

THE MILITANT

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SWP candidate for president Róger Calero Strengthen unions to fight bosses' attacks Socialist speaks at California campaign rally

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

SAN FRANCISCO—"At plant gates, mine portals, and in working-class districts, we often run into workers who say: 'We need a union. How do we organize one?'" said Róger Calero, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, at a September 25 campaign rally here. "We find increasing interest in the central demand of our platform, which is to support workers' right to organize unions to defend themselves from the bosses' assaults and to strengthen the labor movement to resist the continuing offensive by the employers and the two main parties of capitalism—the Democrats and Republicans."

At the event, held at a neighborhood YMCA near the socialist campaign hall on the edge of San Francisco's Mission District, organizers announced that the SWP had nominated Dennis Richter, a meat packer and member of the United Food and Commercial Workers, as its candidate for U.S. Senate in California at a state nominating convention earlier that day. Richter, who chaired the meeting, introduced the rest of the socialist slate in California.

"The ruling class has a one-point program," Calero said. "Through speed-up, lengthening the workday, and driving down real wages, the bosses are trying to increase the surplus value they are extracting from workers, to increase their profits."

Under the lash of intensifying capitalist competition, he said, "the employers need to increase the portion of the wealth work-

ers produce through our labor power that the bosses take from us. They go after our wages, benefits, and job and living conditions to shore up their declining profit rates. That's the source of all differentiation in the working class, of all divisions between employed and unemployed, old and young, men and women, immigrants and native-born," the socialist presidential candidate stated.

"Working people are reacting to these conditions. They are reacting to forced overtime, the extension of the workday, the work week, the work year, and their working life," Calero said. "They are reacting to speed-up on the job, two-tier wages, deteriorating health coverage or no medical benefits, unsafe working conditions, and assaults by the bosses on our dignity."

Workers face a grinding offensive both on and off the job, the socialist candidate continued. "As a result, workers are being pushed and they want to fight back. That's why millions want to organize unions or strengthen the ones they have."

While the labor movement continues to weaken, the struggle at the Co-Op mine in Huntington, Utah, is setting an example for workers who are struggling to defend themselves from the employers' attacks or who simply yearn to resist, Calero said. "The union-organizing struggle by these coal miners in Utah is a concrete example of the kind of battle that can be waged today," he stated. "This should be at the center of

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Haiti floods: a social, not a 'natural,' disaster Imperialist plunder is cause of deadly toll

BY ERIC SIMPSON
AND LAWRENCE MIKESH

MIAMI—Rains caused by Tropical Storm Jeanne have resulted in widespread damage in northwest Haiti, as well as Florida.

The death toll in Haiti has been astounding. At least 1,500 people have been confirmed dead in the city of Gonaives, and nearby smaller towns, and rural areas. Another 1,000 are missing, many of them presumed dead. An unknown number have been swept to the sea by the floods. About 250,000 people have been made homeless.

The reason for this devastation is not "natural." It mainly stems from the country's extreme deforestation as a result of imperialist domination. The toll has also been magnified by the lack of adequate housing, medical care, roads, transportation, communications, and other basic infrastructure. These conditions are the result of exploitation by the domestic capitalist ruling families and plunder by imperialist powers—above all Washington, Paris, and Ottawa.

Frequent flash floods are a worsening feature of Haitian life, as living conditions continue to deteriorate. About 3,000 Haitians perished after floods and mudslides in June in the border region between Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Only 1 percent of Haiti retains tree cov-
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'Immediate, unconditional U.S. aid to Haiti!' Says Martín Koppel, socialist candidate for U.S. Senate in N.Y.

BY PAUL PEDERSON

NEW YORK—"The rising death toll in Haiti, the thousands left homeless, and the threat of epidemics there after Tropical Storm Jeanne are not the result of a natural disaster. They are the result of imperialist oppression and exploitation, which has blocked economic development and led to deforestation. The Socialist Workers campaign calls for canceling Haiti's foreign debt, which the imperialist powers use to plunder the entire Third World. We demand that Washington send immediate aid with no strings attached. This disaster also speaks volumes for backing the right of oppressed nations to expand electrification, which is necessary for development, by any means, including the use of nuclear power."

This is how Martín Koppel, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in New York, opened his remarks while addressing a few dozen students September 22 at the Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) here. He took the microphone shortly after a member of the Haitian student club announced the formation of their organization. Students standing around the club's literature table had been discussing the solidarity effort under way in New York's Haitian communities.

SWP candidates had been invited by
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Pathfinder
supersaver
sale p. 6



Militant/John Brink

Róger Calero, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president (left), campaigns September 29 outside Tipatía store in Des Moines, Iowa. Four days earlier, the socialist candidate spoke at a campaign rally in San Francisco. He then joined Martín Koppel, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in New York, for speaking engagements at Stony Brook University in Long Island and campaigning in Manhattan's Garment District.

Utah miners: 'Bosses' lawsuit won't stop our fight for union' UMWA re-upping its support for miners Co-Op workers build Oct. 2 solidarity rally

BY PAT MILLER
AND ANNE CARROLL

PRICE, Utah—One year after being locked out and forced to strike, and three months after winning the battle to be reinstated on the job, Co-Op miners here are pressing ahead with their struggle to win representation by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). The mine near Hun-

tington, Utah, is run by C.W. Mining and is owned by the Kingstons. The workers, their families, and other supporters of the union-organizing fight are gathering October 2 at the UMWA hall in Price to celebrate the one-year anniversary of their struggle and show their resolve to win. At the rally, they will also discuss how to counter the latest attack by the Co-Op bosses.

On September 24, attorneys for C.W. Mining and the so-called International Association of United Workers Union (IAUWU), which miners say is a company union, filed a federal civil suit in the U.S. District Court in Utah against the UMWA, its officers, and 17 current and former Co-Op miners. In all, 120 organizations and individuals are named in the 76-page suit, accused of "unlawful labor practices" and "defamation."

"This company has taken advantage of the Co-Op miners for many years," said Bob Butero, UMWA Region 4 director, in response to the lawsuit. "Now they are suing these organizations for trying to help the miners. All of us who support the workers are there because we support justice."

Also named as defendants in the suit by the Kingstons are the *Salt Lake Tribune*, and eight of its editors and journalists who have reported on this labor struggle; the *Deseret Morning News* and five of its staff; the *Militant* newspaper, its editor, its web ad-
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'Militant' and SWP
also sued by the Kingstons

Defend freedom of speech!
Send funds to back defense
— See editorial on page 10

Meat packers at Minnesota Beef win union vote

BY CLAUDIO ZARATE
AND BOB SORENSON

BUFFALO LAKE, Minnesota—Workers at the Minnesota Beef Industries plant here voted 53 to 46 to join United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 789.

Local 789 won a groundbreaking victory in organizing Dakota Premium Foods in South St. Paul, Minnesota, two years ago and has been trying to organize other packing plants in the area. The vote at Buffalo Lake is the first victory in this struggle.

The September 24 vote here came less than five months after meat packers backing the union lost a previous representation election. Deteriorating conditions at the Minnesota Beef plant helped turn the tide, workers said. In addition, promises the bosses had made last spring of better pay and benefits if the workers rejected the union never materialized, union supporters pointed out.

"If we get injured or if we have to work light duty, we automatically get bumped to \$7 an hour," said Manuel Cespedes, a boning worker, in an interview here two
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Pathfinder books sell at Paris festival

BY JEAN-LOUIS SALFATI

PARIS—Supporters of Pathfinder Press had their most successful sales ever at the Fête de l'Humanité, getting out 220 books and pamphlets. The September 10–12 festival in a suburb of Paris is organized each year by *l'Humanité*, the newspaper of the French Communist Party.

An estimated 500,000 people attended the gathering, somewhat more than in recent years.

As in previous years at the festival, an international team of Pathfinder volunteers staffed a large and attractive booth within the Book Village that is part of the event. Team members came from Canada, France, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

The most popular Pathfinder title at the three-day festival was *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning*, with 19 copies sold. Other best sellers included: 18 copies of each of *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* and *The Second Declaration of Havana*; 13 each of *We Are Heirs of the World's Revolutions* and *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*, both by Thomas Sankara; and 10 copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*. All told, 96 of the books and pamphlets sold were part of the Pathfinder Supersaver Sale. (See ad on Page 6.)

"I'm not yet a communist but want to change this society because all this is too much injustice," said Christiane David, an office cleaner in Paris.

At first, she quietly listened to a discussion between someone opposed to the Cuban Revolution and a member of the Pathfinder booth team. Then, as the discussion ended, she asked about learning more about Cuba. "They seem to look after their workers in that country," she said. "Here they have no respect and this has to change. Give me something good to read; I like to read." She eventually bought *Capitalism's World Disorder* in French and issue number 5 of the Marxist magazine *Nouvelle Internationale* containing the article by Mary-Alice Waters titled, "Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution."

This worker's thirst for a better under-

standing of today's world, for learning more from fighters in Cuba and around the world, was expressed by a number of workers and youth who came by the table, one of the busiest and most political at the Book Village during the weekend. Pathfinder's large display of books and pamphlets was a magnet for those interested in discussing the lessons of 150 years of struggle by the working class internationally, and a scientific explanation of today's capitalist crisis and the way forward for working people.

Émeline Miegakanda, a college student majoring in English who is Black, passed by the table and stopped when she saw Malcolm X titles. After some discussion, she bought *By Any Means Necessary* by Malcolm X and the pamphlet *Revolution in the Congo*. Later on in the afternoon, she came back to deepen the discussion and purchased a copy of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* by Socialist Workers Party leader Jack Barnes.

Thibault, a student living in Denain, a working-class town in the north of France, had met Pathfinder during last year's Fête and came back to the booth this year. He purchased a three-volume set of Lenin's works in French. "After this purchase, I only have 10 euros left for today and tomorrow, but with these books, I should be alright," he said. "You're the only revolutionary table here because you're the only ones who sell books of revolu-

Thomas Sankara speeches now in Spanish

BY MIKE TABER AND LUIS MADRID

Pathfinder Press has just published a pamphlet in Spanish by Thomas Sankara, leader of the 1983–87 revolution in the West African country of Burkina Faso. *Somos herederos de las revoluciones del mundo* (We are heirs of the world's revolutions) contains five speeches by the Marxist revolutionary that address many of the burning questions facing workers and farmers in Africa and throughout the world today.

With this booklet, also available in Eng-

Scotland cosmetics workers on weekly strikes



Militant/Caroline Bellamy

QUEENSLIE, Glasgow, Scotland—Transport and General Workers Union members September 21 during one of their four two-day strikes in a fight over shift allowances and dignity on the job. The banner reads "1988–2004 Soapworks Dictators," referring to plant managers. The factory is owned by Body Shop, which sells "ethical beauty products." "Five years ago, we agreed to a five-year wage freeze to avoid threatened redundancies [layoffs]," said John White, a shop steward. "Now we are only asking what is our due."

—CAROLINE BELLAMY

tionists," he added.

While most of the 220 books sold were in French, 35 were in English, 12 in Spanish, and 2 in Farsi. Contacts were made

with three bookstores, including one from Bordeaux that specializes in jazz, and another that operates both in Paris and in the African country of Cameroon.

lish and in the original French, Pathfinder gives Spanish-speaking readers an entry into the political legacy of this outstanding internationalist leader.

But Sankara did not portray Africans simply as suffering victims. He repeatedly explained that ordinary men and women of Burkina were capable of becoming conscious actors on the world stage, fighting "to take charge of their own history."

In the October 1983 speech that opens this collection, Sankara outlines the character and goals of the popular revolutionary government that had risen to power two months earlier in what was then Upper Volta.

"The revolution has as its primary objective the transfer of power from the hands of the Voltaic bourgeoisie allied with imperialism into the hands of the alliance of popular classes that make up the people," he stated. "This democratic and popular power will be the foundation, the solid base, of revolutionary power."

In a speech to a February 1986 international conference on the environment, Sankara pointed to the causes of the wanton destruction of the environment throughout the world, particularly in the Third World: "This struggle to defend the trees and the forest is above all a struggle against imperialism. Imperialism is the arsonist setting

fire to our forests and savannah....

"Our struggle to defend the trees and the forest is first and foremost a democratic struggle that must be waged by the people," he said. "The sterile and expensive excitement of a handful of engineers and forestry experts will accomplish nothing!"

In October 1987 a counterrevolutionary military coup put an end to the popular revolutionary government in Burkina Faso, and Sankara was assassinated. One week before the overthrow of the revolution, Sankara had paid tribute to Ernesto Che Guevara, one of the central leaders of the Cuban Revolution. This is the concluding speech of the pamphlet.

"Fearless youth—a youth thirsty for dignity, thirsty for courage, thirsty for ideas and for the vitality that he symbolizes in Africa—sought out Che Guevara to drink from the source, the life-giving source that Che's revolutionary heritage represented to the world." He continued, "You cannot kill ideas; ideas do not die. That is why Che Guevara—an embodiment of revolutionary ideas, of self-sacrifice—is not dead."

Those words ring true today about Sankara as well, and point to the invaluable legacy contained in these speeches.

The pamphlet is available for \$7 and can be ordered through www.pathfinderpress.com. (See ad on Page 6.)

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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Yemen regime cracks down on 'terrorists'

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Over the last three months the government of Yemen has dealt devastating blows to groups it labels "terrorist." These include Young Believers, a split off from a pro-monarchist party in parliament whose leaders said they had modeled it after the Lebanese Hezbollah, and the Aden-Abyan Islamic Army that has alleged ties to al-Qaeda.

The administration of Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh has also cut government funding to religious schools run by the Muslim Brotherhood and shut many of them down, converting the facilities into public institutions. In addition, courts have recently handed down harsh sentences to more than a dozen individuals convicted of planning and carrying out the 2002 attack on the French oil tanker *Limburg* and the attack on the USS *Cole* two years before.

These steps have met the U.S. government's approval. On September 1, Washington dropped its weapons embargo against Yemen, filling orders from the Yemeni air force for fighter jets and C-130 planes to transport troops and weaponry. The White House had made frequent exceptions to the arms embargo over the last two years, as military cooperation between the two governments improved.

"We're updating our existing alliances and building new relationships based on security realities of this new century, and not the last century," U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld said September 10 at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. "Countries like Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Yemen, Pakistan, India—to cite but a few examples—are now partners in the fight against extremism in the Middle East and Central Asia."

In a trial in late August, one defendant was sentenced to death and 14 others to between 3 and 10 years in prison, after being convicted of carrying out the attack on the French tanker *Limburg*. In September, two men were sentenced to death and two others to up to 10 years in prison after a judge found them guilty of planning the October 2000 attack on the USS *Cole* which killed 17 U.S. sailors in the port of Aden.

Religious schools, many of which once functioned with government funding, have been stripped of such financial aid. Scientific institutes run by the Muslim Brotherhood, for example, used to get 6 billion Yemeni rials (\$32.4 million) from the Ministry of Education. The government cut their funding and converted them into public schools. It has also promised to shut down all schools that do not teach a standardized curriculum.

The *Yemen Times* estimated that some 35,000 "Islamic extremists" have left the country in face of this crackdown. Hundreds of others have been arrested. The police have regularized spying operations at mosques and religious institutions.

"We are not allies of America or collaborators," Yemeni president Saleh told a Beirut newspaper August 19, after taking some heat from his opponents for this crackdown. "But we cooperate with the Americans within the framework of the international community in order to combat the world's evil, terrorism."

On June 18, an anti-government insurgency broke out in the northern part of the country. Its leader, Hussein Bard Eden al-Mouthy, was a former member of parliament from the pro-monarchist Has Party. He said he modeled his group, Young Believers, af-



Getty Images

Photo released September 14 by Yemeni government shows Yemeni troops carrying body of Hussein al-Mouthy, leader of anti-government revolt in north Yemen.

ter Hezbollah in Lebanon. Al-Mouthy called the Yemeni president "a tyrant... who wants to please America and Israel." Supporters of al-Mouthy had staged a wave of demonstrations outside mosques in Yemen in the months leading up to the rebellion.

The Yemeni government sent at least 2,000 troops, along with tribesmen it has recruited from other regions, to crush al-Mouthy's rebellion. More than 600 soldiers and rebels reportedly died in the battles.

On September 10, Yemeni authorities announced that al-Mouthy had been killed by government forces. Eleven days later, the warring parties agreed to a cease-fire.

Washington slapped economic sanctions on Yemen in the early 1990s after the government in Sana'a voted against Washington's war resolution for the 1990-91 Gulf War in the United Nations Security Council. The U.S. government also imposed a ban on weapons sales to Yemen in 1994, when

a 10-week civil war broke out after a failed secession attempt in the southern part of the majority Arab country.

Over the past three years, however, as Washington has carried out two wars in the region in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, assault on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, the Saleh administration has increased its military collaboration with the U.S. government. In June, the Yemeni and Jordanian regimes became the first Arab governments to offer to send troops to join the U.S.-led occupation forces in Iraq, on the condition that the UN oversee the troops.

In early 2002, some 100 U.S. Special Forces troops arrived in Yemen to begin "counter-terrorism" operations. In November of that year, an unmanned Predator drone operated by the CIA fired a missile at a car in Yemen killing the six men inside. The CIA claimed the men were high-level al-Qaeda operatives.

In the spring of 2003, Washington established a military command at a former French base on the Gulf of Aden in the east African country of Djibouti, less than 50 miles from Yemen across the Gulf of Aden. The "Combined Joint Task Force—Horn of Africa" includes approximately 1,400 Marines, CIA operatives, and Special Forces soldiers. These troops are responsible for "counterterrorism" operations in Yemen and across the Horn of Africa—including Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, and Djibouti, as well as the coastal waters of the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and Indian Ocean. Since 2003, forces from that base have trained Yemeni government troops and conducted operations in the country.

French premier on Turkey: Stop 'river of Islam' into Europe

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—"Do we really want the river of Islam to enter the riverbed of secularism?" French prime minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin asked the European edition of the *Wall Street Journal*. Raffarin made these remarks as Turkey's prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan arrived in Brussels September 23 for talks with European Union (EU) officials over Ankara's request to join the EU.

"We are not doubting the good faith of Mr. Erdogan, but to what extent can today's and tomorrow's governments make Turkish society embrace Europe's human rights values?" Raffarin said.

While Raffarin raised the specter of a majority Islamic country infecting the EU's secularism, other bourgeois politicians and pundits in Europe have argued that membership by Ankara in the EU would allow Muslims to predominate against "Christendom." Many capitalist politicians in France, Germany, Austria, and other EU member countries have expressed similar views. In the European Union, only the British government, working together with Washington, has been campaigning adamantly for Ankara's admission. (See also "'Old Europe' balks at accepting Turkey in European Union; British, U.S. rulers campaign for entry" in last week's *Militant*.)

The strong opposition campaign against admitting Turkey notwithstanding, the European Union's enlargement commissioner, Guenter Verheugen, said it is likely that Turkey will be given the green light to begin talks on joining the EU, according to a September 23 Reuters report. Verheugen made the announcement following a meeting with the Turkish prime minister. Erdogan gave assurances that Ankara would fully meet demands by the EU to reform its laws to meet the EU-prescribed guidelines.

On September 25, the Turkish parliament voted to amend its penal code along lines demanded by the EU, dropping an earlier amendment proposed by a faction of the ruling party to include a law criminalizing adultery.

Following the meeting with Erdogan, Verheugen told a news conference in Brussels that "no outstanding obstacles remained on the table."

Verheugen's commission is preparing a report due October 6 on Turkey's membership in the EU. If the commission makes a

favorable recommendation, the EU parliament would vote December 17 on whether to accept the proposal.

Even by the best estimates, the negotiations for Turkey to enter the EU could take up to 10 to 15 years. Turkey's rulers have been trying to join the EU for 45 years. Their efforts began in 1959, when Ankara first applied for membership in what was then the European Economic Community, the EU's forerunner. Its population of 67 million, largely Muslim, roughly equals the combined total of the 10 countries admitted to the EU in December 2002.

French president Jacques Chirac and German chancellor Gerhard Schröder, who lead the main governments in what U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld has called "Old Europe," are officially in favor of Turkish membership in the EU. But they have been noticeably restrained in the face of thinly veiled anti-Muslim agitation by their subordinates against Turkey.

Reuters reported, for example, that French European Parliament member Jacques Toubon told a news conference that he opposes even beginning talks on Turkey's admittance to the EU because, "to bring Turkey into the European Union is not consistent with our concept of the European project and it is not good for Europe." Toubon joined French finance minister Nicolas Sarkozy and the leader of the opposition Christian Democratic Union in Germany in calling for a "special partnership" with Turkey instead of membership in the EU.

Toubon is a member of the Union for a Popular Movement (UMP), which is headed by Chirac. Reuters described Toubon as a Chirac ally. Distancing himself from the French president on the issue of Turkey's admittance, Toubon said, "That's him [Chirac] and this is me."

Sarkozy is also a leader of the UMP and hopes to succeed Chirac as French president, said Reuters.

Sarkozy said September 27 that Ankara cannot be allowed to join the EU without a referendum in France on the matter. He told La Chaîne Info television that his views were based on Turkey's size, rather than the fact it is a Muslim country. "Turkey alone represents the equivalent of the entry of the 10 new eastern European countries combined—that's quite something," he said. "Turkey means 71 million inhabitants—looking ahead to 2050, it will be 100

million, and given the new voting rules in the constitution, it would be the country with the most votes."

According to a recent poll published by the French daily *Le Figaro*, some 56 percent of adults in France oppose admitting Turkey to the European Union.

Prominent politicians in Denmark, among them prime minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, also threw cold water on the idea of beginning talks on Turkey's membership in the EU. Rasmussen stressed that the reform package must not only be approved

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Creditors resist Argentina debt write off

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—International bondholders, most of them in Europe and Japan, are resisting Argentina's demand to write off 75 percent of its \$100 billion in defaulted debts. The creditors are pressing for a smaller write-off. Any resumption of payments would mean that bondholders would cut their losses and begin to receive some returns on the debt, hoping to take advantage of the current economic upturn in Argentina.

The London-based *Financial Times* reported September 20 that most of the foreign bondholders seemed to be ready to accept a debt restructure plan in which the Argentine government would pay 30 cents on the dollar. The government of President Néstor Kirchner has said that it could not pay more than 25 cents on the dollar, suggesting that it would otherwise risk a social explosion.

After years of monthly reports of Argentine bonds that pay no interests, most insurance companies, pension funds, and mutual funds that purchased these securities have dumped them onto so-called vulture funds. These funds specialize in buying up "distressed debt." Along with individual bondholders, they now hold 80 percent of Argentina's debt, the *Financial Times* reported.

On September 17 the International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreed to a delay in payment on \$1.1 billion in Argentina's debt for one year while Buenos Aires works out its debt restructuring. The IMF, which is dominated by U.S. finance capital, said the Argentine government must still pay \$1.46

billion due in the next four months.

The international bondholders hope to take advantage of Argentina's economic upturn to recoup as much of their losses as possible. After a devastating recession that reached its low point in 2002, the country's gross domestic product rose 8.4 percent last year and exports increased sharply. Inflation, which had reached double digits, has decreased substantially. The official unemployment rate is now at 14.4 percent, down from more than 20 percent in 2002.

The economic squeeze has eased somewhat for the middle classes and better-off workers, widening the gap between these layers and the most pauperized sections of the working class, who are still feeling the long-term effects of the privatization of state-owned industries in the 1990s and the plant closings during the recent recession.

In December 2001 the Radical Party government of President Fernando de la Rúa resigned after Buenos Aires defaulted on its debt in face of a mounting depression, setting off a financial collapse and an eruption of working-class and middle-class protests. De la Rúa was replaced by Eduardo Duhalde of the Peronist party, a capitalist party that has the backing of the labor officialdom.

Duhalde's government broke the decade-long linkage of the Argentine peso to the U.S. dollar, precipitating a 70 percent devaluation of the national currency. Duhalde used his Peronist credentials as a "man of the people" to push through the devaluation and other measures devastating to working people, in order to restore the confidence of the capitalists. The current president, Kirchner, is also a Peronist.

Utah miners' fight

Continued from front page

ministrators, and 20 of its reporters who have written articles on the Co-Op struggle; the *Sun Advocate* and other local newspapers in Utah's Carbon and Emery Counties; the Socialist Workers Party; the Workers World Party; Jobs with Justice and its affiliate in Utah; the Roman Catholic Church and its Salt Lake City Diocese and Bishop George Niederauer, as well as Father Donald Hope of the Notre Dame Catholic Church in Price; the Utah AFL-CIO; the PACE international union; the National Organization for Women (NOW); and numerous other labor organizations, individual unionists, newspapers, and others who have expressed support of the Co-Op miners fight to win UMWA representation.

Most of the alleged defamations are factual presentations by workers and their backers on how their labor struggle has unfolded since last year.

How struggle unfolded

On Sept. 23, 2003, some 75 miners were locked out and fired by C.W. Mining, also known as the Co-Op mine, in Huntington. The owners, the Kingston family, have business holdings in six western states worth about \$150 million. The firings took place after a number of workers at the mine began organizing to bring in the UMWA in order to win better safety conditions, decent wages, and respect. Getting wind of this effort, the bosses at Co-Op began harassing union supporters, eventually firing one of the leaders of the effort. When workers at the mine protested this victimization, the company called the local sheriff and ordered the workers off the property, locking them out of their jobs.

The miners turned the lockout into a strike and picketed the mine. After nine-and-a-half months on the picket line, effectively limiting production at the Co-Op mine and winning broad support from the labor movement throughout the West, especially, and around the world, the miners won their jobs back. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ruled in May that the miners had been fired illegally and ordered C.W. Mining to allow the miners to return. Following an unconditional offer to return by the bosses, a number of the strikers got back on the job July 12.

Since then, Co-Op miners have said they are pressing their fight to be represented by the UMWA from inside the mine.

The NLRB also ordered that a union election be held between the UMWA and the IAUWU, which workers describe as a phony company outfit. The labor board held a hearing here in July to determine which employees of C.W. Mining would have a right to vote in such an election. Company lawyers argued that up to 100 people, many of whom are Kingston family members or close relatives, including managerial and office personnel, should be allowed to vote. The UMWA argued that such individuals are loyal to the company and have no right to vote in a union election. The NLRB has not issued a ruling yet on this matter nor has it set the date for the union election.

"It is going to be important for us to show we are united and we have widespread support for our fight," said Juan Salazar, one of the Co-Op miners who has been a leader of the fight for a real union at the mine in an interview. Salazar said that he and two other miners, Alyson Kennedy and Ricardo Chávez, recently did house visits with co-workers and other miners who used to work at Co-Op to build the October 2 rally. "We discussed with our co-workers and their families how the fight continues and why all of us should be there October 2," he said.

The miners will have a display at the rally featuring all of the major turning points in their struggle. They are also producing a T-shirt to raise funds and spread solidarity, which reads, "One Year in Struggle, September 22, 2003—Co-Op Miners Want the UMWA."

While Co-Op miners, UMWA members, union retirees, and others in this area have been spreading the word about the October 2 rally, unionists from other parts of the country are also making their way to the event. A delegation of 10 members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and the Service Employees International Union are traveling from Seattle for the October 2 event. Two other members from the ILWU in Tacoma, Wash-

ington, are also coming. A delegation from the International Union of Operating Engineers in Farmington, New Mexico, will be in Price. Other miners from Colorado have called to say they will be at the rally as well, miners report.

The Co-Op miners also said they have extended an invitation to the coal miners who have been thrown out of work at the three mines formerly owned by Horizon Coal Co. in West Virginia and Kentucky to be special guests at the solidarity rally.

Utah Jobs with Justice is organizing a caravan of unionists and other supporters of the Co-Op fight from Salt Lake City. The caravan is set to depart at 9:00 a.m., Saturday, October 2, from the AFL-CIO Labor Temple in Utah's capital city for the rally later that day.

Kingstons' suit against the union, others

The lawsuit by the Kingstons cites hundreds of supposedly defamatory statements made in the course of the last year. These include:

- Statements by Co-Op miners explaining how they were locked out and fired from their jobs because of their efforts to join the UMWA and defend a co-worker;

- Explanations by individual Co-Op miners of how they are paid between \$5.25 and \$7.00 an hour to mine coal when the prevailing wage in the mining industry is \$15 to \$20 an hour;

- Details of the unsafe working conditions miners are forced to work under. One such example is a statement by Co-Op miner Celso Panduro quoted in the *Militant* where he says, "The day we united against the owners, it was because we had hit a wall. Every time we had asked for better working conditions they told us to keep our heads down and keep working.";

- Statements by miners that the company does not provide affordable health insurance, and examples of when the bosses forced miners to work when they are injured;

- A statement by UMWA Region 4 director Bob Butero who said the fight at Co-Op "is not over until these workers are covered by a true labor agreement.";

- A statement by Pastor Donald Hope saying, "What is needed here over the long term is the development of a conscience on the part of C.W. Mining Co. They need to take the necessary steps to give their workers basic human rights."

The Kingston lawsuit asks for at least \$1 million in damages from the defendants, and an unspecified amount of punitive damages to be determined during trial. Furthermore, the Kingstons ask that the court enjoin all of the named defendants, and up to 200 unknown others who may be discovered during trial, from carrying out further actions in support of the miners, because of the injuries their actions inflict on C.W. Mining Co.

Defendants vow to fight back

Other defendants reacted to the suit with statements similar to Butero's. "We welcome the lawsuit because we know they can't win it," said George Nekels, of Utah Jobs with Justice. "And it just sheds more light on their activities. The more they are investigated, the more their questionable and unscrupulous treatment of the miners will be uncovered. The fact that it is a joint lawsuit between the attorney for the company union and the attorney for C.W. Mining is more evidence of collusion and conflict of interest. It again shows why no Kingston family member should be allowed to vote in the union election."

The IAUWU, the miners contend, does the bidding of the company and has failed to represent the workers in every dispute.

The filing of the lawsuit has already received media coverage, including articles in the *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret Morning News*, two of the defendants. The September 25 edition of *Deseret Morning News* reported that managing editor Richard D. Hall said "he was surprised by the paper's inclusion in the lawsuit, which he described as 'completely frivolous and without merit.'"

Norton Sandler, Socialist Workers Party campaign director, said the lawsuit "needs to be taken seriously. There is no reason to assume the courts will dismiss it out of hand. We consider outrageous the inclusion of Róger Calero, SWP candidate for president of the United States, as one of the defendants and we intend to join the min-



Militant

Co-Op miner Bill Estrada (right) addresses supporters at September 18 picket at Salt Lake City office of Carl Kingston, one of the lawyers who filed recent lawsuit by mine bosses. Co-Op miners Alyson Kennedy and Ricardo Chávez are at center.

ers, the UMWA, and others to fight it. Far from being intimidated and silenced by this lawsuit, Calero and his running mate Arrin Hawkins, and SWP candidates for public office across the United States, will continue to speak out wherever they go in defense of the unionists at the Co-Op mine, who will prevail in this battle to be represented by the UMWA."

"The lawsuit filed by the Kingstons against the Co-Op miners, their union, the *Militant* newspaper, other news organizations, church groups, and other supporters of the miners' fight is a serious attack on political rights," said John Studer, executive director of the Political Rights Defense Fund (PRDF), in a September 28 statement. PRDF has been providing support for the defense of political rights for more than 30 years. This includes the successful legal challenge to decades of harassment and disruption by the FBI and other government agencies against the Socialist Workers Party, and the successful defense last year of Róger Calero, associate editor of *Perspectiva Mundial* and staff writer for the *Militant*, against efforts by immigration authorities to deport him to his native Nicaragua.

"The goal of this attack is to divert supporters of the miners from publicizing their struggle, forcing them instead to devote resources, time, and attention to defending themselves," Studer continued. "In addition, the attack on the *Militant* and its reporters, as well as on other newspapers, is a challenge to freedom of the press and the paper's effort to tell the truth about the miners' struggle to unionists and others across the country and around the world. PRDF pledges to lend whatever support it can to the fight to turn back this attack and defend political rights."

Fighting suit can help union struggle

A number of Co-Op miners said they won't allow the lawsuit to slow down or stop their fight for a union.

"Many miners we talked to during house visits at first laughed about the Kingston lawsuit," said Co-Op miner Alyson Ken-

nedy. "It is so outrageous," they said. But we take it seriously and see it as another attempt to intimidate us and our supporters. It's going to backfire on the bosses, though. We will end up stronger, with more support, as a result of this action by the Kingstons and our fight against it."

Kennedy reported that a member of Amnesty International at the University of Utah called the Co-Op miners right after reading about the Kingston lawsuit. She wanted to know how they could help, and described plans by her group to organize a fundraising benefit for the miners and to organize students from the campus to come to the October 2 rally.

"We are not afraid of this lawsuit," Juan Salazar said. "Many of the miners we talked to said they will be there on October 2, even more so after hearing what the Kingstons had just done. The company needs to know we are not sitting down and waiting."

Bill Estrada, who is cited as a defendant and is quoted often in the bosses' lawsuit, said: "The Kingstons are going to find that the Co-Op miners and their supporters are proud of what we have done. The Kingstons have put together in their legal brief an honor roll of those who have sided with us in this struggle for justice."

The Co-Op miners said they urge supporters around the world to write to the NLRB asking that the labor board set a date for the union vote and reject the bosses' proposal to give the right to vote to supervisory personal and other Kingston family members and relatives brought in the mine to stack the deck against the UMWA.

Such letters can be sent to NLRB Region 27, attn. B. Allan Benson, director, and Nancy Brandt, hearing officer; at 600 17th Street, 7th Floor - North Tower, Denver, Colorado 80202-5433. Tel: (303) 844-3551; Fax (303) 844-6249.

For more information on the October 2 rally or to send a message of support or financial donation contact UMWA District 22 at 525 E. 100 S., Price, Utah 84501; Tel: (435) 637-2037; Fax: (435) 637-9456.

Teachers' strike in Iceland

Continued from back page

tract. Siggerdur Ólöf Sigurdardóttir, a teacher in the town of Kópavogur, explained this further in an interview. "We aren't allowed to tell how much we are getting from the wage pot," she said. "Solidarity was being undermined, and finally people were so angry that most were ready to strike."

Another issue is the number of classes per week and how much other work can be assigned to the teachers by the principal. "The main thing is to be able to prepare the classes adequately," two teachers from Seltjarnarnes told the *Militant* at the opening of the strike headquarters. "All kinds of extra tasks have been piling up in recent years. We are under a lot of pressure to cover everything."

The municipalities are pressing for more money from the national government to settle with the teachers. Prime Minister Halldór Ásgrímsson, who took office in mid-September, answered, "This is not our dispute." He added that it had been clear when the municipalities took over the schools from the state some years ago, that extra funding was out of the question.

Minister of Education Thorgerdur Katrín Gunnarsdóttir has not ruled out passing a law against the strike. She has played on worries over senior students dropping out of school and said she understands people who

think that teachers' wages should be decided by a government board. A few members of parliament have floated similar proposals.

The strike has brought forth divisions within the labor officialdom. Two days before the strike, Halldór Björnsson, chairman of Starfsgreinasambandið (SGS), a union federation, said, "We are deeply worried about this, but it's hard for us to interfere." The Confederation of Labor, to which SGS belongs, has collaborated with the employers and the government to "keep stability" and "keep inflation down" by agreeing to keep wage increases at about 2-3 percent.

Helgi Helgason, a spokesman for the Federation of Teachers, responded to similar remarks in an article in *Fréttablaðið*. "The interference of those who guard the low-wage policy of the so-called parties of the labor market suggests that the 'wage cop' is still its old self and ready to use any means to prevent a contract." In face of the big-business propaganda campaign, the strike is being widely debated among working people here. Some buy into the argument that the teachers demands are "excessive" and that they would harm other workers. But others are expressing solidarity. Sigríður Ágústsdóttir, a retired home-care worker, said, "I think it's good that they stand their ground. Our workload is always being increased."

SWP campaign key to success of sub drive

BY PAUL PEDERSON

With a little over a month left before the November 2 elections, socialist workers, young socialists, and other supporters of the 2004 Socialist Workers Party campaign, are gearing up to maximize support for the socialist ticket. This includes, above all, organizing speaking engagements for the SWP candidates on campuses, at debates with capitalist candidates, and elsewhere; soap boxing at street corners in working-class districts; shaking hands with workers and distributing the socialist campaign platform at plant gates and mine portals; and doing media work.

Selling subscriptions to the *Militant* and its Spanish-language sister monthly magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, along with books on revolutionary politics like those advertised as part of the Pathfinder super saver sale (see ad on page 6), is a complementary task to campaigning for the socialist slate.

To facilitate these efforts, and taking into account the goals adopted by distributors in local areas and their performance the first four weeks of the sub drive, the *Militant* editors have lowered the international target to 2,300 *Militant* subscriptions. With this adjustment, campaigners can go out confident that they are shooting for a realizable goal. Campaigners are making plans to make maximum use of

an October 2-10 target week to push ahead in the international drive to expand the readership of the socialist campaign newspapers.

Readers from about a dozen cities sent in reports last week describing how they are taking advantage of campaigning for the socialist candidates to sell revolutionary literature.

"I wish you luck on your campaign," a coal miner at the Hobet mine near Charleston, West Virginia, told Brian Taylor as he stopped to speak with him outside the mine entrance on September 25. Taylor, a coal miner in southwestern Pennsylvania, is the SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in that state.

"I buy this paper every time you guys come out," the West Virginia miner told Taylor, as he picked up a copy of the *Militant* and a statement issued by the socialist campaign headlined "Support Horizon miners' fight to maintain health care and pensions! Support their right to a union!"

Over the September 25-26 weekend a team of campaign supporters from Pittsburgh and Cleveland visited several mines in the Charleston area that were formerly owned by Horizon Natural Resources.

On September 24, the Cannelton mine in Fayette County, now owned by Massey Energy, shut its doors, laying off 255 miners. That mine and six others organized by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) were sold off by Horizon. The pensions and medical benefits of 3,300 miners and retirees connected to these mines were put on the chopping block when a federal bankruptcy judge issued a ruling granting Horizon bosses the right to throw out the provisions in the union contract on pensions and medical care. Coal miners with 20-30 years in the mine stand to be left empty-handed.

Twenty-eight miners bought copies of the *Militant* at that mine. After visiting four mine portals in the area, the



Militant/Tony Lane
Romina Green, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in Ohio, talks to miner at Pinnacle Mine, owned by bankrupt Horizon Natural Resources, in West Virginia September 25.

socialist workers sold the socialist paper to a total of 60 miners. Three signed up to subscribe.

In Washington, D.C. SWP vice-presidential candidate Arrin Hawkins attended a September 28 protest there by farmers fighting for land and against systematic racist discrimination by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) against farmers who are Black. Nine farmers signed up to subscribe to the *Militant*.

In Houston, campaign supporters are gearing up for a campaign visit by Hawkins in the coming week.

"We've had quite a week in Houston," reported Brian Williams. "We visited Tulane University in New Orleans last weekend [September 25-26] and our campaign table was busy the whole day. Arrin Hawkins is scheduled to speak at Tulane on October 2. Twenty students signed up to meet her. Six students bought subscriptions to the paper at the campus. We sold two more at a gathering that night to celebrate getting the SWP ticket on the Louisiana ballot.

"Several students wearing Kerry T-shirts stopped by the table and picked up campaign literature," Williams continued. "One, who told us he had volunteered to help register students to vote, picked up a dozen copies of the campaign handout to give to his friends." Williams said that the weekend before, the socialist campaign got a warm response at a Palestinian film festival held at the Southern Methodist University in Dallas. Participants snapped up 37 books and pamphlets and 13 subscribed to the *Militant*.

Militant/Perspectiva Mundial					
Fall Subscription Drive					
Aug. 28–Nov. 7, 2004: Week 4 of 10					
Country	Militant			PM	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold
SWEDEN	30	20	67%	5	1
ICELAND	25	16	64%	2	0
NEW ZEALAND					
Auckland	45	20	44%	1	0
Christchurch	35	15	43%	1	0
N.Z. total	80	35	44%	2	0
AUSTRALIA	55	21	38%	8	1
UNITED KINGDOM					
Edinburgh	25	10	40%	2	0
London	50	14	28%	12	1
UK total	75	24	32%	12	1
UNITED STATES					
Craig, CO	50	31	62%	20	2
Houston	75	44	59%	20	3
Seattle	50	29	58%	10	0
Birmingham	40	20	50%	8	1
Omaha	55	23	42%	45	7
Price, UT	50	20	40%	20	10
Twin Cities	105	41	39%	40	11
Detroit	40	14	35%	10	3
Des Moines	65	22	34%	25	9
Newark	90	31	34%	25	11
Atlanta	80	26	33%	20	5
Tampa	40	13	33%	10	3
Washington	115	37	32%	21	2
New York	180	55	31%	70	19
NE Pennsylvania	55	16	29%	15	9
Pittsburgh	65	18	28%	4	1
Los Angeles	150	41	27%	50	24
Philadelphia	95	25	26%	10	0
Boston	100	26	26%	40	5
San Francisco	100	25	25%	25	3
Chicago	100	20	20%	40	11
Cleveland	35	6	17%	8	3
Miami	100	9	9%	50	0
U.S. total	1840	592	32%	586	142
CANADA					
Montreal	32	12	38%	12	2
Toronto	85	22	26%	18	4
CANADA total	117	34	29%	30	6
14-day campaign*	-	179	-	-	31
Int'l totals	2190	921	40%	664	182
Goal/Should be	2300	920	40%	550	220

*14 days of campaigning in New York Aug. 21–Sept. 3 at protests and events leading up to and during the Republican convention

IN THE UNIONS				
	Militant		PM	
	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
AUSTRALIA				
AMIEU	8	2	25%	
CANADA				
UFCW	6	2	33%	3
UNITE HERE	2	0	0%	1
Total	8	2	25%	4
NEW ZEALAND				
MWU	2	1	50%	
NDU	2	0	0%	
Total	4	1	25%	
SWEDEN				
Livs	2	0	0%	1
ICELAND				
Hlif	2	1	50%	
Efling	2	0	0%	
Total	4	1	25%	
UNITED STATES				
UFCW	135	47	35%	150
UNITE HERE	50	15	30%	40
UMWA	30	5	17%	15
Total	215	67	31%	205

AMIEU—Australasian Meat Industry Employees' Union; Livs—Food Workers Union; MWU—Meat Workers Union; NDU—National Distribution Union; UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA—United Mine Workers of America. Hlif—Union of Unskilled Workers in Hafnarfjörður. Efling—Union of Unskilled Workers in Reykjavík.

Turkey's entry into European Union

Continued from Page 3

by Turkey's parliament but "must be put into practice in Turkish society" before the talks could begin.

"It's important not to go soft on the criteria right now," added Gitte Seeburg, a leader of the conservative Christian Democrats in Netherlands, and a member of the EU parliament.

While attending a North Atlantic Treaty Organization meeting in June in Ankara, U.S. president George Bush pressed for Turkey's admittance to the EU. Chirac became furious in response to this remarks, accusing Bush of meddling in European affairs.

Turkey, a NATO member, has an army larger than any of the EU members and its military budget is exceeded only by Britain, France, Germany, and Italy. Turkey has blocked with Washington to prevent the imperialist governments of "Old Europe" from developing an EU military force that could be effective independently of U.S.-led and -dominated NATO.

The admittance of Turkey, still a largely agricultural country, into the EU would also exacerbate one of the deepest conflicts within the European Union—the so-called Common Agricultural Policy. Under this policy,

farm products of EU member states are subsidized. The subsidies primarily benefit large capitalist farmers. Big agribusiness dumps these cheap agricultural goods onto the markets of semicolonial countries, destroying the livelihoods of peasants in those countries.

The ongoing debate over the extent and character of government farm subsidies that give a competitive edge to agricultural products from the strongest imperialist countries within the EU has led to sharp exchanges between London and Paris in particular. In one such clash, Chirac postponed a traditional end-of-the-year meeting with British prime minister Anthony Blair.

In 2002, the unequal application of the subsidy policy between the wealthy imperialist nations in the EU and the others became a stumbling block for 10 governments, mainly from eastern Europe, which had applied to join the EU but were told they would not receive the same subsidies as current members.

They held out for a larger share and, in the end, accepted a package totaling \$42 billion between 2004 and 2006. That amount was only 25 percent of what other member states are entitled to. Parity is not forthcoming until 2013, at best.

Minnesota meat packers win union

Continued from front page

days after the union vote. "One knife worker was pregnant, but she could not afford to take the pay cut she would get while on light duty. So she kept on working her regular job, which is very difficult. When she finally had her baby, it turned out that she also had a hernia."

"We are here for work, not to be treated like animals," said another boning worker who asked that his name not be used. "The line speed has gotten faster and faster. We kill more than 300 cows in less than six hours. That is too fast and we can't live on pay of just six hours a day. It's for the company's benefit that we kill more cows and they get more money. We just have three demands: better treatment, better pay, and more hours."

Buffalo Lake, a town of less than 800, is located about an hour and a half west of St. Paul. There are around 125 workers at the Minnesota Beef plant.

"This victory is testimony to how strong these workers are," Local 789 organizer Bernie Hess told *Militant* reporters. "This was made possible because of the unity they showed."

Unionists lost the previous vote on May 5 by a 67 to 32 margin. Many of the workers said the company had tried to intimidate them in the period leading up to that vote. According to union officials, management said it would call the police to check the documents of workers, most of whom are immigrants from Mexico, raising the

threat of deportations. The union appealed the vote and the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ruled that the company had to hold a second vote.

The success at Minnesota Beef puts Local 789 in a better position to organize the 1,000 poultry workers who are also fighting for a union in the nearby town of Willmar, said Hess.

The union has so far failed to organize the workers at the Jennie-O turkey processing plant there.

"Many workers have friends and relatives who work in all these different plants and they all talk to each other," the UFCW organizer added. This also played a part in the election victory in Buffalo Lake.

"A lot of the workers also know people who work at Long Prairie Packing and at Dakota Premium Foods," Hess said. At both of these plants the workers have won unions. "The company said that if the Minnesota Beef workers got the union, they would be forced to pay \$25 a week in union dues. But when one worker saw the paycheck of his friend who works at Long Prairie, he saw that they only pay \$6 for dues."

The union victory at Dakota Premium Foods came after a two-year-long struggle that began with a seven-and-a-half hour sitdown strike in the company cafeteria in June 2000. It took workers one year to force a union election and win the vote, and one more year to force the company to sign a contract with UFCW Local 789.

U.S. aid to Haiti now!

Continued from front page

BMCC students to campaign at a Club Info Fair, where student groups set up tables and passed out literature about their activities. They spent all afternoon talking to youth who came by the table—distributing campaign literature, selling the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and books, and inviting them to upcoming campaign activities.

During the program, in which members of the student government and campus clubs spoke, the SWP senatorial candidate was invited to say a few words. Koppel pointed to the drive to cut wages, lengthen the workweek, speed up production, and roll back social gains that the employers and their twin parties are carrying out.

To defend themselves from this assault, many workers are seeking to use their unions or to organize unions, and the Socialist Workers candidates support workers' right to do so, he said.

"Whether Republican Bush or Democrat Kerry wins the elections, we can be sure that the next administration is going to take the next steps in assaulting working people at home and waging wars of plunder abroad," Koppel said. "The Socialist Workers campaign offers a working-class alternative to these two parties of imperialist war and exploitation. Our campaign gives you a reason to vote for something you support, not vote against someone you hate." He pointed to the example of the Cuban Revolution, where workers and farmers took political power and transformed society in the interests of the majority.

Koppel said that the Socialist Workers campaign platform starts with the world. He pointed out that the situation in Haiti is not unique. More than 2 billion people in the world, he said, one-third of humanity, don't have access to any modern form of electricity. That's why the socialist campaign supports the efforts of the power-poor semi-

colonial countries to acquire and develop the energy sources necessary to expand electrification, a prerequisite for economic and social advances. "We also call for exposing the drive by Washington and its allies to prevent the nations oppressed by imperialism—such as Brazil, Iran, India, and north Korea—from developing the sources of energy they need, including nuclear power," he stated.

A number of youth who heard the talk came over to the campaign table to meet the socialists. "I really agree with your message. I'd like to find out more about this," said one student, Katrice.

Afterward, Estevan Nembhard, a member of the National Council of the Young Communist League (YCL), affiliated with the Communist Party USA, took the mike and took sharp issue with the SWP candidate. "How can someone call himself a socialist, say he is for the working class, and tell people not to vote? You got to get Bush out of office," he said, arguing that voting for Kerry was the duty of everyone who supports progress.

In subsequent discussion between Nembhard, BMCC students, and Arrin Hawkins, the Socialist Workers candidate for vice president of the United States, the YCL leader claimed that V.I. Lenin, the central leader of the Bolshevik revolution, had argued that revolutionaries had to be "with the masses" and that today this meant supporting the Democratic Party. Anyone who didn't do so was lending support to the "fascist" Bush, he said.

In response, Hawkins asked for the microphone. She described how the U.S. rulers use the Democratic and Republican parties

to gang up on working people. Revolutionary leader Malcolm X had explained that the U.S. rulers "always show you a wolf to get you to run into the hands of the fox," she said.

"If you do vote, don't waste it on a vote for the Democrats or Republicans. Vote for the working-class alternative, the Socialist Workers ticket."

Hawkins said that the Bush administration is not "fascist," any more than the previous Clinton administration was "liberal." Both of the two main capitalist parties, she said, have shifted to the right and are carrying out the program of the ruling class,

the top priority of which is to squeeze more profits out of the labor of working people. "With either the Democrats or the Republicans, working people lose," the socialist vice-presidential candidate said.

When students nodded in agreement as Hawkins spoke, socialist campaigners approached them and invited them to come to the table to continue the discussion. After the end of the club fair, a debate among students continued at the student government offices.

In informal discussion with students, Hawkins also pointed out that, unlike what Nembhard said, Lenin forged the Bolshevik party to lead the workers and peasants of Russia in a revolution to take power out of the hands of capitalist exploiters. The October 1917 Russian Revolution, she said, was also carried out against another "socialist" party, the Mensheviks, who were for class collaboration with the parties of the bourgeoisie.

After a successful day of campaigning, the socialists met with students to pursue further opportunities for the SWP candidates to speak on campus.

The previous week a BMCC student who is a *Militant* subscriber interviewed Koppel for *Voice of the Voiceless*, a student paper.

She also helped arrange for the socialist campaigners to be invited to participate in the campus fair.

Koppel is taking a leave from the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* staff for a few weeks to campaign full-time. Socialist Workers campaigners in New York are putting together a plan of speaking engagements, media interviews, campaigning at plant gates and in workers districts, and teams to Buffalo and other cities in the state.

On October 11, Koppel will take part in a debate with two other senatorial candidates, David McReynolds of the Green Party and Donald Silberger of the Libertarians. The debate will take place at 7:30 p.m. at the State University of New York in New Paltz, about an hour and a half north of New York City.



Militant/Paul Pederson

Arrin Hawkins (center), Socialist Workers Party vice-presidential candidate, at campaign table during September 22 "Club Info Fair" at Borough of Manhattan Community College in New York City. Dorothy Kolis (observed behind Hawkins), SWP candidate for Congress in New York's 16th District, and Martin Koppel, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in New York (with tie), joined Hawkins at the fair at the invitation of the BMCC student government.

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The SWP 2004 ticket is on ballot in:

- 1) Colorado
- 2) District of Columbia
- 3) Florida
- 4) Iowa
- 5) Louisiana
- 6) Minnesota
- 7) Mississippi
- 8) Nebraska
- 9) New Jersey
- 10) New York
- 11) Utah
- 12) Washington
- 13) Wisconsin
- 14) Vermont

Calero in California

Continued from front page
our campaigning in California.”

Calero said the proposals for individual retirement and health-care accounts recently promoted by the Bush administration are part of preparing the way for a stepped-up offensive by Democrats and Republicans against Social Security, Medicare, and other social conquests of working people. “The capitalists view us as a problem,” he said. “They say we are living too long. This is part of their effort to tear apart the working class, our solidarity. We can fight against this offensive only by joining workers and farmers resisting the effects of the capitalist crisis and presenting a program that has at its center active support for the struggle of the working class to organize unions, labor’s basic defense organizations.”

At the meeting, the socialists also announced they are organizing to collect the required signatures to obtain official write-in status for Richter, as well as Calero and his running mate Arrin Hawkins. Election laws across the United States are crafted by state legislatures largely to maintain a ballot monopoly for the Democrats and Republicans. The California law is among the most onerous, requiring any other party to collect 77,389 signatures from registered voters to qualify for the state ballot, unless that party polled at least two percent of the vote in the previous election.

About 40 people attended the September 25 meeting. The event was organized

in conjunction with a California state SWP nominating convention, which approved Richter’s campaign for the U.S. Senate and mapped campaign activities for the next five weeks.

Richter chaired the public meeting. “We will take the campaign to college campuses, factory gates, and street corners in working-class neighborhoods in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and other cities,” Richter said. “We will look for every opportunity to speak to the media.”

As part of his campaign, Richter said, he will be joining the October 2 rally in Price, Utah, to extend his solidarity and join with coal miners in celebrating the one-year anniversary of their struggle to win representation by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) at the Co-Op mine there.

Bill Estrada, a Co-Op miner, also addressed the campaign event, as did Chessie Molano, the SWP candidate for Congress in the state’s 8th District, and Connie Allen, the SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in Washington State.

“I support the Socialist Workers Party campaign because it offers a voice for working people,” said Estrada. “This is the working-class alternative I am fighting for.”

The coal miner noted that the socialist campaign’s support for workers’ right to organize unions is very important. Estrada said Calero is the only presidential candidate “who is defending the labor movement from the continuing offensive by the employers.



Militant/Frank Forrestal

Dennis Richter, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in California, talks to United Farm Workers member Roberto Garcia at September 26 Progressive Festival in Petaluma.

The majority will vote for either Bush or Kerry, but the only alternative worth fighting for is the Socialist Workers ticket.”

Estrada encouraged those present to come with fellow unionists to the October 2 one-year anniversary rally in Price. He said he was glad to hear that Calero was planning to attend the event. “Calero is the only presidential candidate who has visited the Co-Op miners and given us solidarity,” said Estrada.

The Co-Op miners returned on the job after a strike that lasted almost 10 months, Estrada pointed out. The workers’ effort to win representation by the UMWA, however, is far from over, he noted. “We forced the National Labor Relation Board to rule that the Co-Op bosses illegally fired us. We got our jobs back in July, but ongoing solidarity is crucial to the next stages of the fight to win unionization. We face an everyday battle on the job.”

During the campaign meeting, Richter introduced the California SWP slate of candidates running for U.S. Congress. In addition to Molano, these include Mark Gilsdorf in the 21st C.D. in San Francisco, Seth Dellinger in the 33rd C.D., Wendy Lyons in the 34th C.D., and Naomi Craine in the 35th C.D. The latter three are districts in the Los Angeles area.

In her remarks to the meeting, Molano appealed for messages to be sent to the mayor of Hazleton, Pennsylvania, protesting the September 11 firebombing of the Socialist Workers campaign hall there (see article on page 10).

Supporters of the socialist ticket in California raised \$1,800 at the meeting toward their goal of \$3,000 to finance the SWP 2004 campaign.

SWP campaign director: ‘Let’s not lose a day till Nov. 2’

BY DOUG NELSON

“There are five weeks to go from today until the November 2 election. Let’s not lose a day in taking advantage of the openings that are available everywhere to campaign for the SWP candidates!” said Norton Sandler, national director of the Socialist Workers Party campaign, in a September 28 letter to campaign organizers around the United States.

“In every area, we should be pressing right now to arrange speaking engagements on campuses and elsewhere, and media interviews for both local SWP candidates and the presidential ticket,” Sandler continued. “We should be soap boxing at busy areas in working-class districts, including transportation centers and factory gates, where appropriate.”

This includes making sure that every Militant Labor Forum between now and the election has a campaign focus, Sandler said. Militant Labor Forums are public meetings organized in cities and towns across the country on Friday nights by supporters of the campaign newspaper, the *Militant* and its Spanish-language sister publication *Perspectiva Mundial*.

“Working-class candidates have no equal time on TV, radio, or other media, even where we are on the ballot,” Sandler pointed out. “We don’t have millions of dollars to buy expensive commercials on television to get out the message of our campaign. So we must use every opportunity for candidates to

speak, including the weekly Militant Labor Forums. This is also a time when campaign directors in states across the country can be spokespersons for the SWP ticket,” he said.

Sandler pointed to what Róger Calero and Arrin Hawkins—the socialist candidates for president and vice-president—had done the previous three days as examples that can be emulated everywhere. This included campaigning by Calero in California (see front-page article) as well as at Stony Brook University in Long Island, New York. In the latter example, Martín Koppel, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in New York, joined Calero in speaking at three classes, at the invitation of a faculty member. A reporter for National Public Radio accompanied the socialist candidates and their supporters the whole day, which began with campaigning at a building full of garment factories in Midtown Manhattan. As we go to press, Calero was campaigning in the Des Moines, Iowa, area (see SWP candidates’ schedule below).

On September 28, Hawkins campaigned at a farmers’ rally in Washington, D.C., to demand an end to anti-Black discrimination they have suffered at the hands of U.S. government agencies (see article on page 10). She then traveled to Tampa, Florida, and was scheduled to campaign next in New Orleans, Houston, and Cleveland.

Two candidates for U.S. Senate, Martín Koppel in New York and Dennis Richter in California, have taken several weeks off

work to campaign full-time.

Public meetings, like Militant Labor Forums, offer a chance to have a back-and-forth discussion on how the socialist campaign addresses vital questions in world politics, and to explain and popularize the party’s platform. “Having local SWP candidates mix it up by speaking at different campaign centers, beyond their city or state, will also serve to strengthen each candidate’s presentations by drawing on various experiences in different areas of the country,” Sandler said.

Sandler added that SWP candidates and their supporters should be talking to workers and distributing campaign literature regularly in front of factory gates and mine portals over the next month, along with selling the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* and books on revolutionary politics.

In another interview, *Militant* editor Argiris Malapanis said that all local organizers of the Socialist Workers campaign should make sure that photos are taken of SWP candidates in action and sent to the *Militant* every couple of days. “In addition to articles giving a feel for each presentation by the socialist candidates and the exchanges with their audiences, pictures are vital for getting across what the socialists are doing,” he said. “No other paper will give such prominent and regular coverage of the SWP campaign for the next five weeks. Let the photos and articles roll!”



Militant/Julian Santana

Róger Calero speaking at September 25 campaign rally in San Francisco.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY 2004 CAMPAIGN SCHEDULE

Roger Calero, President

Sept. 29–30	Des Moines, Iowa
Oct. 2–3	Price, Utah
Oct. 5–6	Minnesota
Oct. 7	Omaha
Oct. 8	St. Louis
Oct. 9	Tampa
Oct. 10–11	Miami
Oct. 12–13	Atlanta
Oct. 14	Houston
Oct. 15–17	Alabama and Mississippi

Arrin Hawkins, Vice President

Sept. 29	Washington, D.C.
Sept. 30–Oct. 1	Tampa, Florida
Oct. 2	New Orleans
Oct. 3–4	Houston
Oct. 5–6	Cleveland
Oct. 7–8	Chicago
Oct. 9	Wisconsin
Oct. 10–11	Detroit
Oct. 12–13	Pittsburgh
Oct. 14–15	Boston

Dennis Richter, U.S. Senate, California

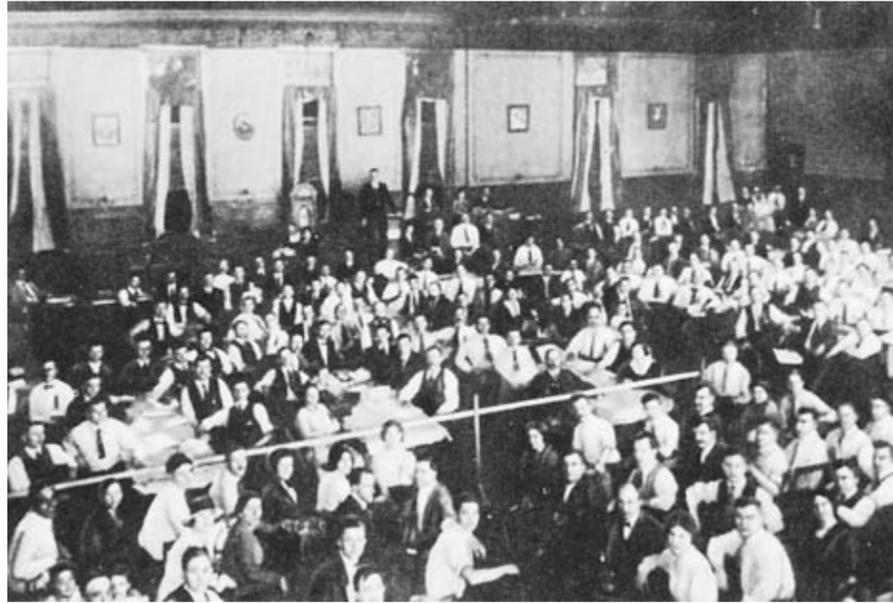
Oct. 2	Co-Op miners Anniversary event, Price, Utah
Oct. 4	Napa Valley College “Rock the Vote” campus meeting
Oct. 5	U.C. Berkeley, plantgate campaigning at SF meatpacking plant
Oct. 6	U.C. Santa Cruz
Oct. 7	Campus meeting at SFSU, campaigning with United Airlines workers
Oct. 8	Campaigning at Longshore hall in San Francisco
Oct. 9	Campaign event at Militant Labor Forum hall in San Francisco

The first 10 years of American communism

Below is an excerpt from *The First Ten Years of American Communism*, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September. It tells the story of the early years of the effort to build a proletarian party modeled on the Bolshevik leadership of the Russian Revolution. The author, James P. Cannon, was a founding member of the Communist Party of the United States following the Russian Revolution, and its delegate to the Executive Committee of the Comintern and its Fourth Congress. In the

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

excerpt below, "The 'American question' at the Fourth Congress," Cannon describes the role played by the Russian leaders of the Comintern in resolving political differences among the various currents that were locked in factional battle over the way forward to building the party. L.E. Katterfeld and Rose Pastor Stokes led the current that said the party must remain an underground organization. They opposed the group led by Max Bedacht, Arne Swaback, Cannon and others who wanted to liquidate underground functioning and take advantage of wider opportunities in the United States to expand communist political work.



Founding convention of the Communist Party, held in Chicago, September 1919.

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BY JAMES P. CANNON

Soon afterward, the formal sessions of the American Commission of the Fourth Congress were started. The Russians showed their decided interest in the question by sending a full delegation—Zinoviev, Radek and Bukharin—to the Commission.

Nothing was hurried. There was a full and fair debate, in a calm and friendly atmosphere. Nobody got excited but the Americans. Katterfeld and I were given about an hour each to expound the conflicting positions of the contending factions. Rose Pastor Stokes, Bedacht and others were called upon to supplement the remarks of the main reporters on both sides. A representative of the seceding underground leftist group was also given the floor.

Then the big guns began to boom. First Zinoviev, then Radek and then Bukharin. The noncommittal attitude they had previously shown in our personal conversations with them, which had caused us such apprehension, was cast aside. They showed a familiarity with the question which indicated that they had discussed it thoroughly among themselves. They all spoke emphatically and unconditionally in sup-

port of the position of the liquidators.

Their speeches were truly brilliant expositions of the whole question of legal and illegal organization, richly illustrated from the experience of the Russian movement. They especially demonstrated that the central thesis of the underground leftists, namely, that the party had to retain its underground organization as a matter of principle, was false. It was, they explained, purely a practical question of facts and possibilities in a given political atmosphere.

They especially castigated the tendency to transplant mechanically the Russian experiences under the Czar, where all forms of political opposition were legally proscribed, to America which still retained its bourgeois democratic system intact and where the Workers Party was already conducting a satisfactory communist propaganda without legal interference. Illegal underground work, said Zinoviev, is a cruel necessity in certain conditions; but one must not make a fetish of it, and resort to costly and cumbersome underground activities, when legal possibilities are open. He told an amusing story of an old Bolshevik underground worker who insisted on carrying her old false passport even after the Bolsheviks had taken over the state power.

The result of the discussion in the American Commission was the unani-

mous decision: (1) to legalize the party; (2) to recommend that the party advocate and work for the construction of a labor party based on the trade unions; and (3) to appeal to the seceding leftists to return to the party, assuring them a welcome and rightful place in its ranks.

That was one time when a great problem of American communism, which it had not been able to solve by itself, was settled conclusively and definitely by the Comintern for the good of the movement.

All subsequent experience demonstrated the absolute correctness of this decision. It is appalling to think what would have been the fate of the American communist movement without the help of the Comintern in this instance. The two factions were so evenly matched in strength, and the leftists were so fanatically convinced that they were defending a sacred principle, that a definitive victory for the liquidators within a united movement could not be contemplated.

The main energies of the American communists would have been consumed in the internal struggle, at the expense of public propaganda and the recruitment of new forces. The prospect was one of unending factional struggles and disintegrating splits until the movement exhausted itself, while the great country rolled along and paid no attention to it. The intervention of Trotsky, and then of the Russian party and the Comintern, saved us from that.

This decision showed the Comintern at its best, in its best days, as the wise leader and coordinator of the world movement. Its role in this crucial struggle of the infant movement of American communism was completely realistic, in accord with the national political conditions and necessities of that time. Moreover, the Russian leaders, to whom American communism owed this great debt, showed themselves to be completely objective, fair and friendly to all, but very definite and positive on important political questions.

I always remembered their friendly help in this affair with the deepest gratitude. Perhaps that was one reason why I could never reconcile myself to the campaign against them and their eventual expulsion a few years later. I could never believe that they had become "enemies of the revolution," and I believe it even less today, 32 years afterward.

September BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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By James P. Cannon

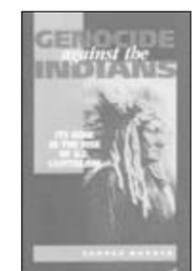
An account of the early years of the U.S. communist movement by a founding leader. \$20.00



Genocide Against the Indians

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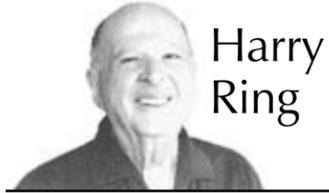
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A spreading disease—PROVIDENCE, Rhode Island—“Advocates for the homeless erected a tent city at the foot of the State-



Harry Ring

house to highlight the lack of low-income and affordable housing in the [low population] state and to lobby for better conditions at shelters. Soaring rents made housing unaffordable for about half the state’s renters and last year homeless shelter admissions

reached an all-time high of 5,686 people.”—News item.

Oink, oink—ORLANDO, Florida—“The Judicial Qualifications Commission accused Judge Alan Todd of chastising a deputy sheriff who had a child out of wedlock, saying she was ‘a disgrace to society,’ ‘had no morals’ and her child was ‘a bastard.’ Todd told the deputy ‘it is acceptable for a male to have sex before marriage, but if a female does so, she is not respected and considered a tramp.’”—USA Today.

Education and morality—At the University of Texas, Brownsville, a low-income area, students have been taking high-cost text-

books across the border to Mexico where a \$100 book can be copied for as little as \$13, and the book then returned. School officials warned this was illegal and federal action could be taken.

Where your money goes—Big-time drug dealers have a long-standing argument to justify their outrageous rip-off prices for their products. That is the claim that they spend a bundle for research to develop new medicines. Last year, drug companies spent \$3.9 billion—22 percent of income—advertising name-brand and over-the-counter products.

That’s capitalism—SANIBEL ISLAND, Florida—“Lee County

commissioners voted to raise tolls on the Sanibel Island bridge from \$3 to \$6. Discount tolls for residents and commuting workers will be raised from 50 cents to \$3. The tolls are expected to reduce traffic on the deteriorating 40-year-old bridge.”—News item.

Plain talk—“WASHINGTON—The military’s system for compensating soldiers who become sick, injured or wounded can be as unforgiving as the battlefield: Fewer than one in 10 applicants receive the disability payments applied for.”—Associated Press.

And that’s just the surplus—ANNISTON, Alabama—“The Army’s chemical weapons incin-

erator at Anniston marked its first year of operation... Managers say it has destroyed more than 34,000 rockets and 343,000 pounds of sarin nerve agent. More than 4 million pounds of sarin, VX and blister agent remain to be burned.”—News item.

New recipe?—With poultry processed by the trillions, flavor has pretty well vanished. A few select chickens are available in posh stores, like in Los Angeles, for a mere \$6 a pound. Now its reported that Banquet frozen chicken breasts have had a major recall because they contained pieces of metal. Maybe the metal was added to lend some snap to the rubbery quality?

Rumsfeld defends global repositioning of U.S. military

NATO agrees to deploy 300 officers near Baghdad to train Iraqi armed forces

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld testified September 23 before the Senate Armed Services Committee in Washington on rearranging the Pentagon’s “Global Posture.” At the hearing, Rumsfeld defended the repositioning of the U.S. military around the world that has been going on for the last three-and-a-half years and is projected to continue for at least another half-decade.

A day earlier, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) agreed to deploy 300 officers to train the Iraqi military, overcoming resistance from a few members, particularly the French government. NATO will set up its military academy in Rustamaniya, outside Baghdad. Forty NATO officers who have been in Iraq for weeks have already started this process.

“Today’s decision by NATO to establish a major collective training program marks a major step by the alliance,” said Nicholas Burns, the U.S. ambassador to NATO.

The move expands the world reach of the imperialist military alliance. It coincides with efforts led by Washington to transform NATO’s forces into rapid reaction units that can be deployed quickly around the globe. It also jibes with the transformation of the U.S. military.

“We have entered an era where enemies are in small cells scattered across the globe,” said Rumsfeld in his September 23 testimony. “Yet America’s forces continue to be arranged especially to fight large armies, navies, and air forces, and in support of an approach—static deterrence—that does not apply to enemies who have no territories to defend and no treaties to honor.

“We are still situated in a large part as if little has changed for the last 50 years—as if, for example, Germany is still bracing for a Soviet tank invasion across the northern plain. In South Korea, our troops were virtually frozen in place from where they were when the Korean War ended in 1953.”

For these reasons, Washington has developed a new strategy for redeploying its forces, Rumsfeld said, which is centered around four main points.

“A first notion is that our troops should be located in places where they are wanted, welcomed, and needed,” Rumsfeld said. “In some cases, the presence and activities of our forces grate on local populations and have become an irritant for host governments. The best example is our massive headquarters in some of the most valuable real estate in Seoul—Korea’s capital city—long a sore point for many South Koreans. Under our proposed changes, that headquarters will be moved to a location well south of the capital.”

Answering critics of the Bush administration who have charged that it has weakened Washington’s military capabilities by moving U.S. troops away from the so-called Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) that has divided the Korean peninsula since the 1950s, and reducing the overall number of U.S. troops stationed there, Rumsfeld said: “In fact, our partnership with the Republic of Korea is a good example of what we hope to accomplish. The Defense Department has been investing in and making arrangements for improved capabilities—such as long range precision weaponry—to be

available on the Korean peninsula.... We know that sheer numbers of people are no longer appropriate measures of commitment or capabilities.”

To back up his point, Rumsfeld quoted a statement that Democratic senator Joseph Lieberman had made weeks earlier. Lieberman said Kim Jong Il, the president of north Korea, “is not under any misconceptions. We have enormous power at sea, in the air, on the ground, in the Asian-Pacific region, and on the Korean peninsula. And if he tries to take aggressive action against the South Koreans, he will pay a very, very heavy price.”

The second thrust along which the U.S. military’s global posture is changing, the secretary of defense said, is the “concept that American troops should be located in environments that are hospitable to their movements. Because U.S. soldiers may be called to a variety of locations to engage extremists at short notice, we need to be able to deploy them to trouble spots quickly. Yet over time, some host countries and or their neighbors have imposed restrictions on the movement and use of our forces. So it makes sense to place a premium on developing more flexible legal and support arrangements with our allies and partners where we might choose to locate, deploy or exercise our troops.”

The Turkish government, for example, a NATO member, did not allow its soil to be used for the U.S. armed forces to transport troops for launching a northern front in their invasion of Iraq last year.

Thirdly, Rumsfeld said, “we need to be in places that allow our troops to be useable and flexible. As the President has noted, the 1991 Gulf War was a stunning victory. But it took six months of planning and transport to summon our fleets and divisions and position them for battle. In the future, we cannot expect to have that kind of time.”

To accomplish this goal, the Pentagon is planning smaller, light armored brigades with greater independent powers of command, which can move anywhere in the world within days. These would replace the larger divisions reliant on tanks and other heavy armor that were used to amass more than 530,000 troops for the 1991 imperialist assault on Iraq.

After succeeding quickly in expelling the Iraqi army from its expansionist invasion of Kuwait then, U.S. troops stopped short of marching toward Baghdad because of strong opposition from members of the U.S.-led coalition—especially Paris, Berlin, Moscow, and Beijing. To avoid repetition of that eventuality, the U.S. rulers have now shifted to the concept of the “coalition of the willing.” This implies no permanent alliances tied to treaties that impose constraints on Washington, and a varying set of allied regimes from task to task—as, for example, has been the case in the recent imperialist wars on Afghanistan and Iraq.

“In the last few years, we have built new relationships with countries that are central to the fight against extremists—in places such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan,” Rumsfeld said. “We also have strong partnerships with the newly liberated nations of Eastern Europe. We

Continued on Page 11



Reuters/Bob Strong

Iraqi interim minister of defence Hazem al Sha’alan (left) briefs the media with U.S. Admiral Greg Johnson following a July 6 NATO delegation meeting in Baghdad. Johnson headed the first NATO mission to Iraq after the recent summit in Istanbul where NATO members only reached vague accord to help train the Iraqi military.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



October 12, 1979

The actions announced by President Carter in his October 1 speech are ominous steps toward war.

Carter is sending warships into the Caribbean, establishing a military command center at Key West, and beefing up “Rapid Deployment Forces” for military interventions in other countries.

Carter has also ordered a landing of 1,600 to 1,800 Marines at Guantánamo Naval Base in Cuba, complete with assault ships and heavy artillery. This provocative “exercise”—carried out on Cuban soil occupied against the wishes of the Cuban people—is an outrageous violation of Cuban sovereignty.

These moves constitute a clear threat to use U.S. military might against Cuba and against other countries of the Caribbean and Central America.

Carter’s threats are especially aimed at the people of Nicaragua, who recently toppled the murderous dictatorship of the Somoza family, imposed on them forty-five years ago by Washington. And the threats are directed at the people of El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, where tens of thousands of workers, peasants, and young people are trying to get rid of brutal U.S.-backed military regimes.

Why is Carter undertaking these aggressive actions? Because of the presence of a few thousand Soviet troops in Cuba? Carter admits these have been in place for years and could not possibly attack this country.



October 11, 1954

No, the “threat” Carter is mobilizing against is the workers and peasants of Latin America, who want to determine for themselves the kind of social system they live under, without U.S. interference.

The main battle-line of human freedom is not on the Rhine or in the China Sea. It’s right here in the good old U.S.A. It’s the line where the battle is joined against discrimination and segregation imposed on 15,000,000 Negro Americans.

The white supremacist bosses have unleashed terror against young Negroes who have dared to exercise their right to non-segregated schools—a right upheld even by the conservative Supreme Court. Those who would draw the iron curtain of inequality between the Negro child and full free educational opportunity are openly engaged in force and violence.

These evil elements are the very ones who would go to any lengths to keep organized labor down. They oppress the white workers in the South especially, smash unions, break strikes. They keep alive the flames of race hatred to destroy the unity of black and white workers.

This is American labor’s battle. The challenge to the rights of Negro school children is a challenge to the freedom of all American workers. It must be met by the mighty resistance of the whole labor movement. Let every union throw its full moral and material strength into this fight.

Defend freedom of speech!

Send funds to help defeat lawsuit by Co-Op bosses

We urge our readers to join the *Militant*, the United Mine Workers of America, the Co-Op miners fighting to win representation by the UMWA, the Socialist Workers 2004 campaign, Socialist Workers Party, Political Rights Defense Fund, numerous media, trade unions, and other organizations in protesting the lawsuit by the owners of C.W. Mining against us and more than 100 other defendants.

We also urge you to send in contributions right away to help the *Militant* in mounting a legal and public defense (see address on page 2).

Given this turn of events, we wholeheartedly agree with the Co-Op miners that building their October 2 anniversary rally in Price, Utah, takes on additional significance.

The Co-Op bosses have the gall to charge the UMWA and a number of its officers and organizers with “unfair labor practices.” This is after the National Labor Relations Board found in June that the Co-Op miners had been fired illegally and ordered the company to take back the workers.

This lawsuit, however, is not only an attack on workers’ elementary right to organize a union. It’s an attack on freedom of the press. It’s an attack on free speech. The mine bosses in Utah who filed the suit—along with the so-called International Association of United Workers Union, which miners say convincingly is a creation of the Kingstons to keep out a real union—are trying to silence those who have backed the Co-Op workers’ struggle for living wages, safe working conditions, and human dignity. The Kingstons are trying to intimidate us, to prevent us from telling the truth.

These Utah mine bosses need to know that their lawsuit will have the opposite effect. The *Militant* is joining the Co-Op miners, their union, and other labor and news organizations in an unremitting struggle to dismiss the suit or to defeat the Kingstons if the case goes to trial. In the process, the truth about this wealthy capitalist family at the center of the offensive against labor in the western United States will be told and heard much more widely.

The suit the mine bosses filed names the following publications and other media as defendants, in the order cited in their legal brief (already posted on www.themilitant.com): *United Mine Workers Journal*, *The Militant*, *Salt Lake Tribune*, *Deseret Morning News*, *Emery County Progress*, *Price Sun Advocate*, *Provo Daily Herald*, *Intermountain Catholic*, *National Catholic Reporter*, *Catholic News Service*, KRCL Radio 90.9 FM, Utah Independent Media Center, *Earth Island Journal*, the website of the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride Coalition, *Joe Hill Dispatch*, KUTV, *Northwest Labor Press*, *Salt Lake City Weekly*, *Casper Star Tribune*, *Craig Daily Press*, and *Workers World*.

We pledge to continue our truthful coverage of the labor

struggle in dispute and to work with all the news organizations named above, and many others, to expand this kind of publicity.

The *Militant*, its editor, its web administrator, and 20 reporters occupy a weighty section in the Kingstons’ lawsuit. Their legal brief devotes 24 of its 76 pages to citations from some 50 articles, two editorials, and one letter to the editor the *Militant* has published over the last year. What are the alleged “defamations”? Overwhelmingly, statements by workers, UMWA representatives, and other unionists and supporters of this union-organizing struggle describing the miserable wages, unsafe working conditions, and indignities by the bosses against Co-Op miners, as well as the actions by these workers to band together in order to form a union to fight the employers and win.

An article by Anne Carroll published in the Nov. 3, 2003, *Militant*, for example, is among the numerous, and often lengthy, citations. “The article also republished the following defamatory statements,” the Kingstons’ brief claims.

The first is a quote by Ernie Herrera, a UMWA retiree who worked 23 years at the Hiawatha mine near Co-Op, who said: “I’m proud of you guys. Everyone knows the Kingstons have been abusing the people at this mine for years. They think they are above the law.”

The article also quoted Celso Panduro, one of the Co-Op miners, stating: “The day we united against the owners is because we had hit a wall. Every time we had asked for better working conditions they told us to keep our heads down and keep working or we could be out the door.”

The *Militant* is proud to have published such articles providing the facts and editorials siding with the workers. We stand by them.

As we have said in previous editorials, this is the most important labor struggle in the United States today. With their determined struggle to win, aided by expanding support from the labor movement in this country and beyond, the Co-Op miners are setting an example of how to effectively resist the bosses’ offensive. The stakes are high. If the Kingstons prevail, the mine barons everywhere will have blood in their mouths to intensify their assault on labor. If the miners succeed, they will have given a much needed boost to the UMWA in the West and beyond, and to thousands of others fighting to organize unions or strengthen those they already have.

Defeating the Kingstons’ lawsuit is part of this struggle. It’s also needed to ensure that no boss can get any idea it can use this suit as a precedent to pursue their profit-increasing objectives. We pledge to do our utmost to make this a reality. And we urge all workers, farmers, youth, and every other individual and organization interested in human decency to join in.

Farmers rally in Washington

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Just over 100 farmers and their supporters rallied here September 28 to protest decades-old anti-Black discrimination by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The action was called to coincide with a hearing by the U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Committee on complaints by farmers that the USDA had failed to implement a 1999 consent decree that settled a class-action suit by farmers known as *Pigford v Glickman*. Daniel Glickman was secretary of agriculture in the Clinton administration.

In *Pigford*, a federal judge decreed a settlement out of court. The government agreed to give each of the farmers who could provide minimal evidence of discrimination between 1981 and 1996 a \$50,000 tax-exempt payment, debt forgiveness, and preferential treatment on future loan applications. In numerous public meetings over the last year, farmers have presented ample evidence showing that Washington didn’t come close to meeting those promises.

“Five years after the settlement and still no check,” said John Boyd from Virginia, who is president of the National Black Farmers Association (NBFA), shaking his head.

Two busloads of farmers and their supporters came from Virginia. Farmers also came from Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Arkansas.

“This fight is not new,” Boyd continued. “It hasn’t changed from administration to administration. In regards to the Black farmers the Democrats and Republicans are both guilty.”

Thomas Burrell, president of the National Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association (BFFA), Inc., castigated demands by USDA officials that the farmers should have one group the department could talk with. “The USDA recognizes hundreds of organizations of white farmers but they want to tell Black farmers they must have one group,” he noted. “We are all here today as one.”

A week before the rally, several farmers’ groups formed a new coalition called the Congress of Black Farmer Organizations. Among them, said Burrell, are BFFA, Inc., NBFA, the Federation of Southern Cooperatives, and the Arkansas Land Development Fund.

The group has filed a new class-action suit against the USDA seeking \$20 billion in damages. The lawsuit charges the USDA with discrimination in loans and processing of credit applications, and failure to promptly investigate racist discrimination complaints of farmers between January 1997 and August 2004. Plaintiffs in the suit include BFAA, Inc., 13 individual farmers, and a class of nearly 70,000 farmers.

Later that day, farmers and their supporters packed the congressional hearing. Phillip Haynie, a Virginia farmer, described how they were kept out of final negotiations on the 1999 settlement, which was approved despite the opposition of farmers’ organizations leading the fight to defend their land.

Michael Lewis, the court-appointed arbitrator for the consent decree, said his office had disqualified an estimated 70,000 claims that he said failed to meet the Sept. 15, 2000, deadline stipulated in the consent decree. Democratic and Republican members of the House judicial committee speculated that Congress could approve legislation that would allow the 70,000 individuals to have their claims heard.

“They all lied,” said Jerri Williams-White, referring to the testimony by USDA officials. Williams-White was forced out of chicken farming when she was denied a loan by the USDA in 1976 because she was a woman. “They told me a woman couldn’t do farming,” she told the *Militant*. As a result, she moved to California and got a job at a General Motors plant. “They said I couldn’t farm but I put in 30 years on the assembly line building trucks, busses, and handling those heavy assembly guns,” she noted. “I even became a welder,” Williams-White said. “The women’s liberation movement hit the company so hard that they sent us to school to learn welding.” Williams-White has retired from GM-Saturn and hopes to return to farming.

Richard Pearson, a tobacco farmer from Virginia, told the *Militant* that the local USDA committee denied him a loan in 1972 because he supposedly lived in the wrong county. His farm borders on Brunswick and Greenville counties. “When I moved to the county they said I should live in they still denied the loan,” Pearson said. He was forced to take out a loan with a private bank. The interest rate for the USDA loan would have been 3 percent, Pearson said. “I paid 5 percent on the loan from the bank.”

Unconditional aid to Haiti now!

We are using part of our editorial space this week to publish the statement below, released September 29 by Martín Koppel, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from New York.

In response to the deadly flooding in Haiti, the Socialist Workers campaign demands:

Massive, immediate U.S. aid to Haiti, with no strings attached!

Cancel Haiti’s foreign debt! The imperialist powers use this debt bondage to plunder the entire Third World.

All U.S., UN, and other imperialist troops out of Haiti!

The rising death toll in Haiti, the thousands left homeless, and the threat of epidemics after Tropical Storm Jeanne is not a “natural calamity.” It is caused by decades of imperialist oppression that has blocked economic development.

Deforestation has magnified the destructive effects of flooding in Third World countries from Haiti to Indonesia and Nicaragua. After decades of intensive tree cutting for firewood and charcoal, barely 1 percent of Haiti’s territory has tree cover. Without access to electricity or modern fuels, thousands of workers and farmers depend for heat, light, and cooking on charcoal made from chopping down trees. The disaster in Haiti highlights the reality that more than 2 billion people in the world—one third of humanity—lack access to any modern form of energy.

The Socialist Workers campaign supports the efforts by the power-poor semicolonial countries to obtain and develop the energy sources necessary to expand access

to electricity, a precondition for economic and social advances. We call for exposing the drive by Washington and its allies to prevent nations oppressed by imperialism—such as Brazil, Iran, north Korea, and India—from developing the sources of energy they need, including nuclear power.

Washington’s response to this disaster is a promise of miserly aid. Instead of doctors, it deploys soldiers, whose job is to keep working people in check. In contrast, revolutionary Cuba gives true solidarity with no strings attached. Some 600 Cuban volunteer doctors and nurses offer free, quality medical services in rural areas of Haiti.

At least 2,500 people are dead or missing in Haiti in the wake of the storm. Dozens were killed in the rest of the Caribbean and in the United States from the recent hurricanes. In contrast, not a single person died in Cuba during Hurricane Ivan, and only four during Hurricane Charley, as the revolutionary government mobilized workers and farmers to evacuate hundreds of thousands of people and to organize other life-saving preparations. Why? Because in Cuba, workers and farmers have made a socialist revolution and hold political power, acting in the interests of the majority, not the profits of a few.

Cuba points the road that workers and farmers in the U.S. and elsewhere will need to take: to organize a movement to wrest power out of the hands of the exploiting classes, establish a government of working people, and join the worldwide fight for a society based on human dignity and cooperation, not the capitalist law of the jungle.

by Blacks in nearby Wilkes-Barre.

Gillian Barker, a professor at Bucknell University in nearby Lewisburg, PA wrote, “While obviously some people in this area feel threatened by the work you do there are others like me who think it is of great importance. I salute your courage and dedication and will be honored to contribute to your rebuilding fund.” Similar expressions of support have come from dozens of unionists, community activists, academicians and others from the northeast Pennsylvania area, nationwide, and from other countries including Australia, New Zealand, and Paraguay.

David Greenleaf, a representative of the UNITE-HERE union, and Laurie Klemow of the Jewish Community Cen-

ter and Greater Hazleton Human Rights Coalition, joined Tim Mailhot, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress, on a September 24 delegation to the mayor’s office to deliver the most recent batch of messages of support.

Contributions are arriving daily for the \$3,500 rebuilding fund for the campaign office and to replace fire-damaged books. “As of September 26, we have \$2,000 in hand,” explained Mailhot. Messages urging steps be taken to rapidly apprehend those responsible for the attack can be sent to Hazleton mayor Louis Barletta, 40 N. Church St., Hazleton, PA 18201, phone: (570) 459-4910; fax: (570) 459-4966. Funds can be sent to 2004 Socialist Workers Campaign, earmarked for rebuilding the campaign office.

Protests pour in against attack on SWP Penn. campaign hall

BY BETSY FARLEY

HAZLETON, Pennsylvania—Letters and faxes continue to pour into the offices of Hazleton Mayor Louis Barletta condemning the arson attack on the Socialist Workers Campaign and book center here and urging authorities to vigorously pursue the investigation to apprehend and prosecute those responsible.

In the early morning hours of September 11 a brick with burning material was thrown through the window of the SWP center here igniting a fire in the front of the office that could have endangered the lives of families in the apartments upstairs. At about the same time an arsonist set fire to the White House Café, a restaurant and tavern patronized

Disaster in Haiti

Continued from front page

er. This extreme deforestation—the worst in the Americas—exacerbates the effect of even a minor rainfall, causing massive runoff, mudslides and erosion, clogging rivers and lakes, and polluting coastal waters.

The imperialist powers that have dominated Haiti have left it so underdeveloped that most people have no source of modern energy. The national electrical system only serves a tiny minority. Average electrical consumption per person in Haiti is only 2.8 percent of U.S. per capita consumption. The real figure for workers and peasants, however, is a lot less than the national average, which fell 18 percent in the 1990s. With no alternative source of fuel, Haitian workers have used Haiti's forests to manufacture charcoal both for their own use and to eke out a living by selling it. About 70 percent of Haitian homes use charcoal or wood for cooking and heating water.

Two thirds of Haitians live under the national poverty level. Annual per capita income in this predominantly agricultural country is only \$440, intensifying the pressure on the land. Many survive with help from family members living in the United States or other countries. Haitians living abroad send remittances to relatives and others at home totaling about \$800 million per year.

The coastal city of Gonaives with a population of 200,000 was largely underwater September 18, after the storm hit the north coast of the island, on its way to the Bahamas and central Florida. Parts of Gonaives remained submerged a week later. Flood waters rose 10 feet as overflowing rivers from the valleys above the city poured down, charged with mud and rocks. Bodies were carried down rivers and streams into the city.

Port de Paix, on the northern coast, lost 56 people to the flood waters. Up river from Port de Paix, the small town of Chansolme was reported to have 400 people missing and 18 dead. Gros Morne, Pilate, Ennery, Passereine, Poteaux, and Mapou were among the many other towns and villages that were reportedly hard hit. With roads washed out and telephones inoperative, however, information on the scope of the disaster is incomplete.

Many rivers flow into the Quinte River, which drains into the sea at Gonaives, whose highest point is only two meters above sea level. As tributaries overflowed their banks, rising 30 feet in some cases, the rising water caused city residents to seek shelter on rooftops and trees. Waters rose to roof level, causing the whole city to look like a lake with rafts floating on it as the sun rose the morning after the flood, according to an eye witness who was lucky enough to find

a rooftop refuge with his family. Whole families were lost. Every building in Gonaives is said to be affected, with 4,000 completely destroyed.

The hospital in Gonaives was still out of commission a week later after it was hit by a mudslide. Bodies of patients were still buried in the knee-deep mud.

There is no fresh water or electricity in the city.

An article in the *Miami Herald* from Dibedou gives a picture of the damage in the countryside. “[S]ome of the houses built on low-lying areas were washed away, and most of their families lost their farm animals and their crops,” it said.

“The floodwaters receded here almost as quickly as they came. But now the land itself is wounded: Fields once planted with corn and sorghum are covered with boulders; a thick, now-dry layer of mud covering other fields will take months to plow and replant. ‘We lost eight cows and eight goats,’ said Asemene Donasien, pointing to a shed where her family’s corn harvest was stored. Soaked by the floods, the corn is now ruined for eating or as seed for planting.”

The damage to crops will intensify the food crisis over the coming months.

Members of the UN-sponsored military forces and private aid agencies are providing food and water to only a small portion of those in need. One week after the flood, UN representatives say they have only gotten food to 25,000 people.

Several countries have donated emergency aid. The government of Cuba, which has a permanent medical mission of 600 doctors and nurses in Haiti, has 16 medical technicians in Gonaives. Venezuela immediately offered more than \$1 million. The European Union offered \$1.8 million. Washington initially said it would give a paltry \$60,000—which it later raised to over \$2 million after widespread criticism. But the damage to roads is so great that the limited aid on hand has not been effectively delivered. UN-sponsored troops have beaten Haitian working people at distribution sites who are desperately seeking food and drinkable water.

The regime of Prime Minister Gerard Latortue—which replaced the elected government of Jean Bertrand Aristide after a rightist military uprising last February that enjoyed Washington’s tacit backing—has been largely a spectator in the rescue efforts.

The U.S. Senate recently passed a resolution that concludes by warning the Haitian government that “the failure to establish a secure and stable environment and to conduct credible and inclusive elections (in 2005) will likely result in Haiti’s complete



AFP/Getty Images/Sophia Paris

The city of Gonaives, Haiti, devastated by flooding September 19. Rains rolling across deforested countryside in two storms have killed more than 4,500 people in Haiti this year.

transition from a failed state to a criminal state.”

The World Bank organized a conference in Washington, D.C., in July where wealthy nations pledged \$1 billion in “aid” to Haiti. Most of this funding, however, is extended in the form of loans or investments that perpetuate Haiti’s colonial domination.

Even as the first in the series of hurricanes hit the Caribbean, some capitalist figures in the United States couldn’t help but express their contempt for the people of the region.

“Clothing is wonderful, but let them go naked for a while, at least the kids,” was the advice offered by Teresa Heinz Kerry, the wife of Democratic presidential contender John Kerry. The scion of one of America’s wealthiest families, she told volunteers packing emergency relief supplies September 15 at a market in Brooklyn’s Caribbean community that “water is necessary, and then generators, and then food, and then clothes.... I think it’s important we help all the kids we can.”

U.S. military repositioning

Continued from page 9

believe it makes sense to try to work out arrangements with countries that are interested in the presence of the U.S. and which are in closer proximity to the regions of the world where our troops are more likely to be needed in the future.”

The fourth and final point, Rumsfeld said, is that “we should take advantage of advanced capabilities that allow us to do more with less. The old reliance on presence and mass reflects the last century’s industrial-age thinking.”

The defense secretary outlined some of the advanced technology armaments the Pentagon is developing to meet these goals. These include, he said, “three new state-of-the-art guided missile destroyers to patrol the seas; 42 new F/A-18 fighter aircraft to guard the skies; and new C-17

strategic air lifters, which will improve our ability to move forces quickly over long distances.” New advanced spy satellites, which will be deployed “deep behind enemy lines,” will speed image transmission from the current 12 minutes to less than a second, he stated.

Rumsfeld also repeated other aspects of the transformation and redeployment of the U.S. armed forces. These include more reliance on elite Special Operations

units; intermixing of units of the army, navy, and air force in combat; and shutting down some of the U.S. bases in western Europe while shifting more troops to the east and to central Asia. Another goal of the Pentagon, he said, is shifting non-military jobs, such as cooking and medical care, to civilian contractors as the military focuses more on upgrading its “warrior ethos.”

In previous public presentations, Rumsfeld and other Pentagon officials have stressed that the ruling class does not need now, or in the foreseeable future, a draftee army and must maintain the volunteer character of the military—offering hefty pay increases to enhance recruitment.

To accomplish all this, of course, requires a substantial boost in military spending, which has been moving steadily upwards the last three years. U.S. total military expenditures reached an all-time high of nearly \$405 billion last year in constant 2000 U.S. dollars, about \$100 billion higher than when Bush took office. This represents 54 percent of the world’s total military spending, with China a distant second at \$60 billion a year.

Correction

The article “8,000 farm workers win union contract” in the October 5 issue misidentified the farm workers’ organization. It is the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), not the Farmer Labor Organizing Committee.

LETTERS

‘Jackson Advocate’

Readers who have been following the *Militant’s* coverage of the Socialist Workers 2004 campaign’s efforts to get on the ballot in Mississippi will be pleased to know that the August 16–22 *Jackson Advocate* published a letter to the editor from four campaign supporters in Tchula, Mississippi. The letter was written in response to an early August article in the *Advocate* that red-baited and slandered the Socialist Workers campaign. The letter from Tchula also appeared in the September 21 *Militant*. It was signed by Barbara Bell and Joann Hogan, two veterans of the Catfish Workers of America’s

strike at Freshwater Farms catfish plant in Belzoni, Mississippi, in 1998–99, and David Howard and R.D. Howard from the Mileston Co-op, the oldest Black farmers’ cooperative in Mississippi.
Susan LaMont
Birmingham, Alabama

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.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

FLORIDA

Miami

Sudan: U.S. gov’t uses Darfur crisis to threaten intervention. Speaker: Alex Alvarado. Fri., Oct. 8, 7:30 p.m. 8365 NE 2nd Ave., #206. Donation requested. Tel: (305) 756-4436.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Meet the Socialist Workers Party candidates. Speakers: Arrin Hawkins, SWP candidate for U.S. vice president. Rebecca Williamson, SWP candidate for Congress in 4th C.D. Fri., Oct. 8. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Suggested donation, \$5 dinner, \$5 program. 3557 S. Archer Ave. Tel: (773) 890-1190

MICHIGAN

Detroit

Hurricanes: Cause of death toll ‘natural disaster’ or capitalism? Speaker: Ilona Gersh, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Oct. 8, 7:30 p.m. 4208 W. Vernor St. (Between Scotten & Clark, southwest Detroit). Tel: (313) 554-0504.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Chechnya and the fight for self-determination. Speaker: Sara Lobman, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Oct. 8, 168 Bloomfield Avenue, 2nd Floor. Tel: (973) 481-0077.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Haiti floods: A social, not a ‘natural’ disaster; Im-

mediate U.S. aid to Haiti with no strings attached!

Speaker: Dan Fein, Socialist Workers 2004 New York campaign director; Fri., Oct. 1. Dinner, 7 p.m.; program, 8 p.m.

Why do capitalist politicians in European Union want to stop ‘river of Islam’ into Europe by preventing Turkey’s entry into EU? Fri., Oct. 8. Dinner, 7 p.m.; program, 8 p.m.

Both programs at 307 W. 36 St., 10th floor (use north elevators). Donation: \$5 for dinner, \$5 for program. Tel: (212) 629-6649.

PENNSYLVANIA

Hazleton

‘Farmingville’ Video documentary on the resistance to 2000–2001 attacks on immigrant workers in Long Island, New York. Sat., Oct. 2, 7:30 p.m. 69 N. Wyoming St. Tel: (570) 454-8320.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

Election night social with Ron Poulsen, Communist League Candidate for Watson, House of Representatives, in 2004 elections. Sat., Oct. 2, 7 p.m. 3/281-7 Beamish St., Campsie (upstairs in arcade near Evaline St.). Tel: (02) 9718-9698.

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

As rents, house prices soar: Affordable housing is a right! Speaker: Annalucia Vermunt, Communist League. Fri., Oct. 15, 7:00 p.m. The Gloucester Arcade, 129 Gloucester St. Tel: (03)365-6055.

Australian gov't covers up killing by cop

BY LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY, Australia—The New South Wales state coroner has claimed in an August 17 report that Thomas “TJ” Hickey died as a result of a “freak accident” after being “followed, rather than chased” by cops. TJ, a 17-year-old Aboriginal youth, died after being thrown from his bike and impaled on a fence while being chased by police in Redfern, Sydney, on February 14. His death sparked a nine-hour street battle between cops and Aboriginal youth.

In his report, State Coroner John Abernathy cleared the cops of all blame for TJ’s death even though it occurred during a police operation.

At a September 24 NSW parliamentary inquiry into the “Redfern riot,” however, an Aboriginal liaison officer with the police testified that the police covered up their direct responsibility for Hickey’s death.

“The coronial inquiry was not just a cover-up, it was worse—it was a complete and utter whitewash,” said Ray Jackson, president of the Indigenous Social Justice Association, at a September 3 speak-out organized by the Militant Labour Forum in Campsie, Sydney. “There were contradictions galore in the police evidence presented,” said Jackson. “Even given the evidence, his decision was a bad one.”

The coroner stated that he could not accept statements from Hollingsworth and Reynolds, the two cops in the wagon chasing TJ, that they had not seen the youth when they traveled down the street behind him.

Eyewitnesses interviewed by the *Militant* at the time said they saw the cops’ vehicle ram TJ’s bike from behind, pitching him onto the steel fence.

Police Commissioner Ken Moroney defended his cops, saying that inconsistencies in the statements given by Hollingsworth and Reynolds, “do not necessarily amount to lies.”



Militant/Ron Poulsen

Protesters march February 24 in Sydney, Australia, against killing by cop of Thomas TJ Hickey, an Aboriginal youth. Recent report by New South Wales state coroner whitewashed the police, despite testimony to the contrary by witnesses and a police officer.

Hollingsworth, a senior police constable, refused to testify at the inquest on the grounds it could lead to possible disciplinary action, reported the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

“The coroner made the most insulting decision by allowing Hollingsworth not to take the stand,” Jackson commented. “He should have forced him to take the stand. It was a slap across the face to the family and supporters.”

According to the *Herald*, “the inquest found that Hickey died of penetrating neck and chest injuries sustained when he was catapulted over the handlebars of his ‘defective’ bike onto the fence.”

“The forensic report on his injuries was never looked at in court,” Jackson said. “It

stated that Hickey’s internal injuries were the result of absolute force. That is, the bike must have been hit with force to catapult the youth onto the fence.

“When we saw the bike, the wheels had been changed. A young guy who had known TJ saw his bike with the wheel off at Redfern station. No forensic evidence was taken from the police wagons. In an open inquiry it would have been.”

“We want to reintroduce the case back into the coroner’s court so he can hear the true evidence—not the fabricated evidence he heard in court. But it will take a lot of lobbying and support to get the case reopened,” he said.

Ron Poulsen, the Communist League candidate for the seat of Watson in the Oc-

tober 9 federal elections, joined the speak-out to demand justice for TJ. He called for the prosecution of the cops who killed the youth and protests against the whitewash by the court system. “The courts always act to cover up constant police racist harassment and violence against Aboriginal and other oppressed and working-class youth,” he said.

‘Police rammed the kid’

The cops’ cover-up was further exposed when Paul Wilkinson, an Aboriginal liaison officer with the Redfern police, told the September 24 NSW parliamentary inquiry into the “Redfern riot” that “the police actually rammed the young kid.” Wilkinson, who has since been transferred out of Redfern, said that his house had been burned down and he had received death threats from police warning him not to come forward and give evidence.

Wilkinson was never questioned by police authorities for that report. “The reason they wouldn’t ask me is because they’re trying to cover up for exactly what took place down in Redfern that day,” he said.

At the parliamentary inquiry the liaison officer described the racist behavior typical of Redfern cops. Wilkinson described one junior constable saying when he heard a scream, “I hope it was a coon underneath our tires.”

In the coroner’s report much of the blame for the so-called riot on February 14 was laid on TJ’s family. The coroner stated that if the family had gone to the police with their concerns that TJ had been pursued by the police then the outcome “would have followed a very different path.”

An August 18 *Herald* editorial following the release of the coroner’s report called for “more experienced police” and “a rethink of policing approaches.”

An internal police report into the events following TJ’s death recommended that police consider using more “offensive” riot-control equipment such as rubber bullets, armoured rescue vehicles, long-range capicum spray, and gas grenades.

There has been a beefing up of police in Redfern and Sydney more generally in the wake of the February 14 “riot.” On July 16, for example, the New South Wales state Labour government announced that a full-time riot squad of 46 officers would be created to respond to “civil disorder” anywhere in the state.

A \$6 million seven-story new police station is planned in Redfern with cop numbers boosted from 170 to 226. They will be issued with riot shields and undergo riot control training, including the use of armored vehicles.

Union vote at Quebec Wal-Mart upheld

BY SÉBASTIEN DESAUTELES

JONQUIERE, Quebec—The Quebec Labour Relations Board upheld September 24 its earlier decision to certify United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 503 representing workers at Wal-Mart here. The board made the ruling after a company appeal of a union victory in a representation election, which the labor board ruled valid on August 2.

Militant reporters who visited Jonquière September 4 got a feel for the significance of this victory in interviews with Wal-Mart workers.

This is the only union local at this time that organizes all the workers at a Wal-Mart facility. Wal-Mart has 1.3 million employees worldwide, and 60,000 in Canada, earning an average of Can\$8 (US\$6.25) an hour.

Johanne Desbiens and Sylvie Lavoie have been working in this Wal-Mart since it opened in August 2000, when the workforce was about 250. Today there are 50 full-time workers out of a total workforce of 165, they said. The full-timers work only 28 hours a week. Part-time workers put in around 12 hours a week. “When we started working there we didn’t complain much, because Jonquière is not like Montreal,” explained Desbiens, referring to the fact that the Saguenay region has few jobs to offer. “We gave our 150 percent for Wal-Mart.”

“Our first motivation for the struggle is to fight injustice, and I would do it again anytime,” said Lavoie. “There was an injustice going on because there was no respect for seniority—newly hired workers earned more than the others.” The workers’ victory came out of two attempts to convince the majority of workers to sign cards for a union. The first time, in April, they fell eight votes short. Desbiens and Lavoie both explained that in the days prior to the April vote managers threatened the store would close if the union got in. Lavoie said they felt discouraged about the outcome, but co-workers kept coming back to them about

continuing the fight to bring in a union.

Their second attempt began in June and on July 6 they turned in the signed cards. “This time we had more cards signed, enough so that even if the section managers were included in the vote we would still be the majority,” said Desbiens.

When she was hired, Lavoie said, the company paid her only \$8 an hour because it recognized only 10 of her 20 years experience, and Desbiens received \$7.80 for 5 years experience in sales, when in fact she had 10. Both are part-time workers. The two unionists said most of those working at this Wal-Mart are single mothers. Some, like Desbiens, are denied full-time posts. She thinks it is because of her union activity. Lavoie works as a customer service employee in the cashier department and Desbiens is a cashiers’ supervisor, which is really just someone who fills in for others, she said. Part-time workers like Lavoie and Desbiens work Thursday through Sunday—a difficult schedule for single mothers.

“It couldn’t be worse than that: no benefits, no insurance, nothing!” said Lavoie.

The most difficult part was not how to convince co-workers of the need for a union, but being able to talk to them. The two unionists said in the first union-organizing effort they got most of the cards signed in one evening, right under the boss’s nose at the company Christmas party. During the second attempt Wal-Mart didn’t notice that they were getting cards signed until they had almost finished.

Desbiens said the bosses tried to drive them out of the store. “They wanted to make us leave by not giving us postings. It’s really outrage that made us continue. The trick is to transform that into positive energy,” she said.

“After what we’ve accomplished we now get calls from other Wal-Mart workers on how can they get a union in,” said Lavoie. “I think it’s going to be hard to get our first contract. Wal-Mart will not want to

meet with us, and we won’t win much. But we are the first link in the chain.”

“What we deplore,” said Desbiens, “is that even though Andrew Pelletier, the Wal-Mart boss in Toronto, says he will accept the workers’ decision, by his threats and actions he proves the opposite. It means that Wal-Mart wants to attack the labor laws by not accepting the majority vote.”

In the next weeks and months contract negotiations are due to start.

Sébastien Desautels is a garment worker and member of UNITE HERE.

Iceland teachers strike public schools

BY HALLBJÖRN GUMUNDSSON AND ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

REYKJAVÍK, Iceland—A nationwide strike by more than 4,000 teachers has become a hotly debated issue here. The strike, which began on September 20, has shut down all public schools for students between 6 and 16 years of age. Together the struck schools have 45,000 students.

The teachers face a concentrated propaganda campaign against them by the capitalist media, which seeks to pit other working people against the teachers and attack their right to strike.

On September 22, commentator Thráinn Bertelsson attacked the teachers’ strike in his regular column in *Fréttabladid*, the most widely circulated daily in Iceland. Under the headline “Hostage taking or a strike?” he charged that the “ideology behind [the strike] much more resembles the ideology of terrorists and hostage-takers than labor struggle.” Using a common argument by big-business commentators, he said the teachers’ strikes hurt children, not employers. He went on to say that strikes in general are outmoded.

An editorial in the same paper that ran on September 19 lamented that if the teachers

won their demands “the wages of all other wage-earners will rise.” It argued that “then the buying power of everyone will plunge and inflation will go wild. This is a horrific vision.” The editorial was repeating a myth frequently peddled by the employers: that higher wages for some workers will hurt other working people by causing inflation.

Teachers are demanding an immediate average increase of 13.5 percent and annual increases ranging between 2.25 percent and 3 percent.

Eiríkur Jónsson, chairman of the Icelandic Teachers Union, spoke at a rally held at the strike headquarters in Reykjavik on September 22. According to the *Strike Mail*, a daily union bulletin published during the strike, he said the teachers’ negotiation committee had clear direction from the membership “not [to] settle before we have accomplished our goals regarding the classroom work and work management, and including the so-called wage pot in the basic wage. These demands are not up for compromise.”

The “wage pot” refers to a sum of money that each principal can divide at will among the teachers. This came with the last con-

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