

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

U.S. workers pay dearly for health coverage; over 45 million uninsured

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UMWA: Build Oct. 2 union rally in Utah

Back Co-Op miners' organizing struggle

BY ANNE CARROLL

SALT LAKE CITY—"We thank everyone for your ongoing support and invite you to attend and publicize the October 2 anniversary rally we are holding at the UMWA union hall in Price, Utah," said Celso Panduro. A coal miner at the Co-Op mine near Huntington, Utah, and one of the supporters of the struggle to win representation by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) at the mine, Panduro spoke at the end of a September 18 picket here in front of the law offices of Carl Kingston.

A prominent member of the Kingston clan, a wealthy capitalist family that owns

the Co-Op mine, Carl Kingston is the main company lawyer.

The day before the picket, UMWA Region 4, which covers the western states of Colorado, Wyoming, Arizona, Utah, and Montana, sent a letter to the hundreds of union locals and other organizations and individuals who have extended solidarity to the Co-Op miners' union organizing struggle. The letter, signed by Bob Butero, UMWA Region 4 director, invited everyone to attend the anniversary rally.

"The Co-Op miners and the United Mine Workers of America want to thank community activists, local unions, and union members, for their support in the struggle," the letter says. "The Co-Op miners traveled throughout the country and met many unionists. Your continued support and solidarity has been greatly appreciated.

"Beginning at 12:00 noon on Saturday, October 2, 2004, a Co-Op Miners Anniversary Rally will be held at the UMWA in Price, Utah, and we want to invite you to attend. If you can't attend, you can send a message to be read at the Rally. Send information to the United Mine Workers of America Office located at 525 East 100 South, Price Utah 84501. Telephone (435) 637-2037 or Fax (435) 637-9456—Co-Op Miners Anniversary Rally."

"September 22 marks the one-year anniversary of our strike," said Bill Estrada, another Co-Op miner who addressed the crowd following the September 18 picket. "On that day last year, 75 miners at the Co-Op mine in Huntington were fired for union activity. After a 10-month battle, we are now back to work. But this fight is far from over. Because of the solidarity we received, the National Labor Relations Board was forced to rule that the Co-Op bosses illegally fired us and ordered the mine owners to reinstate everyone in July. We need to continue to put pressure on

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'Old Europe' balks at accepting Turkey in European Union; British, U.S. rulers campaign for entry

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

If Turkey were to join the European Union (EU), "the liberation of Vienna in 1683 would have been in vain." This is what EU internal market commissioner Frits Bolkestein, from the Netherlands, said September 6.

The EU official was referring to the siege of Vienna in July 1683 by 200,000 Turkish troops that the Ottoman Empire had dispatched there. The siege was crushed about two months later by a joint force of the Austrian and Polish armies, "thereby saving Christendom from further incursion by Islam," as an editorial in the September 18 *Spectator*, a conservative British magazine, put it.

Bolkestein's racist remarks were largely accepted by EU leaders—especially in the countries U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld has described as the "Old Europe," led by Paris and Berlin. This reflects the widespread reluctance by the majority of capitalist politicians in the EU to approve Turkey's entry into the European Union, and the outright opposition by many

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Militant/Paul Pederson

Martín Koppel, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in New York (at microphone), speaks to students September 22 at Borough of Manhattan Community College. Socialists campaigned there all afternoon as part of a "Club Info Fair."

SWP candidate for vice president: 'Back workers' right to unionize'

Socialist Arrin Hawkins speaks at Pennsylvania campus

BY RYAN SCOTT AND NORTON SANDLER

HAZLETON, Pennsylvania—Socialist Workers Party vice-presidential candidate Arrin Hawkins spoke before students in two classes at Bloomsburg University here September 17. She was invited to speak to the history classes by professor Walter Howard.

"Many working people around the country are reacting to speedup on the job, to brutally long work hours, to

unsafe conditions and assaults on our dignity by the bosses in their drive for profits," Hawkins said.

"At the heart of our campaign is championing workers' right to organize unions or to use their unions to defend themselves from these attacks by the employers and their twin parties, the Democrats and Republicans. These assaults will step up, no matter whether Bush or Kerry wins the election."

Hawkins said the Socialist Workers campaign offers a working-class alternative to the two major capitalist parties and other pro-capitalist candidates. "I invite you to

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Iran protests UN agency demand to halt uranium enrichment

Raising pressure, IAEA sets Nov. 25 deadline

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The government of Iran said September 21 it would not heed a call by the United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to stop uranium enrichment.

Gholamreza Aghazadeh, the head of Tehran's Atomic Energy Organization, told reporters in Vienna that day that Iran had begun converting 37 tons of raw "yellowcake" uranium to process it for use in nuclear centrifuges—the machines that enrich uranium, a process necessary to produce fuel for the nuclear reactors that Tehran is developing to help meet the country's growing electricity generation needs.

"What was decided in the board of governors is unjust for a nation," Aghazadeh said, referring to a resolution the IAEA's board had just passed.

The IAEA "considers it necessary," the resolution that was adopted unanimously September 18 says, "that Iran immediately suspend all enrichment-related activities, including the manufacture or import of centrifuge components, the assembly and testing of centrifuges, and the production of feed material" (emphasis in the original).

The UN agency also called on the government of Iran "to reconsider its decision to start construction of a research reactor."

The resolution said that the agency will bring back a report on whether Tehran has complied with these demands to the November 25 meeting of the IAEA's board of

governors. At that meeting the board "will decide whether or not further steps are appropriate," it said.

Washington and the main powers in the European Union—London, Paris, and Berlin—cosponsored the resolution.

U.S. officials stated that the road is now open for the IAEA to refer Tehran to the UN Security Council for possible sanctions if the Iranian government does not comply with the UN atomic agency's demands. "The is-

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Order back issues of 'Militant' to learn about miners' battle. Free with sub! (see p. 2)

Indonesia gov't mobilizes public opinion behind crackdown on 'terrorist' group

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

Taking advantage of violent attacks on civilian targets by armed groups, the ruling class in Indonesia and its allies in the United States, Australia, and other imperialist powers have scored new successes in their "war on terrorism" in that Southeast Asian country—the fourth most populous in the world.

The September 9 suicide bombing outside the Australian embassy in Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, attributed to Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), is the latest attack the country's rulers have used to win broader acceptance in public opinion for a crackdown against the group, which calls for the formation of "Islamic governments" across the region. Nine people were killed and more than 180 others were injured in that bombing.

Jakarta has won support for more repressive measures against Jemaah Islamiyah from major Muslim organizations and political figures in Indonesia who had been reluctant to do so in the past. Syafii Maarif, the central leader of Muhammadiyah, one of Indonesia's two largest Muslim organizations, joined the government chorus against JI. "If Muslims conduct this kind of uncivilized action, they should question whether they are Muslims or not," Maarif said. "They misuse the religion."

On September 20, former general Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono won a landslide victory in the presidential election, winning 60 percent of the vote.

An article in the September 21 *New York Times* described the White House attitude toward the Indonesian elections: "The Bush administration—particularly Paul D. Wolfowitz, who was ambassador to Indonesia in the late 1980s—has said the success of the elections here in the world's most populous Muslim country shows that Islam and democracy are compatible."

A former security minister in Su-

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Iowa slaughterhouse closes, workers given no advance notice

BY KEVIN DWIRE

TAMA, Iowa—"This is the land of unopportunity," Renee Fenton told *Militant* reporters August 21, as she and three friends sat outside the Crown Point apartments here. She was talking about the shut down the day before of the Iowa Quality Beef slaughterhouse here, which left 540 workers unemployed. Fenton was visiting friends who were preparing to move out of Tama to look for work.

Iowa Quality Beef is a partnership between the Iowa Quality Beef Supply Cooperative and American Foods Group of Green Bay, Wisconsin. Over 900 cattle producers from Iowa and surrounding states had invested in the operation, which opened in July 2003. It was the only cattle slaughterhouse in Iowa. According to press reports, American Foods Group, which operated the plant, now wants out of the partnership.

The *Des Moines Register* reported August 19 that Wythe Willey, a cattleman and lawyer from Cedar Rapids who is chairman of the board of the cooperative, blamed the closing "on bad market and financial conditions in the cattle industry because of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, also known as mad cow disease (BSE)." Willey said the plant has lost \$3.5 million to \$5 million because of BSE. He also called the shutdown temporary and said the plant may reopen in about two months.

The plant closing will also hurt farmers. The shutdown "diminishes competition for cattle, which could mean lower prices for producers," said an article in the *Des Moines Register*, adding that farmers will "incur the added costs of shipping their animals to more-distant markets."

Workers first learned the operation was shutting down "temporarily" on August 18, when kill floor workers were told that it was their last day. Workers on the cut floor then worked the last two days of the week to process carcasses.

Many workers immediately began to prepare to move out of town. "I'm on

my way to Joslin, Illinois," said a worker as he loaded the trunk of his car. "We're going down to try to get an apartment before I start work there." He had been a sanitation worker in the plant. "When we found out the plant was closing, I called my landlord right away to say that we needed to work something out, because we had no jobs and I needed to get my deposit back. The landlord said that he needed 30 days notice. I told him that the company didn't give me notice, how could I give him notice?"

He pointed to several young men standing on the porch of the house they shared. "We all worked sanitation in the plant for a company called Kaiser," he said. "We're all being transferred to other jobs in Dubuque, Waterloo, Dennison, and Joslin. I was a manager here, but they don't need a manager in Joslin, so I'll be a worker like the others."

"The employee handbook says the company was supposed to give 60 days notice about layoffs, but people got no notice at all," said Gabriel Salazar. He and his friends had moved to Tama to work at the plant from Long Prairie, Minnesota, where they had been members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 789. Salazar said he quit, however, because the bosses had him doing the job of three people. Salazar and other workers interviewed did not know about the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN), which requires employers to provide 60 days notification in advance of plant closings or mass layoffs. News coverage of the plant closing in Iowa has not mentioned the WARN act.

Salazar's friend, Lorenzo Galvan, said that the company had shorted him wages for 14 hours, which the bosses never paid despite saying they would. Several workers told *Militant* correspondents similar stories about not being paid for all the hours they worked. Salazar, Galvan, and Marisol Garcia said they were going to Denison, Iowa, to try to get jobs there.

At a nearby apartment building, *Mili-*

School cleaners fight cutbacks in Australia



Militant/Ron Poulson

SYDNEY, Australia—Over a thousand state-employed school cleaners on a three-day strike from around New South Wales (NSW) joined in a colorful and spirited march on the Sydney offices of the NSW Labor premier, Robert Carr, September 8. The cleaners, organized by the Liquor, Hospitality and Municipal Workers Union, were joined by supporters carrying other union banners. Protesting threats to their job security and hours, they chanted: "What do we want? Current hours! When do we want it? Now!"

"I'm now the only cleaner at a school of 500 students," said Gayle Ross, 44, who has worked for 12 years at Grafton Primary School. "They've squeezed our hours and just let people retire without replacing them." She carried a placard saying, "Labor government attacks workers basic rights." John Robertson, secretary of the NSW Labor Council, was one of the speakers at the rally.

—ALASDAIR MACDONALD

tant reporters talked to several workers. "I'm going back to Mexico Friday," said Umberto López. He hails from a rural area of Zacatecas and says that there are no jobs there. He will be going back to a farm to raise corn and hogs.

Laura Castellanos said that she had worked in the plant under the previous owners, who also shut it down. "They told us we would be rehired when it opened up again, but I wasn't rehired," Castellanos said, adding that some workers are afraid to apply for unemployment because they might lack papers.

Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Iowa, Edwin Fruit, who works at the Tyson plant in Perry, Iowa, and is a member of UFCW Local 1149, told workers that "the labor movement needs to come to the defense of the workers here in Tama.

"The labor movement here in Iowa should demand that since the company did not give workers 60 days notice required by the WARN Act and stipulated in the company hand book, it should pay workers wages for the next 60 days and continue their insurance coverage," Fruit said. He also said that all workers should receive unemployment compensation, whether they have papers or not.

"The treatment of workers here in Tama shows why the SWP campaign's demand to support workers' right to organize unions and to defend ourselves from the bosses' attacks is so important. We also demand a massive federally funded public works program to put millions to work at union scale."

Kevin Dwire is a meat packer in Des Moines, Iowa.

Unemployment declines in New York

BY DOUG NELSON

New York City's unemployment rate declined from 7.6 percent in July to 6.7 percent in August, according to the state Department of Labor.

May and August of this year are the first two months that unemployment has dropped below 7 percent in New York since October 2001.

About 117,000 jobs were created since January 2004, as part of an upturn in the business cycle.

Last month's drop in the official unemployment rate, however, was due to a 44,000-person decline in the labor force. The Department of Labor defines "labor

force" as those currently employed, those who are laid-off and waiting to be recalled, or those who are "able, available, and actively looking for work." The jobless who are not seeking work are not counted. The total number of those employed actually dropped by 10,000 in August. So the decline in joblessness last month is largely due to a substantial drop in those actively seeking work.

Since April, the unemployment rate both in New York City and nationwide has been lower every month than it was during the first quarter of the year.

U.S. unemployment still remains above 5 percent, as it has since October 2001.

THE MILITANT

Find out about Utah miners' fight for union

After a 10-month strike, Co-Op miners in Huntington, Utah, returned to work July 12 and have continued the battle for the union from inside. From day one of the strike the 'Militant' has given weekly coverage to this important labor struggle. New subscribers can get two back issues of their choice to find out more about it. Don't miss a single issue!



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