

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

How the right to choose abortion was won, lessons for today
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Abortion rights activists mobilize to defend clinic

Nebraska action responds to rightists' threat



Militant/Rebecca Williamson
Defense line outside funeral of Dr. George Tiller in Wichita, Kansas, June 6. Tiller, who operated abortion clinic there, was killed while attending church by antiabortion rightist May 31.

BY MAGGIE TROWE

DES MOINES, Iowa—The August 28–29 mobilization to counter an attempt by antiabortion outfits to shut down a clinic in Bellevue, Nebraska, received a boost August 21 with the backing of the National Organization for Women.

“Defend Dr. Carhart’s clinic! Women

need you in Nebraska!” said Terry O’Neill, National Organization for Women (NOW) president, in a statement posted on NOW’s Web site and e-mailed to members.

In response to Dr. Carhart’s August 3 announcement that he intends to open a clinic providing late-term

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Iowa socialist campaign joins in Nebraska clinic defense

The following statement was released August 26 by the Iowa Socialist Workers candidates—David Rosenfeld, running for Des Moines City Council at-large, and Rebecca Williamson, for Des Moines City Council Ward 1.

We join together with working people, youth, and others mobilized

in Bellevue, Nebraska, to defend a woman’s right to choose abortion. We salute our fellow fighters for women’s rights and urge all to continue to mobilize for this struggle.

The August 28–29 action to defend Dr. LeRoy Carhart’s clinic is a crucial response needed to counter the attacks from opponents of women’s

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U.S. gov’t expands attacks on immigrants

BY SETH GALINSKY

Contrary to his campaign promises to bring undocumented workers “out of the shadows,” the administration of President Barack Obama has stepped up actions leading to the firing, deportation, and prosecution of workers without papers.

“We are expanding enforcement, but I think in the right way,” Janet Napolitano, secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, told the *New York Times*. For Napolitano and the White House this means less reliance on high-profile factory raids and more emphasis on other measures that increase deportations or firings of undocumented workers.

In an August 11 speech to an Albuquerque, New Mexico, Border Security Conference, the Homeland Security chief boasted that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency has already arrested more than 181,000 undocumented workers this year, a rate she said was higher than in 2007.

She said that in the last six months the U.S. government has doubled the

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Afghan vote highlights limits of U.S. war

BY CINDY JAQUITH

August 26—In the recent Afghan presidential election, incumbent president Hamid Karzai and his closest challenger, former foreign minister Abdullah Abdullah, both claimed victory in the August 20 vote. The final tally is not expected until mid-September. Its outcome highlights the political difficulty the U.S. government faces in putting together a stable government that can serve Washington’s imperialist interests.

In 2001 a United Nations–sponsored conference appointed Karzai head of an “interim” government, following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan and overthrow of the ruling Taliban. Karzai had been a commander in one of the factions that fought the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and later the Taliban. He became president in a 2004 election.

U.S. officials, including President Barack Obama, have expressed displeasure with Karzai and the conduct of the war in Afghanistan. As he has grown more and more unpopular and isolated, Karzai has reached out to

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Washington, Islamabad deal blows to Pakistani Taliban

BY DOUG NELSON

While Washington’s top general in Afghanistan, Stanley McChrystal, says Islamist forces currently have the upper hand in the imperialists’ war in the country, Taliban forces based in Pakistan have been disorganized as a result of the Islamabad’s deepening cooperation with the U.S. military. Meanwhile, toilers of the region are caught under the repressive forces of the U.S.-led military alliance, the Taliban, and the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

A U.S. drone killed Baitullah Mehsud, a Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan leader August 5. Shortly afterward, Maulvi Omar, the group’s chief spokesman, was arrested.

The Tehrik-e-Taliban is an alliance of about a dozen Taliban factions in Pakistan’s Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and parts of the North West Frontier Province. Unlike other Taliban groups whose focus is combating U.S. and allied forces in Afghanistan, the Tehrik-e-Taliban has also been waging a fight against the Pakistani government. Since Baitullah Mehsud’s death, the organization has been beset with an internal power struggle and attacks by anti-Taliban

militia backed by government air strikes.

In its war against those Taliban forces that oppose it, the Pakistani government has increasingly backed and relied upon private armies based on tribal loyalties and commanded by wealthy individuals.

Since its inception in the 1990s, the Taliban have been a key strategic asset for Islamabad in its contest for influence in Afghanistan. But the Pakistani government lost its ability to control much of the Taliban after

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Haitian refugees fight for justice in Florida

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

MIAMI, August 25—Immigrant rights supporters here have won the release of one of the parents of a Haitian child who drowned when the boat they were on capsized and sank near Palm Beach in May. They say the father may be released soon.

Several Haitian groups here and throughout the state are also organizing a rally in Washington, D.C., September 16 to demand that undocumented Haitians be granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS), and an end to raids and deportations. TPS allows undocumented immigrants, under certain conditions, to remain in the country temporarily with a work permit.

Haitian rights groups held a press conference August 11 to demand release of the child's parents. "They should be released to deal with death of their little girl," said Marleine Bastien, executive director of Haitian Women of Miami speaking at the Jean Jacques Dessaline Community Center. After three months the body of eight-month-old Luana Augustin remains in the Palm Beach County morgue awaiting burial. She was among at least eight others who died when the boat sank. Sixteen survivors were pulled from the water.

The parents, Chandeline Leonard and Lucsene Augustin, were taken to a jail in West Palm Beach after U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement turned them over to the U.S. Marshals Service.

Federal authorities later charged the boat's captain, Jimmy Metellus, and Jean Morange Nelson with immigrant

smuggling resulting in death. The charge carries a possible death sentence. Metellus said he was hired by four men in the Bahamas in exchange for a free ride.

Ronald Surin, attorney for the parents, said, "We even asked for release under supervision but even that was denied."

"This couple is in the hands federal marshals," said Cheryl Little, executive director of the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center. "They were victimized by smugglers. Now they are victimized by our government. We expected with the new administration we would have kinder, gentler policies in regards to immigration."

Little said Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano did not respond to a letter requesting release of the parents. "We know President Obama has the power to release these people. We continue to ask that he deliver on the promises he made," she said.

In addition to calling for the parents' release, the press conference called for Temporary Protected Status for some 30,000 Haitians in the United States.

Marxist books snapped up at Beirut meeting on Cuba

BY BASHAR ABU-SAIFAN AND GEORGES MEHRABIAN

BEIRUT, Lebanon—The *Communist Manifesto* and *The First and Second Declarations of Havana* led the sales of Pathfinder titles at an August 1 meeting here celebrating the 56th anniversary of the launching of the Cuban revolutionary armed struggle led by Fidel Castro.



August 11 press conference demanding release from jail of parents of eight-month-old Luana Augustin, who drowned when boat carrying Haitian refugees sank off South Florida coast in May. From left, Marleine Bastien, executive director of Haitian Women of Miami, and Albert Noel, cousin of Chandeline Leonard, mother of Luana Augustin.

The Obama administration has so far refused any change in the status of undocumented Haitians in the United States, leaving them facing arrest and deportation at any time.

"We ask Obama to pass TPS for Haitians. Do the right thing President Obama. Release the parents now. TPS for Haitians cannot wait for comprehensive immigration reform. He promised. He needs to deliver," said Bastien.

Among those organizing the September 16 demonstration are Haitian Women of Miami, Florida Immigrant Coalition, Haitian Coalition for TPS, and Palm Beach County Coalition for Immigrant Rights, as well as other groups throughout Florida.

For more information on the September 16 action call Francesca Menes at (786) 340-1646 or Danna Magliore at (305) 756-8050.

The two books along with other titles from Pathfinder were featured at a booth staffed by volunteers from Beirut and Athens. The major liberal daily *Al-Safir* reported on the booth and its display in its August 3 issue.

"What should I read in order to get an idea of Marxism?" asked one young woman who visited the booth. She left with a copy of Pathfinder's newly published Arabic edition of the *Communist Manifesto*. Many approached the booth with similar questions showing interest in revolutionary working class politics. A total of 16 copies of the manifesto in Arabic were sold.


"Cuba has proven itself to be the only revolution that is honest and clean, that is why I am here," explained one worker as he purchased a copy of *The First and Second Declarations of Havana* in Arabic. A total of 18 copies of this book were also sold.

One young woman, who brought

her father, a carpenter, wanted a copy of *Women and the Cuban Revolution*. Although the price was steep for a worker in Lebanon, she and her father discussed it at some length. "OK, that can be your birthday present," he said. Several titles on the Cuban Revolution sold out very rapidly.

A total of 14 other titles in English, French, and Spanish were also sold, bringing the overall number of book sales to 48.

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Militant/Seth Galinsky
May 19 New York rally for framed-up death row prisoner Troy Davis.

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Australia ‘terror’ case used to restrict rights

BY BOB AIKEN

SYDNEY, Australia—In an early morning operation, some 400 police raided 19 homes across Melbourne August 4, arresting four men on terrorism charges. The men, Somali and Lebanese Australians, are accused of preparing an armed “suicide” attack on the Holsworthy army base here. No weapons, ammunition, or explosives were found in the raids, which came after seven months of surveillance.

Following the operation the federal attorney general announced August 12 that Australia’s “antiterror” laws will be reviewed with the aim of strengthening them.

Holsworthy base is home for two combat-ready Australian army units that have been fighting as part of the imperialist forces in Afghanistan—the 2nd Commando Regiment and the 3RAR Parachute Battalion. It is well fortified and any attack on the base would be dealt with “within minutes,” asserted Australia Defense Association executive director Neil James.

The police allege that the accused men have links to the al-Shabab militia in Somalia, which is fighting to overthrow the U.S.-backed government there. U.S. secretary of state Hillary Clinton welcomed the cop raids, asserting that al-Shabab aims to use Somalia as “a training ground for attacks around the world.”

The FBI has been carrying out extensive operations against the Somali community in Minneapolis and other U.S. cities in recent months, alleging links to al-Shabab. Two Somalis—one in Minneapolis and another in Seattle—were indicted on “terrorism” charges in July.

Angry about the raids and the targeting of the Somali community, about 100 people turned out August 5 for a meeting at the Coburg Town Hall in Melbourne. The meeting was called by the police to brief Somali community leaders on the August raid.

“What do you call waking people up at four in the morning with guns?” Abdurahman Osman told the *Herald*

Sun, a Melbourne daily. “It is the police themselves that are the terrorists.” Adding, “Now we have our kids being called terrorists at school.”

About 11,000 Somalis live in Melbourne. Along with Sudanese refugees they have faced discrimination and racist attacks. Leaflets denigrating African immigrants, distributed in the city in 2007, appeared again following the August 4 raids.

Five men have been charged. Wisam Fattal, Nayef El Sayed, and Yacquib Khayre, who is alleged to have traveled to Somalia earlier this year to train with al-Shabab, face “conspiracy” charges. According to PM, an ABC radio news program, Saney Aweys and Abdirahman Ahmed face the same charge as well as “aiding and abetting a man to engage in hostile acts overseas.”

A review of Australia’s “terror” laws had been promised in December 2008 after charges against Indian-born doctor Mohamed Haneef collapsed amidst public protests in July 2007. Haneef had been held for interrogation for 12 days.

The proposed changes will reduce the time cops can hold a “terrorism” suspect without charge from 14 to seven days.

However, the definition of a terrorist act will be expanded to include acts of “psychological” as well as physi-

N.Y. socialist calls for legalization of immigrants



Militant/Willie Cotton

BRONX, New York—Maura DeLuca, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York public advocate, speaks at the Festival for the Immigrants of the Bronx August 22. “The Socialist Workers Party demands an immediate and permanent halt to the deportations of immigrant workers,” DeLuca said in Spanish. “We also demand legalization now, without restrictions.”

“It’s important to understand that the attacks on undocumented workers are attacks against the entire working class,” the socialist candidate said. “Immigrants strengthen the working class.”

A few hundred people attended the festival sponsored by La Peña del Bronx.

DeLuca also called for an end to the deportation proceedings against Víctor Toro, one of the organizers of the festival. Toro was imprisoned and tortured in Chile after the government of Salvador Allende was overthrown by a U.S.-backed coup in 1973. He has lived in the United States since 1984.

—SETH GALINSKY

cal harm. New “terrorism hoax” and “inciting violence” offenses are to be added. Police powers will be expanded to allow the search of a premise

without a warrant if they believe “material relevant to a terrorism offence” posing a “threat to public health or safety is located inside.”

Thousands protest lead poisoning in China

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Hundreds of villagers in China’s northwestern Shaanxi Province broke into the Dongling Lead and Zinc Smelting Co. August 17 after the majority of children living near the industrial site were diagnosed with lead poisoning. One hundred police mobilized to remove the protesters.

Two weeks earlier about 1,000 villagers in Hunan Province in central China rolled logs onto the roadway to block entrance to a manganese smelter that has also led to children’s lead poisoning. The government arrested two of the plant’s top executives.

Both smelters, which have been closed by the government, are new. They are part of efforts by Beijing’s bureaucratic rulers to boost capitalist development, sometimes called “market socialism,” even at the expense of the health and safety of workers and residents of the surrounding communities.

At least 850 children living near the Dongling smelter have tested positive for lead poisoning, according to the official China Daily news service. Their blood showed levels of 100 to more than 500 milligrams of lead per liter of blood, whereas the normal count is zero to 100 milligrams. One hundred sixty-six of the children are now in the hospital. Lead poisoning can cause brain damage and muscle weakness.

When the plant was built in 2006, the Changqing county government promised to relocate the families living in nearby villages, but only 156 of 581 households have been able to move because new housing has not been completed. Some families that remain plan to send their children away to school next year, but others cannot afford the tuition.

Many factories are built near rural villages. One family of villagers in Sunjianantou, Shaanxi, told Reuters, “We get our water from our family well. We have no idea if it is safe enough or what to do about food.”

Dongling is one of China’s top 500 companies and brings in 17 percent of Changqing county’s gross domestic product.

The poisoning from the manganese smelter in Hunan Province is far wider in scope. So far, 1,354 children have

tested positive, according to Reuters.

The Jinglian Manganese Smelting Factory began operating this year without approval by the local environmental protection bureau, the official Chinese news service Xinhua reported. A kindergarten, an elementary school, and a middle school are located within 550 yards of the plant.

The fate of adults living near the two smelters is unknown. The government is only paying for tests of children under the age of 14, according to Xinhua.

Framed-up Native American activist Peltier denied parole

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Native American activist Leonard Peltier was denied parole August 21. He has been imprisoned for 32 years on frame-up charges of killing two FBI agents in a shootout at the Pine Ridge Native American reservation in 1975. He is serving two consecutive life sentences.

Peltier, 64, had a full parole hearing for the first time in 15 years July 28 at the Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, federal prison where he is incarcerated. Peltier will not be eligible for another hearing until 2024 when he will be 79.

Peltier, an Anishinabe-Lakota, became involved in the American Indian Movement in the early 1970s. He went to Pine Ridge, South Dakota, to assist local people under attack by goons organized by the Pine Ridge Tribal Council headed by Dick Wilson.

With covert backing from the FBI, Wilson was carrying out a campaign of violence, including beatings and

killings, against those in opposition to his policies. In the two years prior to the shootings of the two FBI agents, more than 60 Native Americans on the Pine Ridge reservation were killed. During this time the reservation had a higher ratio of FBI agents to citizens than any other area in the country. Despite this no killings or beatings were ever investigated.

Peltier’s trial was riddled with FBI misconduct and judicial impropriety. As late as 26 years after his conviction the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit admitted, “Much of the government’s behavior at the Pine Ridge Reservation and its prosecution of Mr. Peltier is to be condemned. The government withheld evidence. It intimidated witnesses. These facts are not disputed.” This included suppression of potentially key ballistics evidence that could have led to Peltier’s acquittal. Nevertheless, all appeals of his conviction and sentence have been turned down.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

TEXAS

Houston

Defend Women’s Right to Choose Abortion Against Attacks. Speaker: Participants in Aug. 28–29 clinic defense in Nebraska, including Socialist Workers Party candidate for Houston mayor, Amanda Ulman. Fri., Sept. 4, 7:30 p.m. 4800 W 34th St., Suite C-51A. Tel.: (713) 688-4919.

—CALENDAR—

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Labor Day March for the Rights of Immigrants and All Workers. Mon., Sept. 7, 10 a.m. Sponsors: March 10th Committee. Meet at Union Park (Ashland and Lake), march to Federal Plaza. Tel.: (773) 542-1059.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Grand Opening of the Socialist Workers Party Campaign Headquarters. Sat., Sept. 12. Open house 3–6 p.m.; program 6 p.m.; dinner to follow. 45 Academy St., Suite 309. Tel.: (973) 481-0077.

Obama backs ‘renditions’ as torture report released

BY SETH GALINSKY

A report released August 24 opens another window on the “enhanced interrogation techniques,” a code word for torture, routinely used on prisoners accused of having ties to al-Qaeda or its allies. The same day White House officials announced that the Barack Obama administration will continue sending “terror” suspects to third countries for “interrogation”—a practice known as renditions. Administration officials claimed they would monitor treatment of the prisoners more carefully to ensure they are not tortured.

The “Special Review” by the CIA Inspector General titled “Counterterrorism Detention and Interrogation Activities (September 2001–October 2003),” was issued in May 2004. It was released under a court order in a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit.

Dozens of pages of the 109-page report are blacked out. While the table of contents lists 12 “specific unauthorized or undocumented techniques” including “threats,” “stress positions,” “mock executions,” and “hard take-down,” what are apparently another 10 types of torture are also blacked out.

Among the described incidents:

- In June 2003 an Afghan citizen who turned himself in to U.S. soldiers at a joint U.S. Army-CIA base in northeast Afghanistan was severely beaten with a large metal flashlight and kicked by a CIA contractor. He died in custody.
- In July 2003 a CIA officer rifle-butted a teacher at a religious school and kicked him in front of 200 students, supposedly because the teacher “smiled and laughed inappropriately.”
- Khalid Sheikh Muhammad, accused of involvement in 9/11, was waterboarded 183 times in one month. Interrogators also threatened to kill his children “if anything else happens in the United States.”

The report describes lifting a prisoner off the floor by his arms which were bound behind his back. Another prisoner’s carotid artery was repeatedly squeezed until he began to pass out. A CIA agent implied that he would rape prisoner Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri’s mother in front of him. A mock execution was also staged to

force al-Nashiri to talk. The report describes depriving an inmate of sleep for 180 hours.

The review spelled out what the CIA considered to be acceptable interrogation methods, which include: sleep deprivation not to exceed 72 hours, reduced caloric intake, use of loud music, forced wearing of diapers for up to 72 hours, and waterboarding. “These techniques include, but are not limited to,” the report states, “all lawful forms of questioning employed by U.S. law enforcement and military interrogation personnel.”

At the same time the CIA made public two other previously secret documents. Those documents assert that information obtained from the “capture and debriefing of HVDs (high value detainees)” is a “crucial pillar of U.S. counterterrorism.”

After the report’s release, Attorney General Eric Holder announced that he had appointed John Durham as special prosecutor to recommend if there should be a “full investigation” into whether “federal laws” were violated.

Holder said that the “preliminary review” by Durham was not a criticism of “our intelligence community.” He said CIA agents “deserve our respect and gratitude for the work they do.”

A White House statement reinforced Holder’s position saying, “The President has said repeatedly that he wants



Reuters/Marc Serota MS/SV

U.S. marines escort prisoner for interrogation at naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, Feb. 10, 2002. Heavily censored 2004 CIA report released this August describes some torture methods used to extract information and “confessions” from detainees.

to look forward, not back . . . those who acted in good faith and within the scope of legal guidance should not be prosecuted.”

“Responsibility for the torture program cannot be laid at the feet of a few low-level operatives,” the Center for

Constitutional Rights said August 24. “It is the lawyers and the officials who oversaw and approved the program who must be investigated.” The center has helped win the release of secret documents related to the U.S. torture program.

Washington, Islamabad deal blows to Taliban

Continued from front page

pledging support to the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan that began in 2001. The same dynamic holds true for other Islamist armed groups, which Islamabad has backed as irregular forces aimed primarily at countering the Indian government as a regional power.

Rightist Islamist terror has also been a major tool of imperialism in the region. Washington, Pakistan, and the Saudi monarchy were the main patrons of the Mujahideen forces, which fought both to repel the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and to maintain social backwardness and landlord rule. Both al-Qaeda and the Taliban developed out of this experience.

Islamabad’s push into the FATA was preceded by a major offensive in

the Swat valley to the north in which many civilians were killed and at least 2.3 million people were forced to flee their homes. Roughly 1 million remain classified as “internally displaced people.”

UN humanitarian coordinator Martin Mogwanja said agencies are preparing for possible Pakistani military operations in South Waziristan and the displacement of 90,000–150,000 more people there.

Islamabad pressed to escalate war

“Pakistan deserves to be credited for its role,” James Jones, U.S. national security adviser, told Fox News August 9. “We hope that we continue the pressure and we don’t let up,” he said. McChrystal expressed concern that Baitullah Mehsud’s death could tip Taliban forces to concentrate more on fighting U.S. forces in Afghanistan than the Pakistani government.

Islamabad’s response, however, may not be as swift or thorough as Washington would like. “One would like the dust to settle first,” said Pakistani Maj. Gen. Athar Abbas. The Pakistani army has been bombing some areas, but has stopped short of a ground invasion, citing equipment shortages. “That may happen in winter, or even beyond, probably,” said Lt. Gen. Nadeem Ahmed.

Following Baitullah Mehsud’s death, Washington launched two other drone attacks in the FATA August 11 and August 21 in South Waziristan and North Waziristan, respectively, killing more than 30 people.

Washington has thus far declined to provide the Pakistani military with its aerial drone technology. However, in

cooperation with an Italian company, Islamabad launched production of its own version of the drones August 20.

The Pakistani media commonly cite estimates that 700 civilians have been killed by U.S. drone attacks since the war began, nearly 400 in just the last year. U.S. officials dispute the figures. A survey by the Pew Research Center suggests widespread opposition to the drone strikes in Pakistan.

The survey also suggests a dramatic increase in opposition to the Taliban and al-Qaeda in Pakistan over the last year, with the majority now viewing these groups unfavorably.

In an effort to strengthen government support in the tribal areas, Pakistani president Ali Asif Zardari announced August 14 he will reform aspects of the Frontier Crimes Regulations, the draconian codes set up by the British in 1901 that govern the FATA. It represents a retreat from last year when Prime Minister Yousuf Gilani pledged to abolish the laws altogether.

The reforms will likely allow for the existence of political parties and curb some of the powers of government-paid and appointed *maliks* (tribal chiefs), who arbitrarily make decisions in criminal cases and civil disputes. It may also place limits on indefinite, arbitrary detentions and “territorial responsibility” under which collective punishment is meted out to members of tribes, including children, for the actions of individuals.

The Taliban gained support in the FATA partly by killing maliks and counterposing its rule and “justice” to that of the government agents.

New International no. 7 Opening Guns of World War III: Washington’s Assault on Iraq by Jack Barnes

The murderous assault on Iraq in 1990–91 heralded increasingly sharp conflicts among imperialist powers, growing instability of international capitalism, and more wars.
—\$14



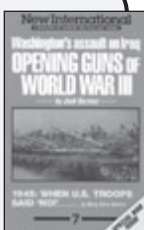
To See the Dawn

Baku, 1920—First Congress of the Peoples of the East

How can peasants and workers in the semicolonial world throw off imperialist exploitation and overcome national and religious divisions incited by their own ruling classes and fight for their common class interests? As the October Revolution echoed around the world, these questions were addressed by 2,000 delegates to the 1920 Congress of the Peoples of the East.—\$22

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W. Sahara independence leaders speak in Australia

BY LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY, Australia—"Western Sahara is the last colony in Africa," stated Fatima Mahfoud at a meeting August 5 at Macquarie University here, attended by 18 people. Mahfoud, a representative of the National Union of Saharawi Women, was on a speaking tour in Australia July 22–August 10.

The Saharawi people, led by the Polisario Front, have waged a long struggle against the Moroccan regime, which occupies their country. Morocco invaded in 1975 after Western Sahara won independence from Spain, the former colonial power. The territory is rich in fishing waters, phosphate, uranium, and gold, and potentially oil and gas.

In 1989 the Polisario leadership agreed to a cease-fire agreement, which included a UN-sponsored referendum on independence. However,

the Moroccan government, backed by Washington, Madrid, and Paris, has consistently blocked implementation of the agreement. "The referendum could easily be held, if the United Nations had the will to support it," said Mahfoud. "The Saharawi people have the right to choose their destiny."

The population of Western Sahara "has been cut in two for 33 years, with half living under the Moroccan regime and the other half living in refugee camps in the middle of the desert," stated Mahfoud. A wall constructed and patrolled by the Moroccan military runs between them.

Mahfoud described how women have played a key role in the organization of the camps, and how from the beginning Cuban volunteers have worked there as doctors. "Cuba gave what we really need. More than half of those growing up in the camps



Saharaiiak

Saharawi women demonstrate in 2005 south of Mahbes, Western Sahara, against wall built by Moroccan government through Western Saharan territory. One half of population lives in part of country occupied by Moroccan regime and other half in refugee camps.

have studied in Cuba," she said, like herself, together "with many other students from African nations and other Third World countries."

Kamal Fadel, the Polisario represen-

tative to Australia and the Saharawi ambassador to Timor Leste, joined the platform during the discussion. He said that the Moroccan regime is still an absolute monarchy. Under it there is "no right to demonstrate or of free speech. You cannot question the monarchy or the territorial integrity [of Morocco]."

Among Moroccans there is opposition to the autocratic rule of the monarchy but little knowledge of or support to the struggle for independence of Western Sahara, noted Fadel. The increasing number of visits by Saharawis between the camps and the occupied territories is important because "it helps to break the blackout imposed by the wall," he said.

Today, "there is an intifada in the occupied territories," Fadel said. The young people born under the Moroccan occupation don't know the Polisario but they are more radical, he explained. "They say we are wasting time in negotiations."

Many concessions have been made to Morocco in the negotiations. For instance, "we agreed to have autonomy as a question on the referendum," said Fadel. But despite the hardship of the camps, the "belief of the Saharawi people for their freedom" remains strong.

Orbitz seeks end to U.S. ban on travel to Cuba

BY SETH GALINSKY

Orbitz Worldwide, an Internet-based travel agency and airports in two Florida cities are among those lobbying to end the U.S. travel embargo against Cuba. Meanwhile, the U.S. Treasury Department continues to issue fines against companies doing business with Cuba.

Orbitz says it has collected 50,000 signatures on an online petition urging the U.S. government to end the 50-year travel ban. Orbitz launched the campaign in May.

"Travel—and the resulting exchange of ideas between people from different countries can be a powerful force for positive change," Barney Hartford, the company's chief operating officer, said in a letter to Orbitz customers. As an incentive, customers who sign on are eligible for a \$100 coupon toward a vacation in Cuba—redeemable only if the travel ban is lifted and Orbitz can sell flights and tour packages. While its profits are down as a result of the current economic crisis, the company has sales of nearly \$750 million a year.

Hartford says that the company's position is "aligned with that of Human Rights Watch. Echoing Washington's hatred of the Cuban Revolution, Human Rights Watch backs moves "to chip away at Castro's repressive machinery," according to a statement posted on its Web site, but complains that the travel ban and U.S. embargo of Cuba are "ineffective."

Except for a few years in the late 1970s, Washington has banned travel to Cuba since the early 1960s as part of imposing an embargo on virtually all U.S. trade with the island. This was done in retaliation for the revolution by workers and farmers, which overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and nationalized U.S.-owned sugar plantations and oil refineries, placing them under the control of working people.

When U.S. courts struck down a regulation barring travel to Cuba on U.S. passports in 1967, Washington found another way to impose a ban—by making it illegal to spend money

or conduct "travel transactions" in Cuba. These new rules did not apply to Cuban Americans.

In April, President Barack Obama lifted restrictions imposed in 2004 by then-president George W. Bush, limiting visits to the island by Cuban Americans to once every three years. Obama kept the ban on other U.S. passport holders.

Besides tightening travel restrictions on Cuban Americans, the Bush administration deployed dozens of Treasury Department agents to fine U.S. travelers to Cuba who violated the rules. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, the Obama administration has eased up on this also.

Orbitz is backing legislation in Congress known as the "Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act." Sponsored by about one-third of members in the House and Senate, the act would end direct or "indirect" bans on Cuba travel.

Even if passed, which is unlikely

since it is not backed by Obama, the bill would still allow the ban to be reimposed in case of "war with Cuba, armed hostilities between the two countries" or if the president decides there is "imminent danger to the public health or the physical safety" of U.S. travelers.

Hoping there will be a further easing of travel restrictions, the governments of two Florida cities—Key West and Tampa—recently requested that their airports be declared ports of entry for travel to Cuba. Currently only airports in Miami, Los Angeles, and New York are allowed to operate flights to and from Cuba.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Treasury Department continues to enforce the embargo. In July, American Power Conversion was fined \$10,341 for selling electrical regulators to Cuba; First Incentive Travel, Inc. was fined \$8,250 for arranging travel to Cuba for non-U.S. citizens.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



September 7, 1984

MANILA, Philippines—Despite Pres. Ferdinand Marcos' declaration that August 21 was to be a normal working day, Manila came to a virtual standstill as a crowd estimated from 500,000 to 2 million flocked to the Luneta Park to commemorate the assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino a year ago. Most schools and many offices were closed, and anti-Marcos protesters were showered with confetti as they marched through the city streets.

Realizing it was powerless to prevent the rally, the Supreme Court granted permission for the rally to be held, but insisted that the "no permit—no rally" law would be maintained. By denying rally permits, the Marcos administration gives the police the green light to brutally attack demonstrators. An anti-Marcos rally in Manila August 12 was broken up by police with tear gas, truncheons and fire hoses.



September 7, 1959

On the eve of Labor Day, Congressional conferees reached agreement on a union-crippling bill embodying virtually all the provisions of the Landrum-Griffin measure passed by the House of Representatives, August 15.

The agreement will place new shackles on labor's right to organize and strike besides those contained in the Taft-Hartley Act. The new fetters outlaw such vital adjuncts of the unions' economic struggle as the secondary boycott and the refusal to handle "hot cargo." In addition, through the so-called "bill of rights" for union members, the government gains greater scope for interference in labor's internal affairs.

Last year the Democrats won their biggest majority in Congress since 1938. It is this Congress that is set to pass the first anti-labor measure since Taft-Hartley.



September 8, 1934

Thousands of armed scabs, brutal deputies, the greatest military display since the World War, the killing of ten strikers and the wounding of scores, have failed to dam the irresistible strike wave that has flooded the textile industry and stopped the looms from Maine to Mississippi.

One half million workers are out on strike, with the flying picket squads swooping down, closing mill after mill, town after town.

Pressed forward by a militant rank and file, ready to brave tear gas and bayonets, prepared to fight to the finish, even the diffident top leadership has been forced to issue bold statements.

"We shall agree to arbitration only after we have closed all mills in all divisions of the industry," says Francis J. Gorman, heading the strike committee.

But the matter has passed out of his hands.

N.Y. rally: ban shackling inmates during childbirth

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

NEW YORK—Dozens of protesters rallied in front of the New York governor's office in Manhattan August 18 demanding an end to the practice of shackling women prisoners during childbirth. Many of the women present wore handcuffs to show the inhumane and degrading humiliation jailed pregnant women go through.

The action was sponsored by Women on the Rise Telling HerStory (WORTH), Correctional Association of New York's Women in Prison Project, and the New York Civil Liberties Union.

After failing for the previous seven years to consider a bill that would end shackling, the state legislature finally approved the bill May 20. For 90 days after its approval New York governor David Paterson took no action to sign it. In response to the protest, and another involving more than 100 people at his office July 9, Paterson appeared before the demonstrators August 18 promising he will now sign the legislation.

The bill bans shackling women prisoners during labor and post-delivery recovery, and limits shackles during transportation to or from hospitals or clinics. Exceptions can be made for "ex-

traordinary circumstances"—"to prevent such woman from injuring herself or medical or correctional personnel." In such cases, one wrist can be shackled in transit. The legislation doesn't apply to past escapees and those deemed "terrorists."

Venita Pinckney, 37, a member of the coalition for women prisoners run by the Women in Prison Project, was among those attending the action. In March 2008 Pinckney was incarcerated at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, one of seven women's prisons in New York State. "I was put back in jail for a parole violation," she told the *Militant*. She was pregnant at the time.

On Nov. 10, 2008, while undergoing labor pains Pinckney was transported to the hospital with chains over her waist, shackled ankles, and handcuffed. "I told officers not to do this, but they said it's procedure," said Pinckney. Upon arrival she was kept restrained, having to wait for a prison officer to show up in her room. The shackles came off only as the baby was being born and were put right back on afterward.

Tina Reynolds, 50, is a cofounder of WORTH, a group led by formerly incarcerated women. She did a lot of jail time



Correctional Association of New York

Protesters rally August 18 in front of New York governor David Paterson's office in Manhattan demanding he sign bill to halt shackling of women prisoners during childbirth and recovery.

for drug possession, she told the *Militant* in a phone interview. Fifteen years ago while pregnant she was incarcerated on a parole violation. Like Pinckney, she was shackled on her way to the hospital.

"I was furious and afraid that if something happened I wouldn't be able to protect myself or my child," she said. "I was afraid I would give birth in transport." At the hospital her ankles remained shackled and one hand was cuffed to the gurney in the birth room. "I was in excruciating pain but couldn't concentrate on giving birth because of the oppressiveness of not being free to

have my child naturally," she said.

In response to her initiative, the National Organization for Women convention passed an antishackling resolution this past June. As a new member of NOW, Reynolds wrote and presented the resolution, which many women there supported. "This is not a state-by-state issue but must be taken nationally," she said.

To date only four states—California, Vermont, Illinois, and New Mexico—have policies restricting the shackling of women prisoners during childbirth. This applies to state and local facilities. The Federal Bureau of Prisons adopted this approach in October 2008. However the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has refused to end the use of restraints on pregnant women.

Women represent the fastest growing segment of the prison population in the United States. Since 1985 their numbers have increased at nearly double the rate of men, reports the American Civil Liberties Union.

"About 6,000 women are in state and local correctional facilities in New York," stated a news release from the Correctional Association of New York. "Nationwide, an estimated 4% of women in state prisons, 3% of women in federal prisons, and 5% of women in jail report being pregnant at the time of incarceration."

U.S. government expands attacks on immigrants

Continued from front page

number of ICE agents on the border, as well as added mobile X-ray machines, license plate readers, and K-9 dog teams as part of a twin antidrug, anti-immigrant campaign.

On July 1 ICE announced that it was ordering audits of I-9 employment forms at 652 businesses across the United States, compared to 503 in the entire previous year. During an audit, ICE inspects the company records to determine if workers are U.S. citizens or "authorized" to work in the United States.

If ICE says a worker does not have required job permits, the company can be fined up to \$10,000 per undocumented worker, if the worker is not fired. If ICE says there is a "pattern" of violations, company officials can be imprisoned for up to six months.

The penalties for hiring undocumented workers were part of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, approved when Ronald Reagan was president. The law granted amnesty to some 3 million undocumented workers, but also included new anti-immigrant measures.

After an ICE audit at American Apparel in Los Angeles, some 1,800 workers were informed they will be fired if they can't produce work papers. Workers from American Apparel have joined marches against the Obama administration's stepped up use of I-9 audits and expansion of the E-verify system.

According to a study by the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse, in April there were 9,037 immigration cases in federal courts, a 33 percent increase over April 2008.

Homeland Security is also proceeding with plans to check the fingerprints and immigration status of everyone in federal, state, and local jails.

Two other existing programs that the Obama administration is expanding are E-verify, which lets employers check on the legal status of workers through the

Internet, and 287(g), a program instituted during the William Clinton administration that gives local police the power to act as immigration cops.

Some 137,000 companies are now enrolled in E-verify. According to Napolitano, more than 1,000 new companies sign up for the program every week.

The combination of increased anti-immigrant measures and the rising U.S. unemployment have slowed the pace of immigration to the United States. Emigration from Mexico for the year ending August 2008 declined 25 percent compared to the previous year. Close to a third of immigrants in the United States

are from Mexico.

During his campaign to win the U.S. presidency, Obama said that he would both crack down on employers who hire undocumented workers and create a "pathway" to citizenship for immigrants already in the United States. The so-called pathway included making immigrants pay huge fines, learn English, pass background checks, and go "to the back of the line."

But at a summit meeting with the presidents of Mexico and Canada in early August Obama said that he has "a lot on my plate" and that immigration "reform" would have to wait until 2010.

U.S. 'capture and kill' unit to stay in Philippines

BY SETH GALINSKY

The U.S. government has decided to keep an elite unit of U.S. troops in the Philippines that specializes in "capture and kill" missions. The Joint Special Operations Task Force of 600 soldiers, which includes Green Berets, has been operating with their Filipino counterparts for seven years.

The U.S. troops have played a key role in helping the Philippine armed forces fight Islamist groups and others opposed to the Philippine government in the southern part of the country. The island nation is made up of some 7,000 islands, strategically located between Indonesia and China.

For almost five decades after the Philippines won formal independence in 1946, Washington maintained a large military presence, including the two largest bases outside U.S. borders—Subic Bay naval base and Clark air base.

In 1986 the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos was toppled by a mass upsurge. Sustained protests by working people succeeded in forcing the Philippine Senate to close the U.S. bases in 1992, a big blow to U.S. imperialist interests in the region.

While 80 percent of the Philippines' 98 million people are Catholic, about 5 percent, mostly in the south, are Muslim. Between 1967 and 1971, government-sanctioned programs evicted some 800,000 Muslims from their land. Discrimination, including in employment, continues today.

During the decades-long conflict on the southern island of Mindanao, where most Muslims live, more than 120,000 people have been killed.

In 1996 the Philippine government signed a peace agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and agreed to some limited autonomy for the Muslim regions. In the early 1970s, the MNLF had tied down some 40 percent of the Philippine military.

A split off from the more secular MNLF, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which calls for independence for the Muslim regions in the south and the establishment of Sharia law, signed an uneasy on-again, off-again truce with the Philippine government in 2001.

The U.S. Special Forces were first sent to Basilan Island, south of Mindanao, in 2002 to help the Philippine military counter a third group, Abu Sayyaf,

which Washington charges has ties to al-Qaeda. On August 12 the Philippine Army and National Police raided the main Abu Sayyaf camp in Basilan.

Along with the Special Forces, Washington has sent night-vision goggles and drones to aid the Philippine military.

Col. William Coultrup, the current U.S. Special Forces commander in the Philippines, told the *New York Times* that most of the U.S. operations involved building roads, schools, and health clinics as well as offering medical examinations. But he boasted that the military mission has helped the Philippine armed forces "neutralize high-value targets."

Bayan, a coalition of union, peasant, and student organizations in the Philippines, has protested the U.S. military presence.

"The retention of U.S. troops in the Philippines is an affront to our sovereignty, disguised as some questionable humanitarian mission," Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes said in a statement. He called for "the immediate pullout of all U.S. military troops and personnel not only in Mindanao, but in other parts of the country."

More than 1 million die yearly from toxic water

BY RÓGER CALERO

More than a million people around the world—nearly all of them the children of workers or small farmers—die each year from water-related illnesses.

The World Health Organization says 1.6 million people—90 percent of them children under five—die yearly from diarrheal diseases, including cholera. Hundreds of millions suffer from diseases ranging from intestinal infections to blindness due to lack of access to safe drinking water and the unsanitary conditions in which billions of working people are forced to live.

In Bangladesh alone, tens of millions are at risk of arsenic-poisoning related diseases from contaminated wells. According to the World Health Organization up to 270,000 people in Bangladesh could die of cancer related to drinking contaminated water. The real figures, however, are hard to estimate since some illnesses might not show up for 8 to 20 years.

In Bangladesh government, along with UNICEF, the World Bank, and the British Geological Survey (BGS), promoted the construction of millions of tube wells in the country but never suggested testing for arsenic in the water.

The wells in Bangladesh were dug starting in the 1970s, as part of an initiative to provide “safe” drinking water as an alternative to bacteriologically contaminated surface water responsible for some 250,000 deaths each year, according to the World Bank.

“We saved millions from dying of diarrhea,” said Carel de Rooy, UNICEF’s representative in Bangladesh, as she defended the measure. This “compassionate” measure has been justified by some saying that more is known now about the toxicity of arsenic in water than before, even though there are well-documented cases of contaminated river water in 1971 in Antofagasta, Chile, and of wells in West Bengal, India, in 1988.

In 2004 a British court ruled in favor of BGS in a lawsuit brought by two Bangladeshi residents who accused the organization of neglecting

to detect the arsenic. BGS had been called in to survey the water. The survey team ran tests for other chemicals, but not arsenic.

In 2000, there were 60 million people in Bangladesh drinking water with arsenic levels higher than the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standard, according to Richard Wilson, a Harvard professor, in a report presented at the Royal Geographic Society in 2007.

At the beginning of the 1990s, a campaign was launched to identify contaminated wells. Almost 20 years later, of the 8.6 million existing wells only 55 percent have been inspected, according to Spain’s daily *El País*.

The disregard by the ruling capitalist families for water safety is not limited to underdeveloped countries. For more than two decades, authorities in the working-class community of Crestwood, near Chicago, secretly drew water from a contaminated well in order to reduce costs, according to a *Chicago Tribune* feature in April.

In 1986, the *Tribune* said, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency informed Crestwood officials that they had found dangerous dry-cleaning solvents, including vinyl chloride, in a well used by the town. There are no safe levels of exposure to the chemical, the EPA says.

To avoid scrutiny, Crestwood’s officials told the state that they would get all their tap water from Lake Michigan, but instead continued drawing from the well. It was not until December 2007 after state officials tested the



Boy in southern Bangladesh pumps water from tube well provided by Save the Children. UNICEF, World Bank, and other organizations promoted construction of millions of such wells across country to provide “safe” drinking water without testing for arsenic, putting tens of millions at risk for cancer and other arsenic-poisoning related diseases.

water for the first time in more than 20 years, that they found that town authorities were still piping water from the contaminated well. The test was prompted by an investigation by a resident whose son developed leukemia as a toddler.

Public water supplies in 42 states are contaminated with 141 unregulated chemicals for which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has never established safety standards, according to the Washington-based Environmental Working Group.

Capitalist crisis throws 1 billion into starvation

BY DOUG NELSON

The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations projects that for the first time in history more than 1 billion people worldwide will face chronic hunger this year. This unfolding social disaster highlights that capitalism—a system that operates to maximize individual profit—is inimical to providing toiling humanity with the most basic necessities of life.

Drawing on an analysis from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the FAO projects world hunger will increase by 11 percent this year. The number of malnourished has risen steadily since the mid-1990s.

The growing social crisis of world starvation, afflicting one-sixth of humanity, “is not the consequence of poor global harvests but is caused by the world economic crisis,” said a June 19 FAO press release.

In other words the 100 million more workers and farmers being pushed into starvation this year is primarily because they can’t afford to buy food in the capitalist market.

Working people in the semicolonial world are being squeezed particularly hard between high food prices and falling income.

Food prices shot up between 2006 and mid-2008, with many basic staples doubling in price. The average world food prices in real terms remain 24 percent higher than they were in 2006 and 33 percent higher than 2005, according to the report.

In semicolonial countries, prices are higher and the decline from last year’s highest levels lag far behind the price drops in the imperialist countries. For example, the price of wheat in Peru peaked at about \$680 per ton in August 2008, but declined less than 15 percent by April 2009. However, U.S. wheat export prices peaked at about \$470 in March 2008, then fell to under \$250 per ton by December—a nearly 50 percent drop.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates that direct foreign investment in “developing” countries will decline by 32 percent this year. The FAO report says, “Reduced employment will have economy-wide ripple effects,” as a result. In addition, loans for the least developed countries are exceedingly more expensive or unavailable.

Money sent to family members in these countries from individuals working abroad, known as remittances, will drop this year by 5 percent to 8 percent, according to the World Bank.

The report says the IMF projects foreign aid, which had also increased in recent years, will decline in the 71 poorest countries by about 25 percent.

The increase in hunger will hit every corner of the globe. The smallest increase this year is expected to be in Asia and the Pacific, the world’s most populous region and home to most of the world’s hungry—642 million. There the rate is projected to increase

by 10.5 percent this year.

The highest prevalence of hunger is in Sub-Saharan Africa where 32 percent of the population is starving. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the only region where there had been any decline in pervasive hunger in recent years, the number of undernourished is expected to increase by 13 percent.

The percentage of hungry in the Near East and North Africa is projected to rise by 13.5 percent, the largest percentage increase in the semicolonial world.

About 1.5 percent of the world’s hungry live in the “developed” countries. However, it is in these countries where the greatest percentage increase is projected—15.4 percent.

As usual, the report outlines policy recommendations to address the social crisis of hunger. The fact that the root of the problem is systemic, rather than one of bad policy, is illustrated by the fact that the UN organization’s “work” over the years has amounted to nothing. The number of hungry and all the “targets” set by the UN World Food Summit (WFS) have run in opposite directions since its inception in 1995. The more than 1 billion people facing chronic hunger is double the WFS “target” for 2009.

The report warns that “unless concrete steps are taken” the current economic crisis “can have long-term adverse impacts, particularly on the economies of the poor countries even after the wave of the global recession has passed”—whenever that may be.

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How right to choose abortion was won

Lessons from 1970s point to importance of mobilizing to defend it today

Below we reprint excerpts from the article “The abortion struggle: What have we accomplished; where should we go from here?” It appears in Part III of the three-volume collection *Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women’s Liberation: Documents of the Socialist Workers Party, 1971–86*, an *Education for Socialists* booklet. The volumes can be purchased at a steeply discounted price through the end of September. (See ad on this page.) In the article, Betsey Stone and Mary-Alice Waters describe how the historic 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion came about. The authors also take up the debates within the women’s movement over the place of the abortion rights struggle and the vanguard role played by the Women’s National Abortion Action Coalition (WONAAC). Copyright © 1992 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY BETSEY STONE AND MARY-ALICE WATERS

The January 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion was a landmark victory in the struggle for women’s liberation.

It was the first major advance recorded by the new wave of struggles by women in the fight against the institutionalized domestic slavery to which women have been relegated by class society.

The abortion rights victory opened the door for millions of women—especially working women, Blacks, Chicanas, Puerto Ricans—to begin to control their own reproductive functions, their own bodies. It went a significant way towards establishing a fundamental human right for all women—the right to choose whether or not to bear a child.

Freedom from enforced motherhood is a precondition to women’s liberation. Only with the right to control their own bodies can women begin to reassert their full human identity as productive, not only reproductive, beings. . . .

Behind the Supreme Court victory

The Supreme Court decision was brought about by a combination of factors. . . .

First, the decision was a product of the increasing disparity between the actual position of women and the possibilities provided by today’s technology and wealth for freeing women from a narrow existence of domestic drudgery. As a result of psychological conditioning and economic coercion women

continue to be channeled into the role of wife-mother-housekeeper. They are systematically molded for this socially prescribed role by law, by custom, by religion, by the dominant ideology of the ruling class. They are taught it is their “natural” place. While women today have more options than ever before in terms of jobs, education, and participation in productive activity, they are still restricted at every turn by the institutionalized forms of sexual discrimination and oppression which are the basic underpinnings of class society.

This disparity between what is and what could be became abundantly clear in the debate around the issue of abortion. The use of birth control devices and the pill are now widespread in the U.S., and are recognized as a legal right in most states. Under modern medical practice abortions are safer by far than childbirth. But for simply exercising the right to control their own bodies, women have been branded as criminals and condemned to risk their lives at the hands of backstreet abortionists.

This and similar contradictions gave rise to the women’s liberation movement in general and the struggle against the reactionary abortion laws in particular.

The impact of women’s liberation ideas and the fight carried out by large numbers of women was another major factor behind the Supreme Court decision. This was manifested in the fact that the concept put forward by large numbers of women’s liberation forces—that abortion should be a woman’s right to choose—was incorporated in the Supreme Court decision.

The ruling was also influenced by the general radicalization with its challenges to traditional attitudes and values. The rise of the Black movement, the antiwar movement and other struggles for social change helped create an atmosphere that spurred changing views on abortion.

The influence of the radicalization, and the development of the feminist movement in particular, was reflected in the polls that showed a rapid change in attitudes relating to abortion between 1968 and 1971. In 1968, the polls reported that only 15 percent of the population believed women had a right to abortion. Abortion was still largely a secret ordeal that many women went through but were afraid to talk about. By 1969, the percentage supporting abortion rose dramatically to 40 percent. By 1971, it was 50 percent.

The rise of the women’s liberation



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Some 1 million protesters rally in Washington, D.C., April 25, 2004, to defend abortion rights. “Only with right to control their own bodies can women begin to reassert their full human identity as productive, not only reproductive beings,” the article states.

movement helped bring about the first partial victory in the abortion rights struggle: the legalization of abortion in New York state in 1970. The excellent safety record in New York under the new law and the demonstrated demand for legal abortion helped legitimize the procedure and also made it more difficult for the ruling class to take back this limited gain women had won. . . .

Passage of the liberalized New York abortion law in March 1970 was a turning point in the struggle. At one and the same time it provided an impetus to the abortion rights fight and prompted the reactionary anti-abortion forces, spearheaded by the powerful Catholic Church hierarchy, to launch a campaign to reverse the trend toward legalization. Numerous capitalist politicians including Richard Nixon felt impelled to publicly support this reactionary offensive. Newspaper and magazine articles on the abortion question proliferated; debates raged in more and more state legislatures; meetings, rallies and demonstrations were organized by both sides in the abortion fight. . . .

Considerations behind campaign

A national action campaign centered on the abortion issue could rebuff the reactionary right-wing offensive and become the vehicle to enable the women’s liberation forces to break out of a relatively closed-circle existence and begin to organize around the real social and political issues that affected the masses of women. Such a campaign could provide the opportunity to advance beyond the stage of general propagandizing about women’s oppression to organizing a fight to attain a concrete goal of vital importance to masses of American women. It could begin to demonstrate, in practice, that the ideas of women’s liberation are of concern to working women, Black women, Chicanas. It could be a way of involving new layers of women in the feminist movement.

The SWP considered such a campaign to be a realistic prospect because, in addition to our own movement, there were other significant forces already involved in the abortion rights struggle who would welcome the idea of a national effort on this issue. In the spring of 1971, Women vs. Connecticut, a group which sponsored a class action suit against that

state’s abortion law, had already called for a national march on Washington demanding repeal of the laws restricting the right of women to obtain abortions.

From the beginning, the feminist component of the abortion rights movement had been the most uncompromising in its stand for total repeal of abortion laws and the right of a woman to choose abortion. One of the dangers of the developing controversy over abortion was that the population-control advocates who were influential at this time in many pro-abortion groups would direct the debate into a losing fight over population control vs. “right-to-life.” Leadership by the women’s liberation movement was needed to shift the debate off this axis and squarely pose the question on the basis of a woman’s right to control her own body. This was particularly important in order to involve Black, Puerto Rican, and Chicana women in the abortion struggle, since most population-control theories and proposals are marked by racist attitudes and assumptions. Clear political leadership by the feminist movement was also needed to fight liberal proposals that women should be allowed abortions only under special conditions, such as rape, incest, or threat to the life or health of the pregnant woman.

The demands embodying a clear, principled position based on a woman’s right to choose were—“Repeal all anti-abortion laws” and “No forced sterilization.” . . .

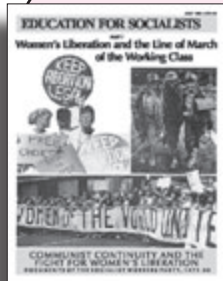
What did WONAAC represent?

Together with other forces, the SWP and YSA helped initiate the Women’s National Abortion Action Coalition in July of 1971. The initial organizing efforts, including the first national WONAAC conference, were successful in involving and inspiring hundreds of women with the perspective of united action to beat back the anti-abortion forces and participation in a struggle which could register an important victory for women. At the same time, from its very inception, a debate raged within and around WONAAC between the supporters of a mass-action approach and the sectarians and liberals who saw WONAAC as a threat to their orientations. . . .

One major debate was over the impor-

Continued on page 9

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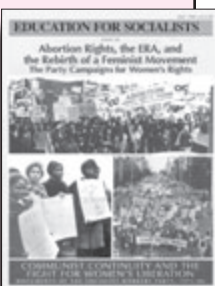


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Socialists answer Seattle paper on disclosure laws

An outfit trying to overturn a Washington State law that gives gay and lesbian couples the same state benefits as married couples has asked the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) to withhold information on its donors. Protect Marriage Washington is attempting to place Referendum 71 on the ballot, which would repeal the law. The group said it feared harassment and possible property damage to contributors.

The PDC Web site normally reports the names of all donors to public campaigns and candidates, as well as their hometowns, places of employment, and the amounts they contributed.

The August 16 *Seattle Times* ran an editorial opposing exemption of Protect Marriage Washington from disclosure. The paper said, "An exception should require a pattern of acts that are real, ongoing and serious."

"There has been one example," it continued. "In the 1990s, the Socialist Workers Party offered evidence of actual harassment and property damage done to its donors. Its argument had already been accepted by the Federal Election Commission and several times the state PDC granted the request. The city of Seattle denied it, was sued, and lost in federal court."

However, the editorial continued, "the Socialist Workers are a special case. They could show actual damage They are a communist party, a fringe party. They're tiny, and their candidates have no chance of winning."

"Referendum 71 is not at the fringe. . . . If it gets on the ballot there will be campaigns on both sides. . . . People will want to know who is paying to influence them."

Below we reprint the letter sent to the editor of the *Times* August 20 by Mary Martin, SWP candidate for mayor of Seattle, and Edwin Fruit, the party's candidate for city council position 6. The socialist candidates explain that "disclosure clauses," no matter who they are used against, are aimed at working people and all those "who speak and act against the capitalist government and its policies."



Letter to *Seattle Times* Editor

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) candidates for Seattle mayor and city council disagree with your August 16 editorial insisting that Protect Marriage Washington publicly disclose names of financial donors. While we oppose the group's goal of refusing legal and civil equality to all, denial of an exemption will be used as a precedent by those on the Seattle Ethics and Election Commission and other local, state, and federal bodies who seek to reimpose disclosure on the SWP and others who speak and act against the capitalist government and its policies.

Disclosure laws are an obstacle to steps by the working class toward political organization and action independent of the Democratic, Republican, or other capitalist parties. The Socialist Workers Party has successfully fought such restrictions since they were imposed in the 1970s, winning an extension of our federal exemption in March. (The federal lawsuit lost by Seattle officials in 2004 was filed by the Freedom Socialist Party, not the SWP as the editorial

says. After that victory, the SWP fought for and won exemption from local and state election boards in the 2005 mayoral race.)

Far from being a "fringe" party, as your editors put it, the SWP is the only party explaining that capitalism has entered into the deepest world economic and social crisis in living memory. We call for immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Iraq and from Washington's escalating wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The working class must organize a revolutionary struggle to take state power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers and reorganize economic and social relations in the interests of workers and farmers.

We urge those who want to support a revolutionary working-class alternative to write in the names of the Socialist Workers candidates.

Sincerely,

Mary Martin

Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Seattle

Edwin Fruit

Socialist Workers Party candidate for city council pos. #6

Iowa socialists file petitions for ballot status



Militant/Chuck Guerra

DES MOINES, Iowa—On August 24, the first day petitions for city council candidates could be filed, Socialist Workers Party candidates Rebecca Williamson and David Rosenfeld, on left of counter, filed more than double the required signatures at city hall.

Williamson, who is running for the council seat in Ward 1, a workers district in the northwest part of the city that includes a considerable number of African Americans and immigrants from Africa and Bosnia, had 129 signatures validated, more than double the 58 required. Rosenfeld, who is running for an at-large seat that requires 164 signatures, had 482 signatures validated.

Both candidates are planning to participate in defense of Dr. LeRoy Carhart's abortion clinic near Omaha, Nebraska, August 28–29, where women's rights supporters will counter efforts by rightist Operation Rescue to shut down the medical facility.

— MAGGIE TROWE

How right to choose abortion was won

Continued from page 8

tance of the abortion issue itself. Many of the women who proposed WONAAC take up other issues did so because they believed abortion was not a matter of concern to most women.

Their arguments took many forms. Just as sectarians in the antiwar movement had objected that the demand for U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam was "not radical enough," that it "wouldn't stop the seventh war from now," so too did representatives of these currents in the women's movement try to say that the demand for legal abortion was "not radical," or that the capitalist class would easily grant it and therefore it was not worth struggling for. . . .

The SWP rejected these arguments as did the majority of WONAAC activists. The right to abortion is a basic democratic right of women that must be wholeheartedly championed by any socialist. Under the laws in force prior to the Supreme Court decision statistics showed that one woman out of every four would have had an abortion at some time in her life. Almost every woman had been haunted by the fear of unwanted pregnancy, and the fear of having to resort to illegal, backstreet abortionists.

We pointed out that the right to legal abortion is *especially* relevant to working women, Black, Puerto Rican and Chicana women since these are the women who have the least access to birth control information and devices, and the hardest time getting safe, inexpensive abortions under illegal conditions. They account for the overwhelming majority of botched-abortion fatalities.

We saw the fight for the right to abortion as a struggle challenging one of the most important ideological props of women's oppression. Freedom to decide when or if to bear a child is necessary if women are to begin to have any control

over the course of their lives. Along with "women's duties" in the home, vulnerability to unplanned pregnancy has been one of the basic "justifications" for discriminating against women in all areas, including jobs and education. It is one of the fundamental components of reactionary ideology defining women as inferior, dependent beings, whose proper place is in the home.

We believed that winning a victory on this question was possible, and that it would represent a giant step forward for the women's liberation movement. It would alleviate an important aspect of women's oppression and represent a defeat for the reactionary anti-abortion and antifeminist forces. It would lay the basis for further struggles by women. . . .

Balance sheet of abortion campaign

The most dramatic proof of WONAAC's correctness was the Supreme Court decision itself. The ruling reflected the social impact of the burgeoning women's liberation movement as a whole. It was also affected by WONAAC's arguments and activities. The political concept that WONAAC fought for as the axis of the abortion struggle was incorporated into the decision itself with the recognition of abortion as a woman's right.

WONAAC's direct achievements are impressive. It carried out the November 20, 1971 Washington demonstration, the first national action for the right to abortion. It carried out manifold activities in local areas in May 1972. The New York WONAAC demonstration held during that Abortion Action Week was the only visible protest action by the abortion rights movement to offset the nearly successful attempts by the anti-abortion forces to have the New York abortion law repealed.

WONAAC's three national confer-

ences served to unite large sections of the movement for valuable discussions of political questions, priorities, and exchanges of experiences in the abortion rights struggle. The largest conference in Boston attracted 1300 women. The WONAAC newsletter played an important role in giving national direction and inspiration to the abortion fight as well as providing a forum for discussion.

The coalition organized the successful defense of Shirley Wheeler, the first woman tried and convicted in the U.S. for having an abortion. It spurred the rest of the movement to join in this defense effort.

WONAAC encouraged and helped to draft the Abortion Rights Act introduced into Congress by Bella Abzug. It helped initiate class action suits in several states, including California, Massachusetts, and Michigan. It educated around the questions of availability of birth control, and of the practice of forced sterilization and polemicized against those who viewed abortion as a "population control" issue. WONAAC supporters throughout the country were the major force engaging the "right-to-life" forces in head on confrontation, rebutting their reactionary campaign in debates and literature.

Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women

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Why Bolsheviks suppressed 1921 Kronstadt mutiny

Below is an excerpt from Kronstadt. The book contains writings and speeches by V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, central leaders of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, on the March 1921 revolt at the Kronstadt naval base in Soviet Russia. It is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for August.

After 10 days of bitter fighting, the Bolshevik government suppressed the mutiny, which had threatened to unleash counterrevolutionary forces against the Bolshevik-led workers state. The events occurred shortly after the young Soviet republic emerged from several years of a hard-fought civil war.

The excerpt below is from a March 8, 1921, report by Lenin to the 10th Congress of the Russian Communist Party, a day after the Red Army forces began operations to suppress the Kronstadt uprising. Copyright © 1979 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY V.I. LENIN

I should now like to deal with the Kronstadt events. I have not yet received the latest news from Kronstadt, but I have no doubt that this mutiny, which very quickly revealed to us the familiar figures of White Guard generals, will be put down within the next few days, if not



V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky (center) in Petrograd with delegates to 10th Congress of Russian Communist Party who participated in suppressing Kronstadt revolt in March 1921.

hours. There can be no doubt about this. But it is essential that we make a thorough appraisal of the political and economic lessons of this event.

What does it mean? It was an attempt to seize political power from the Bolsheviks by a motley crowd or alliance of ill-assorted elements, apparently just to the right of the Bolsheviks, or perhaps even to their "left"—you can't really tell, so amorphous is the combination of political groupings that has tried to take power in Kronstadt. You all know, undoubtedly, that at the same time White Guard generals were very active over there. There is ample proof of this. Two weeks before the Kronstadt events, the Paris newspapers reported a mutiny at Kronstadt. It is quite clear that it is the work of Social Revolutionaries and White Guard émigrés, and at the same time the movement was reduced to a petty-bourgeois counterrevolution and petty-bourgeois anarchism. That is something quite new. This circumstance, in the context of all the crises, must be given careful political consideration and must be very thoroughly analyzed. There is evidence here of the activity of petty-bourgeois anarchist elements, with their slogans of unrestricted trade and invariable hostility to the dictatorship of the proletariat. This mood has had a wide influence on the proletariat. It has had an effect on factories in Moscow and a number of provincial centers. This petty-bourgeois counterrevolution is undoubtedly more dangerous than Denikin, Yudenich, and Kolchak put together, because ours is a country where

the proletariat is in a minority, where peasant property has gone to ruin, and where, in addition, the demobilization has set loose vast numbers of potentially mutinous elements. No matter how big or small the initial, shall I say, shift in power, which the Kronstadt sailors and workers put forward—they wanted to correct the Bolsheviks in regard to restrictions in trade—and this looks like a small shift, which leaves the same slogans of "Soviet power" with ever so slight a change or correction. Yet, in actual fact the White Guards only used the nonparty elements as a stepping-stone to get in. This is politically inevitable. We saw the petty-bourgeois anarchist elements in the Russian revolution, and we have been fighting them for decades. We have seen them in action since February 1917, during the Great Revolution, and their parties' attempts to prove that their program differed little from that of the Bolsheviks, but that only their methods in carrying it through were different. We know this not only from the experience of the October revolution but also from the experience of the outlying regions and various areas within the former Russian empire where the Soviet power was temporarily replaced by other regimes. Let us recall the Democratic Committee in Samara.* They all came in demanding equality, freedom, and a constituent assembly, and every time they proved to be nothing but a conduit for White Guard rule. Because the Soviet power is being shaken by the economic situation, we must consider all this experience

and draw the theoretical conclusions a Marxist cannot escape. The experience of the whole of Europe shows the practical results of trying to sit between two stools. That is why in this context we must say that political friction, in this case, is a great danger. We must take a hard look at this petty-bourgeois counterrevolution, with its calls for freedom to trade. Unrestricted trade—even if it is not as bound up initially with the White Guards as Kronstadt was—is still only the thin end of the wedge for the White Guard element, a victory for capital and its complete restoration. We must, I repeat, have a keen sense of this political danger.

It shows what I said in dealing with our platforms discussion: in face of this danger we must understand that we must do more than put an end to party disputes as a matter of form—we shall do that, of course. We need to remember that we must take a much more serious approach to this question.

We have to understand that, with the peasant economy in the grip of a crisis, we can survive only by appealing to the peasants to help town and countryside. We must bear in mind that the bourgeoisie is trying to pit the peasants against the workers; that behind a facade of workers' slogans it is trying to incite the petty-bourgeois anarchist elements against the workers. This, if successful, will lead directly to the overthrow of the dictatorship of the proletariat and, consequently, to the restoration of capitalism and of the old landowner and capitalist regime. The political danger here is obvious. A number of revolutions have clearly gone that way; we have always been mindful of this possibility and have warned against it.

* On June 8, 1918, Czechoslovak military forces captured the town of Samara, in the Volga region. The Social Revolutionaries followed on the Czechs' heels whereupon both forces presided over dissolving the soviets, setting up a constituent assembly, and launching a violent anti-Communist campaign. Calling themselves the Constituent Assembly Committee, the SRs set up governments similar to the one in Samara in the wake of further Czech military victories along the Volga and in the area of the Urals. By fall these forces were soundly defeated by the Red Army—ed.

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August

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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10 The Militant September 7, 2009

Iowa socialists join clinic defense

Continued from front page

rights. As the crisis of capitalism worldwide grows, polarization around issues such as women’s rights, and in particular their right to control their own bodies, become sharper. The recent killing of abortion provider Dr. George Tiller and other attempts by opponents of women’s rights to clamp down on legal abortion illustrate the need to rebuild a movement to defend and extend abortion rights.

At best, capitalist politicians in the Democratic and Republican parties have simply let the killing of Doctor Tiller and other rightist attacks pass with little or no objection. President Barack Obama issued a two-sentence statement in response to the killing, calling abortion “a difficult issue.” Just two weeks earlier, Obama called for finding “common ground” with antiabortion groups. “Let us work together to reduce the number of women seeking abortion,” he said. These statements only serve to embolden rightist forces.

So-called “friends of women” in the capitalist political parties offer no way out of the systematic oppression of women produced by capitalism.

The course of reliance on capitalist politicians, Democrats and Republicans, has weakened the defense of the right to abortion and disoriented women’s rights fighters. As of 2005 some 87 percent of U.S. counties—and 97 percent of non-metropolitan counties—had no abortion provider. Thirty-five states now require parental consent or notification for minors seeking an abortion, while 24 states require waiting periods. In most states, Medicaid programs do not cover abortions, which in 2008 cost an average of \$523.

These inroads that opponents of abortion rights have made underscore the need to redouble our efforts to make sure women can exercise their right to choose whether and when to bear children. Having the right to decide this question is a precondition for full equality and liberation. Without the right to control her own body, a woman cannot exercise effective control over her life or join as an equal in the social and political arenas, such as the fight for job and education equality and for union rights.

One of the major factors in the 1973 victory of Roe v. Wade was the rise of an uncompromising movement for women’s liberation, which built upon the momentum of the fight for Black rights and against the Vietnam war. It was marked by the refusal to subordinate the fight for legalized abortion to the electoral aspirations of capitalist politicians.

As long as the capitalist system exists, capitalist social relations will maintain the subordinate status of women in society in order to increase profits and divide and weaken the working class. The only way to open the road to ending women’s oppression is to take power out of the hands of the handful of billionaire families who run this country and reorganize society in the interests of the exploited majority, with working people in command.

Along the working class’s line of march toward political power, the Socialist Workers candidates put forward the following immediate demands to unite working people and strengthen our fighting capacity: Defend and extend affirmative action for women and oppressed nationalities! Keep abortion safe and legal!

Abortion rights activists mobilize

Continued from front page

abortions in the Wichita, Kansas, area, Operation Rescue, joined by Rescue the Heartland and Nebraskans United for Life, announced a “Keep It Closed” campaign targeting Carhart. The rightist outfits say they will hold a “pro-life rally” and “street activism” at Carhart’s clinic in Bellevue, outside of Omaha.

NOW groups in Kansas and Nebraska took the initiative to call a mobilization to defend the clinic. The showdown will take place just three months after Wichita abortion provider Dr. George Tiller was gunned down by an antiabortion rightist.

“Dr. Carhart saves women’s lives, and we need to stand with abortion providers like Dr. Carhart to say that his life is precious, too,” O’Neill wrote. “Please join me in Nebraska to stand with a man whose compassion and dedication make it possible for women to own their lives.”

Erin Sullivan, president of Nebraska NOW, reports that there will be round-the-clock clinic defense and a local church will provide housing. Potluck dinners will be served for clinic defenders each night. The pro-choice activities will begin with a sign-making party on August 27.

The breadth of participation in the two days of clinic

defense is growing.

In Chicago, a couple dozen defenders of a woman’s right to choose abortion are already signed up for caravans organized by DuPage NOW. Illinois Planned Parenthood and the Chicago Abortion Fund are also calling on members to attend.

Missouri NOW is building the action, and South Dakota abortion rights defenders will be heading south to Omaha, reports Tiffany Campbell on the Kansas NOW Facebook page. Des Moines supporters of women’s rights are building a caravan as well.

Five students from Austin, Minnesota, including several who have helped organize two counterprotests against anti-immigrant actions by Nazi outfits in that city, are planning to drive to Bellevue.

In Minneapolis, the Women’s Student Activist Committee at the University of Minnesota sent out information to their e-mail list and organized two meetings to publicize defense of the clinic. The campus Black Student Union is alerting its members about the mobilization. As a result several students are planning to join a caravan from the city.

Diana Newberry from Minneapolis and Betsy Farley and Laura Anderson from Chicago contributed to this article.

Afghanistan

Continued from front page

warlords in various parts of the country in a bid to get enough votes to win the election.

He invited Abdul Rashid Dostum to campaign for him. Dostum had been forced into exile for his brutal treatment of prisoners of war—including the slaughter of 2,000 Taliban detainees locked up in cargo containers until they died. Dostum is from the Uzbek minority, representing 9 percent of the Afghan population. Karzai is from the dominant Pashtun nationality.

Karzai picked Mohammad Qasim Fahim, a Tajik warlord, as one of his vice-presidential candidates. Fahim is notorious for “murdering prisoners of war during the 1990s and of running private armed militias,” reported the London *Times*.

In a bid for votes from the Hazara minority, Karzai brought two Hazara warlords with similar records—Mohammad Mohaqiq and Karim Khalili—into his campaign.

Backs antiwoman law

In late July Karzai quietly engineered the adoption of an antiwoman law supported by the most reactionary Shiite clergy. It allows Shiite men to deny their wives food and sustenance if they refuse their husbands’ sexual demands. Shiites comprise 20 percent of the population.

After a demonstration against the law in April by some 200 people, mostly young women, Karzai said he would order a review of the legislation. On July 27 the bill was printed in the official government gazette, making it law.

Candidate Abdullah campaigned against “government corruption,” and called for giving more power to the parliament and for the election of provincial governors, who are currently appointed from Kabul, the capital.

According to a *New York Times* report on a campaign rally Abdullah held in the city of Herat, “He raised the biggest cheer with his promise to build up Afghan institutions so that foreign troops could go home soon.”

Like Karzai, Abdullah was a Mujahideen fighter against Soviet troops in the 1980s. When they were routed, he served in the Northern Alliance government, which held power for a time in the 1990s. He later served as foreign minister under Karzai. Abdullah’s base is among Tajiks, the second largest nationality.

The U.S. government did not endorse any candidate for president. However, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, U.S. diplomats looked kindly on the candidacy of Ashraf Ghani, a Pashtun, who has worked for the World Bank and was Afghanistan’s finance minister from 2002 to 2004. He is also a close associate of Richard Holbrooke, Obama’s special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, reported the *Huffington Post*.

Stable gov’t harder to achieve

One of the most underdeveloped countries in the world, Afghanistan lacks a cohesive capitalist class and remains divided into regions ruled by rival factions based partly on tribal ties. The challenge is more difficult than in Iraq, where there is a substantial capitalist class made up of both Sunni and Shiite Muslims, allowing Washington to pull together a more stable government.

Obama hailed the presidential election in Afghanistan as “the first democratic election run by Afghans in over three decades.” But turnout at the polls was far lower than the presidential election in 2004, when about 70 percent voted. This year, election officials estimate 40 percent to 50 percent turned out, blaming this on Taliban intimidation.

In the southern province of Wardak, “nearly all polling centers outside of district capitals had to be closed due to violence,” the *Journal* reported. In Uruzgan Province, only six of the 36 polling places for women were open, according to the Free and Fair Elections Foundation of Afghanistan.

Twenty-six Afghans were killed during the election and two voters had fingers chopped off, reportedly by the Taliban. If no candidate gets 50 percent of the vote on the first round, a second round will be held in October.

LETTERS

Chinese workers

Thank you for the great articles by Mary-Alice Waters on the history and contributions of Chinese workers. The book review by Jim Altenberg was excellent. (See “Driven Out: The Forgotten War Against Chinese Americans” in August 17 *Militant*.) These two articles have offered material that I was never aware of. The truth and factual reporting of the *Militant* often motivates us to study further.
Wendy Banen
New York, New York

Wants book recommendations

I just wanted to write and let you

know how much I enjoy your paper. Could you recommend some basic political works of Marx and Engels for me to study so I can understand Marxism and socialism better?

A prisoner
Washington

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The Prisoners’ Fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. To donate, send a check or money order payable to the Militant and earmarked “Prisoners’ Fund” to 306 W. 37th St., 10th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

Editor’s note—The best introductory work by Marx and Engels is the *Communist Manifesto*, which is available from Pathfinder. A good companion is the Pathfinder booklet *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* by Mary-Alice Waters.

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.