

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

French forces board, 'inspect' north Korean ship
—PAGE 3

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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British gov't steps up spying, plans more curbs on rights

BY TONY HUNT

LONDON—The rulers of the United Kingdom are continuing to exploit the July 7, 2005, bomb attacks in London and other alleged plots by Islamist groupings or individuals to expand their domestic spying operations and other attacks on the rights of working people.

In a speech at Queen Mary College here November 9, Eliza Manningham-Buller, the director general of the Security Service—the British secret police, usually known as MI5—said the agency had “200 groupings or networks, totalling over 1,600 identified individuals” under surveillance. She alleged that some 30 further bomb attacks were being prepared.

The police operations involve “24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week surveillance,” the BBC reported. Manningham-Buller said the MI5 has been

Continued on page 2

U.S. Congress blocks bill to normalize trade ties with Vietnam

BY CINDY JAQUITH

On the eve of U.S. president George Bush's trip to Hanoi, Vietnam, for the November 18–19 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit, a bill to normalize U.S. trade with that Southeast Asian nation was defeated in U.S. Congress.

The proposed legislation would have extended to Vietnam the same Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) status the United States has with most other countries. Currently, under the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, Vietnam is granted such status on a conditional basis, subject to an annual review by the U.S. government of certain political and economic practices.

The Congressional vote on the Vietnam trade bill was 228 in favor and 161 against, short of the two-thirds majority required for expedited passage. The White House argued that granting

Continued on page 3

Workers walk out at N. Carolina meat plant

1,000 protest 'no-match' letters, firing threats



Fayetteville Observer/Raul Rubiera

Workers protest outside the Smithfield Foods Inc. pork slaughterhouse in Tar Heel, North Carolina, November 17 demanding no to victimization of immigrant workers.

BY SETH DELLINGER

TAR HEEL, North Carolina—Some 1,000 workers walked off the job November 16–17 at the Smithfield Foods plant here, the largest hog-slaughter facility in the world. The walkout was sparked by the company's firing of several dozen

employees it claimed were working with false papers. It ended when the company announced that it would not penalize those who joined the walkout, that the fired workers could return to their jobs, and that they would have more time to

Continued on page 7

'A magazine that arms us with ideas to fight imperialism'

Panel at Caracas fair discusses 'New International'

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

CARACAS, Venezuela, November 15—Reading *Nueva Internacional*, especially the article, “Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun,” said Oscar Rodríguez, “helps us understand what is behind the conflicts we continue to see in our country between capital and working people.”

Rodríguez was speaking on behalf of the leadership of the Youth of the Fifth Republic (JVR). The organization is affiliated with the governing party, the Movement of the Fifth Republic.

A member of the legislative council in the state of Miranda, Rodríguez was speaking as part of a panel presentation of *Nueva Internacional* numbers 6 and 7, the Spanish editions of the two most recently published issues of the magazine of Marxist politics and theory, *New International*.

More than 50 people attended the event, which was part of Venezuela's Second International Book Fair. The fair, which will travel throughout the country, is being held here in the capital city November 9–19.

Also on the panel were Zuleica Romay, vice president of the Cuban Book Institute, and Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *New International*.

The program also included a special contribution from Harry Villegas, a brigadier general in Cuba's Revolu-

tionary Armed Forces. Villegas is known widely as Pombo, the nom de guerre given him by Ernesto Che Guevara, the Argentine-born leader of the Cuban Revolution. Villegas worked and fought alongside Che for a decade, from the Congo to Bolivia.

'A turning point in class struggle'

“*Nueva Internacional* is a tool to arm and be used by workers and youth actively involved in the practical work of building a communist party and youth organization—in the United States above all,” said Waters in her opening remarks.

“We believe that building such a proletarian movement is a historical necessity,” she said. “None of the burning social questions of our epoch will be settled short of working people in the United States taking the economic and military power to rule out of the hands of the class that today imposes its interests on the world.”

The two most recent issues of *Nueva Internacional*, Waters noted, “explain with conviction and facts that we are today living through a great turning point in the international class struggle. Communists and broader vanguard forces must fully absorb this historic shift and begin acting on its political logic.”

Waters noted the importance of the

Continued on page 6

U.S. elections: no shift in rulers' assaults on workers, farmers

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON AND MARTÍN KOPPEL

The day the U.S. Congress reconvened after the November 7 elections, the House of Representatives defeated a bill that would have normalized U.S. trade

NEWS ANALYSIS

relations with Vietnam. House Democrats, waving the banner of “protecting American jobs,” voted in their majority against the bill. This action maintains punitive trade legislation against Vietnam, the continuation of Washington's decades-long effort to bludgeon that Asian country into submission.

The following day, incoming Senate majority leader Harry Reid said the newly elected Democratic majority would push for a \$75 billion increase in the military budget to get the U.S. Army back into combat shape. He insisted that his party would not cut off funding for the war in Iraq, regardless of its tactical differences with the Bush administration over how best to prosecute it.

The initial actions and statements of the Democrats, along with those of their Republican counterparts, make clear there will be no fundamental change in the course of U.S. imperialism at home or abroad in the wake of the midterm elections. The twin parties converge on basic foreign and domestic policy as bourgeois politics continues to shift to the right.

Seeking to shore up declining profit

rates, the U.S. capitalist rulers are driven toward wars such as in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as threats against Iran, north Korea, and other governments that don't bow to their dictates. They also have no alternative but to keep grinding away at the living standards and rights of working people at home. What they do today builds on the last six years under the Bush administration and the record of the Clinton White House before it.

Democratic candidates made an issue over the U.S.-led war in Iraq. They gained from the fact that the Bush administration's call to “stay the course” did not appeal to many people who are tired of an unresolved conflict in Iraq that has dragged on for more than

Continued on page 4

Also Inside

- Day laborers win victory in Freehold, New Jersey 4
- Capitalist methods meet resistance by toilers in China 5
- Youth group rallies in Caracas for Chávez reelection 7
- UCLA students protest assault by campus cops 9

British government steps up spying, plans further curbs on rights

Continued from front page expanded in size by 50 percent over the past six years, and projected yet another increase.

The spy chief also reported that 99 individuals are awaiting trial in 34 "terror" cases.

The individuals targeted are in many cases British citizens of Pakistani descent. Manningham-Buller pointed to the attraction of some British-born youth to Islamist political currents as a justification for an increase in domestic spying operations.

Manningham-Buller's speech came after statements made to the BBC in early September by Peter Clarke, deputy assistant commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. Clarke said, "The numbers of people who we have to be interested in are into the thousands. That includes a whole range of people, not just terrorists, not just attackers, but the people who might be tempted to support or encourage or to assist."

Clarke, the "national co-ordinator of terror investigations," added, "What we've learnt since 9/11 is that the threat is not something that's simply coming from overseas. What we've seen all too graphically and all too murderously is that we have a threat which is being generated here within the United Kingdom."

Also, in late October Richard Thomas, the government's information commissioner, reported that the United Kingdom has 4.2 million

closed-circuit television cameras used for surveillance of public places. That is one for every 14 people. This is more than any other country, the *Times* reported in an October 29 article titled, "British the most spied-on people in western world."

Prime Minister Anthony Blair expressed support for the MI5 chief's speech November 10. He said that the "terrorist" threat "will last a generation" and so will the fight against it.

Further attacks on rights

Finance minister Gordon Brown, expected to succeed Blair as prime minister next year, supported calls by Ian Blair, head of London's Metropolitan Police, to increase the detention without charge of "terrorist suspects" from the current 28 days to 90 days.

In an interview with the *Sunday Times*, Brown said, "Given the scale of the threat we face, we must give the security service and the police not just the resources they need, but the powers they need." He attacked Conservative Party leader David Cameron for opposing the introduction of compulsory identity cards.

In a speech in Germany, Ian Blair also called for new laws to ban the burning of flags and effigies and to prevent demonstrators from covering their faces and to legalize the use of "telephone intercept evidence" in UK courts.

Manningham-Buller's speech came a few days after a life sentence was handed to Dhiren Barot, 34, who pled



Scott Barbour/Getty Images

Residents pass through police cordon June 2 in a London neighborhood where a Muslim man was shot by police during an "antiterror" raid on a house, which involved 250 cops.

guilty to "conspiracy to murder" in a series of alleged planned bombings against British and U.S. targets. The case against him was based largely on what the police said they found "on hard drives of computers—often deleted files," the BBC reported.

In addition, government officials have used the November 10 acquittal of two leaders of the ultraright British National Party (BNP) of charges of "inciting racial hatred" as an opportunity to project more assaults on freedom of speech, while at the same time countering claims that they are anti-Islamic. Rightists Nicholas Griffin and Mark Collet were charged after the BBC secretly filmed and televised speeches they gave at BNP meetings

in 2004 that targeted the Islamic faith and South Asian immigrants.

Brown told the BBC that the laws on "religious or racial hatred" would have to be reviewed. Lord Chancellor Charles Falconer also called for laws against "religious hatred" stating, "We should look at them in the light of what has happened because what is being said to young Muslim people of this country is that we as a country are anti-Islam and we have got to demonstrate without compromising freedom that we are not."

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Blair announced November 16 that new "antiterror" laws would be brought before Parliament before the end of the year.

THE MILITANT

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Trade summit in Vietnam

Continued from front page

passage. The White House argued that granting normal trade rights to Vietnam would force that nation to open up to more capitalist investment and imports. Opponents, led by the Democratic Party, countered with a protectionist line, backed by the AFL-CIO officialdom, that the bill would threaten “American jobs” such as those in the garment and textile industries.

Washington imposed a trade embargo on Vietnam in 1975 after the workers and peasants of that country defeated the invading U.S. military force. A revolution in Vietnam had overturned capitalist property relations in the north in the late 1950s, after defeating the French imperialist occupation, and extended this workers state in the south in the late 1970s.

It was only in 1994 that Washington ended the trade embargo against Vietnam, resuming full diplomatic relations the following year, but certain trade restrictions were maintained. In 2001 the two governments signed an agreement extending Vietnam conditional Normal Trade Relations status. U.S. tariffs on Vietnamese-made apparel were decreased.

Washington has continued, however, to impose protectionist restrictions on some Vietnamese imports such as shrimp and catfish. Today Vietnam exports more to the United States than to any other country—\$6 billion in exports in 2005. It imports \$1 billion in U.S. products a year.

Those in the U.S. ruling class favoring the bill were anxious to get in on the possibilities for investment in what they describe as one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. This year Vietnam’s gross domestic product is projected to increase by more than 8 percent, faster than any other Asian country except China, according to the *International Herald Tribune*. Vietnam, recently admitted to the World Trade Organization (WTO), is now the world’s second-largest exporter of rice. Its biggest exports are oil and coal, followed by garments.

A November 15 briefing by the Strategic Forecasting Inc. (Stratfor) reported that “Intel recently announced a \$1 billion plan to build what it calls the world’s largest semiconductor assembly and test facility in Ho Chi Minh City. In 2005, Vietnam ranked No. 4 among Asian-Pacific countries in the number of new foreign investment projects...

beating out Hong Kong, Thailand, the Philippines and South Korea.”

At the same time, Vietnamese workers and farmers remain largely impoverished. Average per capita income is less than US\$1.80 per day.

Stratfor also noted that “Hanoi still hangs on tightly to business operations in the country [and] the banking system remains tightly controlled by the government,” referring to the fact that Vietnam remains a workers state. The article added that the Vietnamese regime, however, “is making efforts to solve these problems. In 2000, the government passed an enterprise law that significantly boosted the creation of private businesses.” With its admission to the WTO, Hanoi will be required to further reduce trade barriers and subsidies on its products.

Aims of Hanoi summit

At the summit meeting in Hanoi, Washington pressed for APEC members to remove protective barriers to U.S. goods.

The 21 members of APEC include the imperialist countries of Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Canada, and the United States; 12 semicolonial countries in Asia, the Pacific, and on the Pacific coast of Latin America; and three workers’ states, China, Vietnam, and Russia. Hong Kong, a former British colony returned to Chinese sovereignty in 1997, is also a member.

APEC members adopted a “Hanoi Declaration” that included a section calling on the renewal of WTO talks, known as the Doha round, aimed at reducing trade barriers. Talks on that issue fell apart last July over differences between imperialist governments unwilling to reduce subsidies



Students demonstrate November 16 in Jakarta, Indonesia, against visit by U.S. president George Bush. His trip there was part of an Asia tour aimed at pressing Washington’s “free trade” offensive in the Pacific region following trade summit in Vietnam.

to capitalist farmers—measures allowing them to “dump” food on semicolonial countries at prices lower than local farmers can charge—and semicolonial countries resistant to lowering tariffs on imports.

At the close of the APEC conference, following a meeting with Russian president Vladimir Putin, U.S. president George Bush announced that Washington was signing an agreement to back Moscow’s membership in the WTO. Russian economy minister German Gref said the agreement marked “the return of Russia to the market principles of the world economy.”

Washington used the APEC summit to try to line up more support for United Nations–approved sanctions against north Korea. U.S. officials had hoped the summit would produce a written document condemning the

Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) for carrying out a nuclear weapons test in October. Instead, they got a verbal statement by Vietnamese president Nguyen Minh Triet, chair of this year’s summit, in which he endorsed the sanctions and called the test “a clear threat to our shared interest of peace and security.”

Washington failed to get south Korea’s commitment to participate in the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Under that program, Washington and its allies assert the right to stop and board ships on the high seas originating from a list of counties, including the DPRK, that they deem to be of nuclear “proliferation concern.”

South Korean president Roh Moo-hyun told reporters his government would not agree to board north Korean vessels, but would “support the principles and goals of PSI.”

French forces board north Korean ship

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

French officials boarded and searched a north Korean cargo ship at an Indian Ocean island in mid-November. It was the first time a north Korean ship had officially been stopped under an October 14 United Nations Security Council resolution that imposed sanctions against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK). Four other ships from that country have also been stopped since the sanctions were decreed, allegedly for other reasons.

The sanctions, pushed by Washington and other imperialist powers, were decreed after the government in Pyongyang announced October 8 it had conducted a nuclear weapons test. Since 2003, under the Proliferation Security Initiative, Washington and its allies have been asserting their prerogative to stop, board, and confiscate the cargo of any ship they claim is carrying “suspect” cargo.

The ship, carrying a cargo of cement from Singapore to the Comoros Islands, was first inspected by French customs and police officers November 11 while still at sea near Mayotte, a French island colony located between Madagascar and the southeast coast of Africa.

Once docked, French agents boarded the vessel and searched it “from bow to stern and top to bottom,” said an unnamed customs official, according to the Associated Press. The 45-person crew was also searched. They found no

items banned by the sanctions, however. The inspection dragged on for nearly a week.

On October 14 the UN Security Council decreed sanctions against north Korea, allowing member states to board the country’s ships and inspect all imports from or exports to it, to freeze all assets allegedly connected to its nuclear program, and to impose a trade ban on all commodities deemed military or luxury goods.

French foreign ministry spokesman Jean-Baptiste Mattei told the Associated Press, “We are exercising particular vigilance regarding cargo transported by North Korean ships,

and all ships starting from or heading to North Korea.” Mattei noted that after Pyongyang’s nuclear test, Paris immediately restricted visas for north Koreans and canceled all “bilateral contacts.”

In related actions, Chinese authorities in Hong Kong stopped two north Korean cargo ships in October, supposedly for safety reasons. Burmese authorities inspected cargo of a north Korean ship that anchored at a port in early November. Indian officials interrogated the 12 crew members of a north Korean vessel heading to Iran that entered Indian waters.

The south Korean government has balked at Washington’s demand that it take part in interceptions of ships from the DPRK. Officials in Seoul are nervous that such action could “lead to naval clashes, or even a war, with the North,” the *New York Times* reported.

The French government’s act of piracy in the Indian Ocean was reported as U.S. president George Bush used his trip to Asia to try to drum up support for more military and economic pressure against the DPRK.

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U.S. midterm elections: no shift in rulers' assault on workers and farmers

Continued from front page

three years. Many hoped that voting for the nonincumbent party might lead to an improvement. Popular sentiment, however, continues to accept the U.S. government's argument that the "fight against terrorism" is necessary.

Democratic critics of the White House raised only tactical differences over how best to conduct the occupation of Iraq and advance U.S. imperialism's interests worldwide. Some argued that the Bush administration was not waging the "war on terror" effectively. They called for a more aggressive stance against Iran or north Korea, or, like former presidential candidate John Kerry, for more U.S. troops in Afghanistan.

Democratic Senate hopeful Ned Lamont, a wealthy cable TV executive falsely dubbed an "antiwar candidate" in the capitalist media, called for a phased "redeployment" of frontline U.S. troops in Iraq while reinforcing the use of the National Guard for "homeland defense" in the United States.

Lamont lost the election in Connecticut to incumbent senator Joseph Lieberman, one of the most pro-war Democrats, who ran as an "independent" after failing to win the Democratic primary.

Now that Democrats have won a majority in both houses of Congress, their rhetoric about the conduct of the war in the Mideast has become more guarded. Asked during a November 12 interview on CBS's *Face the Nation* whether he would propose a timetable for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from

Iraq, Reid replied, "Absolutely not."

Eight days after the elections, the *New York Times*, which fervently campaigned against the Republicans with critiques of the Iraq war, ran a front-page "military analysis" titled "Get Out Now? Not So Fast, Experts Say." It cited "a number of military officers, experts and former generals, including some who have been among the most vehement critics of the Bush administration's Iraq policies," who argue that "any substantial reduction of American forces over the next several months would be more likely to accelerate the slide to civil war [in Iraq] than stop it."

Transformation of U.S. military

Throughout the election campaign, Democrats had made Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld a target of their attacks on the administration. By announcing Rumsfeld's resignation the day after the elections, the White House deprived its critics of ammunition. The likely confirmation of former CIA chief Robert Gates as Rumsfeld's replacement only confirms there will be no basic shift in course.

Above all, what will not change is the historic shift that has been carried out over the last half decade in the global deployment of U.S. imperialism's armed forces, its military strategy, and its order of battle. This transformation includes the restructuring of the U.S. armed forces into smaller, lighter, more mobile units better suited to fight the kinds of wars Washington will have to pursue around the world.

This shift began in the late 1990s as



Robyn Beck/AFP/Getty Images

Arizona governor Janet Napolitano visits Utah National Guard troops June 6 along U.S. border fence with Mexico. Militarization of the U.S. border is a bipartisan course that is part of U.S. rulers' preparations for assaults on working-class resistance.

the U.S. rulers recognized they could no longer count on the aid of Stalin's heirs in Moscow to help police the world's workers and farmers, as they had done during the Cold War. U.S. imperialism had to prepare to fight more directly the resistance by working people to the effects of the world capitalist crisis and to confront sharper competition with its imperialist rivals.

No wing of the Democrats or Republicans has offered an alternative to this course. As the article "Their Transformation and Ours" explains in issue 12 of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*, "The rulers sense—even if they do not see clearly or understand—the uncontrollable forces carrying them toward a future of sharpening crises." The frustration born of a vague but growing awareness of this vulnerability, it notes, "is the single greatest source of the deepening factionalism, demagoguery, and degradation of political discourse" that mark bourgeois politics in the United States today, including within the officer corps of the U.S. military.

Bipartisan assault on rights

In the 1990s the Clinton administration stepped up the U.S. rulers' assault on the social gains and rights of working people. It dismantled "welfare as we know it," significantly expanded the police, stepped up use of the death penalty, expanded authority for wiretaps, and curtailed the rights of immigrants. It accelerated "missile defense" and took initial steps toward the domestic use of the military, laying the basis for deeper steps under the Bush administration.

Building on this course, what the U.S. government has carried out over the last six years with broad bipartisan support, especially under the banner of "homeland defense," is a good gauge of what working people can expect from the new Congress. These measures include the following:

- Shortly after Sept. 11, 2001, Democrats and Republicans in Congress passed the Patriot Act, giving new powers to the FBI and other police agencies to conduct spying and disruption operations against organizations and individuals. The law, which authorizes arbitrary search and seizure operations in private homes and businesses, was built on several 1996 laws enacted by the Clinton administration.

- In March of this year, with overwhelming bipartisan support, President George Bush signed legislation renewing 16 of the Patriot Act's original provisions.

- In October 2002 the U.S. govern-

ment established the Northern Command, the groundwork for which was laid by the Clinton White House. NORTHCOM, a "war-fighting" command with responsibility for the continental United States and the rest of North America, makes "civil disorder" a military matter for the federal government, not solely a police matter for local and state governments, for the first time since the Civil War.

- As part of "Operation Liberty Shield," surveillance and inspections have been stepped up at ports, airports, land borders, trains, and public transportation. The operation allows for greater collaboration between the FBI, Department of Homeland Security, and Justice Department in "tracking" anyone U.S. officials accuse of being a "terrorist suspect."

- The 2006 Military Commissions Act approved military trials for individuals detained as "enemy combatants" in Washington's "war on terrorism." It permits the use of evidence obtained through coercion and hearsay and allows the indefinite imprisonment, with no charges, of individuals captured in combat or accused of giving "material support" to those branded "terrorists."

Combined with the assault on wages, working conditions, job safety, and benefits that the bosses have unleashed on the working class, these antidemocratic measures are preparatory moves for the class confrontations the ruling class in this country anticipates. The biggest obstacle to the U.S. rulers reversing the economic crisis of their system remains the working class in this country and its defensive organizations, the unions.

To reverse their declining rates of profit, the rulers need to take on the unions and workers' social wage—including Social Security, Medicare, unemployment insurance, and other programs that guarantee a modicum of a social safety net. But a direct showdown with working people over these questions is a battle the U.S. capitalists are not yet ready to fight.

The 1,000 meatpackers at the Smithfield plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina, who recently walked off the job to protest the firing of dozens of immigrant workers demonstrated in action the road forward for working people to counter these attacks.

When working people mobilize today to defend themselves from the bosses' attacks and use their collective power, they are planting the seeds for the building of a powerful, fighting labor movement tomorrow.

Day laborers win victory in Freehold, New Jersey

BY EDDIE BECK

FREEHOLD, New Jersey—In a victory for workers' rights, the Borough of Freehold has backed off from its attacks on day laborers, agreeing to settle a lawsuit filed by groups supporting immigrant rights.

The suit was filed in December 2003 after the Freehold town council voted unanimously to exclude workers from an area known as the "muster zone," where they gathered each morning to seek work. A city ordinance was adopted that threatened "loiterers"—along with "horn-blowers" and those accused of obstruction—with a fine of \$500 and 30 days in jail.

The lawsuit against the Borough of Freehold is one of several that have been filed in recent years by day laborers and their supporters to counter attacks by capitalist politicians and rightist groups across the country. The antilabor measures seeking to criminalize these workers include English-only local ordinances; penalizing companies or landlords for employing or renting to undocumented immigrants; giving local cops the power to check workers' immigration status; and turning over to federal immigration agents those without proper documents. Workers also face antiloitering laws and selective and discriminatory enforce-

ment of housing codes and vehicle and traffic legislation.

According to the Freehold settlement, the borough will no longer prevent the use of public property to pick up and discharge day laborers, or deny workers their free speech right to solicit jobs. The settlement calls for reimbursing \$33,000 to workers fined on loitering or other trumped-up charges and paying the plaintiffs' legal fees of \$245,000.

Day laborers interviewed said things have improved since the settlement was announced.

"It's good. Now the police don't bother us as much," said Julio, who asked that his last name not be used, as he waited for a job in front of a convenience store. "Before there were lots of inspections" of people's housing, he added. Originally from Oaxaca, Mexico, Julio said he had participated in several of the immigrant rights protests in Freehold, as well as one of the massive protests in New York City this past spring.

"We're out here because we can't find work anywhere else," said another worker, who declined to give his name as he waited for a job on a Saturday morning. "Women can find jobs cleaning or in the office, but if they didn't they'd be out here too," he explained. "And when we protest, we're here, side-by-side."

— ON THE PICKET LINE —

Bus drivers in London hold one-day strike for pay raise

LONDON—Some 2,500 members of the Transport and General Workers' Union at eight depots here went on strike Tuesday, November 14. They are demanding a wage increase of £0.57 per hour, to bring their hourly rate to £11 (£1=US\$1.89). "It's about time we had a strike," Koray Alpergin, shop steward at the Kings Cross depot, told the *Militant*. "There hasn't been one on Metroline for seven years or more. They keep promising things and we get very little. If they don't give us a better deal we'll strike again next Monday." The union has given notice of another strike on November 20.

—Jonathan Silberman and Celia Pugh

Unionists in south Korea join four-hour 'warning' strike

Some 138,000 workers from 193 local unions affiliated to the Korean Confed-

eration of Trade Unions (KCTU) in south Korea conducted a four-hour "warning" strike November 15, union officials reported. Among the demands the workers are raising is to stop repression against the trade unions, repeal new labor regulations that threaten job security, and halt the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement negotiations.

The unionists rallied in major cities across south Korea, including a demonstration in front of the National Assembly in Seoul. Auto workers organized by the Korean Metal Workers Federation joined the protest, halting production at Hyundai, Kia, and Ssangyong plants that day. Thousands of other government employees, teachers, taxi drivers, transportation, and social service workers joined the rallies and work-site protests. The KCTU has announced that unless its demands are met a broader indefinite strike will be launched November 22.

—Brian Williams



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Bus drivers picket Metroline depot in Holloway, London, November 14 during one-day strike for a pay raise.

Capitalist methods accelerate resistance by toilers in China

Below are excerpts from *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*, by Jack Barnes. They are taken from a talk given in June 1992. Copyright 1999 Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

BY JACK BARNES

Today, more and more toilers in China are being drawn out of the countryside and into factories, mines, and mills owned by the state and increasingly also by foreign and domestic capital. As this process unfolds, the breakdown of Stalinist apparatuses that we have seen in Europe and the former USSR will inevitably shake the deformed Chinese workers state as well.

It will take time, but class tensions and conflicts are already growing in China's cities and workplaces, as well as in the countryside. And when the day comes that a young and rapidly growing working class enters into combat in larger battalions, the Stalinists will find that their bloody suppression of the Tiananmen Square youth rebellion in 1989 cannot be endlessly repeated. The struggles that are coming, whatever their tempo and exact forms, will be larger and more explosive than anything in China since the revolution itself...

What is developing in China today is an accelerated expansion of capitalist methods and penetration by international finance capital—the growing sway of the law of value in southern China especially, as well as Shanghai and other coastal areas.

Many of you have probably read newspaper reports about the so-called Special Economic Zones in southern China, where much of the imperialist investment is concentrated. These zones are located in huge, and growing, population centers. The Shenzhen and other Special Economic Zones in Guangdong [Canton] Province and the Pearl River Delta, around Hong Kong, are in an area with about 80 million people. Companies based in Hong Kong are estimated already to employ as many as 3 million factory workers in this region.

Among Deng Xiaoping's pithy sayings of late was one this past January, during a visit to Guangdong. In another twenty years, Deng said, the province would become the "Fifth Small Dragon" of Asia, joining Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, and Hong Kong itself. Think of

the depth of the political bankruptcy! The main spokesperson of a supposedly socialist country says the goal they are pursuing—and are well along the road to achieving—is to become more like Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, and Hong Kong.

But that is the goal of the dominant wing of the bourgeois-minded bureaucratic caste in China. Desperately poor peasants are being drawn from the countryside and into the cities, where to survive they are forced to work long hours, under extreme speedup, for minimal wages in both state- and capitalist-owned factories. In the medium term, these conditions will permit a relatively rapid economic expansion...

The Japanese, U.S., and other capitalists investing in China think they have died and gone to heaven. They have most of the rights of capitalists, but the

state "handles" the workers for them. The state, including the Communist Party and its functionaries, makes sure the workers do not get out of line on the job, do not strike—do not do much except work very hard, for very long hours, for very little pay. It seems like a dream!

Of course, the dream will not last. As capitalist exploitation increases throughout China, so do strikes, peasant protests, and attacks on bosses. A few weeks ago, for example, the *New York Times* ran an article headlined, "Capitalist-Style Layoffs Ignite Sabotage and Strikes in China." The home of a Chinese bank director, a "reformer," had been firebombed after he had fired numerous workers. In another case, a factory boss known for "Western-style management" had been run over by a truck, and workers at the plant rejected

the government's proposal to honor him as a "martyr" for reform.

The article cited spreading wildcat strikes, sabotage, and smashing of machinery across China. The *Times* reporter noted that these "incidents suggest that opposition to fundamental changes is increasingly coming not only from octogenarian Communist hard-liners but also from many ordinary blue-collar workers."

Ignore the correspondent's imaginary bloc between angry workers and senile Stalinists. The resistance reported in the article is real, however. Workers in China will conduct more fights like these, and they will eventually link up with dissatisfied peasants and also win support from young people attracted to the working class as the force that can revitalize society. *That will be the real bloc.*

— 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO —



December 4, 1981

OTTAWA, Ontario — The largest demonstration in Canada's history took place here November 21, as some 100,000 trade unionists from both Quebec and English Canada braved snow and bitter cold to protest the economic policies of the Trudeau government...

The demonstration was initiated by the nearly three-million-member Canadian Labor Congress (CLC) to protest high interest rates for bank loans. It was also organized by the three major Quebec labor federations: the Quebec Federation of Labor (FTQ), the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN), and the Quebec Teachers Federation (CEQ). The New Democratic Party (Canada's labor party), and women's, farmers, senior citizens, and native organizations helped build the action...

Between 40,000 and 100,000 homeowners risk losing their homes before Christmas, according to a government study, because mortgage payments are too high to pay. Farmers are also losing their farms, and tenants are being hit by enormous increases in rent and face zero vacancy rates by 1983.



December 3, 1956

Despite a number of significant victories against the witch hunt in recent months, there is plenty of evidence that it is still operating with destructive power against the labor movement and within the labor movement.

The Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union, for example, has just been hit with a union-busting indictment of 14 of its leaders. The union officials are charged with "conspiring" to file false Taft-Hartley non-Communist affidavits. Mine-Mill is still fighting off the attack initiated July 1955 under the notorious Humphrey-Butler Communist Control Act of 1954. The Department of Justice's 1955 attack on Mine-Mill came as a brazen assist to the employers during the strike against the copper corporations.

Another red-baiting anti-union attack is being cooked up against the Int'l Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union on the West Coast. The Senate Internal Security Committee this week opens hearings on "Communist activities" in the Hawaiian Islands. The anti-union nature of the investigation can be gleaned from the fact that 40 ILWU leaders have been subpoenaed.



December 5, 1931

STAUNTON, Illinois — The campaign for the release of Tom Mooney has broken ground in the coal fields of Illinois. On the initiative of the St. Louis Branch of the Communist League of America (Opposition) and through the instrumentality of the St. Louis United Front Mooney Conference, the movement has got under way.

Twenty-six delegates, from eight U.M.W.A. locals representing approximately 5000 miners, the Communist League of America (Opposition) and the Communist Party responded to the call of the Staunton Pardon Mooney Club and met in the Staunton Labor Temple...

After disposing of preliminaries, the conference buckled down to business. The conference elected its officers and committees then proceeded to a discussion on methods for the beginning of systematic mass activity for the release of Mooney...

The conference was a success from many points of view. The delegations were representative ones, and militancy was outstanding.

'This magazine arms us to fight imperialism'

Continued from front page

composition of the speakers' panel and the audience, which included many young people. It is young people to whom the magazine is directed first and foremost, she said, as well as to cadres with decades of experience in the class struggle.

Waters also introduced Ulises Estrada, another well-known Cuban internationalist who worked alongside Guevara in Africa and throughout the Americas for many years. She urged those present to attend a forum the following evening at the book fair at which Villegas and Estrada were scheduled to speak.

"Without continuity, without the mix of experiences among generations of revolutionary fighters, without collaboration across borders—and without each new generation making the lessons of the modern international working-class movement its own—victory is far from certain," Waters said.

"It will be won at a much higher price than necessary, if at all. Those lessons have been paid for in blood by those who have gone before us. That's why having compañera Zuleica speaking from the perspective of the Cuban Revolution is so important, and why the presence of compañeros Ulises and Pombo means a great deal."

Using 'Nueva Internacional'

"We are living at the beginning of capitalism's long hot winter," Rodríguez said, as is pointed out in the article by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States, that is featured in *Nueva Internacional* no. 6.

The JVR leader referred to a section of the article that says: "Driven inexorably by the necessity to compete or die, capitalists, without exception, act pragmatically—on the basis that what *has been* happening will continue to happen. They seek to maximize profits by moving in directions that bring the highest returns."

This article, Rodríguez said, helps explain how the capitalists, including the owners of the banks, "have no scruples and use interest rates and other means to spread their tentacles everywhere in order to enrich themselves at the expense of the vast majority."

The JVR leader referred to struggles his organization has been part of in the state of Miranda, which surrounds Caracas, against attempts by Venezuela's pro-imperialist opposition to privatize hospitals and schools and to prevent implementation of programs such as Barrio Adentro. The latter, which means "Into the Barrio," is a program sponsored by the Venezuelan government that has brought volunteer doctors from Cuba offering quality health care, free of charge, into areas where working people have had little or no access to medical services.

Reading *Nueva Internacional* "helped me see that what we have faced in Miranda is not some local conflict," he said. "It has to do with much bigger forces in the world."



Militant photos by Linda Joyce



Above: General Harry Villegas (Pombo) of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces takes floor at November 15 presentation of *Nueva Internacional* issues 6 and 7 during international book fair in Caracas, Venezuela. Seated at table are panelists (from left) Oscar Rodríguez from Youth of the Fifth Republic (JVR); Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *Nueva Internacional*; and Zuleica Romay, vice-president of Cuban Book Institute. Left: Audience members buy copies of the magazines and Pathfinder books after the program.

Studying a magazine like *Nueva Internacional*, and applying in practice what it presents, is necessary to develop revolutionary youth cadres, Rodríguez said. He added that he will use the articles in the magazine, of which he purchased several copies, in study circles he is organizing in Miranda.

Lenin and electrification

Zuleica Romay of the Cuban Book Institute focused her remarks on the article, "Our Politics Start with the World," also by Barnes, in *Nueva Internacional* no. 7. She pointed to a statement at the opening of the article made in 1920 by V.I. Lenin, the central leader of the Bolsheviks and the October 1917 Russian Revolution. "Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the entire country," Lenin said.

This is important, Romay noted, because many people argue that what Lenin and other Marxists said and did decades ago is not relevant today because the world has changed so much. "But these are superficial changes," she said. "The world Lenin described in 1920 is fundamentally the same unjust world we live in today."

Romay said *Nueva Internacional* no. 7 explains how the Bolsheviks in Lenin's time used electrification "not only to achieve social development by applying important scientific and technological advances. Electrification for Russia, which was backward and its countryside was still marked by semifeudal conditions, meant the possibility for human beings to transform themselves into new men and women by creating new conditions of life and work."

This is applicable today, Romay said, in a world where one-third of humanity have no access to modern means of energy.

Nueva Internacional no. 7 also shows how technology is used by different classes to achieve different ends. "The magazine explains with savvy how the scientific advances of the 19th and 20th centuries were used for wars of conquest and to crush and colonize many peoples," Romay noted. She contrasted that reality to how the Cuban Revolution has used

technological advances to raise the cultural level of the entire population and to strive to build a society of cooperation and equality.

One of the points that surprised her in reading "Our Politics Start with the World," Romay said, is the centrality of the effort to close the cultural

"Without each new generation making the lessons of the modern international working-class movement its own—victory is far from certain."

gap between city and countryside in cementing an alliance of workers and peasants, which was a cornerstone of both the Russian and Cuban revolutions. This is important, she emphasized, "because many people argue that such an alliance is impossible today because imperialism has already eliminated the peasants."

A magazine like *Nueva Internacional* is not only essential for building a communist movement in an imperialist country like the United States, Romay said. "It is also useful in Cuba where we are good on action but we lack on theory, on explaining to those who march alongside us the hows and whys, and need this kind

of material," she said.

"We went through a period in Cuba when we presented Marxism as an ossified science, like the Bible," Romay said, "in which you didn't have to change anything, you simply had to do what it said."

During the book fair here, Romay noted, some friends have argued with her that it is no longer possible to make a socialist revolution today as they did in Cuba nearly half a century ago because conditions in the world are so different now. That's why the point in *Nueva Internacional* about not only the need but the possibility of emulating the Cuban Revolution in today's conditions "must be appreciated and studied," she said.

'Knowing your enemy'

At the invitation of Waters, who chaired the meeting, Harry Villegas took the floor when the discussion was opened. He underscored the importance of presenting *Nueva Internacional* at Venezuela's International Book Fair, as had been done at Havana's International Book Fair earlier this year, because it is a magazine about Marxist politics and theory.

"There is a military principle that you can't win in combat without knowing the characteristics of your enemy, in regular warfare and guerrilla warfare, which I experienced," Villegas said, and *Nueva Internacional* makes it possible to know the enemy. "The existence of such a magazine that analyzes imperialism in all its global manifestations is important to us all."

People have to take into account the experiences of all revolutions, Villegas said. "And you have to take into account your experience here," he noted, referring to Venezuela, "where what you have done has been peaceful. But I remember something Che said, which I haven't forgotten because I spent so much time at his side. And that is that the character of imperialism is not peaceful—you can't expect it can bring you peace. You always have to be prepared, analyze, and investigate under light of Marxism, which is objective and concrete."

A magazine like *Nueva Internacional*, he added, "arms us with the ideas essential for defending our revolution and fighting imperialism around the world."

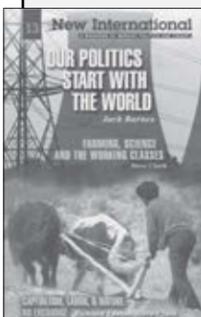
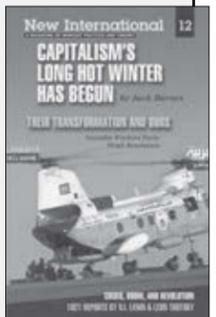
Nueva Internacional nos. 6 and 7 together were the top sellers from the Pathfinder booth at the book fair here, with 130 copies sold.

Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun

by Jack Barnes

in *New International* number 12

also includes "Their Transformation and Ours" and "Crisis, Boom, and Revolution" by V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky
Available in English, Spanish, French, and Swedish. \$16



Our Politics Start with the World

by Jack Barnes

in *New International* number 13

also includes "Farming, Science and the Working Classes" by Steve Clark and "Capitalism, Labor, and Nature: an Exchange" by Richard Levins and Steve Clark
Available in English, Spanish, and French. \$14

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Smithfield workers walk out

Continued from front page
clarify their immigration status.

For more than a decade, workers at this plant have been involved in efforts to organize into the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union. The facility employs 5,000 workers and slaughters up to 32,000 hogs a day.

Leading up to the protest, workers told the *Militant*, Smithfield had sent notices, known as “no-match” letters, to hundreds of employees saying their names and Social Security numbers did not match federal records. Workers were given 14 days to resolve the discrepancy. Firings began as the deadline came due.

On the Monday before the protest, “the company started pulling people into the office,” a packing line worker said in an interview. “They were firing people on the spot. Every day it was more. On Thursday morning, suddenly we noticed that hardly any boxes were coming down the line. On the radios they were shouting ‘They’re walking off the line!’ The supervisors were frantic—they couldn’t believe it.

“When I went on break, the parking lot was really crowded with people. It was truly a beautiful thing the way they united,” said the worker, a Black woman in her early 20s. Like other workers interviewed, she asked that her name not be used “because right now we’re fighting for the union.”

Roberto, a Mexican-born worker, said he was working on the kill floor when the protest started. “Nothing was coming down the line, so I asked around what was going on. The guys who unload the trucks said, ‘We’re not working, we’re walking out.’ So I walked out too,” he said.

Hundreds of workers gathered outside the plant, chanting in Spanish *¡Queremos justicia!* (“We want justice!”) and *¡Sí se puede!* (“Yes we can!”) Workers leading the walkout issued a statement demanding “No retaliation now or in the future for any worker participating in the fight for justice at Smithfield, including but not limited to points, demotion, or termination.” It also called for “an end to the unjust firing of Smithfield workers and

the timely rehire of all workers who have been unfairly terminated.”

Consuelo, a meat cutter on the night shift, was at home when the walkout began. On hearing the news she joined the protest. She said in an interview that she was glad to see UFCW organizers outside the plant because “they say they will support us.”

When the afternoon shift arrived, several hundred more joined the protest instead of going into work. While the majority of those refusing to work were Latin American immigrants, some Black and other U.S.-born workers participated as well.

The following day, November 17, hundreds of workers protested again outside the plant. By the end of the day, Smithfield agreed to discuss the workers’ grievances with representatives of the Catholic Church. Workers returned to the job Saturday.

According to a November 18 UFCW press release, the company agreed “to increase the time allowed for employees to respond to ‘no match’ letters,” that “employees who have been laid off for failure to resolve Social Security issues may return to work while they sort out these issues,” and that “no disciplinary actions of any kind will be taken against those employees who participated in the walkout.”

Smithfield plant manager Larry Johnson agreed to meet November 21 with a delegation elected by the workers.

The press release reported that the North Carolina NAACP, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and other religious and civil rights groups backed the workers’ demands.

Also fueling the anger of workers is the high injury rate due to job conditions and the abusive treatment by bosses. These issues have been at the heart of an ongoing campaign by the UFCW to organize the Tar Heel plant.

Keith Ludlum, a union supporter who herds hogs off the truck and to the kill floor, told *The Robesonian*, a local daily, that there is “no way an employee can [work] here very long without receiving permanent damage to their body and



Fayetteville Observer/Raul R. Rubiera

Packinghouse worker calls on her co-workers at Smithfield plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina to join November 17 walkout by 1,000 to protest firing of dozens of immigrant workers.

their joints.”

Workers report that a common cause of injury is using dull knives. Gene Bruskin, UFCW director of the Smithfield Justice campaign, told the press that in August workers circulated a petition in Spanish asking to be issued a second knife.

María, a 10-year veteran in the plant, told the *Militant* a supervisor had called her “lazy” and tried to get her fired. “But I’m a hard worker,” said María, who successfully challenged the victimization attempt. Then the boss “brought a pallet over with 10 boxes of meat that wasn’t cut right and said it was my fault and I would

have to pay for it. In the end, I didn’t have to pay for the meat, but she kicked me out of the department. In my new job I only got 28 hours, which isn’t enough, because I have a young son to feed.”

Workers’ efforts to organize the Tar Heel plant go back more than a decade. Union elections were held in both 1994 and 1997 amid widespread company harassment and intimidation, including beatings and arrests of union supporters. Although the UFCW lost both times, a federal appeals court ruling this year stated that Smithfield repeatedly broke the law during the two elections.

Venezuela youth group rallies for Chávez reelection campaign

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS
AND EMILY PAUL

CARACAS, Venezuela, November 16—More than 10,000 young people from across the country filled the Poliedro arena here today for an election campaign rally sponsored by the Youth of the Fifth Republic (JVR), which is affiliated with the governing party, the Movement of the Fifth Republic.

The featured speaker was President Hugo Chávez, who is seeking reelection in the December 3 vote. His main opponent is Manuel Rosales, governor of the oil-rich state of Zulia, who is backed by a coalition of pro-imperialist parties and sections of the capitalist class.

In addition to the JVR, the government’s National Youth Institute and a coalition of groups backing Chávez’s reelection were among the sponsors of the event. The electoral alliance includes the youth groups of the Socialist Party of Venezuela, National Independent Movement, Communist Party of Venezuela, and Patria Para Todos, as well as the Francisco de Miranda Front. The latter organizes youth who have studied social work in Cuba and then work in working-class and rural areas here.

Most of those who attended the rally were students from high schools, universities, technical schools, and military academies across the country. They included a contingent of about 100 students at a new medical school that the Venezuelan government opened two years ago in Barquisimeto, the capital of Lara state. The students were all seated in a prominent spot in the arena and stood out in their white coats.

“About 1,500 are enrolled at the school,” medical student Héctor Antonio Guerra said. “We are being trained to be part of the Barrio Adentro program, because when the government asked for volunteers very few Venezuelan doctors came forward. We are studying medicine to work alongside the Cubans when we graduate.”

Through Barrio Adentro (Into the

Barrio) the government has brought some 20,000 Cuban medical personnel to Venezuela. They operate clinics in working-class districts and rural areas offering dignified medical services free of charge to people who did not have access to health care in the past.

In his speech, Chávez emphasized that campaigning over the next two weeks should focus on winning more than 60 percent of the vote, not just winning reelection. He urged the youth to work toward building a political organization after the elections, not just an electoral group as the JVR largely is today. He quoted extensively from *Socialism and Man in Cuba* by Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara.

Musical performances and remarks by representatives of sponsoring groups and some of the guests preceded his talk.

Speakers included Marta Quiñones of the Francisco de Miranda Front in Amazon state, where the JVR is trying to build a base among the largely indigenous population, and Carlesis Ascaño, a student at the Central University of Caracas.

“Indigenous people have been subjected to murder, racism, and recent attempts to eradicate our culture,” said Quiñones in expressing her organization’s support for reelecting Chávez. “We now feel we have a chance to change that.”

Tania D’Amelio, national coordinator of the JVR and a deputy in the National Assembly, also spoke. After outlining activities aimed at securing a resounding victory for Chávez, she asked four people seated among 1,000 special guests in front of the platform to address the rally briefly from the floor.

The four guests were José Serpa, who helps coordinate the Barrio Adentro program in Lara; María Rosa Jiménez from Guárico, of the Francisco de Miranda Front; Christian Algedis Hernández, a leader of a student group in Caracas; and Christian Castro, who gave solidarity greetings on behalf of the Young Socialists in the United States.

5,300 Houston janitors win a union contract



Militant/Jacque Henderson

HOUSTON—After a one-month strike against five major cleaning companies, janitors here reached an agreement November 20 on their first union contract. The agreement will cover the 5,300 cleaners who organized into the Service Employees International Union last year. It stipulates wage increases from \$5.15 per hour to \$7.75 over three years; guarantees an increase in minimum work hours to six per night, up from four, over the three-year contract; and includes six paid holidays, two weeks of vacation, and medical coverage over the course of the next two years. Flor Aguilar, a janitor and founding leader of the organizing effort and the strike, told a rally celebrating the victory, “Today we can lift our heads up very high.” The crowd of 2,000 responded by chanting “¡Sí se pudo!”—Spanish for “Yes, we did it!”

—STEVE WARSHALL

'Can't build socialism using capitalist methods'

Below is an excerpt from an October 8, 1987, speech by Cuban president Fidel Castro, titled "Che's ideas are absolutely relevant today," at a ceremony marking the 20th anniversary of the death of Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara. It is part of *Socialism and Man in Cuba*, a pamphlet featuring a 1965 article by Guevara by the same title. This pamphlet is one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* for November.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

In the speech Castro describes the effort waged in the second half of the 1980s, known as the rectification process, in which the Cuban leadership mobilized working people to begin to reverse the mounting negative political consequences of economic planning and management policies Cuba had adopted in the early 1970s modeled on those of the bureaucratic Soviet regime. Copyright © 1989 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY FIDEL CASTRO

If Che had ever been told that one day, under the Cuban revolution there



Militant/Laura Garza

Voluntary workers in "Ernesto Che Guevara" Contingent packing bananas in Limoncito area, Holguín province, September 1994.

would be enterprises prepared to steal to pretend they were profitable, Che would have been appalled....

Were he to have seen a group of enterprises teeming with two-bit capitalists—as we call them—playing at capitalism, beginning to think and act like capitalists, forgetting about the country, the people, and high standards (because high standards just didn't matter; all they cared about was the money being earned thanks to the low norms), he would have been appalled....

Those paths I repeat—and Che knew it very well—would never lead us to building real socialism, as a first and transitional stage to communism.

But don't think that Che was naïve, an idealist, or someone out of touch with reality. Che understood and took reality into consideration. But Che believed in man. And if we don't believe in man, if we think that man is an incorrigible little animal, capable of advancing only if you feed him grass or tempt him with a carrot or whip him with a stick—anybody who believes this, anybody convinced of this will never

be a communist....

Che had great faith in man. Che was a realist and did not reject material incentives. He deemed them necessary during the transitional stage, while building socialism. But Che attached more importance—more and more importance—to the conscious factor, to the moral factor....

In essence—in essence!—Che was radically opposed to using and developing capitalist economic laws and categories in building socialism. He advocated something that I have often insisted on: Building socialism and communism is not just a matter of producing and distributing wealth but is also a matter of education and consciousness. He was firmly opposed to using these categories, which have been transferred from capitalism to socialism, as instruments to build the new society.

At a given moment some of Che's ideas were incorrectly interpreted and, what's more, incorrectly applied. Certainly no serious attempt was ever made to put them into practice, and there came a time when ideas diametrically opposed to Che's economic thought began to take over....

Now the [voluntary work] minibrigades have been reborn and there are more than 20,000 minibrigade members in the capital....

[They build] community projects such as special schools, polyclinics, day-care centers for the children of working women, for the family; in short, so many extremely useful things we are doing now and the state is building them without spending an additional cent in wages! That really is miraculous!

We could ask the two-bit capitalists and profiteers who have blind faith in the mechanisms and categories of capitalism: Could you achieve such a miracle? Could you manage to building 20,000 housing units in the capital without spending a cent more on wages? Could you build fifty day-care centers in a year without spending a cent more on wages, when only five had been included in the five-year plan and they weren't even built, and 19,500 mothers were waiting to get their children a place, which never materialized.

At that rate it would take 100 years! By then they would be dead, and fortunately so would all the technocrats, two-bit capitalists, and bureaucrats who obstruct the building of socialism....

Capitalists are very happy when they hear people talk about rent, profit, interest, bonuses, superbonuses; when they hear about markets, supply and demand as elements that regulate production and promote quality, efficiency, and all those things. For they say, "That's my kind of talk, that's my philosophy, that's my doctrine," and the emphasis that socialism may place on them makes them happy, for they know that these are essential aspects of capitalist theory, laws, and categories....

That's why on this, the twentieth anniversary, I'm making an appeal for our party members, our youth, our students, our economists to study and familiarize themselves with Che's political and economic thought.

November

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Oppose 'no-match' letters!

Working people everywhere should stand with the meatpackers at the Smithfield plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina, who are fighting to oppose the use of "no-match" letters to fire dozens of their co-workers. We should join in the call for unconditional permanent residency for all undocumented immigrants.

By mobilizing their collective power to stand up to company and government intimidation, the 1,000 workers who walked out of that giant plant November 16-17 set an example for all working people. They compelled the bosses to agree not to discipline anyone involved in the walkout and to take back the fired workers at least temporarily. Now they are in a stronger position to wage the next round.

The protesters, largely Mexican-born and other Latin American immigrants, welcomed the participation of U.S.-born workers. They spoke out against the bosses' abusive treatment and the brutal conditions, especially the line speed, that make injuries inevitable. In a plant that processes 32,000 hogs a day, workers' lives and limbs are sacrificed on the altar of the bosses' profits.

The fight at Smithfield against the victimization of immigrant workers has strengthened the years-long fight for a union at the plant. The firing of workers because of their legal status is a union issue, and should be backed by the entire labor movement.

The government sends "no-match" letters to companies "informing" them that some workers' Social Security numbers don't match federal records. Feigning innocence and hypocritically voicing concern about "not breaking the law," bosses use this as a club to try to divide and intimidate workers.

The U.S. employers and their government have launched such attacks in numerous workplaces

around the country. Related moves include the deployment of National Guard troops on the border with Mexico, police raids of workplaces, and local legislation aimed at criminalizing day laborers and other immigrants. The response to these and other attacks has been an unprecedented mobilization of working people in the streets. Millions took to the streets in April and May demanding amnesty for all the undocumented and declaring, "We are workers, not criminals!"

The historic wave of immigration of the past two decades has strengthened working people as a whole. It is internationalizing the working class, helping break down prejudices and divisions.

Another example of this strengthening is the recent victory by 5,300 Houston janitors who, after a month-long strike, won their first union contract. And in two cities—Freehold, New Jersey, and Mamaroneck, New York—day laborers recently pushed back efforts by the authorities to victimize them.

The purpose of no-match letters and other such measures is not to expel most undocumented workers. It's to maintain a large layer within the working class that has fewer rights and is more vulnerable to superexploitation.

We should reject the argument that immigrants "steal American jobs." There is no such thing as an American job—it's a job. The fight for jobs will be successful only if the labor movement rejects such divide-and-rule arguments and champions the demand for jobs for all.

It's true bosses use immigrant labor to try to push down the wages of all workers—that's the nature of competition, which is inherent to capitalism and its dog-eat-dog character. The only way to prevent that is to organize *all workers* into unions.

Labor's demands should be: Stop the use of no-match letters! No firings of workers at Smithfield! Amnesty now! Unconditional legalization of all immigrants!

Hundreds protest use of Taser gun on student by UCLA campus police

BY MICHAEL ORTEGA

LOS ANGELES—More than 500 students and other young people rallied November 17 at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) after campus police shot UCLA student Mostafa Tabatabaiejad repeatedly with a Taser stun gun. Tabatabaiejad, a 23-year-old Iranian-American student, was studying in the university library when campus cops ordered him to leave for not showing his student ID card. In removing him from the library, officers used the weapon, which fires electrified darts, on him a total of five times—including three while handcuffed, according to protestors.

Tabatabaiejad is suing the campus police department for brutal excessive force and false arrest. Tabatabaiejad's attorney, Stephen Yagman, stated that the student declined to show his ID card because he was singled out for his Middle Eastern appearance and was being racially profiled. "We're here to protest the excessive use of force," said Sabiha Ameen, president of the Muslim Students Association, at the November 17 rally. "We do not feel safe on campus anymore. This is why we are demanding an independent investigation be carried out with students and that the officers involved in the action be immediately suspended." The event was called by more than 50 student organizations and supported by campus organizations across the country.

A video made of the attack by a witness shows Tabatabaiejad saying he's going to leave and the repeated tasing by officers. "There's been a lot of outrage," said Negin Yaghinoot, a third-year student at UCLA. "In the video, you can see a girl ask the police for their badge numbers and they respond by



Andrew Hsieh/Daily Bruin

Some 400 students rallied outside the UCLA campus police department November 17 to protest use of the Taser on a student, Mostafa Tabatabaiejad.

threatening to Taser her too."

Midway through the rally, protestors decided to march to the university police headquarters carrying signs that read, "I am a student, Don't Taser me!" and chanting "U-C-P-D, You disgust me!" As they approached, police locked the doors, turned off the lights, and dressed in riot gear, according to *The Daily Bruin*, the UCLA student newspaper.

So far the officers involved have not been suspended nor put on leave. The day after the demonstration, UCLA acting chancellor Norman Abrams said that an independent investigation of the event would be launched, headed up by Merrick Bobb, who was also a part of the investigations of the Los Angeles police beating of Rodney King.

Kidnappings highlight factional fight in Iraq gov't

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—A recent string of kidnappings in Iraq highlight the ongoing factional struggle between wealthy Sunnis and Shiites to gain leverage in Iraq's government.

In Congressional testimony, Washington's top general in Iraq, John Abizaid, said an initial withdrawal of U.S. troops today would lead to more "sectarian violence" in Iraq and a larger number of U.S. troops will be needed to accelerate the training of Iraqi security forces.

Iraq's Shiite-dominated government issued an arrest warrant for one of the country's leading Sunni clerics, charging him with inciting violence and supporting terrorism.

In a separate development a U.S. soldier was sentenced to 90 years in prison after pleading guilty for his part in the rape and murder of a 14-year-old Iraqi girl and the killing of members of her family.

On November 18 U.S. and Iraqi troops raided sections of Sadr City, a working-class section of Baghdad that is mostly Shiite, in search of dozens of men kidnapped in broad daylight from the Ministry of Higher Education. The ministry is headed by a leader of the main bloc of Sunni-led parties in the government.

One witness said police stood by while a group dressed in police uniforms abducted some 150 men, Reuters reported. Most were released but 50 remain unaccounted for.

The kidnapping was widely believed to have been carried out by a militia loyal to Muqtada al-Sadr, according to an Associated Press dispatch. Al-Sadr's forces fought fierce battles with U.S. troops in several cities in southern Iraq two years ago, but members of his organization now head several ministries in the U.S.-backed government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

Washington has been pressuring al-Maliki to dissolve the militias, many of which are connected to political groups headed by Sunni and Shiite bourgeois forces. But al-Sadr is an important ally of al-Maliki's Dawa party within the Shiite governmental bloc that is headed by a rival group, the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq.

In testimony on November 15 before a Senate committee, Abizaid, head of the U.S. Central Command, said more U.S. troops might be needed in Iraq to accelerate the training of Iraqi security forces. There are more than 140,000 U.S. soldiers in Iraq.

Abizaid said even a phased withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq would increase "sectarian violence." He also said he thought the dismissal of former officials in Saddam Hussein's Baathist party regime, a process known as de-Baathification, had initially gone too deep.

On November 11, the day after an Iraqi court sentenced Hussein to death, the government also announced plans to reinstate thousands of members of his Baath party.

The Iraqi interior minister said November 17 that a warrant had been issued for the arrest of Harith al-Dhari, a leader of the main Sunni Muslim clerical association, the Association of Muslim Scholars. In response the group called on Sunni politicians to quit the government.

Alaa Maki, a prominent Sunni political leader of the Iraqi Islamic Party, called the arrest warrant a "politically weak decision coming from a weak government." Saleh al-Mutlak, a Sunni member of parliament and leader of the Iraqi Front for National Dialogue, said he planned to ask parliament to shut down until the government revokes the warrant.

Al-Dhari's home was raided by U.S. and Iraqi troops in 2004 and 2005. Recently he drew the ire of Iraqi government officials by calling the trial of Saddam Hussein illegitimate and expressing support for al-Qaeda.

Meanwhile, U.S. Army soldier James Barker was court-martialed in Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and sentenced to 90 years in prison after pleading guilty to taking part in the rape and murder of 14-year-old Abier al-Janabi and the killing of her family.

In a nine-page document Barker described how he plotted the attack on Abier and her family with other soldiers. They disguised themselves, cut through a fence, and sneaked into the home. Pfc. Steven Green herded Abier's family into a room and shot them. The soldiers alternated holding Abier down on the floor while raping her. Then Green raped and killed the girl, according to the document.

Barker is one of 16 U.S. soldiers sentenced to prison time for the deaths of Iraqi civilians. Under the deal Barker avoided the possibility of the death penalty and agreed to testify against other soldiers charged in the case. Barker would be eligible for parole in 20 years.