

Eastern strikers step up activities

BY JUDY STRANAHAN

With Eastern Airlines still reeling from indictments on charges of conspiracy to defraud the government and failure to maintain proper safety checks of its airplanes, the Machinists on strike against the air carrier are seizing the moment to press ahead with their fight for a contract.

Around the country, Eastern strikers and other unionists are turning up the heat with a series of solidarity activities and actions:

- **Miami** — "The best regulators of airline safety are airline unions," reads the flier strikers are distributing to build an August 3 expanded picket line. The event is to be held at Eastern's 36th Street gate from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.

- **New York** — International Association of Machinists Lodge 1018 at La Guardia Airport has stepped up the building of a rally and human billboard beginning at noon at the airport on August 4.

- **Washington, D.C.** — IAM Lodge 796 is passing out a flier headlined, "No Contract! No Peace! Keep the Pressure On!" The leaflet promotes three special events: an August 5 walk-through from 2:00 p.m. at the main terminal of National Airport; August 9 and August 16 expanded picket lines from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the airport.

- **San Francisco** — Strikers are organizing for a September 1 picket and rally at noon at the Eastern departure gate at the airport.

Strikers in a number of cities have reported that they are receiving very friendly and fraternal responses to their picket lines from passengers going in and out of the airports.

Comments of "You were right all along, Eastern is unsafe to fly" and "Keep up the good work, you're winning" are more com-

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'Socialism is historical necessity,' says Castro

BY SELVA NEBBIA
AND RICH STUART

HAVANA, Cuba — Under huge billboards that read, "Socialism or Death!" "Cuba, Yes!" and "Homeland or Death, we shall win!" hundreds of thousands gathered here in the Plaza of the Revolution to hear Cuban President Fidel Castro on July 26.

The occasion was the 37th anniversary of the 1953 attack on the Moncada Barracks, which marked the beginning of the Cuban revolution against the tyranny of Fulgencio Batista.

"We are celebrating this anniversary at a very special time in the life of the country and in the life of the revolution," Castro said. During his three-hour speech, the Cuban president described the "exceptional conditions" the Cuban people face today.

"Today," Castro noted, Cuba "is accomplishing more than ever with less resources than ever. But as fate would have it, this huge effort coincides with exceptional and unexpected international events."

"Who would have imagined that the socialist camp would fall apart like a house of cards," he continued. "Who would have imagined that the Soviet Union itself would be facing the difficulties and the problems it faces today."

"We must be realistic," he said. "I cannot come here on this 37th anniversary and tell you everything is rose-colored, that no danger threatens us, that we are not threatened by any problem. We cannot say that!"

"It is hard to acknowledge that our most extraordinary effort for the development of the country and for consolidation of socialism in our homeland coincides with a catastrophe in the socialist camp," Castro said, and with the imperialist blockade against Cuba "that has been going on for more than 30 years."

Cuba does not rely on the imperialists for its future plans, said Castro. "At a time when our economy was mainly based on the solid



Militant/Rich Stuart

Cuban President Fidel Castro giving July 26 address in Havana

pillars of our economic relations with the socialist camp, and in particular, with the Soviet Union, all these events take place that create great uncertainty about resources that the country was counting on for the years to come.

"The people have hardly noticed the real problems, thanks to the extraordinary efforts carried out by the revolution, all the efforts

that we make every day so that the children do not go without milk, so that medicines are not in short supply, so that there is no lack of basic foodstuffs, no lack of transportation," said the Cuban leader, "so that nothing is lacking to stop us from moving forward with our development programs."

"Nevertheless," Castro said, "we are working under very tense conditions." Regarding the availability of essential resources, Cuba is facing "problems we never had before," he said.

Castro noted there is a shortage of fuel in Cuba today. "This is an essential product. We are getting it in smaller quantities than agreed upon, than what we had contracts for." A similar situation exists with many other raw materials that are essential for Cuba's industrial and agricultural production, he said, such as fertilizer, metal, and wood.

The Cuban president reminded those present of what he said last year at the July 26 celebration in Camaguey: "If the socialist camp falls apart, we will continue building

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Canada rally shows support for Mohawks

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

OKA, Québec — "We will not surrender. Though our nation is under siege, our people remain committed, strong and free," said Mohawk negotiator Ellen Gabriel to a rally of almost 2,000 people who came from all 10 Canadian provinces.

Held in a park near Oka, about 30 miles northwest of Montréal, the July 29 rally was organized by the Assembly of First Nations

in solidarity with Mohawk Indians at Kanesatake, a Native community in Oka, and at Kahnawake, a reserve immediately south of Montréal. Gabriel spoke to the rally by telephone from behind the barricades.

On July 11 Mohawk warriors at Kanesatake defeated an armed attack by the Québec provincial police (Sûreté du Québec — SQ) on barricades they had erected to prevent their land from being seized by Oka city officials to expand a golf course. The SQ then massively reinforced barricades facing the Mohawk lines. The SQ also set up barricades cutting off access to the Kahnawake reserve after Mohawks there blocked a key bridge to Montréal in solidarity with Mohawks in Kanesatake. More than 2,000 heavily armed cops remain at these blockades.

After police efforts during the first two weeks of their siege to prevent all food and medicine from reaching the Native communities were widely denounced as illegal and a violation of fundamental human rights, the cops have begun to allow a small trickle of emergency supplies to pass through their lines.

Mohawk negotiators demand free access for food and medicine before resuming negotiations. One ambulance carrying a Mohawk woman with severe chest pains was recently held for 35 minutes at the police lines. When Mohawk leaders went to court July 30 to force the cops to allow free movement, Québec Superior Court Judge John Gormery refused the request. Noting the

woman was still alive he said, "Come back and see me" when someone dies.

Canadian federal Deputy Minister of Indian Affairs Harry Swain, Parti Québécois leader Jacques Parizeau, and Thomas Constantine, superintendent of the New York State Police have all labeled the Warriors, a grouping among the embattled Mohawks who are organizing the barricade defenses, as "criminals" and "terrorists." Their propa-

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Employers step up slander campaign against British mine workers' union

BY PETE CLIFFORD

SHEFFIELD, England — "The time is now to organize our forces," Maureen Stubbins, joint national secretary of Women Against Pit Closures, told an organizing meeting here on July 25. This is the response needed to counter the slander campaign against mine workers' union leaders Arthur Scargill and Peter Heathfield, she said. Stubbins reported to the meeting plans to hold rallies around the country with the two National Union of Mineworkers leaders.

The slander campaign initiated by the *Daily Mirror* began by alleging the NUM officials had used funds raised during the 1984-85 nationwide coal strike for their personal benefit. When a union-commis-

sioned inquiry by attorney Gavin Lightman cleared them of these charges, the slander campaign shifted its axis. It is now alleged that they had channeled £1.4 million (US\$2.56 million) to the International Miners' Organisation, money destined to the National Union of Mineworkers.

The slander campaign has explicitly targeted the continued impact of the 1984-85 miners' strike. *Daily Mirror* publisher Robert Maxwell, in a signed editorial on March 5, wrote, "It was a wrong strike, at the wrong time, with the wrong motive and the wrong leaders."

The campaign against that political legacy continues. On July 27 the *Daily Mirror* fea-

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22,240 sign to put socialists on ballot, 7,760 to go!

Campaign supporters have collected 22,240 signatures to put the Socialist Workers Party candidates on the ballot in New York State.

The SWP candidates are Craig Gannon and Susan Anmuth for governor and lieutenant governor, Aaron Ruby for comptroller, Derek Bracey for attorney general, and Selva Nebbia and Cathy Sedwick for U.S. Congress in the 15th and 11th districts.

The legal requirement is 20,000 names. Petitioners have set their goal at 30,000. Signatures must be filed by August 21. See article on page 5.



Militant/Greg McCartan African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela spoke before South African Youth Congress meeting in KaNyamazane, South Africa, in April. Speech is one of 10 translated into Spanish for new Pathfinder release.

Coming soon: Mandela speeches in new Spanish-language book

BY MIKE TABER

Pathfinder Press has announced the forthcoming publication of *Nelson Mandela: Intensifiquemos la lucha* (Nelson Mandela: Intensify the struggle). This new Spanish-language book, a collection of speeches by the African National Congress leader since his release from prison in February, will be available in September.

The new collection will contain 10 speeches. Some of these are included in Pathfinder's recently published English-language pamphlet, *Nelson Mandela Speeches 1990: "Intensify the Struggle to Abolish Apartheid."*

The book will also feature four additional items. One is Mandela's address in March to a rally in Stockholm, Sweden. The others are speeches from his recent U.S. tour — to a rally of 100,000 in Harlem, to the United Nations, and to the U.S. Congress. The ANC's basic program, the Freedom Charter, will be printed as an appendix.

"This book will make Mandela's ideas more accessible to Spanish-speaking trade unionists, farm workers, students, and activists in the United States and around the

world," said Luis Madrid, the book's editor. Madrid also edits the socialist monthly magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*.

"Those who read these speeches will understand more clearly the worldwide impact of the fight to abolish apartheid and build a nonracial and democratic South Africa," he stated. "Many will be inspired by Mandela's ideas and example to join in the battle themselves."

The book's title — and one of its central messages — is taken from Mandela's words the day he was released:

"Our struggle has reached a decisive moment. We call on our people to seize this moment so that the process towards democracy is rapid and uninterrupted. We have waited too long for our freedom. We can no longer wait. Now is the time to intensify the struggle on all fronts."

Nelson Mandela: Intensifiquemos la lucha will complement another Pathfinder Spanish-language title, *Habla Nelson Mandela* (Nelson Mandela speaks). That book contains Mandela's courtroom speeches during the 1962 and 1964 trials that sentenced him to prison. Several thousand copies have been

sold since its publication in 1986, including 571 in the first half of 1990.

Rounding out Pathfinder's package of Spanish-language South Africa titles is *Sudáfrica: la revolución en camino* by Jack Barnes. This 75-page pamphlet is a translation of "The Coming Revolution in South Africa," an article appearing in issue No. 5 of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*.

The forthcoming book will be 112 pages long, plus a 16-page photo section. Many of the photographs were taken by Margrethe Siem, who participated in a month-long reporting trip to South Africa for the *Militant* last March. An introduction has been written by Luis Madrid and *Militant* staff writer Greg McCartan, who was also part of the reporting trip.

Regularly priced at \$12.95, Pathfinder has announced a special prepublication offer for the book of \$9.95. The offer will last until November 1.

Nelson Mandela: Intensifiquemos la lucha will be available from any of the Pathfinder bookstores listed on page 16. It can also be ordered directly from Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014.

British miners set rallies to defend union leaders

Continued from front page

tured a full-page article attacking Scargill for the successful flying pickets he led in 1972 at the Saltley gas works in Birmingham to the massive picketing at Orgreave near Sheffield during the 1984-85 strike.

Stubbins told the July 25 meeting that the



G.M. Cookson Miners' union President Arthur Scargill speaking at rally during 1984-85 strike.

slander campaign was because "[Prime Minister Margaret] Thatcher can't forgive the fact the NUM beat sequestration." During the strike, to avoid the government's attempts to sequester the union's finances, a maze of bank accounts was established by the union leaders, which successfully protected funds raised to run the strike. In a statement to Scargill, the Women Against Pit Closures — an organization set up out of miners' wives groups during the strike — restated its "support and belief in everything that took place during the 1984-85 miners' strike."

Rallies set

The first major rally will be held here in Sheffield, where the union's national headquarters is located, on August 24 in the city's Memorial Hall. Speakers include Scargill, Heathfield, and Labour Party member of Parliament (MP) Dennis Skinner.

Skinner introduced a parliamentary motion endorsed by 56 Labour MPs backing the union leaders. Similar meetings are planned by Women Against Pit Closures in conjunction with the miners' union branches in Nottinghamshire, Lancashire, and South Wales and with the Justice for Mineworkers Campaign. These rallies, Stubbins told the meeting, "will show that miners, women from the coalfields, and the labor movement stand with Scargill and Heathfield."

Since the NUM national conference at the start of July, where delegates overwhelmingly supported their leaders, a serious escalation of attacks has taken place.

First, the government instructed the union certification officer to investigate whether the union's accounts during the period of the strike were legal.

Second, Roger Windsor — a former NUM employee who has featured centrally in the *Daily Mirror* allegations against Scargill — announced he was taking the NUM leader to court.

Against this background, the NUM Executive was advised by Lightman that to avoid personal liability of Executive members, it should sue the IMO to claim recovery of the funds that were alleged to belong to the NUM in the IMO's accounts and claim damages against Scargill and Heathfield.

Area councils oppose move

Union reactions to the Executive decision to take its own leaders to court was sharp. Meetings of the two largest area councils of the union in Yorkshire and the North-East called for resolving the issue out of court. The North-East area condemned the decision to go to the courts and called for a Special Delegate Conference of the union. It also decided to organize an area conference to which Scargill and Heathfield will be invited.

This was followed by a meeting between an NUM Executive subcommittee and IMO leaders that successfully recommended to the High Court judge appointed to deal with the case that there be a delay in proceeding with the action until October 26 while the IMO and NUM resolve the issue between themselves. Subcommittee member Henry Richardson said, "We hope this will not come to court again."

Within hours of this agreement, the Police Serious Fraud Squad announced initial investigations into NUM finances. This followed referral to the police by two individuals of allegations concerning financial impropriety. According to the press, one of these was a former NUM employee. The other is Sergei Massalovitch, a Soviet miner. Massalovitch recently toured Britain as the guest of the "Union of Democratic Miners" — a promanagement organization set up by strikebreakers during the 1984-85 strike — and an antilabor magazine, *Soviet Labour Review*. The police will first interview the two complainants before assessing whether to proceed and directly investigate the union.

Responding to this latest attack, Scargill said, "We did everything we could to sustain our union through sequestration and receivership. We have done nothing wrong and have nothing to hide. I'm beginning to get the view it is 'Get Arthur Scargill' time."

'The Militant prints news of the victories and defeats of workers and farmers in the U.S. & around the world — news not usually found in other newspapers.'



NELLIE and ROBERT BERRY

Mark Curtis Defense Committee activists
Des Moines, Iowa

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Trinidad coup attempt ends after 5 days

Reflects deepening economic crisis

BY DON ROJAS

The most serious political crisis for Trinidad and Tobago's capitalist rulers in 20 years was resolved this week when a group of armed Muslims and their religious leader, Yasin Abu Bakr, surrendered to the country's security forces and freed 46 hostages after a violent five-day confrontation.

The aborted coup left dozens of police, soldiers, and civilians dead or wounded. Scores of businesses in the capital, Port of Spain, were gutted and looted. Food, medi-

Rebels stated that they and the authorities had agreed on peace treaty.

cine, and fuel were in short supply throughout the country in the wake of the crisis.

Trinidadian officials characterized the events over the five days as "worse" than the popular uprising in 1970 when mass demonstrations of workers, farmers, and students supported by an army mutiny almost brought down the government of then-Prime Minister Eric Williams.

In what was described at the time as the "Black Power revolts," tens of thousands took to the streets in weeks of protests, demanding redress of historical injustices and popular control of the "commanding heights of the economy."

Trinidad's militant Oilfields Workers' Trade Union played a prominent role in the 1970 events.

Although the insurrection was defeated by military forces loyal to the government, it nonetheless had profound political impact on progressive movements throughout the Caribbean, including the New Jewel Movement of Grenada — which, under the leadership

of Maurice Bishop, brought an anti-imperialist revolution to power in 1979.

Conditions of surrender unclear

In the recent events the acting prime minister, Winston Dookeran, said the Muslim rebels had "surrendered unconditionally" and denied that an amnesty deal had been struck between the government and Abu Bakr.

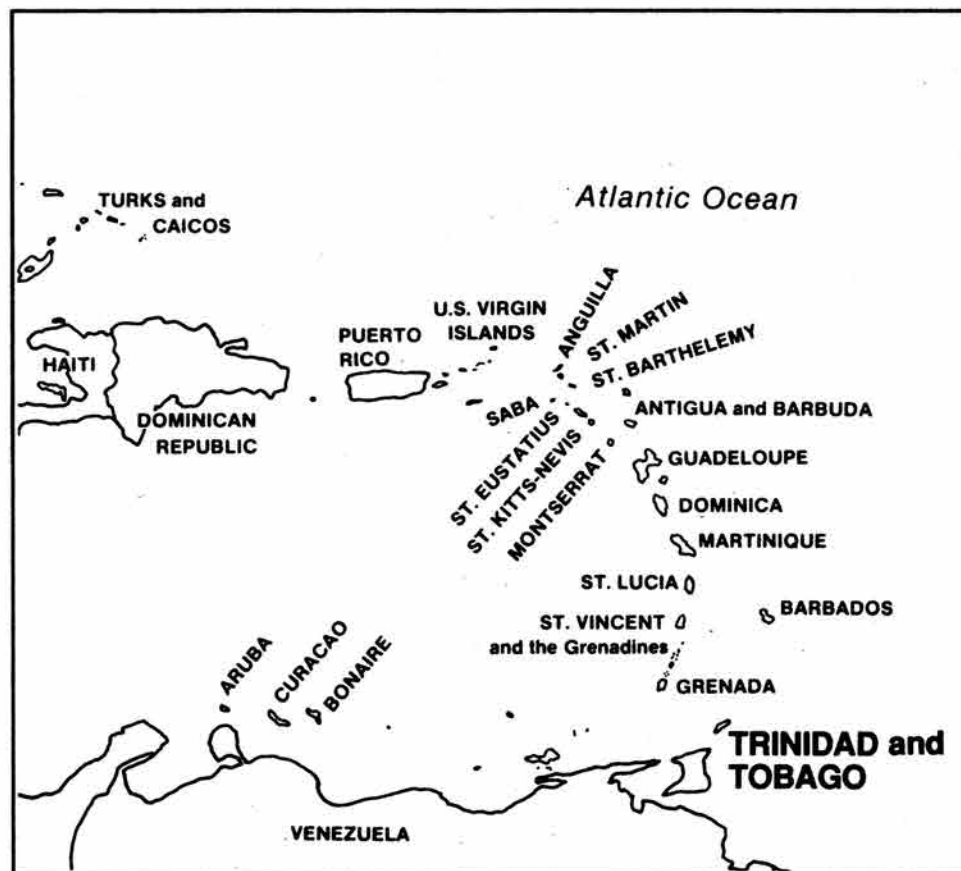
However, some of the 112 surrendering rebels stated that they and the authorities had agreed on a peace treaty.

Dookeran was standing in for Prime Minister Arthur Robinson, who along with his entire cabinet, had been held hostage by the rebels.

The attempted government overthrow in this twin-island republic of 1.3 million people of mostly African and East Indian origin in the southern Caribbean triggered widespread ferment throughout the capital and neighboring towns and communities. Hundreds of millions of dollars worth of food and consumer goods were taken from stores and supermarkets. The government's response was to implement 18- and 22-hour curfews and to order security forces to shoot on sight anyone found taking goods.

These most recent events are sure to exacerbate the steady economic decline of this country, which 10 years ago claimed a per capita wealth higher than all other countries in the Americas with the exception of the United States and Canada.

The current economic crisis has been caused by a combination of international factors, such as the drop in world oil prices and the unfavorable terms of trade for Third World countries, and Prime Minister Robinson's economic policies. His government recently entered into a loan agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).



Between 1986 and 1989, real wages in Trinidad and Tobago fell by 30 percent. Unemployment has risen to 35 percent. The country's foreign debt has steadily mounted, and under IMF pressure, the government was forced to devalue the national currency twice in the recent past.

The first national strike in 51 years brought the country to a virtual halt on March 6, 1989. Up to 80 percent of working people responded positively at that time to strike organizers' call for a "national day of resistance."

Throughout the five-day coup attempt, the

threat of foreign military intervention loomed large. Four U.S. warships were positioned in Trinidad's territorial waters while hundreds of troops mobilized by neighboring Caribbean governments stood poised to intervene.

Hundreds of citizens of Trinidad and Tobago living in New York demonstrated at the United Nations headquarters, protesting these interventionist threats.

Unlike the 1970 uprising, the rebellion led by Abu Bakr, an ex-policeman, did not develop into a popular insurrection.

There was, however, widespread sympathy for the sentiments expressed by the rebels on radio and television, condemning the Robinson government for corruption and insensitivity to the plight of the growing numbers of Trinidad's unemployed and poor.

Since it swept to power over three years ago in a landslide election victory, the Robinson government has grown increasingly unpopular as it moved to implement antiworker austerity measures under the IMF's dictates.

The fate of the Muslim rebels remains unclear. What is certain, however, is that political instability coupled with economic hardships will prevail in Trinidad and Tobago into the foreseeable future.

Cuban leader speaks at New York events

BY PETER THIERJUNG

NEW YORK — Cuba's revolution was celebrated at two events here, both of which were addressed by Ricardo Alarcón, Cuba's permanent representative to the United Nations.

The first, sponsored by Casa de las Américas, an organization of anti-imperialist Cubans based in New York, drew 400 on July 21. It was held at the headquarters of Local 1199 Hospital and Health Care Employees Union.

More than 400, mostly Blacks and Latinos, also participated at a celebration held in Harlem's Marcus Garvey Park July 26.

Both festivities commemorated the 37th anniversary of the rebel attack on the Moncada military garrison in Santiago de Cuba. The action led by Fidel Castro launched the popular movement that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista in 1959.

At the Harlem meeting, Alarcón was interrupted several times by chants of "Cuba! Cuba!" as he spoke to the crowd.

The Cuban diplomat discussed the 1988 battle in Cuito Cuanavale in Angola where the military forces of South Africa's apartheid regime were decisively defeated "for the first time in history." This was accomplished by the Angolans, the South West Africa People's Organisation, and Cuban internationalist troops, he said. "All the technical support and sophisticated weaponry given to them failed them when they faced the courage of our brothers and sisters who fought that battle."

"It was a lesson well learned" by the South African regime, Alarcón added. "That's why they had to negotiate. That's how another big change came about, the independence of Namibia. Namibia represents the real future."

Another change brought about by the battle of Cuito Cuanavale was the "liberation of comrade Nelson Mandela," he said. "Cuba had a part in his liberation. We gave our blood. Our brothers and sisters fought hard. Nelson Mandela is now free because South Africa was first defeated in the military field."

At the July 21 meeting and dance at 1199's union hall, Alarcón discussed how the "old

servants of colonialism" want to make Cuba retreat from its revolutionary road. The Spanish government, he explained, was withdrawing its economic aid and called on the European Community to do the same to punish Cuba.

Superior social system

Such attacks would have serious consequences for Cuba's economic development, he said. Even if Cuba is forced to confront continued economic and military aggression, the Cuban people will be better off than most of the Third World. This is true, Alarcón explained, because Cuba has a superior social system in place.

Despite talk these days of the demise of socialism, he said, socialism remains the most advanced social system. It is the reason Cuba will be able to meet and resist any challenge, he said.

Rafael Cancel Miranda spoke prior to Alarcón's arrival at the Harlem celebration. The well-known Puerto Rican nationalist and former U.S. political prisoner saluted the Cuban revolution's accomplishments and noted the common history of struggle shared by Cuba and Puerto Rico.

He also discussed Nelson Mandela's recent visit to the United States and referred to the campaign against the ANC leader for his support to other liberation struggles. "They made a mistake with Mandela," Cancel Miranda said. "He had too much dignity for them. Mandela is Fidel. He is the Palestinian and Puerto Rican people. How can he speak against himself?"

Apolinario Correia from the Angolan mission to the United Nations paid special tribute to Cuba's contribution to the struggle for his country's sovereignty and independence.

Other speakers at the Harlem celebration included Esmeralda Brown of the Women's Workshop in the Americas, Puerto Rican activist Nelson Ramirez of the Families of Political Prisoners, Rev. Lawrence Lucas from Resurrection Roman Catholic Church, and Natasha Russell of the Black Consciousness Movement. Afro-Cuban and reggae music was provided by the group Los Africanos and others. The U.S. Hands Off Cuba Coalition sponsored the event.

On July 28 the Friends of the Pathfinder Mural celebrated Cuba's revolution by hosting a reception for Héctor Delgado Pérez, the official photographer for the Union of Cuban Writers and Artists, who is visiting the United States. Some 35 people attended the reception at the Pathfinder Bookstore in Manhattan, which included a display of the photographer's work.

'Independence yes!' demonstration on Puerto Rico called for Aug. 15

PATRICIA SANCHEZ AND ARTEMIO CAMACHO

NEW YORK—"Independence yes! Sham plebiscite no!" This is the theme of a demonstration to be held at the United Nations August 15.

The demonstration will coincide with the second of two days of hearings on Puerto Rico's status before the UN Commission on Decolonization.

Since 1972 the commission has held that Puerto Rico is a U.S. colony and that the Puerto Rican people have the right to self-determination and independence.

Washington, in an effort to remove the question from debate in the international forum, has been working out details for the plebiscite proposed for 1991. Hearings on the various political formulas that the Puerto Rican people would choose from have been held in San Juan, Puerto Rico; Washington, D.C., and New York. These have drawn hundreds voicing anticolonial sentiments and sparked increased discussion over who has the right to determine the status of Puerto Rico.

The August 15 demonstration was called both to reaffirm that the UN has jurisdiction over the question of Puerto Rico's colonial status and to protest the U.S. Congress-proposed plebiscite as a sham.

The organizers of the rally demand a plebiscite that complies with internationally defined guarantees of choice — one that is free from any form of coercion by the colonial power.

These include: 1. the prior transfer of all sovereign powers to Puerto Rico, 2. the release of all political prisoners before the transfer of powers, 3. the withdrawal of all U.S. troops from the island, 4. the right of Puerto Ricans to participate in the plebiscite whether living on the island or in the United States, and 5. U.S. economic reparations necessary for the transition from colonialism to independence.

They point out that such a process has been successfully carried through this year in Namibia, leaving Puerto Rico the second most populous colony after Hong Kong.

The rally will be held at Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza at the United Nations (47th Street and First Avenue) Wednesday, August 15 from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. For more information contact the Committee for Puerto Rican Affirmation (212) 477-8252.

No issue next week...

The *Militant* will not publish next week so that our staff can participate in the second session of the Socialist Workers Party national convention to be held in Oberlin, Ohio. We will resume publication with the issue dated August 24, which will include coverage of the convention.

Supporters won in Nicaragua and New Zealand

Mark Curtis is a unionist and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa, who was framed by police on rape and burglary charges. He was convicted in September 1988 and is now serving a 25-year sentence in the John Bennett state prison in Fort Madison, Iowa.

Despite harassment by authorities, he continues to be politically active in prison and refuses to be isolated from the world beyond

activities in support of Mark Curtis from your city or country, please send them to the *Militant*.

ESTELÍ, Nicaragua — "How is the compañero doing, is he still in prison?" The question was asked by Orlando Pineda, a deputy in Nicaragua's National Assembly from the Segovias region. He is a Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) representative.

clear, Gutiérrez said, "that there are political prisoners in the United States."

Two members of the union's executive committee, Hilario Zosa Lazo and Alba Tórriz Briones, both workers who participated in the discussion about Curtis' defense campaign, signed up too. They were interested in the role Curtis had played in the fight to unite workers at the Swift packinghouse where he worked in Des Moines and his advocacy of union rights for undocumented Mexican and Salvadoran workers there.

Deysi, a Salvadoran refugee and leader of the relief organization ACRES, endorsed the defense case after reading materials on Curtis' fight. What impressed her, she said, was Curtis' stand in defense of his immigrant coworkers. "This case is important for us," she said.

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — A rally to demand justice for Mark Curtis, held at the Hotel and Hospital Workers Union hall July 20, heard Jock Barnes, an 84-year-old trade union veteran and co-treasurer of the Curtis Defence Fund in New Zealand.

"The only way Curtis will be released," he said, "is through worldwide protests and worldwide pressure." He pointed to the protest and pressure that allowed Nelson Mandela to "walk tall and free today."

Barnes introduced the panel of speakers. Syd Jackson, a nationally prominent Maori rights fighter, explained, "It's fortunate that at this time people throughout the world are prepared to stand up for Mark Curtis, to highlight his struggle, to bring it to the knowledge of people who are dedicated to justice."

Paul Chalmers, education officer of the Northern Hotel and Hospital Workers Union, explained that he had been impressed by the personal integrity and work in defense of Curtis by Kate Kaku, Curtis' wife. He met Kaku during a 1989 New Zealand speaking tour and again in the United States this year.

Others who addressed the rally were John Minto, international secretary of HART, the main anti-apartheid organization in New Zealand; Marie Leadbeater, a well-known peace activist and a leader of the Coalition for Democracy in Fiji; David Rhodes, president of the Auckland Technical Institute Students Association; Anthony Drumm of the Young Socialists; John Watkins, a poet and supporter of the African National Congress of South Africa; and James Robb, a supporter of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

Some \$600 (US\$350) was raised at the rally for the defense effort.

KANSASCITY, Missouri — Immigrant workers, Greyhound strik-

ers, and union activists met here July 22 to discuss developments in the international effort to defend Mark Curtis.

Maurice Copeland discussed Curtis' political activity in prison. "Mark just won't learn to mind his own business, and in prison that's a crime," he said. Copeland read a poem saluting Curtis.

Bill Claus, host of the Heartland Labor Forum radio show, talked about the opportunities to reach out to unionists with Curtis' fight. "Mark didn't have a union post, but he was a leader, by his example," he said. "He started with what is best for all workers. He discovered real political power: his fellow workers. More people are reaching for that power today."

Other speakers included Robin and Brent Cole, two Greyhound strike activists assaulted by the Kansas City police; Dora Anderson, who is part of a fight against her daughter's discriminatory firing at the General Motors Fairfax plant; Sam Mann, a leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; and Héctor Marroquín from Des Moines, representing the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. More than \$500 in contributions and pledges were raised.

Jon Hillson, who was in Nicaragua; Peter Bradley from New Zealand; and Arlene Rubinstein from Kansas City contributed to this week's column.

DEFEND MARK CURTIS!



the prison walls.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee, based in Des Moines, is leading an international campaign to fight for justice for Curtis and to defend his rights in prison. More than 8,000 unionists, defenders of democratic rights, political activists, prominent officials, and others — from the Philippines to Sweden, from South Africa to Canada — have endorsed the committee's efforts.

For more information about the case or how you can help, write to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311; telephone (515) 246-1695. If you have news or reports on

"Last year, I gave a speech to the National Assembly about Mark Curtis" to let its members know about "human rights violations in the United States," Pineda explained. He recently reaffirmed his support for Curtis and became an endorser of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Ramón Gámez, another FSLN deputy to the National Assembly, also endorsed the defense effort.

Hugo René Gutiérrez, secretary-general of the city employees' union of Estelí — Nicaragua's fifth largest city — became an endorser. Looking through defense committee materials and hearing about both the frame-up and Curtis' continuing political activities in prison made it

Numbers of homeless people in Israel increasing

Homeless Israelis who climbed to a rooftop and threatened to commit mass suicide ended their protest yesterday after being promised a meeting with housing minister Ariel Sharon.

Thirty people, including pregnant women and small children, climbed onto the Bat Yan town hall near Tel Aviv overnight and threatened to blow themselves up by igniting a tank of cooking gas. — *New York Newsday*, July 19.

BY HARRY RING

The desperate protest in Bat Yan reflected a critical problem in Israel, the increasing number of homeless people. Members of the Knesset, Israel's congress, say that in a population of 4.4 million, there are 25,000 homeless families. This apparently includes those who crowd in with relatives and friends as well as those on the streets.

Israel's housing problem is made worse by the massive influx of Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union.

A report from Jerusalem to the July 18 *New York Times* said, "Existing housing is rapidly filling up as Soviet immigrants continue pouring into the country. . . . Low-income Israeli families are being evicted by the hundreds so landlords can rent the space to the immigrants who get government housing subsidies. Many of the new 'homeless' . . . are living in burgeoning tent cities."

The report adds, "The longer these people remain without permanent housing, the more frustrated they are becoming. In the last week some of them have turned violent, burning tires, attacking buses, breaking into empty apartments, and mobbing government officials."

In June, 11,000 Soviet émigrés arrived in Israel. In the coming months that number may double. More than one million Soviet Jews are expected in the next several years.

This exodus from the USSR is spurred by the economic crisis there and by increasingly open manifestations of anti-Semitism.

Arriving in Israel, the newcomers receive substantial relocation benefits, totaling \$11,000 in the first year. That compares well with an average Israeli wage estimated at \$6,000 to \$7,000 a year.

The allotment includes a \$240 monthly rent subsidy, and landlords can be paid a full year in advance. With this, rents have jumped

30 percent to 35 percent and in some areas have doubled or tripled.

Welcome to Israel

Given the escalating housing shortage, some of the recent Soviet arrivals are also having a hard time finding a place to live. The July 18 *New York Times* reported that when the Israeli government invited them to check out 250 state-owned apartments in one area, 900 people showed up.

The report added, "Scuffles over the apartments developed into a full-scale riot, the police said, and four immigrants were hospitalized."

The big majority of the Soviet immigrants are middle-class people. A reported 59 percent are scientists, engineers, or academics. They are having a hard time finding work. The June 10 *Washington Post* reported, "Despite their relative material comfort, most of the Soviets do not have jobs and many have already grown impatient with the Israeli government bureaucracy charged with dispensing their subsidies and arranging their language and job training."

"Demonstrations by angry Soviet citizens have been staged recently outside government offices in several cities, and an advocacy organization chaired by former refusenik Natan Sharansky, the Soviet Jewry Zionist Forum, is growing rapidly."

Of the 60,000 Soviet Jews who arrived in the past year, the Israeli government estimates only 40 percent have found jobs.

This is not surprising. Israel's capitalist economy has been in a downturn since the 1970s. With the outbreak of the Gaza and West Bank Palestinian uprising in December 1987, the economy has contracted even more sharply. Last year, industrial output dropped 5 percent and personal per capita consumption 3.5 percent.

Workers hard hit

Working people, Arab and Jewish, are feeling the brunt of the recession. The official unemployment rate is 10 percent. For Palestinians who live inside the "green line," Israel's pre-1967 borders, the figure is said to be 15 percent. In Palestinian Nazareth, the jobless rate is 25 percent, the highest in the country.

Also hard hit are those victimized workers who are called Oriental or Sephardic Jews. These include dark-skinned Jews from the Middle East and northern Africa and Black Jews from Ethiopia.

Many of these workers have been shunted



Members of the Knesset, Israel's parliament, say that in a population of 4.4 million, there are 25,000 homeless. Above, a squatters' camp outside the Knesset.

into "development" towns. These towns are created around small, low-wage plants, many of which are going broke.

The glaring contrast between the harsh lot of the Oriental and Ethiopian Jews and the generous welcome given the Soviet émigrés has provoked angry demonstrations.

The July 4 issue of the *Other Front*, a newsletter of the Alternative Information Centre, reported that on June 24 representatives of Oriental Jewish communities from development towns and poor urban areas staged a demonstration outside a meeting of the Jewish Agency, the immigration "absorption" agency.

With placards and chants they demanded equal rights, social justice, and housing. They protested the favored treatment given the Soviet immigrants.

Unlike those coming from the USSR, the African and Asian immigrants are forced to live, sometimes for years, in absorption centers that are often little more than tent cities. Last May 4 the Israeli daily, *Haaretz*, reported that a new organization of Ethiopian Jews demanded that they too be provided regular housing.

Learn to 'adjust'

A spokesperson for the absorption ministry told *Haaretz* this would not be done.

"The immigrants from Ethiopia," she said, "enjoy the best conditions in the absorption

centers. . . . Their task is to adjust there and to learn Hebrew. Later on they will be entitled to move anywhere in Israel where they can be given an apartment."

She did not say why the Soviet immigrants do not have to "adjust" or learn Hebrew before getting a home.

It should be noted that while they are getting favored treatment, the Soviet Jews are not going to Israel by choice. They do so because Washington closed the door on their coming to the United States, the country that for many is their first choice. Only a relative handful are admitted to the United States. In April 1989, when Washington still had the door open, 4,000 Soviet Jews came to the United States and 544 chose Israel.

Despite the political overhead, the Israeli government is determined to maintain the present Soviet influx.

Since its creation in 1948, immigration has played a central role in providing a work force in Israel. But for a number of years more people have been leaving than arriving.

In 1966, 7,000 Israelis emigrated. During 1985-87 the number jumped to 12,000 a year. In 1988, the first year of the Palestinian uprising, 14,600 Israelis left the country.

And, aside from the Soviet immigrants, new arrivals in Israel are down to a trickle. This past April, there were 10,500 immigrants from the USSR, and 975 from the rest of the world.

West Virginia socialists blast ballot exclusion



Militant/Cecelia Moriarity
West Virginia Socialist Workers Party candidates answer questions at July 24 news conference in Charleston protesting their exclusion from ballot. At center and right are Maggie McCraw and Clay Dennison. Partially hidden behind Dennison is Dick McBride.

BY LINDA JOYCE

CHARLESTON, West Virginia — Three Socialist Workers Party candidates blasted Secretary of State Ken Hechler's decision to exclude their names from the ballot in the November 6 election at a news conference here July 24. A similar news conference was held later in the day in Morgantown in the northern part of the state.

Supporters of SWP candidates Maggie McCraw for state treasurer, Dick McBride for U.S. Senate, and Clay Dennison for state attorney general conducted an ambitious petitioning drive last spring, in which they signed up more than 10,000 people on petitions to place the socialist candidates on the ballot. A big part of the signatures were required to waive onerous filing fees.

On July 12 Hechler sent a letter to the state campaign committee asserting that only 2,085 valid signatures had been submitted.

Dennison, a coal miner, stated, "The ruling denying us ballot status is not only aimed at us — it's aimed at anyone who wants to run independently of the Democrats and Republicans."

"Last year we saw what unity can win in the face of the 10-year corporate offensive that seemed all powerful against our unions," he said. "I'm proud to have been a participant in the protest by 44,000 coal miners in 11 states during the Pittston strike. This strike defeated the drive against the United Mine Workers at Pittston and strengthened the Machinists strike against Eastern Airlines."

"This new resistance inspired many other

workers," Dennison said. "We are seeing new organizing drives by the UMWA in the wake of the Pittston strike, and we see an imminent victory in the Eastern strike."

Dennison explained that what was won on the picket lines could be chipped away by the courts, antiunion laws, and mediators. This cannot simply be addressed by the unions, he said.

Dennison reported that a lot of people, like the 60,000 who came through Camp Solidarity during the Pittston strike, are thinking about politics and want to get involved. He concluded, "Some workers in this state are running in elections and taking on the big political questions."

McCraw, a metalworker, said, "This is why the capitalists who run West Virginia,

and the Democratic and Republican politicians who represent them, attempt to shore up their power and influence. They want to restrict the political discussion and elbow-room for workers and our organizations, whether it be our unions or political parties, which they fear."

McCraw explained that running in the two parties of the bosses is a dead end for workers. "That is why we need to think about building a labor party based on the unions, to represent workers' interests," she said. "It doesn't make sense to strike and picket for our rights against our employers one day and vote for their representatives the next."

Workers in Eastern Europe

McBride, a garment worker, commented on the way reporters ask him if what is going on in Eastern Europe is taking the "sting" out of socialism. "I don't think so," McBride said. "We solidarize with the workers and farmers in Eastern Europe. What is happening there is workers are fighting the privileged social layers that repress their rights. They don't want capitalism; capitalism is where the real crisis is. These workers are fighting for the same thing we want here — a better life. They don't want unemployment, higher prices, cuts in social benefits, and attacks on democratic rights."

The candidates said that they and their supporters would be fanning out to the campuses, union meetings, political gatherings, and picket lines to get out socialist ideas. A central part of their campaign is to continue building solidarity with the strike against Eastern Airlines to insure a victory.

Anyone interested in the 1990 West Virginia SWP campaign is invited to the campaign headquarters and bookstores at 116 McFarland Street in Charleston and 221 Pleasant Street in Morgantown. Or they can call (304) 345-3040.

Young activists boost New York effort

BY FREDERICK LeROUGE AND TONY LANE

NEW YORK — Young supporters of the Socialist Workers Party campaign are at the center of the drive to get the party's candidates on the ballot in this state.

An effort has been underway since July 14 to collect 30,000 signatures for the ticket, which is headed by Craig Gannon, the SWP candidate for governor. Election laws require 20,000 signatures of registered voters be filed with the board of elections in Albany, the state capital, by August 21.

"The rich say that we have a free country," explained Michael, who came from Salt Lake City, Utah, to help the campaign effort. "But they make it extremely hard for a third party to be part of the election campaign." Michael is one of the supporters of the Young Socialist Alliance from around the country joining the effort to get the SWP on the ballot here.

"Young people are surprised that we have to fight to be on the ballot, especially since the SWP has had to do so for over 40 years," he said.

Michael decided to come to New York after meeting the YSA in Salt Lake City a few weeks ago. "Every time the government challenges the democratic rights of working people, the fight has to be taken up," he explained.

New York City Socialist Open House

Sat., August 4, 6 p.m.
Pathfinder Bookstore
191 Seventh Avenue
(at 21 St., Manhattan)

- Discuss political perspectives of the Socialist Workers Party election campaign
- Celebrate successful completion of petitioning drive for ballot status

BUFFET DINNER, donation \$5

Sponsored by the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance

"Working people need to be represented."

Eric, who is actively building the YSA in Chicago, came to New York "to take part in politics by joining a discussion launched by the socialist campaign." He explained, "This is a real way for young people to take part in the workers' movement, to go to the Eastern Airlines picket line, to talk politics with workers in the streets."

YSA members are also running as candidates on SWP slates around the country. The SWP is running tickets in 23 states and Washington, D.C., for the November 6 elections. In New York YSA National Executive Committee members Aaron Ruby and Derek Bracey are on the socialist ticket as candidates for comptroller and attorney general.

"A lot of young people are interested in the strikes at Eastern, Greyhound, and Domsey," said Eric. "One person told me he had never heard of a campaign that supported strikes and was glad to see one."

When the news broke of the federal indictments against Eastern Airlines for safety violations, SWP candidate Bracey — a member of the Machinists union at Trans World Airlines — was among the group of strikers and strike supporters who gathered outside the Brooklyn courthouse on July 25. The SWP candidate for lieutenant governor, Susan Anmuth, is a striker at Eastern.

David, a young campaigner from West Virginia, said a lot of people were also happy to see candidates who stand for sanctions against apartheid in South Africa.

Luis, a young Mexican worker who met the YSA during the U.S. tour of Nelson Mandela, explained, "To be a socialist you have to bring your ideas to the streets. Young people respond to the socialist campaign, especially to the ideas of building solidarity with struggling people."

Eduardo from Los Angeles explained, "This campaign is a concrete way to bring a program of action to young people. But it is not enough to fight to advance humanity. You have to know where you are going, join an organization, and help to build it. I explain to people who agree with our ideas that they should join this campaign and join the YSA."

During the ballot drive, the New York and Brooklyn YSA have been organizing classes for youth that the petitioning teams meet. Cliff and Rosa, two YSA supporters from Miami, had joined a recent discussion with SWP candidate Gannon on the *Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. For two hours, questions and discussion revolved around how Marx and Engels, as young fighters in 1848, had participated in

the big political struggles of their time.

"People are open to discussing what socialism really is," said Cliff.

These classes, said Rosa, are a "great opportunity to discuss what is happening in Eastern Europe, South Africa, Cuba, at Eastern Airlines, and to learn what communism is and where the fight for communism fits in the struggles of working people today."

As socialist campaign teams hit the streets, the interest in the SWP's ideas is evident in the literature that is sold from campaign tables and the number of youth interested in further discussion. At a Harlem celebration of the Cuban revolution on July 26, one young person inquired whether Pathfinder Press had a book club. A Honduran youth who had also been at the Harlem event attended a Militant Labor Forum on Cuba at the New York Pathfinder Bookstore two days later and signed up to join the YSA.

North Carolina socialist campaign supporters wrap up petitioning

BY JANE ROLAND

GREENSBORO, North Carolina — Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party campaign of Rich Stuart for U.S. Senate here recently concluded a petitioning drive to qualify the candidate for official write-in status in the November elections. On July 16, 850 signatures were filed with boards of elections in several counties, well above the legal requirement of 500 signatures statewide. In addition, the SWP campaign had to pay 5 cents per signature or write-in votes will not be counted.

Ballot requirements in this state are among the most restrictive in the United States. More than 50,000 signatures of registered voters are required for a candidate to be on the ballot, and three years ago the 500-signature requirement for write-in status was enacted.

During the two-week effort leading up to the filing, campaigners met with a friendly response. They took their discussion of socialist politics onto the job, to shopping centers, political events, and door-to-door in working-class communities.

"He's for the working class? Then I'm with him, all the way."

"Here's \$5. I'd give you \$100 if I had it."

"I know him. I met him on the bus to an abortion rights march in Washington last year!"

Thirty-five of Stuart's coworkers on the

Norfolk Southern railroad signed petitions, several at a meeting of his local of the United Transportation Union. Striking Eastern Airlines workers added their names and wished him luck. And 24 workers at the Cone Mills White Oak textile mill signed up at shift change one evening.

"This was a particularly good response," explained one campaign supporter who petitioned at Cone Mills. "At most of the gates workers drive into the parking lot. We first had to convince them to stop their cars, and then they had to sign quickly as traffic began backing up behind them."

While collecting signatures, campaigners sold 30 copies of the *Militant* and the Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, along with several pamphlets. And they collected \$20 in change as people pitched in to cover the costs of filing the signatures.

Members of the Young Socialist Alliance joined the campaign effort and sponsored a discussion series on the South African revolution for young people they met while petitioning.

In submitting the signatures to the county election boards for validation, Stuart condemned the undemocratic ballot laws. "The U.S. government poses as the champion of democratic elections in other countries," he said, "but consistently restricts democratic elections at home."

'The response to our picket line has been great'

Some 8,500 International Association of Machinists (IAM) members struck Eastern Airlines March 4, 1989, in an effort to block the company's drive to break the union and impose massive concessions on workers.

As of the *Militant's* closing news date, Wednesday, August 1, the

unions in the community, who walked the line with us," Hartless said. "The support is there, but the public should realize that it is not safe to fly Eastern. The company is trying to make it look like the safety violations all happened when [former Eastern head Frank] Lorenzo was in charge. But the people

hard to predict the outcome, we have to hang in there," the striker said.

"We will prevail overall in the end," he added. "We're seeing some good things happen."

Although they had not known he was arriving on a Saturday afternoon Eastern flight and would be walking right through their picket line, strikers at New York's La Guardia Airport did not waste a minute when they saw Martin Shugrue leaving the terminal along with other passengers. Shugrue is the court-appointed trustee who is in charge of day-to-day operations at Eastern and oversees the company for the creditors.

After seeing the strikers, "He took a deep breath, stood up real tall, and came over to the picket line," said a strike activist.

Shugrue told the strikers, "We need you back inside." The strike supporter responded, "As managers?"

"What would it take to get you back?" Shugrue asked again.

"Negotiate, and you know who to talk to — our union leaders," the strikers responded.

Two Eastern flight attendants who regularly walk the picket line told the trustee, "The pilots working for you have been fired from other airlines, or have had their licenses revoked — just like during Lorenzo."

"Shugrue kept saying we were 'bringing up the past' and telling us, 'We want you back inside,'" the

strike activist said.

The strikers were distributing an information leaflet that had the "10 reasons to fly Eastern" from the David Letterman late night talk show. Shugrue read the leaflet and told a striker, "David Letterman is a comic."

"Yes," the striker responded, "but a lot of people watch him and believe him." Shugrue then took a copy of the flier with him as he left the picket line.

At a Kansas City rally Eastern striker Nick Angelos told striking Greyhound workers and their supporters that "the fat lady has begun warming up her vocal chords" for Eastern Airlines.

Angelos, a member of IAM Local Lodge 561, told the July 29 event near the Kansas City Greyhound terminal, "The day of reckoning is here for Eastern Airlines." He pointed to the recent criminal indictments and continuing financial troubles of the carrier as signs that victory is near in the strike. "Until there is a settlement we will keep struggling," he said, adding that the victory at Eastern will be a victory for all of labor.

About 50 people attended the rally, sponsored by the Women's Auxiliary of Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1313. An injunction prohibits the strikers from holding rallies on the picket line. Also speaking were representatives from the International Brotherhood

of Teamsters, Communications Workers of America (CWA), and the Heart of America Labor Council.

At Washington, D.C., National Airport Eastern strikers are gearing up for an expanded picket line August 5, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., says Nancy Brown of IAM Local 796.

"The response we've been getting on the picket line over the last week has been excellent — I've never seen this before. People come by and give us the thumbs-up sign; tell us, 'Keep going. You're going to get Lorenzo!' and hug us and tell us the safety indictments against Eastern are great," Brown said.

The August 5 expanded picket is supported by the Greyhound strikers of the ATU, CWA Local 23-23, National Association of Letter Carriers, and Seafarers' International Union.

"Eastern pilots will also be there," Brown said. The pilots are involved in an "intensive period of leafleting at the airport heading up to August 8 — the end of a federal 'cooling-off' period, at which time the pilots can also go on strike against Eastern."

Additional expanded pickets will be held August 1, 9, and 16 at National. On those days, from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. participants in the nearby IAM leadership school will be joining the picket line in a show of solidarity with the striking airline workers.

Kevin Dwire from Kansas City contributed to this column.



strike was in its 516th day.

The Eastern workers' fight has won broad support from working people in the United States, Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, Canada, Bermuda, Sweden, New Zealand, France, and elsewhere in the world. Readers — especially Eastern strikers — are encouraged to send news of strike solidarity activities to this column.

In Tampa, Florida, "people's eyes are starting to be opened as to what is going on at Eastern," said Ernie Hartless, president of IAM Local 2319 and the local strike coordinator. "It's getting better out on the picket line — people are encouraging us to keep it up."

The 100 strikers in Tampa keep the picket line up from 7:00 in the morning to 9:00 in the evening, and "have gotten support from a lot of

charged were replaced only a few days before the indictments came down."

The next big strike activity in Tampa will be the annual Labor Day event. Last year, Hartless said, some 6,000 unionists turned out. "We plan to attend, be part of it, and have a booth — we'll be real active in that event," he said.

Responding to recent developments in the strike, Hartless said, "We don't know where it is headed yet. We do know that [Northwest Airline head Alfred] Checchi was told, 'we don't want any scabs'" at Northwest by the union.

"We can't make any predictions about what is happening. President Bush refused to appoint a trustee to run the airline and vetoed the bill calling for an investigation into Eastern. So we're fighting the government as well as Eastern Airlines. It's

Eastern strikers build August picketing, rallies

Continued from front page
mon now since the indictments were handed down.

On July 25, U.S. Attorney Andrew Maloney announced "that Eastern Airlines, Inc., and 10 of its management employees have been charged in a 60-count indictment with conspiracy to defraud the United States, wire fraud, falsification of material facts to the Federal Aviation Administration, and obstruction of justice."

Maloney explained the charges resulted from "unreasonable demands, pressure, and intimidation" put on employees by Eastern's upper management "to keep the aircraft in flight at all costs."

Martin Shugrue, court-appointed trustee of Eastern, had maintained that criminal charges against Eastern did not reflect the carrier's current maintenance procedures and practices. However, the indictments cover the period from July 1985 to October 1989. And Maloney indicated the investigation was "continuing" beyond October 1989. The strike began March 4, 1989.

Eastern attempted to minimize the indictments' impact on potential passengers by rapidly launching a television and newspaper advertising campaign. "Today about 60,000 people will fly Eastern. They have a right to know they are flying a safe airline," read the headline of a full-page ad in *The New York Times*. "Today Eastern has a lot of problems — safety is not one of them."

But other newspaper accounts on reactions of Eastern passengers to hearing about the indictments show the damage is already permanent.

"Oh my god, I'm scared enough to travel," said one passenger leaving from New York's La Guardia Airport and traveling to Orlando, Florida, with her husband and two kids.

"I wish my mother wasn't flying Eastern," said another person waiting for a plane to arrive, "I personally would not fly Eastern."

Immediately following the announcement of the indictments, Eastern strikers at La Guardia issued a special leaflet to potential Eastern passengers that read, "On July 25, 1990, Eastern Airlines became the first U.S. airline to be criminally indicted for safety violations. Thousands of innocent passengers were put at risk every day by the criminal actions of Eastern's management. Crucial maintenance work was not done. The indictments include such things as knowingly installing faulty cockpit gauges and avoiding

critical maintenance work because this would have caused delays."

"Before the Machinists strike at Eastern union members were fired for reporting safety violations. Our strike is not only in defense of our jobs but also in defense of passenger safety" the strikers said.

A reflection of the impact the indictments are having on public opinion is that even talk show hosts like David Letterman are making jokes about Eastern in their monologues.

One of those indicted, Elia Dragone, who worked at New York's Kennedy Airport as a maintenance foreman, is the first of those indicted to plead guilty and will testify against Eastern. He said that the fraud was orchestrated by his superiors at the airline.

It has been reported that Eastern instituted an incentive program in which managers and supervisors got extra pay for keeping cancellations and late flights at a minimum. Supervisors with poor records for on-time flights were often transferred, demoted, or dismissed.

Included as defendants are Edward Upton, former vice-president of maintenance and engineering at Eastern's Miami headquarters, and Thomas Lewis, the maintenance director of Eastern's Northern Region airports.



Militant/Jon Hillson
Eastern striker picketing March 11, 1989. From the beginning of their strike, Machinists raised concerns about safety.

If convicted on all counts, Eastern could be fined up to \$30 million. Each of the individual defendants face up to five years in prison and fines of up to \$250,000 for each count.

The United Airlines buyout plan that was put together by the IAM, Association of Flight Attendants (AFA), and Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA), as well as unorganized employees, continues to run into problems as it seeks financing for the plan.

It has been reported that Chemical Banking Corporation and possibly two others of the five banks that were interested in becoming lenders in the buyout deal have withdrawn, at least temporarily. Representatives of the banks refused to comment on the report.

This news, however, was sufficient to

Campaign for long-term readers to socialist press picks up steam

BY RONI McCANN

The campaign to win long-term readers to the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *Lutte ouvrière* is picking up steam. Supporters of these socialist publications began the effort on July 14 with the goal of calling and visiting every subscriber in their area to urge them to renew.

To date 132 readers have extended their subscriptions to the *Militant* or *Perspectiva Mundial*. Of these, 37 identified themselves as members of trade unions.

This past week we received renewals from 52 readers. Twenty-one union members resubscribed to the *Militant*, including five members of the Amalgamated Transit Union on strike at Greyhound; four Machinists; four miners; two steelworkers; one autoworker; and one member of the International Union of Electronics Workers.

As well, four students renewed their subscriptions to the *Militant*, including two from New Zealand. Two *Perspectiva Mundial* readers also sent in renewals.

Many supporters reported progress over the last week in their calls and visits to subscribers. In Atlanta 24 readers agreed to renew, including four members of the United Auto Workers, four union meat-packers, and four Machinists.

In Des Moines, Iowa, supporters made

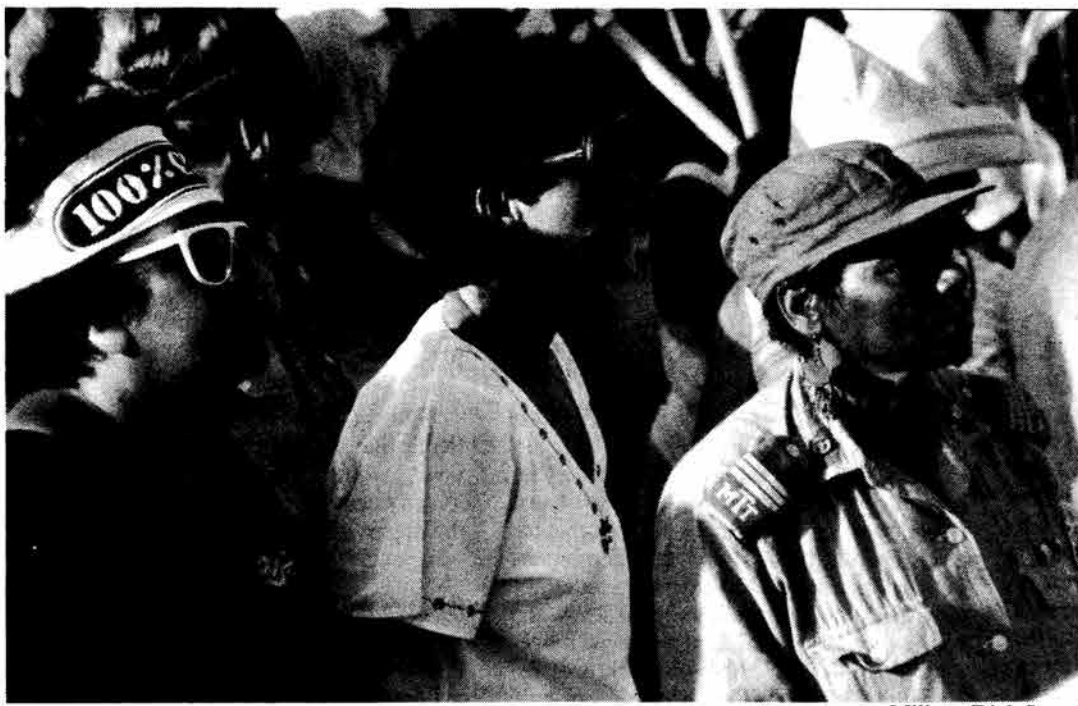
calls and won four renewals they plan to pick up. Five Greyhound strikers have renewed their subscriptions in Omaha, Nebraska. One of the strikers, speaking at an anti-racist rally, explained to the crowd why people should read the *Militant*. A union flight attendant and Eastern strike supporter and a leading farm activist Merle Hansen also extended their subscriptions.

In Philadelphia 15 readers have renewed, including an Eastern striker and two Greyhound strikers. A student at Temple University also resubscribed. Supporters there stressed the importance of working in teams.

Militant supporters in Houston have set a renewal target day and a traveling team in the coming week to call and visit readers there. They have won 11 long-term readers so far. One supporter explained the usefulness of an article in a previous issue of the *Militant* written by supporters in Canada about how they organized their last renewal effort.

One *Perspectiva Mundial* reader invited supporters to his house where he is building up a *Perspectiva Mundial* and Pathfinder Press library with his meager resources. He renewed his subscription and bought a copy of the pamphlet *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*.

The renewal effort ends August 4.



Militant/Rich Stuart

'Socialism is an undeniable historical necessity'—Castro

Hundreds of thousands attended July 26 celebration at the Plaza of the Revolution

Continued from front page
socialism in our country."

"Socialism is not a conjunctural option, it is not a passing game," Castro noted. "It is not, nor can it be, a temporary decision. Socialism was an undeniable historical necessity. Socialism was the result of the political and ideological development of our society, the greatest and best product of our history."

Castro pointed out that Cuba had been a Spanish colony for centuries and under Washington's domination for six decades. In order for Cuba to become truly independent, "master of its destiny, of its resources, of its economy, a country with the right to build its own future with real social justice," it had to "sweep away the capitalist system."

"We have swept that system away from our homeland, and it will never come back again, at least not as long as one communist, one revolutionary, remains in this land," Castro said amid enthusiastic chants from the crowd.

'They underestimate us'

Given the difficult times Cuba is going through, Washington hopes the country will succumb to the pressures. "They underestimate us," Castro noted. The imperialists believe "we won't be able to resist."

"How little they know our people!" he added, reviewing the first Cuban war against Spanish colonialism from 1867 to 1878. "Ten years without shoes, almost without clothing, enduring the most incredible hardship. Men, women, and even children resisted," Castro said, showing their "genuinely unbreakable spirit."

Castro noted the Cuban people have been making contingency plans for a "special period in peacetime," during which, for example, Cuba might be forced to survive with "half the amount of oil it currently uses — or less."

The Cuban people are "genuinely excited with all that we are creating and building today," Castro said. And "we want all our social programs to move forward, such as new schools, new child care centers, new health facilities, new sports and recreational facilities, the construction of new housing," he added.

"But if, as a result of these circumstances, we had to sacrifice our social program," he said, "we would sacrifice it for as long as it was necessary to do so."

If Cuba did not build any schools for the next five years, Castro pointed out, five years from now it would continue to lead the Third World in education. "If our social development plans have to be sacrificed," Castro said, "we should be willing to sacrifice them. What we cannot sacrifice is the economic development that is essential for the survival of the revolution."

The Cuban president explained that under no circumstances should the work be stopped of those brigades building dams, canals, or irrigation or drainage systems; those building hotels to "increase our income in foreign exchange; and above all, those building scientific laboratories and production facilities."

Big strides forward

Cuba continues to make big strides in the production of medicines, Castro noted. In a very short time, there will be very few medicines produced by multinational corporations that Cuba will not be able to produce itself, he said.

"We are working with the same feverish passion," Castro explained, in the field of

food production and in the field of tourism or other areas to "generate export products or to substitute for imports."

Imperialism's "enemy no longer is the socialist camp," said Castro. "Now that the Soviet Union is no longer the enemy, we are the enemy of the empire. It's as if it has no enemies left but us: Cuba."

"For the imperialists, Cuba is now the enemy, and they focus all their forces, all their attention, and all their publicity resources against Cuba," Castro explained.

"Today there are something like two, or three or four or five, kinds of communism or socialism: the 'good socialism' and the 'bad socialism,'" Castro pointed out. "And the imperialists have declared that ours is the 'bad' kind of socialism."

"Such is our luck that we got the 'bad socialism', the 'bad communism', the 'bad revolution' that has to disappear from the face of the earth!" Castro said, as he described the most recent provocations against the Cuban revolution.

"In the course of just a few months," Washington has carried out "almost half a dozen very hostile acts" against the Cuban revolution, Castro explained. "One of these was the TV channel that they gave the name 'Martí' in order to insult our people," said Castro. As he spoke, several people in the crowd yelled, "The one that can't be heard," referring to the successful jamming of the U.S. government-financed broadcasts by Cuban technicians earlier this year.

"A few weeks later," Castro noted, Washington organized "some clandestine maneuvers, with powerful armed forces."

As a result of these maneuvers, called "Cuban shield," "hundreds of thousands of people" were mobilized throughout the island, Castro said, without sacrificing the harvest or basic tasks. This showed the "level of organization and readiness achieved by the Revolutionary Armed Forces and our armed people," he added.

The resources that the Cuban people are forced to dedicate to defense, explained Castro, is another important area that will not be neglected under any circumstances.

The third act of hostility was the freeing of Orlando Bosch — "a scandalous and disgusting thing," Castro noted. Bosch was one of the masterminds of the 1976 sabotage of a Cubana Airline plane in which 73 people died. He was in prison in Venezuela for 11 years before being sent to the United States. Since 1988 he had been in a federal prison in Miami waiting for a country to give him asylum. In the face of pressure from anti-Castro Cubans in the United States, Washington recently set him free.

The incidents at the embassies

The latest provocation against Cuba, Castro pointed out, has been the recent incidents at the embassies. Castro detailed these events.

"The incidents began on July 9, 1990," he said. "Five Cuban citizens entered the embassy of the Czech and Slovak Republic in Havana and asked for protection. It was reported initially that the five did not ask for political asylum, but that they be considered refugees and be allowed to leave the country."

Two other individuals entered the embassy on July 10, Castro explained. "All of this of course received a lot of publicity."

Before the Czech chargé d'affaires informed the Cuban foreign ministry, "all the international news agencies had already sent the news out," said Castro. Reactionary radio stations in Miami were already broadcasting

the news, he said, "way before the chargé d'affaires let the foreign ministry know. A great world publicity campaign, everything designed for propaganda and the campaign against Cuba."

Castro reviewed the events step by step, detailing the various cases of individuals who, during the course of several days, entered the embassies of Switzerland, Spain, and the Czech and Slovak Republic, and an attempt by an individual to enter the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. A few days after Castro gave his speech, all except those in the Spanish embassy had left the embassies.

Castro quoted a July 13 wire service dispatch reporting that the U.S. State Department said the situation reflected the "lack of respect toward human rights in Cuba."

Spanish gov't moves

"On July 16," Castro explained, "the minister of foreign relations of Spain stated in Brussels that the European Community should demand . . . of the Cuban government that for 'humanitarian reasons' it solve the problem of the refugees in the embassies."

The Spanish foreign minister said his government would give shelter to and guarantee the security of all those who wished to enter its embassy, and would hand no one over to the authorities, Castro explained. "What an open and frank invitation. What an invitation to the lumpen, to the declassed, to the nuts, to the borderline cases," Castro said, to enter the Spanish embassy.

Cuban guards stopped one individual from entering the Spanish embassy and one from entering the U.S. Interests Section, explained Castro. In response to this, on July 19 the Spanish government put on hold its plans to send Cuba \$2.5 million in aid for education, he said.

"Not only do they do that — suspend the aid," Castro pointed out, "but they ask the European Community to do the same in order to have a common policy toward Cuba."

But, Castro said, as the leaders of some of those who entered the embassies explained later, "this was all a plot organized back in March." These individuals have detailed to the authorities their conversations with U.S. representatives leading up to the embassy events, the Cuban president explained.

"We have to recognize that this Yankee plan has the abject cooperation of the Czech chargé d'affaires."

"All this had the aim," Castro told the

crowd, "of igniting a fuse, so that every lumpen element who wanted to go for a ride, who wanted to have an adventure, would begin to enter the embassies."

"This was a flagrant violation of the norms, the laws, and the agreements that regulate the conduct of embassies and ambassadors," Castro noted. "Cuba has no treaty for asylum with any country in Europe. We have never had one! No European embassy has the right to grant asylum in our country, let alone to expect that they will be granted exit permits through blackmail."

"If these individuals," said Castro, "go to the office of the U.S. Interests Section to ask for a visa, they will not be given one. If they go to any of these European embassies to ask for a visa, they won't get one either."

But if an individual enters an embassy by force, Castro pointed out, "they say he is a refugee and expect him to be given a visa to travel to that country, since they are the 'champions' of human rights."

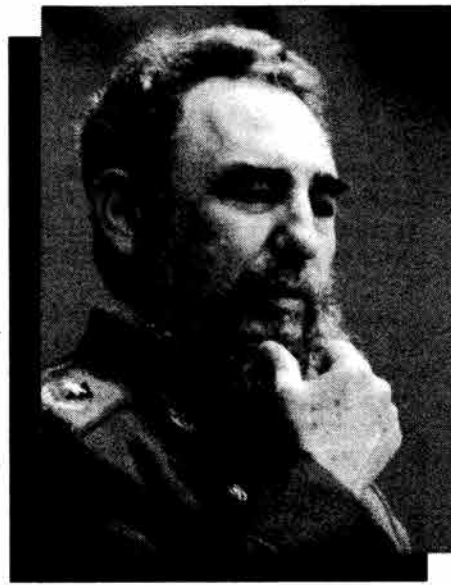
Castro explained that Washington has signed immigration agreements with Cuba, agreeing to give visas to some 20,000 Cubans who wished to enter the United States. But "they did not honor the agreements," explained Castro. "During any given year they have only granted permits to a few hundred or to two or three thousand."

"It is not us who do not allow people to leave. It is they who do not give the entry permits," said Castro. "If they wish, we can reach an agreement between Spain and ourselves, the Community and ourselves. We can organize a little office, or two or three," Castro said, "and free exits to those who want it to the communitarian and progressive Europe."

"And if the Yankees get excited and want to receive those citizens who, as they say, are so harassed and persecuted," Castro noted, "then let them provide the ships and the visas. They should exercise common sense and a sense of decency and responsibility and grant them permits."

"For it is not us, but the distinguished defenders of human rights who deny the visas," said Castro. "How cruel of them not to give a chance to those who wish to abandon a country where there is a bad socialism, a bad revolution, a bad communism, and want to live in the heart of the empire or of the developed countries that colonized the world, that plundered the world and created the underdevelopment and hunger that exists in the world today!"

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Reba Hansen — an irreplaceable part of our revolutionary continuity

Active communist for almost six decades

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

More than 250 friends and comrades from five countries and a dozen cities celebrated the life of Reba Hansen at two meetings a continent apart the weekend of July 27.

Hansen, a veteran of 56 years in the communist movement, died in Salt Lake City, Utah, July 3. Eighty years old at the time of her death, she had maintained a daily schedule of political work until she became ill late last fall.

"People like Reba — and there are very few who can match the achievement of an

meetings. Both of them had known and worked with Reba Hansen for nearly 30 years.

Paul Mailhot, organizer of the Salt Lake City branch of the SWP and speaking for the party units in both Salt Lake and Price, Utah, welcomed the more than 50 guests at the Utah meeting, who included 11 members of Reba Hansen's family. James Harris, a staff writer for the *Militant* and a member of the SWP Political Committee, chaired the meeting in New York, which was attended by more than 200.

An important part of each of the meetings

very end a special interest in the work of the party in Utah.

"As a pioneer rebuilding the Salt Lake City branch of the SWP in 1977," David Hurst wrote, "I was told a number of times that the SWP and its predecessor, the Communist League of America, had existed in Salt Lake City in the 1930s. We knew that Reba and Joe Hansen had joined the communist movement there while Joe was a student at the University of Utah. That was the sum total of our knowledge of our roots in Utah until Reba moved to Salt Lake City for a couple of years in 1980.

"Reba helped us bridge the gap in revolutionary continuity in Utah, not just by providing the history but by making it come alive with colorful stories of the personalities involved and of the day-to-day functioning of communists in the Mormon stronghold back then.

"In early 1981," Hurst continued, "the SWP decided to deepen its turn to the industrial working class and its orientation to coal miners organized in the United Mine Workers of America by establishing a branch in Price, Utah. Right from the get-go, Reba was filled with enthusiasm for this project. She knew miners and the weight of mining in the West.

"In the spring of 1982, the Price Pathfinder Bookstore held its grand opening and there was Reba to cheer it on. She had to overcome some physical limitations in order to make the five-hour round trip by car from Salt Lake City to Price. She said it was 'definitely worth it.' We gave her the grand tour of Price, which she thoroughly enjoyed.

"It meant a lot to the Price branch that Reba could not only be there but talk with us about our efforts, and the very idea of a branch of rough and ready communist fighters getting jobs in the coal mines and setting up shop in a rural town in the Utah desert in order to mix it up politically with other union coal miners, garment workers, and other workers in the area was a source of pride and inspiration for her."

In 1935 the Communist League of America asked Reba and Joe to pack up and move to San Francisco, where the great maritime strikes were registering the transformation of the labor movement. Living above the old San Francisco Seals baseball park, Joe helped edit a left-wing paper in the seamen's union while Reba held down various office jobs as they could be found from San Diego to Los Angeles to San Francisco, took on assignments in strike support activity, and helped comrades organize the distribution of the press.

A year in Mexico

In 1938 Joe and Reba went to Mexico, where Joe had been asked to join the secretariat and support team collaborating with Leon Trotsky. Trotsky, a central leader of the October 1917 Russian revolution, had been driven into exile following Lenin's death by the bureaucratic caste headed by Stalin because Trotsky — a revolutionary opponent of the first wave of "perestroika" — refused to abandon the program of communism.

The time in Mexico was an important experience for Reba, Barnes said. But "it's wrong to think this was the major formative period of her life, or to confuse Joe and Reba's responsibilities there."

Joe Hansen was one of Trotsky's secretaries, his chauffeur, and the main organizer of the household's defense. He knew how to drive on mountain roads, he was a crack shot, he knew three languages and, with Reba's encouragement, he had learned shorthand and professionalized his typing and use of office tools. He was perfect for the job.

Reba's experience in Mexico was different. "She enjoyed the days when everyone in the household got to participate in defense drills," Barnes said. "She learned to 'pack a gun,' as she said, and use it. She learned from the informal political discussion. She loved meeting revolutionaries and artists from around the world and, with Joe, came to have a lifelong interest in Mexico and a comradesly affection for the revolutionary fighters it produced.

"But she found the household routine difficult. She didn't care for being one of the young women there who was not working directly under Trotsky's command but under the supervision of Natalia Sedova Trotsky, who organized the household."

Branch leader in New York

Within less than a year Reba suggested that she leave and go on to take a new assignment. After weighing the pros and cons of going back to Utah or California she headed for New York. Joe had told her there was a place called the Bronx that still had a few trees and grass and rocks, if not exactly the high desert.

This period in New York, while Joe remained in Mexico, was "when the Reba we knew took a great leap forward," Barnes said. She became deeply involved in the activity of the Bronx and then the Yorkville branch, and in the strikes and related solidarity activity that were taking place. For the first time she began systematically shouldering direct leadership responsibility in the committees that were organizing the work of the branch.

Along with other young leaders she took part in classes and helped to organize them. She organized the branch's literature distribution, the equivalent then of directing a Pathfinder bookstore. She sold the *Militant* at union halls and street corner meetings, and was elected as an alternate delegate to the 1939 convention of the party.

It was in New York that Reba got to know well and began to work with James P. Cannon, one of the founding leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and the party's national secretary for many years.

"Jim was the formative and permanent political influence on Reba, just as Trotsky was the person who had the greatest political influence on Joe," Barnes stated. It was what she learned from working with Cannon — methods, goals, and values of party building and organization — along with Reba's growing experience in life, in the class struggle, and in the party that made this period so important in her life.

In later years, because Joe and Reba worked so closely together, many comrades began to think of them as "a team." But this was misleading, Waters noted. They were two individuals who were part of a much larger cadre of the party. As national office secretary and organizer of the office for many years, Reba worked closely not only with Cannon but with Farrell Dobbs, especially during the difficult years of the 1950s.

Helping 'Militant' reach around world

During World War II Reba became business manager of the *Militant* and began to write the circulation column that was called the "Militant Army." This weekly piece, a very popular feature, was "a dialogue with the readers," Mary-Alice Waters explained. "Reba solicited their comments and criticisms and she responded to them. She transformed these exchanges into a column that appeared week after week."

Reba did not invent this method, Barnes noted. It came out of the early Communist Party, and Cannon was one of its best practitioners. "But Reba became a master of it," he added. In her hands, the weekly *Militant Army* column exemplified the fact that "this paper was written by workers for workers; it was the paper not only of the party but of the fighters, of the working class. It had to communicate."

Discussing further this aspect of Reba's contribution, Waters pointed out that while Reba was a wonderful writer, she only really gave you a chance to see it in her letters. "Reba never had enough confidence politically to translate this into writing for the *Militant* or the other publications that she was the business manager of for many years," Waters said.

"She wrote letters that were magnificent, that made things come alive. Over the years one or two of these were transformed into articles that appeared in the *Militant*. And yet if asked to sit down and write a political article, she would freeze up. This was something, she



Militant

Reba Hansen in the library at the Pathfinder Building in New York in 1989. She took on the task of organizing one of the most valuable archives in the workers' movement.

active political life spanning six decades — play a unique role in the continuity of the communist movement internationally," said Mary-Alice Waters.

"Reba was above all a political," said Jack Barnes. Because her political life spanned much of this century she had a different perspective on big world events than her younger comrades. "Events that the great bulk of us have only studied as history" — the Russian revolution, the prosperity and class polarization of the 1920s, the great crash that followed, the labor and farm battles of the 1930s, the expansion of the antilynching campaigns, the rise to power of Hitler, the bloody consolidation of the Stalin-led bureaucracy's counterrevolutionary victory over the Leninist vanguard in the Soviet working class — "were the events around which Reba became a political person."

Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, spoke at the Salt Lake City meeting July 27 and the New York meeting July 29. Waters, who is editor of the magazine *New Internationalist* and a member of the SWP Political Committee, also spoke at the two

was a display of photographs of Hansen at different periods in her political life. It centered around samples of the front pages of the various publications she had served as business manager of, highlighting the historic turning points in world politics that marked and shaped her life.

High school dropout

Mailhot described Hansen's roots in Salt Lake, where she was born Sept. 6, 1909, the oldest of six children in a working-class Mormon family. Forced to leave school following the ninth grade to find work, Hansen also experienced firsthand the economic devastation of the Great Depression when her father lost his job and the family had to give up their home and move back to the countryside to live with her grandmother.

Eventually she was able to return to school for a year in 1930, enrolling in the Latter Day Saints' Business College in Salt Lake City because it offered the most systematic training in secretarial and business machine skills.

In 1934 Reba Hansen joined the Communist League of America, a predecessor of the SWP. She was part of a group of radical young people that included her husband and lifelong companion, Joseph Hansen, whom she had married in 1931 and who had recruited her to revolutionary politics.

This group was the "scandal of Utah and Nevada," Barnes related. Not only were they communists but they operated out of a mortuary where a sympathizer gave them space free of charge for forums and meetings.

These working-class fighters added insult to injury in a way that only young people would understand, Barnes said. "They liked operating out of that mortuary. Reba suspected they stayed there longer than they had to."

Reba's family was suspicious of Joe, who had developed a reputation as a "bomb thrower" in junior high school. "They were convinced," Barnes said, "that Reba was becoming exotic, erotic, and subversive. And it must be admitted that they were correct on all three counts. Reba remained exotic, erotic, and subversive by bourgeois standards her entire life."

One of the messages that had been sent to the meeting, Mailhot told the Salt Lake gathering, recounted how Reba maintained to the

Reba Hansen Party-Building Fund

Friends and supporters of the Socialist Workers Party who want to contribute to the work that Reba Hansen devoted her talents and energies to throughout her lifetime are urged to do so by making a donation to the Reba Hansen Party-Building Fund.

The fund, which was initiated at the meetings in Salt Lake City and New York, will be used to rebuild the library facilities and other offices in the Pathfinder Building.

More than \$4,000 was pledged at the two meetings.

Contributions should be sent to: Reba Hansen Party-Building Fund, Socialist Workers Party, 406 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.



The front page of the July 7, 1934, *Militant* (top) at the time Reba Hansen joined the communist movement. In 1963 Joe and Reba Hansen moved to Paris to publish *World Outlook* (left), which was renamed *Intercontinental Press* in 1968. *IP* was merged with the *Militant* in 1986.

said, she hadn't started early enough on." Joyce Meissenheimer, a South African exile and today a member of the Communist League in Canada, described for the New York gathering another of Reba's important responsibilities as *Militant* business manager. Meissenheimer had first come into contact with Reba and the *Militant* in the early 1950s when she was the editor of the *Torch*, an anti-apartheid weekly published in Cape Town, South Africa.

Stringent new censorship regulations had been enacted after the apartheid regime came to power in the late 1940s. "These restrictions were imposed by customs officials, government bureaucrats, and the police," Meissenheimer recalled. "These people were not exactly super-intelligent in their capacity to judge either literature or politics, for the popular children's classic *Black Beauty* and Thomas Hardy's novel *Return of the Native* were zealously added to the list of banned publications."

At the same time, however, copies of the *Militant* sent in exchange for the *Torch* were frequently confiscated. "When these confiscations took place, we would write and try to get replacements," Meissenheimer recounted. "Sometimes our paper did not reach its destination either, and more correspondence ensued. And it was Reba Hansen and Karolyn Kerry of the *Militant* with whom I corresponded during those years to break down the walls apartheid erected to keep revolutionary ideas out of South Africa."

During the McCarthy witch-hunt period of the 1950s, Barnes noted, "the revolutionary workers' movement, while fighting to remain as active as possible, substantially collapsed in on itself." Everyone was affected. As it came to an end, however, there was a deep differentiation between those who reached out and went forward as Joe and Reba did, and those who — often to their surprise — could not.

Joe and Reba responded as revolutionaries to the Cuban revolution, to the mass battles of the civil rights movement, to the deepening struggles in the colonial world. With renewed political energy they lined up with and became as one politically with the new generation of communist cadres.

Voluntary labor

In 1963 Joe and Reba Hansen moved to Paris where they organized the team that began publication of the mimeographed labor press service *World Outlook*. While reflecting in its contributing editors the views of the Fourth International, which had reunified under the impact of the Cuban revolution, the magazine's scope was wide and its goals far reaching.

As Reba later described the operation, Joe edited the magazine, she copyedited and typed it, and a team of international volunteers helped mimeograph, collate, and mail it each publication day. Begun on a shoestring with a second-hand typewriter, a reconditioned mimeo machine, and a grand total of \$75 in cash, *World Outlook* soon attracted enough subscribers to assure its regular weekly publication.

Transferred to New York in 1965 and renamed *Intercontinental Press* in 1968, the publication merged with the *Militant* in 1986. Michael Baumann, who worked alongside Reba and Joe on the *IP* staff for several years in the 1970s, recalled at the New York meeting the great effort Reba put into reaching out and drawing volunteers into the work of producing the magazine.

Intercontinental Press had an enviable reputation, Baumann said, not only for its political analysis but also for its high standards of technical excellence, including the quality of its proofreading.

A good part of the credit for this belonged to Reba, Baumann said, "because virtually the entire contents of each issue of *IP* were proofread and then double-checked — not by the staff or by the composing room — but by a team of organized volunteers, built up over the years through her work and attention."

"For many who helped out in this way, it was their only ongoing and direct connection

with the revolutionary movement. Reba always made sure these treasured volunteers knew how important a contribution they were making to the movement, and how highly it was valued."

Confidence in working class

There is another valuable lesson here, as well, Waters pointed out. The pride Reba and Joe took in everything they did expressed their political confidence in the working class. They understood that by insisting on the highest standards of accuracy and error-free production, they were paying tribute to the consciousness, combativity, intelligence, and pride of their readers.

"Joe and Reba understood that the working class — their class — if it ever is to become the ruling class, has to conquer the discipline and consciousness necessary to produce things with precision, accuracy, and the highest standards of quality," Waters explained. "This is the same lesson that Che Guevara tried to convey through word and deed to the working class of Cuba and rest of the world."

There is also a myth about *Intercontinental Press* that should be laid to rest, said Waters. The myth is that Joe and Reba worked a superhuman schedule to produce the magazine. "It's true they worked long and hard hours" along with the other staff members and volunteers, Waters said. "But they also organized time to relax. They enjoyed their hours of relaxation with the same gusto, enthusiasm, and humor with which they worked." And they responded — Reba more quickly than Joe — when younger staff members and party leaders urged reorganization of staff schedules to fit more closely with the rhythm of active branch members.

"The most important thing," Waters said, "is that the hours they put in were never frenzied, frenetic, or disorganized. They always worked in a measured way, establishing a pace that they and others could sustain week after week, month after month, year after year. They never confused motion with progress and knew the most exhausting work was labor that moved in circles."

"Nothing horrified Reba more than the chaos of an office with files piled on the floor and papers stacked up on the desks," Waters recalled. She was not a compulsive cleaner. But Reba knew that such disorganization meant something was politically wrong, that comrades were not in control of what they were doing. She knew it meant they were inundated by the chaos around them and responding to whatever seemed to be the biggest problem of the moment rather than carefully planning their work and priorities and carrying it out accordingly."

When Reba Hansen finally began slowing down a little in the late 1970s she had already helped organize a transition on *Intercontinental Press*. She took on as her responsibility helping to organize the library at the Pathfinder Building. This library serves the needs of the editorial staffs that work there and of the leadership bodies of the SWP.

Although she retired from full-time assignments, Reba insisted on maintaining a daily schedule of political work in the library until her heart, damaged in childhood by a bout with rheumatic fever, finally gave out on her. She knew, said Waters, that politics is not something you contemplate, it is what you do to change the world. And if you ever stop "doing," you cease being a communist. Organized communist politics — not family, friends, or hobbies — was the axis of her life.

Reba also met the challenge of the "arc of life" well, Barnes added. She was objective about herself and helped lead the way in making a transition to younger cadres as she got older. In 1973 she asked to be released from her responsibilities as a member of the party's control commission, on which she had served for almost 20 years, saying it was well past time for younger comrades to be elected.

Many of the messages sent from around the world by friends and coworkers of Reba Hansen noted how she had always made it a point to get to know personally

the comrades she worked with. Ethel Lobman, who first met Reba in the 1940s and worked with her for many years, recalled at the New York meeting how easily Reba spanned the 15-year age difference between them. Lobman also noted how enthusiastically Reba greeted the social and economic changes in the status of women and the rise of the women's liberation movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Reba was always particularly conscious about encouraging other women in the party and had many friends among the young women who joined the party in this period.

Reba learned the interests of the younger members, the things that they enjoyed, and she found ways to connect up with and relate to them — no matter what the difference in ages.

"Reba treasured her comrades," wrote Dick McBride, today the Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of West Virginia. In a message that was read to the meetings, McBride described how Reba would "find out how you came to be interested in politics," make suggestions on books to read, and share with you her interests. "I remember her telling me how excited she was to see an avalanche in the mountains, to see nature at work," McBride recalled.

Natalie Bombaro, another comrade from a generation younger than Reba, recalled that she had first met Reba in the mid-1970s, when Bombaro was working to help settle two Chinese comrades who had recently come to live in the United States.

"Through working together, and despite our 40-year age difference, Reba and I became friends, and she carried out her personal life tasks with great gusto as well!" Bombaro recalls.

"As a younger comrade, when I had different personal problems, I would complain to Reba. She would always hear me out and then discuss in an objective way what I was doing with my life and why I had decided to do it. She would say that being a revolutionary was not a sacrifice. It was a fulfilling way to live your life."

"Reba reaffirmed her commitment to the revolutionary movement and the SWP many times."

Continued on Page 17



In 1938 Reba went to Mexico with Joe Hansen where he joined the secretariat and support team collaborating with Leon Trotsky. Above from left to right are Mexican artists Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo; Natalia Sedova, Trotsky's life-long companion; Reba Hansen; writer André Breton; and Leon Trotsky.

Messages from around the world

Comrades, friends, and political associates around the world sent more than a score of messages to the gatherings celebrating the life of Reba Hansen. Excerpts from many of them were read in the course of the meetings.

The great bulk of the letters and telegrams came from comrades and friends with whom Reba worked most closely in recent years. In addition to those noted in the accompanying article, these included messages from John Riddell, Toba Singer, Judy Stranahan, Steve Warshell, and Malamoud Yaravi.

Messages from abroad included those

from the Communist Leagues of New Zealand, Sweden, Britain, and Canada; Ernest Mandel, a former contributing editor of *World Outlook* and *Intercontinental Press*; Connie and Alan Harris of Britain; Kay Riddell and Art Young of Canada; and Nat London of France.

Messages from veteran communist fighters who have known and worked with Reba for decades included Pearl Chertov, Mary Lou Dobbs, Catarino Garza, Tom Leonard, Howard Mayhew, Paul Montauk, George Novack, and Harry Ring.

Miners in West hold back coal

Strike victories in 1987, fights today are important for miners' union r

BY JUDY STRANAHAN

Early this year United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) members won an important victory against the Pittston Coal Group, forcing the coal operator to settle with the union.

The strike, which lasted 11 months, was reinforced by the Machinists strike against Eastern Airlines — a 17-month battle that continues to gain momentum and is closer to victory today than at any time since it began.

The strike at Pittston, which ended in February, won solidarity from the labor movement nationwide and internationally. It especially inspired support from other coal miners throughout the United States.

In June 1989, 44,000 UMWA members in the East walked off the job for six weeks in support of the Pittston miners.

UMWA members in the West saw that the outcome of the fight at Pittston could affect negotiations in their own contracts in 1990, they looked for ways to link up with the miners at Pittston. However, the UMWA national leadership discouraged union members in the West from joining the solidarity strike.

Even so, a dozen different car caravans loaded with UMWA members, other unionists, and supporters from several points in the western coalfields made the nearly three-day trip to Camp Solidarity in southwest Virginia. Many western locals donated funds to help the Pittston miners in their fight.

Several locals also gave financial and other aid to the Eastern strikers. Striking Decker miners traveled to Denver from Sheridan, Wyoming, to help the Machinists picket Continental Airlines, owned by former Eastern boss Frank Lorenzo.

A June 10, 1989, picnic organized by UMWA locals in Kayenta, Arizona, drew more than 200 unionists. They heard updates on the Pittston and Eastern strikes and the UMWA fight at Decker Coal Co. More than \$1,000 was raised for the strikers at Pittston and Eastern.

Two rallies sponsored by UMWA District 22 were held in Price, Utah, to hear reports from miners who had made the trip to Camp Solidarity. At one rally, a presentation was made by Pittston striker Mark Kennedy, who was on a special tour of the West to tell the story of the fight at Pittston.

Important battles in western coalfields

Historically, divisions in the UMWA have existed between eastern and western miners, which were fostered by the coal operators. In the last few years, UMWA members in the West have fought some significant battles that are helping to overcome the divisions in the union. A close review shows that these fights are important to the overall experience of union coal miners in the United States.

In the western part of the United States and Canada, a huge coal mining industry stretches across North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico and into the Canadian provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan. There are both underground and surface mines — also known as strip mines.

The UMWA represents miners nationwide. It also organizes workers in coal mining areas in Canada.

In the western United States, the biggest concentration of unionized underground coal miners is in Utah's Carbon and Emery counties. There are more than 1,000 laid-off and working miners in the state.

There are three UMWA districts in western North America. District 15, located in Wheat Ridge, Colorado, represents miners in Montana; New Mexico; North Dakota; Sheridan, Wyoming; Window Rock, Arizona; and throughout Colorado. District 18, centered in Calgary, Alberta, covers miners in western Canada. District 22, headquartered in Price, Utah, in the southeastern part of the state, represents UMWA members in Utah, southwest Wyoming, and Kayenta, Arizona.

Miners hang tough against concessions

In the 1980s, the UMWA was the only major industrial union that did not give major concessions to the employers.

Miners waged hard-fought battles with a

111-day nationwide strike in 1977-1978. They struck again in 1981. Both times, they turned back concession demands by the coal operators.

In 1984, when the contract expired again, a no-concessions agreement was signed between the UMWA and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) — the umbrella association for many coal operators — without a nationwide strike.

However, UMWA members working for Emery Mining Corp. — today owned by Utah Power and Light, and one of the largest mine operations in Utah — were forced to strike for four weeks.

A majority of UMWA members at Emery's Deer Creek, Wilberg, and Des-Bee-Dove mines had voted to accept the national contract. Emery's owners, however, had pulled out of the BCOA in 1981 and was demanding a separate agreement. The company wanted to discontinue contributions to the UMWA Health and Retirement Fund, which provides pensions and medical coverage to retired miners.

The strike was successful and the mine owners were pushed back.

In 1986 and 1987, many union contracts expired in the West, with the coal operators demanding deep concessions.

UMWA members throughout the country carefully watched the developments in the West, knowing the outcome could have a decisive impact on the 1988 national negotiations between the union and the BCOA. The BCOA contract was due to expire Jan. 31, 1988.

Joel Price, a coal analyst for the New York investment firm Donaldson, Lufkin and Jenrette, commented at the time, "We've seen

Wyoming Fuels also pressed for cutting paid sick days and vacation days and substituting a company-administered pension plan for the UMWA pension fund.

Local 9856 members were out for 18 months before scoring a victory over the company.

In February 1987, 10 months into the strike in Trinidad, almost 400 UMWA members in Window Rock, Arizona, and Oak Creek, Colorado, working at the Pittsburg and Midway (P&M) McKinley and Edna strip mines, struck. Two months later, P&M miners in Kemmerer, Wyoming, also went out.

P&M is a subsidiary of Chevron Oil. The company, based in Englewood, Colorado, today produces more than 15 million tons of coal a year, mostly in the West and Midwest. It is one of the most profitable coal operators in the industry.

In mid-March, the P&M miners were joined by a strike of 900 miners against Peabody Coal. Peabody is the largest coal company in the United States.

Miners working at Peabody are organized in the UMWA at the Kayenta and Black Mesa mines in Kayenta, Arizona; Nucla mine in Nucla, Colorado; Seneca mine in Hayden, Colorado; and Big Sky mine in Colstrip, Montana.

Then in late April, a strike of UMWA Local 2386 members working for the FMC Wyoming Corporation at the Skull Point mine in Kemmerer was called.

Peabody and P&M set the pattern

"Basically, what FMC was doing was following the western pattern set by P&M and Peabody," said Mark Hanson, Local 2386 president. Negotiations between the UMWA

to south and 175 miles east to west.

Extensive unemployment exists on the Nation. Jobless figures at the time of the strike were estimated to be 35 percent to 50 percent of the work force.

Peabody and P&M attempted to take advantage of this by offering \$250 to union members who crossed the picket line. They then threatened to fire the miners who did not return.

On April 24, 1987, P&M issued an order to strikers to return to work by April 27. That day, as hundreds of chanting strikers and their supporters stood at the entrance to the mine, about 75 union members crossed the picket line, protected by more than 100 state cops, McKinley County sheriff deputies, and Navajo tribal Police. They were all outfitted in riot gear and backed up by fire department water hoses.

Coal operators try to divide Navajos

From the beginning Peabody and P&M campaigned to divide the UMWA from the Navajo Tribal Council and others living on the Nation.

Navajo Nation land is rich with coal deposits, which the coal operators lease and hire wage labor to mine. They pay royalties to the Nation based on the number of tons of coal mined.

At first, the Navajo Tribal Council — the elected government that decides policy and laws on the Nation — opposed the strike and backed the company. The Tribal Council offices are located in Window Rock, which is in the area where many P&M miners live.

A statement issued by Stan Milford — from the office of Peter MacDonald, then chairman of the Tribal Council — said in part, "We applaud P&M's actions and their decision to open the mine and would support each striking employee who decides to exercise their right to return to work."

"The strike," Milford said, "has continued too long, it is the Navajo people that have been most affected, and it is now time to return to work."

Peabody said union demands were at odds with the Navajo Preference in Employer Act. This law states, "All employers doing business within or near the boundaries of the Navajo Nation or engaged in any contract with the Navajo Nation shall give preference in employment" to residents of the area.

The union had demanded the company sign an agreement giving laid-off UMWA miners first crack at jobs at any mine, whether or not the mine was unionized. Peabody has plans to open nonunion mines next door to union mines.

The overwhelming majority of miners at Peabody are Navajo. Others are Hopi Indians. Likewise, at P&M, most are Navajo, some are from other area tribes, and the rest are Chicano or white.

Campaign for Navajo support

The UMWA members launched a counter-campaign to win other Navajo people and the Tribal Council to their side.

The union explained it unconditionally supported the Navajo Preference Act and issued a statement explaining, "UMWA is us. And we are one solid unit, and we all recognize Navajo Nation as a sovereign Nation and respect its laws."

The union also organized protests of miners and friends at the Tribal Council offices. A few days following Milford's initial statement, another one was released saying Milford's quotes did not represent MacDonald's administration.

The Tribal Council also voted to ask P&M to return to negotiations, a proposal the UMWA supported.

At Peabody's Nucla, Seneca, and Big Sky mines, the company started hiring scabs even before the strike by advertising in newspapers from Texas to California.

"When we found out the company was sending strikebreakers to get their physicals at a clinic 40 miles away, we immediately sent our people to the clinic to talk to them," said Frank Vincent, who was UMWA local 1575 president at the Big Sky mine. "When we let them know what the real issues were,



Militant/ Joe Swanson

A supporter of the miners at Decker Coal Co. being arrested by the Wyoming Highway Patrol during 1987 strike.

what's happened in airlines, copper, steel, and autos. We've seen huge concessions in each of these industries." The union would be under pressure to accept concessions in the 1987 and 1988 round of contract negotiations, he said.

1986-87 wave of strikes

As these negotiations opened, a wave of strikes spread through the western coalfields. One of the first began April 17, 1986, at Wyoming Fuel Co. near Trinidad, Colorado.

In a broadside attack, the company proposed a return to the piecework system of payment based on the tonnage produced per hour rather than the number of hours worked.

The miners considered this a serious assault. "Piecework went out years ago, and there's no way we're going to allow this company to bring it back. That would push us back 50 years," said Mike Romero, president of Local 9856 at Wyoming Fuels at the time.

and Peabody have traditionally determined the pace for western surface coal agreements.

Peabody was demanding no pension increases; partial payment by miners for their health benefits, which had been covered 100 percent; a two-tier wage structure; work-rule changes; and a 90-day probationary period for new miners.

P&M wanted random drug testing, no increases in benefits for pensioners and widows, and cutbacks in medical benefits that would include miners paying for part of the health-care program.

Of the five western Peabody mines, the biggest operations with the largest number of miners are the ones located in Kayenta, Arizona. Likewise, the McKinley mine near Window Rock is the largest of P&M's coal operations in the West. Both of these operations are located within the boundaries of the Navajo Nation. The Navajo Nation covers territory in Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico, spanning some 225 miles north

bosses tionally

lot of them decided then and there not to
...ss our line."

It was the first time these miners had
ncountered the use of scabs by the company.
One woman, who was a member of the Local
385 Women's Auxiliary, explained that of
he four times the local at the Seneca mine
n Hayden, Colorado, had been on strike, this
was the first time the company had brought
private guards and strikebreakers.

On April 22, 1987, 45 members of UMWA
ocal 1344 went on strike against Colo-
ado Yampa Coal Company, located in
earby Oak Creek, Colorado. There the com-
pany offered to pay miners \$18 an hour, more
han the going rate of hourly pay, but wanted
miners to give up all rights to bid for jobs
nd to do away with job classifications and
eniority.

By the end of April, strikes had spread
cross the entire West, except in Utah, where
he contracts were tied to the expiration date
of the BCOA national agreement.

The striking locals throughout districts 15
nd 22 reached out for solidarity from other
ions and the communities in their areas.
rike committees and women's auxiliaries
were formed.

At the P&M Edna mine in Oak Creek,
ocal merchants donated food to the picket
ine. Members of the steelworkers' union
oined the FMC miners' picket line in
Semmerer, Wyoming, every day.

olidarity spreads across West

UMWA members began to travel long
distances to participate in joint activities and
he strike activities of other unions.

Locals from Window Rock and Kayenta,
Arizona, and miners from Utah traveled to
Hayden, Colorado, for unity rallies. Miners
from Oak Creek and Hayden, Colorado,
rove to Sheridan, Wyoming, to participate
n solidarity events. UMWA members from
Sheridan traveled to Price, Utah, and Kayenta
or rallies and picnics sponsored by District
22. Districts 15 and 22 held several unity
allies.

Striking miners all over the West began to
earn firsthand about each other's struggles.

Agreements were reached in the P&M
strike and the strike at Peabody on May 6
nd May 12, 1987, respectively. FMC was
settled on May 18.

However, it took the threatened walkout
of two other locals at Colorado Yampa's
parent company, Cyprus Minerals, in
Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, and Hayden,
Colorado, to help force a settlement in Local
1344's strike in Oak Creek in late August.

In these cases, the miners were able to beat
back the coal operators' concession demands.

Union miners at Decker strike

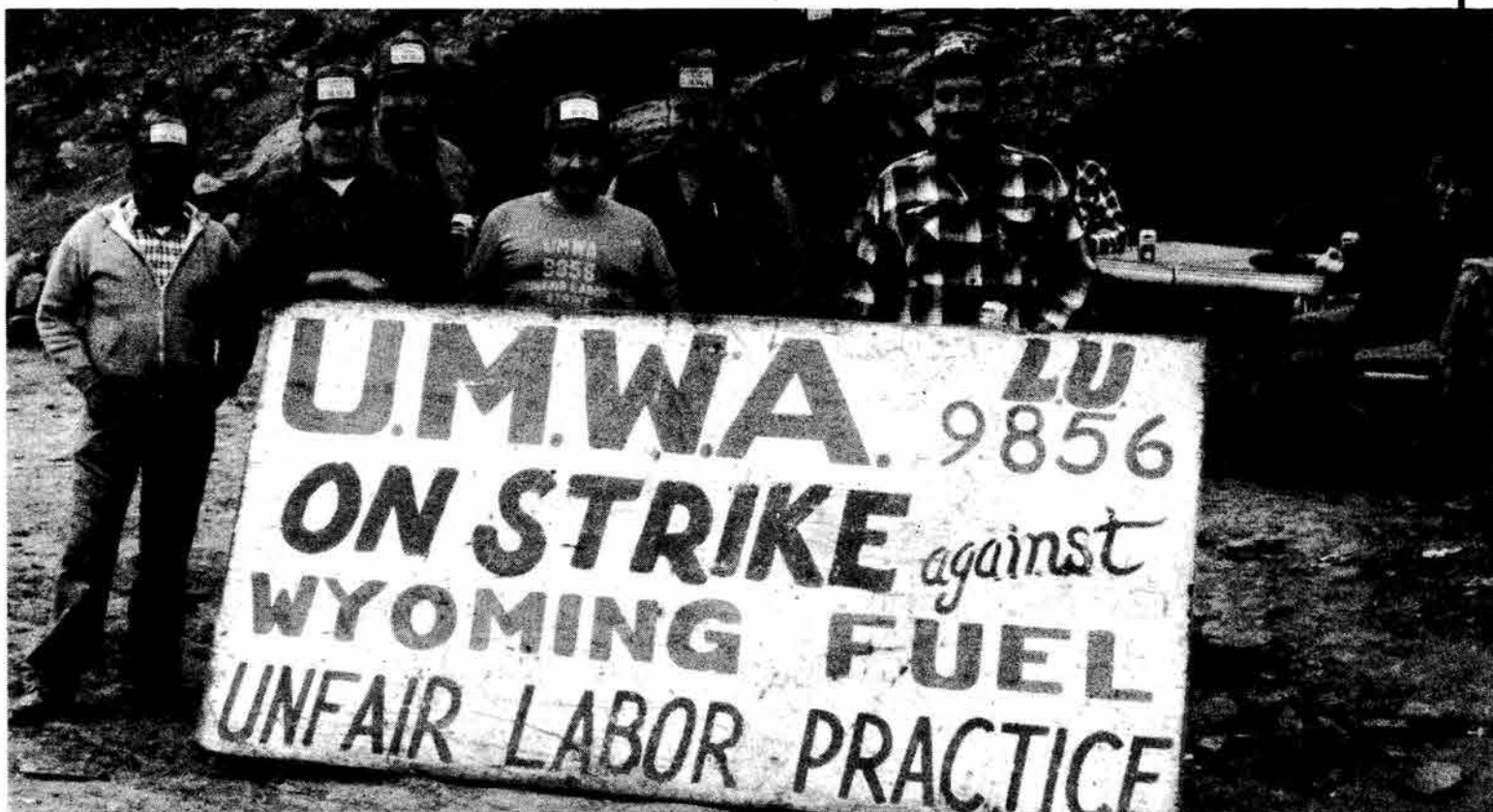
On Oct. 1, 1987, 240 members of UMWA
Local 1972 struck Decker Coal Co. The
Decker strip mine — owned by Peter Kiewit
and Sons, the largest U.S. construction com-
pany, and Nerco Coal—is located in Mon-
tana, just north of Sheridan, Wyoming. Five
days after the Decker miners went out, Local
2055 at Big Horn Coal near Sheridan, which
s owned solely by Kiewit, struck.

At issue in both strikes were job security
and benefits. The UMWA wanted contract
visions protecting its membership's jobs
from being eliminated by subcontracting.
The union also demanded a three-year con-
tract, instead of the one-year pact it had to
sign in 1986, and a clause granting laid-off
miners preferential recall at other Kiewit
mines.

The company pressed for cuts in medical
re coverage and a wage freeze. The miners
had only received one five-cent-an-hour raise
since 1982.

In 1983 Decker miners had voted to throw
out a company-oriented union called the Pro-
gressive Mine Workers and joined the
UMWA. At first the company refused to
acknowledge the UMWA and allow the min-
ers to have union dues deducted from their
paychecks.

In 1986, three years after the union was
voted in, the company finally agreed to a
one-year contract. When that contract was
up, the company refused to negotiate seri-
ously with the union, forcing a strike.



Colorado miners on strike in 1986 against company demand for return to piece work

Militant/Nancy Boyasko

At stake in both the Decker and Big Horn
strikes was whether or not the mines in the
Powder River Basin would be unionized. The
basin is located east of Sheridan and covers
territory in Wyoming and Montana. Adjacent
to it is the Thunder River Basin. There are at
least 14 nonunion coal operations in this
vicinity, one of the largest coal-producing
areas in the world.

The UMWA had been dealt a setback
earlier in 1987 when miners at Thunder
Basin Coal, owned by Atlantic Richfields Oil
Co., voted down UMWA representation by
307 to 56. After scabs were brought in at
Decker, the UMWA lost at least two other
elections at mines in the Powder River and
Thunder River basins.

Face major union-busting drive

From the beginning, Decker and Big Horn
miners were up against a highly organized
union-busting effort by the company, the
cops, and the courts. Kiewit made it clear
from the start it wanted the union out.

As negotiations opened on 1987 contracts, a wave of coal strikes spread in West.

On the second day of the Decker strike,
the company sent out letters to all the miners
telling them they would be replaced if they
did not return to work in 10 days. The com-
pany placed advertisements for scabs in local
papers and chartered buses to get the strike-
breakers and company personnel into the
mine.

Kiewit hired 200 scabs and started herding
them across the picket lines. The miners
responded by conducting sitdowns at the
entrances to the mine.

Over the next two weeks there were doz-
ens of arrests by the cops. Court judges kept
ruling in favor of Decker Coal and restricting
the union.

Decker also hired Baker and Associates,
a notorious union-busting outfit, to intimidate
the strikers.

From the outset of the strike, the UMWA
locals countered the employers by winning
solidarity and support from the labor move-
ment in the area and from UMWA members
throughout the West, as well as in parts of
the East. Initially, union rail workers refused
to take coal trains through the picket lines.
Only by court order were they eventually
forced to do so.

Several solidarity rallies were held during
the strike, and dozens of unionists from
throughout the region participated, including
from rail unions, the state AFL-CIO bodies
in Montana, Wyoming, and North Dakota,
and from other UMWA locals in the area.

But despite these efforts, the company was
able to keep the scabs working at the mine,
and coal was produced.

In June 1988 the union offered to return
to work at both Decker and Big Horn. But
when 120 miners tried to go back to work at
Decker on June 28, they were told by the
coal operators there were no jobs.

The miners at Decker and Big Horn got a
big boost when the Pittston miners went out
on strike in early 1989. The locals reached
out to the Pittston miners, making visits to
Camp Solidarity. A Decker miner escorted
Pittston striker Kennedy on his western
coalfields tour. They drew inspiration from
the strike at Pittston, and as a result, they
have been able to sustain their own 34-month
fight.

In February of this year, a judge ruled that
Decker Coal committed unfair labor prac-
tices that were to blame for the strike. The
judge ordered the company back to the bar-
gaining table and directed it to immediately
reinstate 80 strikers, which obligates the
company to fire strikebreakers it hired if they
occupy positions union members are entitled
to. The company must also pay back wages
to the miners that are recalled. Decker has
appealed the ruling to the National Labor
Relations Board.

Still at dispute and under investigation is
the case of another 152 Decker miners, who
were fired by the company for alleged strike
misconduct.

Big Horn had agreed to take back 18
miners when the unconditional offer was
made in June 1988, but fired another 18.

More recently, Decker miners have been
campaigning to bring their story to working
people in Chicago and other cities where
Kiewit has coal contracts. The company pro-
vides most of the coal used to generate elec-
tricity in Chicago. Miners have joined with
consumer groups and others to urge working
people there to ask Commonwealth Edison
to renegotiate its coal contracts and press for
a fair settlement at Decker.

Recently, the Chicago City Council passed
a resolution urging Commonwealth Edison
to use whatever power it has with Kiewit to
urge the company to go back to the bargain-
ing table.

Since the judge's ruling in February, 56
miners have gone back to work at Decker.
The company had vowed that it would keep
UMWA miners out of its mines. With this
partial victory, the union continues to focus
on fighting for more miners to get their jobs
back.

1990 contract discussions

This year the contracts that were won in
1987 expired and negotiations for new con-
tracts took place. With the 1987 contract
battles still fresh in many miners' minds, the
union locals at Peabody and P&M began
organizing what they termed "the mobiliza-
tion" to prepare for a possible fight.

Both P&M and Peabody Coal indicated
that concessions on health continued to be
on the top of their lists and that they wanted
miners to pay at least 20 percent of their
medical insurance.

Many miners who were active in the 1987
strikes, along with new forces, helped to lead
"the mobilization." They explained it was a
way to involve the membership, keep every-
one informed, and help organize regionwide
solidarity actions.

Some UMWA members on the Navajo
Nation began to discuss how to win more
recently hired Navajo miners who speak only

Diné — the Navajo language — to join the
union. The auxiliary from Local 1332 at the
P&M McKinley mine has staffed an educa-
tion table at the Navajo Nation annual fair
each year since the 1987 strike. The fair
draws hundreds of thousands of Navajo peo-
ple.

Kerry Cobb, a veteran of the 1987 strike
at the Peabody Seneca mine, stressed that the
miners' campaign showed the unity among
all the locals in the West. "There's no ques-
tion that the mobilization helped," he said,
noting the miners "got the message across to
the company."

The week of March 9, 1990, a unity action
was carried out and coordinated by the locals
at both Peabody and P&M. UMWA members
in Districts 15, 18, and 22 wore yellow
armbands and ribbons to show support for
miners when they opened negotiations with
P&M.

No concessions at P&M

When contract negotiations began be-
tween Local 1332 in Window Rock and
P&M, two of the company's proposals were
voted down by the membership before a third
was accepted. P&M wanted concessions in
medical care coverage and previously estab-
lished work and bidding rules that protect the
rights of miners on the job.

In the end Local 1332 accepted a five-year
no-concessions contract that included a 25-
cent wage increase for each year of the con-
tract, an increased pension plan, and 100
percent coverage for medical care.

At Peabody, local officers approved a set-
tlement that extended the 1987 contract for
two more years. Most miners there and the
local officers pointed to the new agreement
as a victory. Mitch Manley, vice-president of
Local 1924 at the Kayenta mine, explained,
"The agreement we won three years ago
stands intact." He also pointed out that the
new expiration date at the Peabody mines
puts them in sync with the expiration of the
national BCOA contract.

Miners at Peabody received a \$2,200
bonus as well.

While Peabody initially agreed to also
negotiate a contract with 20 coal samplers
covered under locals 1924 and 1620 at the
Kayenta and Black Mesa mines, the com-
pany now has pulled back from this. Coal
samplers work at the mine, taking samples
of coal as it is mined and burning it to check
the ash content and to check for impurities.
Peabody pressed for a decertification election
of the UMWA among the samplers there. A
vote is set for August 1.

Although probes were made by the coal
bosses this spring, the miners held firm. They
had drawn lessons from their strike battles in
1987 and were preparing to resist any de-
mands for concessions in the 1990 negotia-
tions. The coal operators took this into
account.

At the same time the bosses also had to
factor in the UMWA victory over Pittston's
union-busting attempts.

For these reasons, the coal bosses in the
West backed off and decided not to take the
miners on in the 1990 round of contracts.

Stalinist vs. communist policies in fight against national oppression in the USSR

The following is the second in a series of articles based on a report adopted by the June session of the 35th National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party. It has been edited to take into account events since the convention that illustrate some of the main political themes of the report.

BY JAMES HARRIS

The massive upsurges that have overthrown Stalinist regimes in Eastern and Central Europe and weakened the bureaucratic regime in the Soviet Union have released a flood of angry protests among nations and nationalities oppressed by the privileged castes within the borders of their countries. As each week passes the list of those peoples demanding national self-determination grows. The newspapers are full of their names: Armenians, Lithuanians, Azerbaijanis, Ukrainians, Mongolians, Turks, Latvians, Uzbeks, and Tadzhiks, to name a few. All are entering political life with their own demands for the first time in decades. In the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, 11 of the 15 republics have adopted sovereignty declarations, and Lithuania has declared its independence.

The Stalinist regimes have blocked off the development of struggles for self-determination in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Their policies have reinforced national divisions and oppression and perpetuated racism, national chauvinism, and anti-Semitism.

Their policies are in sharp contrast to those of the Bolsheviks under V.I. Lenin's leadership in the early years of the Russian revolution. The Soviet government headed by Lenin established a voluntary federation of workers' and peasants' republics.

The mass nationalist upsurges in the Soviet Union and several Eastern European countries have exposed the lie by the Stalinists that the "national question" had been solved and was a thing of the past. The policies of the bureaucracy have instead exacerbated national conflicts. The breakup of the Soviet Union is now inevitable and is in its early stages. It has become a precondition for beginning to advance the struggle for communism.

Communists have long recognized that the transition to socialism can only be successfully carried out if revolutionary workers give full support to the struggle for national self-determination. In the tsarist empire and today in the USSR, as in many other countries, this has been bound up with the fight to liberate rural working people and assure them the right to work the land.

Socialism is a voluntary task

Socialism is not a "thing" that can be granted or forced on captive and oppressed peoples against their will. The movement to socialism requires the working class consciously and voluntarily adopt a communist political course and take on more and more responsibility for running society. This requires communist leadership.

The fact that the liberation of the working class must be the task of the working class — a voluntary task of men and women — has been explained by all the great communist leaders beginning with Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. This was the policy followed by the Bolsheviks under Lenin and by the communist fighters led by Leon Trotsky who continued to carry out a Marxist course following Lenin's death in 1924. It was at the heart of the revolutionary policies exemplified by Ernesto Che Guevara, one of the outstanding leaders of the Cuban revolution.

The national oppression carried out by the Stalinist bureaucracy, in the name of communism, is an obstacle to establishing socialism. It is a roadblock to the development of communist consciousness among working people, both in the oppressor nations and in the oppressed nations.

Communists fight to guarantee the right of national self-determination to all oppressed nations and nationalities. Their goal is to forge voluntary federations of workers' and farmers' republics.

It's helpful to look at the real history of the Russian revolution on this question and the stance of the Bolsheviks. The October 1917 revolution inspired revolutionary uprisings by oppressed peoples throughout the



Reprinted by permission of Pathfinder Press
Delegates at Congress of the Peoples of the East held in Baku, Azerbaijan, in 1920. The Bolshevik leadership of the Russian revolution in Lenin's time championed the fight for national self-determination in the old tsarist empire, as well as anti-imperialist struggles throughout the East (Asia) and the rest of the colonial world.

old tsarist empire. The Bolsheviks responded to these new forces with the offer of a fighting alliance and voluntary federation. They did not seek to forcibly hold together the Russian empire under a "socialist" veneer.

As Lenin put it in a speech in December 1917 at the First All-Russia Congress of the Navy:

"We are told that Russia will disintegrate and split up into separate republics, but we have no reason to fear this. We have nothing to fear, whatever the number of independent

'We are told that Russia will disintegrate, split into separate republics. But we have no reason to fear this.' —V.I. Lenin

republics. The important thing for us is not where the state border runs, but whether or not the working people of all nations remain allied in their struggle against the bourgeoisie, irrespective of nationality."

The unconditional support that the Bolsheviks gave to the struggle for self-determination was decisive in the victory of the revolutionary government against the counterrevolutionary forces between 1918 and 1921. In this way the Bolsheviks were able to inspire the oppressed nationalities and win their confidence in the revolution as a victory for themselves — not simply trading one master for another.

Forging working-class unity

The Bolsheviks support for self-determination was a precondition to advance the struggle for unity in the working class across national borders.

This revolutionary alliance could only be voluntary. The Bolsheviks had to convince the toilers of the oppressed nations that the new government had thrown off all the chauvinist and expansionist aims of the old order. The Bolsheviks did not set out to create a new "Soviet" nationality or a socialist superstate that would in reality be based on the dominant Russian nationality.

The aim of the Bolsheviks was to establish a voluntary federation of the republics based on soviet power. The soviets were revolutionary organizations made up of representatives from the workers, peasants, and soldiers and acted to centralize popular mobilizations and exercise governmental power.

The Bolsheviks under Lenin's leadership set out to establish a union of soviet socialist republics, exactly as the name implies.

Lenin's stance was shown clearly in a 1922 debate in the Soviet Communist Party on the constitution of the new Soviet federation that was coming into existence.

The constitution commission was headed by Joseph Stalin. It made the proposal that all of the non-Russian republics were to be integrated into the Russian Federated Soviet Socialist Republic. The name of the proposed new federation, which gave special status to Russia, also reflected its content. Four out of five of the representatives of the non-Russian republics on the constitution commission opposed Stalin's plan, but their views were ignored.

When Lenin was presented with this proposal he strongly opposed it and successfully defeated it during the last months of his active political life. He suggested a different structure — not just in name, but above all in political direction.

"We see ourselves as equals in law with the Ukrainian SSR and the others," Lenin said, "and enter with them into a new union, a new federation, 'The Union of Soviet Republics of Europe and Asia.'" (This was his first proposal for a name before it became the USSR in December 1922.) The purpose of this federation, Lenin said, was not to destroy the independence of the republics "but rather to establish a new stage, a federation of republics with equal rights."

Later in a memo to Communist Party leader Lev Kamenev, Lenin stated: "I declare war to death on Great Russian chauvinism. . . . It must be absolutely insisted that the Union Central Executive Committee should be presided over in turn by a Russian, Ukrainian, Georgian, etc. Absolutely."

Weakens defense of the revolution

The denial of the right to self-determination weakens the defense of states where working people have overturned capitalist political rule and economic domination. And it can have disastrous consequences in fighting against imperialist-backed counterrevolutions.

For example, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 helped the U.S.-financed counterrevolutionary landlords and capitalists win popular support for their armies by raising the banner of national sovereignty.

The Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union has reimposed a new version of the prison house of nations that existed before the victory of the Russian revolution. It has made

the breakup of the Soviet Union inevitable by fueling the centrifugal forces of racism, national chauvinism, and denial of democratic rights over the decades.

The struggles by the oppressed nations within the USSR are part of the world revolution. The most politically advanced fighters among working people in these struggles will reach out toward other fights against national oppression, including those in the Third World. Through these links, they will learn more about the reality of imperialism and what capitalist exploitation has meant for hundreds of millions throughout Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Moreover, active support for their right to self-determination is an important test that oppressed nationalities will put to all those in other nations who claim to be communists.

Proletarian internationalism

The national oppression carried out by the Stalinist regimes in the Soviet Union has blocked the development of proletarian internationalism and anti-imperialist solidarity. It has prevented the forging of links between the peoples of the USSR and the oppressed people of Africa, Asia, the Pacific, the Caribbean, and Latin America.

The Soviet government does not subordinate its narrow national interests to the worldwide fight for national liberation and socialism. Just the opposite. Its approach to national liberation struggles and other battles by workers and farmers around the world is determined by the needs and state interests of the privileged caste.

Unlike the imperialist ruling classes, the caste in the Soviet Union does not directly exploit Third World nations through the export of capital and the reaping of superprofits from the labor of the workers and peasants in these countries. The Soviet regime, however, is complicit with imperialist exploitation through the benefits they reap from unequal trade with colonial and semicolonial countries at prices determined by capitalist domination of the world market. This is explained most clearly in the writings of Che Guevara. (See *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution: Writings and Speeches of Ernesto Che Guevara*, Pathfinder, 1987, especially pages 203-330 and 337-346.)

A communist leadership of an industrially developed workers' state such as the Soviet Union would chart a course to help close the economic gap with the less developed workers' states, workers' and farmers' governments, and regimes in the Third World arising from revolutionary struggles against imperialism. This was the approach the Bolsheviks advocated with regard to raising the level of economic and social development of the oppressed nations within the Soviet federation, for instance.

Cuba's example

In today's world the Communist Party of Cuba is the first leadership since the Bolsheviks to act on the basis of proletarian internationalist principles. They subordinate the national interests of revolutionary Cuba to the interests of the world revolution. They never do this in a reckless way, but they act in full knowledge of the risks involved in their course.

No clearer example can be pointed to than the decision since 1975 to send hundreds of thousands of Cuban volunteer troops to Angola at the request of its government to help beat back the racist apartheid regime. Cuban internationalist volunteers — teachers, medical personnel, construction workers, and others — have gone to Angola, Nicaragua, Grenada, Ethiopia, Vietnam, and other countries throughout the world.

Communists in Cuba recognize that the internationalist path they have chosen is a precondition for continuing to advance toward socialism. Active internationalism deepens the politicization — the anti-imperialist and communist consciousness — in Cuba. It is part of the fight against bureaucratization and corruption. And it is also the best way to hold off and defeat the threat of aggression against Cuba by U.S. imperialism.

As Cuban President Fidel Castro explained in December 1988, "Whoever is incapable of fighting for others will never be capable of fighting for himself."

'In Defense of Marxism': an essential work to understand USSR's social and political structures

The following is the preface to the third edition of *In Defense of Marxism* by Leon Trotsky, to be published this month by Pathfinder. The preface is copyright © 1990 and reprinted by permission of Pathfinder.

BY DOUG JENNESS

Unleashing decades of pent-up anger and frustration, millions across Central and Eastern Europe took to the streets in the closing months of 1989 and early 1990 demanding justice and political rights. By July 1990, when this preface was written, they had toppled or shaken most of the regimes dominated by Stalinist Communist Parties. In doing so, they opened the door for working people to break out of the political cocoon they were wrapped in for more than four decades by the repressive policies of the privileged bureaucratic castes in these countries. The disintegration of the Stalinist parties and the formation of weaker and more unstable regimes create the possibility for workers and farmers to take the first steps toward getting involved in political life, organizing to defend their class interests, and being influenced by struggles of working people and national liberation fighters in other countries.

The parasitic petty-bourgeois caste in the Soviet Union, too, is being wracked by this crisis. Workers' strikes are mounting. Mobilizations of nationally oppressed peoples threaten secession from the USSR by republics from the Baltics to Azerbaijan.

Moreover, economic stagnation has led to a decline in workers' living standards and to growing popular unrest and protests throughout Central and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. In the face of this situation, most of the regimes — both the new governments in most Eastern European countries and the Communist Party-dominated regime in the Soviet Union — have initiated steps to restructure their economies by employing wider use of capitalist market methods and incentives.

These momentous changes are stimulating interest and discussion among working people, students, and others around the world. There is a thirst for a clear explanation of the economic, social, and political contradictions in the structures of these countries, where capitalist ownership of basic industry and

Questions being asked are, What is social character of these states? Is capitalism being restored?

banking was overturned decades ago.

Questions include: What is the social character of these states? Is capitalism being restored? What, if anything, is there for workers to defend in these societies? What is the character of workers' struggles? What should be the stance of working people in the United States and other countries to these developments? What is the relationship of workers in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union to struggles against capitalist exploitation and imperialist domination around the world?

The republication of this book by Leon Trotsky is a helpful guide for working through answers to these and other questions. As a central leader of the October 1917 Russian revolution and of the Communist International in its early years, Trotsky brings insights from direct experience. Although the articles and letters in this volume were written 50 years ago, their evaluation of Soviet society and its contradictory place in world politics is not only accurate but essential to understanding the permanent crisis of the Stalinist parties and the growing instability of the regimes in Eastern and Central Europe and in the USSR itself.

In the late 1920s Trotsky had been ex-

pelled from the Soviet Communist Party and forced into exile by Joseph Stalin. Trotsky's "crime" was to have continued to fight for the communist course that V.I. Lenin and the Bolsheviks had followed before the bureaucratic degeneration of the revolution under Stalin.

"Stalinism" refers to the counterrevolutionary policies of the privileged social caste that emerged and consolidated its power at that time and continues its domination in the Soviet Union to this day. These Stalinist policies were endorsed by the leaderships of parties that called themselves "Communist" around the world. They subordinated workers' struggles to serving the diplomatic needs of the caste in the Soviet Union and,

New edition of book is helpful guide to questions posed today in Eastern Europe, USSR.

after World War II, of the castes that exercised power in other countries where capitalism had been overturned in the decade following the war.

In 1939-40, when the materials in this book were written, Trotsky was living in exile in Mexico. In August 1940 he was assassinated by an agent of Stalin.

Trotsky wrote these articles and letters as part of a debate inside the Socialist Workers Party during the opening stages of the second inter-imperialist world war. The key issue in dispute was what kind of party needed to be built in the United States and around the world: a revolutionary party that was truly part of the working class and its struggles, or a petty-bourgeois radical party calling itself working class in words, while buckling in deeds to bourgeois public opinion? What kind of party could stand up to the pressures of the capitalists' intensifying prowar propaganda and anticommunist hysteria?

Trotsky's standpoint was that of the working class, both inside the Soviet Union and internationally. He explained that clarity on the class character and contradictions of the Soviet Union was interlinked with the political tasks and orientation of revolutionary workers the world over. It was necessary to distinguish between the nationalized property relations that resulted from the expropriation of the capitalist class, which were conquests of the workers and peasants during the opening years of the Russian revolution, and the counterrevolutionary policies of the privileged social caste. Only by doing so could working people around the world know what they should do to defend the Soviet Union against impending military attack (which came with imperialist Germany's invasion in June 1941, less than a year after the final items in this collection were written).

The underlying cause of World War II was the rivalry among the competing capitalist ruling families of the imperialist countries, Trotsky explained. A manifesto on the war drafted by Trotsky and adopted by the SWP and other revolutionary organizations in May 1940 outlined the tasks of working people as they were dragged into the slaughter by the capitalist rulers. (See *Writings of Leon Trotsky 1939-40*, Pathfinder, 1973, pp.183-222.)

Trotsky's analysis of the economic and social structures of the Soviet Union and the counterrevolutionary character of the Stalinist bureaucracy, which the SWP shared, has been tested by history and confirmed. Moreover, the prognosis that the war would lead to a new wave of working-class revolutions and anticolonial uprisings was also borne out, although in ways that Trotsky and the SWP did not and could not have foreseen.

Despite the Stalin regime's continuing counterrevolutionary course during the war,

the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union successfully beat back the German imperialist invasion. The military turning point came in early 1943 when Soviet resistance broke the siege of Stalingrad. The victories of Soviet working people, won at great human and material cost, not only defended the conquests of the October revolution and prevented the restoration of capitalism and imperialist domination in the Soviet Union. They also gave a powerful impulse to anticolonial and other national liberation struggles throughout Africa, Asia, the Pacific, and the Caribbean. And capitalist property relations were overturned in the late 1940s and early 1950s in Yugoslavia, elsewhere in Eastern and Central Europe, North Korea, China, and then North Vietnam.

The extension of the socialist revolution, however, occurred under the domination of Stalinist, not revolutionary, leadership. Moreover, the strength of Stalinism in the workers' movement in Western Europe, especially France and Italy, blocked any chance for socialist victories in a major imperialist power. Thus, the revolutionary advances impelled by the triumph of Soviet working people over imperialist aggression did not "inevitably lead to the overthrow of the bureaucracy in the USSR and regeneration of Soviet democracy," as Trotsky had anticipated. These advances did not result in a political revolution that restored power to the Soviet working class under the leadership of a renewed communist party.

In Trotsky's 1936 book, *The Revolution*



A contingent of workers during November 1989 protests in Czechoslovakia. The momentous changes in Eastern Europe and Soviet Union are stimulating interest and discussion among working people, students, and others around world.

Betrayed: What Is the Soviet Union and Where Is It Going? (Pathfinder, 1972), which is an essential complement to *In Defense of Marxism*, he based his prognosis of a political revolution in the Soviet Union on the communist consciousness that still existed among tens of thousands of workers who had gone through the October Revolution or had been deeply influenced by its revolutionary leadership.

In the decades since, however, this political consciousness has eroded so much under the stultifying conditions imposed by the Stalinist regimes that today there is no communist working-class vanguard in the Soviet Union or anywhere in Central or Eastern Europe. Instead, there has been a sharp break in continuity with the rich communist traditions of the early Soviet government under

Continued on Page 16

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U.S. government's inaction on AIDS worsens health crisis

BY PETER THIERJUNG

Six federal studies and more than 50 congressional oversight hearings during the last decade have all arrived at conclusions similar to those reported by the U.S. National Commission on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome to President George Bush in April.

"A lack of clear definition of government roles at all levels," the report said, "has hampered our national ability to organize health-care services, to recruit and train human services personnel, to provide housing for the sick, to provide effective AIDS education and prevention programs, to provide coordinated, comprehensive substance abuse treatment and prevention, and to develop sufficient monies to finance all these efforts. All across the country there is a cry for leadership from the federal government."

It was the second report to the president by the commission. The first, issued in December 1989, warned that "there is a dangerous, perhaps even growing, complacency" toward the spread of AIDS and urged that the federal government take immediate action to meet the crisis.

The commission first met in August 1989, a full seven months after the deadline set by law. The panel was held up by the Bush administration's delay in appointing its members.

The commission is also the federal government's second on AIDS. The first was set up in 1987 by Ronald Reagan's administration, responding to public pressure after AIDS had already claimed 24,070 lives. It was set up some six years after AIDS was first recognized as an illness.

The Reagan panel was plagued by understaffing and efforts by capitalist politicians to manipulate the public health issue to bolster attacks on democratic rights. It took more than 10 months, 43 hearings and site visits with 800 witnesses and 17,000 pages of testimony to produce a report and 579 proposals that have largely been ignored.

Gov't action could have saved lives

In 1986 the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences issued a 390-page report calling on the government to immediately begin spending more than \$2 billion a year in research and education to stem the spread of AIDS. Action taken then might have saved thousands of lives and could have helped stave off the massive medical and social crisis now being triggered by the disease's spread.

A survey published last year in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* showed that budget cuts, inadequate government-financed Medicaid, the lack of any health insurance for tens of millions of working-class families, and the rising AIDS case load are pushing the country's public hospital system to the verge of collapse.

The problem is a concentrated one. Thirteen of the country's largest cities have 55 percent of all reported AIDS cases, and 5 percent of the country's hospitals care for half of all AIDS patients. For example, more than 27 percent of the beds in New York's main public hospital, Bellevue, are occupied by AIDS patients.

Legislative bills allocating as much as \$3 billion to \$4 billion are now pending in the U.S. Congress. They have been earmarked to provide emergency relief to cities hardest hit by AIDS and are aimed at preventing a collapse of the country's public health system. The bills are not the national plan needed to advance the fight against the spread of AIDS.

Bush administration officials say they are opposed to the legislation, asserting that it is costly and is limited to a single disease.

The federal government's failure to take effective public health measures has worsened the impact of other problems in confronting the spread of AIDS as well. These include:

- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration bureaucracy has hampered and delayed the development of effective drug treatments, vaccines, and a cure for AIDS. The agency has also been riddled by scandals and conflicts of interest involving kick-backs from

the drug industry.

- Interagency rivalries and competition for government and foundation funding have prevented the exchange of vital information among scientists and doctors necessary to advance AIDS research and treatment.

- Drug companies taking advantage of AIDS patients' desperation have padded their profit margins on available drugs.

Burroughs-Wellcome Co., the sole producer of AZT — a treatment that has inhibited the development of full-blown AIDS in many people infected by the virus — reaps a 70 percent to 80 percent profit on the drug. A year's treatment with AZT can cost \$7,000 or more.

A similar situation exists for those who cannot tolerate the toxic side effects of AZT and need other types of drugs. A nutritional supplement for AIDS patients suffering from extreme weight loss is \$500 a day, or more than \$180,000 a year. Monthly treatments with pentamidine, a drug shown effective in treating a pneumonia that AIDS patients are susceptible to, costs \$1,200 to \$2,100 a year.

- Government programs have failed to meet the rising spread of venereal diseases, like syphilis and gonorrhea, that cause open sores, facilitating the transmission of the AIDS virus. Syphilis has risen to its highest rate in 40 years, and young people are considered to be at particular risk because of lack of education about the disease.

- Inadequate government funding has limited drug-abuse treatment programs for those with intravenous drug addictions. In New York today, treatment is available for about 35,000 of the city's estimated 250,000 IV drug users. About 30,000 of those in the United States diagnosed with AIDS are IV drug users who shared needles infected by others.

Blood bank's policy doomed thousands

Testimony by blood specialists before the U.S. Congress July 13 confirmed that thousands of people contracted the AIDS virus in the early 1980s through blood transfusions and injected blood products.

"Most of these tragedies could have been avoided," said Dr. Marcus Conant of the University of California Medical Center in San Francisco. As many as 15,000 people, many of them hemophiliacs, were infected with the AIDS virus by the time the test for the virus was made available in March 1985, he said.

Of the country's 20,000 hemophiliacs, 1,424 cases of AIDS have been reported and 867 had already died by the end of March, according to the National Hemophilia Foundation. Studies indicate that prior to 1985 close to half of all hemophiliacs became infected with the virus. They contracted the virus from blood-clotting products injected intravenously and made from donated blood.

Hemophiliacs, who are virtually all males because of the genetics of this inherited disease, lack blood factors that cause clotting. Without these factors, they suffer repeated bleeding episodes, especially in joints, that can have crippling effects.

Blood clotting factors developed in the early 1970s liberated them from the worst effects of the disease. Their lives were radically changed as it became possible for them to work regular jobs, attend school without missing much classroom time, and live independent lives.

About half of all hemophiliacs need regular injections of clotting factors, in many cases weekly or every other week. Because of the frequent injections, and because clotting factor is made from the blood of many different donors, hemophiliacs had a high chance of being infected with the AIDS virus prior to the start of testing in 1985.

Conant and others told the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Investigations Subcommittee that information about AIDS being transmission through blood transfusion was known in mid-1981, but the Food and Drug Administration refused to act on this information.

Blood banks ignored the information or launched angry denials that a threat to the



Impact Visuals/Tom McKitterick
New York demonstration demanding health care for people with AIDS, held last March. New figures show that there is one AIDS death in the United States every 12 minutes.

- Insurance companies are making it increasingly difficult for people with AIDS and those suspected of being infected with the AIDS virus to get and keep coverage for health, disability, and life insurance. One Los Angeles insurer limited AIDS coverage to \$10,000 a case, while allowing up to \$1 million for cancer, heart disease, and other

life-threatening illnesses.

- Of the 600,000 doctors in the United States, only 2,000 are listed as accepting referrals from the Physician's Association for Care. Homophobia, fear of infection, and unwillingness to care for patients who cannot afford treatment have contributed to doctors avoiding AIDS patients.

blood supply even existed. Tests designed to discover other blood-borne viruses were known to be reliable in detecting the AIDS virus prior to 1985, but their use was rejected by blood-donor institutions because of the expense and time required.

The New York Blood Center rejected testing proposed by the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta in January 1983 because of an anticipated \$5 million price tag, according to Randy Shilts in his book *And the Band Played On*.

Despite its "not-for-profit" tax status and its reliance on voluntary blood donors, the blood-banking industry is a billion-dollar-a-year business. The not-for-profit label is misleading because these companies function by the laws of the capitalist market that impose cost-cutting measures and drives for stepped-up productivity to increase assets and income.

The blood bank arm of the American Red Cross alone reported revenues of \$535 million in 1988 — which would make it No. 464 in the Fortune 500 list of the largest industrial corporations in the United States if it were a "for-profit" entity.

Although the organization reported a net loss for 1988 of almost \$25 million, its net assets totaled more than \$188 million. Of that amount \$77 million is tied up in property, equipment, and other inventory that the Red Cross claims could not be converted to cash without hampering operations.

But the rest is in cash, investments, and accounts receivable. Advocates of those infected with AIDS through blood transfusions or injected blood products say the finances of the Red Cross Blood Services division are proof that the blood banks earn "unconscionable" profits. — P.T.

The spread of AIDS in the U.S.

By the end of May more than 132,000 cases of AIDS had been diagnosed in the United States since 1981. From June 1988 through May 1989, 32,047 new cases were reported. In the same period from 1989 to 1990, 37,619 cases were reported. Sixty-one percent of those who had developed AIDS over the last 10 years have died — more than 84,000 people.

Scientists and researchers with the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta estimate that more than a million people have been infected with and are carrying the AIDS virus. Of these 390,000 to 480,000 will have been diagnosed as having developed AIDS by the end of 1993.

The spread of AIDS is not affecting every section of society equally, nor will it. The June 27 *Militant* article "AIDS spread in the U.S. — a shift that spells disaster for the poor" provided information showing the shifts in the spread of AIDS in the United States. It explained

that the way the AIDS virus is spread as well as the social conditions in better-off sections of society, limit who will be infected, develop the disease, and die.

AIDS is now hitting the poorest and most oppressed, particularly the Black and Latino communities, hardest. It recently became the leading cause of death for Black women between the ages 15 and 44. It is the leading factor in the growing gap in life expectancy between Blacks and whites. Among homeless people in New York City, which some government agencies estimate as high as 70,000, from 20 percent to 30 percent are infected with the AIDS virus.

Blacks, who are 13 percent of the U.S. population, constitute 28 percent of all AIDS cases. Latinos make up 8 percent of the population and are 15 percent of all AIDS cases. Together Blacks and Latinos account for 43 percent of those with AIDS. In 1987 they were 38 percent of all AIDS cases.

Nicaragua's Sandinista Front reassesses its policies from early years of revolution

BY SUSAN APSTEIN

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — The Sandinista National Liberation Front has published a major document assessing the reasons for its defeat in the February elections and mapping a strategy to win the presidential race in 1996. The resolution was approved by a June 17 meeting in the town of El Crucero of several hundred party leaders and elected delegates.

That gathering issued a call for the First Congress of the FSLN to take place in February 1991. The first convention of the party to be held, it will reevaluate the Historic Program, published by the Sandinista Front in 1969, decide the party's organizational structure, and elect a leadership.

Published in a four-part series in the FSLN daily *Barricada*, the El Crucero resolution also appears in the July 14, 1990, issue of the English-language biweekly *Barricada Internacional*.

The document presents the FSLN leadership's view of international developments over the past 11 years, including the impact on the revolution of the U.S.-sponsored contra war against Nicaragua and the crises of the Eastern European regimes. The FSLN also examines errors it thinks were made by the FSLN-led government in implementing its policies and presents a platform of political demands for the coming period.

A major question taken up in Part I of the document is a reassessment of the anticapitalist course the FSLN pursued in the early years of the revolution, including some of the programs and policies that most clearly marked the revolutionary character of the government at that time.

Workers' and farmers' government

In the revolution that triumphed in 1979, Nicaraguan workers and peasants, led by the FSLN, seized political power from the tyranny of landlords and big businessmen headed by dictator Anastasio Somoza. They established a government of workers and farmers.

As the El Crucero document explains, this government began to "implement a course that was expressly anticapitalist," including a broad program of "profound changes benefiting working people."

The FSLN-led government carried out expropriations and other measures against capitalist property and social prerogatives. It began a radical agrarian reform program,

including confiscation of land from capitalist farmers and distribution of land to poor peasants.

Nicaraguan working people were armed, trained, and organized on a mass scale to fight to defend the revolutionary power. In addition to building a new, revolutionary army, popular militias began to be formed.

Early government policies sought to provide certain basic commodities at subsidized prices to every Nicaraguan through rationing.

Tens of thousands of Nicaraguans participated in health brigades, carrying out massive vaccination and other preventive health measures and health education programs throughout the country. Thousands of high school-age youth from the cities and others taught peasants in remote areas of the country to read in a literacy drive that also reached into factories and workplaces and strengthened the revolutionary alliance of workers and farmers.

By the second half of the 1980s, the FSLN-led government had retreated from its anticapitalist course. In the name of maintaining national unity in the face of the U.S.-sponsored contra war, it began to subordinate the interests of workers and peasants to seeking a long-term social pact with the large landowners and capitalists. This course was deepened following the war as FSLN leaders argued that the economy could only be rebuilt through reliance on the capitalist market.

As the resolution states, "The model we chose as a banner and began to carry out, of socialist orientation, in practice was in contradiction with a program of reconstruction

and national unity."

The problem with some of the government's anticapitalist policies, the resolution argues, is that these "tended to drive some social sectors away from the revolution."

These sectors "formed a bloc of disagreement, with real means of destabilizing the government's course." The bloc was made up of "Somozas, anti-Sandinista businessmen, landowners and rich peasants, indigenous communities of the Caribbean Coast manipulated by the CIA, influential sectors of the Catholic church, parties and organizations of the traditional right, and backward layers — in political terms — both of the country and the city."

In addition, the FSLN itself was "politically worn down" by its efforts to "defend the revolutionary state and support its actions," the document maintains.

It lists the following as among efforts that tired out party activists: "recruitment to military service, organizing brigades to carry out productive tasks, organization of public health mobilizations, the literacy drive, the organization of militias and reserve battalions, and the establishment of a system of distribution with ration cards."

The agrarian reform is included among government policies that "tended to drive some sectors away." The resolution argues that the government's policy of land confiscation was carried out "indiscriminately among big, medium, and even some small private producers" during the first phase of the agrarian reform, producing "negative effects."

Rationing is another policy questioned in

the resolution. "The sale of products through rationing was introduced to defend workers' real wages, but was irritating and unfavorable to the informal [merchant] sector of the economy," the document argues.

New government: 'Pro-U.S., bourgeois'

The latter portion of the resolution takes up the nature of the current regime, describing it as a "pro-U.S., bourgeois government."

The FSLN "sets itself the task of resuming governmental power through the electoral road in 1996," according to the document.

It outlines a line of march for the party as a parliamentary opposition in pursuit of that goal, while the FSLN forms a bloc with President Violeta Chamorro's forces.

The Chamorro forces "represent a sector of reformist capital" that "wants to avoid a precipitous confrontation with the Sandinista Front," the resolution maintains.

At the same time, a "regroupment of counterrevolutionary forces aspires to . . . reestablish the old [Somoza] regime." What they accomplish will depend on "the relationship of forces in the conflict: democratic and revolutionary forces on one hand against those who want a return to the past of Somoza."

The resolution argues the importance of the continued participation of the FSLN in many government positions and as the majority of commanders in the army and police.

"The legitimate presence of the FSLN in various state structures and government enterprises is a factor of equilibrium in the face of onslaughts by the extreme right," it states.

Carrión: 'Historic Program exhausted'

BY SUSAN APSTEIN

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — In preparation for a party convention to be held in February 1991, leaders of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) have initiated a public discussion on what the party's program should be.

The convention will specifically reevaluate the FSLN's Historic Program. Published in 1969, this program presented a series of revolutionary, democratic, and anti-imperialist demands that were to mobilize workers and peasants over the next 10 years in a battle to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictatorship of

Anastasio Somoza.

In the initial years after the revolution triumphed in 1979, establishing a government in the interests of workers and peasants, the Sandinista Front sought to implement aspects of the Historic Program. This included distributing land to a portion of the country's landless peasants and farm workers. At the heart of the current discussion are questions as to whether it was correct for the FSLN to have done so.

FSLN leader Luis Carrión took up some of the questions under discussion in an interview in the June 20 issue of the FSLN daily *Barricada*. Carrión is one of three members of the Executive Committee of the party's National Directorate.

Offering reasons why the FSLN lost elections in February to the U.S. government-backed National Opposition Union, Carrión states:

"The FSLN functioned as a kind of ministry of mobilization of a government that started trying to drive forward a revolutionary program that many of the population wasn't necessarily in agreement with."

A key factor, the FSLN leader asserts, was lack of support for the revolution among the peasantry.

Contras become 'peasant movement'

Carrión says that the U.S.-financed contra army that fought for nine years to overthrow the FSLN-led government "in the end became a peasant movement."

"A succession of [former dictator Anastasio Somoza's] National Guardsmen and bourgeois politicians who tried to establish themselves as the top political leadership," he continues, "left over time, and what remained in the end was clearly a peasant movement."

"This shows that at a certain point the alliance of the revolution with an important sector of the peasantry was broken," he concludes. The FSLN leader states that "the revolution was eminently urban — in its base of support and in the immense majority of its leadership — triumphing through an insurrection that was decided in the cities." This caused "a tendency for a number of years to grant privilege to the interests of the urban population to the detriment of the peasants."

He cites as an example of such policies "the establishment of road checkpoints to guarantee, through coercion, that the peasants turn over their products to the state at

the official price. The objective was to sell those products cheaply to the population of the cities, especially wage workers."

The government's program of land distribution, according to Carrión, was also unpopular among the peasants.

"Some sectors felt their claims were satisfied by the agrarian reform. But others," he argues, "felt threatened, even those who had no land, especially along the agricultural frontier, in areas where there is more cattle ranching."

'Aspired to become big landowners'

Carrión says these peasants felt threatened "basically for ideological reasons. Many of them aspired to become landowners like those affected by the agrarian reform. They interpreted the agrarian reform as depriving them of the opportunity to one day become big property owners."

Another factor, according to Carrión, was "the confrontation between the revolutionary government and leaders of the Catholic church and some Protestant churches." These churches worked among broad sectors in the countryside, he said, "where the weight of religion is much greater than in the urban sectors and the Pacific region in general."

Among the many questions the February convention of the party will take up, Carrión explains, are "what kind of party the FSLN should be under the new political conditions, what its strategy should be, and its program for the future."

"When I say program," Carrión says, "I mean that the Historic Program of the FSLN has basically been exhausted, carried out, and that it's no longer a sufficient guide for the political activity of the Sandinista Front."

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Africa Called, Cuba Answered. Video showing of *Cuba and Angola: Response to the South African Escalation* about March 1988 battle of Cuito Cuanavale, Angola. Sun., Aug. 5. Video,

3 p.m.; dinner, 5 p.m. 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd floor. Donations: video, \$2.50; dinner and video, \$5. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

MARYLAND

Baltimore
Socialist Campaign Open House. Meet the 1990 Socialist Workers Party candidates for Maryland statewide offices. Sat., Aug. 4, 2-4 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Tel: (301) 235-0014.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston
The U.S. Has Lost the Cold War: The Meaning of the Events in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Speaker: Andrea Morell, member National Committee Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Aug. 4, 7:30 p.m. 605 Massachusetts Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

PENNSYLVANIA

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 Class 2: Fri., Aug. 17, 7 p.m. 6566, boul. Saint-Laurent.
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Vancouver
 Class 2: Sun., Aug. 19, 7 p.m. 1053 Kingsway, Suite 102. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

Toronto
 Class 1: Sat., Aug. 4, 4 p.m. Class 2:

* * *

Date and times for classes 3, 4, and 5 in the three cities to be announced.

Local 630, attended British miners' union conference. Sun., Aug. 5, 7:30 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

CANADA

Montréal
Solidarity with the Struggle of Native People for Sovereignty and Self-government. Stop the Police Repression. Speaker: Beverly Bernardo, *Militant* reporter who spent time behind the Mohawk barricades at Oka. Sat., Aug. 4, 7:30 p.m., 6566, boul. Saint-Laurent. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Forum Lutte Ouvrière. Tel: (514) 273-2503.

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Celebrate Cuba's National Holiday with the Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association. Featuring Marimba in concert with Jesus Morales from Cuba. Fri., Aug. 3, 7 p.m. Winchevsky Centre, 585 Cranbrooke Ave. Telephone for tickets at (416) 967-5603, 964-3388, or 656-3171.

'In Defense of Marxism': an essential work

Continued from Page 13
 Lenin's leadership and the first five years of the Communist International.

Workers throughout Eastern and Central Europe, however, are regaining political room to organize and become involved in politics. They are seeking to fight back against attacks on their economic and social conquests as the regimes — new and old — in all these countries increase reliance on capitalist methods and try to forge closer ties to the imperialist ruling classes of Western Europe, North America, and Japan. It is through struggles like these that working people from Berlin to the Pacific coast of the Soviet Union will link up with fights by other workers and farmers the world over, test alternative strategies and ideas, and begin anew the building of proletarian communist leaderships.

* * *

The political crisis in the Socialist Workers Party discussed by Trotsky in these pages was precipitated by the signing of the "non-aggression" pact between the governments of the Soviet Union and Germany (the Stalin-Hitler Pact) on Aug. 22, 1939, and the outbreak of war a week later with the invasion of Poland by German imperialism. A substantial minority in the SWP leadership and membership concluded that there was no longer anything progressive in the Soviet Union to defend. This panicky turning away from historic conquests of the international workers' movement reflected a more fundamental retreat from any perspective of building a revolutionary proletarian party in the United States and worldwide.

For several years, Trotsky had been urging the SWP to adopt an "orientation of the whole party toward factory work" and to deepen its active involvement in the industrial trade

unions. He called for systematic political activity among workers who are Black. "They are convoked by the historic development to become a vanguard of the working class," Trotsky said. His views on these questions can be found in *Background to "The Struggle for a Proletarian Party"* and *Leon Trotsky on Black Nationalism and Self-Determination*, both published by Pathfinder.

Many questions of communist leadership and party building that arose in the 1939-40 debate were also addressed in *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party* (Pathfinder, 1972) by James P. Cannon, SWP national secretary at the time. This book remains a valuable companion volume to *In Defense of Marxism* and should be studied along with it.

For a broader picture of the effort to forge a party of the working-class vanguard in the United States, Pathfinder's four-volume series on the struggle to organize the Teamsters union in the Midwest is especially useful: *Teamster Rebellion*, *Teamster Power*, *Teamster Politics*, and *Teamster Bureaucracy*. The series was written by Farrell Dobbs, a prominent leader of the Teamster organizing drives in the 1930s who later served as the SWP's national secretary. Dobbs describes the hard-fought labor battles through which an entire layer of working-class fighters learned how to carry out serious revolutionary work in the trade unions and were won to socialism. The impact of the Teamsters' experience on the evolution and development of the forces that founded the SWP was deeply felt in the 1939-40 struggle, in which the proletarian character of the party was challenged and successfully defended.

During the period of capitalist expansion following World War II, the labor movement was pushed out of the center of politics in the United States. This began to change as the 1974-75 international recession, the

deepest since 1937, registered the scope of the economic crisis facing the capitalist rulers. To bolster declining profit rates, employers began squeezing more out of working people and launched an assault on the unions.

Labor's resistance to this assault, which has gone through ups and downs, has moved the unions back into a central place in U.S. and world politics. Moreover, the unions have been deeply affected by the conquests of social and political battles of recent decades (the struggle for Black rights, the anti-Vietnam war movement, fights for women's rights, etc.) and by the changing composition of the working class in the United States (growing numbers of immigrant workers, the increasing percentage of women).

In response, the Socialist Workers Party entered a new stage of its evolution by turning its face and activity to work in the industrial trade unions. The 1978 report by Jack Barnes for the SWP National Committee that adopted this perspective explained that this turn was necessary to "carry forward the basic proletarian orientation the party has had for decades." That report and other documents outlining a course to build a proletarian party in the closing decades of the twentieth century are contained in *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*, published by Pathfinder in 1981.

* * *

In Defense of Marxism was first published in 1942 with an introduction by George Novack and Joseph Hansen, two leaders of the SWP. Hansen was one of Trotsky's secretaries in Mexico during much of the time the 1939-40 discussion in the SWP was taking place. Novack and Hansen updated their introduction for the second edition of the book in 1973.

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FROM PATHFINDER



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This volume contains a lively 1954 debate over the relation of the marketing of cosmetics and fashions to the exploitation of women. It discusses how the standards of beauty and view toward work are determined in capitalist society. 144 pp. \$11.95

Available at Pathfinder bookstores (see directory on page 16) or from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Send \$1 for shipping and handling.

—THE GREAT SOCIETY—

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four of 10 reasons offered by TV personality David Letterman on why you should fly Eastern: the likelihood of getting killed on an Eastern plane is the same whether you're innocent or not; pilots point out interesting landmarks when not yelling Mayday; Eastern aircraft always get emergency landing priority; you get emotional greetings from loved ones even after the most routine flight.

Plain talk — "The international security environment is in the midst of changing from a bipolar stance to a multipolar one with polycentric dimensions." — Marine Corps Gen. Alfred Gray explaining that with the end of the Cold War the

marines would focus on smaller, local confrontations.

Fax countdown? — The U.S. Air Force is buying 173 fax machines at \$425,000 each. That does include "war-readiness spare kits." The Pentagon says the machines will fax in extreme heat or cold, function after being submerged in water, and will withstand a nuclear blast.

The equitable society — In the past decade, workers' income increased a reported 66 percent, 5 percent behind an inflation rate of 71 percent. In the same period, the pay of top corporate execs jumped 149 percent, better than double the

inflation rate. They now "earn" an average \$289,000 a year.

To continue . . . — The gap between rich and poor doubled in the past decade. In 1980 the richest 1 percent of the country received half as much as the bottom 40 percent. Now the income of the top 1 percent nearly equals the income of the bottom 40 percent.

Check it out — Last year D. Porthault & Co. sold a set of linen bedsheets trimmed with antique lace for \$45,000. But, from the catalog, you can order a set of sheets in French voile with satin trim for \$15,000. Also, towels and curtains plus covers for corporate jet bunks and for pet baskets.

City planning — Some 160 million gallons of raw sewage poured into New York waters after an explosion and fire at a city sewage treatment plant. With a rated capacity of 250 million gallons a day, the plant has for years been handling 350 million gallons. New backup equipment is expected in 1996.

What's the harm — The army is burning stockpiles of nerve and mustard gas and other chemical weapons in a new incinerator on Johnston Atoll in the South Pacific. If it works, incinerators will be built on eight sites in the United States. It's all quite safe, but when visitors arrive they're issued gas masks and a syringe of nerve gas antidote.

Reba Hansen: part of our revolutionary continuity

Continued from Page 9

times in her life. I can remember her excitement with the turn to industry, the development of the Nicaraguan revolution, and how seriously she studied and discussed 'Their Trotsky and Ours,' wholeheartedly agreeing with the clarification it made for the communist movement.

"Reba never lived in the past, and while she held her memories dear, especially of Joe, she always looked ahead to the fights in the world, the advances being made by the party, and how she could be a part of that fight."

Reba was a person who had many interests to share, Mary-Alice Waters noted. "I will always think of her as an artist whose talents were expressed in many ways, both in her work and in the way she relaxed." Her interests, many of which she shared with Joe, shaded off into science on one side and into crafts and the perfecting of craft on the other — everything from geology and horticulture to dress-making, crocheting, stone polishing, and jewelry making. She enjoyed the creativity of cooking, and she was a mechanic leg-

endary for her skills in repairing recalcitrant typewriters and mimeo machines.

A final contribution

Reba faced a difficult adjustment following the death of her life-long companion in 1979. Joe's death, Barnes noted, was followed closely by the death of Reba's youngest brother, the victim of leukemia almost certainly caused by radioactive fallout from the U.S. government's open-air nuclear testing in Nevada during the 1950s. Several other close friends and relatives died within a very short period.

At the same time, she found herself parting company with a number of her contemporaries in the party who had turned their back on the work of the party as it responded to new openings in the working class at the end of the 1970s. Reba, to the contrary, reacted with enthusiasm to the new possibilities for building industrial fractions in the working class, to the victory of the Grenada revolution, the Nicaraguan revolution, the new advances in Cuba, and all the opportunities and challenges these developments offered.

After living for a few years in Salt Lake following Joe's death — during which she was an active builder of the Salt Lake City branch — Reba returned to New York where she thought she could make a greater contribution by resuming her responsibilities for the library. She tackled the disorganization that had crept in during her absence, when there was no full-time librarian, and trans-

formed the place.

In particular, she took on the task of organizing one of the most valuable archives in the workers' movement. Over many decades the library had accumulated a massive collection of the publications of revolutionary parties that were part of the Fourth International and its predecessors — the continuity of the Bolshevik party and Communist International. This collection had become so large that the library could no longer maintain and preserve it with the resources available.

Reba took on the job of organizing this material and initiating the effort to locate a major library that did have the resources to catalog and microfilm it so it could be preserved for future generations and easily used by present ones. This was a task of several years that Reba completed shortly before her final illness this year removed her from day-to-day work.

"Reba considered this to be her great final accomplishment," Waters noted, "because she understood the historical importance of this material." She described it as a weapon necessary for struggle, not simply a collection.

Reba Hansen, Barnes noted in closing his remarks, was a woman "who literally had no prejudices."

Her example, her scope, her consistency, and her contributions to advancing the working class along its historic line of march are an irreplaceable part of our continuity.

Mohawks continue their struggle

Continued from front page

ganda war is aimed at sowing divisions among Native peoples, undercutting their support among working people across Canada, and establishing the basis for a further cop attack.

The massive cop buildup, combined with inflammatory statements by government leaders, encouraged racist mobilizations against the Mohawks in Chateaugay to the west of Kahnawake in the first two weeks of the siege, and more recently in Oka.

However, the Mohawks' continued resistance to government and cop attacks is also inspiring unprecedented unity among Native people and growing support from non-Native organizations — including trade unions. The

Labour Congress, which represents 2.2 million workers across Canada — pledged labor's support and called on the federal and Québec officials "to get armed police off Indian land. It's not ever going to be a golf course. It's Mohawk land."

The crowd rose to its feet when Elijah Harper, the Native member of the Manitoba provincial legislature who fought the Meech Lake constitutional accord, was introduced. Harper explained that the unanimity of Native people in opposing the proposed constitutional amendment, which ignored Native rights, assured its defeat. "With that kind of unity we can move mountains," he said.

National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) President Judy Rebick, New Democratic Party leader Audrey McLaughlin, and Herb Gray, a leader of the federal Liberal Party, also spoke, as did many other Native leaders.

Peter Mahlangu, the representative of the African National Congress of South Africa in Canada, explained that ANC leader Nelson Mandela is planning to return to North America to get to know and make links with the Native struggle.

In Montréal on July 29, some 1,500 people who marched to protest police violence against gays and lesbians also condemned recent cop attacks on Blacks and the Mohawks.

Solidarity blockades

Solidarity blockades and demonstrations continue to take place daily from Nova Scotia to the Yukon. Last week in Saskatchewan there were rallies of 400 in Saskatoon and 150 in Prince Albert; Métis Native people blockaded a highway in Batoche, the site of the 1885 battle where the Canadian army crushed the Métis fighting for their land and self-government.

In British Columbia there are approximately 15 different blockades set up by Native bands across the province. The Mohawks' struggle in Québec has inspired Natives there to press their own land claims, which number in the hundreds. For the first time a premier of British Columbia was forced to meet with Natives to seriously discuss their claims. Premier William Vander Zalm had to fly by helicopter to Lilloet to meet with Seton Indians blockading a railway line.

The Mohawks are also trying to win international support. On July 27 Jean Claude Fouque, secretary-general of the International Federation of Human Rights, arrived in Oka to investigate complaints of human rights violations. He will make a report to the United Nations. On July 30 the UN Working Group on Indigenous Peoples will hold a hearing on the Mohawks' demands.

—10 AND 25 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEETLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

Aug. 8, 1980

ST. GEORGE'S, Grenada — One day during his week-long visit here in early July, Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Andrew Pulley stopped to eat at the Peppers snack bar. A young woman in the kitchen smiled, waved, and explained she had met Pulley a few days earlier at a trade union seminar.

"What a difference from the United States!" Pulley said later. "You'd never expect to find a union militant at McDonald's." But in Grenada, where more than 80 percent of the work force is organized, it is not so surprising.

This massive unionization is one result of the island's March 1979 revolution. After dictator Eric Gairy was thrown out, workers were free to join the unions of their choice. Employers who resisted organizing drives faced heavy fines or imprisonment. As Grenadians would say, the bosses were put under heavy manners.

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interests of the Working People

Aug. 9, 1965

The following is an excerpt of an article by Clifton DeBerry, SWP candidate for president in 1964.

The national conventions of the NAACP and CORE [Congress of Racial Equality] that were held recently reminded me of a

popular cigarette commercial: some are too harsh, others are too mild, but one has the taste that's just right. The one that's just right is President Lyndon (pardon my past mistakes) Johnson.

The line adopted at these conventions by the respectable civil rights leaders, over some opposition from the ranks, was projected by Bayard Rustin in the February issue of *Commentary* magazine. In it Rustin expresses what must be done by the respectable Negro leaders to keep the Negro masses in check. He proposes: one, that they form a Negro elite; two, they reaffirm their adherence to the principles of nonviolence; three, they get and keep the masses out of the streets and into capitalist party politics, directly or indirectly. His program boils down to subservience to Johnson and the capitalist power structure.

The dependence of the Negro leaders on Johnson and the Democratic Party is most blatant and disgusting in the field of foreign policy. The NAACP ducked the question of the Vietnam War at its convention. The CORE delegates at first took a stand against the war, but reversed themselves after James Farmer made a plea for them to do so.

This program of dependence on the capitalist power structure, most clearly put forward by Rustin, is in direct contrast to the program outlined by Malcolm X. He flatly stated that no one gives anyone their freedom. They must fight for it.

Malcolm said that the U.S. government is a racist government. It breeds, perpetuates, and maintains racism. It is not willing or able to protect the lives and rights of the Negro people, and therefore the Negro people must use any means necessary to fight for their rights and defend themselves from racist attacks.

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AIDS and criminal culpability

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) has claimed the lives of some 84,000 people over the last decade.

U.S. government officials have known since 1981 how the AIDS virus is transmitted and that it is not casually contagious. But an effective national plan of public health measures to save lives and provide care for people with AIDS has yet to be implemented.

The spread of AIDS did not just happen. It was and is being allowed to happen. And there is no excuse for it. In the wealthiest capitalist country in the world — with the most sophisticated medicine and most extensive public health system — substantial steps could and should have been taken to limit the syndrome's spread and to eliminate it.

When gay men were the primary AIDS fatalities in the early 1980s, the government ignored it. In the mid-1980s, when AIDS deaths numbered in the tens of thousands and the syndrome began to shift beyond this section of society, public concern started to mount and pressure developed for the government to act.

A hysterical campaign by the capitalist media then played on the public's fears and did little to tell the truth about AIDS. It stirred up antigay bigotry and racism, and aimed to reinforce divisions among working people. Gays, intravenous drug users, immigrants, Haitians, the homeless, prisoners, prostitutes, and others — the most marginalized layers of society — have been scapegoated.

The lie that AIDS would spread indiscriminately was consciously used by the White House, Congress, and politicians from both the Democratic and Republican parties to promote police measures in the name of fighting AIDS. Mandatory AIDS testing was imposed on GIs, immigrants seeking residency, and prisoners. Visitors from other coun-

tries have been banned from entering the United States if they are infected or have AIDS.

The U.S. government must also bear the blame for the profit-gouging drug companies that have robbed desperate people, insurance conglomerates that won't cover people they consider at risk for AIDS, and a medical system that doesn't provide adequate care.

The deliberate decision by blood banks not to test donated blood for the AIDS virus until 1985, even though the means existed, condemned close to half of all hemophiliacs in the United States to AIDS. And the U.S. Food and Drug Administration was fully complicit in this act of genocide.

The AIDS pandemic predicted by some has not materialized. The hysteria has given way to complacency by the U.S. rulers, their representatives, and better-off sections of society that have been least affected by the spread of AIDS.

In capitalist society all life is not equal. If the billionaire U.S. ruling families or just the middle class had been ravaged by AIDS, the government's response would have been the opposite.

But the people now dying in greater numbers are the poorest sections of the working class, particularly Blacks and Latinos. Gay men remain a large proportion of those dying from AIDS. To the U.S. rulers these people don't deserve to be treated as human beings and they don't care whether these people live or die.

Working people need to champion the rights of those struck by AIDS no matter who they are. We must demand government funding for adequate medical care and for stepping up the research for better treatment and prevention of AIDS. The rulers' complacent attitude now shrouding the spread of AIDS should be forcefully rejected.

U.S. hands off Liberia!

As the regime of Samuel Doe crumbles in Liberia, calls for U.S. military intervention have begun from Washington's imperialist allies. Five European Community ambassadors in Liberia made a special appeal to the U.S. government, urging nations not to "sit idle while one country plunges into anarchy and national suicide."

While the U.S. government maintains it is neutral in the war — claiming neither the government nor the rebel organizations have "any proven democratic credentials," working people and others opposed to U.S. intervention around the world should strongly condemn any moves to send U.S. military forces into the country.

The U.S.-backed Liberian government has responded to the growing insurgency against it with the massacre of villagers and refugees — rejecting calls by religious, union, student, and community organizations that Doe step down. On July 30 government troops burst into a refugee center in a Lutheran church and gunned down 600 men, women, and children.

Since early June Washington has stationed four warships loaded with 2,500 troops off the coast of the West African country. Herman Cohen, U.S. assistant secretary of state for

African affairs, claimed the warships are "ready for an emergency evacuation" of U.S. citizens in Liberia "if necessary."

Washington's domination of Liberia deepened during the decade Doe has been in power. He received some \$500 million in the first five years alone — more money per capita than any other African country. The U.S. rulers, and other imperialist powers, want to make sure they maintain their vast economic and military interests in Liberia and the region.

"I cannot heed the advice to quit the leadership of Liberia because it would introduce a dangerous precedent of outrageous rebellion and instability into the West African region," Doe said in late July.

The Liberian people are fighting to boot out a repressive and undemocratic regime that has been militarily and economically supported by the U.S. government. Washington has shown — in Grenada, Panama, and elsewhere — that when they can get away with it politically, they will intervene militarily in a sovereign country's affairs. Any moves by Washington to do the same in Liberia should be met with protest and condemnation.

Crisis in the banking system

The recent report from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) is further evidence of the vulnerability of the country's banking system, which if it collapses, could precipitate a catastrophic economic crisis. The FDIC is the government body that insures deposits in commercial banks up to \$100,000.

FDIC chairman William Seidman told the Senate Banking Committee that the insurance fund is at its lowest point since it was set up 57 years ago. Seidman predicted that the FDIC could lose as much as \$2 billion this year. This will leave the fund with \$11 billion to insure \$2.7 trillion in assets. By the end of the year the FDIC's loss could leave only 50 to 60 cents for every \$100 it insures.

This year will be the third consecutive year that the fund will post a loss. Seidman blamed this year's loss on the weakening real estate market and the record number of bank failures over the last three years. Already this year more than 112 commercial banks have failed, which is on a par with the failure rates in both 1988 and 1989. In each of those years more than 200 banks crashed.

The deepening difficulties of the commercial banks are unfolding as the crisis of the savings and loan system continues to worsen. The "thrifts," as they are called, have already depleted their deposit insurance. The expected cost to the government for the bailout of the S&Ls runs as high as \$500 billion. The ruling class proposes taking the burden

for paying these costs off the bankers by having the federal government pay them. This will place the burden on the backs of working people who pay the bulk of the taxes.

But this is only part of a worsening economic picture. The corporate debt is staggering as mergers and leveraged buyouts are made with a high ratio of debt to assets. Other financial institutions, such as insurance companies and large stock companies, are beginning to show signs of stress.

Moreover, the massive Third World debt remains a time bomb ticking at the heart of the banking system with no possibility of being paid, or even a medium-term stabilization of the debtor countries. The probability of a default in any one of the major debtor countries, like Mexico, Argentina, or Brazil, undermining the entire world financial system is greater than at any time since the explosion of the Third World debt crisis in the early 1980s.

These are all elements of the deepening crisis of capitalism. And they appear before a recession, which will inevitably lead to more bankruptcies and defaults. The root of the problem facing the capitalists is their inability to stem their falling rate of profit. Their solution is to make working people pay the price for the crises through taxes, cutbacks in social services, unemployment, and attacks on our wages and standard of living.

What will inspire millions to fight for humanity?

BY DOUG JENNESS

In his letter on the facing page, Bronson Rozier responds to the column that appeared in the July 27 issue, "Fight for shorter working day and voluntary labor." The column took up questions Rozier raised in a letter published in the July 20 issue.

The key difference with Rozier is over the goals that are going to inspire and win thousands and then millions of fighters to commit their lives to the struggle for communism. He stresses the vision of leisure time for all in the future socialist society.

I think a different approach is needed — one that appeals to people to look beyond their own individual needs, interests, and lives and to commit themselves to the fight to lift

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up all of humanity. Out of the big class battles that are coming, growing numbers of working people will begin to see the accomplishments that can be made when they dedicate their time, energy, and creative capacities — beyond the work they must do to make a living — in order to join the fight to emancipate humanity from capitalist domination.

When capitalist rule is overturned, working people can use governmental power to fight against poverty, hunger, disease, violence, racial and sexual discrimination, and environmental degradation, as part of the transition to socialist society.

It's joining this fight, not the promise of leisure time many generations hence, that we can take to young workers alienated from capitalist society. Many don't yet see any way forward — and sometimes lash out in individual ways, become demoralized or escape in drugs or alcohol. It's also the appeal we can make to students and other young people headed toward empty lives of money-grubbing or self-indulgence.

We don't know much about what life will be like in communist society, where classes have disappeared, a state no longer exists, and everybody contributes according to their abilities and receives according to their needs.

One thing we can be sure about is that work and leisure will be very different from anything we know or experience in the world today. The view that men and women of the future will have of these activities will develop out of their experiences in constructing a socialist society.

We should not be too quick, however, to assume, as Rozier seems to, that there will be a sharp dichotomy between work and leisure and that it is only during "leisure time" that people will "have time for cultural and personal development." This notion is still mired in the concept of work under capitalist society, which entails workers surrendering a big part of their lives in the form of selling their labor power — their capacity to work and create — to the capitalist exploiters.

It is precisely through unalienated labor in a society free from exploitation that working people will be able to develop culturally and personally.

In an article written in the 1950s and included in the book *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* (Pathfinder: New York, 1986), Evelyn Reed explained, "To cover up their empty, vapid, parasitic existence, the idle rich of capitalist society propagate the notion that the idle life is the 'good life' and the 'beautiful life.'"

"What a mockery this is of the gift of labor," she continued, "the primary creative force of humanity. The truth is, the idle life is the most corrosive and corrupting of all influences upon the mental, moral, physical, and psychological fiber of human beings. Without labor, whether of hand or brain — and these are interdependent — humans rot away."

Reed, who was for many years a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, pointed out, "One of our tasks is to overthrow this bourgeois lie that labor is identical with exploited labor. Another is to restore labor to its rightful place as the most honorable, the most necessary, the most useful and beautiful of all human attributes. In the process we will destroy the split between art and labor."

A decade later Ernesto Che Guevara, one of the central leaders of the Cuban revolution, wrote in a similar vein. He noted that "man truly reaches his full human condition when he produces without being compelled by physical necessity to sell himself as a commodity."

In another article the Marxist leader explained, "Work should be a moral necessity for us. Work should be somewhere we go every morning, every afternoon, or every night, with renewed enthusiasm and interest. We have to learn to extract from work what's interesting, what's creative, to know the tiniest secret of the machine or the work process. . . . Work should always be part of the good life, something exciting, something associated with life's happiest moments, not its burdens. This will be the great result when communist society is achieved in full."

It's this perspective that can inspire new generations to commit their lives to the struggle for a new society where there are no exploiters and exploited.

New film details police cover-up in Puerto Rico

Show of Force, directed by Bruno Barreto. Based on the book *Murder Under Two Flags* by Anne Nelson. Actors Amy Irving, Lou Diamond Phillips, and Robert Duvall.

BY RON RICHARDS

Twelve years ago two supporters of independence for Puerto Rico — Carlos Soto Arriví, 18, and Arnaldo Darío Rosado, 24 — were killed by police on the remote mountaintop of Cerro Maravilla. The police claimed that they died in a shoot-out.

Proving that the official story was a lie required a struggle of almost epic proportions. The process included investiga-

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tive journalism, civil lawsuits, and televised hearings, as well as investigations by both the Puerto Rican and U.S. governments. All were prodded by public pressure.

It took five years for the public to learn that the two young men were savagely beaten and murdered after they had thrown down their weapons and surrendered. The story is far from over but already more than 10 cops have gone to jail on murder or perjury charges.

This case has been documented in two books, *Murder Under Two Flags* by Anne Nelson and *Requiem on Cerro Maravilla* by Manuel Suárez. Brazilian director Bruno Barreto chose the case for his first U.S.-produced motion picture, *Show of Force*.

The film is being talked about a lot in Puerto Rico where people are familiar with the case. Some of the roles in the film are based on people who are prominent in Puerto Rico today. The film is expected to be in the top five for 1990 in this U.S. colony.

The central character of the film is Kate Meléndez played by Amy Irving. Meléndez is a television reporter from the states who is inspired by the memory of her late husband. He was a leader of the Puerto Rican independence movement.

The murders were the result of a police provocateur played by Lou Diamond Phillips. While posing as a pro-in-

dependence activist, he advocated that the movement take up arms against the United States and its colonial government on the island. He provided weapons and vehicles that were used in a series of actions.

The police provocateur was not merely an informant. He led the other two activists into a fatal ambush. The plan had been to capture some nearby communications towers and use them to transmit a political message to the population. Instead the two were outnumbered by a heavily armed police squad. They threw down their weapons and surrendered. They were beaten and then about 15 minutes later murdered.

The key to the case was how many volleys of shots were fired. In the police story there was only one volley. There were no civilian eyewitnesses. Eventually the testimony of a cabbie and a blind man on a picnic proved that there were two rounds of shooting. They could not see the shootings but they were close enough to hear what happened.

To what levels of the U.S. and Puerto Rican governments did the planning and cover-up of the murders extend? This is the central unanswered question in the case today. Was the governor of Puerto Rico involved? What was the role of the Federal Bureau of Investigation? Why did the U.S. Justice Department drop an investigation of the case around the time that Gov. Carlos Romero Barceló endorsed the reelection campaign of then President James Carter?

In real life the Puerto Rican senate plans to convene hearings this summer to try to resolve some of these questions. The U.S. Justice Department has defied a federal court order and has refused to turn over relevant documents to the senate.

In the movie liberty is taken with the proven facts and the FBI is responsible for both the murder and the cover-up. The film has been controversial in Puerto Rico but, interestingly enough, this central political point is not being debated. Many people feel that even if it has not been proven, the FBI was probably responsible for what happened.

The attitude towards the FBI can be seen in the case of Filiberto Ojeda Ríos. Ojeda is one of the central figures in the frame-up of Puerto Rican independence activists in Hartford, Connecticut. When the FBI came to his house in 1985, Ojeda used an Uzi submachine gun to defend himself and his family. The shoot-out delayed his capture for several

hours, during which time more people — including reporters — arrived on the scene.

Eventually Ojeda surrendered, but the presence of more witnesses made it impossible for the police to kill him and lie about it. He was acquitted by a federal jury composed of Puerto Ricans here in San Juan. The jury ruled that his actions were in self-defense.

The film has been controversial in its portrayal of life in Puerto Rico today. In the film everybody lives in beautifully restored stone homes from the Spanish era or in wooden shacks. Not a single concrete building is shown. The extreme poverty depicted in the film exists, but the reality of Puerto Rico is more complex. Many people, including many workers, live in concrete houses or apartment buildings. In this sense the film miseducates viewers.

When the special prosecutor is shown in *jíbaro* (peasant) clothing, many in the audience laughed. In fact most attorneys in Puerto Rico wear suits indistinguishable from attorneys in the United States.

The truth is never exciting enough for Hollywood. Instead of teams of reporters and lawyers picking away at the police story, the film has one heroine who does everything. In the film Meléndez gets threatened, kidnapped, and drugged. In real life journalists were fired and risked their careers but were never physically attacked.

Whatever the specific role of the U.S. government in the Cerro Maravilla case, in a broader sense it is responsible for the murders of Soto and Darío. All of the police on that mountaintop were members of the Intelligence Division. Of all the sections of the Puerto Rican police, this has the closest ties to federal authorities. Many of its members have been trained by the FBI. Additionally, the overall structure of the local government is a byproduct of U.S. colonialism.

The film makes a strong case against the U.S. government's role in Puerto Rico. This case is weakened by defects in the presentation.

Despite its problems, the film is useful in explaining Puerto Rico to its viewers in the United States and other countries as well. If the film sparks renewed interest in the Cerro Maravilla case and the two books about it, it will have played a very powerful role in the fight against U.S. imperialism.

LETTERS

Québec Blacks

In his article in the June 8 *Militant*, Steve Penner suggests that mainly white, anglophone Quebecers discriminate against Blacks in Québec when he says, "Blacks in Québec face a deeper oppression even if they speak English, but especially if they speak French."

I wish to correct him by saying that white francophones are just as guilty of discriminating against Blacks in Québec as white anglophones. As a Black Canadian, I know that Blacks in Québec are treated by racists with the same hostility, regardless of whether they speak English or French. The color of our skin, not the language we speak, is the reason we African-Canadians suffer racist attacks.

Mr. Penner should write about the bad treatment of Natives and other minorities at the hands of the Québec francophone "justice" system. The current situation involving the Mohawks being forced to militarily protect their land at Oka would be a good topic.

Olembe Wickham
Toronto, Canada

Voluntary labor

Thank you for your response to my letter on voluntary labor. (See the "Learning About Socialism" column in the July 27 *Militant*.) I especially thought both the description of the different nature of labor under a social system run by workers and the point that workers in industrial nations will have a special internationalist obligation were important.

However, I feel there is still some confusion about the difference between the transitional period from capitalism to socialism and socialism itself. There are the tasks necessary after capitalism has been overthrown to move toward socialism and then there are the ultimate goals of a socialist society.

The reduction of the workday is one of the historic goals of socialism. Readers might be interested in a 1953 speech by James P. Cannon entitled "What a Socialist America

Would Look Like" (*America's Road to Socialism*, New York: Pathfinder 1975).

He explained that under socialism advancements in science and technology would be used to reduce labor time, allowing all to have time for cultural and personal development, not just the rich and powerful. Cannon said there is a lot to take care of before we can start to establish this reality. "But," he said, "it is precisely this anticipation, this vision of the future, that fits us for our role as soldiers of the revolution, soldiers of the liberation war of humanity."

Bronson Rozier
Louisville, Kentucky

Leonard Peltier

This is the 13th year Leonard Peltier has spent behind bars for a crime he did not commit.

I attended a June 23 Militant Labor Forum about the 1975 frame-up, extradition, and imprisonment of the Native American activist. The program opened and closed with songs and dancing by the Bear Creek Singers from the Native American Center in Rochester, Minnesota.

Speakers included Raúl González, representing the Socialist Workers Party, and Nakoma Volkman, a Native American artist and cultural activist. Volkman expressed his support for a petition calling on President George Bush to free Peltier through an act of executive clemency.

A video documentary was shown that exposes key aspects of the frame-up of Peltier. The FBI staged a provocation, under the guise of looking for a pair of "stolen" cowboy boots, in order to intervene in and disrupt a struggle to defend Indian treaty rights on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Two FBI agents were killed.

The film shows how ballistic evidence that would have exonerated Peltier was suppressed during the trial and how false testimony was used to extradite Peltier from Canada and convict him.

The Leonard Peltier Defense

THE MAN WITH THE HOE



THE MAN WITH THE RAKE



Committee can be contacted at P.O. Box 583, Lawrence, Kan. 66044.

Dean Peoples
Austin, Minnesota

Cuba blockaded

Below are excerpts of a letter I sent to President Bush to vent my anger at not being allowed to visit Cuba. I feel like a political prisoner. I know the *Militant* calls for an end to the travel ban and trade embargo. I hope you step up this call even more.

"Dear Mr. President:
"Our government's Cuba policy

is a Berlin Wall without the block and mortar.

"It is time to lift the travel and trade bans and end the policy of arrogance and aggression toward Cuba.

"The Cuban people realized several years ago that Soviet-style communism — where people are trained to serve the economy — had failed in Cuba. They began a rectification process to improve the quality of life for everyone.

"Shouldn't Americans have the right to learn about the changes taking place in Cuba?

"During the congressional debate on a constitutional amendment to

protect the flag, many speakers on both sides reiterated their support for the important democratic principles of freedom, liberty, and justice. Unless this was nothing more than slick, self-serving political rhetoric, it is time to allow American citizens the political freedom to experience cultures anywhere on the planet, including this small island in the Caribbean.

"Let's face it. The Cold War is over and our present Cuba policy is outdated and wrong. We can continue intimidating Cuba electronically and militarily or promote tolerance and understanding. It's the right thing to do, the American thing to do, the only thing to do. Let's tear down this Berlin Wall."

James York
Boulder, Colorado

Turkish prisoner

I am a political prisoner in Turkey. I was sentenced to imprisonment for life and have been in prison since 1977. I translate political articles published in some foreign periodicals so that my fellow prisoners can read them. More than 150 political prisoners are kept in this prison.

We want to be informed of the class struggle in the United States and the revolutionary processes in Latin America. We had an opportunity to read an issue of the *Militant*. We want to receive it regularly. But it is forbidden for us to send money abroad; besides, we can't afford to pay for a subscription. We will be thankful to you if you can send us the *Militant* regularly.

Best wishes and comradely greetings to all there at the *Militant* from me and my fellow prisoners.

A prisoner
Malatya, Turkey

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. 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.

Liberia rebel troops make gains in battle to topple Doe regime

The government has Washington's backing and is protected by an Israeli-trained antiterrorist unit.

BY GREG McCARTAN

Antigovernment rebels fought pitched battles with troops loyal to President Samuel Doe in the center of Liberia's capital, Monrovia, at the end of July. At the same time increased pressure is being brought on Washington by its European allies to intervene militarily.

The rebels have grown to a force of some 5,000 since beginning their drive to oust Doe last December. Scoring rapid victories in the countryside over the succeeding months, the forces seeking to bring down the Doe regime have cut off all roads to the capital since early July. Monrovia residents report shortages of food and water. Electricity has been cut off completely.

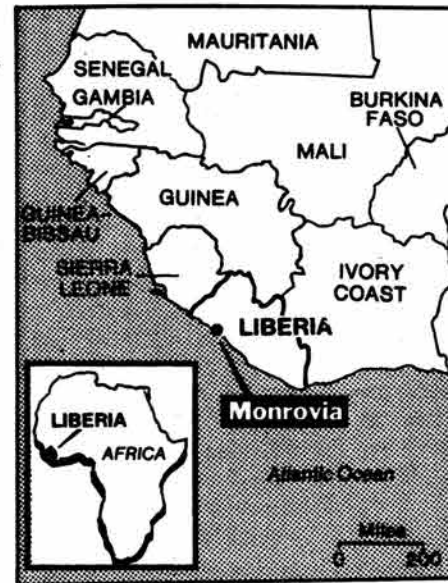
Doe is protected by an Israeli-trained Spe-

cial Anti-Terrorist Unit of 2,000 heavily armed troops. As the military situation deteriorates, members of the regular army have been seen stripping off their uniforms, changing into civilian clothes, and fleeing the battle fronts.

Doe has ruled Liberia, a country of 2.5 million on the western coast of Africa, for a decade. Rebel leaders accuse him of corruption, government mismanagement, and human rights abuses. The U.S. government, which has backed Doe's regime, also admits the regime has committed atrocities against the civilian population.

Charles Taylor, a former government official, heads the rebel organization, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). The rebels who first fought their way into Monrovia's city center are led by Prince Johnson, who appears to have left the Front and set up another fighting force.

In a radio broadcast July 27, Taylor declared Doe's government dissolved and said a National Patriotic Reconstruction assembly would assume state functions. In the broadcast Taylor said elections would be organized within six months. He has previously ex-



plained he does not plan to change the form of government but will "take over the reins and clear up the government and country."

Religious, union, student, and community organizations held several rallies in Monro-

via in late June. A protest of 20,000, organized by the Liberian Council of Churches, demanded an end to the civil war and the killing of civilians. The next day the Committee for Democracy in Liberia staged a march demanding Doe's resignation.

The second march was broken up when troops began firing with machine guns into the air. The marchers were also prevented from taking their protest to the U.S. embassy.

The demonstrations came in the midst of the breakdown of a negotiating session between the government and the NPFL held at the U.S. embassy in neighboring Sierra Leone. In the meetings Doe refused rebel demands that he resign unconditionally, offering instead to include the NPFL in an interim government until the next elections are held.

The U.S. government has maintained a fleet of four warships with 2,500 troops off the coast of Liberia since early June. Washington has backed Doe with military and financial aid and dispatched several military advisers to a combat zone in early February.

The U.S. capitalist rulers have enormous economic and military interests in Liberia. The country's natural resources, including rubber, timber, and iron ore, have long been exploited by U.S. capitalists. The CIA maintains installations in the country. The U.S. Omega marine transmitter — one of the five most important U.S. naval transmission bases in the world — is also based there.

On July 27 five European Community ambassadors called for a meeting to the United Nations Security Council to take up the Doe regime's deteriorating situation. The ambassadors called on the U.S. government to intervene militarily "in view of the special relationship" with Liberia.

'No government in control'

"There is no longer any effective government in control of this country," said Italy's ambassador to the country. "The interdependence of nations no longer permits other nations to sit idle while one country plunges into anarchy and national suicide."

Doe came to power in 1980 when he toppled the government of William Tolbert. Tolbert, like every Liberian president since 1847, was an Americo-Liberian — descendants of freed slaves in the United States who set up Liberia in 1822. Americo-Liberians came to politically and economically dominate the country, disenfranchising the 99 percent of the population who are descendants of some 20 ethnic groups.

Upon coming to power Doe promoted the descendants of the Krahn people — who constitute about 4 percent of the population — to high positions within the government apparatus. This move deepened the divisions within the country's population. Doe has carried out massacres of descendants of the Gio and Mano peoples, who have become the backbone of the rebellion against his regime.

When Taylor's forces began their offensive, the Armed Forces of Liberia set fire to villages, claiming residents were hiding rebels. In the north of the country some 200 government troops attacked the villages of Siathon and Kperton, killing inhabitants as they ran out of their homes.

As the rebel forces have advanced on Monrovia, atrocities by Doe's troops have increased, including the summary execution of some 100 Gio and Mano people. The government's acting information minister said such killings were "not government policy."

Most of Doe's top military and political advisers have abandoned the regime and left the country, and some 375,000 Liberians have been forced to flee the country during the fighting as the government tries to hold on to power.

South African gov't launches lie campaign against the ANC

BY GREG McCARTAN

Leading up to the August 6 round of talks with the African National Congress, the South African government has launched a massive anticommunist campaign against the liberation organization.

On June 22 the South African press reported that up to 40 members of the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, (Spear of the Nation) had been arrested by the police.

ANC leader Walter Sisulu said "significant arrests" had been made, including two senior ANC officials. "People have always been infiltrating here since we launched the armed struggle in the '60s," Sisulu said, "but under the new climate it can be expected that many more would return to South Africa."

The South African police claimed that the ANC and the South African Communist Party had prepared a plot to overthrow the government. Sathyandranath Maharaj, a member of the ANC's National Executive Committee and of the SACP's Central Committee was arrested by the police under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act.



Militant/Margrethe Siem South African Communist Party's Secretary General Joe Slovo.

Maharaj is the highest ranking ANC member to have been arrested by the apartheid regime since it unbanned the liberation organization in February. The security act gives the police power to arrest and detain people without filing charges. The legislation is part of a battery of apartheid's repressive laws that predate state-of-emergency regulations imposed in 1986. The state of emergency was lifted in June, except in Natal Province.

Citing "anonymous sources," the big-business press peddled the claim that the insurrectionary plot was being secretly carried out by members of the SACP who are also members of the ANC. Trying to drive a wedge between the two organizations, the papers added that senior leaders of the ANC were unaware of the plot.

The government and the press seized on remarks made at a rally in the Transkei Bantustan by Umkhonto we Sizwe Chief of Staff Chris Hani. They quoted him as saying, "the ANC might have to seize power if the government does not shift or share it" and noted that Hani is also a member of the SACP.

"Disorder, anarchy, and terrorism will not be tolerated," South African President F.W. de Klerk said, of the arrests. "The Government regards this matter in an extremely serious light." In a July statement he said, "The ANC does not appreciate the seriousness of the facts which were brought to light." He also denounced Hani's statement, saying it violated the "words and spirit of the Groote Schuur minute," referring to the early May agreement between the government and the ANC to pursue a peaceful road to the abolition of apartheid.

Treason charges were filed against Hani by the Conservative Party, calling his statement "a blatant declaration of war."

'Evidence' given to Mandela

In a July 26 meeting with de Klerk ANC Deputy President Nelson Mandela was presented with "evidence" of the plot. The documents are purported to be minutes of an underground meeting of the SACP in which a "Comrade Joe" explains they are not bound by any cease-fire or agreement signed by the ANC and the government. "Joe" is supposedly a reference to Joe

Slovo, head of the SACP.

In the meeting de Klerk demanded that Slovo be removed from the ANC delegation to the August 6 talks.

Slovo denied the party had any such plans and called on the government to stop its "anticommunist hysteria."

"I don't have to repudiate anybody because there is no such plot," Mandela told the press.

Meeting in Johannesburg, the ANC National Executive Committee "repudiated with contempt the hysteria, fueled by press leaks by unnamed sources, regarding a so-called 'communist insurrectionary plot' as well as the wild and unfounded speculations about splits and tensions within the ANC and its leading bodies."

Mandela, ANC Secretary General Alfred Nzo, Slovo, Joe Modise, and Thabo Mbeki were named as the ANC's team for the talks. The delegation "will present proposals concerning the removal of the remaining obstacles of negotiations, the suspension of armed actions and steps that should be taken to initiate a process leading to the elaboration and adoption of a democratic constitution."

Condemning the continued arrests under the security legislation, the ANC leadership demanded that "such arrests should stop and those detained should be released immediately and unconditionally."

SACP rally

At a July 29 rally held by the SACP in the Black township of Soweto, Mandela said, "To suggest, as some are doing these days, that these outstanding sons and daughters of our people harbor ideas of unilateral military action against the peace process is an insult manufactured by the enemies of democracy who have built conspiratorial nests within the intestines of the power structures of this country."

"The ANC is not a communist party," Mandela told the rally, "but as a defender of democracy, it will fight for the right of the Communist Party to exist."

Fifty thousand turned out for the event, the first such rally held by the SACP since it was banned 40 years ago. "A negotiated solution is in the interests of all South Africans, white and Black," Slovo told the crowd.