

THE MILITANT

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Communist League in
Canada holds convention

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 62 NO. 4 FEBRUARY 2, 1998

S. Korea: Washington presses austerity

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Some 2,500 workers and students shouting "Fight! Fight!" and thrusting their fists in the air marched in south Korea January 17 to protest layoffs the government says are needed to meet demands of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Two days later the Korean Federation of Trade Unions, which led a three-week general strike against layoffs last year, organized another demonstration against the IMF demands for austerity. A few days later in Thailand, 3,000 auto parts workers walked out, protesting a cut in their work hours and the company's refusal to pay an annual bonus. Police violently broke up their protest demonstration and arrested 58 strikers January 21.

These protests came as Washington pressed its Mexican-style IMF "bailout" scheme on workers and peasants throughout southeast Asia. At the same time capitalists in the United States and Europe are debating the impact of the Asian economic crisis on their profit margins.

In mid-January the south Korean government set up a "consultative group" modeled after the one the Clinton administration imposed on Mexico in 1995 following the collapse of the peso in 1994. As the Mexican government repaid the "rescue" loans there, workers were hit with a drop in living standards and higher unemployment, and U.S. capitalists bought up more of the country's patrimony.

The "consultative group" in south Korea will include trade union officials, the economic deputy prime minister, and the head

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Two workers are killed in unsafe Canada mine

BY STEVE PENNER

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — Two miners, Wayne Campbell, 41, and Darrell Ralph, 33, were killed at the Quinsam coal mine, about 12 miles west of Campbell River on Vancouver Island January 16. They died after a section of rock fell from the roof and buried the men while they were operating a continuous mining machine. A third miner, Mike Pearo, was saved after a five-and-a-half-hour rescue operation by his fellow miners.

The Quinsam mine employs 230 mineworkers, 50 of whom are currently on layoff. It has a history of unsafe working conditions.

Terry Gallamore, an underground miner who also operates a continuous mining machine, told the *Militant* that for the company "production is more important than safety." Miners lack adequate equipment and supplies. They also are forced to work in "deplorable" and unsafe working conditions, he explained.

"We have to walk through water and muck pulling cables behind us," Gallamore, the former president of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) union local at

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'Inspectors out of Iraq!'

Protests oppose Washington's provocations

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

CHICAGO — Some 25 people marched in front of the Federal building here January 20 protesting the latest U.S. war moves against Iraq. The protest was called on two day's notice and sponsored by the Chicago Young Socialists and the Socialist Workers Party.

The workers and youth at the picket line chanted "Hey, Hey, Ho, Ho, UN Inspectors Have Got To Go," "U.S. Hands Off Iraq," and "Self Determination! Iraq is a Sovereign Nation!"

Luis Galarza from the Chicago Cuba

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Clinton uses 'weapons' as pretext for threats

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Threatening that Washington may take military action against Iraq, even without a vote by the United Nations Security Council, U.S. president William Clinton stated January 21 that if Iraqi officials "really believe that there are no circumstances under which we would not act alone, they are sadly mistaken."

Earlier that day, Iraqi deputy prime

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Militant

Demonstration protesting U.S. war moves against Iraq in Chicago January 20

Hundreds in Miami protest new immigration limits

BY RACHELE FRUIT

MIAMI — More than 800 people demonstrated in front of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) offices here on January 14. Chants of "What do we want? Amnesty! When do we want it? Now!" and "Amnesty — yes! Discrimination — No!" could be heard blocks away.

The demonstration was organized by the Committee for Dignity and Justice for Immigrants on the last day that Section 245(i) of the immigration reform act was in force. This provision had allowed immigrants whose visas expired to stay in the country while they requested permanent residence, for a fee of \$1,000.

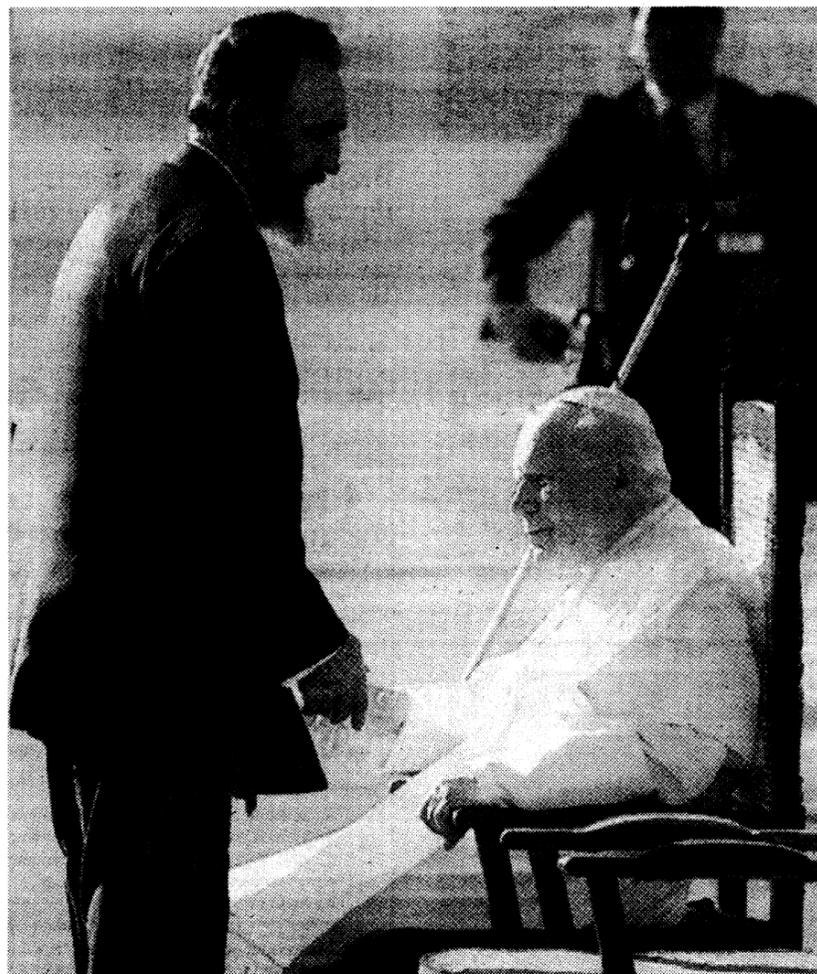
Most of the demonstrators were Haitian and many said they were there to protest discrimination by the U.S. government. Numerous people said they wanted "to see Haitian people treated the same as everyone else," referring to the bill adopted by Congress that promised residency to about 150,000 Nicaraguans, as well as many immigrants from Cuba and western Europe.

After January 14 people who want to apply for residency will have to return to their country of origin and wait for years before they can obtain their status. There is no guarantee they will be accepted.

A representative from the Guatemalan Groups in Exile spoke at the rally and expressed that they also were fighting for equal treatment and that they were organizing a demonstration in Washington, D.C. on January 30, demanding justice for Guatemalan

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Revolutionary gov't in Cuba confidently welcomes Pope



President Fidel Castro welcomes Pope John Paul II to Cuba January 21. At the ceremony, Castro said the Cuban people today "refuse to accept the dictates and the rule of the mightiest economic, political, and military power in history.... We choose a thousand times death rather than abdicate our convictions."

Just off the press!

Celebrating the homecoming
of Ernesto Che Guevara's
reinforcement brigade to Cuba
(see p. 8)

Palestinians reject Tel Aviv's demands for concessions

When Israeli soldiers pointed their guns at 400 Palestinians blockading a road in the Gaza Strip January 15, Palestinian police responded by aiming their rifles at the occupying troops, who eventually backed down. The 20-minute standoff took place the same day Palestinian officials rejected a 12-page list of 50 demands that the Zionist regime in Tel Aviv said had to be met before any more troops would be withdrawn from the West Bank. These included demands to extradite Palestinians accused of "terrorism" to Israel and to cut the Palestinian police force by 12,000. On top of this, the Israeli government stated that it would never cede buffer zones on either side of the West Bank, Zionist settlements, bypass roads, military bases, and the area around Jerusalem. Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat called the list of demands "a unilateral declaration by Mr. Netanyahu that we no longer have a peace process."

The U.S. government has paraded as a peace seeker in the region, including calling for Tel Aviv to make some pullouts as was agreed to in the Oslo treaty. Washington, however, pumps \$3 billion dollars a year into Israel for military and economic aid. The pressure from the tens thousands of Palestinian fighters for self-determination in the streets resisting settlements is shaking the ruling coalition government in Israel apart. On January 15 Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai threatened to resign if Tel Aviv does not carry out a partial withdrawal from the West Bank in three months. The day before, some 20,000 rightists rallied on Rabin Square in Tel Aviv opposing any troop or settlement withdrawals.

Turkey gov't bans Welfare party

The constitutional court in Turkey announce January 16 its 9-2 vote to dissolve the Welfare Party and ban its leader, former prime minister Necmettin Erbakan, from political office for five years. The decision was based on charges filed last May that the Welfare Party, which won the largest number of seats in the last parliamentary elections, was "undermining Turkey's secular regime and bringing the country to the brink



As part of a national strike in Bolivia some 20,000 sanitation workers, teachers, and others paralyzed downtown La Paz for two hours January 12 with a work stoppage and protest march. They were demanding a 300 percent wage increase.

of civil war." Five other officials from that party got five-year bans as well, and the party's property is to be transferred to the government treasury. This is the third time in nearly three decades that a party formed by Erbakan has been shut down. The Welfare Party's remaining 147 members of parliament will hold their seats as independents.

Zimbabweans: 'lower food costs'

On January 13 hundreds of people filled the streets of Harare, Zimbabwe, demanding that the government act to provide subsidies and lower the prices of basic commodities. Demonstrators forced stores — some of which had raised prices by as much as 42 percent — to shut down. Zimbabwe's information minister Chen Chimutengwende accused business owners, most of whom are white, of raising prices as retaliation against government plans to seize 74.7 million acres of farm land, also owned largely by whites.

Croatian gov't reclaims Slavonia

On January 15, more than six years after the Croatian regime seceded from Yugoslav

via in 1991, UN forces handed over eastern Slavonia back to Zagreb. It was the first region seized from Croatia by the chauvinist Serb forces led by Radovan Karadzic and backed by the Yugoslav army. Some 80,000 Croats fled Slavonia after 1991. For the past two years, that region was run by the United Nations under jurisdiction of the 1995 Dayton "peace" accord, under which tens of thousands of NATO troops are occupying Bosnia with the aim of paving the way to restoring capitalist rule there.

The Croatian government expects the return of eastern Slavonia to boost its chances of getting inducted into the European Union. U.S. and European government officials say that will not happen at this point, stating that Croatia supposedly is not "democratic" enough to join.

Ecuadorans: 'No U.S. sanctions'

About 100 protesters in Ecuador demonstrated before the U.S. embassy there January 15 against the economic sanction proposals floated by U.S. ambassador Leslie Alexander. Participants chanted anti-U.S. government slogans and called for Alexander's removal. "We are here to show that American threats do not scare us," said María Eugenia Castro, one of the protesters. Washington has accused Quito of inadequately protecting foreign "intellectual" property, such as copyrights, and put the country on a "priority observation" list.

Drop in oil prices further threatens economy in Venezuela

In mid-January Venezuelan oil prices fell to well below \$13 a barrel, an historic low. They recovered slightly January 13 to \$12.85, still far short of the \$15.50 projected for the 1998 budget. Oil accounts for 70 percent of Venezuela's export income, and each dollar lost from the per barrel price

translates into \$1 billion in gross revenue lost. Caracas was already in the midst of preparing an austerity package that includes \$1.3 billion in budget cuts, and is considering further reductions that will hit working people. An unnamed analyst in a *Financial Times* news article said this crisis makes investors nervous "that the currency will not hold up." The central bank raised interest rates January 13.

Brazil gov't bank begins sell-off

Banco do Brasil plans to sell off BB DTVM — the biggest mutual fund company in Brazil — to foreign investors. The move opens the door for the buyer to sell its products in 3,000 retail branches throughout the country. It is also hanging the "for sale" sign over BB Securities, based in London. The bank was one of the few government-run companies supposedly not on the auction block for the next two years. Bank president Paulo César Ximenes swore this was not the first step to privatizing Banco do Brasil itself. The U.S. companies Fidelity, Citibank, HSBC, and Chase Manhattan Bank are considering the deal. The British firm Schroders also set up offices in Brazil.

Last year the U.S.-based Whirlpool bought up 66 percent of Brasmotor, which controls some of Latin America's leading appliance producing companies. Now Whirlpool is preparing to lay off 3,200 workers as part of downsizing its own plants in Brazil. Meanwhile, the Brazilian government is pressing an austerity drive against working people, with proposals to "reform" the social security system there, forcing workers to turn to private pension companies.

Clinton bolsters New York cops

During a January 15 press event at Kennedy International Airport, President William Clinton, standing with New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani, made a \$120 million dollar grant to hire 1,600 more cops in New York, and a similar sum to employ 1,700 more at 620 police agencies across the United States. This will bring the total cop force in New York City to 40,000. Clinton and Giuliani attributed a drop in crime statistics to so-called community policing, and "smarter and tougher punishment."

'Get KKKer name off school'

One of two Blacks on a seven-member school board members in Gadsden, Alabama, is calling for the renaming of General Forrest Middle School. Gen. Nathan Forrest was a Confederate officer who later became the first grand wizard of the Ku Klux Klan. Superintendent Fred Taylor responded by describing Forrest as a "war hero" and saying, "He had a right to be in the [KKK] organization as much as these folks [Blacks] have a right to be in the NAACP. That doesn't mean he wasn't a hero."

— BRIAN TAYLOR

THE MILITANT

U.S. warships out of the Mideast!

The Clinton administration has stationed nearly 30,000 troops and an armada in the Persian Gulf. That military mobilization is the biggest threat to peace in the region. The 'Militant' tells the truth about Washington's war moves and explains why working people should oppose them. Don't miss a single issue!



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The Militant

Vol. 62/No. 4
Closing news date: January 22, 1998

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Published weekly except for one week in December and biweekly from mid-June to mid-August by the Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Telephone: (212) 243-6392; Fax (212) 924-6040.

The Militant can be reached via CompuServe at: 73311.2720 or via Peacenet at: themilitant
Internet: 73311.2720@compuserve.com or: themilitant@igc.apc.org

The Militant can be accessed on the internet at: gopher://gopher.igc.apc.org/11/pubs/militant
Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The Militant Business Office, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Subscriptions: **United States:** for one-year subscription send \$45 to above address.
Latin America, Caribbean: for one-year-sub-

scription send \$65, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (airmail), send \$80. **Asia:** send \$80 drawn on a U.S. bank to 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Canada: Send Canadian \$75 for one-year subscription to Militant, 4581 St. Denis, Montreal, Quebec H2J 2L4.

Britain, Ireland: £36 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution, 47 The Cut, London, SE1 8LL, England. **Continental Europe, Africa, Middle East:** £40 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution at above address. **France:** Send FF300 for one-year subscription to Militant, MBE 201, 208, rue de la Convention, 75015 Paris; chèque postale: 40 134 34 U. **Belgium:** BF 1,900 for one year on account no. 000-1543112-36 of 1Mei Fonds/Fonds du 1 mai, 2140 Antwerp. **Iceland:** Send 5,400 Icelandic kronur for one-year subscription to Militant, P.O. Box 233, 121 Reykjavík. **Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark:** 500 Swedish kronor for one year. Pay to Militant Swedish giro no. 451-32-09-9. **New Zealand:** Send New Zealand \$75 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand. **Australia:** Send Australian \$75 to P.O. Box K879, Haymarket, NSW 1240, Australia. **Pacific Islands:** Send New Zealand \$75 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

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'Euro' looks likely, but will be weak

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — A few months ago it looked unlikely that the European monetary union (EMU) would start as planned on Jan. 1, 1999, with initial participation from a majority of the states constituting the European Union (EU). The German rulers were struggling to keep the Mediterranean states, especially Italy, outside a future currency union, by demanding the strict application of "convergence criteria" for budget deficits, inflation, and other economic factors. Bonn's aim was to launch a common currency that would be as strong as the mark, involving a smaller number of countries closely tied to the German economy, or else to delay the launching of the currency union indefinitely.

While it now appears the EMU will start on schedule with 11 of the 15 EU members taking part, the prospects are dim for the "euro" to be a strong currency that will strengthen the hand of the main imperialist powers in Europe in relation to their rivals in Washington and Tokyo. And the attempt to implement the common currency will exacerbate tensions between Bonn, London, and Paris.

The two main contenders for dominance in Europe, the ruling classes in Germany and France, have both failed to push through the kind of austerity measures and attacks on the working class they have projected in the name of meeting the criteria for the EMU.

The former government of Prime Minister Alain Juppé in France had to largely drop its planned austerity measures after workers fought back at the end of 1995 in the biggest labor mobilizations in France since 1968. Chancellor Helmut Kohl's government in Germany launched an attack on the workers in the spring of 1996, targeting sick leave payments, unemployment benefits, and pensions. Hundreds of thousands of workers came out in demonstrations and protest strikes against these austerity measures between June and October 1996, pushing back many of the attacks.

The rulers in France were dealt a further setback last year when the Socialist Party (SP) won early elections called by President Jacques Chirac, reflecting workers' desire to resist the austerity drive. The new SP prime minister, Lionel Jospin, had promised in his campaign to push for changes to supposedly create more jobs in the EU "stability pact" that lays out the EMU criteria. At the Amsterdam European Union summit in June, however, Jospin was able to get only a fig leaf, as the stability pact was renamed the "stability and growth pact" without any qualitative changes.

In the first half of 1997, Kohl made concessions to striking coal miners. His projected tax "reform" and further attacks on the social wage were blocked by the social democrats in the upper house of parliament, reflecting pressure from the resistance among workers.

Moreover, German finance minister

Theodor Waigel had to perform the same kind of budget acrobatics that Bonn had accused Rome of in order to meet the EMU criteria of a deficit no more than 3 percent of gross domestic product. Although Italian prime minister Romano Prodi was forced to resign over a package of austerity measures in the fall 1997, he was able to restore his government with only minor changes in the package. It became apparent that Rome would come as close to the 3 percent deficit criteria for 1997 as Bonn and Paris.

Kohl: 'alternative to EMU is war'

A layer of prominent politicians in Germany have argued for delaying the EMU start if the criteria are not strictly met, including Bundesbank chief Hans Tietmeyer; the prime minister of Bavaria, Edmund Stoiber; and Gerhard Schröder, one of the two contesting candidates for German chancellor in the next elections for the social democratic party. They have been met with a cannonade of arguments from Kohl's government circles laying out a scenario of doomsday if EMU doesn't start as planned.

Germany economics minister Günter Rexrodt stated last year, "A delay implies the great danger of a definitive collapse [of the EMU] and renationalization within the EU."

Along similar lines, Chancellor Kohl earlier declared, "The question of war and peace in the 21st century really hinges on the progress of European integration," sparking a storm of protests from British politicians.

The governments of the United Kingdom, Denmark, and Sweden have declared that they will not join EMU at the start. They have been described as a dollar-pound block within EU, since there is a substantial amount of trade done in those currencies. With the Jan. 1, 1999, EMU start date looking more likely, the new Labour Party government in the UK is under pressure to jump on the train as soon as possible. They don't want to be the outsiders in a project that will affect the nearly 60 percent of their trade that is with EU countries. Britain is scheduled to chair the European Union in the first half of 1998, when the negotiations for the start of the currency union will be finalized.

A bad sign for British prime minister Anthony Blair's government was its failure to win the right to attend the "informal" meetings of the finance ministers of the states that are to join the EMU from the start when they discuss questions concerning the



More than 30,000 students protest in Bonn, Germany, December 18 against education cuts. German and French governments face resistance to austerity measures.

Euro. Many British officials have therefore become softer on EMU, declaring that they plan to join sooner rather than later. The social democratic government in Sweden is following suit.

In May 1998 the countries that are to join the currency union are scheduled to be named and to fix the exchange rates of their currencies in preparation for the EMU. The formula for this will probably be along the same lines as the current Exchange Rate Mechanism, which allows a variation of 15 percent above or below the value of the German mark. Electronic payments denominated in euros will start in January 1999, while the bills and coins will be introduced later.

Political, economic divisions, not union

Smaller monetary unions have been set up in Europe before, but the EMU is by far the largest ever projected. One lesson from history is that monetary unions without political union tend to collapse. For the system to work smoothly, it needs harmonized interest rates, taxes, and fiscal policy to allow transfers of money from one region to another to avert uneven economic shocks, as well as a common immigration policy that allows the free flow of labor between different regions. Moreover, common foreign and military policies would be a precondition for a monetary union to remain stable for an extended time.

But these conditions are not in the cards. Interest rates, taxes, and fiscal policy vary across Europe. Fixing common interest rates for all the "euro" participants will tend to sharpen any economic shocks, increasing the likelihood and severity of recessions in each country. The annual budget of the EU is only

\$100 billion, a small fraction of the GDP of the member states, and no government wants to pay more toward it. More than half of this budget goes to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) — farm subsidies that are fundamental to the political stability of most of the governments in Europe. How these payments are apportioned is always a point of tension.

The mobility of the workforce across national borders when growth slows in one country while picking up in another is very small, although formally allowed within the European Union. Formally there is also the free flow of goods within the EU, but in reality member states still use national standards, as well as health, safety, and environmental legislation, to bar the entry of goods from other member states.

An even bigger obstacle to a stable monetary union is that the interests of Paris and Bonn often don't coincide. This is reflected in a proposal by the French government to nominate Jean Claude Trichet, currently the governor of the Bank of France, as head of the European Central Bank (ECB). Bonn favors the present head of the European Monetary Institute, Wim Duisenberg, who is Dutch. Since the decision must be unanimous, a compromise is likely, which would be at the expense of the mark and to the advantage of the franc.

In addition there are huge tensions between governments in Europe on foreign and military policy, as shown by the divisions among them over Yugoslavia, Albania, and the expansion of NATO and the European Union into Eastern and Central Europe.

The reunification of Germany also has far

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Sinn Fein leaders reject UK proposals

BY PAUL DAVIES

MANCHESTER — Sinn Fein leaders Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness met British prime minister Anthony Blair at his Downing Street residence January 19 to express their opposition to British proposals to maintain the partition of Ireland. The proposals were presented in the "Provisional Heads of Agreement" by the governments of Dublin and London at the all-party talks. The reformist Social Democratic and Labour Party praised the proposals.

Following the meeting with Blair, Adams commented that "Anyone who thinks an internal settlement is going to work, or some assembly with a few nationalist nobs stuck on it is going to work, is not living in the real world." The British government is proposing to "settle" the conflict internally, within the north of Ireland, and maintain the partition that it imposed on the island by the British rulers since 1921.

The Downing Street meeting followed the murder of Fergal McCusker in Derry, Northern Ireland, the fourth killing of a Catholic in the last month by the rightist Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF). "It's obvious to everyone that terror is being visited against the nationalist community in an effort to force it to accept less than they are entitled to at the negotiating table," stated McGuinness.

At least 6,000 people participated in the funeral of Catholic Terry Enright, also killed by the LVF, at one of the largest funerals in Northern Ireland in many years. An unprecedented number of sympathy notices appeared in the Irish News published in the south of Ireland.

There is growing press speculation that the British government may issue an apology for Bloody Sunday, when the army shot dead 14 civil rights protesters. Commander Derek Wilford, who headed the British forces in Derry on the day of the massacre, hinted that the British government and not the army was responsible for the killings. Commenting on a possible government apology he said, "I think the prime minister of the time should be the person who is discussing it.... If people start talking about apologizing then I think one has actually got

to look at who was responsible for the decision to carry out that type of operation."

Joe McKinney, a relative of one of those killed on Bloody Sunday, said in a phone interview, "We want an international inquiry, with an English judge, an Irish judge, and an international judge."

The all-party talks will move from Stormont, Northern Ireland, to London January 28. A public meeting hosted by Sinn Fein will take place at Camden Town Hall in London January 29, with Adams and McGuinness as the featured speakers.

From Pathfinder



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BRITISH TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND!

Events are planned across the United States to commemorate the 1972 Bloody Sunday massacre of Irish civil rights marchers by the British Army.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31

New York, New York

Members of Irish Northern Aid from the New York tri-state area will protest at the offices of British Airways at 51st Street and 5th Ave., from noon until 2 p.m. For more information call: (212) 736-1916.

Columbus, Ohio

The Diarmuid O'Neill Unit of Irish Northern Aid will hold an event at the Shamrock Club, 60 West Castle Road, at 6 p.m.

The program will feature Matt Morrison, an eyewitness to Bloody Sunday and a video about the north of Ireland. Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$12 at the door. For information call David Fanning at (614) 488-3914.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Philadelphia Federation of Irish Societies will demonstrate in front of City Hall from noon until 2 p.m. For more information call Gerry O'Hare

at (609) 848-3040.

Seattle, Washington

There will be a Bloody Sunday commemoration on the day the British Army's "Black Watch" pipe band is playing at the Seattle Center at 2 p.m.

Chicago, Illinois

The Irish Northern Aid Committee will picket at the British Consulate at 400 N. Michigan Ave. from noon to 1 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1

Scranton, Pennsylvania

The Ancient Order of the Hibernians will hold a candlelight vigil at 5 p.m. on the steps of the Lackawanna County Courthouse in downtown Scranton.

St. Paul, Minnesota

Members of the Minnesotans for a United Ireland will hold an event at the Dubliner Pub from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Steelworkers get unemployment pay, discuss end of strike

BY GAETAN WHISTON

PUEBLO, Colorado — Members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Locals 2102 and 3267 were told January 8 that they would receive unemployment compensation retroactive to November 23 from the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. This is a reversal of the department's earlier decision to deny benefits, and is based on the conclusion that CF&I Steel has permanently replaced the 1,000 union members who stayed out after striking the company October 3. Since the union locals decided December 30 by 355-259 vote to call off the strike, CF&I has called only 27 union members back to work.

According to union, the strike cut the company's projected shipment for the fourth quarter of 1997 to only 46 percent of the previous quarter, and 40 percent of actual production capacity.

Since November the company has hired 600 replacement workers, who company spokesperson Vicki Tagliafico says will remain along with about 100 union members who crossed the line. The company has stated that they have all the workforce they now need, and will recall former strikers only as jobs open up.

Shortly after the decision to make an unconditional return to work offer, union members set up informational picket lines at the three major gates to the steel mill, as well as at the company's corporate office. The pick-

ets are up from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. On the picket lines several union members told *Militant* reporters they remained hopeful about getting back into the plant. Ray Holloway, who worked at the mill for eight years, said that calling the strike off was going to "force the company's hand and make them negotiate as they should have done nine months ago."

Mack Archuleta, a union member with 28 years' seniority, added, "The company has bitten off more than it can chew. Hopefully they will see that the union is united and give us a fair contract."

Union member Dan López, who worked for the company for 29 years, told the *Militant* how he got run over by a strike breaker's car and was out on injury for two months. "The scabs have taken jobs that this union has fought for."

According to USWA Local 2102 president Ernest Hernández, the company must now "obey the law, fire all the scabs they've hired, and recall the striking workers" or pay "back pay liability — which could run as high as \$30 million a year." Under federal law, this is supposed to be the case if a labor court determines the strike to have been over unfair labor practices, as opposed to economic issues. Union officials also project keeping up the "corporate campaign" against Wells Fargo and other major business partners of CF&I, which began at the outset of the strike. Meanwhile, the company has

Pittsburgh: 'Protest police brutality!'



Militant/Phil Norris

A rally on January 17 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, demanding prosecution of all five policemen involved in the beating death of Jonny Gammage, Jr. He was killed after a traffic stop in October 1995. The meeting also commemorated Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

changed its name to Rocky Mountain Steel Mills.

A USWA newsletter described the "unconditional offer to return to work" as "key to a number of steelworker victories over the past few years — including the Bridgestone-Firestone strike." When the union called off the 10-month walkout by 4,200 workers at Bridgestone-Firestone, which began in July 1994, the company said it would rehire strikers as openings occurred. Workers returning to the plants had their wages slashed from an average of \$17 an hour to an average of \$12. In November

1996, more than a year after calling off the strike, the union reached a contract settlement that included a seven-day, 12-hour rotating shift schedule, a two-tier wage scale, a wage increase of 40 cents per hour, and the elimination of health-care premiums. Most of the several dozen workers fired for strike activity were given "amnesty" under this agreement, but a few were not.

The company and the union here have set January 20 - 23 as dates for talks.

Gaetan Whiston is a member of USWA Local 9198 in Roseville, Minnesota.

Volunteers help upgrade Pathfinder building in N.Y.

BY MARY ANN SCHMIDT

NEW YORK — Over the weekend of January 17-18, more than 100 socialist workers, Young Socialists, and others from Boston, New York, Newark, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. joined in a "Red Weekend" of volunteer labor at the Pathfinder building in Manhattan, where Pathfinder books, the *Militant*, and *Perspectiva Mundial* are published and printed.

This weekend was an opportunity to do what "needs to be done" to help keep in print the lessons of working-class struggles around the world, as Olympia Newton, a Young Socialist from Washington, D.C., put it.

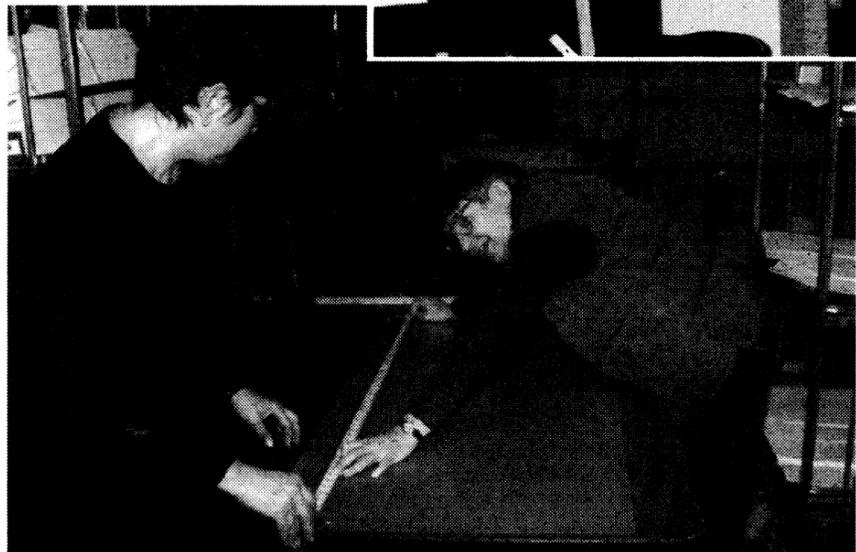
The volunteers were organized in teams to work on many projects that could not have been carried out during the regular operation and maintenance of the printshop and editorial departments. This included painting stairways, ceilings, and locker rooms; repairing bathrooms; and removing water damage from brick walls on the upper floors of the building. In addition, a group of volunteers worked on displays for the upcoming socialist conference in Seattle. Others

were transcribing and translating for future publication interviews that *Militant* reporters had with three Cuban generals last October.

After the first day of work, volunteers participated in a dinner and Militant Labor Forum celebrating 100 years of the resistance against U.S. imperialism in Cuba, Puerto



Militant/Brian Taylor



More than 100 volunteers pitched in January 17-18 to help maintain the Pathfinder building. Top: YS member Olympia Newton from Washington, D.C., on a painting crew. Above: Eva Chertov and Ethel Lobman measure ceiling light panels.

Rico, and the Philippines. That meeting raised \$580 dollars for the Books for Cuba Fund, which helps make Pathfinder books available to revolutionary fighters there.

Several of those who volunteered their efforts had never been part of such a project before. On Saturday volunteers who had never been to the Pathfinder building got a tour. Miriam Mendoza, a laundry worker from New York, explained how she saw it as different from a capitalist-run business. "In most offices everyone is separated by walls, the individual is emphasized, whereas here it is the opposite," Mendoza explained. "There are no walls between the desks, everyone can see everyone, and you can see the beautiful view outside as well," she said.

A 30-year-old metal plater from Boston saw his participation as making a voluntary contribution to the working class. He said he was most impressed that this building ex-

isted, "in the center of the United States."

Ron Coleman from Philadelphia enjoyed talking with those who work full-time in the printshop and publishing offices. "There's more cooperation than a regular business," Coleman said. "Everyone is working together for a common cause. Society should model itself after how Pathfinder is run. No one looks down on anyone, everyone is equal."

José Aravena, who headed up organizing the weekend, commented, "Each team worked together collectively whenever they encountered problems" and made the weekend successful. This spirit made it possible to finish the projects, and for the volunteers to enjoy working hard on their weekend off.

Mary Ann Schmidt is a member of the United Auto Workers in New York.

Hundreds in Miami protest INS

Continued from front page

immigrants. As she repeated "Amnistía para todos" (Amnesty for all) several times, the crowd responded enthusiastically.

Francisco Javier Garza from the Farmworker Association of Florida also addressed the crowd. "We all come here to improve our life," he said. "We all have the same problems, suffer the same hunger. We're fighting for the same thing."

Garza told a *Militant* reporter that in Homestead where he lives, "the INS are stopping cars and they look only at the color of your skin. This is discrimination."

Several students attended the demonstration from Edison High School, where most of the students are Haitian. One senior said "No one in my family has a green card," referring to permanent residency status. "I don't have a green card, so I can't go home for a visit. I haven't seen my mother for five years." Under another part of the new laws, immigrants who have been in the United States without documents can be barred from reentry for up to 10 years if they leave.

Among the speakers at the rally was Tony Jeanthor from Veye-Yo, a Haitian rights organization, who told the protesters, "They [U.S. officials] don't give any gifts to people. We have to keep protesting in the streets and we will rip our residency from their hands." He told the crowd to support a bill introduced in Congress by Rep. Carrie Meek, a Florida Democrat, that would give residency

to about 30,000 Haitian immigrants who came to the U.S. before Dec. 31, 1995.

Along with representatives of different Haitian groups, Monica Russo, southern organizing director for the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, also addressed the crowd, as did several immigrant rights lawyers.

Rollande Girard from the Socialist Workers Party also spoke, saying, "The attacks on immigrants' rights and the deportations are part of the workings of the capitalist system in crisis. Look around the world at the economic crisis in Asia, the massacre in Chiapas, Mexico, the U.S. threats against Iraq, and the worsening situation in Haiti, which remains occupied by U.S. troops. More people will be forced to leave their countries," she said. "What we need is a movement like the civil rights movement to fight to defend immigrants, workers, and all the oppressed."

The INS offices were open until midnight that day, as a seemingly endless line of people waited with their manila envelopes and file folders to pay their \$1,000 fee. For several hours they could hear the protesters chanting outside.

Rachele Fruit is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1126. Rollande Girard, a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 7609, contributed to this article.

New releases from Pathfinder highlight the roots of jazz and the Black struggle

John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s, 480 pp. Pathfinder Press, 1970, 1998. \$23.95. *Black Music, White Business* 200 pp. Pathfinder Press. \$17.95. Both books by Frank Kofsky.

"Jazz is one of the most meaningful social, esthetic contributions to America... it is antiwar; it is opposed to [the U.S. war in] Vietnam; it is for Cuba; it is for the liberation of all people.... Why is that so? Because jazz is a music itself born out of oppression, born out of the enslavement of my people." — Saxophonist Archie Shepp.

BY SAM MANUEL

This insightful comment by Shepp points to the wellspring of the revolution in jazz music some three decades ago. It is taken from *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution in the 1960s* by Frank Kofsky, recently released by Pathfinder Press. A companion book, *Black Music, White Business: Illuminating the History and Political Economy*

IN REVIEW

of Jazz, will soon follow.

Coltrane is a revised and expanded edition of *Black Nationalism and the Revolution in Music*, first issued in 1970. *Black Music* presents a gripping exposition of the exploitation of jazz musicians and the music by the wealthy capitalist owners who control the recording studios, promotional firms, and booking agencies.

Jazz and struggle for Black freedom

Both books are indispensable contributions to understanding jazz and its relation to the struggle for Black freedom. They are timely contributions to the renewed interest in Coltrane and the political ferment in urban Black working-class communities across this country in the 1960s that made the music possible.

Just as many white liberals and radicals alike could not hear, or reacted sharply against, the revolutionary message and course of Malcolm X and the rise of nationalist consciousness among Black youth in the late 1960s—the mostly white "music critics" reacted in similar fashion to the explosive and rebellious innovations in jazz led by John Coltrane, Archie Shepp, Max Roach, and others.

Take this sample of commentary by Nat Hentoff, which appeared in the jazz magazine *down beat*.

"Coltrane's tone is often strident at the edges," wrote Hentoff, "and rarely appears to sustain a legato softness as [white "cool" saxophonist Stan] Getz can.... Another horn—a gentler trumpeter, say—would have helped complement the not always attractive Coltrane sound."

Some even challenged jazz's standing as music. In the same magazine Ira Gitler wrote, "I don't know, by any stretch of the imagination, how the music I heard that night

could be called musical.... I think we're getting away from musical values that have been established for centuries."

Others conceded jazz's validity but attempted to disconnect it from its Black roots. *Coltrane* traces the origins of jazz from early Negro gospels, work songs from the southern plantations, the blues, and the increasingly secular music forged in the growing urban ghettos following the migration for work in northern factories under the impetus of the second world war.

Identification with Africa

The names given the compositions by the musicians speak of the Black experience in America—"Walkin'," "Doin' the Thing," "Head Shakin'," "In a Funky Groove," "Ribs and Chips." Compositions like "Dakar," "Tanganyika Strut," "African Lady," and "Dahomey Dance" reflected the growing identification of Blacks with the struggle against colonial rule in Africa and the impact of this identification upon the music. Many Black jazz musicians began to incorporate instruments and musical styles from Africa and the East.

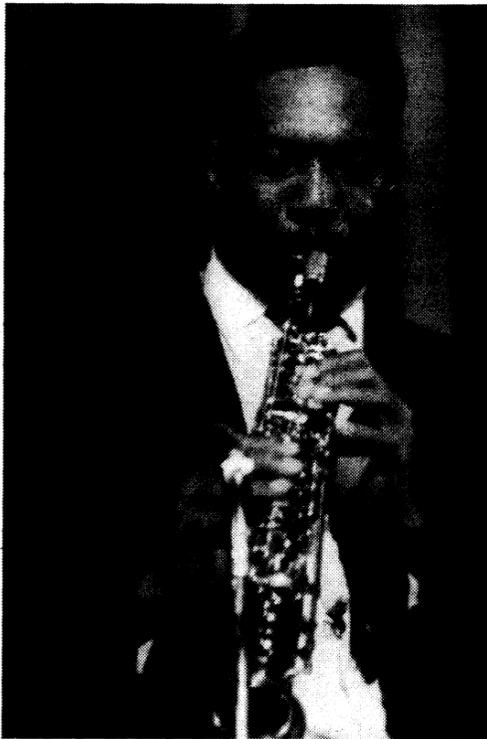
Coltrane's "Alabama" is a tribute to the civil rights movement. A benefit appearance by him at the University of California in 1960 to raise funds for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the main student civil rights group, was blocked by then university chancellor Clark Kerr.

The jazz revolution of the 1960s was preceded by the innovative bebop style of the 1940s. Among those musicians were trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie and saxophonist Charlie "Yardbird" Parker. Bebop's demise was followed by "cool" or "West Coast" jazz, a style more to the liking of white music critics. "Cool" was dominated by white jazz musicians such as trumpeter Chet Baker and saxophonist Stan Getz.

Kofsky's passionate defense of the origins and nature of jazz is unleashed in his comparison of solos by Gillespie, the father of bebop trumpet-playing, to one from the period of cool trumpeter Baker.

"Where Gillespie roams the entire instrument, plays at the top and bottom of its range, is not afraid to be triple fortissimo as the context demands, packs his solos full of flurries of rapidly cascading short notes, and is generally eloquent in a florid, full-blooded manner, Baker's approach is smooth to the point of blandness and almost completely devoid of excitement.... The overall effect is one of 'pretty' but relatively vapid music."

Kofsky explains, the issue is not whether some white musicians can become competent jazz performers or even innovators in the music. Nor is it whether whites can appreciate the music. But rather who's music



Left: Frank Kofsky

Frank Kofsky's books trace and explain the innovations in jazz by Black artists such as John Coltrane (left), and Billie Holiday (top), seen with saxophonist Lester "Prez" Young. White-owned music industries all but stole the contributions that Holiday, Charlie Parker, Bessie Smith, and many other Black musicians of their time made to the music world.

is it? From what people and experience does the music draw its vitality? "Dave Brubeck, a white jazz pianist," writes Kofsky, "is certainly unique in his approach to the piano, but unlike the no-less-unique Black pianist Thelonious Monk, his style has never been sufficiently compelling to produce a 'school' of musicians whose playing can be unequivocally traced back to him."

Coltrane is not simply a revision of *Black Nationalism and the Revolution in Music*. It contains some 150 additional pages of material. In addition to the new chapters in the book the author invested effort in reworking the original material so as to make it easily accessible to younger generations.

Coltrane also provides a richer analysis of jazz music in an added chapter on drummer Elvin Jones. It illuminates the central role played by the relationship between Jones and Coltrane in the evolution of jazz rhythm in Coltrane's quartet. Music readers will gain even more from the numerous musical notations that have been added.

'Are we running any record companies?'

"Where the control is, the money is. Do you see any of us [black musicians] running any record companies, booking agencies, radio stations, music magazines?" asks trumpeter Rex Stewart in *Black Music, White Business*.

Black Music, as the title suggests, illuminates the political economy of jazz. It is among the most serious treatments of the subject available. As Kofsky explains, no genuine approach to this issue can be attempted without examining the principal contradiction in jazz pointed to by Stewart: Blacks create the music but wealthy whites own it.

The expropriation of the means of expression of a whole people—and its transformation into just one more commodity to accrue profit—is the key to understanding the ruthless exploitation of jazz music and the musicians.

Black Music opens with examples of how three of the biggest names in jazz and blues—Charlie Parker, Billie Holiday, and Bessie Smith—were rendered helpless in face of this fundamental relationship between the makers and owners of the music.

Parker was the most prominent innovator of the bebop style of jazz. In 1946 he was arrested and sentenced to a state hospital for the mentally ill. Ross Russell, then owner of Dial Records, a company that owed its existence to recording Parker's music, arranged for the saxophonist's release. As a price for Russell's aid, Parker was forced to sign a renewal of

his contract giving Dial exclusive recording rights.

John Hammond, a descendant of the Vanderbilt family and a top executive of Columbia Records for many years, fashioned himself as a promoter of jazz music and friend of the musicians. The truth is that Hammond despised the musicians and the music. He increased his wealth at the expense of talented artists such as Holiday and Smith.

Even the money Hammond could make was of secondary importance whenever an artist got out of place. *Black Music* recounts the executive's displeasure at Holiday's decision to hire a woman from a "distinguished" [i.e., wealthy] family of his acquaintance as her manager.

"I was concerned that she and her family might be hurt by unsavory gossip, or even blackmailed by the gangsters and dope pushers Billie knew," Hammond relates in his autobiography. After his intervention Holiday lost her manager "and never worked at Cafe Society again" Hammond added.

Billie Holiday: \$30, no royalties

Hammond signed Holiday and Smith to a series of contracts with Columbia Records that gave them a small flat fee for each recording and no royalties. In one instance Holiday received \$30 for half a dozen recordings. To add insult to injury, company policy at Columbia designated Hammond "the sole recipient of royalties" from sales of a 1970s reissue of Smith's albums. Kofsky estimates Hammond made \$60,000 off Smith alone. In 1998 dollars the amount is at least four or five times as great.

Jazz history is replete with the continued exploitation of the musicians even after death. Recordings withheld from the market are often released with much publicity after the artist has died.

Following Smith's death Columbia released a memorial album with much fanfare. It was later discovered that Smith lay in an unmarked grave. After a campaign by rock singer Janis Joplin and Juanita Green, a Black nurse, a few hundred dollars was raised for a headstone and a scholarship in Smith's name.

Columbia records finally saw fit to part with \$1,000 to augment the fund. Hammond added his own princely contribution of \$50.

In *Black Music* Kofsky drives home the totality of white control of a Black art form. Even those who interpret the music in jazz journals, books, and academic forums are white. And with few exceptions their attitudes are at best patronizing and often disdainful.

What the critics dislike most about the revolution in jazz led by John Coltrane is what Kofsky so brilliantly describes in both books, the defiant humanity of Black workers, which is so unmistakably clear in the music.

Sam Manuel is a member of the United Transportation Union in Washington, D.C.

Just off the press from Pathfinder



John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s

Coltrane's role in spearheading the last major innovative development in jazz, and how the 1960s jazz revolution reflected an intense cultural, political, and ideological ferment—marked especially by the rise of resistance to racial discrimination. Also contains the best-known interview with John Coltrane—recorded in 1966, a year before his death. Formerly published as *Black Nationalism and the Revolution in Music*. \$23.95, paper. **Special offer: \$18 for Pathfinder Readers Club members.** Available in cloth, \$65.

By Frank Kofsky

Black Music, White Business

Illuminating the History and Political Economy of Jazz

Probes the principal contradiction in the jazz world: that between Black artistry on the one hand and white ownership of the means of jazz distribution—the recording companies, booking agencies, festivals, nightclubs, and magazines—on the other. \$17.95, paper. \$50, cloth.

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

Coming soon

Seattle YS joins fight for affirmative action

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists (YS), an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS write to: Young Socialists, 1573 N. Milwaukee, P.O. Box #478, Chicago, Ill. 60622. Tel: (773) 772-0551. Compuserve: 105162,605

BY ALARIC DIRMEYER AND AUTUMN KNOWLTON

SEATTLE — Close to 2,500 people marched from Garfield High School to downtown Seattle January 19 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The theme of this year's march was "Affirm Affirmative Action," which is in response to the growing attack on this important gain won through years of struggle in the civil rights movement. In a speech at the kick-off rally, Hop Hopkins, a student leader at Seattle Central Community College (SCCC), confidently stated, "Ordinary people are the ones who make change." The mobilization included many in the local Black community, as well as organizations of students and workers like Mothers Against Police Harassment, the Urban League, the Coalition for the Preservation of Affirmative Action, and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

This march follows a series of student-organized actions that have opposed Initiative 200, a measure modeled after Proposition 209 in California, which aims to end affirmative action in public schools and in government hiring and contracts. Students at the University of Washington organized a 1,000-strong rally on December 4, and SCCC coalition sponsored a rally attended by 250 people on December 6 demanding rejection of Initiative 200. Students at both schools have joined forces to call for a march in Olympia on January 31 as a show of student militancy to preserve affirmative action. The Seattle chapter of the Young Socialists has thrown itself into this campaign, helping to organize the rallies and draw in the support of organized labor.

The local chapter ended the day of action with an open house at the Pathfinder bookstore on socialism and the fight for Black liberation with YS leader Joshua Carroll, who is touring the West Coast to build the upcoming Western Regional Socialist Conference in Seattle January 24-25.



BY JOSHUA CARROLL

SEATTLE — The Los Angeles leg of the tour to build the Young Socialists (YS) and the upcoming regional conference in Seattle started on a good note January 16 with a dinner and discussion. Three members of the YS came, as well as another young person who is planning on coming to the conference and is thinking about joining the Young Socialists.

We spent most of the evening discussing politics, especially the need for workers and

youth to oppose Washington's war preparations against Iraq. Another topic of discussion was the Unz Initiative — a proposed law that would end all bilingual education programs in California public schools. The following day YS members went to the University of California — Los Angeles campus to talk to various student organizations about participating in a January 20 picket line protesting Washington's war drive.

Another noteworthy meeting in Los Angeles was a dinner meeting January 17 at the home of Craig Honts, a socialist rail worker and a member of the United Transportation Union (UTU). The meeting was organized so that I could meet a young co-worker of his, Nester Bazúa, who is planning to come to the Seattle conference.

Bazúa was in the U.S. Army in Iraq during the 1991 U.S.-led Gulf War. He explained how U.S. soldiers were given no information about what was going on. Most of the soldiers in his platoon, he said, had nothing against the Iraqi people. "Many of the prisoners we took weren't even armed and they hadn't eaten. We gave them some of the food that we had," he said.

Bazúa also explained that his basic motivation for fighting was the possibility of leaving. "We did what they told us to do so that we could get it over with and then go home." During his time in the army he took opportunities to explain to other soldiers in his platoon that the war against Iraq was being waged for oil by the big-business interests in the United States.

In Seattle I participated on January 20 in a march of 1,500 in honor of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, and against Initiative 200. After the march, members of the Young

Socialists organized an open house at the Pathfinder bookstore, where we got into a lively discussion on affirmative action. Kate Porter, a leader of Students Against I-200 and the Coalition to Preserve Affirmative Action, said, "We still need affirmative action because there is still racism and discrimination."

Following the march in Seattle, I flew to San Francisco. On January 20, we organized a meeting of six people at the University of California at Santa Cruz. After that, five of us drove to Palo Alto to attend a picket line of about 200 people in defense of bilingual education. Many of them pointed to the connection between the Unz Initiative; Proposition 187, which barred undocumented immigrants from receiving public education and healthcare; and Proposition 209, which ended all state-sponsored affirmative action.

West Coast Regional Socialist Conference January 24-25 Seattle

Main Presentations

The Siren Call of Economic Nationalism and Washington's March toward Fascism and War

JACK BARNES, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party

- ▶ Asia and beyond: the looming crisis in Europe
- ▶ Iraq and beyond: the weakening of the Clinton administration and the shortening war fuse
- ▶ The seduction of the entire North American left by the new leadership of the AFL-CIO
- ▶ Liberal reformers and petty bourgeois radicals walk workers and youth toward Patrick Buchanan's fascist trap
- ▶ Oliver North joins outcry against horror of sweatshops abroad
- ▶ Poor Little Tibet: Today's Poor Little Finland
- ▶ Seattle, Boeing: the central political test of workers' space in the war industries

100 Years of Struggle against Yankee Imperialism: The Weight of the Cuban Revolution in a World of Growing Capitalist Disorder

MARY-ALICE WATERS, Editor of 'New International' magazine

- ▶ The special period, rectification, and the homecoming of Che Guevara's Reinforcement Brigade
- ▶ From Brazil to Japan: Washington's drive to buy up the world
- ▶ The scope of the spreading economic crisis in Latin America and the tasks of revolutionary fighters
- ▶ The pope's visit and its effect on the course of the Cuban revolution
- ▶ The leadership transition to new generations of Cuban communists
- ▶ The combat example set by the Cuban people and their Revolutionary Armed Forces

Schedule

Saturday, January 24

- 9 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Registration
- 12 noon Meeting of socialist workers in the United Transportation Union (UTU)
- 12 noon Reception
- 1:00 p.m. Opening presentations and discussion

9:00 P.M. Sendoff for international team to Havana Book Fair and Young Socialists delegation to Cairo meeting to discuss 1997 World Festival of Youth and Students in Havana and next steps for international youth movement.

Social to follow.

Sunday, January 25

- 8:45 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Classes
- 11:15 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Classes
- 2:15-5:45 p.m. Discussion (continued) and Summary of Conference
- 7:00 p.m.-9:30 p.m. Meeting of socialist workers in UTU (to be continued Monday, January 26)

Classes

Who will change the world? The battle of Birmingham and the fight to end racist segregation
Stephen Bloodworth and Derek Bracey

Iraq and the working-class campaign against imperialist war
Joel Britton and Naomi Craine

From the defeat of Radical Reconstruction to the Spanish-American War: the rise of U.S. imperialism and the struggle against it
Andrea Morell

Working farmers in the whirlwind of capitalist crisis: From Mad Cow Disease to Round-Up Ready Beans — The scourge of nationalism and the fight for a worker-farmer alliance
Doug Jenness and Ian Garvey

The fight for Quebec independence: On the front lines of the struggle against Canadian imperialism
Michel Prairie and Jason Phelps

FOR TRANSPORTATION, HOTEL AND OTHER INFORMATION:
Young Socialists: (773) 772-0551
Los Angeles SWP: (213) 380-9460
San Francisco SWP: (415) 282-6255
Seattle SWP: (206) 323-1755



Selling the Militant at Boeing plant gate in Seattle, Dec. 5, 1997



Rally in California in defense of affirmative action, Sept. 19, 1995

Correction

Last week's issue of the Militant published a column by me that quoted Lenin Fernández, a young worker in Vancouver, as saying, "Imperialism lost in Vietnam; it lost in Cuba; and it lost in Nicaragua. It's not as strong as it was before." I wrote that I agreed entirely with that statement.

I do agree that imperialism is weaker today, but this statement is wrong with respect to Nicaragua. The workers and farmers of Nicaragua did deal a military defeat to the *contras* — counter-revolutionary forces that were armed and funded by Washington — after many years of war. But the government led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front, which came to power in a 1979 revolution, recoiled from consistently turning to the ranks of workers and peasants, as the communist leadership in Cuba had done in the early years of the revolution there. By searching for an accommodation with imperialism, the leadership set the stage for the revolution's eventual defeat, and this was a victory for imperialism.

Joshua Carroll

U.S. probes against Iraq

Continued from front page
minister Tariq Aziz had called for a freeze until April on discussions with UN "weapons inspectors" on granting them "full access" throughout Iraqi territory. Richard Butler, the chief UN inspector, rejected the proposal, saying, "I cannot rule out that tomorrow or the next day ... I will authorize an inspection to one of the presidential sites." Baghdad has declared presidential sites off-limits to the UN inspectors.

The day before Aziz's proposal, U.S. Rear Admiral John Nathan declared, "It is perfectly clear to the Iraqi government that if they don't comply with sanctions, then the military option will be the type of option that will make the difference."

Nathan, commander of a group of seven U.S. warships deployed in the Persian Gulf, spoke from the aircraft carrier *USS Nimitz* as several of its 75 warplanes blasted off its deck to enforce the "no-fly zone" in southern Iraq. "We have great striking power and we certainly are the leverage for the United Nations," he warned.

In addition to Washington's arsenal, London announced January 16 it was sending the aircraft carrier *HMS Invincible* accompanied by the *Royal Fleet Auxiliary Fort Victoria* to Gulf region. London is the only government on the UN Security Council backing Washington's willingness to launch

military strikes. When Moscow, Paris, and Beijing balked at backing previous White House war moves in mid-November, Clinton was forced to accept a diplomatic solution. Meanwhile, Iraqi president Saddam Hussein announced January 17 that cooperation with UN inspectors would be suspended by May 20 if sanctions against Iraq's oil sales are not lifted. Baghdad asserts that Washington and London intend to manipulate inspections to ensure the embargo, which was imposed during the U.S.-led Gulf War, in which more than 100,000 Iraqis were killed, remains in place indefinitely.

An unnamed senior Clinton administration official admitted, "the logic of our position is that sanctions will be in place until he [Saddam Hussein] is gone."

Baghdad has demanded that the U.S. U-2 spy flights flying over Iraqi territory be replaced by French or Russian planes and also called for 1 million volunteers to campaign for an end to the seven-year-old embargo. The Iraqi government organized a rally of 5,000 people January 19 demanding an end to sanctions in front of the UN inspectors' headquarters in Baghdad.

A funeral procession was held that same day for 73 children who died because of lack of medical supplies. Since the sanctions were imposed, infant mortality has increased six-fold. A United Nations Children's Fund

report release last November reported that 32 percent of Iraqi children — some 960,000 people — are chronically malnourished as a result of lack of food and medicines due to the UN embargo.

When the Iraqi government imported a batch of growth medium, which is used in hospitals, U.S. and British officials issued allegations that the substance was for use by Baghdad for developing a biological weapons program.

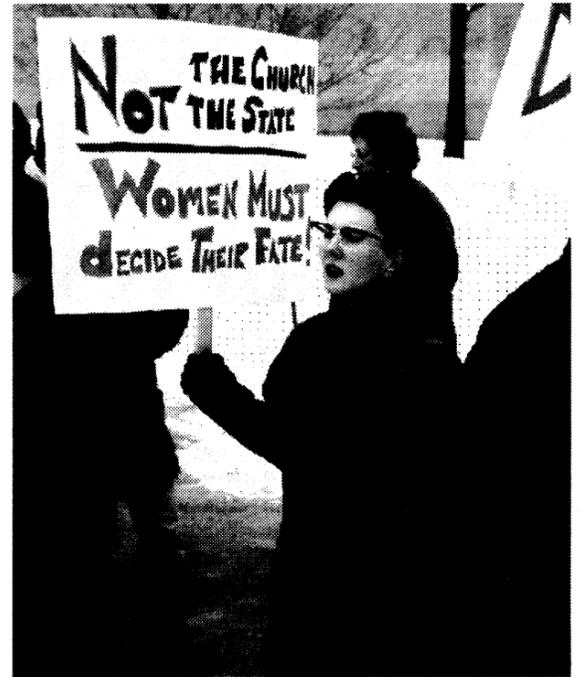
Washington uses these claims to demand the right to snoop on any facility in Iraq; searching detergent factories, breweries, pharmaceutical production, dairy factories, and vegetable processing plants.

Another allegation by Butler that Baghdad was conducting "possible biological testing on human beings" at a prison was disputed by other UN officials. Charles Duelfer, deputy chairman of the United Nations Special Commission to disarm Iraq, said a photograph found more than two years ago of a man with a lesion

on his arm touted as evidence proved nothing.

"We certainly cannot draw the conclusion that it's human testing," he asserted.

Detroit: Defend abortion rights!



Militant/John Sarge

Fifty to 75 abortion rights supporters held a spirited protest outside a Right to Life rally at Wayne State University January 18 in Detroit. About half the protesters entered the rally. Cops and antichoice thugs forcibly removed those seated at the front and arrested six of the young activists.

'No sanctions against Iraq'

Continued from front page

Coalition told the *Militant*, that he was there because "I am opposed to aggression against any country. No country has the right to inspect another country. You don't let your neighbor see what's in your house. Why let your enemy?"

Galarza is also one of the organizers of the Comité Nacional Puertorriqueño '98 that is organizing Chicago's participation in the July 25 March on Washington to protest the U.S. invasion of Puerto Rico 100 years ago. He reported they are getting a good response for the march, especially from many Puerto Ricans and Filipinos.

Jack Willey, a leader of the Young Socialists, addressed the crowd at the end of the protest. "Once again, the Clinton administration is on the prod against Iraq, using the pretext of Baghdad having weapons of mass destruction. Washington is the only government to use nuclear weapons, bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II. This is the same government that invaded Panama, led an occupation of Haiti and has led the occupation of Yugoslavia."

Willey continued, "This latest war threat comes after the failure of the White House to get any semblance of a coalition to support its November attempt at military action. Richard Butler, U.N. Chief Arms Inspector, held a press conference today, claiming that talks with Iraq are not going anywhere. In the days ahead, it will be important to get the truth out at factories, schools and in the streets and to remain vigilant and prepared for more actions like this one to demand 'U.S. Hands Off Iraq,' 'End the Embargo,' and 'No to UN Inspection Teams.'"

BY GREG McCARTAN

BOSTON — Twenty people chanted,

"US hands off Iraq! End the sanctions now!" and passed out flyers to workers and young people passing by during a spirited demonstration here January 20 in front of the John F. Kennedy Federal building.

They opposed Washington's latest military threats against Iraq, the brutal seven-year-long sanctions, and pledged to continue organizing to protest Washington's aggressive policies.

Carol Thomas from the July 26 Coalition in Solidarity with the Cuban Revolution; Andrea Morell from the Socialist Workers Party, who is a member of the United Transportation Union; and Jim Casteris, representing Veterans for Peace gave brief remarks opposing the U.S. government policy.

Other actions organized across the country against Clinton's latest war moves included a January 20 demonstration at the Federal building in Los Angeles where 20 people participated; a January 21 protest in Des Moines, Iowa; a January 22 rally at the Federal Building in New York; and a picket line planned for January 23 in Houston.

'Euro' likely, but won't bring stability

Continued from Page 3

reaching consequences for the European Union. It poses the question of whether the EU budget should go to cover the costs of German reunification or to weaker capitalist powers in southern Europe, especially Italy, Greece, Spain, and Portugal. For the ruling class in Germany this is an important consideration, because since the early 1990s they've put about \$100 billion a year into trying to turn eastern Germany into a prof-

itable capitalist region, without success and without an end in sight. Bonn depends on a strong mark to attract capital from capitalists around the world, who have seen buying German bonds as business.

Euro will be a weak currency

The EMU is a project with bad odds, but it has rolled so far politically that it cannot be stopped short of a collapse coming from its own dynamic and the dynamic of the world capitalist crises. Already it is obvious that the euro will be a weaker than the still relatively strong mark, and will drag down the German currencies. As such, it will not be attractive for capitalists around the world who are looking for safe havens to place their capital, compared to U.S. greenbacks or Swiss francs in times of financial volatility.

The euro is not a thing. It is a set of social relations that will reflect the relatively weak standing of the ruling classes in Europe, in relation both to the working class and to their capitalist rivals in other part of the world — especially the United States — on military, political, and economic fronts. It will not replace the U.S. dollar as the main reserve currency for world trade, although it will probably diminish the use of dollars in trade and financial transactions in Europe for a time. Today central banks hold about 60 percent of their \$1.4 trillion foreign exchange reserves in U.S. dollars, compared with just 20 percent in European currencies.

While there will probably be a shift in these figures after the Euro is launched, it will not be like between the first and second world wars, when the U.S. dollar replaced the British pound sterling as the world's reserve currency and Wall Street replaced the City as the financial center of the world.

The EMU and the euro cannot become the strong and powerful means that the ruling classes in most of the states in Europe hope will help resolve their troubles. Its dynamic is more like the attempt to restore the gold standard in the 1920s, which was put forward as a mantra to take Europe out of its deep crisis following World War I, and which in the end helped trigger the financial collapse that was the beginning of the Great Depression of the 1930s.

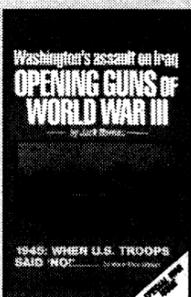
Carl-Erik Isacson is a member of the Metalworkers Union in Södertälje, Sweden.

Opening Guns of World War III

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by Jack Barnes

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Che Guevara, Cuba, and the Algerian revolution

The article below appeared in the October 1997 issue of the French publication *Le Monde diplomatique*, under the title, "On the 30th Anniversary of the Death of Che Guevara: Che as I knew him." Its author, Ahmed Ben Bella, was the central leader of the Algerian National Liberation Front, which led the struggle for independence from France. Ben Bella was the president of the revolutionary workers and farmers government that came to power following the victory over Paris in 1962. He was overthrown in a counterrevolutionary coup led by Col. Houari Boumediene in June 1965.

We are reprinting it here as a final, twelfth part to the series of articles and speeches by those who knew and worked with Guevara that the *Militant* reprinted at the end of 1997 under the rubric "Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution."

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On October 9, 1967, in a little school-room in La Higuera, Bolivia, Ernesto "Che" Guevara was assassinated. He had been taken prisoner the day before. Thus ended the life of a revolutionary whom Jean-Paul Sartre called "the most complete human being of our era." It had led him from Argentina to Guatemala, from Cuba to the Congo, and finally to Bolivia, always inspired by an ardent hope of relieving the sufferings of the poor. President Ahmed Ben Bella met him many times in Algiers from 1962-65 when the city was a haven for all the anti-imperialists of the world.

BY AHMED BEN BELLA

For thirty years Che Guevara has been challenging our consciences. From beyond space and time, we hear Che's call, which demands that we answer: yes, only the revolution can sometimes transform man into a being of light. We saw this light illuminating his naked body lying somewhere in distant Nancahuazú,¹ in the photographs that appeared in newspapers all over the world. The message of his final gaze continues to touch the depths of our soul.

Che was a courageous fighter, but a conscious one, with a body weakened by asthma. Sometimes, when I climbed with him to the Chréa heights overlooking the town of Blida, I saw him suffer an attack that turned him green in the face. Anyone who has read his Bolivian diary knows in what poor health he faced the terrible physical and mental ordeals with which his path was strewn.

It is impossible to speak of Che without

speaking of Cuba and the special relations which united us, since his story and his life were so closely bound up with the country that became his second home before he turned to wherever the revolution called him.

I first met Ernesto "Che" Guevara in the autumn of 1962, on the eve of the international crisis around the missile affair and the United States blockade of Cuba.² Algeria had just achieved independence and formed its first government. As head of that government, I was due to attend the September 1962 session of the United Nations in New York at which the Algerian flag would be raised for the first time over the UN building, a ceremony marking the victory of our national liberation struggle and Algeria's entry into the concert of free nations.

Visits to Washington and Havana

The National Liberation Front's political bureau had decided that the trip to the United Nations should be followed by a visit to Cuba. More than just a visit, it was intended as an act of faith demonstrating our political commitment. Algeria wished to emphasize publicly its total solidarity with the Cuban revolution, especially at this difficult moment in its history.

I was invited to the White House on the morning of October 15, 1962, and had a frank and heated discussion about Cuba with the president, John Fitzgerald Kennedy. I asked him point blank: "Are you heading towards a confrontation with Cuba?" His reply left no doubt about his real intentions. "No," he said, "if there are no Soviet missiles. Yes, if there are." Kennedy tried hard to dissuade me from flying to Cuba direct from New York. He even suggested that the Cuban military aircraft that was to fly me to Havana might be attacked by Cuban opposition forces based in Miami. To these thinly veiled threats I retorted that I was a *fellah* who could not be intimidated by *harkis*, whether Algerian or Cuban.³

We arrived in Cuba on October 16 amid indescribable scenes of popular enthusiasm. The program provided for political discussions at party headquarters in Havana immediately after our delegation arrived. But things worked out very differently. As soon as our luggage had been dropped off at the place where we were supposed to stay, we threw protocol overboard and began a heart-to-heart talk with Fidel, Che Guevara, Raúl Castro, and the other leaders who were accompanying us.

We stayed and talked for hours and hours. I naturally conveyed to the Cuban leaders the impression I had received from my conversation with President Kennedy. At the end of an impassioned discussion, around



Ahmed Ben Bella (center), leader of the Algerian revolution, is welcomed to Havana in October 1962 by Cuban president Fidel Castro (left) and an enthusiastic crowd. The day before he got a much cooler reception from U.S. president John Kennedy in Washington (inset).

tables which we had pushed together end-to-end, we realized that we had practically exhausted the questions on the agenda. There was no point in a further meeting at party headquarters, and by mutual consent we moved straight on to the program of visits prepared for us across the country.

This anecdote gives an idea of the total lack of formality that, from the very beginning, was the norm for the relations uniting the Cuban and Algerian revolutions and of my personal relations with Fidel Castro and Che Guevara.

Cuban troops aid Algerian revolution

The solidarity between us was spectacularly confirmed in October 1963, when the Tindouf campaign presented the first serious threat to the Algerian revolution.⁴ Our young army, fresh from a war of liberation, had no air cover (since we didn't have a single plane) or armored transport. It was attacked by the Moroccan armed forces on the terrain that was most unfavorable to it, where it was unable to use the only tactics it knew and had tried and tested in the liberation struggle, namely guerrilla warfare.

The vast barren expanses of desert were far from the mountains of Aurès, Djurdjura, the Collo peninsula or Tlemcen, which had been its natural milieu and whose every resource and secret were familiar to it. Our enemies had decided that the momentum of Algerian revolution had to be broken before

it grew too strong and carried everything in its wake.

The Egyptian president, Abdel Nasser, quickly provided us with the air cover we lacked, and Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, Raúl Castro, and the other Cuban leaders sent us a battalion of 22 tanks and several hundred troops. They were deployed at Bedeau, south of Sidi Bel Abbès, where I inspected them, and were ready to enter into combat if the desert war continued.

The tanks were fitted with infrared equipment that allowed them to be used at night. They had been delivered to Cuba by the Soviet Union on the express condition that they were not to be made available to third countries, even communist countries such as Bulgaria, in any circumstances. Despite these restrictions from Moscow, the Cubans defied all the taboos and sent their tanks to the assistance of the endangered Algerian revolution without a moment's hesitation.

The United States was clearly behind the Tindouf campaign. We knew that the helicopters transporting the Moroccan troops were piloted by Americans. The same considerations of international solidarity subsequently led the Cubans to intervene on the other side of the Atlantic, in Angola, and elsewhere.

The circumstances surrounding the arrival of the tank battalion are worth recalling since they illustrate better than any commentary the nature of our special relations with Cuba.

Coming soon! from the pages of the *Militant*

Celebrating the homecoming of Ernesto Che Guevara's reinforcement brigade to Cuba

Articles from the *Militant* newspaper on the 30th anniversary of the combat waged in Bolivia by Che and his comrades

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 - International conference in Havana on "Socialism as the 21st century approaches"
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- ❖ Cuban Generals speak out
- ❖ Twelve-part series "Che and the Cuban revolution"; articles and interviews by fellow revolutionists who knew and worked with Che — \$8.00

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This selection is part of a series marking the 30th anniversary of the death in combat of Ernesto Che Guevara. Argentine by birth, Guevara became one of the central leaders of the Cuban revolution that brought down the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959 and, in response to mounting pressure from Washington, opened the socialist revolution in the Americas. Che, as he is popularly known, was one of the outstanding Marxist leaders of the 20th century.

In 1966-67, he led a nucleus of revolutionaries from Bolivia, Cuba, and Peru who fought to overthrow the military dictatorship in Bolivia. In the process, they sought to forge a Latin America-wide movement of workers and peasants that could lead the battle for land reform and against U.S. imperialist domination of the continent and advance the struggle for socialism. Guevara was wounded and captured on Oct. 8, 1967. He was shot the next day by the Bolivian military, after consultation with Washington.

As part of the commemoration of this anniversary in Cuba, dozens of articles, speeches, and interviews by those who worked with Che were published, dealing with the Cuban revolution, its impact in world politics, and the actions of its leadership. Many of Guevara's collaborators and family members have spoken at conferences and other meetings, bringing Che to life for a new generation and explaining the importance of his rich political legacy today. These materials contain many valuable firsthand accounts and information, some of which are being written down and published for the first time. They are part of the broader discussion taking place in Cuba today on how to advance the revolution.

The *Militant* is reprinting a selection of these contributions, along with related material such as the article above, as a weekly feature, under the banner "Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution."

When I visited Cuba in 1962, Fidel Castro made a point of honoring his country's pledge to give us two billion old French francs worth of aid.⁵ Because of Cuba's economic situation, the aid was to be provided in sugar rather than in currency. I objected, arguing that Cuba needed her sugar at that time more than we did, he would not take no for an answer.

About a year after our discussion, a ship flying the Cuban flag docked in the port of Oran. Along with the promised cargo of sugar, we were surprised to discover two dozen tanks and hundreds of Cuban soldiers sent to help us. A brief note from Raúl Castro, scribbled on a page torn out of an exercise book, announced this act of solidarity.

Obviously, we could not let the ship return empty. We filled it with Algerian products and, on the advice of Ambassador Jorge Serguera, added a few Berber horses. This was the start of a kind of barter between our two countries that was carried on in the name of solidarity and was entirely devoid of commercial considerations. Circumstances and constraints permitting, it was a distinctive feature of our relations.

Che's internationalist work in Africa

Che Guevara was acutely aware of the countless restrictions that hinder and weaken genuine revolutionary action — and indeed of the limits on any experiment, however revolutionary — as soon as it confronts directly or indirectly the implacable rules of the market and the huckster mentality. He denounced them publicly at the Afro-Asian Conference held in Algiers in February 1965.⁶ Moreover, the painful terms on which the affair of the missiles installed in Cuba had been concluded, and the agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States, had left a bitter taste. I myself exchanged very tough words on the matter with the Soviet ambassador in Algiers. All of this, together with the situation prevailing in Africa, which seemed to have enormous revolutionary potential, led Che to the conclusion that Africa was imperialism's weak link. It was to Africa that he now decided to devote his efforts.

I tried to point out that perhaps this was not the best way to help advance the revolutionary maturity that was developing on our continent. An armed revolution can and must find foreign support, but it first has to create the internal resources on which to base its struggle. But Che Guevara insisted that his own commitment must be total and required his physical presence. He made several trips to Cabinda (Angola) and Congo-Brazzaville.

He refused my offer of a private plane to help disguise his movements, so I instructed Algerian ambassadors throughout the region to provide him with every assistance. Whenever he returned from sub-Saharan Africa, we spent long hours exchanging ideas. Each time he came back impressed by the fabulous cultural riches of the African continent but dissatisfied with his relations with the Marxist parties of the countries he had visited and irritated by their approach. His experience in Cabinda and subsequent contacts with the guerrilla struggle around Stanleyville were particularly disappointing.⁷

Meanwhile, parallel to Che's activity, we were pursuing another course of action to save the armed revolution in western Zaire. In agreement with Nyerere, Nasser, Modibo Keita, N'Krumah, Kenyatta and Sekou Touré,⁸ Algeria contributed by airlifting arms via Egypt, while Uganda and Mali supplied military cadres. The rescue plan had been conceived at a meeting in Cairo convened on my initiative. We were beginning to implement it when we received a desperate cry for help from the leaders of the armed struggle. Despite our efforts, we were too late and the revolution was drowned in blood by the assassins of Patrice Lumumba.

During one of his visits to Algiers, Che Guevara informed me of a request from Fidel. Since Cuba was under close surveillance, there was no real chance of organizing the supply of arms and military cadres trained in Cuba to other Latin American countries. Could Algeria take over? Distance was no great handicap. On the contrary, it could work in favor of the secrecy vital for the success of such a large-scale operation.

I agreed, of course, without hesitation. We immediately began to establish organiza-

tional structures, placed under the direct control of Che Guevara, to host Latin American revolutionary movements. Soon representatives of all these movements moved to Algiers, where I met them many times together with Che.

Their combined headquarters were set up in the hills overlooking Algiers in a large

Sukarno and Nasser, etc.⁹

The date October 9, 1967, is written in fire in our memory. For me, a solitary prisoner, it was a day of immeasurable sadness. The radio announced the death of my brother, and the enemies we had fought together celebrated their sinister victory. But as time passes, and the circumstances of the



Celebrating the second anniversary of the victorious independence struggle that brought a workers and farmers government to power, thousands rallied in front of the government house to hear Algerian president Ahmed Ben Bella on July 13, 1964.

villa surrounded by gardens, which we had assigned to them because of its symbolic importance. The name of the Villa Susini has gone down in history. During the national liberation struggle it was used as a torture center where many men and women of the resistance met their death.

One day Che Guevara said to me, "Ahmed, we've just been struck a serious blow. A group of men trained at the Villa Susini have been arrested at the border between such and such countries (I can't remember the names) and I'm afraid they may talk under torture." He was very worried that the secret site of the preparations for armed action would become known and that our enemies would discover the true nature of the import-export companies we had set up in South America.

Che Guevara had left Algiers by the time of the military coup on June 19, 1965. He had warned me to be on my guard. His departure from Algeria, his death in Bolivia, and my own disappearance for 15 years need to be studied in the historical context of the ebb that followed the period of victorious liberation struggles. After the assassination of Lumumba, it spelled the end of the progressive regimes of the third world, including those of N'Krumah, Modibo, Keita,

guerrilla struggle that ended that day in the Nancahuazú fade from memory, Che, more than ever, is present in the thoughts of all those who struggle and hope. He is part of the fabric of their daily lives. Something of him remains attached to their heart and soul, buried like a treasure in the deepest, most secret, and richest part of their being, rekindling their courage and renewing their strength.

One day in May 1972, the opaque silence of my prison, jealously guarded by hundreds of soldiers, was broken by a tremendous din. I learned that Fidel was visiting a model farm only a few hundred yards away, no doubt unaware of my presence in the secluded Moorish house on the hill whose roof he could glimpse above the treetops. It is certainly for the same reasons of discretion that this very house was, not so long ago, chosen as a torture center by the colonial army.

At this moment, the memories flooded back. A kaleidoscope of faces passed before my eyes like an old, faded newsreel. Never since we parted had Che Guevara been so vivid in my memory.

In reality, my wife and I have never forgotten him. A large photograph of Che was always pinned to the wall of our prison and his gaze witnessed our day-to-day life, our

joys and our sorrows. But another smaller photo, cut out of a magazine, which I had stuck onto a piece of card and covered with plastic, accompanied us on all our wanderings and is the one that is closest to our hearts. It is now in my late parents' house in Maghnia, the village where I was born, where we deposited our most precious souvenirs before going into exile. It is the photograph of Ernesto "Che" Guevara stretched out on the ground, naked to the waist, blazing with light. So much light and so much hope.

¹ The first guerrilla battle of Guevara's forces in Bolivia took place in the Nancahuazú region, where the base camp for the combatants was located.

² On Oct. 22, 1962, Kennedy initiated the "Cuban missile crisis," or October Crisis as it is known in Cuba. The U.S. president ordered a total blockade of Cuba, threatened an invasion of the island, and placed U.S. forces around the world on nuclear alert. Washington demanded the removal of Soviet nuclear missiles, which had been installed in Cuba by mutual agreement of the two sovereign powers. Cuban workers and farmers responded by mobilizing massively in defense of the revolution. Faced with the determination of the Cuban people, and the knowledge that an assault on Cuba would result in massive U.S. casualties, Kennedy negotiated with Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev, who decided to remove the missiles without consulting the Cuban government.

³ *Fellah* is the Arabic for peasant. *Harkis* were counterrevolutionary auxiliary troops organized by the French colonial army in North Africa.

⁴ In 1963 Moroccan forces, backed by Washington, invaded Algeria, which had won its independence from France the previous year after an eight-year revolutionary war. At Algeria's request, the Cuban government sent a column of troops under the command of Efigenio Ameijeiras, a veteran of the Cuban revolutionary war, to help stop the attack. The mere presence of Cuban troops forced the Moroccan government to back down and withdraw its forces.

⁵ Approximately \$3.3 million at current exchange rates.

⁶ This speech appears in *Che Guevara Speaks*, published by Pathfinder Press.

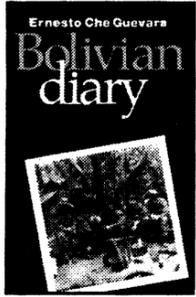
⁷ Stanleyville was the former name of Kisangani, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire). Between April and December 1965, Guevara led a contingent of more than 100 Cuban volunteers assisting revolutionary forces that were fighting the regime in Congo, which was backed by Belgian, South African, and other imperialist forces. In January 1961 Patrice Lumumba, the leader of the fight for independence from Belgium and first prime minister of the Congo, was murdered by proimperialist forces backed by Washington, after being disarmed by a U.S.-led United Nations "peacekeeping" intervention.

⁸ The presidents of Tanganyika (now Tanzania), Egypt, Mali, Ghana, Kenya, and Guinea respectively.

⁹ Sukarno was the president of Indonesia until 1967.

FROM PATHFINDER

The Cuban revolution in world politics





Che Guevara Speaks
SELECTED SPEECHES AND WRITINGS
"A faithful reflection of Che as he was, or, better, as he developed" — from the preface by Joseph Hansen. Includes works not available elsewhere in English. \$14.95



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At the Side of Che Guevara
INTERVIEWS WITH HARRY VILLEGAS (POMBO)
Villegas talks about the struggles he has taken part in over four decades — in Cuba, the Congo, and Bolivia, to the war in Angola and the defeat of the South African apartheid army at Cuito Cuanavale in 1988. Above all, he explains the importance of Guevara's political legacy for new generations of fighters the world over. Booklet \$4.00 Also in Spanish.

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Guevara's day-by-day chronicle of the 1966 - 67 guerrilla campaign in Bolivia. A painstaking effort to forge a continent-wide revolutionary movement of workers and peasants capable of seizing state power. Includes excerpts from the diaries and accounts of other combatants, including — for the first time in English — *My Campaign with Che* by Bolivian leader Inti Peredo. Introduction by Mary-Alice Waters. \$21.95

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Iowa farmers discuss the fight for right to farm, make living

BY SIMONE BERG
AND JOE SWANSON

DES MOINES, Iowa — Some 80 people demonstrated January 13 inside the state capitol here demanding greater regulation of big hog confinement facilities. The rally was called by Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement (ICCI). The majority of those demonstrating were working farm families from Iowa counties that have large hog confinement operations in their area. A group of high school students and a handful of trade unionists also came.

Today, Iowa has 18,000 hog farms of all sizes, including 220 with 5,000 head of hogs or more, according to a recent report by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Forty percent of Iowa's hog farmers went under between 1992 and 1996. Over those years the number of hogs declined at a much slower rate, and last year increased by 15 percent statewide.

The rally was addressed by a number of farm activists. Larry Ginter, a hog farmer in Rhodes, Iowa, and leader of ICCI, opened the rally by explaining that Gov. Terry Branstad "caved in, justice prevailed," in reference to the state administration's unsuccessful attempt to stop the rally from taking place at the same time as the governor's State of the State address.

Roger Larson, a farmer from Humboldt County, said, "The family farmer system will quickly die if it has to compete with big hog corporations." He called for the right to sue large hog producers (in opposition to House File 519, which protects large producers from lawsuits), for zoning laws to regulate them, and the ability to tax large producers in a differentiated way from small producers. Humboldt County has passed zoning regulations of hog confinements that allow local control by an elected Board of Supervisors.

There have been articles in the *Des Moines Register* calling for more regulation of large hog confinement facilities. An editorial entitled, "Disaster waiting to happen," with the subhead, "A deadly possibility: Manure flowing into drainage wells," explains how easily aquifers, particularly in north-central Iowa, could easily be contaminated by manure lagoons that they are in close proximity to. Most of these lagoons were built by capitalist farm owner A.J. DeCoster. The article ends by suggesting that, "the ill-considered hog-confinement legislation adopted by the 1995 Legislature" should be revisited. The legislation referred to by the editorial's author is House File 519.

Other speakers at the rally included Alice Ginter, a member of ICCI; Gary Hoske, a leader of the National Farmers Union and farmer in Tama County; Brenda LeBlanc, a member of Des Moines Citizens for Community Improvement; Pastor Jerry Avis Rouse of the Iowa Family Farm Coalition; and Rosie Partridge of ICCI.

A press conference was held after the rally as part of a day of activities, which included lobbying state legislators and protesting in front of the Ames, Iowa, office of Murphy Farms — a North Carolina-based capitalist hog contractor.

Three days after the rally, the Militant

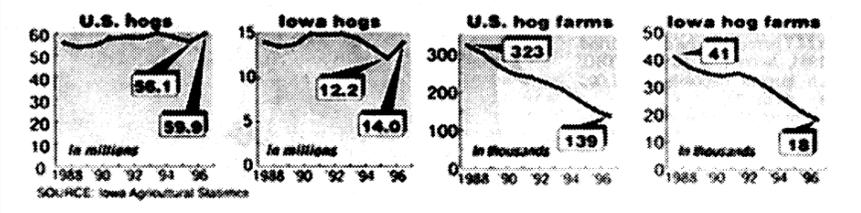
Labor Forum in Des Moines sponsored a panel discussion entitled, "Building an alliance of workers and farmers." The panel included Larry Ginter; Doug Jenness, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 9198 in Roseville, Minnesota; George Naylor, a farmer and member of the National Farmers Union; and Earl Sime, a farmer and member of the American Farm Bureau and the American Agriculture Movement.

Ginter pointed to the deepening debt bondage of farmers and how the large hog "factories" are colonizing them. Farmers need a fair price for what they produce in relation to the cost of production, enough for a standard of living that enables farmers to survive. Ginter explained how farmers' costs are out of line with price received for their produce. "That is where working farmers are at economically today, and why workers and farmers need to build a bond between themselves — that includes internationally. The capitalist system uses competition between farmers to drive family farmers off the land," said Ginter.

Naylor's presentation explained how farmers are continually being squeezed off the land by the policies and programs of the government, such as the most recent farm bill, the so-called Freedom to Farm Act. "These programs are not what is best for the land or humanity because the only alterna-

Hog herd surges, but producers disappearing

After several successive years of declining numbers, the U.S. hog inventory increased 7 percent last year. In Iowa, hog numbers jumped about 15 percent, returning to levels seen 10 years ago. At the same time, though, the number of producers both in Iowa and in the nation has fallen sharply during the past decade.



Charts above show business trends related to hog production over the past decade. They reveal sharp decline in producers, as working farmers are squeezed off the land.

ive is to expand and become more efficient," said Naylor. Government regulations are the same for every size farm including, "farmers that don't pollute and the big operations that let hog manure run down the river. It is scary for corporate America to continue to be in charge," said Naylor. "Workers and farmers need a revolution to develop a new vision in the interest of humanity."

Sime explained the historical struggle of family farmers that brought electricity, better roads, and conservation measures to the countryside. "It was neighbors working together, sharing ... equipment and labor," said Sime, that allowed farmers to form cooperatives "in most rural towns as part of the struggles to reduce the cost of production." He went on to explain that today, where he farms in north-central Iowa, these cooperatives have been rolled into one big "cooperative" that includes at least five rural towns. The result is that bigger farmers get the reduced prices for the cost of production and the smaller farmers don't.

"This panel of working farmers are all involved in fighting the government, bankers, and big business that pit farmers against each other," explained Jenness, who is also the author of the Pathfinder pamphlet *Farm-*

ers Face the Crisis of the 1990s.

"What they have described here," he said, "is the callous disregard big business has for farm families driven off their farms. It is like their attitude toward wage workers when they lay us off. Workers and farmers only show up as statistics in the profit and loss columns of the capitalists' ledgers," said Jenness. He noted that "just as they try to pit worker against worker, they try to pit workers against farmers and even exploited farmers against each other, for example 'independent' farmers against those who sign contracts with capitalist contractors."

Jenness explained, "Workers and working farmers have common problems and a common enemy around the world, and a big rise in the labor movement would have an impact in the countryside. Building a revolutionary alliance among workers and farmers and getting rid of capitalism is the main task so that production, markets, technology, conservation, and so on can be organized by those that produce."

Simone Berg is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 114 in Perry, Iowa. Joe Swanson is a member of United Auto Workers Local 1672 in Des Moines.

Working farmers, nationalism, and the world crisis of capitalism

BY DOUG JENNESS

Nearly 100 workers and students participated in the two sessions of the class, "Working farmers in the whirlwind of capitalist crisis: From Mad Cow Disease to Round-up Ready Beans — The scourge of nationalism and the fight for a worker-farmer alliance," that Tony Harris and I presented at the International Socialist Conference in Toronto over the New Year's weekend.

We took up several challenges facing the working class and working farmers resulting from the intensified competition between the capitalist rulers and their deepening pressure to draw working people into collaborating with them using the ruse that toilers and the capitalists have common "national" interests in each country.

One of our goals was to show how well-founded concerns about health, safety, environment, new technologies, etc. are used as mechanisms for seducing working people into accepting the chauvinist trade policies and practices of all imperialist countries.

We focused on two examples:

1) how capitalists in Germany, France, and other European Community (EC) countries used the fear about "mad cow disease" to impose a ban on British-grown beef and deal a sharp blow to the beef industry, particularly working farmers, in the United Kingdom;

2) how the decade-long conflict between some agribusinesses in EC countries and U.S. grain exporters over trade in soy beans has been exacerbated by the introduction of genetically engineered soy beans from the United States into the European market.

In the first case Tony detailed how hard hit beef growers have been in the United Kingdom (UK) as they have been forced to slaughter tens of thousands of head of cattle with only meager compensation. He also explained how the Communist League (CL) in Britain, in attempting to support working farmers — many devastated by the beef bans — initially slipped into supporting chauvinist actions by farmers calling for a ban on the import of beef from Ireland and France. He pointed out that in correcting this error the CL explained that the enemy of working farmers in the UK is not Irish or French farmers, but the capitalist profiteers and their government in that country.

Tony also had some useful information on the class structure of agriculture in Brit-

ain that showed that the proportion of working farm families in UK agriculture is greater than many people are aware of. This material itself would be useful to get into a *Militant* article.

In the second case I explained how the various protests by Greenpeace and other environmentalists against genetically engineered soybeans, in the context of the current stepped-up capitalist rivalry and price competition, end up supporting the nationalist and protectionist schemes of those European capitalists that want to limit U.S. soy bean imports into Europe.

I also addressed the importance of the fight to defend the Canada Wheat Board against the attempt of big grain merchants in the United States, the richer wheat farmers in Canada, and the U.S. government to weaken or destroy it. Participants from Canada elaborated on this.

During the discussion period many participants from Canada related information and opinions about the Maple Leaf packinghouse workers strike taking place in that country. It was clear that the obvious intersection of this strike with agriculture had renewed interest among some of them in the problems facing working farmers and in finding ways to advance united action of workers and farmers.

Discussion around the Maple Leaf strike also led to discussion about the structural changes in the hog industry in the United States. These center around big corporations like Murphy Farms setting up a core of one or more large factory farms using wage labor and then contracting out to working farmers most of the hog production. We discussed how this represents a deeper penetration and domination of big capital in the production process on the land. Despite these structural changes, however, family labor, rather than wage labor, remains predominant in the raising of hogs.

Several people asked whether independent fishermen with their own boats are producers like farmers. There was also discussion about the recent "salmon war" between U.S. and Canadian fishermen in the Pacific Northwest. We pointed out that independent fishermen, and in some places in the United States independent woodcutters, were exploited much like independent working farm families. This is in contrast to the larger fishing boats, where capitalist owners hire and

exploit a crew of wage workers.

In the second class someone asked how the economic crisis in Asia would affect farmers in the U.S. and the exports markets for U.S. traders. I said that I thought it was too early to tell. I noted that by far the biggest market in Asia for U.S. agricultural commodities is Japan and I didn't expect there would be a big change in this market in the immediate future.

One questioner asked if farmers are a different class than workers. We responded that farmers are a spectrum of classes that includes big capitalist farms and smaller capitalist farmers that exploit wage labor, independent producers using only family labor, and semi-proletarian farmers who farm with family labor but supplement their income with a wage job.

In informal discussion following the classes, several people asked why the capitalists don't just set up all agricultural production on a wage labor basis and why, for the most part, they organize to more deeply exploit the labor of "independent" farm families. I explained that they can squeeze more surplus value out of farmers in these conditions and can also unload more market, weather, and other risks on "independent" farmers. The introduction of contract farming into some sectors of agriculture is an attempt by big capital to intensify their domination over the production process while still using family labor rather than wage labor. Some 97 percent of poultry production is done through contract farming and an increasing proportion of hog production is moving in this direction. This is not so much a conscious policy of agribusiness as it is the lawful workings of the capitalist system as the capitalists attempt to follow the channels that will lead to maximizing their profit rates.

A weakness in the first class (rectified in the second) was not reviewing the basic programmatic approach to establishing a worker-farmer alliance that is laid out in the book, *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, by Leon Trotsky and the article, "The Crisis Facing Working Farmers," in *New Internationalist*, No. 4. Both are available from Pathfinder Press.

Doug Jenness is a member of the United Steelworkers of America in Roseville, Minnesota.

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DOUG JENNESS

Communist League holds convention

Revolutionary party in Canada confronts siren call of economic nationalism

BY JOHN STEELE

TORONTO — The membership of the Communist League (CL) in Canada met January 3-4 at the League's Fifth Constitutional Convention. The convention was preceded by a two-day international socialist conference where nearly 300 people from across North America and several other countries attended. Participants discussed the weight of the Cuban revolution in the world, imperialism's march toward fascism and war, and the opportunities to build the communist movement today. Convention delegates participated in all of the sessions and classes during the January 1-2 conference, and many conference participants stayed to observe the CL convention.

Many convention participants reported on their efforts to build solidarity with the ongoing strike of the 2,400 pulp and paper workers at Fletcher Challenge in British Columbia, and the struggle of 2,300 meatpackers in four cities across three provinces, who are on strike and locked-out against the union-busting drive of Maple Leaf Foods.

Communist League members in Toronto have begun selling the *Militant* newspaper to workers at Quality Meats as part of their efforts to build solidarity with the Maple Leaf strikers. "Because the *Militant* is a reliable source of information on the strike we have been selling quite a few copies to workers each time we go to the plant gate," reported Heidi Rose, a member of the International Association of Machinists.

The importance of week-in and week-out efforts to get communist ideas into the hands of fight-minded workers and youth was one of the central themes of the convention. The entire membership of the Communist League was seated as delegates at the convention. In addition, fraternal delegates from communist leagues in Britain, Iceland, New Zealand, and Sweden; the Socialist Workers Party in the United States; and the Young Socialists in Canada and the U.S. took part in the convention discussion.

The convention concluded that in order to take full advantage of the growing openings for communist work among working-class fighters and youth, the League had to unambiguously reject the party's drift over the previous months toward political adaptation to the reactionary nationalism of Canada's imperialist rulers. These pressures are transmitted into the labor movement by the petty-bourgeois reformist left and the "progressive" trade union officialdom.

Political crisis confronted

"The course of the party," Communist League leader Michel Prairie explained in a report to the convention on behalf of the Central Committee, "has been more and more divergent with the line of march of the working class toward the revolutionary struggle to replace the capitalist government in Ottawa with a workers' and farmers' government.

"This political crisis has come to a head because the retreat of our class has bottomed out, we have been recruiting a new levy of young fighters, and there are growing opportunities to win fighting workers to a communist perspective," Prairie continued. "These changes are forcing us to confront our weaknesses and to transform what we do.

"Despite the almost two-decade long retreat of the labor movement in Canada, the Communist League has been able to maintain branches in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver," Prairie noted. "No other organization has succeeded, as we have done, in building a centralized party in the working class, with a leadership that has a strong Quebecois component, and a branch located in a region central to the fight for Quebec's independence.

"As a party of workers, our members are doing communist political work in four of the main industrial unions in this country," said Prairie. "Young members, many of whom are leaders of the Young Socialists, are becoming leaders of the Communist League. League members are central to the work of the three Pathfinder bookstores and the new Toronto center for the distribution of Pathfinder books across Canada. These gains in cadres and structure of a communist workers' party are a strength that we can use to move forward."

A good deal of discussion focused on the participation of Communist League members in the conferences and demonstrations organized in Vancouver last November against the Ottawa-hosted meeting of government and business leaders from the 18 member countries of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

Wrong to join anti-APEC actions

The anti-APEC activities were organized by two coalitions involving the Canadian Labor Congress, Council of Canadian Unity, New Democratic Party, and Stalinist church, student, and other organizations. Under the guise of fighting for democracy and human rights against "Third World dictators," the anti-APEC campaign promoted a protectionist perspective of "jobs for Canadians" that converged with the interests of a layer of Canada's capitalist rulers. Among the demonstrators were those who attacked the Chinese workers state, in the name of "freedom for Tibet."

"Communist workers are opposed to military pacts or trade arrangements like APEC and NAFTA that the capitalist rulers use to extend their domination over exploited workers and farmers, and oppressed nations," said Steve Penner from Vancouver. Communist workers are also opposed to all the alternative ways of organizing bourgeois trade put forward by some of the capitalist ruling families and labor tops. "But we rationalized that we could block with the anti-APEC forces and at the same time fight against their reactionary Canadian nationalist campaign. However, as participants we could not differentiate our working-class perspective from them and were drawn into giving left-wing cover to their Canadian nationalist campaign, and ultimately to Ottawa's imperialist foreign policy," Penner explained.

"At the time of the APEC conference the Canadian government was backing Washington's preparations to bomb Iraq," said Penner. "U.S. president William Clinton was in town and yet there were no demonstrations protesting the war moves against Iraq, or Ottawa's complicity. There was a conference dealing with the impact of Washington's economic sanctions against Iraq that we should have participated in and didn't.

"We fooled ourselves into thinking that we could meet up with a lot of young fighters through participating in the anti-APEC actions," said Penner. "But our eyes were not on the real fighters. A member of the Young Socialists found himself waving to a picket line of striking postal workers who were taking on the federal government, as he marched past them as part of the anti-APEC demonstration." Being on that march instead of on the picket line gave a signal that workers should direct their demands against APEC, instead of the Canadian government and bosses.

Responding to a delegate who lauded the efforts of League and Young Socialist members to debate federal government ministers and officials at the anti-APEC events, Susan Berman, a member of the United Steelworkers of America from Toronto, argued that the Communist League and Young Socialists fell into a trap. "We didn't get the Canadian government minister," said Berman. "By debating him on his terrain, he got us."

Land mines and the trade union left

The Communist League stood alone in its opposition to Ottawa's cynical campaign to ban land mines that culminated in the December 2-4 international conference hosted by Ottawa.

"Although late in reacting to Ottawa's campaign, the Political Committee issued a statement published in the *Militant* following the conference," said Prairie, "condemning Ottawa's campaign as a cold-blooded maneuver to convince working people in Canada to support its foreign policy and the use of its so-called peacekeeping troops abroad and at home" to defend its economic interests.

Montreal delegate and Young Socialist leader Maria Isabel Le Blanc pointed out how events like Ottawa's land mines conference provide the communist movement with an opportunity to explain Ottawa's role as an imperialist nation in the world. "By



Militant
Pulp and Paper Workers Union Local 2 picket Fletcher Challenge December 27. Communist League decided weekly plant gate sales and picket line visits are essential.

telling the truth about Ottawa's foreign policy we can help working people understand how Canadian imperialism oppresses nations abroad and nationalities like the Quebecois at home," she said.

The officialdom of the Canadian Auto Workers and a number of public sector unions style themselves as the left-wing of the labor movement. They have been central to the building of a series of "Days of Action" that have mobilized tens of thousands of working people over the past two years in job actions and street demonstrations against the antiunion austerity drive of the Ontario Conservative government.

Communist workers in Ontario have correctly built and participated in these events. "But we tended to exaggerate their scope accepting as good coin the claim of the union officialdom that they represented the birth of a new 'social movement,'" said Young Socialist leader and steelworker Mick McDonnell. "Despite their power and breadth, the Days of Action never went beyond the control of the trade union officials."

Toronto delegate and machinist union member Sylvie Charbin explained how the activities of Communist League members in that city tended to be guided not so much by important developments in the class struggle in Canada and internationally, but by announcements that came through the fax machine from a service called "Faxleft" announcing hundreds of activities of those oriented to radical unionism and the petty-bourgeois left rather than the fight to get rid of capitalism.

"I propose that we end our subscription to this service," Charbin said, "and get back into the weekly rhythm of picket line participation, sales of the *Militant* to workers at plants where we have members working and doing political work, organizing members to get union jobs in industry in a variety of factories in each city, building the Militant Labor Forum, getting Pathfinder books into the bookstore chains, and other propaganda activities, which are the bedrock of building a working-class, revolutionary party today."

Delegates concluded that veering off the weekly rhythm of communist party-building work described by Charbin had led to their being drawn into the chauvinist anti-APEC protests and other activities of the "Faxleft" milieu.

A proletarian axis

In his concluding remarks at the end of the six-hour discussion, which took place with simultaneous translation into French and English, Michel Prairie called on the veterans of the Communist League to lead the party as a whole in one of the most important turning points of its history.

Currently a quarter of the Communist League membership is under 27 years of age and has joined over the last two years. "By leading the work of the party back toward a working-class axis the veterans of the party can advance the transition in leadership that has begun," said Prairie.

The delegates voted unanimously for a number of propos-

als. These included adopting the report presented by Prairie and a written report by Steve Penner drawing a balance sheet on the participation of the Vancouver branch in the anti-APEC coalitions. This report had earlier been adopted by the Vancouver branch.

"We were organized as if the smoke and mirrors of the anti-APEC events were more important than the actual class struggle unfolding today," stated the report. "One of the most fundamental lessons of the communist movement in times of an accelerating war drive by the rulers," the report continued, is that "we need to go more deeply into our class," and its "resistance to the rulers' attacks."

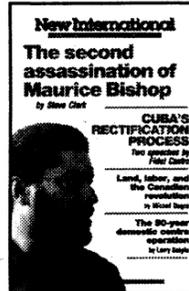
It took a number of rounds of discussion to get clarity on these issues. The participants decided to set aside the original convention agenda, including a leadership election, to take the necessary time. They decided to hold a second session of the convention later this year to assess the progress of the League in implementing this course and to elect a new Central Committee.

In the weeks following the convention Communist League members in Vancouver traveled to Vancouver Island to report for the *Militant* on the Fletcher Challenge strike and Toronto members got out to the Maple Leaf Food strikers' picket lines in Stoney Creek and Burlington. In response to the social crisis facing workers and farmers in the aftermath of a massive ice storm, Communist League members in Montreal increased their weekly propaganda sales at plant gates where they work; and organized sales of the *Militant* and Pathfinder books to working people forced into emergency shelters and to hydro workers and others clearing the streets and rebuilding the region's power grid.

John Steele is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 2113 in Toronto.

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S. Korea: Washington presses austerity

Continued from front page

of the Federation of Korean Industry. They hope to implement a "social contract" of layoffs and other austerity measures without provoking sharp confrontations with the workers. The Parliament postponed discussion on a layoff bill January 15 pending an agreement reached by the group.

In the midst of a currency crisis, last December the IMF extended a \$57 billion package of loans to the south Korean government, while insisting Seoul impose deep cuts in social programs and layoffs that could leave 1.3 million people jobless. One of the main aspects of the IMF deal called for "restructuring" among south Korean conglomerates to pay off debts and force layoffs to reduce excess capacity.

International investors had foisted loans on enterprises in south Korea and throughout the region as a way to extract profits from interest payments into the coffers of U.S. banks and other imperialist financial institutions. The IMF bailout is intended mainly to assure repayment of these loans.

As part of its "revamping process" Hyundai, the largest conglomerate, announced January 19 that it would shelve plans for an integrated steel mill and drop plans for building a semiconductor factory in Scotland, an auto plant in Indonesia, and office buildings in China. The third largest of the top four corporations, the LG Group, known mainly for its chemical and electronics operations, said it would jettison 90 businesses by 1999. Neither Hyundai nor LG announced layoff plans.

Washington pushes military might

Seeing a profit bonanza from the devalued currencies throughout Asia, imperialist investors are moving into the region to buy up enterprises at discount rates. A few ruling class figures, however, repeated their anxieties that the currency turmoil could prompt spiraling deflation, an economic slowdown, and political instability. "This uncoordinated global contraction could lead to a deflationary cycle," wrote Robert Reich in the January 15 *Financial Times* of London. "As the global economy slows, social unrest threatens," added Reich, who had been the labor secretary in the Clinton administration.

"People [in some Asian countries] have lost half their savings. That's a pretty predictable recipe for some serious turmoil," stated Robert Manning, an official with the Council of Foreign Relations, a U.S. ruling-class policy-making institution. One Pentagon official voiced concerns about a "rise in Islamic radicalism" in Indonesia.

Seeking to underscore Washington's ability to use its military might for maintaining stability and to enforce IMF "reforms," U.S. defense secretary William Cohen launched a 12-day tour of the region January 12. The defense secretary organized a meeting in Jakarta to discuss military relations. "I am not here as any sort of financial expert, I am here to talk about security issues," he explained.

Cohen announced January 14 that the Clinton administration and the Philippines government reached a tentative agreement to resume military relations. The U.S. military has not had forces stationed in the Philippines since 1992. The White House is aiming to beef up its arsenal in the region, which already includes 100,000 troops, fleets of aircraft, and warships.

"Washington's key concern, however, is with the Korean peninsula," reported the January 15 *Christian Science Monitor*. The 37,000 U.S. GIs deployed in south Korea remain a dagger aimed at the workers state in north Korea.

Meanwhile, "Asia's financial crisis is starting to affect Europe, slowing down exports of everything from heavy machinery to telephones," the *New York Times* stated January 20. With unemployment at record levels in Germany and France, the south Korean corporation Daewoo suspended plans in mid-January to build two new factories in France that would have created 1,000 new jobs.

The aircraft industry has been rocked by the Asian economic crisis as Asian airlines contemplate canceling orders. Cancellations could easily reach 100 jets if the economic turmoil continues. The two giants in the industry, the European consortium Airbus Industrie and the U.S.-based Boeing Co., are tussling over a shrinking market.

On January 14 Philippines Airlines can-

celed delivery of four Boeing 747s. Malaysia Airlines System is discussing with Boeing executives delaying the delivery of 20 aircraft by up to five years. Some 35 percent of Boeing's backlogged orders are in Asia, and the company is expected to post a \$384 million loss for 1997.

Indonesia's state-owned airline Garuda missed two payments totaling \$8 million on aircraft ordered from Airbus in December and acknowledged on January 13 that it had stopped lease payments on six new Airbus A330s.

Moody's Investor Service lowered its credit rating on two big French banks and released warnings on seven other banks based in Europe. European banks are reported to have outstanding loans to crisis-ridden Asian nations that are nearly 2 percent of the Gross Domestic Product. Countries in the European Union export some \$56 billion in trade to Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and south Korea.

Last year, bankruptcies in Japan soared to the highest number in more than a decade as 16,365 businesses collapsed. The three largest brokerage companies in Japan reported losses totaling \$438.5 million for the final quarter of 1997. Yamaichi Securities, which had been the country's fourth-largest brokerage firm, went belly-up last November under the weight of \$2 billion in losses.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

ALABAMA

Birmingham

The Weakening of the Clinton Administration and the Shortening War Fuse. Speaker: Ma'mud Shirvani, who has traveled extensively in the Caspian Sea region and has written on this subject for the *Militant*. Fri., Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m. Dinner, 6:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. Dinner: \$5.

From Radical Reconstruction to the Fight Against Racism in WWII. Fri., Feb. 6, 7:30 p.m.

The Battle of Birmingham: Lessons for Today. Fri., Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m.

All events held at 111 21st St. South. Donation: \$4. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

25th Anniversary of Roe v. Wade — The Abortion Rights Struggle Continues. Speakers: Janice Pemberton, National Organization for Women activist; Heather Martin, Young Socialists; Linda Luna, Coalition of Labor Union Women; and a representative of Planned Parenthood. Fri., Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

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NEW JERSEY: Newark: 87A Halsey.

A Japanese television network estimated January 11 that bad bank debt in the country amounted to \$682 billion. Eight days later the Japanese cabinet approved an infusion of \$232 billion to shore up the country's banking system.

Nationalist and protectionist demagogy

Bosses and government officials in the United States and Europe have stepped up accusations that Tokyo and other regimes in Asia are jacking up exports to resolve their economic woes.

Exports from Japanese auto makers to Europe soared 32 percent in the 11 months leading up to last November, according to the Japan Manufacturers Association. Japan's car companies plan to increase overall production in Europe by 300,000 to 350,000 over the next four years "This is the clearest indication the Japanese are exporting their way out of their troubles at the expense of somebody else," declared Anthony Millington, a representative of the European industry association ACEA.

"I don't think Congress is going to tolerate any countries that try and export their way out of an economic downtown, which don't give us access to the market at the same time," U.S. Senator Carl Levin remarked January 14. Levin said Tokyo would risk renewed trade tensions if it did not open its domestic markets to U.S. business interests.

Protest Washington's War Threats Against Iraq

Speakers Ilana Bakal; Ernest Mailhot, Socialist Workers Party, member International Association of Machinists Local 1126. Fri., Jan. 30, Program: 7:30 p.m. Dinner: 6:30 p.m. 137 N.E. 54th St. Donation: \$4. Dinner: \$5. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

U. S. Hands Off Iraq! Why Working People and Youth Should Oppose President Clinton's War Moves. Speaker: Joel Britton, National Trade Union Committee of Socialist Workers Party, and member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union. Fri., Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m. 1223 N. Milwaukee Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (773) 342-1780.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Why Are Abortion Rights Still Under Attack? Panel discussion. Fri. Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

This economic nationalism and demagoguery is reflected in the comments of members of the U.S. Congress who are trying to restrict the Clinton administration's access to the government's \$40 billion Exchange Stabilization Fund. The fund allows the president to provide direct loans to other nations without Congressional approval. They have also warned that Congress will not approve the president's request for an additional \$18 billion for IMF loan arrangements.

"We all have a stake in Asia's financial stability, but this help should not be a bailout for bankers, speculators or repressive dictators," said Congressman David Bonior, the second-highest-ranking Democrat in the House of Representatives.

"Where is the magic of the marketplace for the reckless investors and speculators at Chase Manhattan, Bank of America, and Citibank who have made huge profits in Asia but now want U.S. taxpayers to take the hit so they don't have to lose substantial sums as their loans go sour," proclaimed social democrat Rep. Bernard Sanders.

This nationalist demagoguery is put forward by prominent rightists as well. Columnist Phyllis Schlafly, for instance, denounced the IMF as "a bank account into which Congress puts U.S. money that is given away by a European bureaucrat named Michael Camdessus."

Protest U.S. War Moves against Iraq. Fri. Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m. 87 A Halsey St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (973) 643-3341.

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Defend Abortion Rights. Speaker: Dick Landers, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m. 1832 Euclid Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (216) 861-6150.

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

Oppose Wellington and Canberra's Military Intervention on Bougainville. Featuring documentary "Hell in the Pacific" detailing imperialist mining operations on Papua New Guinea and Bougainville. Speaker: Lars Ericson, Communist League. Fri., Jan. 30, 7 p.m.

For a Fight To End Unemployment Without Borders: Why Workers Should Reject Nationalist Campaigns To Save "New Zealand Jobs." Fri., Feb. 13, 7 p.m.

Both events held at 199 High Street (corner High and Tuam). Donation: \$3. Tel: (3) 365-6055.

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Christchurch: 199 High St. Postal address: P.O. Box 22-530. Tel: (3) 365-6055. Compuserve: 100250,1511

SWEDEN

Stockholm: Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. Compuserve: 100416,2362

Tsk — "WASHINGTON — The Asian financial crisis, suddenly touching U.S. security interests, has set back the Pentagon's efforts to get Asian allies to pay more for their



Harry Ring

own defense and is threatening manufacturers." — News item.

A rerun? — Federal Aviation Administration inspectors found that AirTran — formerly ValuJet —

has major safety violations, including falsified documents, improper maintenance, faulty repairs, and failure to supervise contractors. Inspectors said the violations were more serious than in February 1996 when the agency made a recommendation to ground the airline, but did not act on it. Three months later came the Everglades crash that killed 110 people.

Watchful — Bankrolled by Washington to beam counterrevolutionary propaganda into Cuba, Radio and TV Martí continues to suffer staff feuding and low morale. Of a philosophical bent, the director explains, "You're always going to have people not happy or satis-

fied with policies." To improve "teamwork," he had the doors removed from a number of offices.

Ah, those were the days — For nostalgia buffs, London's *Daily Telegraph* is offering a reproduction of a 1920s map showing the British Empire at its height. (Remember? "The sun never sets on the British Empire.")

Sorry about that — The new British Labour government budget includes £20 (About \$32) payments to help pensioners meet their winter fuel bills. The treasury minister vowed that unlike the past, no more winters would go by with pensioners "fearful of turning up their heat-

ing, even on the coldest winter days." Unfortunately, the new payments will be delayed until spring. Computer difficulties.

Bargain-basement managers — Women now hold 46 percent of U.S. management jobs. On average, they earn 38 percent less than their male counterparts.

Fat-free — On Rodeo Drive, the ultraplush shopping strip in Beverly Hills, a jeweler is offering freshly designed miniatures — a hamburger look-alike, \$1,700; a basket of McDonald fries, \$2,000; a Coke bottle, \$2,000.

Breakthrough — Noting that long commutes to work, lunchtime

errands, etc., are making "dashboard dining" commonplace, the Lear Corp. announced development of "a revolutionary electronic cup holder that has the ability to keep drinks hot or cold. Just flip a switch." In fact it can simultaneously keep the driver's coffee hot and a passenger's soft drink cold.

Thought for the week — "The biggest impact on Japanese companies and banks is that their assets [in Indonesia] are becoming much less valuable.... The second problem is that Japanese companies operating in Indonesia will face various difficulties. Especially, their earnings will be much smaller." — A Tokyo financial analyst.

After slavery: the fight for 40 acres and a mule

Below we reprint excerpts from the article "The Fight for a Workers' and Farmers' Government in the United States" by Jack Barnes. This selection describes the 1867-77 period Radical Reconstruction that followed the Civil War in the United States, and the class forces that led to its bloody defeat. The *Militant* is printing this as part of a series on the

BOOK OF THE WEEK

conditions that gave rise to U.S. imperialism and the struggle against it. The entire article appears in issue no. 4 of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*. It is copyright © by 408 Printing and Publishing Corp., reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY JACK BARNES

The creation of the Black proletariat following the revolutionary abolition of slavery was ... integrally linked to the land question. In this case, however, proletarianization did not primarily involve the dispossession of Black farmers (although that has been the fate of millions of farming families that are Black over the past 100 years).

Instead, freed slaves in their great majority were denied land ownership. In the initial two years following the Civil War, most ex-slaves were impressed into contract labor gangs on plantations under the notorious Black Codes adopted by most state governments of the vanquished Confederate slavocracy. Blacks organized in the South to resist this effort by the planters to restore virtual slave labor conditions. They won the support of some sectors of the northern labor movement, as well as that of a layer of industrial capitalists and their representatives in Congress who were alarmed at efforts by the former slave owners to reassert their political influence.

As a result of this postwar struggle, Radical Reconstruction regimes were set up throughout the South by 1867, with the mandate of the U.S. Congress and backed up by the armed power of the Union Army. These new governments repealed the Black Codes

and adopted legislation barring some of the most onerous provisions of the labor contracts that had been imposed on Black agricultural laborers.

Freed Blacks fight for land

The proletarianized ex-slaves, however, wanted more than better contracts and labor-law reform. They waged a struggle for land — for a radical agrarian reform that would break up the old plantations of the former slave owners and divide the land among the freed slaves and other small rural producers. They fought for the tools, livestock, cheap credit, and other things they would need to make a go of it as free farmers. "Forty acres and a mule" became their slogan.

Exploited farmers and other toilers who were white in the South also fought for land, for tools, for better conditions. Many initially joined in struggle with freed Black slaves, some even with the goal of reconstructing the former Confederacy as "states of labor." Small farmers and propertyless rural working people made up the big majority of the population in all these states. In five states Blacks were a majority.

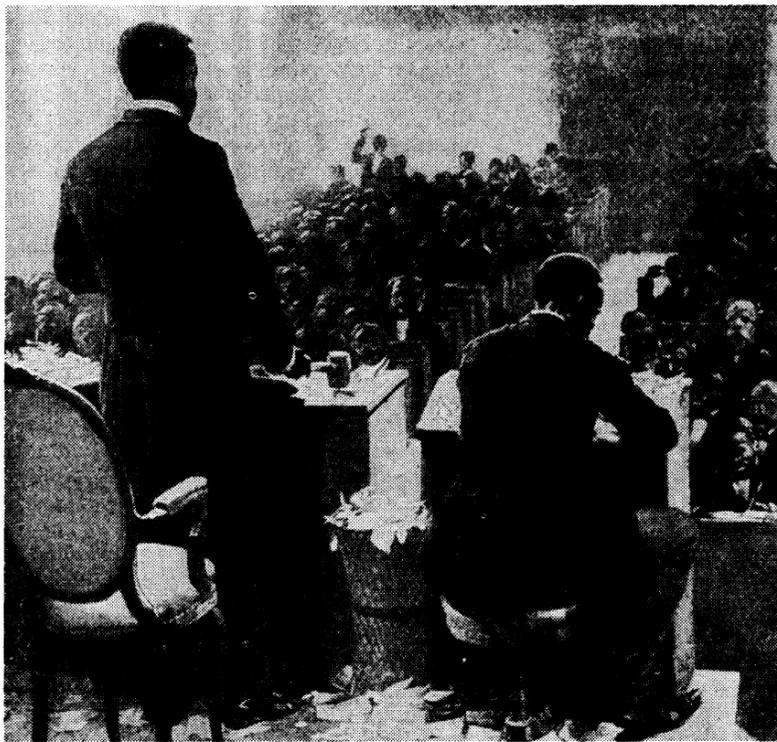
In South Carolina, in particular, the exploited producers, led by Blacks, took big strides for a number of years following 1867 toward establishing a revolutionary dictatorship that advanced the class interests of the freed slaves, small farmers, and other working people. The Radical Reconstruction regime there had a majority Black legislature, and its social base among the freed slaves and other working people was organized through an extensive armed militia and Union League chapters in many communities.

The U.S. ruling class, its schools, and bourgeois historians try to hide or distort this revolutionary experience of the producing classes in this country. But it is a story that needs to be told by a revolutionary proletarian party in the United States, as an example of what many of our predecessors fought for a century ago — a forerunner of the kind of workers' and farmers' government we are fighting for today. This story will find a ready audience among fighters in the factories and on the farms.

The most advanced of these Radical Reconstruction regimes, such as those in South Carolina and Mississippi, adopted progressive social legislation: civil rights laws barring racial discrimination; progressive tax laws that taxed the rich; universal suffrage for males regardless of race; the first free public schools in these states, in some cases including free college education; expanded rights for women; and public-relief systems.

Aspirations blocked by capitalist rulers

None of the Reconstruction governments, however, had the will or the power to enforce an expropriation of the big plantation owners that could have made possible a radical land reform, since the appointed Union Army



Freed Black slaves convene South Carolina legislature in 1873

under conditions of virtual debt peonage for large plantation owners. Of the white farmers and few Black farmers who did have their own small plots, many fell deeper and deeper into debt bondage. They often lost their land and ended up in the same situation as the majority of freed slaves.

The aspirations of the liberated and proletarianized Blacks, and their allies among southern white working people, were blocked by the growing power of the U.S. capitalist class. The final defeat of Radical Reconstruction required a bloody counterrevolution. The deal between the Democratic and Republican parties to withdraw Union troops from the South in 1877 accelerated a reign of terror by the Ku Klux Klan, the Knights of the White Carnelia, and other racist gangs beholden to the interests of the exploiters....

This defeat was suffered not only because the freed slaves, who aspired to get land and to become working farmers, were betrayed by the bourgeoisie and both capitalist political parties. It also occurred because the U.S. working class and its organizations were as yet still too weak and politically inexperienced to provide leadership to the kind of social revolution that could have made possible a massive expropriation and redistribution of land to the freed slaves.

commanders in each state held effective veto power over legislation and its enforcement. While some of these officers were more radical than others, none were willing to countenance a broadside attack on the property of the southern landowners....

Most of the freed slaves did not get any land, and were instead forced into sharecropping, tenant farming, or wage labor in the fields and towns. Often they worked

slaves, who aspired to get land and to become working farmers, were betrayed by the bourgeoisie and both capitalist political parties. It also occurred because the U.S. working class and its organizations were as yet still too weak and politically inexperienced to provide leadership to the kind of social revolution that could have made possible a massive expropriation and redistribution of land to the freed slaves.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



February 2, 1973

The agreement by the U.S. to halt the bombing and to withdraw its remaining troops from South Vietnam is a long-sought-for victory for the Vietnamese people. It is also a victory for the antiwar movement here and throughout the world. But imperialist intervention in Vietnam is far from ended.

The accords do nothing to solve the social, economic, and political root of the Vietnam war. The imperialists recognize the fact of two armies and two governmental forces in South Vietnam, each representing opposed class forces.

On the one side is the Saigon regime of the landlords and capitalists, backed by U.S. imperialism. On the other side are the revolutionary forces based on the workers and peasants. This is an inherently unstable situation. One side or the other will eventually have to predominate, and that can only be determined in struggle.

The cease-fire accords announced Jan. 24 will not bring peace to Indochina. They signal a new stage of the civil war, and of Washington's intervention.

The U.S. will continue to pump massive economic aid to the Saigon clique. Washington will be permitted to maintain Thieu's forces, including the world's third largest

air force, at their present bloated level. Many U.S. bases and much U.S. war materiel in South Vietnam have already been turned over to the Saigon dictator.



February 2, 1948

Leading imperialist spokesmen in Washington and London have bluntly proposed that the Marshall Plan be used to power an economic and military bloc of Western European capitalist countries against the Soviet Union. They are speedily discarding any pretense that the Marshall Plan is simply a humanitarian program of relief and rehabilitation.

At Senate hearings last week, Bernard Baruch and John Foster Dulles, chief Wall Street advisers to the Democratic and Republican parties respectively, demanded in effect that an economic and military alliance of anti-Soviet governments in Europe be made an integral part of the Marshall Plan.

British imperialist spokesmen promptly responded. Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin blasted unrestrainedly at "communism" and called for a "western union" of England, France, Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg. This would be the "nucleus" for an eventual bloc of all capitalist regimes in Western Europe, including their "dominions and colonies."

The Fight for a Workers and Farmers Government in the United States
Jack Barnes
 The shared exploitation of workers and working farmers by banking, industrial, and commercial capital lays the basis for their alliance in a revolutionary fight for a government of the producers. \$9.00

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The looming crisis in Europe

The working class is becoming more restless in Europe. In France thousands have occupied government offices and many more are marching in the streets for jobs and living benefits for the unemployed. In Germany, where joblessness has also reached record high levels, protests by hundreds of thousands of students swept the country late last year and steelworkers in the East — which the German boia constrictor has been unable to digest in its capitalist belly — came within a hair's breadth of another major strike.

This is a reflection of the looming crisis in Europe, before which the collapse of the "Asian miracle" will pale.

Wall Street is getting concerned. "While investors and money managers remain transfixed by the Asian disintegration, an occasional glance at Europe — now less than a year from adopting a single currency — also is warranted," said the January 12 issue of the U.S. financial weekly *Barron's*. "The outlook is not encouraging.... It's not Indonesia — but it ain't pretty."

It's not an accident that working-class protests have begun unfolding in France and Germany. Bonn and Paris are the two main capitalist powers in the European Union driving toward launching the common currency, the "euro." The goal of the French, German, and other bourgeoisies, however, is not a unified, border-free Europe. Even if this new currency comes into being, it will not lead to some "ultra-imperialism" and the dissolution of the bourgeois nation states. Each ruling class has as its starting point the desire to gain the best position for its own national capital, denominated in its own currency, and defended by its own army against its competitors.

The drive toward the euro is accelerating, not softening, the conflicts between international capital's most powerful, armed nation states on the continent and between them and their competitors in the United States and Japan. This is shown by how capitalists in France and Germany have used the "mad cow disease" to deal sharp blows to British beef and by the decade-long conflict between agribusinesses in EU countries and U.S. grain exporters over the soy bean trade. Most recently, frictions between Paris and Washington — the number one power in Europe militarily and economically — over policy toward Iraq have also become clearer.

The Bonn-led march toward the euro is another form of the various shifting blocs each of these bourgeoisies

enters into against their rivals in Washington and Tokyo and against each other.

Each ruling class is also using the criteria for the monetary union as a pretext to demand much deeper sacrifices from working people. In doing so, the German and French rulers are sharpening polarization and boosting ultraright forces in each country — like Le Pen's National Front, which is railing against the "Europeanists" and is winning support among not only middle class layers but also among some workers with its France First demagoguery.

German chancellor Helmut Kohl has declared that the alternative to the European monetary union is war. But the advent of the euro will mean nothing but renewed conflict and the possibility of a crisis akin to the Great Depression that preceded World War II.

That is the nature of imperialist system, which Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin aptly described at the dawn of the 20th century as the highest and final stage of capitalism and the eve of the social revolution of the proletariat.

Working people the world over should rejoice that the capitalist rulers in Europe have been unable to inflict defeats on the working class and its allies — working farmers and other independent commodity producers. Since the 1995 strike wave in France, there is ample evidence that the retreat of the working class has bottomed out. This has been clearly registered in the election of social-democratic bourgeois regimes in France and the United Kingdom last year and the more recent working-class and student protests. When the government in Germany or France says, "If you don't tighten your belt the national currency will go down the drain and we won't be able to join the euro," workers in growing numbers respond, "So what — that's your problem, not ours."

These economic and social struggles offer a way forward for working people. Through them increasing numbers of youth and workers can draw the conclusion that the only way to move toward a united Europe free of borders, national conflicts, chauvinism, and class exploitation is to organize and fight to take state power out of the hands of the warmakers in each country. Building proletarian parties today that can provide confident leadership in the coming revolutionary struggles will determine the future of humanity — either fascist victories and capitalist barbarism or the triumph of the proletariat and the advance of the world struggle for socialism.

Protest U.S. war moves on Iraq

We urge our readers to help organize more picket lines, demonstrations, public forums and other activities opposing Washington's latest provocations against Iraq. The recent actions are important examples for working-class fighters and youth to emulate.

What's needed is a working-class campaign against U.S. imperialism and its war preparations, to tell the truth about Clinton's military threats. Socialist workers and youth should take this campaign to co-workers on the job, at plant gates, on campuses, at street corners, in Black and other workers' neighborhoods, and to GIs at military bases.

It's essential not only to oppose any bombing, but for workers and farmers around the world to demand an end to the U.S.-led sanctions and the withdrawal of all UN "weapons inspectors" from Iraqi soil. The inspectors' allegations of chemical and biological weapons are simply a pretext used by Washington to justify provocations and maintain its massive military arsenal in the region to intimidate workers and peasants who dare to fight to change their living conditions.

The U.S. imperialists' war moves are aimed at economically draining, politically oppressing, and militarily subjugating the Iraqi people. They aim to overthrow the Hussein government in order to strengthen their domination in the region at the expense of their rivals in Japan,

Germany and France. Washington seeks more control over raw materials, markets and access to superexploitation of low-paid labor.

Workers, farmers, rebel-minded youth should join the campaign against imperialism and war using books and pamphlets that help explain the declining capitalist world order.

Among the most important tools are the issues of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* with the articles "The Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq" and "Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War," along with *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by Jack Barnes. *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* by Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin and *U.S. Hands off the Middle East! Cuba Speaks Out at the United Nations*, by Fidel Castro and Ricardo Alarcón are invaluable as well. The latter shows the role played by revolutionary Cuba condemning the U.S.-led slaughter against the Iraqi people in 1990-91 and charting a course of action to defend the interests of working people around the world.

Now is the time to organize protests and speakouts demanding:

U.S. hands off Iraq!
End the sanctions now!
Get all UN inspectors out of Iraq!

Fight for abortion rights

January 22 marked the 25th anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* court decision that codified the right for women to choose an abortion. The date should be celebrated as the most important victory for women's rights in the United States in decades, as the ruling struck down all prohibitions on all women to exercise their right to choose when and if to bear children.

The best way to celebrate is through picket lines, rallies, defending clinics, speakouts, and other actions — no matter what size they are — in defense of abortion rights, against the attacks that are taking place right now.

The 25th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* has brought a flurry of articles in the big-business press claiming there is less support for the right to choose today. These are part of a propaganda campaign to push back the gains for women's rights won in the streets in the 1960s and '70s. There are increasing legal attacks on abortion rights as well. Today there are 17 states that have banned a type of late-term

abortion, and Congress has twice passed similar bills. While the White House has vetoed the legislation, Clinton's statements supporting a ban with only a few exceptions help to undercut this fundamental right.

The attacks on abortion rights, like the moves in several states to ban affirmative action, are aimed against the working class as a whole. They are part of trying to divide working people, and drive down the pay, working conditions, and expectations of women. The labor movement should champion the fight to defend these rights. Mobilizations and public meetings serve to push back the right-wing forces that have blockaded clinics, and they answer liberals who argue that "it's not the time to fight." Actions that stand strongly for a woman's right to choose an abortion at any time and any place will build confidence among women's rights fighters and win solidarity from other struggles.

Defend abortion rights! Defend affirmative action!

Two workers killed in unsafe mine

Continued from Page 1

the mine, pointed out. Eleven thousand volt cables lie underneath the water. "We shouldn't have to work under these conditions."

In 1996 a supervisor was killed in the mine. The company has refused to comment on whether the circumstances were similar to the latest deaths. The provincial government's mines branch carried out a safety audit in November of that year, which raised questions about accident prevention, training, and maintenance.

"It was not a flattering audit," British Columbia's chief inspector of mines, Fred Hermann, pointed out. Safety, far from being a priority, "was a second thought." Hermann found that there was no clear system in place to limit the danger of roof collapses.

While Hermann says he believes the company has acted to improve safety conditions since then, Gallamore disagrees. Safety conditions in the mine "haven't improve significantly," he asserted.

Ken Neumann, director of the western division of the USWA, stressed at a press conference that mine collapses are not inevitable. "They happen when safety is compromised." He released a confidential report produced for the company by an outside consultant in February 1997 that rated the mine as seriously deficient in mechanical and electrical safety, inspection and training, and in other areas. The report said that crews were spread so thin that only "minimal efforts" were put into maintenance. The mine's 24-hour production schedule had resulted in "Band-aid" repairs and a lack of preventative maintenance, which "leave the equipment open to catastrophic and potentially very hazardous failure."

The company refused to comment on the report.

A letter from miners reprinted in the *Campbell River Mirror* last March charged that "The equipment we have to work with is in absolutely the worst mechanical condition and so poorly maintained that it makes the mine an unsafe environment." At the time, the Quinsam mine manager Donald Rankin denounced the letter as union politics and defended conditions at the mine despite occasional "slip-ups." Ten months later two miners, Wayne Campbell and Darrell Ralph, were dead.

Steve Penner is a laid-off member of Canadian Auto Workers Local 3014 in Langley, British Columbia.

'New Yorker': Pathfinder is place to find books on Cuba

The following report appeared as the first item in a feature in the January 26, 1998, issue of *The New Yorker* magazine on places and events in New York related to Cuba.

PATHFINDER BOOKSTORE — A small, brightly lit storefront in Brooklyn offers accounts of contemporary Cuba not available in your local newspaper or your average textbook. This independent distributor sells the speeches and writings of the Revolution's leaders. Castro's 1962 manifesto "The Second Declaration of Havana" shares shelf space with Che's "Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War, 1956-58"; also available are copies of the Cuban Communist Party's newspaper, *Granma International*, and *La Gaceta*, a Spanish bimonthly published by Cuba's Union of Writers and Artists. "This is the place to find out what Cubans have to say about Cuba, not what other people write about it," says Ruth Robinett, who volunteers at the store. (59 Fourth Ave., at Bergen St. Brooklyn. 718-399-7257.)

Rally protests hours at California railroad

This column is devoted to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standards, working conditions, and unions.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers

but how he's worked. After he drives a train for 12 hours he's left to just sit on the train for hours and hours more." This sentiment was expressed many times on the picket line.

Diane Houchen, the wife of another engineer, said, "We want our

finally catch a train back to the home terminal in Colton. The railroad doesn't care."

He added, "The worst thing is they don't pay us what they owe us. We're on a train for 16 hours and we only get paid for 12. We have to put in a special claim for the other four and who knows if we'll see the money or not."

Michigan paper workers strike against takebacks

KALAMAZOO, Michigan — Teamsters Local 7 has been on strike since December 11 against Contempo Colors in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Contempo makes paper products such as paper plates, cups, napkins, etc. The local, with 288 members, voted to strike with 238 in favor, 20 against, and 30 members not present.

At this time, no further negotiating sessions have been scheduled since the company will not cooperate in negotiations unless the union agrees to limit discussions to the

company's takeback demands.

These include pay cuts for most of the workers between 56 cents and \$2 per hour, with the greatest cuts affecting the lowest paid workers; no pay raise for the first two years of a five-year contract; and pay raises of 2 percent, 3 percent, and 4 percent in the second half of the contract. Other company takeback demands are a 15 percent increase in the copayment that workers make for their medical insurance plan and gutting of seniority rights.

Under the old contract, workers could bid for a job and be transferred to another department based on seniority. Management wants to have total decision-making authority in this area. The old contract provided for a worker to receive his or her current pay scale when pulled to a different job.

The company, however, has recently been violating that aspect of the contract by paying the worker the hourly wage of the job that he or she is pulled to even when that rate is lower than his or her usual

rate.

No union members have crossed the picket line, but it's possible that the strike has become a lockout. One of the union members contacted the company about going back to work and he was refused.

The strikers have received financial and food donations from many area unions and reinforcements for their picket lines. The union organized a candlelight vigil on December 11. There's discussion about leafleting stores that carry Contempo products asking workers not to buy these products.

Pickets expressed determination to stand strong against the company's takeback demands. Strikers who were offered a pay raise stated union solidarity and concern for their co-workers as one reason they were on the picket line.

Craig Honts, a member of the United Transportation Union in Los Angeles, and Sandy Knoll in Fennville, Michigan, contributed to this week's column.

ON THE PICKET LINE

around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

LOS ANGELES — The continuing crisis growing out of the merger of the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific railroads sparked a picket line of 45 spouses and children of Union Pacific employees at the Colton yard in southern California on December 20, protesting the long hours and unsafe conditions on the railroad.

Picket signs at the protest read: "UP Management: License to Kill," "Bring My Daddy Home Safe!," and "Sleep Deprivation Kills."

Matthew Boyer, the 15-year-old son of one engineer with 20 years at SP, explained why he was at the protest. "I'm protesting the hours my dad works. Not just the hours

husbands back. They leave and they're on a train for 16 or 18 hours at a time. They come home and they're exhausted — but have to go out again in 10 hours. My husband worked on a train for 12 hours and then had to wait for a crew to come out and relieve them. After waiting for five hours he got out and hitchhiked home with the conductor agreeing to stay and watch the train. No one should have to go through this."

One engineer working at Colton explained from the sidelines of the picket line, "Crews go from here to Yuma and then don't come back for three or four days. It happens a lot. What happens is that after taking a train to Yuma you rest in the motel for eight hours and then patch another train, that is get called to bring another train into Yuma that didn't make it all the way. Then you rest in the motel for another eight hours and they might have to patch once again. Then after resting in the motel for eight more hours you might

INS raids packinghouse in Iowa after sit-down protest by workers

BY MAGGIE TROWE AND SIMONE BERG

TAMA, Iowa — Nine workers at Tama Packing, a division of agribusiness giant IBP, were arrested by agents of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) January 13, as they drove out of the plant parking lot. Seven of those detained are adults and will be deported, an INS spokesperson said, while two were juveniles who were returned to their families.

The arrests took place just days after workers at the plant had carried out job actions demanding an increase of the base rate of pay. Diego and Gerardo, two workers these reporters spoke with outside the plant who asked that their real names not be used, described what happened.

The 400 workers, who are organized by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, stayed in the cafeteria at the end of the lunch break January 8, de-

manding that the company raise the base rate paid to experienced workers. A recent \$1 an hour raise given to new hires had brought the starting rate to \$8. After about two hours, company representatives said they would meet with leaders of the sit-down protest to discuss their demands if everyone would return to work. At that point the workers went back to their jobs.

The next morning union members held a 5 a.m. meeting before work at a cattle auction barn near the plant. Diego said Tama police showed up at that meeting to intimidate workers. Company management told the workers they would give them no raise. Later that morning, after the first break, most workers stayed sitting in the cafeteria again instead of returning to work. Management then called the police, and told workers that if they didn't return to work, they would be considered trespassers, subject to arrest.

Some of the protesters returned to work, but others stayed. About 15 deputy sheriffs arrived and expelled a number of workers from the plant. They cited ten for trespassing, and arrested one, Adolfo Garcia, who was later released on

bail.

Five days later on January 13, INS cops in cars and a bus stationed themselves outside the plant in the early afternoon. They stopped selected cars. According to INS spokesman Gerard Noland, Tama police had given the immigration cops a list of 14 workers. The INS detained nine workers. When these reporters arrived at 3:30 p.m., there were more than eight police cars at or near the plant.

Some workers from the kill floor who had gotten off early returned to the plant at 5 p.m. to make sure workers coming out at that time didn't run into problems.

A waitress at a nearby restaurant said that INS agents who had stopped in earlier in the day told her they were coming to Tama Packing because workers had "made all that trouble with their sit-down strike."

Workers at the Swift packinghouse in nearby Marshalltown expressed support for the strikers. At least two Swift workers had relatives arrested by the INS.

Maggie Trowe and Simone Berg are members of Local 1149 of the United Food and Commercial Workers.

From Pathfinder

American Railroads The Case for Nationalization

Dick Roberts

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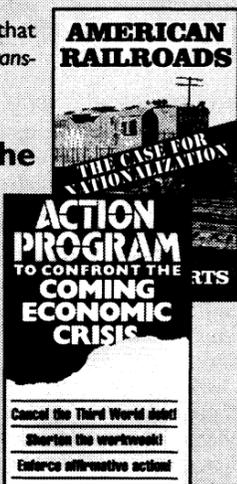
An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis

A Program for International Working-Class Struggle Today

Edited by Doug Jenness

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LETTERS

Imperialism before 1898?

I have to question a statement made by Mary-Alice Waters at the socialist conference in Birmingham, Alabama. The statement was that "Washington rose as an imperialist power 100 years ago with the Spanish American War." The question I have is what about the numerous imperialist wars that Washington waged against Native Americans? Didn't these wars begin to establish the United States as an imperialist power?

The word imperialism I believe has its origin in the Roman Empire. We should take into consideration that Rome became an empire partly because of its domination of tribal peoples. Some of these tribes were the Anglos, the Saxons, the Britons... If the Roman Empire was an imperialist power, it seems that the wars against Native Americans were a classic example of imperialism.

If the wars against Native Americans were imperialist, they were not the only examples of U.S. intervention before 1898. In William Blum's

book *Killing Hope* he gives a list of all the military interventions in the history of the United States. The use of the military prior to 1898 is included in a list covering five pages. This list doesn't include most of the wars against Native Americans. One example was the conquest of Hawaii in 1893.

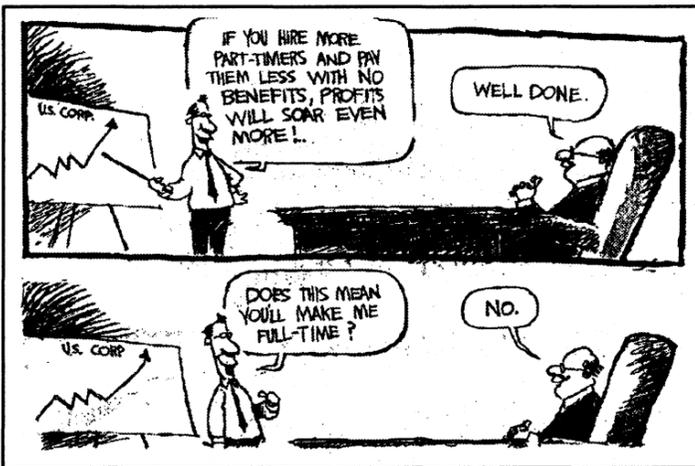
These are the reasons why I question the statement that this country became an imperialist power 100 years ago. However, I commend the *Militant* for giving attention to Cuba's revolutionary war of independence during the latter years of the 19th century.

Steve Halpern
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

A crucial source of information

The *Militant* is a crucial source of information for workers — the majority at this moment in history. Thank you for your work and solidarity with Cuba.

P.K.
Inver Grove, Minnesota



N.Y. unemployment

On page 34 of the December 29, 1997/January 5, 1998 issue of *Business Week* there is an article entitled "Down and Out in the Big Apple?," which cites some figures on unemployment in New York City. According to the article, unemployment in New York City has just recently fallen below 10 percent.

Ten or nine percent unemployment may be something that everyone in New York has come to assume. But it stands in stark contrast to what is going on in some other parts of the country where today there is a relative labor shortage — Minnesota and Alabama, where unemployment is well below four percent, are two examples with which I am personally familiar.

The disparity points up the unevenness of the rulers' recovery and one real consequence of the unprecedented bull market right in the capital of U.S. capital. It also underscores the relevance of the demands raised in *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*.

John Hawkins
St. Paul, Minnesota

I appreciate the 'Militant'

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France: 50,000 march for jobs

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN
AND DEBBIE DELANGE

PARIS — Thousands of people took to the streets throughout France January 17 in the latest wave of protests against unemployment. Marches and other actions took place in 40 cities. Altogether some 50,000 people participated in this "day of action," according to press reports that used estimates by the police. They included 4,000 in Toulouse, 3,000 in Nantes, and 1,800 in Lille. About 1,500 protested in each of the cities of Bordeaux, Le Havre, Le Mans, and Montpellier. Marches of 1,000 took place in Grenoble, Clermont-Ferrand, Quimper, Cherbourg, Rouen, and Caen. Organizers said the numbers were larger.

The biggest action was a lively protest in Paris of some 20,000 people, according to the sponsors.

Joblessness, at the record high of 12.4 percent, has become the focus of broad discontent here. Many unemployed workers are also angry that the social-democratic led government of Lionel Jospin has not kept its promises to create jobs or provide adequate relief for those out of work. According to public opinion polls, some 70 percent of people in France sympathize with the protests, which have included occupations of state social security offices, prominent academic and financial institutions, and department stores throughout the country.

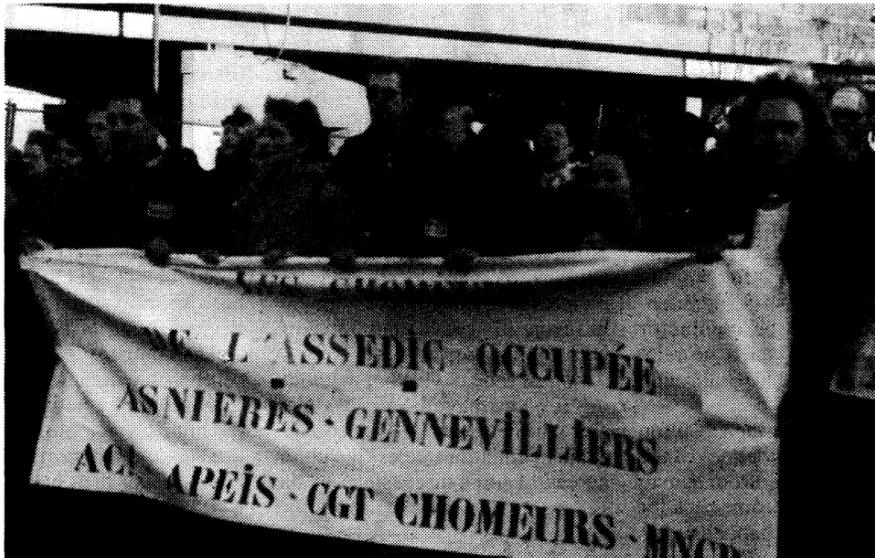
The demands of the protesters center on increasing the minimum unemployment benefits and the minimum wage, currently about \$600 per month. They also include an immediate cash payment to ease the conditions of the unemployed. Six million workers are paid at or below these "social minima."

In response, the government declared immediate assistance of a billion French francs (US\$150 million). This amounts to about \$45 per person for unemployed workers. On January 12 the government's minister for employment and solidarity, Martine Aubry of the Socialist Party, invited representatives of the organizations leading the protests for talks.

The government says that greater concessions are not possible in 1998. It justifies this by arguing that the type of benefits protesters demand will increase the budget deficit, at a time when the government is preparing for the single European currency, the "euro," planned to be launched in less than a year. According to the criteria laid down in the Maastricht agreement, entry into the projected European Monetary Union is conditional upon a budget deficit of less than 3 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product.

Stalinists, Greens support cop assault

The French Communist Party and Greens, both partners of the Socialist Party in the coalition government, have stated their support for the demands of the protest campaign. At the same time, leaders of these par-



Militant/Claude Bleton

Paris demonstration for jobs and unemployment benefits earlier in January

ties backed Jospin in sending the riot police to evict those occupying the social security offices, known as Assedic.

The government sent the militarized CRS riot police to oust the protesters January 10. Government officials rushed to issue public statements backing the cop attack, including Jospin; Jean-Claude Gayssot, minister of transport and a leader of the Communist Party; and Dominique Voynet, environment minister and leader of the Greens.

'Employed in solidarity with jobless'

Many individuals and groups of friends took part in the January 17 march here with their own hand-made placards and banners. Antoine Cicolella, 28, and three companions marched behind such a banner that read: "Employed youth in solidarity with the unemployed." Cicolella said that the four were on a government scheme that provides unemployed young people with a job for a year. The contracts are renewable for up to a maximum of five years. "Madame Aubry has agreed to a program of 350,000 of such jobs," Cicolella said. "But what happens at the end of the five years?"

"These government schemes don't provide real jobs," stated Sophie Deleage. "They're a way of hiding unemployment."

Pierre Yves, a young worker and a member of Young Socialists Movement, the ruling SP's youth organization, said he thought that reducing the workweek is key to tackling unemployment. "There's money to do it but the government's proposed 35-hour workweek is not what's needed. It will be combined with flexibility, the annualization of hours, and will exclude many people."

Didier Niot, 36, was on his first demonstration of the current campaign and was mad. "I am a skilled worker and I've been unemployed for three years," he said. "You've got to protest such things, but I'm not sure what will happen. I don't think the

employers will allow Jospin to solve unemployment because they need joblessness desperately. It's in their interests." Niot was referring to a document signed by five employers' associations objecting to the government's proposed legislation on the 35-hour workweek, even though Jospin's plan is not to take effect for a few years.

Jean-Louis, a worker in a post office depot, said that he considered casual work to be a central issue. "There were 60,000 *précaires* (temporary workers) in the postal service at the end of 1996," he said. They earn just 4,000FF per month (\$600). He related the story of a successful strike at his depot to win permanent status for a temporary worker who was being laid off.

Immigrants put mark on marches

A particularly striking feature of the demonstration was the participation of more than 1,000 immigrant workers and youth grouped in contingents. They were organized by the *Sans Papiers* (without papers) of St. Bernard, which campaigns for the rights of undocumented workers; the Movement of Immigration and Suburbs, which campaigns against the double punishment of detention and deportation that's meted out to immigrants; and Droit Devant, which helps immigrants get papers.

Akib Mohammed, a 21-year-old unemployed worker, explained how difficult it is for Algerian youth like him to get work. When you graduate from school, it's very difficult to find a job, he said. It's important to unite immigrants and French-born workers, and fight against racism, he added, because "unemployment affects everyone."

The *Sans Papiers* contingent chanted "All together for rights — undocumented, homeless, and jobless!" One of their leaders, Madjiguene Cissé, of Senegalese origin, took up this theme when she addressed the march at the end. "The fight against unemployment and in defense of immigrants goes together. It's a fight against division and against being excluded. Immigrants are invariably the first to be thrown out of work and the Chevenement law will lead to more sans papiers. It's important for us to stick together and to wage the struggle in the streets."

"I think it's vital to explain that unemployment is not caused by immigration," said Patrick Vachon, a rail worker from Paris. Vachon said he was the only worker from his rail depot on the march. Many workers today are susceptible to the chauvinist arguments that unemployment is caused by immigration, he said. These France First arguments are pushed both by right-wing politicians and by social democrats and Stalinists. "But even if there was no immigration there would still be unemployment," Vachon said.

The protests have been led by a coalition of four organizations that campaign for jobs, against casual work, for better pay and conditions for low paid workers, and higher

benefits for the unemployed. These are Action Against Unemployment (AC!), a coalition principally of trade union activists; the unemployed committees of the CGT trade union federation, in whose leadership the Communist Party has major influence; the Communist Party-led Association for Employment, Information and Solidarity (APEIS); and the National Movement of Unemployed and Casual Workers (MNCP).

Coalition of four protest groups

Contingents from these organizations headed up the Paris march on January 17. Each had their own placards. The AC! placards read, "35 hours: less unemployment. 32 hours: no unemployment." "No to casual jobs. Yes to permanent contracts," read the placards of the CGT contingent, which was the largest of the four with more than 1,000 demonstrators.

The leadership of the pro-Socialist Party CFDT has publicly opposed the unemployment campaign. Writing in the federation's weekly paper, *Syndicalisme* (Trade Unionism), employment spokesperson Michel Jalmain denounced the campaign as a maneuver directed against the CFDT and its general secretary Nicole Notat. Notat also functions as president of the joint union-employer-government organization, Unedic, that runs social security.

Also opposed to the campaign is the leadership of Force Ouvriere (FO), the other main union federation. FO general secretary Marc Blondel argues that the protests divide the employed from the unemployed, claiming that demands of the jobless are inevitably directed against those who have a job.

Nationalism of ultraright and 'left'

While the January 17 marches were going on, the fascist National Front, headed by Jean-Marie Le Pen, held its national convention in Lyon. In a press conference prior to the convention, Le Pen said the National Front distinguished between the leaders of the campaign against unemployment — who he denounced as the "CP and their Trotskyist epigones" — and the "unfortunate French people" who are silent. Attempting to drive a wedge between "French" and foreign-born workers, Le Pen claims "hard-working people" have to pay high taxes to finance the benefits for the unemployed. The Front says that unemployment can only be understood in the context of globalization — that is of immigration and "free trade." The nationalist organization calls for protectionism, repatriation of immigrants, and the easing of taxes on small proprietors as a solution to unemployment.

The main headline of the January 14 *Minute*, an ultrarightist paper supportive of Le Pen but not directly linked to the National Front, was: "One billion for the unemployed — 300 billion for immigrants."

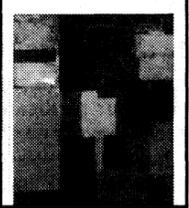
Some of the groups that took part in the Paris demonstration played right into nationalist, anti-immigrant stance of the National Front. Republican Initiative (RI), a party formed in 1996, sported flags in red, white, and blue. Asked if these weren't the colors of French nationalism, spokesperson Tomas Urbitzondo said they were the colors of the "French republic." Urbitzondo said that a "major, national debate" on immigration is needed. "The French economy is not able to support new immigration. There must be entry controls, of course."

Urbitzondo said IR rejected the view that immigrants should be forcibly repatriated, or encouraged to leave, but if they wished to return to their country of origin, "the government should give financial help." The two main partners in the governing coalition, the SP and the Communist Party, have consistently supported restrictions on immigration.

Debbie Delange is a member of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union in Manchester, England. Jonathan Silberman is a member of the Transport and General Workers Union in London.

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