

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Robert Simms, a soldier in the communist movement for 4 decades
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Socialist candidate: union victory at Dakota is example Calero joins with meat packers in Twin Cities



Róger Calero, Socialist Worker presidential candidate, joins January 24 union rally at Dakota Premium on eve of vote.

BY CARLOS SAMANIEGO

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—Róger Calero, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, joined a pro-union demonstration outside the Dakota Premium meatpacking plant here January 24.

He was welcomed by the unionists. A number of them recognized Calero, who worked on the kill floor at the slaughterhouse in 2000. They remembered him as one of the activists in their fight to win a union and a union contract, which they finally won in 2002.

Calero said he supported workers

who were calling for a yes vote in the next day's election that was to decide whether or not the union would remain at the plant (see news article on this page).

In a discussion with workers while waiting for others to exit the plant, Calero said, "This is what our campaign is about. The Socialist Workers candidates are joining workers' struggles. We are pointing to the workers at Dakota as an example of how we can use our unions to fight for better wages

and conditions in the face of the worsening economic crisis."

The next day Calero was among those at the UFCW Local 789 union hall who greeted Dakota workers arriving after work to celebrate their victory—a nearly 2-1 vote in favor of the union.

Rebecca Williamson, who works at Dakota Premium and is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in Minnesota's 5th district, joined Calero at a January 25 forum at the socialist campaign headquarters here. Both candidates pointed to the

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Gaza: thousands cross border as Tel Aviv maintains blockade

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—The Israeli government said January 27 that it will maintain its near economic blockade of the Gaza Strip and expand its military assaults on the Palestinian group Hamas.

Four days earlier, Hamas, the ruling party in Gaza, had broken open a border wall, allowing hundreds of thousands of Palestinians—half of Gaza's population—to cross into Egypt to purchase food, fuel, and other basic supplies that have been in short supply because of severe restrictions imposed by Tel Aviv.

In January 2006 the governments of Israel and Egypt sharply restricted movement of people and goods at the border with Gaza after elections in which Hamas defeated Fatah, the organization of Palestinian Authority president Mahmoud Abbas. The restrictions were tightened into a virtual blockade later that year after Hamas expelled Fatah from Gaza in fighting between the two Palestinian groups.

Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement) calls for the establishment of an "Islamic republic" in Palestine and has refused to recognize the Israeli regime. Fatah, the wing of the Palestine Libera-

tion Organization led by Yasser Arafat until his death in 2004, had been the ruling party in the Palestinian Authority (PA) since its founding in 1994. Abbas supports Washington's proposed "road

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Killing of youth by Oakland cop sparks protests

BY BETSEY STONE

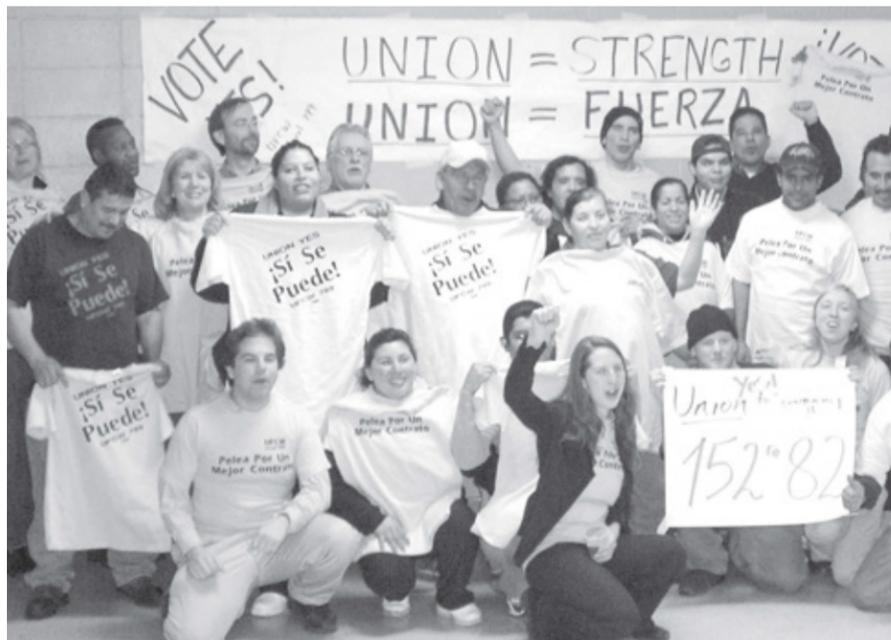
OAKLAND, California—Protesters crowded into the Santa Fe Elementary School auditorium here January 23 to demand justice for 20-year-old Gary King, Jr., who was gunned down by an Oakland cop September 20.

The gathering was initially called by Oakland city officials to "have a discussion with the neighborhood about crime." Oakland police chief Wayne Tucker was there, as were a number of cops.

Most of those present, though, had little interest in the planned agenda. King's relatives, friends, and neighbors came to

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Minnesota meat packers vote 2-1 to keep union Defeat company-backed decertification drive



Members and supporters of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789 celebrate their victory at the union hall in St. Paul, Minnesota, the evening after the vote.

BY CARLOS SAMANIEGO

SOUTH ST. PAUL, Minnesota—Workers from Dakota Premium Foods were greeted with cheers and clapping when they entered the United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789 hall January 25. The workers won an overwhelming victory in their fight to beat back a company-sponsored effort to decertify the union in the plant.

"We're so happy. There aren't

words to explain it," said Dakota worker Argelia Flores Diaz. "Now we have to stay together and fight for a better contract that gives us better wages and respect."

The vote—152 for the union and 82 against—was an even greater margin of victory than the vote in 2000 that brought the union into the South St. Paul slaughterhouse. At that time workers responded to what they

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U.S. court gives Padilla 17 years on 'terror' conspiracy charge

BY DOUG NELSON

A federal court sentenced José Padilla January 22 to 17 years in prison on charges of conspiring to commit unspecified "terrorist" acts overseas and providing material aid to Islamist forces abroad. Two other men, Adham Hassoun and Kifah Jayyousi, were convicted on the same charges and given 15 years and 12 years, respectively.

Padilla is the first U.S. citizen to be arrested as an "enemy combatant," a label under which the U.S. government claimed the right to jail him indefinitely and deny him many legal protections. Jayyousi is a U.S. citizen and Hassoun a 13-year U.S. resident.

Padilla, now 37, was arrested at Chicago's O'Hare airport in 2002 on his return from Pakistan. U.S. authorities claimed he was part of an "unfolding terrorist plot to attack the United States" by detonating a radioactive "dirty bomb." He was locked up without charges in a Navy brig for three and a half years, facing harsh conditions and initially denied legal counsel. In 2006, when it appeared the Supreme Court would rule his indefinite detention unconstitutional, federal officials transferred his case to civilian courts.

Lacking evidence to charge Padilla with the alleged dirty bomb plot, the government slapped overseas conspiracy charges against the three men. The case rested on taped conversations Padilla had with co-defendants and a supposed application in Afghanistan to attend a Mujahedeen training camp, which prosecutors said was filled out with Padilla's Muslim name, Abdullah al-Muhajir.

A key piece of evidence in the government's case was a conversation in

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Wives of two framed-up Cubans in U.S. prisons: Give us visas to see them!

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—For the eighth time the U.S. government has denied visas to Adriana Pérez and Olga Salanueva to see their husbands, Cuban revolutionaries unjustly held in U.S. prisons. They have not been able to visit their spouses, Gerardo Hernández and René González, respectively, since their arrests nine years ago.

Hernández and González were arrested along with Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González, and Ramón Labañino in 1998 on frame-up charges of conspiracy to commit espionage, of being unregistered foreign agents, and—in the case of Hernández—conspiracy to commit murder. In a federal trial in 2001, Guerrero and Labañino were given life sentences, and René González and Fernando González were sentenced to 15 and 19 years, respectively. Hernández received a double life sentence.

The Cuban Five, as they are known, had been monitoring the activities of Cuban-American counterrevolutionary groups based in Miami with a history of carrying out violent attacks against Cuba with the complicity of Washington.

Supporters of the imprisoned Cubans around the world have stepped up efforts to win visas for Pérez and Salanueva to see their loved ones.

Last December more than 100 prominent individuals from 27 countries, among them Nobel Peace laureates Adolfo Pérez Esquivel of Argentina and Rigoberta Menchú of Guatemala, formed the International Commission

for Family Visitation Rights to campaign in support of Pérez and Salanueva.

Also in December, some 100 women in Peru attempted to deliver petitions to the U.S. embassy in Lima demanding that Pérez and Salanueva be given visas. The event was organized by the Peruvian Committee of Solidarity with the Five Cuban Prisoners.

In Uruguay more than 160 women, including trade union officials and members of the government and parliament, signed a letter that was delivered to the U.S. embassy in Montevideo, the capital, demanding visas for the two.

In an interview with BBC last July, Adriana Pérez said U.S. officials have given her a different excuse each of the previous seven times she applied for a visa. “I am told I could be a danger to the security of the United States, a possible terrorist or even an illegal immigrant.”

Pérez flew to the United States in 2002 to visit her husband. Even though she had been granted a U.S. visa, FBI agents detained her on arrival at the Houston airport. She was held in isolation, deprived of her passport, and interrogated without an attorney. She was finally deported back to Cuba without ever seeing her husband.

Salanueva, who lived for years in the Miami area with her husband, remained in the United States for two years after his arrest. After René González refused an FBI offer that he plead guilty in exchange for a lesser sentence, he received a letter suggesting that his family’s permanent resident status could be revoked



Reuters/Claudia Daut (left)

Left, Adriana Pérez; right, Olga Salanueva, with her daughter Ivette. They have been denied visas to visit their husbands, Gerardo Hernández and René González, who have been jailed on frame-up charges in the United States for more than nine years.

if he did not cooperate. On Aug. 16, 2000, Salanueva was arrested, handcuffed, and dragged before a federal deportation judge.

“They drove me to the Miami Detention Center where René had been held since two years before,” Salanueva is quoted as saying in a fact sheet in support of the five. “They took me so he could see that I was in their custody, that he had one more chance to declare himself guilty, and then I could remain in the United States.”

González still refused to plead guilty. Salanueva was held for three more months in an immigration jail before

being deported to Cuba.

Family members of the other three imprisoned Cubans have only been granted one or two visits per year on average.

As a result of her mother’s exclusion, Ivette González, the nine-year-old daughter of Salanueva and René González, has not seen her father even though she is a U.S. citizen by birth. The U.S. government requires that she be accompanied by a parent.

Irma Schwerert, the mother of René González, did not get to visit to her son until September 2004, more than three years after the conviction of the five.

‘The Struggle for a Proletarian Party’ now available in Spanish

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Pathfinder has just published a full Spanish-language translation of *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party*, by James P. Cannon, a founder of the communist movement in the United States.

The book describes a decisive fight within the Socialist Workers Party in 1939–40 to defend the party’s theoretical foundations, political principles, and organizational methods. Under the pressure of the outbreak of the second world imperialist war, a petty-bourgeois section of the party led by James Burnham, Max Shachtman, and Martin Abern be-

gan to reject the program and Bolshevik norms of party organization. Today it continues to be an essential handbook on organizing a communist party—one that is proletarian in its program, membership, and leadership.

La lucha por un partido proletario, issued as an Education for Socialists bulletin, is a translation of the entire text of the book. An earlier version issued last year contained only the main article. Pathfinder is preparing a new edition of the Spanish translation in book format, as well as a new edition of the book in English.

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Union supporters protest in June 2000 during battle to win union at Dakota.

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Victory at Dakota

Continued from front page

considered abusive conditions, especially the line speed, by organizing a sit-down strike in the lunchroom for more than seven hours. Coming out of that action, workers won union representation by United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 789, and after an almost two-year fight, won their first contract.

With the end of this contract in June 2007, a company-backed petition was circulated at the plant in an effort to decertify the union. Over the next six months union supporters responded. Pro-union workers, including a number who were involved in the earlier fight to win the local and contract, talked up the history of the struggle in the plant. Local 789 officials visited workers' homes. Workers produced the *Workers' Voice* newsletter to answer company lies. The newsletter also publicized the bosses' attacks on workers and steps unionists were taking to stop unjust firings and other retaliatory discipline. At one point a delegation of workers went to management demanding that they stop denying union representatives entry into the plant.

"We needed to build momentum in the plant for this win, and we did it," said Local 789 president Don Seaquist. "This goes beyond 789 and the UFCW. This is a message to workers that they have power."

The day before the election 40 union supporters gathered outside the factory entrance at the end of the work shift. Some workers joined as they exited the plant. Chanting "Sí, se puede" (Yes we can) and "Union, Union," they greeted workers in the freezing cold. Dozens held signs urging "Vote Yes." Two large banners were held up, one saying "Union = Strength" in Spanish and English. The week before, thirty union supporters had demonstrated at the same gate.

Reaction in the plant

The decertification election was held January 25. After union supporters counting ballots ran out of the trailer where the voting took place, word of the victory spread rapidly. Dozens of workers went to the Local 789 hall. Each was welcomed with cheers, hugs, high-fives, and pats on the back.

"This is a big step. Now we have to work to get more people to participate in the union," said Oscar Salgado, 27, a worker in the boning department who has been at Dakota for 6 years. "This is the way to go forward. I don't know how much stronger we are now. We'll see as we go forward."

Workers immediately put out a new issue of the *Workers' Voice* and distributed it on the job when they

returned after the weekend. With a bold headline "VICTORY!!!" the newsletter says: "We told the bosses at Dakota Premium we would send them a strong message and we did! We voted 152 to 82 in favor of remaining organized in our Union! Now we will advance in our fight for a contract that includes better wages, working conditions and respect on the job. Today, all workers at Dakota Premium—those who voted yes and those who voted no—are united as members of the Union. Let's move forward together!"

The newsletter also invited workers to the union hall on January 30 "to discuss the next steps in our fight."

As news of the victory spread through the plant January 28, "Sí, se puede" echoed through locker rooms, hallways, and the lunchroom.

"One person congratulated me but I told him we should all congratulate ourselves," said worker Ricardo Orozco. "Some people will show you the thumbs down and one person tried to shout loudly against the union, but people at lunch booed him and told him to shut up."

Obdulia Flores, a kill floor worker with 11 years in the plant said that she thought that a number of workers "who were against the union before are with us now." Others commented on how impressive the margin of victory was.

UK protests will back lawyer arrested for speaking in defense of client jailed under Terrorism Act

BY BJÖRN TIRSÉN

EDINBURGH, Scotland—Defenders of freedom of speech are organizing protests here and in Glasgow in support of attorney Aamer Anwar, charged with "contempt of court" because of a statement he made after the conviction of one of his clients on "terrorism" charges. His trial is expected in March.

Anwar's client, British-born Mohammad Atif Siddique, then 21, was jailed for eight years under the Terrorism Act last October 23. He had been convicted of possessing and distributing "terrorist material" over the Internet. Under covert surveillance by the British security services for several months, Siddique was detained at Glasgow Airport in April 2006 by Special Branch officers as he and his uncle were about to board a flight to Pakistan to visit family. Siddique's laptop computer, passport, and plane tickets were seized before he was released.

A week later, dozens of armed cops raided his family home, arresting him and tying up the wrists of his parents and three brothers while searching their house.

In a Sept. 17, 2007, statement Anwar said that Siddique "was found guilty of doing what millions of young people do every day, looking for answers on the internet. . . . [He] states that he is not a terrorist and is innocent of the charges and it is not a crime to be a young Muslim angry at global injustice."

"The prosecution was driven by the state and carried out in an atmosphere of hostility after the [June 2007] Glasgow Airport attack, and ending on the anniversary of 9/11," the statement continued. "In the end, Atif Siddique did not receive a fair trial and I



Ignacio Ireneo

Union supporters rally outside Dakota Premium January 24, the day before the vote.

Some said they thought the bosses expected an easy win against the union. In the months leading up to the election, the company held very few meetings with workers. One anti-union leaflet was passed out twice in the last two weeks.

By contrast, the pro-union campaign included four issues of the *Workers' Voice* in those two weeks, house visits, two demonstrations outside the plant, and ongoing one-on-one discussions among workers. In addition, pro-union workers got up to address their coworkers in the lunchroom in the days leading up to the vote.

Eddie Ferreira, who has worked in the boning department at Dakota for three years, pointed to the importance of the union campaign. He said the workers need to keep getting out the *Workers' Voice*. "This is better for all workers. Now we're united to defend ourselves," he said. "The bosses know they can't do anything they want. We always have to defend the union."

Carlos Samaniego is a member of UFCW Local 789 and works at Dakota Premium Foods. Rebecca Williamson, a trimmer at Dakota Premium and a member of Local 789, contributed to this article.

will be considering an appeal."

On November 6 Lord Carlway, the judge who convicted Siddique, issued the contempt charges against Anwar. The judge claimed Anwar's statement was "at least in part untrue and misleading," according to the *Scotsman* newspaper. Carlway also said the statement appeared to be an "unjustified" attack on the trial process and on "the integrity of the jury."

A letter protesting the charges against Anwar as "an unprecedented attack on freedom of speech" was sent to the *Scotsman* November 7. It was signed by author Iain Banks; Labour politician Tony Benn; Respect party MP George Galloway; Muslim Council of Scotland convener Bashir Mann; and human rights lawyer Ga-

reth Pierce, among others.

In recent months two other people in the United Kingdom have been convicted under the Terrorism Act. In December Samina Malik, 23, was found guilty of owning "terrorist manuals" and sentenced to 18 months' supervision and 100 hours of unpaid community work. The capitalist media branded her "the lyrical terrorist" because of a pseudonym she had used on the Internet. On January 9 dentist Sohail Qureshi was sentenced to four years in jail for "preparing to engage in acts of terrorism and possessing items useful to terrorists." He had pleaded guilty to the charges. The police and prosecution are calling the four years "lenient" and are pressing for a harsher sentence.

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The economic crisis and the elections: What the Socialist Workers campaign fights for. Speakers: Socialist Workers candidates in Iowa. Fri., Feb. 8. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 3707 Douglas Blvd. Tel: (515) 255-1707.

Socialist candidate Kennedy brings campaign to longshore, other workers in Miami area

BY ELLEN BRICKLEY

MIAMI, January 28—"Among the capitalist candidates for president there is a lot of talk about change, but it's all within the capitalist system, trying to make it work," said Alyson Kennedy, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president.

Kennedy was campaigning in South Florida with two other Socialist Workers candidates, Omari Musa for mayor of Miami-Dade County, and Margaret Trowe for U.S. representative in the 17th Congressional District. Kennedy's presidential running mate is Róger Calero.

"As the election continues and the economic recession unfolds, the Democratic and Republican politicians are putting forward tax rebates, tax cuts, and interest-rate reductions to try to 'jump-start' the economy," Kennedy said.

"But none of these mechanisms changes the fact that huge debt bubbles continue to grow. It's not a new crisis. It's been building up for decades," she noted. As a result of decline in the rate of profit built into the world capitalist system, businessmen have found it more lucrative to invest in derivatives or home mortgage loans than in

industrial plants and equipment.

Kennedy opened her remarks at a January 27 campaign meeting by saluting the victory of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789 in soundly rejecting a company-backed effort to decertify the union at the Dakota Premium Foods meatpacking plant in South St. Paul, Minnesota.

Recounting her experiences as an underground coal miner who took part in a union-organizing battle at the Co-Op mine in Utah, Kennedy underlined the importance of organizing drives and strikes where the workers themselves take leadership of their struggles.

One of the lessons of such actions, Kennedy said, is the limits workers face when they lack a political party of their own, while the employer class has two parties, the Democrats and Republicans. "Strikes and demonstrations by themselves are not enough," she said. "We also have to fight in the political arena. We need a labor party," a working-class party based on a militant union movement.

Discussing the sharp rise in the prices of food, fuel, and other necessities, Kennedy pointed to Labor Department figures showing that last



Militant/Deborah Liatos

SWP vice presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy (center), and SWP candidate for mayor of Miami-Dade County, Omari Musa (right), campaigning January 28 in Miami.

year consumer prices increased by the highest percentage in 17 years.

"But the consumer price index, which determines increases in Social Security and other benefits, has been rigged so it doesn't reflect the real price changes," she said. Social Security benefits recently increased by a paltry \$24 a month—"and \$3 of that goes to increased Medicare deductions."

Kennedy began her tour with a 5:30 a.m. visit to the hiring hall of the International Longshoremen's Association, where dozens of stevedores come to take work assignments at Miami's

large port. Musa, Trowe, and their supporters have been campaigning among workers at the ILA hall nearly every weekend.

Several longshoremen who regularly read the *Militant* and had been alerted of Kennedy's visit came by to talk, and six workers bought the latest issue. They were interested in Kennedy's description of the example set by the coal miners in Utah who waged a three-year battle to organize the non-union Co-Op mine.

Later in the day, Kennedy campaigned with supporters at two post offices, one in the Little Haiti district and the other in Liberty City, a large Black neighborhood.

After Kennedy talked about the SWP platform and its call for a labor party, Bruna Bustin told her, "I think this is a good idea. We have to raise our voice. We have to fight."

"We're talking about the need to shorten the workweek with no cut in pay to spread the work for all, and a sliding scale of wages, with cost-of-living increases so we can keep up with rising prices," Kennedy told a woman who tutors elementary school students. She responded, "Exactly!"

A federal government worker who bought the *Militant* and took a flyer for the campaign told Trowe she has been called a militant for her pro-union stance. She said she would probably vote for one of the Democratic candidates, but hadn't decided yet. "I'll let them fight it out," she said, referring to the sharp exchanges between candidates Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama.

Kennedy was invited to speak at the weekly meeting of the Miami chapter of the Bolivarian Circles, a network of people who oppose Washington's threats against the Venezuelan government led by president Hugo Chávez.

Thanking the 20 people there for the opportunity to have an exchange with them, she noted that the capitalist financial crisis is international in scope, and said the Socialist Workers Party

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Calero backs successful union fight in Minnesota

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fight at Dakota as an example of how workers, both born here and abroad, can fight shoulder to shoulder as part of the broader emerging working-class vanguard in this country.

Calero noted that the conditions working people face—from lower real wages to dangerous job conditions, racist and sexist discrimination, and imperialist war—are not a malfunction in the system but rather are produced by the natural workings of capitalism.

"Our real enemy is the capitalist class itself and its two-party system, through which they rule. Working people need to build their own par-

ty—a labor party—through which we can fight for our own class interests in the political arena, in opposition to the Democrats, Republicans, and any other capitalist parties," he said.



BY JOEL BRITTON

CHICAGO—Capping several days of campaigning in Illinois and Indiana, Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Róger Calero joined in solidarity with nine workers formerly employed at American Meat Packing Corp. (AMPAC) in federal court January 23 (see news article on page 5).

Calero and campaign supporters

introduced workers to "What the Socialist Workers 2008 campaign fights for," the special four-page section in a recent issue of the *Militant*. Some of the former AMPAC workers enjoyed seeing again the photo of Calero with fellow inmates in a Houston federal immigration jail in 2002, having joined in the successful campaign to win Calero's release from jail and his later victory over *la migra's* efforts to deport him.

When Calero said that running mate Alyson Kennedy would be on tour here later, several workers expressed interest in getting together with her to find out more about the campaign.

SWP candidates join Houston immigrant rights event

BY STEVE WARSHHELL

HOUSTON—Candidates and supporters of the Socialist Workers Party campaign participated in the January 18–20 conference of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights here, and found a receptive audience.

"None of the presidential candidates offers much for immigrants," said Gilbert Lopez, a Michigan State University student. "They all are for more *migra* or employer sanctions."

"That's true for the Democrats and Republicans, the big-business candidates," replied Anthony Dutrow, the SWP candidate for Texas House District 138. "But Róger Calero, the Socialist Workers presidential candidate, is today addressing an immigrant rights conference in Indianapolis. He has been involved for years in the fight to stop deportations and police raids and for the legalization of all undocumented workers."

Dutrow showed a group of Michigan students a photo of Calero with his fellow inmates at the federal immigration

prison in Houston where he was jailed in 2002. Dutrow explained that a national campaign helped win Calero's release and gave an example of how to wage a successful fight for immigrant rights. One of the students subscribed to the *Militant* to find out more about the campaign.

Along with Dutrow, the Socialist Workers Party candidates in Texas are Jacquie Henderson for U.S. Senate, Amanda Ulman for U.S. Congress in the 9th District, and Steve Warshell for U.S. Congress in the 18th District.

A member of a Mississippi group called Mpower also stopped to get information about the socialist campaign and offered to help out. "Many of us are poultry workers and are busy fighting companies like Tyson Foods every day!" he said. As it turned out, three of the socialist campaigners were meat packers and exchanged experiences with him. "I can help get Calero on the ballot in Mississippi," the Mpower activist said.

Michael Sadighi, a student from the

University of Texas in Austin, helped campaign at the conference and left with 10 copies of the SWP campaign platform to begin building support for the socialist candidates in his area.

"The whole debate on immigration reform is going the wrong way," said Gabriela Alcazar from Michigan. "It's not easy to see where the Democratic candidates differ from each other, and sometimes it's hard to see where they differ from the Republicans. I had thought [Democrat Dennis] Kucinich was better, now I'm not sure."

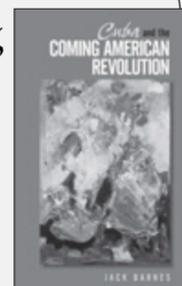
Paula Lau from San Francisco noted that the Socialist Workers campaign supports legalization of all immigrants and expressed her agreement. "It's good to see people who aren't willing to sell their principles for votes. The last debate I saw, the Republican candidates made 'amnesty' out like a dirty word."

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes

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ON THE PICKET LINE

Meat packers vote to join UFCW at Colorado Premium

Workers at Colorado Premium, a beef-processing plant in Greeley, Colorado, that employs about 130 workers, voted January 16 to unionize. The workers are now members of the United Food and Commercial Workers Local 7.

Union representatives said the dangerously high line speeds and the inadequate bathroom breaks were key issues workers wanted to address immediately.

About 70 workers gathered the day of the vote to demonstrate in favor of the union, according to Denver's Channel 7 news.

"We are working all the time with knives close to our bodies and we don't have protection on the body or hands," Luis Medina, a worker at the plant, told the media.

Workers said the company doesn't offer sufficient health benefits, pays low wages, and doesn't provide ad-

equate safety equipment.

—Horace Kerr

Miners in Poland strike for pay increase

January 25—Miners at the Budryk coal mine in Silesia, southern Poland, have been on strike since mid-December, United Press International reported January 16. On December 24, 12 miners began a protest inside the mine. Some 150 miners joined the underground protest in January. Hundreds have held mass pickets outside the mine. Ten miners began a hunger strike inside the mine.

The mine is owned by the state. The operation is slated to be merged with the state-run Weglowa Co. mines, which is Europe's largest coal producer. The miners are demanding that their wages be increased to the level of miners employed by Weglowa. This amounts to a 20 percent raise.

—Paul Pederson

Boston picket protests ICE raid of union hall



Militant/Ted Leonard

BOSTON, January 25—Forty people joined a picket line here today to protest a Bureau of Immigrations and Custom Enforcement (ICE) raid of a union hall in Hartford, Connecticut. Yesterday, immigration cops went into the offices of Local 1199 of the Service Employees International Union and arrested Miriem Kamtengeni, a union employee who is originally from Malawi. In the photo above, Sergio Reyes, a leader of the Boston May Day Coalition, addresses the rally. The protesters picketed the Federal Building here demanding, "Stop the Raids, Stop the Deportations."

—TED LEONARD

Chicago meat packers win back pay settlement

BY JOEL BRITTON

CHICAGO, January 24—"We achieved a victory today for ourselves and for all other workers who face the same thing that happened to us," said Rufino Peña, a former worker at the American Meat Packing Corp. plant on Chicago's South Side. He was referring to the settlement of a class-action lawsuit filed in 2002 on behalf of him and other former workers at that South Side plant, the city's last major hog slaughterhouse.

Since the plant shut down in 2001, former AMPAC workers had been fighting for back pay and benefits lost after the company shut down without giving them the legally mandated 60-day notice.

The settlement terms signed by an attorney for Daniel Ochylski, owner of now-bankrupt AMPAC and Pinnacle Food Group, requires \$175,000 to be paid to the workers and their attorney, Jorge Sánchez. As many as 326 workers, most of whom were members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union, will get equal shares of the \$160,000 that will be left after the attorney's fee is paid.

The workers' suit was brought under provisions of a federal law called the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN), which requires companies to give two months' notice before closing plants. AMPAC tried to take advantage of an exception allowing for "unforeseeable" business conditions, in this case, the November 2001 suspension of inspections by the U.S. Department of Agriculture after many USDA warnings that, unless unsanitary conditions resulting in adulterated meat were corrected, enforcement action would begin.

Peña was one of 11 former AMPAC workers present on January 23 or 24 in the federal court building here as Judge Charles Norgle supervised settlement negotiations. These and other workers had organized protests and mass meetings following the abrupt closing of the plant on Nov. 16, 2001.

In response to Norgle's urging that a settlement be reached so the trial and further litigation could be avoid-

ed, the workers present agreed with attorney Sánchez that it was in their best interests.

Michael Faison, who had worked on the kill floor, led off the conference room discussion that resulted in the workers' decision to support a settlement. "It's not right that we can't get more money; we deserve more than what's being offered. But if we can't get more, yes, we should settle because this thing could go on for a long time and we could end up losing and getting absolutely nothing,"

he said.

This writer, who had also worked on the kill floor at AMPAC, agreed with Faison and others arguing to set-



Militant/Cappy Kidd

Laid-off meat packers picket American Meat Packing Corp. in Chicago, December 2001. The workers recently won a settlement.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



February 11, 1983

Thousands of Cubans marched January 22 in response to the call of the World Front in Solidarity With the People of El Salvador for international actions against U.S. intervention.

The demonstrations were held all over Cuba, municipality by municipality, organized through the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs). The CDRs are the fundamental organizational units of the revolution, carrying out tasks ranging from defense to serving, for example, as the base of the militias and People's Power—the system of workers democracy in Cuba.

The demonstrations involved people from all the Cuban mass organizations. In addition, people from Africa, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Puerto Rico who are living in Cuba joined in, bearing their own national flags.

Demonstrators chanted "We are armed in order to conquer peace" and carried banners and placards with slogans supporting the people of El Salvador and Nicaragua.



February 10, 1958

SEATTLE, Feb. 2—Terry Pettus, Northwest editor of the People's World, a west coast weekly associated with the Communist Party, today announced his support to Jack Wright for the Seattle City Council. Wright is running on the platform of the Socialist Workers Party and has the endorsement of Local 158, International Molders and Foundry Workers, to which he belongs. Growing united socialist support for Wright was given strong added impetus with the release on Jan. 28 of a letter of endorsement from Vincent Hallinan, 1952 Progressive Party Presidential candidate, who has been playing a major role in the national movement for united socialist action.

Terry Pettus, one of the Seattle Smith Act victims who recently won reversal of their conviction, declared his support of Wright at a Washington Pension Union forum this afternoon. Pettus told the forum that Wright has been virtually the only candidate to inject real issues into the campaign.



February 11, 1933

CALL TO ACTION

To all branches, members, and supporters of the Left Opposition.

CONCENTRATE ALL ACTIVITY ON THE GERMAN CAMPAIGN OF THE LEAGUE!

The League is reacting to the German crisis with the greatest campaign of its history. It is precisely at the moment of sharp turns and world-shaking events, when the Centrist bureaucracy reveals its impotence and bankruptcy, that the Left Opposition must show its political initiative, its boldness, and its capacity to multiply its activities many fold. From this point of view the National Committee has already taken a number of decisive steps which are shaking the Communist movement in New York to its foundations.

The first of these actions, and the pivotal point of our campaign, is the decision to publish the MILITANT during the next month THREE TIMES A WEEK!

Toronto meeting celebrates life of Robert Simms

'A soldier' for 38 years as a cadre and leader of the communist movement

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

TORONTO—More than 100 people attended a January 19 meeting here at the Steelworkers Hall to celebrate the life of Robert Simms, a cadre and leader of the communist movement in Canada for 38 years. Simms died in Toronto on December 3, at the age of 61.

Members, supporters, and friends of the Communist League in Canada; the Socialist Workers Party, sister organization of the CL in the United States; and the Young Socialists came from cities across North America to celebrate Simms' many political contributions. The Communist League in the United Kingdom sent a representative to the meeting. Others who had worked with Simms over his four decades of political activity also came. Among those who attended were Robert's brothers Brian and Laurie, his sister Karen, and two other family members.

During the reception prior to the meeting, participants looked at an attractive photo display depicting Simms's involvement in world politics, and read binders containing some 30 messages sent to the meeting. A delicious dinner and a party followed the program.

In the month before he died, Simms participated in a Toronto conference to free the Cuban Five and traveled to New York for an international public meeting and celebration hosted by the SWP and the YS.

In addressing how Simms came to join the communist movement in the late 1960s, Jack Barnes, national secretary of the SWP, noted, "Robert wasn't influenced primarily by what his generation did. Above all, he was inspired by the millions of Vietnamese battling against all odds—going back for decades—to eliminate the boot of foreigners on their necks. Their example and conduct in the struggle against U.S. imperialism inspired many—including women and members of oppressed nationalities such as Blacks in the U.S. and the Quebecois—to proudly say they were socialists and begin to act accordingly."

'A soldier'

At some point in the early 1970s, "Robert came to the conclusion that nothing on earth but organizing to fight and prevent the capitalist rulers from destroying humanity and destroying the earth was worthy in our time," Barnes told those at the meeting. "If I had to pick one thing, I have absolutely no



Militant /Guy Tremblay (above), Dave Wulp (inset)

Above, speakers at January 19 memorial meeting in Toronto for Robert Simms. From left: Ben Joyce, a leader of the Young Socialists; Steve Penner, volunteer in Pathfinder Print Project; John Steele, a leader of Communist League; Michel Prairie (at podium), organizer of CL executive committee; Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *New International* and member of SWP National Committee; and Jack Barnes, SWP national secretary. Inset, Simms gives class at 2004 socialist conference in Oberlin, Ohio, on Jew-hatred and conspiracy "theories." "Robert came to the conclusion that nothing on earth but organizing to fight and prevent the capitalist rulers from destroying humanity and destroying the earth was worthy in our time," said Barnes at the meeting.



doubt how I would describe Robert. He was a soldier."

Barnes spoke about the importance of the political fight that took place in 1972-74 in the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière (LSA/LSO) over an adaptation to Canadian



Robert Simms speaks as a candidate of the League for Socialist Action in the 1975 Ontario provincial elections.

nationalism by some of its oldest leaders. At the time Simms was a member of the LSA/LSO, a predecessor of the CL.

"Fighting this adaptation was a question of life and death for Robert's party,"

he said. "The absolutely necessary clarification and split in the LSA/LSO made it possible for the party to take its place in carrying out the fusions that made the Communist League what it is today."

John Steele, a leader of the CL in Canada and one of the meeting's co-chairs, described how, after attending Brigham Young University in Utah for two years, Simms had traveled to Europe and the Middle East. While in Iraq, he was in a car accident that left him a paraplegic for the rest of his life. Simms's father immediately flew to Iraq and arranged for him to be moved back to Canada.

After recovering, Simms attended Carleton University in Ottawa, where he became involved in protests against the Vietnam War. In 1969 he joined the Young Socialists and a year later the LSA/LSO.

Michel Prairie, the organizer of the CL's executive committee, told the audience, "I first met the LSA/LSO in 1970 when the Pierre Trudeau government used the War Measures Act—sending

in 2,000 troops and suspending civil liberties in Quebec—in an effort to stop the fight by the Quebecois against national oppression." The LSA in Quebec ran Manon Léger for mayor, to campaign against this assault, Prairie said. More than 7,000 people voted for Léger, including Prairie.

At the same time in Vancouver, Robert and other LSA members were organizing large meetings with other groups to protest the War Measures Act and win support for the struggle by the Quebecois for their national rights.

In the early 1980s the Revolutionary Workers League, formed by a fusion of the LSA/LSO with three other revolutionary organizations, established a single political center in Montreal. Simms and his companion Joan Newbigging moved to Montreal in 1981 to help lead this process.

"Robert was part of the staff of our newspapers in 1985 when we fused *Socialist Voice* and *Lutte ouvrière*, with the same political content in both French and English," Prairie said. "That year we also began publishing Pathfinder books and pamphlets in French."

Fervent partisan of Cuban Revolution

"Robert was a fervent supporter of the Cuban Revolution," Prairie said. "He saw it as an example of what workers and farmers could do here, in Canada."

Simms was an active builder of seven meetings last year across Canada to promote Pathfinder's book *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*. More than 600 people attended these meetings, many of them coming to their first event about Cuba. "The Communist League and Young Socialists are looking forward to building more of these meetings on *Our History Is Still Being Written* this year," Prairie concluded.

Mary-Alice Waters, the editor of the Marxist magazine *New International* and a member of the SWP National Committee, also highlighted Simms's internationalism. She read from a message sent by Sean O'Donahue from the Table de Concertation Québec-Cuba paying tribute to Robert's defense of the

Continued on page 9

Message from Sophie Harkat to event

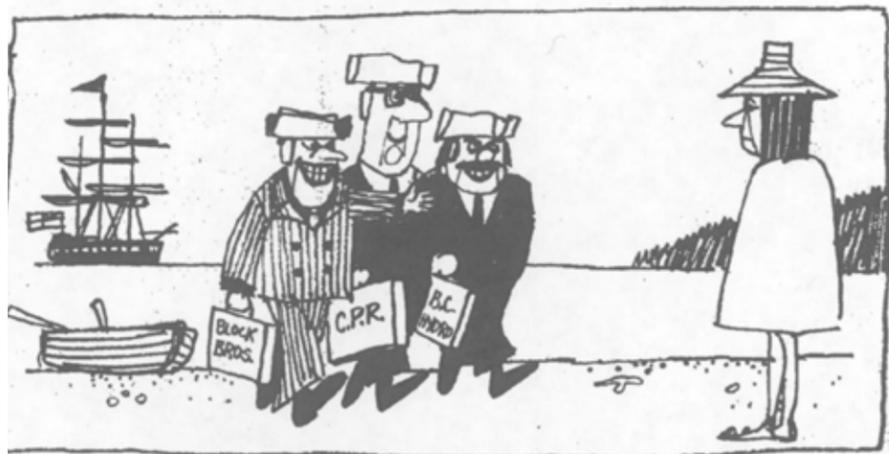
The following are excerpts of a message from Sophie Harkat to the meeting to celebrate the life of Robert Simms. Harkat's husband Mohamed was jailed for more than three years in Canada without charges and threatened with deportation to Algeria under a federal "security certificate" alleging he was an al-Qaeda "sleeper agent." Released on bail in 2006 and living in Ottawa, he was just re-arrested January 29 on false charges that he broke the severe bail conditions.

I would have been honoured to be there in person, but I'm unable to attend Robert's memorial because I'm under house arrest with my husband Mohamed Harkat since June 21st, 2000. . . . Robert would never accept this kind of injustice in our country. Robert believed in justice,

rights and freedom for everyone. He took a stand for us and many Canadians and for that I thank him. . . .

I met Robert back when the issue of Security Certificates was new in the media. The activism blood was still fresh in my veins. I was happy and surprised to see him and Patricia O'Beirne, who had decided to come down and show their support for a vigil I was having for my husband back in April of 2003. I was amazed that two supporters drove down to support us. . . .

Now we need you to take a stand so my husband and the other Security Certificate detainees get a fair and open trial. We need to Stop Secret Trials in Canada once and for all. Secrecy is ruining lives and futures and has no place in a democratic country. Do it for justice. . . . do it in memory of Robert.



Part of a cartoon history of British Columbia published in a 1971 issue of the *Young Socialist* magazine in Canada for which Simms wrote the text. The caption said that among the first colonists to arrive in Canada "were Hudson Bay Co. agents, governors, and missionaries. What shocked them most was the Indians' underdeveloped sense of private property." The *Young Socialists* in Vancouver, where Simms lived then, sold hundreds of copies of that issue.

Canada vigil protests gov't deportation moves

BY NED DMYTRYSHYN

SURREY, British Columbia—About 120 members of the Punjabi Sikh community, trade unionists, and students attended a protest vigil January 27 at the Guru Nanak Sikh temple to support Laibar Singh's fight against deportation to India.

Singh, who has been given sanctuary at the temple, spoke briefly to the crowd, thanking them for their support and vowing to continue his fight to remain in the country.

Singh entered Canada in 2003 applying for refugee status. In 2005 the Indian-born worker suffered a stroke that left him a paraplegic. Despite his health and pending legal appeals, the Canadian government issued a deportation order for July 8, 2007.

On December 10 more than 1,500 people, mostly from the Punjabi Sikh community, rallied in his defense at the Vancouver International Airport, compelling the Canadian authorities to postpone the deportation moves.

Canadian officials again tried to deport Singh on January 9 in the middle of the night. In response, more than 300 supporters rallied at the Guru Nanak temple. This forced the Canadian border police to again postpone the deportation.

At the January 27 rally, organizers and community leaders said they were preparing for a long fight. Speakers at the rally condemned what they called inaccurate and racist coverage of this case in the big-business media, and vowed to continue to mobilize support for Singh.

An announcement was made at the rally that the Vancouver and District Labour Council had decided to back Laibar Singh's case. The union council called on the Canadian government to rescind the deportation order and to grant him permanent residency status. This adds to the list of organizations such as the Canadian Labor Congress, British Columbia Hospital Employees Union, Chinese Canadians for Equality and Solidarity, and Canadian Union of Postal Workers in British Columbia, along with others that have endorsed this fight.

"This rally is part of national actions across Canada in 12 cities demanding permanent residency status for Laibar Singh," said Harsha Walia, a rally organizer and member of the group No One Is Illegal.

Harmeet Singh, a retired sawmill worker, told the *Militant* he was there to support Laibar Singh's right to stay in Canada.

Gil Valencia, a member of Justice for Migrant Workers, said that the Singh fight is important for all work-

ers, especially those who face deportation threats.

The *Vancouver Sun* editorialized January 11 that "there are no excuses for further delays in deporting Laibar Singh." It stated provocatively that "no one wants to break into a place of worship and drag out an invalid. But if it comes to that Singh's supporters will have to shoulder much of the blame."

The January 22 *Globe and Mail* quoted Federal Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day saying, "Deportation orders stand whether or not their subjects are in Sanctuary."

Immigrant rights groups: 'Stop deportations'

BY STEVE WARSHHELL

HOUSTON—Some 650 people gathered here the weekend of January 18–20 for the national conference of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (NNIRR). They came from more than 170 organizations, representing not only Latin American immigrants, but Arab, South Asian, Chinese, and Filipino rights groups.

The conference reaffirmed the network's opposition to immigration police raids and deportations and its support for the legalization of immigrants.

"The raids must stop. The arbitrary arrests and deportations as a whole must stop. We don't want a single person to be jailed just because they are an immigrant," said Arnoldo García, a leader of the NNIRR.

Participants took part in more than 70 workshops. Among the wide range of topics were the fight for the right to driver's licenses for undocumented workers, the fight against deportations, the rights of day laborers, legal rights of immigrants in detention, trade unions and immigration legislation, opposition to a wall on the U.S.-Mexican border, and the U.S. elections.

One of the participants, Kat Rodriguez of the Human Rights Coalition, based in Tucson, Arizona, told of the mounting death toll along the border with Mexico. "Just this year 237 deaths have been documented in Arizona. This is what 'border security' means," she said.

Since the stepped-up militarization of the border began under the William Clinton administration, more than 4,000 people have died crossing the border, Rodríguez said. She noted that a memorial march is organized every November 1, the Day of the Dead celebrated in Latin America, to focus attention on the U.S. government's anti-immigrant policies.



Militant/Dan Grant

January 27 vigil in Surrey, British Columbia, was part of nationwide actions protesting the Canadian government's efforts to deport Indian-born worker Laibar Singh.

Among the participating groups was Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM), which campaigns in defense of South Asian immigrant rights in New York. Asians, Dominicans, Mexicans, and other immigrants "are affected differently, but we all face the threat of deportation in one way or another," said DRUM leader Monami Maulik. Another New York resident at the conference was Rafael Samanez, director of the group Vamos

Unidos, which defends street vendors from police harassment.

One participating group at the conference was a new organization, the Black Alliance for Just Immigration, headed by Gerald Lenoir. He said the group is seeking to counter moves by opponents of immigrant rights to win support among African Americans.

Anthony Dutrow contributed to this article.

'Justice for Gary King, Jr.!'

Continued from front page

demand the prosecution of Patrick Gonzales, the cop who shot King twice in the back, and to discuss the continuing harassment and murder of Black youth by Oakland cops.

"Gary was not a bad person. He did not deserve this," said Julian Nelson, a childhood friend of King. "We want to see justice."

Several of those who spoke said that Gonzales had already shot two other Black youth—Joshua Russell, 19, of Hayward, California, who was killed in 2002; and Amir Rollins, 17, who is now in Children's Hospital, paralyzed after Gonzales shot him in 2006.

According to friends who were with King when he was shot, Gonzales knocked a drink out of his hand and repeatedly Tasered him as he came out of a liquor store holding a soda and a bag of chips. As King staggered away, Gonzales shot him in the back through the lung and the heart.

The cops say it was a case of mistaken identity because King had a similar hair style and coloring as a murder suspect. Gonzales claims he shot King because he thought King was reaching for a gun.

Supporters of justice for King have been holding rallies at the office of Oakland's District Attorney from 4–6 p.m. on Thursdays demanding that Gonzales be indicted. On January 21, a contingent calling for justice for King marched in San Francisco's Martin Luther King Day parade. A mural in Gary King's memory has been painted at the site where he was killed.

"We want to let people know that this is important," Gary King, Sr., said in an interview on NBC. "It transcends Gary, and it's about all our families, and our children. The conduct of the police department has to be addressed aggressively."

For more information on this case, go to www.garykingjr.com.



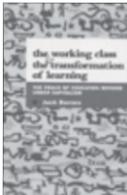
September 24 protest outside Oakland, California, City Hall demands justice for Gary King, Jr., a 20-year-old African American fatally shot in the back by a cop four days earlier.

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Malcolm X 1964: 'Revolution is like a forest fire'

Below is an excerpt from *By Any Means Necessary*, a collection of speeches and interviews by Malcolm X that is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for February. On March 19, 1964, shortly after leaving the Nation of Islam and forming the Muslim Mosque, Inc., Malcolm gave an interview to poet and music critic A.B. Spellman, which is excerpted below. Malcolm outlined his initial thinking on the formation of a new organization to fight for the rights of Blacks and his views on self-defense, nonviolence, and revolution. Copyright © Betty Shabazz and Pathfinder Press 1970. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

SPELLMAN: What is your program for achieving your goals of independence?

MALCOLM: When the black man in this country awakens, becomes intellectually mature and able to think for himself, you will then see that the only way he will become independent and recognized as a human being on the basis of equality with all other human beings, he has to have what they have and he has to be doing for himself what others are doing



Malcolm X at first rally of Muslim Mosque, Inc., March 22, 1964, at Harlem's Rockland Palace.

for themselves. So the first step is to awaken him to this, and that is where the religion of Islam makes him morally more able to rise above the evils and the vices of an immoral society. And the political, economic, and social philosophy of black nationalism instills within him the racial dignity and the incentive and the confidence that he needs to stand on his own feet and take a stand for himself.

SPELLMAN: Do you plan to employ any kind of mass action?

MALCOLM: Oh, yes.

SPELLMAN: What kinds?

MALCOLM: We'd rather not say at this time, but we definitely plan to employ mass action. . . .

SPELLMAN: If the Muslim Mosque, Inc., joined in a demonstration sponsored by a nonviolent organization, and whites countered with violence, how would your organization react?

MALCOLM: We are nonviolent only with nonviolent people. I'm nonviolent as long as somebody else is nonviolent—as soon as they get violent they nullify my nonviolence.

SPELLMAN: A lot of leaders of other organizations have said they would welcome your help but they qualify that by saying "if you follow our philosophy." Would you work with

them under these circumstances?

MALCOLM: We can work with all groups in anything but at no time will we give up our right to defend ourselves. We'll never become involved in any kind of action that deprives us of our right to defend ourselves if we are attacked.

SPELLMAN: How would the Muslim Mosque, Inc., handle a Birmingham, Danville, or Cambridge—what do you think should have been done?

MALCOLM: In Birmingham, since the government has proven itself either unable or unwilling to step in and find those who are guilty and bring them to justice, it becomes necessary for the so-called Negro who was the victim to do this himself. He would be upholding his constitutional rights by so doing, and Article 2 of the Constitution—it says concerning the right to bear arms in the Bill of Rights: "A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." Negroes don't realize this, that they are within their constitutional rights to own a rifle, to own a shotgun. When the bigoted white supremacists realize that they are dealing with Negroes who are ready to give their lives in defense of life and property, then these bigoted whites

will change their whole strategy and their whole attitude. . . .

SPELLMAN: What is your evaluation of Monroe?

MALCOLM: I'm not too up on the situation in Monroe, North Carolina. I do know that Robert Williams became an exile from this country simply because he was trying to get our people to defend themselves against the Ku Klux Klan and other white supremacist elements, and also Mae Mallory was given twenty years or something like that because she was also trying to fight the place of our people down there. So this gives you an idea of what happens in a democracy—in a so-called democracy—when people try to implement that democracy.

SPELLMAN: You often use the word revolution. Is there a revolution underway in America now?

MALCOLM: There hasn't been. Revolution is like a forest fire. It burns everything in its path. The people who are involved in a revolution don't become a part of the system—they destroy the system, they change the system. The genuine word for a revolution is Umwaelzung which means a complete overturning and a complete change, and the Negro revolution is no revolution because it condemns the system and then asks the system that it has condemned to accept them into their system. That's not a revolution—a revolution changes the system, it destroys the system and replaces it with a better one. It's like a forest fire, like I said—it burns everything in its path. And the only way to stop a forest fire from burning down your house is to ignite a fire that you control and use it against the fire that is burning out of control. What the white man in America has done, he realizes that there is a black revolution all over the world—a nonwhite revolution all over the world—and he sees it sweeping down upon America. And in order to hold it back he ignited an artificial fire which he has named the Negro revolt, and he is using the Negro revolt against the real black revolution that is going on all over this earth.

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Salute Dakota unionists' victory

Supporters of the labor movement everywhere welcome the victory scored January 25 by meatpacking workers in United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789 in South St. Paul, Minnesota. They beat back a company-supported union decertification drive by a nearly 2-1 vote. Their resounding victory at Dakota Premium Foods is a boost to all workers confronting unsafe line speed, back-breaking work, company abuse, and employer attacks on our living standards.

The success at Dakota is due to the fact that the ranks have repeatedly used their collective power and taken control of their own struggle. In June 2000, when the plant was nonunion, workers held a seven-hour sit-down strike to demand the company slow down the dangerously fast line speed and stop forcing employees to work while injured. The company backed off. Workers then launched an organizing drive for representation by the UFCW—and won. Then, after a two-

year fight, they won a contract.

At the time the contract expired last June, a company-backed petition was circulated to try to decertify the union. The bosses thought their unceasing efforts to undermine workers' confidence and solidarity would allow them to get rid of the union. Then they would have a freer hand to push back wages and job conditions even further. But the company didn't count on one thing—that pro-union workers would organize a campaign and fight back.

Now, because of what they accomplished, workers at Dakota are more confident to fight and to use their reinforced union power. At a time when the capitalists will use the threat of a recession to step up their attacks on our jobs, wages, benefits, and working conditions, the Dakota victory sends an important message to all working people: by organizing, it's possible to fight the bosses and win.

Padilla sentenced for 'terror conspiracy'

Continued from front page

which Padilla told Hassoun "It's gonna happen soon" and "over there." The prosecution alleged that when they discussed "playing football" or "eating cheese" they were actually talking about aiding "violent jihad."

Prosecutors had sought a life sentence against Padilla. In sentencing him to 17 years, Judge Maria Cooke said she based her "leniency" in part on the conditions that were imposed on him in the Navy brig. "Mr. Padilla was held in hard conditions, without a mattress, a Koran, books, a clock, entertainment, or interaction with relatives or

visitors," she said. "Even an attorney was denied him."

Padilla's lawyers had filed a motion for dismissal on the basis of "outrageous government conduct," which the court rejected.

The government claimed Padilla was treated humanely. However, it neither denied nor confirmed his detailed accounts of mistreatment. These included sleep and sensory deprivation, stress positions, exposure to noxious fumes and temperature extremes, threats of imminent execution, beatings, drugging, and manipulation of diet.

Meeting to celebrate life of Robert Simms

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Cuban Revolution.

Waters, who co-chaired the meeting, pointed to a 1971 issue of the *Young Socialist* magazine in which Simms wrote the text for a cartoon history of British Columbia. In it, said Waters, Simms explained "that what upset the colonizers the most about Native people was their underdeveloped sense of private property. It's done with humor and real histori-

cal insight."

A citizen of time

"I got to know Robert well during the leadership school that the SWP organized from 1980 to 1986, as the party was making a turn to get a majority of its members into the industrial unions," Waters said.

At the school, leaders of the international communist movement studied for a six-month period the writings of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the founders of the modern communist movement. A message received from Catharina Tirsén, on behalf of the Communist League in Sweden, described how immersed Robert became in these studies.

During a break from the school, Tirsén recounted, Simms "ran into comrades who asked him how everything was going. 'Oh,' he said, 'the Communist League just split,' referring to the time frame he was in, when the organization of Marx and Engels had been dissolved in 1852. "What?" one of the comrades, who was living in the present, in the late 1980s, exclaimed with surprise. "The Communist League in Britain?"

Steve Penner, a volunteer in the Pathfinder Print Project today, also spoke. He was executive secretary of the Communist League in Canada when Simms was assigned to lead the distribution of Pathfinder Books in 1988-91. "Twice a year Robert would get in his car to travel across the country to sell Pathfinder books. These efforts led to Pathfinder accounts in some 200 bookstores in Canada," Penner said.

Ben Joyce, a member of the Young Socialists national steering committee in New York, encouraged those present to look at the displays, "which depict the life of a real party person." His "in-it-for-the-long-haul approach" is an example to follow in building the communist movement, Joyce said.

"Without any hesitation, any qualifications of any kind, we can truly recommend Robert as an example to be emulated and admired to all the generations coming forward, now and in the future," said Jack Barnes in concluding his remarks.

In response to an appeal to contribute to a Robert Simms party-building fund, to continue the work of publishing Pathfinder books in French, participants at the meeting contributed more than \$9,100.

Florida campaign

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program begins with the common interests of working people worldwide.

Kennedy said the socialist campaign opposes imperialism's unfolding multi-theater war, from Iraq and Afghanistan to the Philippines. The purpose of the U.S. troops in Colombia, she added, is to defend imperialist interests against the struggles of working people in Venezuela and elsewhere in South America.

Kennedy also participated in a vigil at the Israeli consulate protesting the siege of Gaza and talked with activists there.

On January 28, students at Florida International University got a chance to meet Kennedy at the University Park campus in western Miami-Dade County. The socialists were not the only campaigners. Supporters of two Republican presidential candidates, Texas congressman Ron Paul and former New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani, were there as well.

One student, the son of Latin American immigrants, told Kennedy he was concerned with media coverage he had seen on police harassment of immigrants at the Texas-Mexico border.

"All of the Democratic and Republican candidates have anti-immigrant positions," Kennedy responded.

"Our campaign calls for the immediate, unconditional legalization of all immigrants," she said. "We celebrate the strengthening of the working class through the millions from other countries who have become part of our class here. We saw that strength at the massive May Day mobilizations of immigrant workers and their allies the past two years."

Gaza blockade

Continued from front page

map to peace" and has joined U.S.-sponsored negotiations with Tel Aviv.

In response to a suit filed by Palestinian and Israeli human rights groups to end the blockade, the Israeli government said it would supply industrial diesel fuel needed to run Gaza's main electrical power station but not enough to prevent power outages.

'Collective punishment'

The lack of fuel has meant 40 percent of Gaza's 1.5 million people are without running water. Untreated sewage is being dumped into the Mediterranean, according to United Nations reports. The Gaza enclave is dependent on Israel for 70 percent of its electricity.

The Israeli policy of "collective punishment" has made already intolerable conditions worse. Gaza bakers have stopped bread production for lack of flour or cooking fuel, reported Al Jazeera TV. Fewer meat and dairy products are available because there is no power for refrigeration. The price of meat doubled in 10 days, the TV station said.

The blockade of Gaza has resulted in a shortage of 88 essential drugs and 204 needed medical supplies, according to the World Health Organization. In Shifa hospital some 135 cancer patients cannot be treated due to lack of medications, the British-based relief group Oxfam said.

Moaiya Hassanain, a health ministry official in Gaza, said that because of the power shortages hospitals are having to choose between cutting electricity in the maternity ward, reducing heart surgeries, or closing operating rooms altogether.

Israel halted deliveries of food, fuel, and other supplies for four days in January. It said the action was in response to rocket attacks from Gaza on southern Israel.

Air strikes

Hamas responded January 23 by blowing up part of the Israeli-built border wall, allowing thousands of Palestinians to cross into Egypt from Gaza to purchase basic supplies.

A few days later Israeli warplanes bombed what it called installations of the Hamas armed wing, the al-Qassam Brigades. The strike occurred near the border town of Rafah, where the border wall had been blown up.

In addition to the economic restrictions, the Israeli military conducts routine air strikes and raids in Gaza. Five Palestinians were killed in an air strike on January 25. Another 7 Palestinians were killed and 10 wounded in three air strikes January 17. A Hamas health ministry official said 33 Palestinians had been killed in Israeli air strikes in three days.

Israeli defense minister Ehud Barak vowed that the airstrikes would continue and be expanded until Hamas stopped firing rockets into Israel. An aide to Palestinian president Abbas said the Israeli actions could undermine peace negotiations between the PA and Israel.

Abbas is attempting to take this opportunity to regain some control in Gaza by reestablishing a previous agreement between Tel Aviv, Cairo, the PA, and the European Union, under which the PA would patrol the border crossing from Gaza along with Egyptian border guards.

The Arab League foreign ministers are supporting the effort by Abbas to regain control of the border crossing. But Hamas security forces have begun patrolling the crossing with Egyptian border guards. A Hamas spokesperson said the organization cannot be left out of any new border arrangement.

"Their Transformation and Ours" in *New International* no. 12

An "exhaustion of revolutionary content marks the political evolution of petty-bourgeois and aspiring bourgeois leaderships of national liberation movements today. . . . Frustration and demoralization are bearing fruit in intensified factionalism."—\$16



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