

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Marxist magazine draws interest at Cuba book fair  
—PAGE 8

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 73/NO. 14 APRIL 13, 2008

## Washington and Tokyo, threaten North Korea

BY BEN JOYCE

Washington and Tokyo have threatened to shoot down a North Korean rocket launch of a communications satellite if either of the imperialist powers believes it to actually be a ballistic missile. Pyongyang says that the rocket will carry the Kwangmyong-song 2 communications satellite to be used for peaceful purposes only.

Washington dispatched two Aegis-equipped U.S. warships into the area March 30 to monitor the launch. “Should it look like it’s not a satellite launch . . . we’ll be ready to respond,” said Adm. Timothy Keating, head of the U.S. Pacific Command last month.

The U.S. military carried out war exercises with the South Korean military involving more than 26,000 U.S. troops, 30,000 South Korean troops, and a U.S. aircraft carrier March 9–20. These war games were part of joint military exercises Washington has carried out with Seoul on and off since the 1950s and now each year since 1997.

Japanese defense minister Yasukazu Hamada ordered the deployment of land-to-air and sea-to-air missile

Continued on page 3

## World crisis sharpens capitalist rivalries

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

April 1—“The road to hell.” That is how the head of the European Union described the packages of measures implemented by the capitalist rulers in the United States to deal with the deepening economic crisis. The tone of the remark gives some insight into the sharpening tensions that will simmer behind orchestrated public courtesies at the meeting of the Group of 20, a forum dominated by the leading imperialist governments.

Among the issues in dispute is whether governments should pump more “stimulus” funds into their economies or focus on better regulation of financial institutions. Both approaches fail to get at the root of the crisis, which is a crisis of the capitalist system itself with declining profit rates, steep production cuts, and a rapid drop in trade.

The Czech Republic’s prime minister, Mirek Topolánek, who is also the current European Union president, blasted Washington’s economic policies in an address to the European parliament in Strasbourg, France, March 25. The U.S. government “is repeating mistakes from the 1930s,

Continued on page 7

## Israeli air strikes in Sudan meant as warning to Iran

BY SETH GALINSKY

Israeli air force planes have bombed three convoys in Sudan since the beginning of the year, according to ABC news, allegedly to stop Iranian arms shipments to Hamas in the Gaza Strip. The attacks also serve as a threat to Tehran that Tel Aviv could strike at Iranian nuclear facilities.

One bombing in Sudan in mid-January killed 39 people riding in 17 trucks, said Sudanese officials. A spokesperson for the Sudanese Foreign Ministry said the trucks were likely smuggling goods, but not weapons. Among those killed were Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants.

While not officially confirming the strikes, outgoing Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert said shortly after they were reported, “We operate everywhere we can hit terror infrastructure—in close places, in places further away.”

“There is no point in going into detail,” Olmert added, in comments clearly pointed at Iran. “Everybody can use their imagination. Those who need to know, know. And those who need to know, know that there is no

place where Israel cannot operate.”

Both Tel Aviv and Washington claim that Iran’s nuclear energy program is a cover for developing nuclear weapons, although Tehran states its program is to provide energy to develop its agriculture and industry.

During the Israeli assault against the Gaza Strip earlier this year,

Continued on page 9

## ‘Militant’ subscription drive on schedule, 342 sold in first week

BY PAUL MAILHOT

After the first week of the seven-week *Militant* subscription campaign, many areas are off to a good start, surpassing this week’s target.

In many cities, supporters of the *Militant* are helping to build actions for legalization of undocumented immigrants. Workers participating in those actions are glad to see a newspaper that is a voice for their struggle.

In Salinas, California, some 2,000 farm workers and their supporters demonstrated March 30 in a buildup

## Iraq and Afghanistan, Imperialist troops out!



U.S. Army photo/ Christopher Barnhart

U.S. and Romanian troops survey location for a base in Afghanistan, March 25.

## 4,000 more troops for Afghan war

BY DOUG NELSON

The White House March 27 announced what it described as its new war strategy in Afghanistan and Pakistan, where a U.S.-led military alliance faces a more difficult fight than in Iraq. The plan involves a further escalation of their more-than-seven-year war, sending additional troops and other resources.

Two aspects of the strategy are to continue to bolster the Afghan and Pakistani militaries and win over ma-

Continued on page 4

## Socialist campaign: ‘Troops Out Now!’

The following statement was released March 31 by the Socialist Workers candidates in the New York City elections—Dan Fein, for mayor; Tom Baumann, for Manhattan borough president; and Maura DeLuca, for public advocate.

We join with Socialist Workers candidates in local campaigns in other cities and states in saying not one penny, not one soldier for Washington’s wars in Afghanistan or Iraq; stop the mis-

Continued on page 12

## ‘Militant’ fund drive kicks off with \$99,000 in pledges

BY ANGEL LARISCY

The drive to raise \$105,000 for the *Militant* by May 19 is off to a good start. More than \$99,000 has been pledged so far. Supporters of the socialist newsweekly around the world

are reaching out to new and long-term readers and asking as many of them as possible to contribute to the paper.

Vicky Mercier, a subscriber from Toronto, responded right away to the appeal for funds with this message: “I’ve been enjoying the coverage on

Continued on page 3

### Also Inside:

N.Y. political activist fights against deportation	2
Campus in Scotland hosts women leader from Cuba	5
Turkish gov’t pushes to disarm Kurdish fighters	10
‘Zionism’ today, not 1948: reply to a reader	12

to upcoming May 1 actions for immigrant rights, reports Lea Sherman from San Francisco. Socialist campaigners who participated in the action carrying signs demanding legalization now and an end to raids and deportations got a positive response. Seven demonstrators bought introductory subscriptions to the *Militant*, while others picked up single copies and revolutionary literature.

Supporters of the *Militant* in Chicago, Los Angeles, and Miami also

Continued on page 4



# New York political activist fights against deportation

BY OLGA RODRÍGUEZ

NEW YORK—Some three dozen activists gathered at the Federal Building here March 25 to support Victor Toro, who was appearing before an immigration court on his petition for political asylum in the United States.

Toro was a leader of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left in Chile at the time of the 1973 U.S.-backed coup there. He was jailed in 1974 for his opposition to the military junta that took over, led by Gen. Augusto Pinochet. The junta imprisoned him for a year at the Chilean Air Force’s War Academy and then sent him to several other torture centers and prison camps. In 1976 his jailers put him on a plane without a passport, but with a paper that simply said, “valid to leave the country.” Then the government labeled him “disappeared.”

Toro ended up in Sweden and, after several years of moving from country to country, he entered the United States from Mexico in 1984. Immigration cops picked him up in 2007 and the government began deportation proceedings.

Moisés Mory, a Peruvian immigrant fighting deportation, joined the protest here in a show of solidarity with Toro. Mory was released on parole from Hudson County Jail in New Jersey January 2, after four and a half years of detention. The U.S. attempt to deport Toro is “illegal under international law,” Mory said, pointing out that Toro was declared “dead” by the Chilean government, so he “is basically a person without a country. The

U.S. government should give him legal status in this country.”

Community organizations Vamos a la Peña del Bronx and the Rebel Díaz Arts Collective called the protest and were joined by activists from the May 1st Coalition for Immigrant Rights, Socialist Workers Party, Universal Zulu Nation, Workers World Party, Peoples Video Network, Jane Guskin of Politics of Immigration, and activists from City College and Fordham University.

Toro, his daughter Rosa, and his wife Nieves Ayress, along with attorney Carlos Moreno were greeted by applause and cheers as they emerged from the Federal Building to join the protesters.

Moreno explained to the crowd that the judge set a “final hearing” for August 26. The judge had not yet reviewed documents filed in the case more than a year ago. Moreno said in August the court will “take testimony from all our witnesses,” including experts on the character of the Pinochet regime.

Moreno told reporters that Toro could possibly face deportation because of the rule that asylum seekers must apply within a year of entering the United States. He explained that Toro filed for asylum 22 years after he entered the country because he “had been the victim of torture in Chile under a regime that had been financed and supported by the U.S. government. . . . You couldn’t expect him to go the U.S. authorities to make an application for asylum.”

“Our struggle is for all the undocu-



Militant/Janice Lynn

Victor Toro (left), who escaped repression in Chile in 1976, joins rally in his support outside New York Federal Building March 25. With him is his attorney, Carlos Moreno.

mented,” Toro said in thanking those present for their support. He pointed to the impact of the economic crisis on all immigrant and native-born workers. “We have to be prepared for the war being waged against us, the workers, and join with all who are affected

by the crisis and are struggling.”

He called on his supporters to join in the May Day action in New York for legalization of all immigrants, the April 3 protest against bank bailouts, and the April 4 march against the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

## Older workers delay retirement as economic crisis intensifies

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Six out of 10 people over 60 years of age have decided not to retire yet because they cannot afford to, says a new survey. Soaring medical expenses, erosion of pension plans, and devastation of many workers’ retirement investments due to the capitalist economic crisis are among the factors.

CareerBuilder, an online job search site, conducted the survey. Based on a poll in late November 2008, it found that 73 percent of those interviewed thought they would have to work up to six years longer to have enough savings to retire, while 24 percent felt they could retire in a year or two. Eleven percent of respondents did not think they would ever be able to quit working.

According to the Bureau of Labor

Statistics, of those people 65 or older in 2008, there were 6.3 million still in the workforce, 16.8 percent of that age bracket. That’s up from 11.9 percent 10 years ago, reported the *Wall Street Journal*. The number of those working who are 75 or older jumped even more, from 4.7 percent of all people that age to 7.3 percent, or 1.3 million.

Along with being forced to work longer, elderly workers are more vulnerable to layoffs. The *Journal* said that the number of workers 75 or over who were unemployed in January was more than 73,000, up 46 percent from a year ago. The average time it takes an unemployed worker over 55 to get a new job is 25 weeks, the paper said, compared to 19 weeks for younger workers.

## THE MILITANT

### Halt militarization of U.S.-Mexico border!

*Under the pretext of fighting drug cartels, Washington is sending hundreds more cops to the U.S.-Mexico border and may also send National Guard troops. The ‘Militant’ brings you regular news about these moves and protests against them.*



U.S. Army national guardsman patrols U.S.-Mexico border in 2007.

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# Houston socialists: ‘Stop cop harassment of immigrants!’

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

HOUSTON—“We have to speak out about the use of cops and troops against immigrants and other workers at the border and here in Houston,” said Amanda Ulman, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Houston. Ulman was campaigning March 28 along with Steve Warshell, the party’s candidate for Houston controller, at two shopping centers in a working-class neighborhood in the city’s northwest.

President Barack Obama’s administration has announced that hundreds of agents will be added to the effort to assist the Mexican government in fighting drug cartels. According to the *Houston Chronicle*, Franceska Perot, agent with the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Firearms and Tobacco and Explosives in Houston, confirmed that a “large majority” of 100 federal gun agents that will be transferred to the border region in the next 45 days will be assigned to the Houston area.

Speaking at a Militant Labor Forum March 27, Ulman described a letter sent by Mayor Bill White to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 16 in which he asked to “expedite Houston’s request to enter into a 287(g) Jail Mutual Operating Agreement (MOA).”

The mayor’s letter said, “Please work with Chief Harold Hurtt of the Houston Police Department (HPD) and his command staff to speed the process for cross training our police officers and establishing necessary communications, technological and logistical connections to provide our officers with access to the IDENT database and any other resources available under the 287(g) program.”

“ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] is already in the Houston jails,” said Ulman. “This is a further step to give the cops more leeway to stop, harass, and arrest working people. It is aimed not only at intimidating immigrants but working people broadly.”

Police chief Hurtt outlined March 19 that his department has been instructed by the mayor since 2006 to follow procedures “for fingerprinting those who are arrested by HPD, espe-

cially if they stated they were not born in the U.S. and not U.S. citizens.” He continued, “The fingerprinting allows us to run their prints through the national Automated Fingerprint Identification System to determine if the arrestee has prints on file in the national database.”

Hurtt went on to explain, “Since October 2006 we have allowed ICE complete access to the city jails. The city jail is a temporary holding facility and those committing serious crimes are transferred to the Harris County jail.”

The Harris County Sheriff’s Office this past October became the first in the nation to participate in a program that gives jailers access to a database that has more detailed information on suspects’ immigration status through an automated fingerprint check. There have been several protests over the past two years demanding that ICE get out of Harris County jails.

“In order to try to get out of their deep crisis, the capitalists have to not only destroy massive amounts of capital to expand production, they have to dramatically reduce our standard of living, worsen working conditions for



Militant/Jacquie Henderson  
Amanda Ulman (left) Socialist Workers candidate for Houston mayor campaigning March 28

everyone,” Ulman explained. “They know that as working people we will resist. The militarization of the border is part of getting working people in the United States accustomed to seeing the military used against workers in the U.S. in preparation for class battles to come.”

The socialist candidates and their supporters have met a strong response as they campaigned in the streets and at the University of Houston campus this week. Much of this response has been favorable to their demand for the immediate legalization of all immi-

grants. Maria Cervantes, a 40-year-old house cleaner, met the candidates and their supporters at a shopping center across the street from their campaign office. She told them that she doesn’t accept the government’s claims that troops will make the border safe. “I think the militarization makes it more dangerous. We will keep coming across the border because we come here looking for work. We have to do that because the situation in our countries is very serious. We don’t have another option,” she said.

## ‘Militant’ fund drive gets off to a good start

**Continued from front page**  
the Havana book fair and I was very inspired by the remarks from the Cuban panelists on *Teamster Rebellion* and *Habla Malcolm X*. I always look forward to the arrival of the *Militant*! I would like to pledge \$100 toward the fund drive.”

The eight-week campaign helps raise money to cover basic operating expenses like printing, mailing costs, rent, and equipment, as well as travel for covering events like the recent Havana International Book Fair. The chart on this page shows the current pledges and the amount collected so far.

“We raised \$2,355 in pledges this past weekend in North Carolina,” reports Rachele Fruit, a sewing machine operator who is the organizer of the fund campaign in Atlanta. *Militant* readers in North Carolina organized a dinner where Fruit gave a talk on the value of the *Militant* and what it shows about the developing resistance by working people in the

face of the worldwide crisis of capitalism. Readers also discussed the paper’s coverage of the Havana book fair and the important discussions in Cuba about working-class struggles in the United States.

Fruit says one of the participants was a North Carolina A&T student who met socialist campaigners one week earlier at a conference of the National Council of Black Studies. At the dinner she bought a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *New International* no. 14 featuring the article “Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X.”

Atlanta supporters are holding a fund-drive dinner and panel discussion April 4 that will feature Socialist Workers Party leader Dave Prince. Similar meetings focusing on world politics today are planned the same weekend in Los Angeles, with SWP leader Norton Sandler and in Vancouver, Canada, featuring Michel Prairie, Communist League candi-

date for mayor of Montreal. Supporters will be holding meetings in many more cities in the coming weeks. As campaigners sell subscriptions in the coming weeks, talking to everyone about how they can help with a contribution—no matter how modest—will increase the number of workers who make possible the coverage you can find nowhere else. To make a contribution or find out about a fund meeting in your area, contact a distributor listed on page 6 or write directly to the *Militant* at the address on page 2.

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

**CALIFORNIA**  
**San Francisco**  
**Jew-Hatred and Conspiracy Theories—A Working-Class Response.** Speaker: Andrea Morrell, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 10. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

**GEORGIA**  
**Atlanta**  
**U.S. Troops Out of Afghanistan and Pakistan!** Speaker: David Ferguson, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 10. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 465 Boulevard SE, Suite 201A. Tel.: (404) 627-3704.

**MINNESOTA**  
**Minneapolis**  
**Film Showing: “At the River I Stand”—The Story of the 1968 Memphis Sanitation Workers’ Strike.** Fri., April 10, 7:30 p.m. 1311 1/2 E. Lake St., 2nd Fl. Tel.: (612) 729-5861.

## Washington threatens N. Korea

**Continued from front page**  
interceptors March 27, reported the *Financial Times*. Asserting that his government wants North Korea to cancel its satellite launch, Hamada said, “We will make sure to eliminate anything that may cause us any damage.” Tokyo is mobilizing its military, sending batteries of Patriot missile interceptors to the northern region of Japan, and deploying two warships equipped with SM-3 antiballistic missiles.

In addition to Washington’s efforts to restore its monopoly on nuclear weapons capabilities, the campaign of the U.S. government and its allies against North Korea is part of more than 50 years of hostility stemming from Washington’s defeat by the

workers and peasants of Korea in the wake of their socialist revolution in the 1950s. Since the 1950–53 Korean War, Washington has imposed the division of the peninsula along the 38th parallel as well as a variety of economic sanctions and travel restrictions over more than five decades. Washington also has about 28,000 U.S. troops stationed in South Korea.

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THE MILITANT

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\$105,000 ‘Militant’ Fund Drive March 21–May 19	
Country	Quota
UNITED STATES	
Atlanta	\$8,000
Boston	\$2,800
Chicago	\$9,000
Des Moines, IA	\$1,900
Houston	\$3,000
Los Angeles	\$8,800
Miami	\$3,300
New York	\$15,500
Newark, NJ	\$3,200
Philadelphia	\$3,300
San Francisco	\$13,000
Seattle	\$7,000
Twin Cities, MN	\$6,600
Washington, D.C.	\$4,500
Total U.S.	\$89,900
Canada	\$5,000
New Zealand	\$2,500
Australia	\$1,050
Sweden	\$400
UNITED KINGDOM	
Edinburgh	\$500
London	*
International Total	\$99,350
* Have not yet adopted a quota	



Troops to Afghan war

Continued from front page  
jor sections of the Taliban. In the case of the latter, Washington aims to draw on counterinsurgency lessons from the Iraq war to separate those Taliban forces with whom they believe they can reach a peace agreement and will recognize the U.S.-backed Afghan government from those that refuse to break with al-Qaeda.

In outlining the plan President Barack Obama said he would send roughly 4,000 troops to Afghanistan to accelerate the training of new Afghan soldiers. This is in addition to the 17,000 U.S. troops he authorized earlier this year. The Afghan army is projected to increase from 80,000 to 134,000 by 2011. Total U.S. forces are slated to reach about 68,000 in 2009, according to U.S. defense secretary Robert Gates.

Under a United Nations–brokered agreement in Bonn, Germany, following the overthrow of the Taliban in 2001, a new Afghan army of 70,000 was to be established. This was achieved in early 2008 under the Bush administration—the force mushroomed from less than 2,000 in March 2003 to 76,000 by May 2008. In January 2008 the goal was increased to 86,000, and then revised again to 134,000 in October.

The Dutch government plans to end its mission in the southern Afghan province of Uruzgan after 2010. It left open the possibility of keeping some presence in other parts of the country. Dutch development minister Bert Koenders an-

nounced the government would restart economic aid to Pakistan, which was suspended in 2007.  
U.S. military spending in Afghanistan, currently at about \$2 billion a month, is to increase by about 60 percent this year. Washington will combine this military escalation, Obama said, with “a dramatic increase in our civilian efforts,” as part of laying the groundwork to divide the Taliban.

Counterinsurgency

In addition to increasing their firepower with more boots on the ground, U.S. officials say they have shifted their strategy to decrease the number of civilians killed and place greater emphasis on securing the population from Taliban attacks.

The officials say the plan includes some development projects in Afghanistan and northwest Pakistan where roads are scant and the vast majority of the population lacks access to basic necessities such as clean water, adequate food, and education. Washington is pressing its allies—particularly those who provide little or no troops—to supply funding and personnel for these projects.

With this approach the U.S. director of national intelligence, David Blair, said he believes some two-thirds of Taliban fighters can be convinced to lay down their arms. The new U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan, Karl Eikenberry, pointed out March 26 that a substantial portion of the current Afghan government had



Militant/Willie Cotton  
March 21 demonstration in Washington, D.C., against U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

been Taliban at one time.  
Washington has also increasingly relied on various wealthy “warlords” in parts of the country who employ their own militias. Washington’s relationship with these forces, many of whom amassed their fortunes in the opium trade, goes back to the war against Soviet occupation in Afghanistan in the 1980s where they fought as part of the U.S.-backed rightist Mujahideen forces.

Washington is also seeking to squeeze the Taliban’s source of funds and support by disrupting money flows from the opium trade in Afghanistan, as well as from their ruling-class patrons in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere.

Washington is set to triple economic aid to Pakistan to \$1.5 billion a year and is pressing other nations to follow suit, particularly Pakistan’s allies in China and the Gulf. The U.S. government has provided \$10 billion in military aid to Pakistan since 2001.

Following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, the Pakistani government

turned against and went to war with elements of the Taliban on its own soil.

In addition to working to get support from China and Gulf states, Washington is seeking to work closer with the governments of India, Iran, and Russia. “In 2001, in 2002, we should not forget, Iran provided critical assistance to helping us stabilize Afghanistan,” Sen. John Kerry said March 26.

Iranian deputy foreign minister Mahdi Akhundzadeh took part in an international conference March 31 in the Netherlands on the U.S.-led Afghan war and met with Richard Holbrooke, U.S. special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In Pakistan the Taliban control whole swaths of the country’s northwest mountainous region. There, competing factions of the Taliban based in the southern part of the country’s Federally Administered Tribal Areas on the Afghan border have come together to combat U.S.-NATO forces and prepare for what they predict will be a “very bloody” year.

‘Militant’ subscription drive

Continued from front page  
participated in actions this week in defense of immigrants, where workers and young people appreciated the paper’s stand against the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border.

In Miami, socialist workers are also making a concerted effort to reach out

to Black workers through door-to-door sales teams in the African American community of Liberty City, where the Socialist Workers campaign headquarters is located.

Helen Meyers, a meat packer at the Tyson plant in Perry, Iowa, reports that three coworkers bought subscriptions to the *Militant* last week. One of them decided to subscribe to the paper after a long discussion about the need to transform the unions into fighting instruments for the working class.

In Chicago, Betsy Farley reports that socialist workers at a large meat-packing plant in the city have set a goal of selling 10 subscriptions to coworkers during the drive.

As the bosses and their government respond to the economic crisis of capitalism by relentlessly driving down our standard of living, workers will be looking for the tools they need to understand this crisis and fight back. The *Militant* subscription campaign is helping to advance the discussion with those vanguard workers and young people.

New subscribers are encouraged to let us know what they think about the paper and to help get it around. If you would like to help, contact local distributors of the *Militant* listed on page 6.

‘Militant’ Subscription Drive

March 21 – May 12, 2009 Week 1			
Country	Quota	Sold	%
UNITED STATES			
Boston	60	15	25%
Newark, NJ	75	18	24%
San Francisco	150	29	19%
Chicago	120	21	18%
Seattle	101	18	18%
Atlanta	160	23	14%
Los Angeles	125	18	14%
Twin Cities, MN	140	19	14%
Des Moines, IA	130	17	13%
Houston	95	11	12%
Miami	150	16	11%
New York	280	32	11%
Washington, DC	70	6	9%
Philadelphia	75	6	8%
Other		1	
Total	1731	250	14%
Canada	115	14	12%
UNITED KINGDOM			
Edinburgh	35	5	14%
London	80	29	36%
Total	115	34	30%
New Zealand	70	16	23%
Australia	55	23	42%
Sweden	20	5	25%
International Total	2106	342	16%
Should Be	2150	307	14%

N.Y. socialist speaks out against cutbacks



Militant/Janice Lynn  
NEW YORK—Tom Baumann, Young Socialist member and Socialist Workers Party candidate for Manhattan borough president, speaks at a March 25 protest at Hunter College against budget cuts, tuition hikes, and transit-fare increases. More than 100 students and workers attended. Strikers from the Stella D’oro bakery, who have been on strike for more than seven months also spoke, along with students from several city colleges and others.

“My campaign opposes the budget cuts and any increase in tuition,” Baumann said. “Working people need our own party—one that starts with our own class interests. When elected, I will stop interest payments to the bondholders, and instead enact a public works program to put millions to work at union scale. I will shorten the workweek with no cut in pay to spread the available work around.”

The New York SWP campaign is also running Dan Fein for mayor and Maura DeLuca for public advocate.

—JANICE LYNN



# Campus in Scotland hosts women leaders from Cuba

BY PAMELA HOLMES

EDINBURGH, Scotland—Some 40 people attended a public meeting at the University of Edinburgh March 19 to hear Carolina Amador Pérez of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) and Gilda Chacón Bravo of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers. They were in Scotland as part of a three-and-a-half-week tour of the United Kingdom organized by the Cuba Solidarity Campaign.

The meeting, titled “Women in Cuba: Celebrating 50 years of the revolution,” was chaired by Dr. Fiona Mackay, senior lecturer at the School of Social and Political Science and convener of the Gender & Politics Research Group. The meeting was cohosted by the research group and Women of the World student society in collaboration with the Scottish Cuba Solidarity Campaign.

Amador and Chacón described the gains made by women—both as women and as workers—as a result of the revolution. Amador said that before the revolution triumphed in 1959 women were 12 percent of the workforce—8 percent in domestic service and home sewing, and 4 percent as teachers, nurses, and secretaries. Many women were forced into prostitution. Today women comprise 46 percent of the workforce and occupy 38 percent of leading posts. They represent 66 percent of skilled technicians, 64 percent of doctors, and 53 percent of university lecturers. Women’s unemployment rate is down to 1.9 percent. “A majority of internationalist volunteers are women,” Chacón noted.

“Revolution is a constant transforma-

tion,” said Amador, referring to discussions at the Eighth Congress of the FMC in Havana held March 7–8. The congress discussed the challenges ahead, including those raised by Cuban president Raúl Castro.

Addressing the closing session, he urged the 900 delegates to struggle “with more steadfastness than ever . . . to occupy decision-making positions in the economic, political, and social life of the country.” He stated, “It’s a shame that with all the advances made by women . . . they are so little represented in leadership positions.” Women are 43 percent of elected members of the National Assembly and hold more than one-third of the presidential posts at provincial level. The reorganization of several government ministries just prior to the FMC Congress saw three women appointed out of nine new ministers.

Chacón described the workplace assemblies that took place throughout the



Militant/Anne Howie

Carolina Amador Pérez, left, of Federation of Cuban Women and Gilda Chacón Bravo of Central Organization of Cuban Workers speak at University of Edinburgh March 19.

country to discuss changes to the Social Security law, which raise the retirement age to 60 for women and 65 for men from 55 and 60 respectively. The change was approved by 94 percent of the 3.4 million union members. “We are workers and the owners of the means of production,” she said. “We don’t need permission to organize a union and the government has to discuss with the

unions,” Chacón said.

A lively question-and-answer session covered workers’ rights and the voluntary nature of union membership, the role of women in the revolution, and political campaigns taking on prostitution and homophobia. This was followed by nearly two hours of informal discussion with the speakers around the bookstalls and later in a nearby student bar.

## Kansas doctor acquitted in antiabortion case

BY JANICE LYNN

In a victory for a woman’s right to choose, jurors in Wichita, Kansas, took just 45 minutes March 27 to acquit Dr. George Tiller on charges that he broke a Kansas law restricting how late-term abortions should be handled.

Women’s Health Care Services, which Tiller runs, is one of only three clinics in the United States that perform late-term abortions, according to the *New York Times*. Hundreds of women, who have no access to abor-

tion services in their home states, travel to Wichita to obtain abortions. Antichoice groups have been trying for decades to shut down the clinic.

The clinic has been a target of violent attacks by antiabortion groups. In 1986 a bomb exploded on the clinic’s roof. In 1991, the clinic was the target of summer-long protests. In 1993 Tiller was shot in both arms by an antiabortion assailant. Protests continue there almost daily. Antiabortion protesters attended the four-day trial, demon-

strated outside the courthouse, and drove a truck around the block displaying large photos of aborted fetuses and signs reading, “Tiller the Killer.”

Tiller was accused of having an improper financial relationship with Dr. Ann Kristin Neuhaus, who in 2003 provided the second opinion in 19 cases. If convicted he could have faced one year in prison and a fine of \$2,500 for each count.

Minutes after the acquittal, the state’s Board of Healing Arts, which licenses and regulates physicians, announced it was considering a complaint concerning 11 of the same abortions that had been addressed during the trial. The board could fine Tiller or suspend or revoke his license. No hearing dates were set.

“The antichoice forces are not going to go away easily, but this will end—and will end in our favor,” said Peter Brownlie, president of Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri.

## Amnesty International: U.S. visas for Cuban 5 wives!

BY BEN JOYCE

Amnesty International issued a statement March 25 calling on Washington to issue visas to two of the wives of the five Cuban revolutionaries who have been unjustly held in U.S. jails for more than a decade. It is another indication that the case of these five working-class fighters, known as the Cuban Five, is gaining attention.

The March 25 statement condemns the refusal by the U.S. government to admit Adriana Pérez and Olga Salanueva, wives of Gerardo Hernández and René González respectively. The two women have been denied visas to see their husbands nine times.

“In the case of prisoners whose families live outside the USA, indefinite or even permanent denial of visits from the prisoner’s immediate family is a severe deprivation to the individual,” says the March 25 statement. “Amnesty International urges the US government to once again consider granting temporary visas to the two women for visitation purposes.”

Hernández and González, along with Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, and Fernando González, have been locked up since September 1998. They had been gathering information for the Cuban government on right-wing groups of Cuban exiles based in Florida that have a history of carrying out violent attacks on Cuba with the support of Washington.

The FBI violated many of their

constitutional rights, including wiretapping and illegal search and seizure. They were tried in front of a jury subjected to threats by counter-revolutionary forces. During the trial, the prosecution used secret evidence that the defense was not permitted to see. The five received convictions

on frame-up “conspiracy” charges, which can carry substantial sentences while requiring very little evidence.

Hernández is currently serving two life sentences plus 15 years on these charges, which includes “conspiracy to commit murder,” while González is serving a 15-year sentence.

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



April 13, 1984

In a further escalation of U.S. intervention in North Africa, Washington has rushed new military aid to the Sudanese government of Pres. Gaafar al-Nimeiry.

It has done so to bolster Nimeiry’s proimperialist regime against domestic opposition forces—including a resurgence of rebel actions in the south—as well as to threaten the government of Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi in neighboring Libya.

This stepped-up imperialist involvement in the Sudan fits in with a broader pattern of U.S. threats, provocations, and direct acts of aggression against Libya. The Sudan plays a strategic role in Washington’s interventionist plans in North Africa and the Middle East. The Nimeiry regime played a key role in backing the CIA-financed army in Chad and has made threats against Ethiopia.



April 13, 1959

A top executive of a Maryland engineering company was fired from his job after Navy officials ruled him a “security risk.” The evidence officially cited against him included the secret testimony of an unnamed friend.

The justices of the Supreme Court reportedly smiled when they heard that this kind of “evidence” from faceless informers is used by government boards to screen workers out of their jobs. Under the federal security program, however, it can happen to any of three million workers in private plants holding government contracts.

The security program permits government bureaucrats to fire anyone they think might be associated with an organization arbitrarily branded as “subversive” by the Attorney General.



April 14, 1934

On Saturday, April 7, the streets of Brownsville and East New York resounded to the march of 500 indignant unemployed workers. Most of them having been recently fired as a result of the discontinuation of the CWA [Civil Works Administration] dole agency. The demonstrators, enraged against the “New Deal” government and its hunger program, marched through the streets, shouting militantly for adequate relief, an anti-eviction law and unemployment insurance.

The demonstration having reached Loew’s Square, it halted and held an open air meeting, which was addressed by the delegates who were elected to visit the assemblymen and aldermen of the community. This demonstration was only the beginning of an extensive organizational campaign inaugurated by the Workers Unemployed Union.



# How imperialist ‘aid’ blocks development in Africa

Printed below is an excerpt from *We Are Heirs of the World's Revolutions*, a collection of speeches by Thomas Sankara, leader of the Burkina Faso revolution. The French edition is one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* for April. A popular uprising on Aug. 4, 1983, in the former French colony in West Africa, then called Upper Volta, brought to power a revolutionary government that carried out an ambitious program of land reform, reforestation to stop the advance of the desert and to counter famine, broad measures aimed at women's emancipation, and a fight against imperialist oppression and capitalist exploitation. Sankara was assassinated on Oct. 5, 1987, during a military coup that destroyed the revolutionary government. The piece below is from a speech by Sankara to the UN General Assembly on Oct. 4, 1984. Copyright © 2002 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY THOMAS SANKARA

We represented a wondrous condensation, the epitome of all the calamities that have ever befallen the so-called developing countries. The example of foreign aid, presented as a panacea and often heralded without rhyme or reason, bears eloquent witness to this fact. Very



Ernest Harsch

Peasants rally in October 1987 in Pibaoré, Burkina Faso. Banner reads: “Farmers of Burkina Faso: hoes yesterday, hoes today, machinery tomorrow.”

few countries have been inundated like mine with all kinds of aid. Theoretically, this aid is supposed to work in the interests of our development. In the case of what was formerly Upper Volta, one searches in vain for a sign of anything having to do with development. The men in power, either out of naiveté or class selfishness, could not or would not take control of this influx from abroad, understand its significance, or raise demands in the interests of our people.

In his book, *Le Sahel demain* [The Sahel of tomorrow], Jacques Giri, with a good deal of common sense, analyzes a table published in 1983 by the Sahel Club, and draws the conclusion that because of its nature and the mechanisms in place, aid to the Sahel helps only with bare survival. Thirty percent of this aid, he stresses, serves simply to keep the Sahel alive. According to Jacques Giri, the only goal of this foreign aid is to continue developing nonproductive sectors, saddling our meager budgets with unbearably heavy expenditures, disorganizing our countryside, widening our balance of trade deficit, and accelerating our indebtedness.

Just a few images to describe the former Upper Volta: 7 million inhabitants, with over 6 million peasants; an infant mortality rate estimated at 180 per 1,000; an average life expectancy limited to 40 years; an illiteracy rate of up to 98 percent, if we define as literate anyone who can read, write, and speak a language; 1

doctor for 50,000 inhabitants; 16 percent of school-age youth attending school; and, finally, a per capita Gross Domestic Product of 53,356 CFA francs, or barely more than 100 U.S. dollars.

The diagnosis was clearly somber. The root of the disease was political. The treatment could only be political.

Of course, we encourage aid that aids us in doing away with aid. But in general, welfare and aid policies have only ended up disorganizing us, subjugating us, and robbing us of a sense of responsibility for our own economic, political, and cultural affairs.

We chose to risk new paths to achieve greater well-being. We chose to apply new techniques. We chose to look for forms of organization better suited to our civilization, flatly and definitively rejecting all forms of outside diktats, in order to lay the foundations for achieving a level of dignity equal to our ambitions. Refusing to accept a state of survival, easing the pressures, liberating our countryside from medieval stagnation or even regression, democratizing our society, opening minds to a world of collective responsibility in order to dare to invent the future. Shattering the administrative apparatus, then rebuilding it with a new kind of government employee, immersing our army in the people through productive labor and reminding it constantly that without patriotic political education, a soldier is only a potential criminal. Such is our political program.

On the level of economic management, we're learning to live modestly, to accept and impose austerity on ourselves in order to be able to carry out ambitious projects. Thanks to the example of the National Solidarity Fund, which is financed by voluntary contributions, we're already beginning to find answers to the harsh questions posed by the drought. We have supported and applied the Alma Ata principles by widening the range of primary health-care services. We've adopted the GOBI FFF Strategy recommended by UNICEF as our own, making it government policy.<sup>1</sup>

Through the United Nations Sahel Office (UNSO), we believe the UN should enable the countries affected by the drought to set up a medium- and long-term plan to achieve food self-sufficiency.

To prepare for the twenty-first century, we have launched a huge campaign to educate and train our children in a new kind of school, financed by the creation of a special “Teach our children” raffle. Through the salutary action of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, we have launched a vast program to build public housing (500 units in three months), roads, small reservoirs, and so on. Our economic aspiration is to create a situation where every Burkinabè can at least use his brain and hands to invent and create enough to ensure him two meals a day and drinking water.

We swear, we proclaim, that from now on nothing in Burkina Faso will be done without the participation of the Burkinabè. Nothing that we have not first decided and worked out ourselves. There will be no further assaults on our sense of decency and our dignity.

1. The Alma Ata principles of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) emphasized proper nutrition, safe water, sanitation systems, maternal and child health care, immunization, and a reserve of basic medicine. UNICEF's GOBI FFF Strategy, focused on women and children, includes treating diarrhea-caused dehydration with an inexpensive solution of clean water, glucose, and salts; breastfeeding; immunization against six major communicable diseases; and education.

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April

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# Justice Dept. asserts right to ‘state secrets’

BY SETH GALINSKY

The U.S. Justice Department has warned a federal judge that it could “spirit away” top-secret documents in the court’s possession, if the judge refuses to dismiss a case brought by the al-Haramain Islamic Foundation, the *Washington Post* reported March 25.

“Any way you look at it, it’s pretty remarkable,” Jon Eisenberg, an attorney for the foundation, told the *Post*. “This is an executive branch threat to exercise control over a judicial branch function.”

On February 27 the federal appeals court in San Francisco rejected the Justice Department’s request for an emergency stay in the case to protect “state secrets.” According to the *Post*, this is the second time since Barack Obama became president that the department has asked that evidence be excluded in a civil case on grounds

of “national security.”

Previous U.S. presidents, including William Clinton, George W. Bush, and James Carter have used similar arguments.

In early 2004 the FBI searched the al-Haramain charity’s headquarters in Ashland, Oregon, and the following day the Treasury Department froze its assets, claiming it was a terrorist front.

Government officials later accidentally sent the charity’s attorneys a classified phone surveillance log showing that al-Haramain board members and some of its attorneys had been wiretapped.

In 2006 lawyers and charity officials sued, arguing that the secret log proved their phone and e-mail communication had been spied on without court warrants, in violation of the right to free speech.

In its February 27 filing the Justice



Pete Seda (left), head of Al-Haramain Islamic Foundation, speaks Sept. 11, 2002, at Southern Oregon University. Al-Haramain Islamic Foundation, a Saudi charity, was spied on by the FBI, who claims the organization is a terrorist front.

Department asserts that the judge lacks authority to grant the charity’s lawyers access to classified information “when the executive branch has denied them such access.”

The *New York Times* noted March

26 that the Obama administration is “moving to solidify . . . counterterrorism” as the top priority of the Justice Department and the FBI. According to the *Times*, Attorney General Eric Holder recently told reporters that while more prosecutors and agents will be hired for the “traditional” crime-fighting side of the Justice Department, those increases will not be made “at the expense of the national security component.”

FBI Director Robert Mueller urged Congress March 25 to renew measures of the Patriot Act that expire in December. He told the Senate Judiciary Committee that the FBI had used the act to gain access to private business records—without notifying alleged “suspects”—220 times between 2004 and 2007. A “roving” wiretaps provision, under which one warrant can authorize surveillance on multiple phones and computers, was used 147 times. It has eliminated “an awful lot of paperwork,” Mueller said.

## World crisis sharpens capitalist rivalries

Continued from front page

such as wide-ranging stimuluses, protectionist tendencies and appeals, the Buy American campaign,” he said. “All these steps, their combination and their permanency, are the road to hell.”

Protectionist measures by European governments are also on the rise. Steps taken by the European Union (EU) include a ban on imports of U.S. beef containing hormones. In mid-March the EU imposed stiff tariffs on imports of biodiesel fuel from the United States.

Topolanek’s comments come as government representatives from the Group of 20 nations prepare to meet in London April 2. The G20 includes the leading imperialist powers—Canada, the European Union, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States—as well as Australia, Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, and Turkey. These countries account for 85 percent of worldwide production.

The EU president’s comments struck a chord among government officials in a number of other European nations, including France, Italy, and Spain, where no U.S.-style “stimulus” packages have been implemented.

In Germany, Prime Minister Angela Merkel has rejected calls for further stimulus spending. The government is already required to provide unemployment benefits, covering two-thirds of workers’ wages when the bosses lay off or force employees into shorter work-weeks.

According to the German Federal Labor Office, some \$2.85 billion will be spent for unemployment benefits this year for more than a quarter of a million workers, up from \$270 million last year. This includes nearly 70,000 employees at the Daimler auto company. In February, some 17,000 companies requested these government wage subsidies for 700,000 workers. The official unemployment rate in Germany is now 8.1 percent or 3.5 million workers.

**IMF bailout funds to Eastern Europe**

With rising threats of economic collapse, the International Monetary

Fund is increasing bailout funds to governments in Eastern Europe. The fund, which is bankrolled by Washington, Tokyo, and the EU, provides loans tied to stiff austerity demands to reduce government budget deficits with cuts in wages and social expenditures. Over the last two weeks of March, the IMF loaned the government of Romania \$26 billion; Serbia, \$4 billion; and Hungary an additional \$3.2 billion, bringing that country’s total to \$9.6 billion.

Serbia’s economy minister, Mladjan Dinkic, told the media that the IMF agreement will most affect the more than half a million public workers. “We will reduce funds for cities and local administrations,” he told the daily *Vecernje Novosti* newspaper. “There will be no new jobs, and those who retire will not be replaced.”

Indicating that a lot more bailout funds must be deployed, IMF managing director Dominique Strauss-Kahn in a March 23 address to representatives of the International Labor Organization stated that the economic crisis “will be at the roots of social unrest” and “in some cases, it can also end in war.”

U.S. treasury secretary Timothy Geithner has called for expanding IMF resources by \$500 billion to a total of nearly \$1 trillion. President Barack Obama, who is attending the G20 meeting, has made increasing these funds one of his administration’s “primary goals for the meeting,” reported the *New York Times*. Washington is discussing contributing another \$100 billion, as have Japan and the EU.

**Plummeting world trade**

A report recently released by the World Trade Organization projects that exports worldwide will decline by 9 percent this year, as production declines to levels not seen since the 1930s. This drop will have a big impact on the world’s largest exporters—Germany, China, the United States, and Japan. Trade had grown unabated since 1982. Last year its growth slowed to 2 percent at \$15.8 trillion. In Japan, exports in 2007 were rising by 20 percent, but this February dropped by nearly 50 percent.

Responding to declining confidence

in the U.S. dollar, a leading Chinese official has called for an eventual alternative to the dollar as the world’s reserve currency. Zhou Xiaochuan, governor of the People’s Bank of China, has proposed instead a basket of currencies that would include euros, sterling, and yen.

Geithner responded March 25, saying that Washington will do whatever it takes to maintain the dollar’s dominance. The Chinese government is one of the biggest “investors” in the United States, holding \$1 trillion of U.S. government debt. These funds have been essential for financing Washington’s wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

## Iowa meat bosses paid disabled workers subminimum wages

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

HOUSTON—For more than 30 years Texas and Iowa state governments, using the legal cover of federal labor laws, collaborated with a Texas company that earned tens of thousands of dollars a month by paying “handicapped wages” to disabled workers contracted to an Iowa meat-packing plant, reported the *Houston Chronicle*.

The men received \$60.03 a month in wages for long hours of backbreaking work processing turkeys at West Liberty Foods. Henry’s Turkey Service, a division of Hill Country Farms, in Goldthwaite, Texas, received the rest of their wages and also had their federal disability checks signed over to them, according to the *Chronicle* report.

The company paid the city of Atalissa \$600 a month for the 106-year-old former school building where the men were padlocked into dormitory-style housing, lacking adequate heat, water, or sanitation. Twenty-one of these workers were removed as Iowa marshals closed the building February 7, citing safety concerns with the converted school building.

The men were paid a “handicap wage”—a subminimum wage legally authorized by the U.S. Department of Labor for companies that hire handi-

capped workers, reported the *Des Moines Register*.

Robert Berry, corporate secretary at Hill Country Farms, told the *Register* that the company, which once ran labor camps in at least six states, has scaled back its operations in recent years and that all of the Atalissa workers are in the process of being “retired.” He stated, “So, most of the boys—well, we call them ‘boys,’ but they are men with mental health issues—who have been up there for 30 or so years, they’ve mostly been placed out to other facilities.” The contract with Henry’s Turkey Service expired March 8.

Beginning in the mid-1960s the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation struck a deal with Hill Country Farms as with other companies to save the state money while increasing corporate profits. Mentally disabled men would be sent to work for room and board at the company’s turkey farm. Later the arrangement was extended to workers hired out to companies in other states.

“I want these people prosecuted,” said Sherri Brown, whose brother Henry was one of the men removed from the bunkhouse. She told the press that her brother has only \$87.96 in his bank account to show for working for Henry’s for 30 years.



# Marxist magazine draws interest at Cuba book fair

## Panel takes up 'New International' no. 14

BY RÓGER CALERO  
AND MARTÍN KOPPEL

HAVANA—Speakers at a February 22 panel presentation on the final day of the Havana International Book Fair discussed some of the main themes of the most recent issue of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory that also appears in a Spanish translation, *Nueva Internacional*. The event, attended by 30 people, was one of four book presentations at this year's fair that featured titles published or distributed by Pathfinder Press.

The panelists were Ramón Pichs, deputy director of the Havana-based Center for Research on the World Economy (CIEM); Adilén Roque, a professor at the national leadership training school of the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP); and Jonathan Silberman, organizer of Pathfinder's distribution center in London and a leader of the Communist League in the United Kingdom.

An earlier event during the 10-day book fair featured "Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X," by Jack Barnes, the lead article of *New International* no. 14 and *Nueva Internacional* no. 8, which are distributed by Pathfinder (see article in March 30 *Militant*).

Silberman and Pichs both focused in their opening remarks on the *New International* article "The Clintons' Antilabor Legacy: Roots of the 2008 World Financial Crisis," by Barnes, who is national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.

### Internationalization of working class

Highlighting some of the main points in the article, Silberman addressed the unfolding world capitalist economic crisis today. He noted that imperialist governments from the United Kingdom to the United States are responding with protectionist and anti-immigrant measures that seek to pit working people against each other. He cited the Labour Party government's call to protect "British jobs for British workers" as well as the recent reactionary strikes organized by the trade union officialdom in the United Kingdom that opposed the employment of foreign-born workers in the construction of several power plants

in Britain.

"The fight to win the majority of the working class to defend the interests of all workers irrespective of national origin," Silberman said, "is a fight for the soul of the working class. It will decide our future."

He added that the internationalization of the working class through massive immigration is making it easier, not harder, to break down these divisions as workers of different nationalities work shoulder to shoulder. For example, "I am the only shop floor worker of British origin in the garment shop where I work, outside London. My coworkers are from Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, China, India, Pakistan, and Iran," Silberman noted, as some in the audience shook their heads in amazement.

"The barriers begin to fall as we work together. And it's been Polish workers in Britain who have been among the vanguard of the resistance to the rulers' attacks."

The deepening crisis "will drive the ruling class in each country to even sharper assaults on the wages, working conditions, and rights of working people at home," said Silberman, "and to more military conflicts abroad." This will fuel working-class resistance.

"But unless the working class and its allies are capable of taking power out of the hands of the rulers, there is no crisis from which the capitalists cannot finally emerge, by dealing devastating blows to the working class and destroying sufficient capital to prepare the way for another expansion," Silberman said. That is why the living example of Cuba's workers and farmers and their revolutionary socialist course is so important, he concluded.

### 'A structural crisis' of capitalism

Pichs highlighted some of the major points in the article on "The Clintons' Anti-Labor Legacy" and recommended to the audience "that you read this article and the others that make up this issue. For us, exchanges like this are very useful because of the message and the ideas contained in the magazine."

Pichs reviewed the record of the Clinton years as the U.S. rulers



Militant/Ben Joyce

Ramón Pichs (left), deputy director Center for Research on the World Economy, speaks on capitalist economic crisis as part of presentation of *New International* no. 14. Other panelists, from left, are Jonathan Silberman, Pathfinder Press; Adilén Roque, National Association of Small Farmers; and moderator Mary-Alice Waters.

stepped up their offensive against the living standards and rights of working people. He pointed to the gutting of welfare, attacks on immigrants, the stepped-up use of the police that led to a rapid rise in the prison population, and the tightening of the U.S. embargo against Cuba through the Helms-Burton Act.

He emphasized some of the facts the article underscores, pointing to the Clinton administration's "manipulation of statistics such as minimizing much of the unemployment and inflation—for example, by not including so-called discouraged workers."

Pichs called attention to the Clinton administration's repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act, which facilitated a massive expansion of derivatives and debt. "This growing speculation meant a significant increase in the vulnerability of the financial sector," accelerating and intensifying the financial crash that unfolded last year, he said.

"This was the beginning, not of a strictly financial crisis, but of a much broader crisis, a structural crisis, one that has social and environmental consequences and affects questions of energy and the food crisis in the world. . . . And no one knows how long or how deep it will go."

It is a crisis that "reinforces the economic and social gap between the underdeveloped and developed countries," he noted, with devastating consequences for millions in the world.

### Protection of farmers and environment

Adilén Roque addressed the *New International* article titled "The Stewardship of Nature Also Falls to the Working Class: In Defense of Land

and Labor." She focused her remarks on the role the National Association of Small Farmers has played since the victory of the Cuban Revolution in organizing and advancing the interests of small farmers and protecting the country's natural resources.

One of the first and most decisive steps taken by the revolutionary leadership and implemented by the massive mobilization of the toilers was the 1959 agrarian reform law, followed in 1963 by the second agrarian reform law. These actions "put an end to landlordism and exploitation in the Cuban countryside," she said. In 1961 peasants organized into the National Association of Small Farmers, which today has 331,000 members.

Roque explained the work done by ANAP to advance diversification of crops, conservation, and other measures to restore degraded soil and promote reforestation.

She described ANAP's program to develop "plant health activists" at each local farm cooperative, individuals "who are trained in the use of biological pesticides, which has reduced the use of chemicals that contaminate the soil and water and affect the health of working people and consumers."

In Cuba, she said, applying such techniques "does not mean going backward." Wherever possible, "we use the newest achievements of science and technology."

This issue of *New International* and of *Nueva Internacional* was one of the most popular titles brought by Pathfinder to the fair. More than 340 copies of *Nueva Internacional* no. 8 and *New International* no. 14 were sold and distributed during the course of the book fair and related events.



Militant/Ben Joyce

*New International* and other titles on revolutionary politics attracted a steady stream of people to the Pathfinder stand at the Havana International Book Fair.

## NEW INTERNATIONAL

### a magazine of Marxist politics and theory

#### Issue no. 14

Featuring "Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last year of Malcolm X"

by Jack Barnes

Malcolm X had long been an uncompromising opponent of imperialist oppression, exploitation, and degradation. Malcolm's last year illustrates how, in the imperialist epoch, revolutionary leadership of the highest political capacity, courage and integrity converges with communism.

—\$14

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# Workers have no stake in capitalist trade policy

The following excerpt is from the article “Our Politics Start with the World,” which appears in issue number 13 of New International, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory. It is based on a talk and summary by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, at a 2001 international socialist conference in Oberlin, Ohio.

## BY JACK BARNES

Our politics, proletarian politics, on what the capitalist rulers call “free trade” also start with the world.

In his January 1848 “Speech on the Question of Free Trade,” Karl Marx warned working people and democrats not to be “deluded by the abstract word Freedom!” Whose freedom? he asked. “Not the freedom of one individual in relation to another, but freedom of Capital to crush the worker.” Under capitalist social relations, Marx pointed out, whether free trade or protection happens to be current government policy, either way the worker “goes to the wall.”<sup>1</sup> Since Marx first prepared that speech for publication more than a century and a half ago, the structure of world capitalism has changed significantly, with the rise and consolidation of the global imperialist order. What hasn’t changed, however, is the correctness of Marx’s concluding words: that in judging the trade policies of one or another capitalist government, the position of the workers movement is determined by what “hastens the Social Revolution.”

We start with the interests of the working class, which is an international class. We have no blueprint good for all times, all situations, and all places. With regard to products coming into the United States, our position on free trade is very simple: *we’re for it*. Communists in other imperialist countries take the same position with respect to “their own” governments. We’re unconditionally opposed to the rulers of the United States imposing barriers of any kind under any pretext on imported goods. And we’re opposed to Washington imposing an embargo on the export of goods to Cuba, Iraq, north Korea, Iran—or any imperialist country either, for that matter!

We do everything possible to expose the “free trade” demagoguery of finance capital. The rulers’ trade policy, from start to finish, is a *national policy*. It aims to advance the national interests of the exploiting class, including balancing the conflicting profit needs of capitalist sectors that are vulnerable to competition on the world market to quite different degrees. Under the banner of free trade, the U.S. government uses so-called antidumping clauses, “environmental” and “labor standards” restrictions, “human rights” demagoguery, and other measures to carry out brutal and aggressive trade wars not only against its imperialist rivals but with special ferocity against the semicolonial countries. By the World Bank’s own conservative figures, for example, trade barriers by the industrially advanced countries cost what the bank

labels the world’s fifty least-developed countries some \$2.5 billion in export income annually. Almost half of that is accounted for by U.S. barriers alone—and a high percentage of that is basic agricultural products.

All the talk from the White House, Congress, and in the big-business press about the “complexities” and breakdowns of international negotiations to advance “free trade” is a self-serving smoke screen. The U.S. rulers need do only one thing: declare that all goods coming into the United States are free of tariffs and nontariff barriers of any kind. That’s what the Socialist Workers Party demands in the United States, and what our comrades demand of the governments in Canada, France, Sweden, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom.

That is not what communists demand in most countries in the world today, however. The workings of the world capitalist market bring about an enormous, an unconscionable, transfer to the imperialist countries of the wealth produced by the workers and peasants of Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and most of Asia and the Pacific. That extortion is guaranteed not primarily by “unfair” terms of trade imposed from the outside on the world market. It is guaranteed above all by the differential value of labor power and the gap in productivity of labor between the imperialist countries on the one hand, and those oppressed and exploited by imperialism on the other—a differential that not only underlies unequal exchange but relentlessly reproduces and increases it.



Members of Teamsters union in San Diego protest Mexican trucks entering United States in September 2007. U.S. capitalists seek to draw workers into protectionist schemes under cover of “environmental,” “labor standards,” and “human rights” demagoguery.

lessly reproduces and increases it.

Imperialism warps the economic structures of the semicolonial world. The “comparative advantage” of oppressed nations in the world capitalist market is largely restricted to producing and exporting agricultural produce and raw materials, as well as in recent decades serving as an “export platform” for light manufactures or other industrial goods often made in imperialist-owned factories. Even with regard to these goods, countries in the semicolonial world get slapped down any time they try to horn in on markets sought by the titans of agriculture and industry in North America, Europe, or Japan.

Meanwhile, big business in the Unit-

ed States and in the other imperialist powers exports heavy industrial goods, technology, machine tools, other manufactures, and agricultural produce—and large amounts of capital as well. Today the capital exported to semicolonial countries in particular takes the form not only of buying up agricultural land, factories, retail and wholesale businesses, insurance companies, banks, and mineral rights. It also takes the form of loans that ensnare these countries in a vortex of debt slavery to imperialist banks and governments, often through the intermediary of “international” financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

## Israeli air strikes meant as warning to Iran

### Continued from front page

Washington and Tel Aviv signed an agreement to intensify cooperation to block arms shipments to Hamas. They charged that the Iranian government has been arming both Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon. The Egyptian government agreed to help block the arms shipments and in January prevented an Iranian ship from entering the Suez Canal.

Israel’s bombing raids in Sudan are not the first of its attacks against targets in other countries. On June 7, 1981, 14 Israeli warplanes entered Iraqi airspace and destroyed a nuclear reactor in Osirak near Baghdad. In September 2007, “Israel allegedly bombed a covert nuclear facility in Syria,” according to the *Jerusalem Post*, “and last year was widely accused of the assassination of Hizbullah operative Imad Mughniyeh in Damascus.”

The March 28 *Wall Street Journal* noted that retired Israeli military officers say the attack on Sudan “would likely have been impossible without American intelligence.”

The attack furthers ongoing imperialist intervention in Sudan. The United Nations currently has about 15,000 troops in Darfur in Western Sudan, where some 300,000 people have been killed and 2.5 million displaced since 2003. Armed groups demanding autonomy for the region and an end to discrimination against sev-

eral minorities have fought Sudanese soldiers and government-backed militias there. There are also more than 9,000 UN troops in South Sudan.

On March 4 the UN-created International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for Sudanese president Omar al-Bashir. The indictment, backed by Washington, accuses al-Bashir of “war crimes” and “crimes against humanity.”

In retaliation al-Bashir ordered the expulsion of 13 nongovernmental “humanitarian assistance” groups that provide food and shelter in Darfur, charging they had spied against him. A UN delegation says that more than a million people in Darfur will not get food rations in May that are currently distributed by the expelled groups.

Several of Washington’s allies in the region have demonstrably taken their distance from the international court’s blatant violation of Sudan’s sovereignty. Besides traveling to Eritrea, Libya, and Ethiopia after the arrest warrant was issued, al-Bashir was warmly welcomed by Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak and senior government ministers at Cairo’s airport March 25.

“There is an Egyptian, Arab, African position that rejects the way the court has dealt with the status of the president of Sudan,” said Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Egypt’s foreign minister.

Al-Bashir was given a red-carpet welcome when he arrived for an Arab League summit March 29 in Qatar.

Meanwhile, the Canadian government will host a May international conference to discuss how to prevent weapons shipments from Iran to the Gaza Strip, Israel’s *Haaretz* newspaper reported. Government representatives from Canada, Britain, Spain, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Denmark, Israel, and the United States will take part.

Immediately after the conference Washington will host a “war game”—a practice scenario on blocking arms smuggling from Iran to Gaza.

### For further reading

#### Our Politics Start with the World

by Jack Barnes

“Electrification is an elementary precondition if modern industry and cultural life are to develop, and class-conscious workers fir for it to be extended to all the world’s six billion people... We are part of an international class that has no homeland. That’s not a slogan. That’s not a moral imperative. It is recognition of the class reality of economic, social, and political life in the imperialist epoch.” \$14

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1. Karl Marx, “Speech on the Question of Free Trade,” *MECW*, vol. 6, pp. 463–65.



# Turkish gov't pushes to disarm Kurdish fighters

## Kurd celebrations demand autonomy

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Faced with deepening support for Kurdish rights, the Turkish government is pressing to disarm Kurdish guerrillas based in northern Iraq who are fighting for autonomy in southern Turkey.

The Kurds are an oppressed nationality of 25 million living primarily in Turkey, Iraq, Syria, and Iran. They have historically faced discrimination in all four countries based on their language and culture.

Iraqi ruler Saddam Hussein was one of the most ruthless in suppressing the Kurdish liberation struggle, notorious for killing tens of thousands of Kurds during his regime. With the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq and Hussein's overthrow, Iraqi Kurds seized the opportunity to strengthen their own autonomous region in the northern part of the country. The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) was established and today Kurds enjoy the freedom to use their own language and practice their own culture there. This development has given a boost to struggles by Kurds in surrounding countries.

The autonomous Kurdish region directly across its southern border alarms the Turkish government. More than half the world's Kurds live in Turkey, where they make up 20 percent of the population. Until 1991 it was illegal in Turkey to speak Kurdish and its use today is still restricted. The government refuses to recognize Kurds as a distinct nationality. They suffer the highest rates of illiteracy, poverty, and infant mortality in the country.

In 1984 the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), a Maoist group favoring "protracted people's war," opened armed struggle against the Turkish government. In response, the regime in Ankara unleashed a reign of terror in rural southeastern Turkey where most Kurds live. More than 40,000 people were killed over two decades and the Turkish army destroyed hundreds of Kurdish villages. The PKK retreated to northern Iraq.

Periodically the Turkish army has made forays into northern Iraq in an attempt to wipe out the PKK, to no avail. The armed PKK forces are estimated to still number several thousand.

In January of this year, Washington, Baghdad, and Ankara agreed to set up a command center to coordinate military attacks on the PKK. The government of Iran, which fears its own Kurdish population, regularly bombs areas along the Iraq-Iran border where Tehran says PKK guerrillas operate.

### Seeking Iraqi aid to expel PKK

In a trip to Iraq in late March Turkish president Abdullah Gül called on Iraqi president Jalal Talabani, who is Kurdish, to push the PKK out of Iraqi territory.

In a joint press conference with Gül on March 22, Talabani said, "The PKK has two choices: lay down its guns or leave Iraq." He said the PKK "must become involved in political and parliamentary life instead of resorting to weapons, since using guns does wrong to Kurds and Iraqis."

Gül then met with the prime minister of Iraqi Kurdistan, Nechirvan Barzani, who is also Kurdish. Barzani subsequently told the press, "We are determined, and we confirm again our terri-

tory will not be used to attack Turkey."

But he also said the Turkish government should offer the PKK fighters amnesty.

The two bourgeois nationalist parties that dominate the KRG—the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan—oppose an independent Kurdistan and favor autonomy within the Iraqi state instead. But polls show many Kurds in Iraq would prefer complete independence. The deep support for independence has made it more difficult for the KRG to move against PKK bases, although it has closed some of the group's offices.

"No one has the right to tell the PKK fighters to lay down their weapons or leave the territory of Kurdistan," PKK leader Haval Roze said in an interview with Reuters. "Turkey is just trying to create divisions between the Kurds."

### International conference of Kurds

Talabani has issued a call for a conference of Kurds from around the world to be held in April or May in Erbil, the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan. He stated that the conference will call on the PKK to lay down its arms. The PKK has been invited to participate in the discussions.

Leaders of Turkey's pro-Kurdish Democratic Society Party (DTP) were dubious about participating in the meeting because of the demand that the PKK disarm. "If democratic solutions are developed, the PKK will spontaneously lay down their guns," Selahattin Demirtas, DTP vice president, told the Turkish daily *Hurriyet*. The steps Demirtas proposed include "issuing a general pardon in Turkey, putting different cultures and identities under the protection of a constitution, and actualizing democratic autonomy," said *Hurriyet*.

Meanwhile, March 21 celebrations by Kurds in Turkey of *Newruz* (New Year's) brought out as many as half a million in Istanbul and the Kurdish areas, *Hurriyet* reported. While previous Kurdish Newruz celebrations have been brutally attacked by police, this year's were relatively peaceful.

## France rejoins NATO military command

BY BEN JOYCE

Debate within the French ruling class has emerged after President Nicolas Sarkozy said France would rejoin the NATO military command, some 40 years after then-president Charles De Gaulle withdrew from the alliance's command structure in 1966. The French government will host a meeting April 3–4 marking the 60th anniversary of NATO, at which France's reintegration will be welcomed.

Since 1966 the French capitalist rulers have opposed full integration in NATO in order to maintain independence from their imperialist rivals, in particular Washington.

The Sarkozy administration says the plan will enhance Paris's ability to defend its national interests. "We are in favor of making NATO more European," said Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner. With Paris back in the command structure, "The Europeans will find it easier to lead foreign operations without the backing or involvement of the Americans," he said.



Above: Kurds in Diyarbakir, Turkey, demonstrate on *Newruz* (New Year's) March 21 for autonomous rights. Throughout the country hundreds of thousands joined in celebrations. At right: Turkish tanks roll into northern Iraq in 2007 in failed attempt to wipe out Kurdish guerrillas based there. Autonomous Kurdish region in neighboring Iraq has increased confidence of Kurds in Turkey.



Kurds wore their traditional clothing and danced in the streets. Among the speakers was Ahmet Türk of the DTP, who called on Ankara to negotiate with the PKK. A message was read from the platform in Istanbul from imprisoned PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan. Numbers of people sported T-shirts with Ocalan's picture or chanted slogans in his support.

### Unable to repress struggle

The events were a further sign of the growing inability of the Turkish government to maintain its severe repression of the Kurdish rights struggle. In February, Ahmet Türk, who is a member of parliament, defied the ban on speaking Kurdish in that body. A broadcast of his speech on state TV was immediately cut off. But Türk was not punished. In 1991, another Kurdish parliament member, Leyla Zena, spoke in Kurdish and was jailed for 10 years.

On March 25 Col. Cemal Temizoz was arrested in connection with the Turkish military's slaying of hundreds of Kurds in the southeast during the 1990s. Temizoz was commander of a paramilitary police unit in Sirnak province at the time. Bodies have now been found buried in wells in the area.

The ruling Justice and Development Party (ATP) has taken these steps in part to ease Turkey's entrance into the

European Union.

Local elections March 29 in Turkey registered gains for the DTP despite major efforts by the ATP to gain a foothold in Kurdish areas. ATP leader and prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan campaigned vigorously for the ATP mayoral candidate in the major Kurdish city, Diyarbakir, promising to double government aid for medical care, water supplies, and schools in the region.

But Diyarbakir voters turned out 67 percent for the DTP candidate, and only 31 percent for the ATP nominee. The DTP took seven other cities as well, including three previously governed by ATP mayors.

Some 10,000 people, many of them youths, celebrated outside the DTP party headquarters in Diyarbakir. Some chanted slogans in support of Ocalan and the PKK.

Others disagreed. A 37-year-old taxi driver named Cemal told *Hurriyet*, "These pro-DTP Kurds are looking for an independent state, but they are daydreaming. We will all starve if this war goes on. I have a wife and kids and what I care about is the bread I can earn for them. That's why I voted for the ATP."

After an economic boom earlier in the decade, Turkey now has an official unemployment rate of 13.6 percent.

ests of France and the French."

Despite opposition the Sarkozy administration won a no-confidence vote in parliament March 17 by 329 to 238.

Many U.S. and NATO-led imperialist wars have included the participation of Paris, including Bosnia, Kosova, and Afghanistan, where today there are some 2,000 French troops. Paris has retained its seat in the North Atlantic Council and is currently the fourth largest contributor of troops to NATO.

However Paris has sought to limit U.S. imperialism's expansion where the interests of the French and U.S. rulers are in direct conflict. At the time of the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, the French government launched a campaign against Washington's war, masked in a plea for diplomacy. French companies had profited handsomely from the UN sanctions against Iraq in the 1990s. With the U.S.-led overthrow of the Baghdad regime, billions in loan and investment deals between the Hussein government and French firms and banks were cut off.



# Bosses announce big job cuts in Australia

BY LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY, Australia—Layoffs and job cuts are mounting in Australia, with bosses announcing the elimination of 8,000 jobs this year as the contraction in capitalist production deepens.

The biggest clothing manufacturer in Australia, Pacific Brands, announced February 25 that it would close operations at seven plants in Australia by February 2010, laying off some 1,850 workers. The company will also close its plant in China, sacking 850 workers, and two plants in New Zealand, affecting 98 workers.

More than 40,000 people are employed across Australia in the textile, clothing, and footwear industries. About 3 percent of them will lose their jobs with the Pacific Brands closures alone. Thousands of others working to supply the company with fabric and other products are also likely to be affected.

At Hans Continental Smallgoods in Blacktown, western Sydney, 400 workers lost their jobs at the end of March when the meat processing plant closed. In August 2008 Don Smallgoods announced the closure of two factories in Melbourne and Western Australia, eliminating 640 jobs. Harvey Beef, the biggest beef slaughterhouse in Western Australia, announced March 11 that it would lay off more than 150 workers after they rejected a cut in wages.

In February the official national unemployment rate hit 5.2 percent following the biggest monthly drop in full-time jobs since 1991. In New South Wales the unemployment rate is now 5.8 percent and in Victoria it jumped from 4.8 percent to 5.6 percent, with an even sharper rise in Western Australia.

Big layoffs in the mining industry are currently taking place in Western Australia and in other states, as exports of coal and iron ore to China plummet. In January BHP Billiton announced it would cut 3,400 jobs across Australia. Rio Tinto also announced layoffs of 676 workers.

In Queensland, more than 1,000 jobs are to be phased out from BHP's coal operations across the state. Anglo Coal has laid off some 650 workers from coal mines in Queensland and New South Wales because of slumping demand.

As the price of nickel dived, BHP announced it would close its Ravensthorpe nickel mine in Western Australia, slashing 1,450 jobs. Another 300 workers were laid off as production was reduced at the Mount Keith nickel mine near Kalgoorlie, Western Australia. At the Yabulu nickel plant near Townsville, Queensland, 400 jobs have been cut.

Four Pacific Brands plants in New South Wales will be shut down with 597 workers losing their jobs. At two of the company's factories in Victoria 553 workers are losing their jobs along with 56 in its plant in Queensland.

Pacific Brands workers, a number of whom have worked for the company for years, were stunned by the announcement. Many were angry at the way they are being treated by the company, as media reports surfaced that Pacific Brands directors had in-

creased their bonuses by more than A\$8 million in 2008, including a raise that brings the chief executive officer's annual pay to nearly A\$1.9 million (A\$1=US 69 cents). Union rallies to protest the plant closures and support the workers took place last month in Melbourne, and outside plants in Sydney, Unanderra, and Cessnock, in New South Wales. The main demand put forward by the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia, which covers workers at these plants, is that the government ensure that workers' accumulated entitlements and severance payments are protected.

However, many of the different union officials at these rallies called for the protection of "Aussie jobs," opposing moving operations overseas. Transport workers' unions announced they would blockade any Pacific Brands machinery being taken out of the country. Under the government's textiles, clothing and footwear support scheme, which is aimed at protecting industry in Australia, Pacific Brands had already received more than A\$15 million between 2006 and 2008.

*Linda Harris is a sewing machine operator at the Pacific Brands plant in Sydney.*

## Atlanta campus debates 'Israeli apartheid'

BY JOHN BENSON

ATLANTA—More than 100 students, professors, and others participated in activities titled "Israeli Apartheid Week" at the beginning of March here at Emory University. The event was part of an internationally coordinated week of such activities. A range of views were expressed on the issue from panelists and participants. Emory Advocates for Justice in Palestine (EAJP) organized the event.

At a panel discussion titled "Apartheid: From South Africa to Israel," Nicholas Juliano, an EAJP coordinating committee member, said that "Palestinians face racist separation," and the system that Israel imposes on Arabs in the region can accurately be described as "apartheid," after the South African system overthrown almost 20 years ago.

Kali Akuno, of Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, the US Human Rights Network, and Peoples' Hurricane Relief Fund, urged support for the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions campaign. He said this campaign, which is being called for from within Palestine, is similar to the efforts organized from South Africa as early as the 1940s.

During the question and answer period, Jacob Perasso, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Atlanta City Council president, pointed out that the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions campaign against Israel has taken an anti-Semitic form in targeting Jewish-owned businesses such as Marks and Spencer in the United Kingdom and Indigo Books in Canada.

Dave Prince, of the Socialist Workers Party, explained that increasingly the term Zionist has come to mean Jew. Prince said that a revolutionary struggle is needed in which Arabs,

Jews, Christians, and nonbelievers fight together for a democratic, secular Palestine. It was such a revolutionary course led by Nelson Mandela in South Africa that successfully overthrew apartheid. This is the polar opposite of the course advocated by the current leadership in Palestine— Hamas and Fatah—which is an obstacle to building a revolutionary movement.

Juliano said that the boycott is not of Jewish-owned businesses nor of Israeli goods. He said that it only singles out six corporations, including Motorola and Caterpillar, involved in aiding the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).

A participant asked why the struggle against Israeli attacks on Palestine is not generally part of the antiwar movement. Akuno answered that this had to do with being "out organized" by the Israeli lobby in the United States. He also stated that the word Zionist does not mean Jew.

The Israeli Apartheid Week also included a rally on the Emory campus in solidarity with Palestine. About 40 students and others participated. Protesters chanted, "Not one penny, not one dime, Israel out of Palestine." About the same number of students supporting Israel gathered in a counter rally.

"EAJP was formed less than a year ago

### Protesters in Canada say 'Stop killing Tamils'



Militant/Ned Dmytryshyn

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—Some 200 demonstrators, above, marched and rallied here March 28 to protest the Sri Lankan government's war against the Tamils, an oppressed nationality that makes up 18 percent of the population of the island. "We call on the Canadian government to oppose this war," rally organizer Sue Nathan said. Similar protests have taken place in Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, and Calgary as well as Australia, Belgium, Britain, New Zealand, Switzerland, and the United States. Tens of thousands took part in the protest in Toronto March 16, forming a human chain that stretched about four miles.

—NED DMYTRYSHYN



Militant/Eddie Beck

Jacob Perasso (center), Socialist Workers Party candidate for Atlanta City Council president, campaigns at March 4 rally of Emory University students in solidarity with Palestine.



# — SWP CAMPAIGN STATEMENT —

## Troops out of Iraq, Afghanistan!

Continued from front page  
sile attacks on Pakistan now!

On March 27 President Barack Obama announced a further escalation of the war in Afghanistan. In addition to the 17,000 troops he has already ordered to Afghanistan, he is sending 4,000 more troops to train Afghan soldiers. This brings the U.S. forces in that country to 68,000, in addition to 35,000 other NATO troops. U.S. military aid to Afghanistan is jumping by 60 percent.

Meanwhile, there is no let-up in Washington's missile attacks by pilotless drones in Pakistan, the latest of which, on March 25, killed seven people. The toll in these assaults since Obama took office rank among the highest since Washington launched its war in the region in the beginning of this decade. Washington plans to triple aid to the Pakistani government to step up the war further.

In Iraq, the announced "withdrawal" of U.S. forces over 16 months does not include tens of thousands of troops the White House says are needed to train Iraqi soldiers, provide "security," and fight "terrorists."

We urge supporters of the socialist campaign to join every action protesting these wars and to demand immediate, unconditional withdrawal of U.S. and other foreign troops from Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

These wars are an extension of the domestic policy pursued by both Democrats and Republicans. The U.S. employers face sharpening competition from their capitalist rivals. To increase their profit rates bosses are cutting our wages, increasing speedup, making us perform unsafe work, and laying us off by the hundreds of thousands each month. Here in New York, government officials are planning to cut 9,000 state jobs and raise the New York City subway fare

from \$2.00 to \$2.50, lay off many transit workers, and sharply curtail service.

The employers are increasing protectionist measures with their "Buy American" provisions in government "stimulus" plans and tariffs on goods from other countries. These moves are not only to increase their share of the market. The capitalists are trying to get us to see foreign workers as the enemy, not the boss here at home. They want us to fight for "American jobs" for "American workers" not jobs for all workers around the world.

The socialist campaign opposes all U.S. tariffs and protectionist measures. We say cancel the debt of the semicolonial countries.

The rulers seek to present the unfolding economic catastrophe as caused by "greedy" bankers and investors on Wall Street. They want to channel our anger into protesting these individuals and take our eyes off the capitalist system itself, whose workings brought about the financial collapse and economic contraction that is wreaking havoc on the lives of workers around the world. This is the politics of resentment, dangerous demagoguery aimed at destroying working-class solidarity.

The course we must fight for is one of recognizing that our interests as a class are incompatible with those of the boss. To defend our interests, workers need to make a revolution that takes political power out of the capitalists' hands.

Until we do so, working people the world over will face more wars, unemployment, ruinous bursts of inflation, trade wars, attacks on unions, and efforts to divide us through scapegoating of immigrants, Jews, and other targets designed to take our eyes off the real source of the problem: the profit system.

By overthrowing the wages system and taking political power into our own hands we can take immediate steps to provide relief for the working class, such as extending unemployment benefits for as long as workers are out of a job and legalizing all undocumented workers without conditions. Fighting on a course that put workers' interests first, we can enact legislation for a massive public works program to put millions to work at union-scale wages, building schools, hospitals, affordable housing, roads, and transportation; shorten the workweek with no cut in pay to spread the available work to all; provide cost-of-living increases in all wages and benefits; and bring home all the U.S. troops stationed everywhere in the world.



Militant/Willie Cotton

Dan Fein, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York Mayor (at center of banner) marching in March 21 antiwar march in Washington.

## — LETTERS —

### Is 'Zionist' an epithet? I

The article "Working people need to see our self-worth" (March 2 issue) was right-on. But Norton Sandler's thoughts on "Zionism" have caused me not a little confusion.

The article reported that Sandler said, "Class-conscious workers should drop the term Zionism," in the current context. "There is no Zionist movement today. The reality is, it has become an epithet, not a scientific description; a synonym for 'Jew' that helps fuel Jew-hatred, which will rise as the capitalist crisis deepens."

Is Israel a product of Zionism, or a product of the policy of London and Washington in the region from the Balfour Declaration onward? Is saying the root of the problem in Palestine is Zionism an escape from a class analysis of the struggle within the borders of Israel and the occupied territories?

"Zionism" is certainly an epithet. No doubt about it. Does it fuel Jew-hatred? I think one thing that fuels

Jew-hatred today is the capitalist media testing presenting the "Madoff mentality" as a root of the economic crisis. Madoff = Rothschild?

Is anti-Zionism anti-Semitic? No. Do pro-Israel partisans equate anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism? Of course. But I think anti-Zionists have more and more effectively countered this, especially as more Jews have come to oppose the actions of Israel.

Jay Rothermel  
By e-mail

### Is 'Zionist' an epithet? II

I think the position expressed by Norton Sandler in the *Militant* that "There is no Zionist movement today" is mistaken. This reactionary European colonial-settler national movement still exists, and has as its maximum expression the state of Israel, as well as organized expressions in other countries in the form of groups to organize or lobby for aid to Israel and so on.

Unfortunately, Sandler's state-

ment leads him to further say that Zionism "has become an epithet . . . a synonym for 'Jew' that helps fuel Jew-hatred." This is a completely unwarranted concession to those who say any criticism or opposition to the state of Israel is automatically anti-Semitic.

Finally, while the *Militant* projects a "perspective" of a united struggle by all working people in the region for a democratic, secular Palestine, that cannot be a substitute for expressing unconditional solidarity with and support to the just national struggle of the Palestinian people, something which unfortunately is not mentioned in the article.

Joaquín Bustelo  
Atlanta, Georgia

**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.**

## 'Zionism,' its use today, not in 1948

BY NORTON SANDLER

The *Militant's* editor asked me to reply to letters received about an article in the March 2 issue in which I was quoted as saying, "Class conscious workers should drop the term Zionism," in its current context. "There is no Zionist movement today. The reality is, it has become an epithet, not a scientific description; a synonym for 'Jew' that helps fuel Jew-hatred."

I made these remarks at a January 31 public meeting in London. I was not addressing the history of the Zionist movement, or how the state of Israel came into being as an expansionist colonial-settler state. Zionism in the late 19th century and the first half of the 20th century was a bourgeois political current contending with the communist movement for the allegiance of workers who were Jewish. Israel was established in 1948, more than six decades ago. There is no Zionist movement today and there hasn't been for a long time.

Less than 40 percent of the world's Jews live in Israel today. Palestinians and other Arabs in Israel will be nearly a third of Israel's population within a few generations. The Palestinian population in the West Bank and in Gaza is approaching 4 million. Faced

## REPLY TO A READER

with these demographic trends, the majority of the Israeli ruling class has given up the dream of a "Greater Israel." They are forced to opt for what they consider the only pragmatic solution—maintaining a majority Jewish state within borders of their own choosing. This is hardly the Zionist movement's dream of an Israel from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River.

Given this reality, the term "Zionism"—or "Zionists"—has become a synonym for "Jewish" or "Jew" no matter how much those who use it try to explain it otherwise.

The leaderships of much of the petty-bourgeois left in the United States, the United Kingdom, and other countries often agree with or chose to ignore reactionary Jew-baiting remarks from the leaders of Hamas or Hezbollah, or worse, make Jew-baiting remarks of their own. It is also common for them to take the anti-working-class position that workers inside Israel who are Jewish are reactionary and can never be won to support the Palestinians' fight.

In London earlier this year the Marks & Spencer department stores and Starbucks coffee shops were targets of protests over the Israeli assault on Gaza. These businesses are supposedly Jewish-owned. There are calls by academic and professional organizations to prevent Israeli professors and researchers from attending international conferences. Some push for colleges and universities to "divest" themselves from stock in Israeli companies.

Jewish businesses were a prime target of the Nazis in Germany after 1933. Why aren't U.S.-owned businesses targets during protests against Washington's Iraq and Afghanistan wars?

Reader Bustelo states that my remarks are "a completely unwarranted concession to those who say any criticism or opposition to the state of Israel is automatically anti-Semitic." The Socialist Workers Party has never flinched in 60-plus years from our defense of the rights of the Palestinian people. The SWP has a proud and uncompromising record in opposition to the expulsion of the Palestinian population and for the defeat of Israel in every war it has waged from 1948 to the recent assault on Gaza.

We are confident that coming battles by Palestinian working people over land, against the walls blocking off sections of the West Bank and Gaza, for water rights, for freedom of movement, for jobs at decent pay and with union protection, against many juridical restrictions determined by religion, will bring forward a new generation of leaders.

Out of a fighting perspective of building a broad-based movement for a democratic, secular Palestine a new communist leadership will be built, one that can provide leadership to more and more working people in the occupied territories, among Palestinian and Jewish workers inside Israel, and the broader region.