

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

New preface to 'Changing Face of U.S. Politics' in Spanish

— PAGES 8-9

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Fight by American Airlines pilots is boost for others

BY BETSEY STONE

CHICAGO — When American Airlines pilots carried out their mass sick-out in mid-February, the big-business media made every attempt to turn public opinion against them. News articles and TV coverage focused on the numbers of passengers inconvenienced by the cancellation of more than 6,000 American flights. The concerns of the pilots were not explained clearly and their high pay was mentioned often, trying to present them as unreasonable and greedy.

Nevertheless, many working people were inspired by the pilots' fighting spirit in the face of company's attack and their defiance of a judge's back-to-work order.

Dave Lee is a baggage handler at Northwest airlines in Chicago. Like most workers in the airline industry, Northwest workers have been hit by a company drive to impose concessions. "Many of my co-workers were really picked up by the boldness of the action of the pilots," Lee said. "We have been discussing that this is the kind of fight we'd like to see our union carrying out."

The pilots, who are members of the Allied Pilots Association, are fighting an attempt by American Airlines to introduce a two-tier structure by paying pilots from Reno Air, a small airline American bought in December, less than American pilots. They are also demanding that those American pilots who are being upgraded to captain's jobs because of the addition of Reno planes and flights be immediately paid the higher wages corresponding to their new positions.

The company has insisted that the higher pay scale be instituted slowly over the course of the 18 months it will take to "integrate" Reno into American. Currently Reno pilots make about half of what American pilots do.

Rick Walker, a ramp worker and member

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Clinton is acquitted, presidency is weakened

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

On February 12 the U.S. Senate acquitted President William Clinton of both articles of impeachment the House of Representatives had earlier approved.

The conclusion of the trial, however, did not bring to an end the crisis of the ruling class that has become evident in the year-long scandal. The five-week-long Senate trial brought into the open the contradictions that have plagued the bourgeoisie — contradictions that reflect the growing instability of the world capitalist system and the decline in confidence in its leading personnel.

While Clinton got off scot free, the U.S. presidency has been weakened. The ruling class does not come out stronger or more united to face what they anticipate will be a social and economic crisis that could easily

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Washington threatens air strikes in Yugoslavia

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright telephoned an ultimatum to Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic to accept a "Bosnia-style" occupation army in the Yugoslav province of Kosova by noon February 20 or face an imperialist military assault. "If there is no agreement then the Serbs need to know what we have said earlier — whatever side craters [destroys] the talks would be held responsible," she declared in a television interview February 16. "In the Serb case that means it would be followed by NATO bombings."

U.S. envoy Christopher Hill met with Milosevic in Belgrade that day to personally deliver the threat, but the Yugoslav president did not budge. Yugoslav information minister Milan Komnecic said Belgrade would not permit foreign troops on its territory. "If they bomb Serbia, there will be no more negotiations and a solution for Kosovo will be postponed for several years," Komnecic told reporters in Rambouillet, France February 17.

Washington is preparing to send 2,200 Marines to join a "rapid reaction force" of up to 10,000 NATO troops that would quickly move into Kosova within days after a delegation of Kosova Albanians and representatives from the Yugoslav government agree to swallow the U.S.-drafted "peace" deal. During the "peace conference" organized by the six-nation Contact Group in Rambouillet, U.S. government officials have threatened both sides to acquiesce on the accord or face NATO air strikes.

"These are not conventional negotiations," Albright admonished the participants in a meeting February 14. "The threat of NATO air strikes remains real."

"I believe America should contribute" to

Continued on Page 5

Thousands protest arrest of Kurdish leader



Protests by Kurdish immigrants, like the one above in the Netherlands February 16, exploded across Europe following arrest of Abdullah Ocalan, leader of the Kurdish Workers Party, by Turkish agents. See related coverage on back page.

Farmers discuss proposed discrimination settlement

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

ALBANY, Georgia — More than 700 farmers filled the Civic Center here February 13 to find out about the proposed settlement of a class-action lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The suit demands redress for years of discrimination against farmers who are Black.

The meeting was part of the annual Georgia Farmers Conference Marketing and Trade Show sponsored by the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund (FSC/LAF). The discussion and debate among farmers and lawyers reflected tensions over crucial issues in the suit.

Attorneys for the farmers and for the USDA have already agreed to the deal. The federal judge in the case has also given his preliminary approval and is expected to finalize the deal at a March 2 "fairness hearing." Many farmers think that the terms of the consent decree are inadequate. Small groups of farmers opposed to the settlement attended the February 13 meeting to educate fellow farmers on its real content and urge them to continue the fight. A group of 13 farmers from Tennessee and Arkansas held up signs throughout the meeting that read, "Don't get railroaded. Avoid Track A and B," "Avoid the Spring Round-up — Opt Out," and "Keep [the] \$50,000. We want our land back."

The consent decree as it stands, is divided into two tracks. Those farmers who settle for track A and meet the requirements are promised \$50,000 in a cash payment along with relief from debts to the USDA that they can prove are the result of past discrimina-

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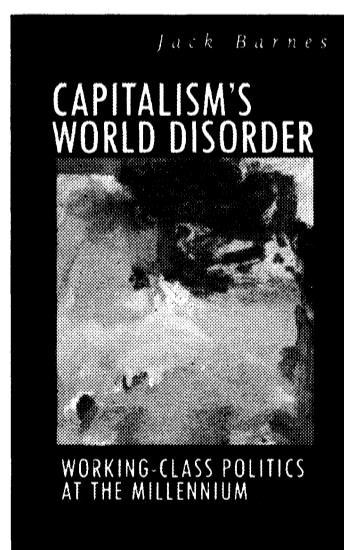
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BY JACK BARNES

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Appeals court tries to roll back reading of 'Miranda' rights

A federal appeals court in Virginia ruled February 9 that police can take a "confession" from an arrested person and submit it in a court of law without reading the accused their "Miranda" rights. Under the 1966 Supreme Court ruling *Miranda v. Arizona*, police are required to inform anyone they detain of their right to remain silent, to an attorney, and that any statements made thereafter can be used as evidence in court. If a person is not clearly informed of those rights any statements in police custody are supposed to be invalid.

Before the Miranda ruling, judges had discretion to decide whether statements to police were "voluntary." In 1968, Congress passed a law that in essence undermined *Miranda*, codifying the pre-1966 standards. This law, which had never been enforced, was resurrected by the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals as the basis for its recent ruling.

U.S. jets fly near Russian islands

Seven U.S. war planes performed unannounced military exercises on February 12 in close proximity to the Russian islands of Komandorskije — less than 400 miles off the mainland. The U.S. pilots, who carried out similar flights February 7, remained in neutral air space. Moscow's federal border patrol, noting how close the plane were to Russian territory, sent guards to monitor the path of the planes.

Finland: strike shuts airport

Air traffic controllers in Finland reached their 12th day on strike February 12, unable to settle a pay dispute with the aviation board. The Helsinki airport was reported to be closed on February 13, with international charter flights moved to Tampere or Turku airports in western Finland. Nearly all regular international flights were canceled.

France: farmers protest austerity

Hundreds of farmers in France, furious at the "reforms" being shoved down their throats by the French government, occupied and ransacked the offices of Environment Minister Dominique Voynet in early February. This latest action is one of the

many that have occurred over the last three months. So-called reform measures — aimed at competing with other capitalist rival countries in the European Union — include: cutting farm subsidies for milk by 15 percent, cereal by 20 percent, and beef by 30 percent, as well as taxing pesticides. Cops arrested hundreds of farmers, most of whom were later released.

Thai farmers begin mass sit-ins

Pressing the demand for a five-year moratorium on \$10 billion of debt owed to the government bank and loan sharks, more than 10,000 working farmers began a sit-in February 5 on parade grounds in central Bangkok. Demonstrators have projected up to 40,000 more farmers will join the action against Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai. Another demand of the farmers is for an immediate rehabilitation of the collapsed farm sector. Farmers have been hit hard by the devaluation of the Thai currency, the sharp drop in prices they receive for their produce, and a prolonged drought. The Thai government has agreed to some relief but rejects the proposal for a moratorium.

INS arrests man on drug charges

A thousand people rallied in front of Queens Country Courthouse in New York, February 12 to denounce the treatment of Rev. Frank Almonte.

A legal immigrant from the Dominican Republic, Almonte could face up to seven years in prison on criminal drug charges and deportation for bringing a steroid appetite enhancer for his son, prescribed by a doctor in the Dominican Republic, back to the United States. Almonte was taken into Federal custody under the 1996 immigration law that allows for the detention and deportation of any legal immigrant who has been charged or convicted of a drug-related crime.

Bomb 'suspect' is denied rights

The U.S. government is preventing Wadhi el Hage from calling his imam at a mosque in Texas. El Hage has been imprisoned in the Metropolitan Correctional Center in New York for months after being accused in the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in Tanzania and Kenya. El Hage served as a secretary in a company owned by Osama bin Laden, who

Baltimore rally backs Crown workers



Militant/Brian Williams

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

BALTIMORE, Maryland — Some 150 people picketed Crown Central Petroleum's corporate headquarters here February 11. The action marked the third anniversary of the lockout of 250 members of Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers (PACE) Local 4-227 at Crown's Pasadena, Texas, refinery.

Members of the United Food and Commercial Workers, United Auto Workers, Teamsters, PACE, Amalgamated Transit Union, United Steelworkers of America, and International Association of Machinists took part. About 20 young people with Clean Water Action joined the rally.

"We must hold Crown accountable for air pollution," stated Kalima Young, a member of this group. "We're for protecting the workplace and the environment."

"We're here today to let the public know what this company has done — vio-

lated environmental rights, engaged in racism, sexism, and union-busting," stated John Grant, a locked-out member of PACE Local 4-227.

Also speaking was a representative of the Baltimore chapter of the National Organization for Women.

Alvin Freeman, also locked-out by Crown, pointed to the role of the government in advancing the company's anti-union campaign. "When we said no to them on their union-busting contract, they locked us out," stated Freeman. "Twenty-six days later they called in the FBI to look for Crown workers trying to exercise their constitutional right to demand a fair contract." Freeman was referring to frame-up charges of sabotage the company filed against the unionists.

Brian Williams is a member of USWA Local 2609 in Sparrows Point, Maryland.

Washington blames for the bombing. Prosecuting attorneys accuse el Hage of being bin Laden's "front man."

The government is invoking a rule that restricts the mail, visits, phone calls, and media contact of el Hage and other inmates held under similar accusations. Washington claims they are preventing el Hage from contacting imam, Moataz Al-Hallak — a leader of the Islamic Society in Arlington, Texas — because of ambiguous "specific concerns." They imply the mosque has some role in the bombing, which Al-Hallak denies.

Men who beat Black soldier plead guilty

Five men accused of the May 30, 1998, brutal beating of Carlos Colbert, a Marine

who is Black, plead guilty January 14. Jessie Lawson, one of the five, admitted to administering brass-knuckle blows to Colbert that are believed to have broken his neck and rendered him a quadriplegic. Investigators say witnesses who attended a party where the beating took place say Lawson and Robert Rio yelling "white power" and other racist remarks while stomping Colbert. Lawson plea bargained for a maximum sentence of 11 years in prison. The other four men, Trenton Solis, Jed Jones, Robert Rio, and Steve Newark negotiated a year in jail and five years probation. Charges of torture and aggravated mayhem, which carry life sentences, were dropped.

— BRIAN TAYLOR

THE MILITANT

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Derry conference urges stepped-up activity against violence by British state in Ireland

BY DOUG COOPER
AND JULIE CRAWFORD

DERRY, Northern Ireland — "The British government has got away with murder for too long — let's see if they can handle the truth as well as they can handle the lies," said Kay Duddy. Her brother, Jack Duddy, was among the 14 civil rights protesters killed by the British Army here in 1972, on what became known as Bloody Sunday. She was the last speaker at a day-long conference, "State Violence: State the Truth," held in the Pilots Row Community Centre in the Bogside neighborhood January 30, the day before the annual Bloody Sunday demonstration. (A report on the demonstration appeared in the February 15 *Militant*).

The conference was part of an effort by relatives and supporters of the Bloody Sunday victims to reach out to other families of the hundreds of nationalists and Catholics killed by British forces and pro-British loyalist death squads since 1969 — both in the occupied six counties of Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. The day's discussions were an opportunity for a number of these other families to meet and exchange experiences. Bloody Sunday relatives pointed to their 27-year-long fight as an example of how to sustain a united effort to win justice.

A photo exhibition at the front of the hall included some of those killed by British state violence, including Robert Hamill, a nationalist kicked to death by loyalists while the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) cops looked on in 1997, and Peter McBride, 18, shot in the back in 1992 by two Scots Guards after a patrol stopped him in North Belfast.

Paul O'Connor of the Pat Finucane Centre, one of the organizers of the conference, pointed out that the exhibition represented only a small number of those killed. Nearly 400 killings could be directly attributed to the British state, O'Connor said, and there was growing evidence of state involvement in the many more killings of Catholics carried out by loyalist murder gangs.

John Kelly, from the Bloody Sunday Justice Campaign, described the early years of that fight and noted how it intensified around the 20th anniversary. Kelly emphasized that while London has been forced to open a new inquiry, to get "prosecutions of those who planned and carried out Bloody Sunday, we have a long way to go."

O'Connor noted that in recent visits to Ireland, Charles Windsor, heir to the British throne, and British prime minister Anthony Blair refused to meet with relatives of those killed by British security forces but did see relatives of those killed as a result of republican military operations or by loyalist murder gangs. Such moves are designed to reinforce the British government's attempt to portray itself as neutral and its occupation of the six counties in the occupied North as separating "two warring tribes."

Elish McCabe, who heads Relatives for Justice, spoke of the "litany of murders" by Britain. Her brother Aidan McAnespie was shot dead by a British soldier at a border crossing in February 1988. "The British government is involved in a dirty and illegal violation of our human rights," she said. McCabe also denounced the Dublin government's role in covering up these murders. She detailed other examples of British violence, such as the "shoot to kill" policy of the early 1980s and the use of plastic bullets against protesters.

The vast majority of those killed by the security forces have been unarmed civilians, attorney Paddy MacDermott told the conference. In 30 years only four British soldiers have ever been convicted of murder, he said. None have served more than a few years in prison and all were reinstated into the army upon release. The first prosecution for murder of an RUC cop was for the 1984 killing of Sean Downes. The cop was acquitted. No police officer has served any time for murder since the conflict began in earnest 30 years ago, he noted.

Those killed include Irish Republican Army (IRA) fighters who were ambushed and summarily executed over the years or who were wounded and allowed to bleed to death. The IRA is currently on cease-fire after waging a military campaign against British occupation.

Róisín Barton's brother, Colm Keenan, was an IRA Volunteer killed by the British



Militant/Doug Cooper

Sinn Féin Youth in march commemorating Bloody Sunday in Derry, January 30. One of SFY's main campaigns is demanding disbandment of Royal Ulster Constabulary.

Army while unarmed. It was "a summary execution," she said. Barton said families of executed IRA Volunteers were demonized in a way "they couldn't do with Bloody Sunday.... My brother was a soldier." She added that no family who had lost members to state violence should be "silent victims."

Martina Duffy's father Patrick, an IRA man, was shot at point-blank range by the Special Air Services (SAS), an undercover special forces unit of the British Army. "I'm very proud of my father," said Duffy, who was attending the conference with her mother. "He was fighting for justice." After his death "we didn't know how or where to start to get justice."

The presence of relatives and survivors of British state violence from the south, showed the potential for an all-Ireland campaign. It also highlighted the complicity of

the capitalist rulers in Dublin in hiding the facts. Derek Byrne from Dublin was seriously injured in the 1974 Dublin-Monaghan bombings that killed 33 people. While no one has been charged with this atrocity, several media reports have implicated a loyalist death squad assisted by British police agencies. Byrne was initially pronounced dead, and lay in a morgue for several hours. "We never got anywhere with the Irish government," he said. "We need justice for all, under one banner, North and South." He condemned both the British and Irish governments for their cover-up.

Meanwhile, Paul Mahon, a lawyer who is currently working with the Bloody Sunday Justice Campaign, explained how new facts are beginning to emerge about the extent of British state violence. Members of the Parachute Regiment of the British Army,

which was responsible for the Bloody Sunday killings, carried out another massacre, he said, the Springhill massacre in Belfast in July 1972, where six people were killed.

Some British soldiers involved in Bloody Sunday have appealed court rulings that they are entitled to only partial immunity from being named during the new inquiry established by the Labour government, known as the Saville Inquiry.

The conference finished with a final panel discussion, exchanging views on the usefulness of truth commissions and other questions. There was some debate on whether the arrest in Britain and possible extradition of former Chilean dictator Gen. Augusto Pinochet to Spain aided or hindered the struggle for justice in Ireland.

One panelist was Jeremy Corbyn, a Labour MP with a record in support of the Irish struggle, who spoke earlier at the London Bloody Sunday march. He argued for London to extradite Pinochet.

Tony Hunt, a leader of the Communist League in the United Kingdom, spoke from the audience in response, noting that the British state had no more right to interfere in the affairs of the Chilean people than it did in the affairs of the Irish. He pointed to how London was using the Pinochet case to pretty up its own record and justify intervention in Iraq and Yugoslavia.

A Basque participant explained that the Spanish judge who requested Pinochet's extradition is the same judge who imprisoned the entire national executive of the Basque nationalist party Herri Batasuna on trumped-up charges. Asking why the Spanish courts had never taken action against Spanish military officers who carried out gross acts of murder and torture during the dictatorship of Francisco Franco, he said, "I think the fight for justice begins at home."

Doug Cooper is a member of the Maritime Union of Australia in Sydney. Julie Crawford is a member of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union in Manchester.

A LETTER FROM EUROPE

Tensions grow in German gov't as anti-immigrant campaign heats up

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — The conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) won 44 percent of the vote in the central German state of Hesse February 7, defeating the coalition of the Social Democrats (SDP) and Greens that has governed in the state the last eight years.

This was a surprise blow to the federal SDP-Greens coalition government, which came into office last October after 16 years of rule by CDU chancellor Helmut Kohl. The Hesse election is among the recent signs that the leftward shift in bourgeois politics registered in the federal election is a relatively short-term phenomena.

Although the Social Democrats increased their vote by 1 percent compared with the last state elections in Hesse, winning 39 percent, the Greens dropped sharply from 11 to 7 percent. The conservative Free Democratic Party (FDP) was able to get more than 5 percent of the vote and is negotiating to form a coalition government with the CDU.

One result of the Hesse election is that the social democrats no longer control a majority in the Bundesrat, the upper house of parliament, which is based on representation from the 16 federal states. The CDU and its sister Christian Social Union (CSU) party will be able to block proposals from the coalition government.

In the weeks leading up to the elections in Hesse, the CDU and CSU campaigned heavily against a proposal for a new citizenship law that the social democratic coalition government was to submit to parliament. The new law was supposed to make it possible for many of the 7 million immigrants in Germany to get German citizenship and keep their original citizenship.

The current law, based on blood lineage, denies citizenship status to millions of residents, including second-, third-, and fourth-generation immigrants who do not renounce their nationality. This has become a central polarizing issue in politics in Germany.

The CDU/CSU claimed to get 1 million petition signatures opposing the change in immigration law, half of them in Hesse. Their campaign continues, and opens space for the ultraright in Germany to campaign and organize. The ultraright Republicans increased their vote in the Hesse elections from less than 1 percent to about 2 percent in many constituencies. In this context, SDP chancellor Gerhard Schröder is seeking a compromise with CDU/CSU.

Instead of offering dual citizenship for about half of the immigrants in Germany, the compromise proposal would initially give citizenship to all those born in Germany, with dual citizenship allowed up to the age of 23. Adults would not be able to keep their dual citizenship more than 10 years. It is unlikely that Schröder will get agreement from the Christian Democrats on even a very watered down version, however, as this question is at the heart of the cultural war waged by the right wing there.

Tensions are mounting within the

federal coalition government, as the Greens are rebuffed on their key platform issues, particularly the proposed citizenship law and the decommissioning of nuclear power plants. In late January Schröder reversed a coalition agreement to halt contracts to reprocess nuclear waste in France and Britain, following complaints by Paris and London, as well as capitalists in the nuclear industry.

On February 12 Schröder had to publicly deny that he planned to break up the coalition with the Greens and seek the support of Free Democratic Party, which has served both in CDU/CSU and social democratic coalition governments in the past.

Carl-Erik Isacsson is a member of the metalworkers union in Södertälje, Sweden.

From Pathfinder

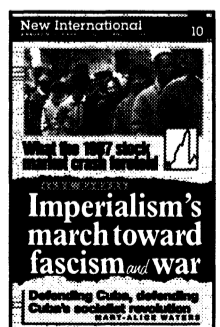
Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War

Jack Barnes

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Georgia farmer: I read 'Militant' every week

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

"We caught up with William Miller, a 67-year-old farmer from Marshallville, Georgia, to renew his subscription at a meeting of 700 farmers in Albany, Georgia," said Arlene Rubenstein, an airline worker in Atlanta. The farmers were discussing the class-action lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Agriculture charging the USDA with racist discrimination (see article on front page).

"Don't let me miss an issue, I read it every week," said Miller, who worked in a New Jersey auto plant before moving back to the farm when his father died. He was one of two farmers at the meeting who renewed their subs to the *Militant*. Another farmer bought an introductory subscription to the newspaper.

Supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* like Rubenstein are using the campaign to sell single copies and subscription renewals for the two publications to step up efforts to reach out to workers and farm-

ers involved in struggles.

Doug Jenness from Minnesota said activists there sold eight copies of the *Militant*, three copies of the pamphlet *Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s*, and one copy of *Malcolm X Talks to Young People* during a tour of Gary Grant, president of the Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association. Several farmers bought the paper and one bought a copy of *The Communist Manifesto*.

"In renewal calling last week we talked to a worker who had bought a subscription from a co-worker in a United Auto Workers-organized plant. He quit that job, went to work for Shop-Rite in Delaware, and now is about to go on strike as a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union," wrote Jason Coughlin from Philadelphia. "He agreed to renew his sub and wants to hook up with us so we can relate to this possible strike."

Coughlin also reported that he and another *Militant* supporter went to a confer-

ence of 400 farmers organized by the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture February 13. "We set up a literature table, sold 13 copies of the *Militant* and three copies of the pamphlet *Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s*. We had discussions with dozens of farmers on the fights against USDA discrimination, the crisis in hog and dairy farming, and the Cuban revolution."

In Christchurch, New Zealand, Annalucia Vermunt wrote, "We went to Nelson and set up a table adjacent to a local market, featuring a large placard promoting the Pathfinder pamphlet *Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s*. It attracted a lot of interest."

One woman stopped and said, "I agree, I'm a farmer and it is tough in farming with the drought." We sold 19 copies of the *Militant* at that table. In the afternoon we went to meet with a local farmer whose orchard had been foreclosed on by the bank. She described the pressures facing small fruit-

growers today. Although they had never failed to meet their loan payments, the bank decided it wasn't willing to continue lending them money. She is fighting the bank's actions."

"We sold 24 copies of the *Militant* in the first week of the campaign," wrote Joanne Kuniansky from Sydney, Australia. "In the week leading up to the start of the renewal campaign we began our calling with good results — three renewals before the drive began. In addition one supporter sold two introductory subscriptions at work while campaigning for Bob Aiken, who is the Communist League candidate for the seat in Fairfield in the New South Wales state elections. Workmates bought subs after reading our campaign literature against the imperialist assault on Iraq."

"In the first week of the sales campaign we sold four *Militant* renewals and two *Perspectiva Mundial* renewals. A Sydney University student who just returned from Cuba renewed her subscription when she joined a campaign table. She has gotten six nominations for Bob in Fairfield and said she would like to staff tables on campus."

The chart below shows the first week's results in the month-long campaign to win long-term readers to the socialist press and to sell 1,250 copies of the *Militant* and 100 of *Perspectiva Mundial* each week. The renewal figures are based on subscriptions received at the *Militant* business office. Subscriptions received by 3:00 p.m. each Tuesday will be counted on the chart. That is also the deadline for supporters to send in their totals of single copies sold.

If you'd like to help in this sales effort, contact the *Militant* supporters nearest you, listed on page 12. Or you can order your own bundle by contacting the *Militant* business office at 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 243-6392.

Thousands protest killing by NY cops

BY GLOVA SCOTT

NEW YORK — Angry protests over the cop killing of Amadou Diallo, an immigrant worker from Guinea, continue almost daily in this city. An overflow crowd — 1,000 inside and 1,000 outside — attended memorial services at the Islamic Cultural Center of New York February 12. Two days later, a huge motorcade accompanied the hearse that transported Diallo's coffin to the Newark Airport for a burial back in West Africa. Two thousand people attended another memorial service at Harlem's Abyssinian Baptist Church February 15. And the following day 600-700 demonstrators rallied out-

"dum dum," bullets, they wouldn't need to shoot people 41 times. These bullets, which are currently banned, explode on entry into human flesh, causing graver injury.

"This is insulting to suggest that the use of hollow point bullets will stop cops from firing so many shots," Paulino said. His classmates agreed.

Clergymen and local politicians addressed the rally. Another action was announced to take place the next day in downtown Brooklyn demanding justice for Patrick Bailey. The 22-year-old Black man was shot in November 1997 by Boss, one of the four cops who killed Diallo. Bailey bled to death while

hours. Organizers officially ended the noon rally after 45 minutes. Reggie Holmes, an office worker and messenger, said he attended an earlier protest on Wheeler Avenue in the block where Diallo lived. Lucy Turull, with Parents Against Police Brutality, said she had been at every single action that had been called. Both plan to attend future protests.

Around 2:30 p.m. police finally forced people onto the sidewalks and opened the street to traffic, although a small group of 40 insisted on marching around the courthouse.

Another protest has been called for February 22, from 4:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m. at City Hall.



Militant/Marc Lichtman

Around 2,000 demonstrators rallied outside the Federal Court building in New York City February 9 to protest killing of Amadou Diallo, 22-year-old vendor from Guinea, by cops who shot at him 41 times.

side the steps of the Bronx Courthouse while a grand jury met to decide whether to press criminal indictments against the four policemen involved.

The four cops, members of a plainclothes "street crime unit," killed Diallo February 4 in a hail of 41 bullets as he stood in the entry hall of the apartment building where he lived in the Bronx. Diallo, 22, was hit by 19 bullets from powerful 9-mm guns at close range.

Patrolmen's Benevolent Association lawyer Stephen Worth asserted that the four cops — Kenneth Boss, Sean Carroll, Edward McMellon, and Richard Murphy — believed Diallo had a gun. He was, in fact, unarmed.

For Jason Paulino, Nilson Rosario, and Erick Nuñez, 16-year-old students from nearby All Hallows High School, the February 16 action at the Bronx Courthouse was their first rally against police brutality. They were finishing up a school project, saw the demonstration, and decided to join it. Paulino recalled seeing New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani and Police Commissioner Howard Safir on television claiming that if police were allowed to use hollow-tip, or

handcuffed on the floor of his apartment building, while an ambulance waited outside.

Democratic Party politicians and other ruling-class figures have felt compelled to denounce Diallo's killing. All claim that the four cops involved are "bad apples" and with "better management," incidents of police abuse will lessen. The big-business press is running articles downplaying police abuse and citing statistics pointing to a drop in crime. The *New York Times* printed a lengthy article February 16 titled, "Refocusing Officers' Firearms Training," about teaching cops when to draw the weapons and when to hold fire.

About 83 percent of those fatally shot by police in the last five years were Black or Latino.

Moses Canello, originally from Peru, was among those who attended the rally at the Bronx Courthouse. "There is no word for what they did — 41 shots," he said. "One shot was one too many. I should be going to work. But I don't want to now."

Canello's anger was illustrated by the hundreds of protesters who lingered in the street in front of the courthouse for several

Militant and Perspectiva Mundial Renewal/Single Issue Circulation Drive February 6-March 7

	Sub renewal			Single issues					
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
Australia	4	4	100%	1	2	20	24		
Iceland	3	2	67%			4	6		
Canada									
Toronto	8	5	63%	1		50	45	5	2
Vancouver	7	4	57%			40	48		
Montreal	3		0%	3		22	45		1
Canada Total	18	9	50%	4		112	138	5	3
United States									
Miami	10	10	100%	4		30	19	5	0
Des Moines	8	7	88%	4		40	44	15	4
Philadelphia	8	5	63%	2		45	43	2	0
Boston	8	4	50%	3	1	30	36	3	2
Los Angeles	20	10	50%	8	3	80		8	
San Francisco	13	6	46%	8		70	59	15	7
Atlanta	7	3	43%	3		55	49	4	5
Chicago	15	6	40%	5		60	51	8	7
Seattle	14	3	21%	3	1	40	49	2	1
Detroit	10	2	20%	2	1	50			
Birmingham, AL	14	2	14%	2		45	46	4	2
Houston	8	1	13%	2		40	41	5	5
Pittsburgh	8	1	13%	2		40	4		
New York	30	3	10%	13		115	87	25	16
Twin Cities, MN	10	1	10%	2		45	25	3	3
Washington, D.C.	15	1	7%	4		40	30	3	1
Newark, NJ	25	1	4%	10	1	100	68	5	1
Cleveland	4		0%	1		40	44		0
U.S. Total	227	66	29%	78	7	965	695	107	54
United Kingdom									
London	10	2	20%	2		50	26		
Manchester	3		0%	0		30	37		
UK Total	13	2	15%	2	0	80	63		
New Zealand									
Auckland	5		0%			25	37		
Christchurch	3		0%			25	37		
N.Z. Total	8	0	0%			50	74		
Sweden	3		0%	1		23	30		
Int'l totals	276	83	30%	86	9	1254	1030	112	57
Int'l goals/ should be	275	68	25%	85	21	1250		100	

Strikers at Ontario hotel wage determined fight

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, 3284 23rd St., San Francisco, California, 94110. Tel: (415) 824-1429.
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BY GABRIEL CHARBIN

CHATHAM, Ontario — Entering their 11th week on strike, members of the United Auto Workers continue picketing outside the Best Western, Wheels Inn, Resort and Conference Center here. The Bradley family are the proprietors of the hotel.

Since Nov. 25, 1998, scabs and customers

have been greeted by strikers, who delay the would-be picket line crossers and urge them to go to other hotels in the area. These strikers, some quite bruised, have been bumped and even run over by entering cars throughout the strike.

Three-quarters of the strikers are part-time workers and high school students. One of the striker's negotiation committee members includes 18-year-old Kevin Stirling. Steve Oosterhoff, 19, a maintenance worker who is now active in the strike committee, said, "You grow up fast in situations like this." These workers have shown determination to win their fight.

Unionists at the hotel have received much support from workers throughout the town. Remnants of the solidarity rally of 1,000 supporters of the strike are still visible, with

a "No Free Press" sticker from Detroit newspaper workers still stuck on an entrance sign. Honks and waves of support are frequent, as cars drive by. One striker told the *Militant* that some teachers from her high school near the hotel have visited the picket line.

Strikers have begun outreach to other workers for support. Approximately 50 unionists went to a Chatham Council meeting recently to protest the arrests of two dozen strikers on charges of mischief, assault, disturbance for impeding traffic, and other bogus claims.

A condition of release for strikers who have been arrested on any charges has included staying away from picket line — usually women: 250 meters, men: 500 meters

Jean Janssens, a front desk receptionist, is one of those charged. Janssens told the

Militant, "If the strike is settled, I can't go back to work unless the charges are dropped."

Janssens was arrested and strip-searched by police after being hit by a car on the picket line. Janssens explained that she could not even go to the local bank, as it is located right behind the hotel.

Pickets are constantly watched as guards hired by Wheels Inn sit in parked vans within a few meters of the picket line. Strikers said the guards' role in this strike has been to find out who the so-called troublemakers are, as they take notes and film them all day and night.

Nicole Demers, an 18-year-old recreation worker, said, "Some people are going back in to work because they're sick of being out here... but I'm going to stay out."

Washington gives ultimatum for Yugoslavia occupation

Continued from front page

the military operation, declared U.S. president William Clinton February 13. His announcement was timed with Albright's flight to Paris that day to impose Washington's dictates on the Serbian officials, Albanians, and the European foreign ministers participating in the talks.

NATO officials said the invasion army would include the 1,800 French-led NATO troops already stationed in neighboring Macedonia. The imperialist occupation force could expand to nearly 30,000 soldiers. Pentagon officials say Washington will provide air and sea power from the Fifth Allied Tactical Air Force unit in Aviano, Italy, and the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean.

On February 15 London transported 400 British military vehicles, including tanks and armored cars, along with heavy guns from Germany to the northern Greek port of Salonika in anticipation of the intervention. British defense secretary George Robertson said London planned to move the military equipment on ships en route to the Balkans even before an accord is signed.

Under the U.S.-sponsored settlement, Kosovo would be divided into zones, with 4,000 U.S. GIs occupying one of them. The British government plans to send 8,000 troops, the French government 5,000, and the German government 4,000. The imperialist army would begin to disarm the Yugoslav government military force and Kosova Liberation Army (UCK), as well as patrol Kosova's borders.

The 60-page document crafted by Washington requires the Albanian rebels to surrender their heavy weapons to storage depots under the supervision of the NATO occupation force. The rebels would also be barred from carrying light weapons or wearing the UCK emblem. The UCK has waged an armed struggle for independence from Yugoslavia. The U.S. plan would grant limited "self-government" to Kosova, less than the autonomy abolished by Yugoslav president Milosevic in 1989.

Kosova is a province in the republic of Serbia, which together with Montenegro makes up Yugoslavia. Ethnic Albanians, who comprise 90 percent of the 2 million people in Kosova, face widespread discrimination. Washington and the other imperialist powers are opposed to Kosova independence.

Albright told Milosevic the Albanian delegation "appear[s] ready to sign the agreement" and said Washington "expects him to do the same," the Associated Press reported February 17.

The Clinton administration has seized on Belgrade's war against the Albanians' struggle for self-determination as a pretext to prepare for military intervention. It is following the earlier pattern of imperialist intervention in Bosnia.

In the early 1990s the U.S. government sabotaged one initiative after another by the French, British, and German governments to act as power brokers in the Yugoslav workers state, where rival wings of the ruling bureaucratic caste were waging a vicious war for land and power. Washington successfully pushed for NATO air strikes in January 1994, as the European occupation force in Bosnia — waving a United Nations banner — faltered. At the same time Clinton initiated the proposal to extend the NATO

war machine eastward closer to the borders of Russia.

Over the next year and a half, Washington led a military operation of more than 3,000 assaults — air strikes, naval bombardment, and ground shelling — against Serbian forces. In the aftermath of this barrage the Clinton administration forced all parties involved to a so-called peace conference on a U.S. military base near Dayton, Ohio. Under the Dayton accord, Washington spearheaded an occupation army in Bosnia of 60,000 NATO soldiers. Of the 20,000 imperialist troops remaining in Bosnia, about 6,700 U.S. soldiers are deployed with no scheduled departure date.

One little-publicized side of the "agreement" U.S. officials are now trying to impose would grant the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, based in The Hague, Netherlands, full access to Kosova. The Belgrade government would also be required to extradite three people accused as "war criminals" to appear before this imperialist-crafted body.

Moscow opposed to air strikes

The Russian government has maintained its opposition to NATO intervention, although it may send troops to participate in the "peacekeeping" operation planned for Kosova like it has in Bosnia. "There are no diplomatic, legal, political or especially economic levers in the [NATO] alliance's arsenal, just naked military force," said Russian Col. Gen. Leonid Ivashov.

U.S. capitalist rulers are on a collision course with the Russian workers state. In an acknowledgment of this tension, an article in the February 12 *Christian Science Monitor* stated, "The Kremlin is anxious to avoid setting a precedent [in Kosova] that might



one day open the door to foreign intervention if one of its ethnic crises were to threaten the stability" in the region.

The imperialists' war moves in the Balkans powder keg are preparations for the day when they will attempt to use force to overturn the property relations in Russia, Eastern and Central Europe and try to reestablish the profit system. Imperialist troops deployed in Kosova would be the next step toward the Washington's military encirclement of Russia, which includes the expansion of the Atlantic military alliance.

NATO candidates Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic are opening air surveillance facilities that would provide the alliance with a view of all military and civilian

air traffic in central Europe. In the next two years, Slovenia, Slovakia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia will be included into the new spy network. The centers will be structured to add early warning against missiles.

The Polish government's "Air Sovereignty Operations Center" opened February 12 at a military base outside Warsaw. That same day Polish government spokesman Jaroslaw Sellin announced that Warsaw will formally join NATO March 12. Hungary and the Czech Republic will be brought into the alliance that month as well. NATO's 50th anniversary summit will be held in Washington in April, at which the three former Soviet bloc countries will be formally taken into membership.

Possibilities to expand Pathfinder book sales underline necessity of capital fund

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

The Pathfinder Capital Fund now stands at \$395,000 toward the \$550,000 goal. The success of the fund to date made it possible to make the final payment in mid-February on the \$350,000 computer-to-plate equipment that is essential to help cut the costs and labor time needed to produce Pathfinder books — making it possible to maintain Pathfinder's printshop.

This is key to meeting the growing need and possibilities to expand the distribution of Pathfinder books. At the center of these efforts right now will be the publication of *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*. This will be the first new Pathfinder book produced with the computer-to-plate equipment. Pathfinder bookstores around the country are beginning to take pre-publication orders.

The book, by Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes, pinpoints the deep-going shifts that are taking place

in world politics as working people increasingly resist the brutal assault of the capitalist rulers. And it points to the opportunities these changes open up for workers and farmers to engage in struggle to change the future capitalism has in store for us.

Billed by its publisher as perhaps the only *millennium* title whose purpose "is not to mystify and obscure but to reveal and clarify," the book will come off the presses February 26. Initial copies will be in every Pathfinder outlet the following Monday.

A special discount price of \$17.00—\$6.95 off the regular cover price of \$23.95 is being offered to members of the Pathfinder Readers Club (see front page ad). The clothbound edition, which will be out in mid-March, will be available for \$35.00 (\$30.00 off the regular price) to Readers Club members.

The book will also be sold through retail, campus, and chain stores. In New York earlier this month, supporters of Pathfinder tested the waters with two days of sales visits to a number of outlets. Two orders, for a total of 87 books, have come so far from the

visits.

Buyers at three of the city's largest independent bookstores asked the sales representatives to return when they had copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* to show. One outlet, a busy store located in Manhattan's East Village, placed an order for 10 copies of *New International* no. 11, featuring the article "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War" and two copies of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*.

The additional \$155,000 now being raised toward the capital fund goal is for further capital needs that must be deferred for now, as the funds are needed to meet a conjunctural cash shortfall as printshop workers work to reverse a serious drop in sales, increase productivity, and then regenerate the capital.

To make a contribution, write the Capital Fund Committee, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Tire and poultry strikers reach out for solidarity at farm show in Kentucky

BY MAGGIE TROWE

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky — Two busloads of members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), on strike against Titan Tire, traveled here from Des Moines, Iowa, and Natchez, Mississippi, for a protest and rally at the Titan Tire booth at the National Farm and Machinery Show.

After their all-day bus ride, the more than 70 striking steelworkers met February 9 and attended a dinner hosted by United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 227, whose members are on strike against the Tyson Foods poultry processing plant in nearby Corydon, Indiana.

After the dinner, the Titan strikers practiced for the next day's protest, and exchanged experiences. The Des Moines workers, members of Local 164, have been on strike since May 1, 1998. The Natchez local went on strike last fall.

Reggie Arnold, a striker with more than 30 years experience at the Natchez plant, which Titan owner Maurice Taylor bought last year, said, "The local police are against us. About six workers got citations for 'obstructing traffic,' but they beat the rap. Another striker was charged with getting battery acid on a strikebreaker's car. He has a hearing coming up."

Also participating in the protest was Charlie Long, who is helping lead an organizing drive at the Titan plant in Clinton, Tennessee. Long worked at the plant until he was fired recently. Managers called Long and another worker to the office and told them they couldn't be so openly supportive of a union. "I told them we're allowed to by law," Long said.

"Later the plant superintendent told me if I had complied a little more, I could have gone further. One day I was sick, so I told them and went home. The next day I came in for my shift and they told me 'You've quit.'" Now Long is doing auto body work at his home, and is continuing to support the unionizing effort. Workers inside the plant are producing an underground pro-union newsletter, "The Bear Trap." Titan owner Taylor calls himself "the grizzly bear" or "the grizz."

The Titan strikers met on the morning of February 10 and went to the exhibition hall by bus. They entered in small groups, mingling with farmers and others attending the machine show for about an hour. Then, as previously rehearsed, they converged on the Titan Tire booth, and when an air horn was sounded, everyone displayed union buttons and T-shirts they had been concealing, and began chanting, "What do we want? A contract! When do we want it? Now!" Another chant was, "The Grizz is a fizzle!" Strikers placed dozens of Alka-Seltzer tablets on the Titan display table.

Then several strikers, using bullhorns, testified about why they are on strike, describing conditions in the plants, massive forced overtime, and wages below industry average. Many show participants were attracted to the commotion, and many were sympathetic.

After 15-20 minutes, exhibition security guards and police ordered the unionists to leave. They marched with dignity out of the building, chanting as they went and raising their fists, and joined a Jobs with Justice rally of unionists outside.

Natchez striker Willie Evans, 48, a rack handler and tire tester, led chants and used his cane to keep the beat. He said, "When I was coming up, the civil rights movement was going on. I agree with the country song that says 'You've got to stand for something or you'll fall for anything; you've got to be your own man, not a puppet on a string.'"

Members of USWA Local 9423, who are on strike against the Southwire Corporation in Hawesville, Kentucky, also came to Louisville for the protest.

A contingent of several dozen Tyson strikers came to the rally and sponsored a lunch for all the unionists at their union hall afterward. The Tyson strikers' slogan is "One day longer, one day stronger!" While the lunch was being prepared, the catering company delivered some chicken that turned out to be from Tyson. Union members turned it away, and served meatloaf and

cold cuts instead.

John Willis, chief shop steward for the Tyson local, said 40-60 of the more than 300 members have crossed the picket line, but morale is still strong on the picket lines.

Lynnette Chinn, 24, who has worked at Tyson for 10 months, said, "Tyson runs the lines so fast that chickens fall all over, and they won't stop the line to let us catch up. When a chicken falls on the floor, they tell us to rinse it off and put it back. That's one of the issues we're striking about."

Another issue, Chinn said, is bathroom breaks. "If you ask to go to the bathroom twice in one day, Tyson says you have to get a note from the doctor about your 'medical condition.'"

Larry Nance, 27, another UFCW member, took "We will win!" stickers from Titan strikers, and told of how many Tyson workers had union stickers and other stickers like smiley faces on their hard hats before the strike.

Tyson managers outlawed stickers, saying they weren't USDA-approved. So workers used magic markers and wrote slogans on their hard hats.

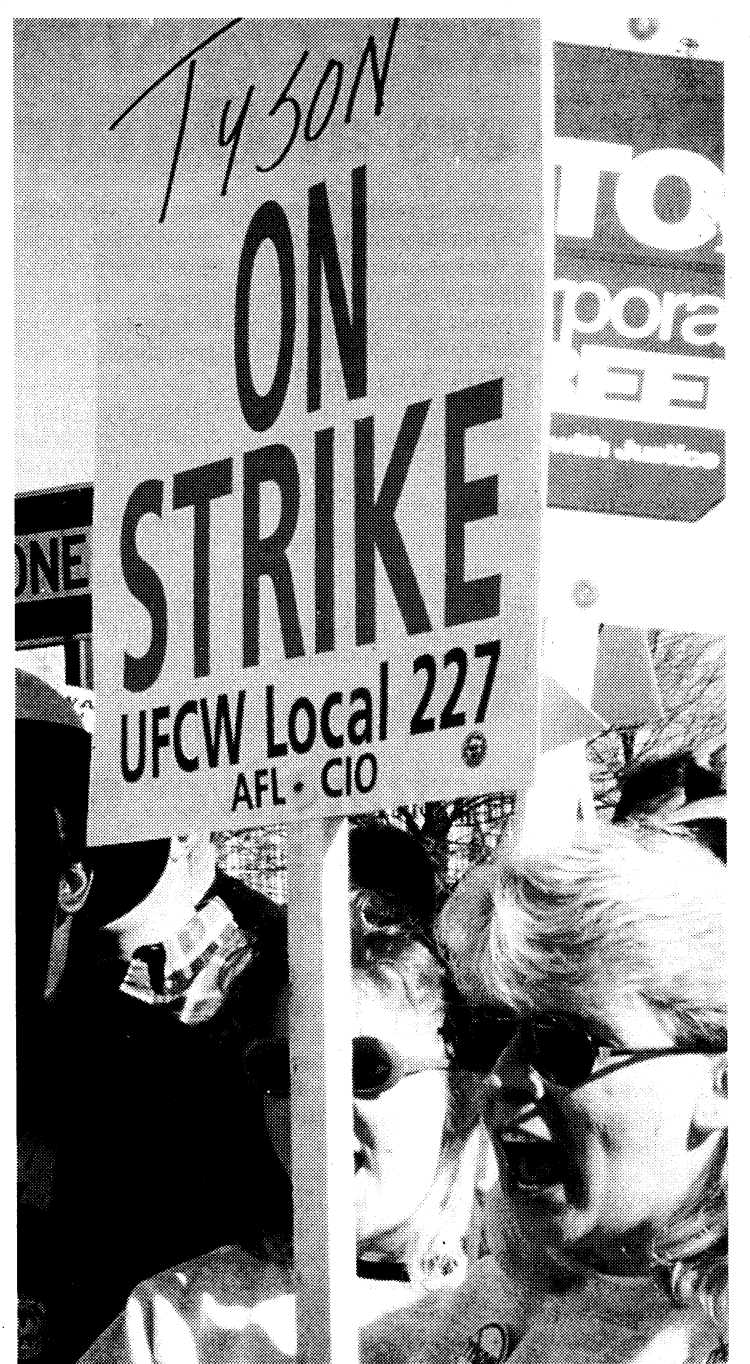
Joe Burnett, 37, said his six-year old son has explained the strike to fellow elementary school students and teachers at his school in Erkon, Kentucky. "Last week they served Tyson chicken nuggets at the school cafeteria," Burnett said, "and everyone threw them in the garbage." Burnett said Tyson's Christmas gift to employees last year was three \$5 Tyson coupons.

Jason Vollman, 22, said this is his first union job and his first strike. He and Willis went leafleting at two Tyson plants in Jacksonville, Kentucky. "One was union and we

got a really, really good response. The other was nonunion, and we were surprised at what a good response we got there," he said. These information teams, or "truth squads" as strikers call them, are "the funnest thing in the world," Vollman added.

After the rally at the UFCW union hall, unionists watched a video on the Tyson strike and talked about plans to travel to Titan headquarters in Quincy, Illinois, in March.

Bob Riggle, 42, who has worked at Titan since 1986, said on the bus ride back to Des Moines, "I was surprised at how long we were able to protest at the Titan booth. I didn't expect so much support from the people at the show. And I was really happy to see the Tyson strikers waiting for us at the rally outside of the show. I didn't know they would be there."



Militant/Ray Parsons

Striking poultry workers from Tyson plant in Corydon, Indiana helped organize rally at farm show in Louisville and hosted meals with Titan Tire strikers from Iowa and Mississippi.

Midwest farmers meet to discuss farm crisis

BY MAGGIE TROWE AND JOE SWANSON

TAMA, Iowa — Sixty people — most of them working farmers — gathered at a meeting sponsored by the Iowa Farmers Union to hear National Farmers Union president Lee Swensen and to discuss how to solve the deep crisis that threatens their ability to stay in farming. Two union packinghouse workers also attended. The meeting took place at the American Legion hall in this town, located in the heart of hog, cattle, corn, and soybean country, down the road from the IBP-owned Tama Packing plant and a large cattle auction facility.

The meeting was chaired by IFU president Gary Hoskey. Speakers in addition to Swensen included representatives from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and from the farm division of the Iowa Attorney General's office. The USDA representative explained how the government's paltry \$5-a-head relief to hog farmers will be distributed. Hog farmers have been getting prices between \$8 and \$30 per hundredweight in the last three months, well below the cost of production.

Swensen attacked the growing concentration of the capitalist enterprises that process and distribute agricultural commodities. He pointed to acquisitions in progress that will give one company control of 85 percent of cotton. "In beef production, four big firms control 80 percent of beef processing, and in pork four firms control 60 percent. Smithfield [one of the big four in pork] bought one plant in South Dakota and shut it down, because they own a big plant in Sioux Falls, South Dakota," Swensen said.

This concentration allows processors to buy low and sell high, Swensen said. "Why did Iowa Beef make a 400 percent increase in profit when beef producers increased their debt by 400 percent?" Swensen asked. "This is a violation of America's trust in the capitalist system."

Swensen invited participants to attend the National Farmers Union convention in Springfield, Illinois March 5-8 where the farm crisis will be discussed. The NFU is demanding that Congress declare a moratorium on all pending mergers and acquisitions

until a review and economic impact survey can be carried out. The NFU is also calling for "a full investigation of price-rigging and monitoring at a state level," Swensen said, "which the Farm Bureau and the Pork Producers Council now support." The NFU also calls for country-of-origin labels on food products, a protectionist measure that pits farmers in the United States against those in other countries. "Our country is a dumping ground for imports," said Swensen, arguing for this demand.

The speakers' presentations were followed by a lively and sometimes heated discussion. Rhodes, Iowa, hog farmer Larry Ginter said, "The federal and state governments have sold their souls to agribusiness." Ginter recalled the activism of farmers who fought against foreclosures during the crisis of the 1980s, and said, "We ought to be marching on the capitol here and in Washington, D.C. Martin Luther King did that, and we can too."

While most of the participants were in their 40s and older, several younger farmers were in attendance. One young farmer called for all elected officials to come forward, "so we can put you on the hot seat."

A packinghouse worker who spoke for an international alliance of workers and farmers against the common capitalist enemy received applause.

This meeting was one of many that are happening in the Midwest. Six hundred farmers and others attended a meeting in Sioux City, Iowa in December. More than 600 people attended the Four State Farm Price Crisis Forum in Sioux City January 30. This meeting, organized by capitalist politicians from Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Minnesota, was attended by hundreds of livestock and grain farmers from the region.

At that meeting, Sen. Paul Wellstone from Minnesota demagogically attacked the big agribusiness capitalists. "The Cargills of the world and the Hormels of this world have the power, but we are on the side of right," Wellstone said, to applause. Wellstone and others had prepared resolutions calling for the U.S. Congress and state legislatures to pass reform measures including providing

for mandatory price reporting for all sales of livestock within the United States, barring processors of meat from owning and operating livestock feedlots. The resolutions also called for enforcement of the 1921 federal Packers and Stockyards Act "to preserve competition and open markets in the Midwestern grain and livestock industries."

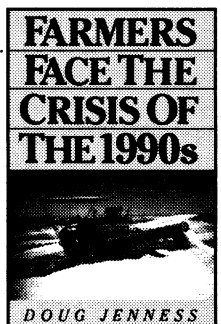
Not all farmers had confidence in the rhetoric. Michael Erickson, 41, a hog farmer from Marshall, Minnesota, said, "The resolution sounded good, but the question is can it get done in time or even at all. I am now looking for an industrial job and I'm about to lose my farm. I don't have much faith in these politicians who always seem to take the side of the big business packers, no matter how radical they sound today."

Supporters of incipient fascist Lyndon LaRouche had a table at the meeting and were distributing their newspaper, *The New Federalist*. Their placards read "Stop the Impeachment! Stop the coup by Albert Gore!" and they were publicizing a meeting later in the day with a South Dakota farmer as the featured speaker.

PATHFINDER

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Farmers' group from N. Ireland tours U.S.

BY MEGAN ARNEY

NEW YORK — "We're farmers and we're trying to show people how the British militarization of our area is affecting daily life," said Maria Caraher, a representative of the South Armagh Farmers and Residents Committee (SAFRC), speaking here February 12. It was the first stop in an 11-day East Coast tour by Caraher and SAFRC secretary Toni Carragher, a farmer in Crossmaglen, Northern Ireland.

The group's chairperson, Declan Fearon, is also speaking in the South and Midwest United States. More than 100 people attended three meetings in the New York/New Jersey area, and 200 turned out for Fearon's first talk in Dallas. The tours are sponsored by Irish Northern Aid.

South Armagh is a small area located on the southeast border of the six Irish counties occupied by the British military as part of the United Kingdom. The overwhelming majority of the 23,000 residents are nationalists, who want a united Ireland, free from British rule.

"Following the IRA [Irish Republican Army] cease-fire on July 20, 1997, the South Armagh people anticipated the demilitarization would be immediately implemented," Carragher said. Instead, more British troops and Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) cops were deployed in the region. "The stopping and searching and the victimization is now at an all-time high. In response to this, ordinary people got together" to form the committee later that year, she said.

There are more than 20 British military bases and lookout posts in South Armagh, an area just 15 miles by 10 miles. There is one member of London's "security" forces for every 68 inhabitants. The area has the busiest heliport in Western Europe, with



Toni Carragher, left, and Maria Caraher of South Armagh Farmers and Residents Committee speak in Montvale, New Jersey, February 14.

more than 200 flights per month into each lookout post. Constant foot patrols consisting of 16 British soldiers and 2 RUC members regularly stop vehicles, take registration numbers, and harass individuals.

"We are living in the most militarized piece of territory in Western Europe, that can only be likened to an open military training camp," said Carragher. "The British government insists that the military presence is required in South Armagh because of what they term the continued 'threat to peace.'"

"The only threat to peace in South Armagh is the presence of the British army and the RUC — fully equipped with their

war machines, pointing guns at our people, the persistent stopping and searching of our families, the continued existence of the outposts that dot our beautiful countryside."

Farmers face crisis

Working farmers across the whole of Ireland confront a growing crisis, as the prices they receive for the products of their labor drop, often below the cost of production. According to *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, there are currently 150,000 farmers in Ireland. That number is expected to drop by tens of thousands over the next five to ten years. Prices for animal fodder are at

exorbitant levels of £3 (1£=US\$1.60) or more for a bale of hay and more than £20 for a bale of silage. At the same time prices for livestock, the main type of farming in South Armagh, have plummeted. The collapse in demand for meat from Russia and Asia, along with the "mad cow disease" panic in Europe, contribute to this.

In response to this crisis, 40,000 farmers and others throughout the Republic of Ireland marched in Dublin and rallied outside parliament, the Dail, October 28 to demand a living income. Sixty-three percent of farmers in Ireland make less than £10,000 (\$16,000) per year and 60 percent supplement their farm income with wages from other full or part-time jobs. Only 7 percent of farms have an annual income exceeding £30,000 (\$50,000).

Farmers who are Catholic in the north of Ireland have an even harder time. "Farming in the north of Ireland at the moment, as it is in the whole of Ireland, isn't very good. But in South Armagh farming is practically nonexistent," said Carragher. There are 1,000 small farmers in the region.

She explained that before building the lookout posts in May 1986, the British government confiscated prime land from residents, "sometimes as much as 30 acres of land, which is considerable, given that the

Continued on Page 14

Farm leader speaks in Minnesota

BY DOUG JENNESS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — "We're all in the same boat together, and if we don't get together and fight, we'll sink together." This was the theme North Carolina farm leader Gary Grant brought to farmers and their supporters in western Minnesota during a February 10-14 tour of the state.

Speaking to potluck luncheon meetings in the prairie towns of Browerville and Watson, Grant described the worsening situation for working farm families and how farmers who face racial discrimination are even worse off.

Grant, president of the Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association, pointed to the significance of the fight against the discriminatory policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This struggle has centered around a class-action suit on behalf of farmers who are Black. Last month the USDA and the lawyers for the farmers agreed to a consent decree. Grant said that there are many inadequacies in the decree and that he and other leaders of the fight plan to press to expand and guarantee the benefits farmers are afforded under the decree at a "fairness hearing" in Washington, D.C., on March 2. There will be a rally outside the courthouse that day.

Farmers participating in the meetings included dairy, hog, and beef producers. One of the dairy farmers, describing the plight of farmers in Minnesota to the audience in Browerville, said that three dairy farms go under every day in the state.

The meeting in Browerville was sponsored by the Central Minnesota Citizens Organized Acting Together and the Whole Farm Cooperative based in nearby Long Prairie. The gathering in Watson was organized by the Western Minnesota Sustainable Farming Association. Together the two meetings drew more than 50 participants. Several people said they were considering going to the March 2 rally in Washington. The February 10 meeting in Browerville, the first on the schedule, was covered prominently in the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* and KTCA-TV, the Twin Cities affiliate of the Public Broadcasting System.

Grant also spoke to meetings at Macalaster College in St. Paul, the University of Minnesota, and Carleton College in Northfield. Several of the students at the Macalaster meeting who come from farm families were inspired by Grant's presentation and set a date to organize a group to go to Washington, D.C., for the March 2 events. Two farmers from the Northfield area came to the meeting at Carleton.

On the final day of his visit, Grant addressed the congregation of the Shiloh Baptist Church in St. Paul.

Money raised from honoraria, collections, and sales of T-shirts and literature cleared \$2,300 after expenses.

Farmers discuss consent decree in Georgia

Continued from front page

Farmers who go for Track B are eligible for a greater amount of relief but must meet much higher standards of proof. Track B claims are decided by a mediator whose decision is final, including if he decides that the farmer is ineligible for any relief. Claims that are rejected under either track cannot be appealed, and a farmer who settles for Track B cannot go back to A.

The meeting began with long presentations by several of the attorneys in the suit, and remarks by Rosalind Gray, Director of the USDA Civil Rights Division. Then Rev. Joseph Lowery, convener of the Coordinating Council of Black Farm Groups, chaired a discussion period.

Thomas Burrell, who presently farms cotton and soybeans in Covington, Tennessee, was the first speaker. Burrell is well-known to many farmers. In 1981 he led a 21-day sit-in at his county Farmers Home Administration office. Burrell and 11 other Black farmers were fighting the very

same things that farmers are protesting now — that the USDA and its county committee system were co-conspirators in the systematic denial of farm loans. Farmers from the Missouri and Oklahoma chapters of the American Agriculture Movement also joined the sit-in for a few days.

Later in 1981, Burrell was charged with a nine-count federal indictment for alleged misuse of government funds, which carried a jail term of up to 45 years. He was not granted any loans while the charges were pending and as a result lost his 4,000 acre farm. The case against him was later dropped.

"For all of those who have ever worked on the land, who have ever farmed, for those who have done without, all of the diabetes, all of the heartache, with everything else that we have suffered, the settlement that we are talking about here is totally inadequate and will not do any of us justice," began Burrell.

"Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman's admission of racial discrimination toward Black farmers is admission to guilt to a lesser crime. The real crime of the USDA is not discrimination, but expropriation of the land ownership of Black America.



Farmers from Tennessee and Arkansas at meeting of 700 in Albany, Georgia, February 13, with signs urging others to reject consent decree in discrimination settlement.

The proposed \$375 million settlement is not indicative of the value of the land — of the dispossession of 16,000,000 acres — taken from Black farmers."

J. L. Chestnut, a prominent Alabama civil rights attorney, responded that no lawyer associated with the current lawsuit would try to stop any farmer from trying to recover land. "But let me tell you about my pedigree with Black folk. I was the only Black lawyer in Selma in 1959 when 150 Blacks were registered to vote out of 150,000. My office has been shot at more times than a Hollywood cowboy," Chestnut continued. "I think the lawsuit is a signal achievement. Like I told you, it does not solve all of your problems. We are lawyers, not magicians."

The next speaker at the microphone was Eddie Slaughter, a Buena Vista, Georgia, farmer and the vice president of the Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association (BFAA). The BFAA is holding a rally on March 2 in Washington, D.C., and is organizing farmers to attend the hearing on the consent decree. "When the government does not admit discrimination, when the consent decree does not force the USDA to investigate, sanction or remove those persons re-

sponsible for discrimination, and when this is all over, and we are once again faced with retaliation, racism and discrimination — because it has not stopped — it is continuing to this day, then we have to say this settlement does not address the problem, does not address our condition."

Slaughter also demanded that the government pay punitive damages, and that lead attorney Alexander Pires explain why no discovery motions were filed against the government.

Willie Head, Jr., a third generation farmer from Pavo, Georgia, and leader of the Georgia FSC/LAF was the next speaker. His objections were the discrepancies between "what the lawyers told us verbally and what came in the claim package." Quoting from the government forms, he read, "You must attach to the claim sheet documentation

for each item you check. If you do not attach proof, your claim will be rejected.' Why do the farmers once again have to prove discrimination?" he asked.

Referring to some of the comments by the lawyers and Lowery, Head and other farmers appealed to the speakers to respect their audience. "There have been a lot of jokes here and that's OK because we need humor in our lives. But we need to be serious. We need answers, so that later we won't have tears."

Larry Vanderbilt, a cattle farmer from Mason, Tennessee, reprimanded J.L. Chestnut for "calling us fools, because we are protesting, and carrying our picket signs, doing what we have to do."

Other farmers raised questions about relief from bank loans borrowed when the USDA denied them government loans. These loans are not covered under the terms of the settlement. A farmer from Savannah who is fighting foreclosure appealed for help. He was told by lawyer Pires that his situation "fell between the cracks."

After the meeting was adjourned, farmers stayed around to talk to the attorneys and to farmers who had protested the settlement.

New Spanish translation of 'Changing Face of U.S. Politics' — a better guide to action

'The fruit of political changes in working-class struggles today'

Below we print the preface to *El rostro cambiante de la política en Estados Unidos: la política obrera y los sindicatos*, the Spanish-language translation of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by Jack Barnes. The book will be released in March by Pathfinder Press. It is copyright © 1999 by Pathfinder, reprinted by permission.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

This second edition of *El rostro cambiante de la política en Estados Unidos: la política obrera y los sindicatos* is the product of many hundreds of hours of work by numerous collaborators around the world. Their efforts have revised and improved the translation into Spanish of the second, expanded edition of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by Jack Barnes, published in 1994 in English, the original language in which this book was written.

The political changes that have marked the class struggle in the United States in the short time since the first printing of the Spanish translation appeared in 1997 make the publication of this new, corrected translation even more important than before. The evidence continues to mount that the working class in the United States and most other imperialist countries has emerged from the political retreat that followed the short, brutal imperial assault on the people of Iraq in 1990-91. The outcome of that war was politically demoralizing to toilers the world over, and even more so to the soldiers and people in Iraq itself, since the bombardment and invasion went largely uncontested by the Iraqi regime, allowing the U.S. imperialist rulers to pay little price for their slaughter.

Today signs of renewed defensive action are everywhere — more numerous strike actions and counteroffensives against employer threats and lockouts, reflecting the tenacity and resistance of the embattled ranks; a noticeable growth in the confidence and determination of women in industry; the increased weight of Black leadership in labor battles and struggles of working farmers; an upswing in the Puerto Rican independence movement; more actions in defense of immigrants' rights; a revival of aspects of the Chicano movement; larger and more insistent responses to rampant police brutality and racist discrimination; more youth being attracted to the example of work-

ers' and farmers' struggles, linking their energy and social protest initiatives to the class forces that can construct a *livable* future for all humanity.

Vanguard currents and individuals, as well as new layers of workers and farmers, are coming together in the course of this resistance, hungry for solidarity and unity in struggle, hungry to march shoulder to shoulder, as together we strengthen and learn from each other's fights against the effects of wage and debt slavery. Along this road, we learn to know and trust each other. We discuss explanations for and alternatives to the devastating future working people increasingly anticipate the capitalist system has in store for us all. More and more we are confident that as sizable sections of the massive working class in the United States go into action — as growing numbers of workers become conscious of themselves as a social class that can be an independent political force — this class will have the capacity to unite the toilers in the struggle to establish a workers and farmers government capable of leading humanity out of the profound social crisis that is the product of the lawful, inevitable workings of capitalism in its decline.

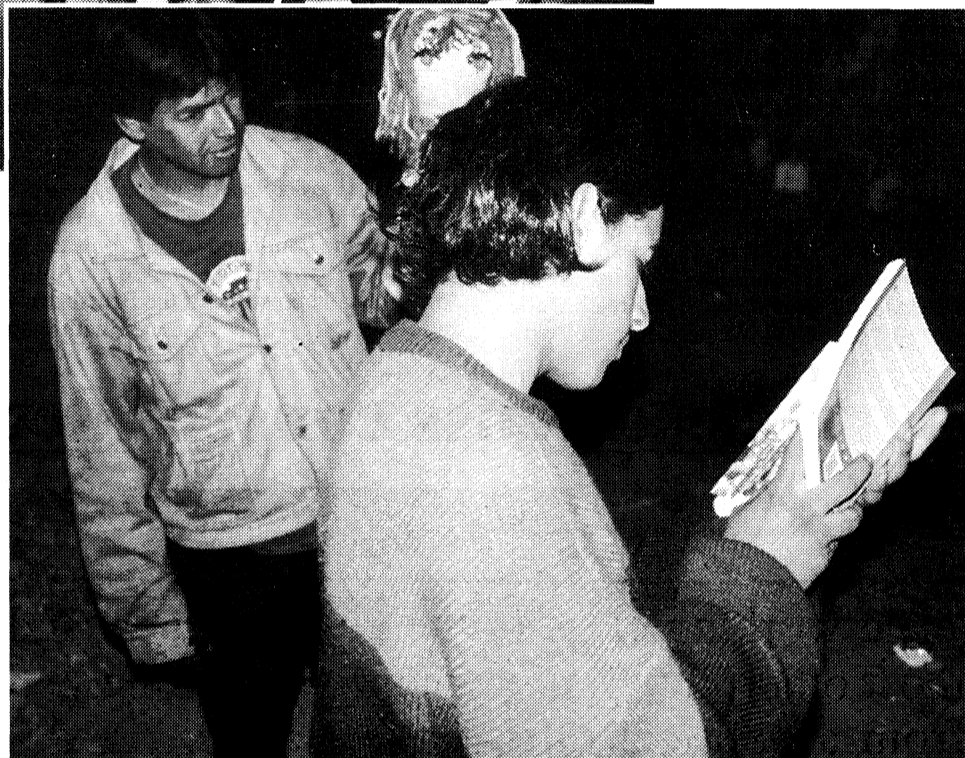
The greatest obstacle we face to the realization of this liberating and revolutionary perspective is that working people who are fighting underestimate what we are actually accomplishing and what we are capable of.



Militant/Claudia Hommel

"Vanguard currents and individuals, as well as new layers of workers and farmers, are coming together in the course of resistance, hungry for solidarity and unity in struggle, hungry to march shoulder to shoulder, as together we strengthen and learn from each other's fights against the effects of wage and debt slavery."

Left, demonstration in support of locked-out Lenc-Smith workers, members of International Union of Electrical Workers, in downtown Chicago Feb. 3, 1999.



Militant/Martin Koppel

"The mix of workers from a dozen or more countries of the Americas reading, studying, and discussing the book and calling attention to different words or phrases that were confusing to them, that didn't seem to capture clearly enough the concepts presented originally in English...helped the editors of the Spanish edition revise a number of key translations." Above, reading *El rostro cambiante de la política en Estados Unidos* at roadside encampment outside Jujuy, Argentina, during protests against unemployment, June 1997.

We don't yet recognize ourselves as the true bearers of culture into the new millennium. But these are things we will learn, together, in the course of battles that are coming.

The work embodied in this corrected edition of *El rostro cambiante de la política en Estados Unidos* — a collective transla-

tion effort of many committed militants — is the fruit of the economic, social, and political changes that have marked the closing years of the twentieth century. Obstacles have been eliminated that earlier would have made much more difficult, if not impossible, the kind of international collaboration that went into catching imprecise or misleading translations that marred the first printing.

The intensifying imperialist exploitation of Central and South America and the Caribbean has forced millions of workers and peasants whose first language is Spanish to leave their homes and head for the United States in search of jobs and income to sustain their families, and often to escape brutal repression. Hundreds of copies of the first edition of the book have been sold to Spanish-speaking workers in the United States, Canada, and elsewhere. The mix of workers from a more than a dozen countries of the Americas reading, studying, and discussing the book and calling attention to different words or phrases that were confusing to them, that didn't seem to capture clearly enough the concepts presented originally in English, or that oversimplified the nuances present in the original, helped the editors of the Spanish edition revise a number of key translations.

One such term is *worker-bolshevik*, a political designation that originated among the communist forces of the October 1917 Revolution and was used not infrequently by Lenin. In the first Spanish translation of this book, *worker-bolshevik* was not translated as a hyphenated compound noun — designating a communist cadre whose integrity and discipline, organizational func-

About this special feature...

The document published here, the preface by Mary-Alice Waters to the second, revised edition of the Spanish-language translation of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by Jack Barnes, will be part of the discussions Socialist Workers Party members and Young Socialists are having with interested working people and youth, as well as in party branches, in preparation for the 40th constitutional convention of the SWP, to be held April 1-4 in San Francisco.

What's dealt with in the preface goes to the heart of the political questions of working-class strategy and party building that every class-struggle-minded worker and young person needs to discuss. The political line of this article has been discussed in leadership meetings of the Socialist Workers Party and communist leagues in other countries. Many of the questions addressed here were discussed at the 1998 convention and Central Committee meetings of the Commu-

nist League in Canada. In January of this year, following a meeting of the SWP National Committee, the party's Political Committee and leadership delegations from the communist movement in Australia, Canada, France, Iceland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom met and discussed the political and translation questions described in the preface by Waters.

Out of that meeting, further editing work was done on *El rostro cambiante de la política en Estados Unidos*, as well as on the upcoming editions of *New Internationalist* in French, Spanish, Swedish, and Icelandic, which contain the 1990 SWP resolution "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War."

As part of these discussions, Michel Prairie, editor of *Le visage changeant de la politique aux Etats-Unis*, the French translation of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*, prepared a chart detailing the main political and translation questions taken up, which will be used as a guide by editors and volunteer translators preparing the upcoming editions of *New Internationalist* in differ-

ent languages. This chart will be submitted for publication in the SWP's pre-convention *Discussion Bulletin*.

In the last two weeks the *Militant* published special *International Socialist Review* supplements containing "A Sea Change in Working-Class Politics" and "Youth and the Communist Movement." These two talks by Jack Barnes are part of the preconvention discussions that SWP and YS members are holding with fellow workers and youth as well as the discussion in party branches.

Readers can purchase copies of these two *ISR* issues (for \$1.00 and \$1.50, respectively) at the nearest Pathfinder bookstore (see page 12) or by ordering them from the *Militant* at 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.

The convention and socialist conference will be held at the downtown San Francisco Hilton. For information, contact the SWP branch nearest you or the communist league in your country (see addresses on page 12).

tioning, class political habits and training, and milieu are proletarian to the core. Instead, it was translated with a noun and an adjective, a *bolshevik worker* (a worker who belongs to a bolshevik party). The complexity and *class* nuances of the Russian and English original, its essential political content, was lost.

A reader in Cuba helped correct the translation of another of the terms central to the politics of the book, the *turn* to industry and the building of a *turn party*. As is amply explained in the pages that follow, the expression *turn party* describes both a party that has made the turn to industry like the one the Socialist Workers Party carried out in the late 1970s as well as one whose rhythm of work, norms of behavior, and political milieu are determined by the fact that the majority of its membership and leadership are industrial workers and members of industrial trade unions. The expression is largely synonymous with proletarian party, as used historically by leaders of the Socialist Workers Party. The best presentation of what a turn party is, what it does, and its continuity through generations back to the 1919 founding of communism in the United States, is found in Section IV of the present book, "The revolutionary perspective and communist continuity in the United States."

In the previous edition, *turn* was translated by the Spanish word *giro*; here it is translated by the word *viraje*, which more clearly indicates a change of direction, as

"The working class in the United States and most other imperialist countries has emerged from a political retreat. New defensive actions by workers and farmers make publication of this new, corrected translation even more important than before."

opposed to revolving.

This new edition also corrects the translation of the word *worker*. Unlike in English, in Spanish there are two terms for worker: *trabajador*, which includes industrial workers as well as others whose livelihood depends on selling their labor power in return for a wage; and *obrero*, which generally means factory or industrial worker. In this corrected edition *trabajador* is generally used to translate the English *worker*, except where the context is clearly referring specifically to industrial workers. The first Spanish edition had generally used *obrero*, a translation that inadvertently narrowed and distorted the class forces referred to in the reports and resolutions adopted by SWP conventions and leadership bodies that make up the contents of this book.

This correction breaks from a tendency, in fact a petty-bourgeois prejudice prevalent in much of the left in Latin America and elsewhere, to view the working class narrowly as those already organized in trade unions, especially better-paid, "skilled" workers, rather than, as in the Bolshevik tradition, the working class as a whole — industrial and nonindustrial, employed and unemployed, in the city and the countryside.

In a similar manner, numerous other terms and phrases have been reviewed and the translation rendered more politically accurate.

Considerable time and political resources have gone into preparing this corrected translation. This effort is an important contribution to forging a homogeneous political cadre in which workers whose first lan-

guage is Spanish can be confident that what they are reading is the same thing fellow workers whose first language is English have read — and, above all, that it furnishes the same guide to action, as they work together to apply it in practice in the mass movement.

As anyone who has ever had experience interpreting from one language to another knows, translating clearly and precisely is a genuine challenge. The obstacle, however, is not simply, or even primarily, linguistic. It is a question of political culture, history, and habits of political thought — in other words, class traditions.

Spanish grammar (or that of French, to take another example of a language into which revolutionary socialists have translated *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*) does not have an ahistorical, antimaterialist, antidialectical, nonproletarian bent greater or lesser than English. But the political history and traditions of the working-class movement in the United States have created a different legacy that does have a very real bearing on political vocabulary and unclouded, even if rough-hewn, class terminology.

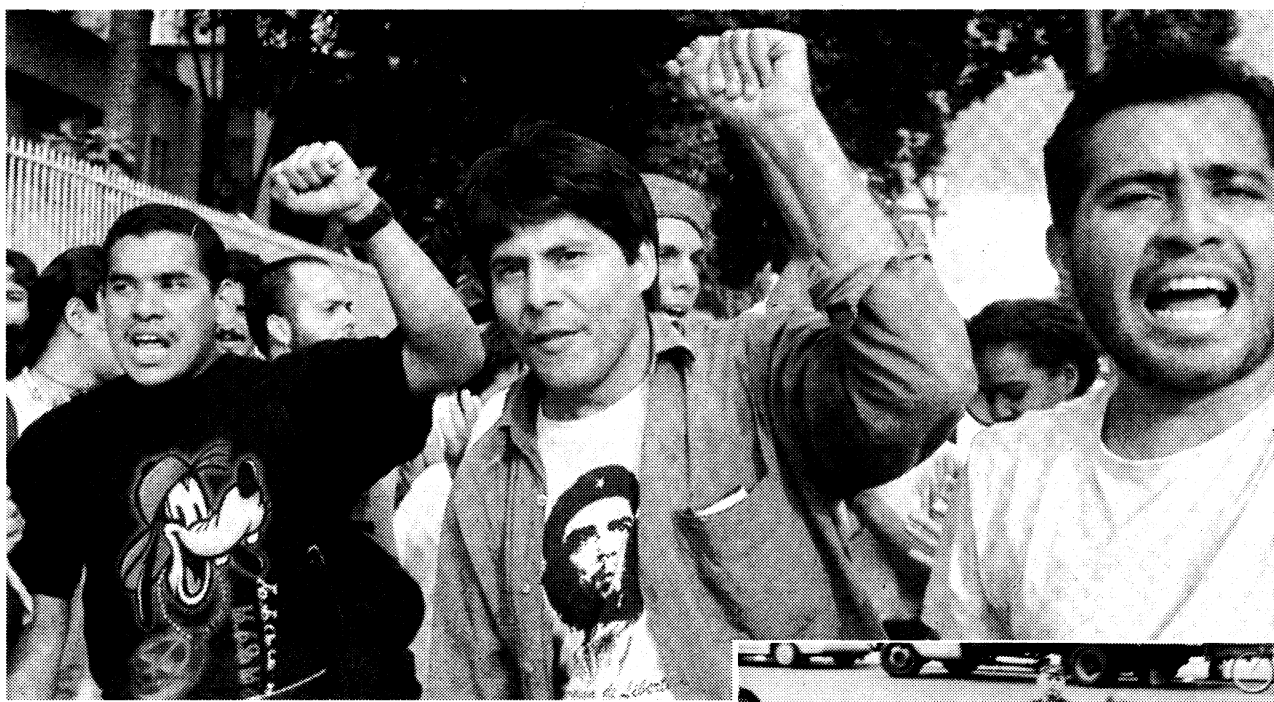
The English-language political vocabulary of the communist movement in the United States has been established in the struggle of the Socialist Workers Party to speak in clear class terms to working people and to peel away the counterrevolutionary obfuscations of the Stalinist and Social Democratic forces, as well as various centrist pretensions and adaptations. The United States is the only country where, due to historical factors beyond any party's control (such as the fact that the United States escaped the physical destruction World War II wreaked

upon the working class in Europe), communist continuity has been organizationally unbroken and relatively strong for the last eighty years, numbers notwithstanding. The relative weakness of the organized communist movement throughout Latin America and Europe over that same time period means that the Spanish political terminology of our movement, like the French, has also tended to adapt to the political culture of the "left," as mediated through the "far left" fashions in those countries.

Another historical factor — which may at first seem contradictory — is important. The powerful ups and downs in the class struggle in Europe and Latin America, as compared to the United States, mean the political traditions of the workers movement are in fact stronger there, even if the proletarian vanguard has never been able to carve out a stable nucleus, with decades-long communist continuity. So the language that "sounds right" to workers, even those newly recruited to the communist movement, is much more heavily weighed down with Stalinist, Social Democratic, and centrist political content and shadings. It means that workers won to the communist movement often have much more to unlearn than newly radicalized workers elsewhere — just to be able to express dialectical contradictions, materialist concepts, and class-struggle content. The accentuated unevenness and contradictory social combinations that mark the final historical days of the imperialist epoch are felt in many ways.

Left, students in Caracas, Venezuela, protest visit by U.S. president Clinton, October 1998. Below, workers at Bell Atlantic in New York, members of Communication Workers of America, waged successful strike in August 1998. Combative workers "have the capacity to unite the toilers in the struggle to establish a workers and farmers government.... The greatest obstacle we face to the realization of this liberating and revolutionary perspective is that working people who are fighting underestimate what we are actually accomplishing and what we are capable of. We don't yet recognize ourselves as the true bearers of culture into the new millennium. But these are things we will learn, together, in the course of battles that are coming."

Militant/Megan Arney

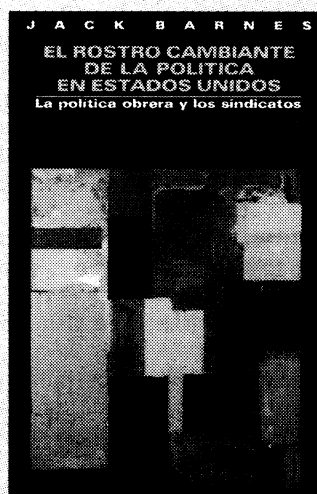


Given the growing social weight of Spanish-speaking workers, including within the imperialist countries of North America, and the fact that they compose a significant proportion of cadre and leadership of communist parties in those countries, clarity and accuracy in translation between English and Spanish especially become a crucial part of the fight for the political homogeneity necessary to forge a powerful enough and broad enough leadership of a proletarian party to lead the toilers to storm and victory.

It is in that spirit that this second edition of *El rostro cambiante de la política en Estados Unidos* is published. While the translation changes affect only a small percentage of the words and phrases in these pages, students of the first edition will find that this second edition reads like a new book. And we hope they will purchase it as readily as the new readers together with whom they will be discussing and using it as a common guide to work in the mass movement.

For the work that made possible this new translation, we express special appreciation and thanks to editors Martin Koppel and Luis Madrid, as well as to Michel Prairie, whose parallel effort on the French-language *Le visage changeant de la politique aux Etats-Unis* helped to spotlight not only translation problems but many of the political challenges that needed to be addressed and corrected.

February 1999



El rostro cambiante de la política en Estados Unidos LA POLITICA OBRERA Y LOS SINDICATOS

JACK BARNES

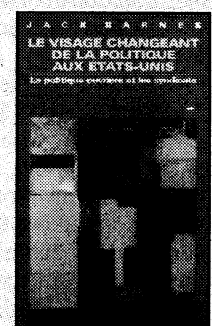
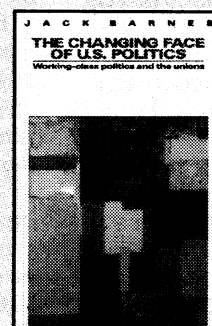
The Spanish translation of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*. A handbook for workers coming into the factories, mines, and mills, as they react to the uncertain life, turmoil, and brutality of capitalism today. It shows how millions of workers, as political resistance grows, will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and all of society. **\$21.95**

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Communist League in Canada charts course toward working-class fighters

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE

MONTREAL — The Central Committee of the Communist League in Canada met here January 23–24 to decide on the next steps to deepen a course aimed at repoliticizing its work in the industrial unions. This is possible because of the deep change over the last two years in the self-confidence and fighting mood of the working class in this country, after years of retreat of the labor movement. Elected leaders of the party's trade union work and branches in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver were at the meeting.

At its previous meeting in October, the Central Committee concluded that the new rise in labor resistance and combativity across Canada over the last year and a half, made it possible and necessary to launch an effort to rebuild concentrations of socialist workers in the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), the International Association of Machinists (IAM), the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), and the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE). A special emphasis was put on rebuilding a national fraction in UNITE from its current concentration in Montreal only.

Participants in the January 23–24 leadership meeting concluded that a revolutionary shift in this fraction-building work is needed to catch up with the actual developments in the class struggle and to build fighting units of the communist movement in the industrial unions. They decided to launch a concerted, focused effort to simultaneously rebuild a national fraction in UNITE and build a new national fraction in the pork and beef-packing section of the Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW).

This is open to every party member to join in, even if it means dismantling established presence of communist workers in the CAW, the IAM, or the USWA. Rebuilding and transforming these fractions into fighting units will be a by-product of the effort by the party as a whole to build national fractions in UFCW and UNITE.

The importance of building a nationwide concentration in the garment industry was highlighted two days before the leadership meeting when 1,300 UNITE workers at Iris, a major stocking company in Montreal, struck for their first contract. This came barely three weeks after the victory by 4,000 UNITE workers in Montreal against an attempt by the men's clothing manufacturers to impose a major wage cut.

"Over the last year," Joe Young explained in the main report to the meeting, "the Iris workers, 80 percent of whom are Haitian, walked out before they even had a union,



Militant/John Sarge

Increased resistance of working class makes possible the shifts discussed at Communist League Central Committee meeting. Above, march and rally January 23 to support the Canadian Auto Workers Local 127 strikers at Wheels Inn in Chatham, Ontario.

won accreditation with UNITE, and are now on strike."

Growing layer of working-class fighters

Young began by describing elements of the ongoing labor resistance in Canada, which forms the objective basis of the radical organizational moves proposed in his report.

"At this time," he said, "there are two hard fought battles going on in the meatpacking industry, where bosses are trying to impose wages and working concessions similar to those at Maple Leaf last year" after a four-month strike and lockout. Eight hundred workers were on strike at Quality Meat in Toronto, a pork processing company. Near Montreal, 560 workers at two Olymel-Flamingo poultry plants, members of the Confederation of National Trade Union (CSN), were also on strike.

On January 12, Young noted, "workers at Quality Meat voted at 58 percent to continue their strike, despite the ambivalent stance of the union officials. At Flamingo, the bosses announced they would close the Joliette plant, and tried to break away the workers at the nearby Berthier plant by offering them a wage freeze instead of wage cuts of about \$2.50 an hour. So far, the workers at Berthier have refused to abandon their brothers and sisters at Joliette." On January 29, workers at Quality Meat voted to end their strike.

Young also described how the previous week, the whole town of Chandler in the

Gaspé peninsula was shut down by a two-hour general strike led by the Communication, Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEP) local at the Abitibi-Consolidated mill. The strike was in response to a company announcement that 200 jobs will be lost. These workers were part of a victorious five-month strike by 4,500 CEP workers in 10 plants in Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland that beat back the company attempt to end company-wide bargaining. "This is significant," the communist leader said, "because the refusal of the Chandler workers, unlike those at the Trois-Rivières mill, to go back to work last summer despite company threats to close the plant was a major turning point in the strike. This is one example of the cumulative impact that labor battles began to have on the workers involved."

It is impossible for the ruling class in Canada, Young said, to close the political space that exists and prevent groups of workers from getting to know each other, broadening their scope, and fighting for others.

Annette Kouri, a USWA member in Montreal, described the recent activity of an Abitibi-Consol worker who communists met during the strike in Shawinigan, two hours northeast of Montreal. "Since the end of the strike," she said, "he joined a group of foundry workers involved in a hard fought strike in nearby Grand-Mère. He visited their picket line and has build solidarity with the strike, including raising funds, in his local."

Massachusetts fishermen demand fishing rights

BY TED LEONARD

SCITUATE, Massachusetts — "We're going to come at you and we're not going to stop until you listen," declared Bob McKennon, president of the Mass Netters Association. He was speaking February 1 to a rally of more than 100 fishermen, their families, and supporters on the town pier here. He was addressing the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and its new regulations imposed on inshore fishermen along the Massachusetts coast. Inshore fishermen have relatively small boats that go out in the morning and come back at night.

"They are slowly putting us out of business," McKennon explained. In December the NMFS voted to shut down all fishing Feb. 1 through April 30, 1999, in an area that stretches 40 miles offshore from Gloucester to Provincetown. This closure encompasses the entire area that Massachusetts inshore fishermen traditionally fish. Some 60 percent of inshore fishermen's income comes during this period.

The NMFS ordered the "emergency shutdown" to save the cod fish stock. Fishermen are especially upset with the NMFS shutdown of all fishing, because in February they fish for flounder, not cod. McKennon pointed out that they can catch flounder without catching cod by using larger net sizes. He urged everyone to attend the next New England Fishery Management Council meeting February 11 to help the fisherman "make them listen."

Paul Cohan, president of the Gulf of Maine Fisherman Alliance and an inshore fisherman from Gloucester, was asked if he believed the cod were on the verge of being extinguished. He replied, "It is not [that]. 'I don't believe the scientists,' but rather the manner they gather data is not the most accurate way. We need the fishermen and scientific community to work together to determine fish levels." He pointed out, "Fishermen have more at stake than anyone in the fish stock."

Four days earlier the New England Fishery Management Council proposed another set of regulations to protect the cod fish. They proposed slashing the already-reduced maximum daily cod catch in half — from 400 to 200 pounds a day — and closing a stretch of sea from Maine to the Cape Cod Bay on a rotating basis. For inshore fishermen in Scituate, this will mean two additional months of no fishing in 1999 and two months in the year 2000.

Rita Rozen, whose husband and son are fishermen, explained how with almost no advanced warning of the shutdown fishermen were especially hard hit because they "are heavily mortgaged" and "rely only on the ocean for a livelihood."

Addressing government regulations that limit the number of days a year a fisherman can fish, she said, "They end up going out on days when they know they shouldn't be out. Its causing a lot of deaths. In New Bedford and New Jersey, those guys should've been home working on their

nets." In the last couple months, there have been four accidents involving fishing vessels on the East Coast, including boats from New Jersey and New Bedford, Massachusetts. Eleven fishermen died.

As Richard Tower, 47, an inshore fisherman from Marshfield, Massachusetts, explained, "There will be a few people who will die this month because their bills are due and they're going to push their 40-foot boats to the edge of the envelope."

Rick Yeats, 51, is the owner of the *Aurora*, a Scituate commercial fishing boat, which he describes as "probably the smallest boat in the fleet, not capable of going 60 miles out." He thinks, "Pretty soon you'll just see outfits like Tyson off loading their trawlers here and the little guys will be gone."

Kathy Sullivan, who works at a local coffee shop, brought free coffee for everyone at the rally. She explained "people need to understand the important role fisherman play in the community."

Besides McKennon and a local politician speaking, there was a boat parade and a free fish give away as part of the rally. The fishermen explained as they gave away the fish this was the last flounder that would be coming out of the waters here this season if government regulations are allowed to stand.

Ted Leonard is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. Sarah Ullman contributed to this article.

John Steele, an IAM member in Toronto, reported that two communist workers from Toronto had visited a pork farmer in Stratford January 23, after meeting him at a demonstration by hundreds of pork producers in Toronto December 1 to demand immediate government relief in face of the devastating free fall of hog prices. This farmer was especially interested in discussing more about the Maple Leaf and Quality Meat struggles, both of them involving hog processing workers. Through the course of the visit, he bought a subscription to the *Militant* and issue no. 4 of the Marxist magazine *New International*, featuring the article "The Fight for a Workers and Farmers Government in the United States."

In his report, Young stressed that the Communist League was at the initial stages of working with such fighting workers and farmers.

Fractions must reverse a job trust tone

"While this has been unequal," Young explained, "the branches of the party have progressed in terms of organizing to be part of the fights in their region and build solidarity." This is reflected in increased regional travels and higher sales of the *Militant* on picket lines, at plant gates where communists work, in working-class communities, on campuses, and at various political events like the protests against the U.S.-British bombing of Iraq in December.

Where there has been the less headway though is through joining these fights through the fractions of the league in industrial unions. "This has a direct impact on what we do when we go to the picket lines," said Young. "It is harder to go there as fellow union fighters seeking to build solidarity."

These limits, Young stressed, "are a reflection of the job trust tone and activity of our union fractions under the impact of years of retreat of the labor movement. For many of us, our job has become a job, instead of a political assignment. We go to work and do little politics. These are jobs where we feel comfortable, where we are in a relative privileged situation either on the level of wages or the kind of work we have to do, where it is not so hard to get time off."

This routinized and nonpolitical functioning is reflected in low sales of the *Militant* and Pathfinder books on the job, as well as the fact that as of the time of the Central Committee meeting, no member of the CAW, IAM, or USWA fractions had changed job to get in UNITE or in a plant with another communist worker.

By adding the UFCW, Young said, "communists consciously turn ourselves toward one section of the working class in Canada that has faced some of the most brutal attacks by bosses and mounted some of the biggest labor battles over the last years. In doing so, we will revitalize our turn to industry, repoliticize our fractions, and recruit."

In the discussion, Vicky Mercier, an auto worker near Toronto, explained the difference it would make in the Quality Meat strike to have communists working in the industry. Following a discussion in the Toronto branch on the perspective of building a UFCW fraction in the area in mid-January, four members volunteered to lead this effort. Since the Central Committee meeting, other members in all three branches have also volunteered.

"This course," Young said in his report, "is the only way for the Communist League to help the Young Socialists recruit and take the next steps to become a Canada-wide communist youth organization. The best young fighters are attracted to the working class because they are looking for a force that can change the world."

Young concluded his report by projecting a course toward the fullest participation from Canada of party and YS members, supporters and contacts, as well as of fighting workers and revolutionary-minded youth in the April convention of the SWP in San Francisco. This effort will include a collective study of the political resolutions contained in *New International* no. 11 on "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War." This political preparation will be made easier in Quebec where French is the language of politics with the upcoming publication of *Nouvelle Internationale* no. 6, the French-language translation of this issue of the magazine.

'Union is stronger because of fight' at Oregon Steel

BY HEATHER WOOD AND RAY PARSONS

PUEBLO, Colorado — Members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) here remain strong in their stand against CF&I/Oregon Steel. For many union members, their motto has become, "One day longer." The 1,100 members of USWA locals 2102 and 3267 were forced out on strike against CF&I Steel, a subsidiary of Oregon Steel Mills, Inc., on Oct. 3, 1997. The workers were demanding an end to forced overtime, the right to a say in work assignments, increased wages, pension improvements, and health-care benefits for retirees.

Workers at the picket line and union hall reported forced overtime and the company's proposed attack on seniority were the two main reasons for their strike. Several described being forced to work 20-hour shifts or longer in the mill. Mark Trujio said he had once been forced to work 68 days straight. "We had to put a stop to it or they were going to drive the union out of here."

Bobby Lee Martinez captured the mood of the USWA fighters saying, "Before the strike, one of the bosses said to me, 'if you don't like it here why don't you quit?' I told him, 'I'm not going to quit. If anything, I'm going to stay and be a thorn in your side.'"

Robert Sanchez, a crane operator with 23 years in the mill, said the company's demand of the "right to assign" workers wherever they like without regard to seniority was a key reason for the strike. He added, "The main reason we went out at first was for respect in our workplace. We deserve to be treated like human beings, not animals."

Workers at the mill gave up \$35 million in wage and benefit concessions after Oregon Steel bought the facility in 1993. This came on top of a \$50-million concession package prior to the takeover. In a closely contested vote Dec. 30, 1997, the Steelworkers accepted a proposal from union officials to end their walkout and make an offer to the company to unconditionally return to work. However, only a small number of workers have been called back to work based on "available positions" within the plant. The company insists that the 600 scabs hired during the course of the strike will remain on the job.

A number of workers said they are confident that the union is stronger now than before the strike. A mechanic with 23 years in the plant who asked not to be named said, "We've become tighter than ever before."

A display at the union hall shows steelworkers and members of the union women's auxiliary, formed since the strike, participating in protests and various community actions. In addition, some union members

have become "road warriors," taking the message of their fight against Oregon Steel around the country. They are currently doing outreach work in 15 states.

On Aug. 17, 1998, Oregon Steel went on trial before the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) on charges of more than 100 violations against USWA members. The NLRB ruled against the company on charges of unfair labor practices. Oregon Steel has appealed this decision. Hearings have been going on for several months and continue in February in Pueblo. Workers are fighting to reinstatement in their jobs with back pay to Dec. 30, 1997.

USWA officials have organized a "corporate campaign" against Oregon Steel, which consists primarily of demonstrations at offices of Wells Fargo Bank, the company's main lender, to urge investors to sell their stock. Unionists explained that recent actions at Norwest Bank, which merged with Wells Fargo, have been restricted by court injunctions that prohibit the use of signs or even the wearing of union shirts or hats by protesters.

Tom Williams, who had worked 44 years in the plant when the union walked out, reflected on the experience gained during the



Militant/Heather Wood

Steelworkers on picket line in Pueblo, Colorado, January 1999. CF&I/Oregon Steel refused to reinstate them after strike over forced overtime, pensions, and seniority.

long fight. "We took a lot of things for granted," he said. "We thought there were laws preventing the company from working us 20 hours a day, and not allowing us time off for our families, but we found out that the government won't protect us."

High school student Chris Sanchez often joins his father on the picket line. He said, "It's pitiful how they make someone work for hours and put their blood and sweat into their job — and then treat you like this."

When asked about solidarity they have received, several unionists proudly recalled the rally they attended last year, a commemoration of the struggles of Colorado coal miners and the Ludlow Massacre of

1914. Six hundred USWA members turned out for the event. The Steelworkers interviewed planned to return to the annual event this August.

When asked how he thought the fight would end, Bill Esquibel said, "We're going to win; we'll be on top. And if the company files for bankruptcy, we'll still win."

For more information, contact USWA Local 2102 at 1414 Evans Avenue, Pueblo, CO 81005. Phone: (719) 564-8600.

Heather Wood is a member of USWA Local 7263 in St. Paul, Minnesota. Ray Parsons is a member of USWA Local 310 in Des Moines, Iowa.

Miners in Australia resist attack on seniority

BY LINDA HARRIS AND BOB AIKEN

SYDNEY, Australia — Coal bosses in Australia have reacted to the sharpening economic crisis in Asia by cutting their selling price and increasing production while laying off thousands of miners and attacking the miners' union. They have targeted seniority rights as central to their drive against the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU).

Rio Tinto has spearheaded this attack. On October 20 last year, they retrenched 115 miners without regard to seniority at their Hunter Valley No. 1 mine, 150 miles north of Sydney. Miners there attracted national attention in 1997 with a successful strike to block Rio Tinto's union-busting attempt to impose individual contracts.

The sacked miners are maintaining a 24-hour informational picket line near the entrance to the mine. The CFMEU has filed an unfair dismissal case on their behalf.

These reporters visited the picket line January 20 and spoke with four of the sacked miners. Grahame Horne, who had worked at the mine for 19 years, said, "We are protesting the elimination process the company took." He explained that as well as sacking

30 out of the 32 union delegates, the whole health and safety committee had been laid off. The company had also got rid of anyone with a disability. There are now only 112 miners left working there.

Rio Tinto announced intended lay-offs for February 1998 and then started carrying out individual work performance reviews at the mine. "They were a joke," said Horne. "Anyone who had the gift of organizing or who spoke up, they got rid of." Horne said the aim of the court case is to get their jobs back, but even if they win, they expect the company will refuse to take them back. Already they are being black listed as they try to find other work.

Bram Berney, a miner from Rio Tinto's nearby Howick mine, also spent a few hours describing what miners are facing in the Hunter Valley. The CFMEU estimates more than 3,000 coal miners' jobs nationally have been lost in the past year. Bengalla, a new mine in the Hunter Valley, has just opened, hiring miners on individual contracts and not giving first option to retrenched miners. The manager claimed it to be a nonunion mine, but Berney said many of the miners have joined the union and will fight for a union contract when their agreements run out.

The seniority system in place since 1902 in the coal mining industry award (the national agreement setting out conditions across the industry) was wiped out by the Industrial Relations Commission in May, following the introduction of antiunion legislation by the federal government.

The layoff at Hunter Valley No. 1 mine "was the first time they have been able to cut across seniority," Horne said. He thought seniority was the most important issue facing the union. While many miners have visited the picket line in solidarity, no industrial action has taken place to support them or in defense of seniority.

In December CFMEU officials did call a two-day national strike by 15,000 coal miners — to protest Australian coal bosses accepting an 18 percent cut in export prices

for the Japanese market. This is part of the union officialdom's nationalist, "Australia First" campaign calling for regulation of coal exports "to protect Australian workers and the national interest."

Rio Tinto has tried to maintain levels of production but not of maintenance or safety, miners said. "They're cutting corners all the time, they've been very lucky no one has been killed or seriously hurt," Horne said. The bosses continue to hold work performance reviews as a threat over the remaining workers' heads.

Miners at the Hunter Valley said another fight was taking place at Chain Valley Colliery, 60 miles northeast of Sydney. The 42 miners at the Chain Valley Colliery have been on strike since November 19, fighting deep attacks on wages and conditions.

Barry Marshall, one of the striking miners on picket duty, explained the company's demands. They wanted staff to do incidental work, introduce individual work assessments, replace sick pay with attendance bonuses, introduce a seven-day roster, cut seniority on shifts, and prohibit union meetings during work hours or at the mine. On top of this, the company wanted a pay cut from A\$680 per week to A\$565 (A\$1=US\$0.65) with little chance of overtime or production bonuses.

The new owners of the mine issued redundancy notices January 18, giving one month's notice of their intention to close the pit down. Marshall said the mine could well reopen in a year or two with new management, but without seniority the unionists don't think they will get their jobs back.

They are fighting to get their redundancy based on the award rate instead of the \$565 a week the company has proposed. About 150 supporters, including other miners from Hunter Valley and Newcastle wharfies, rallied at the picket line on January 14.

Linda Harris and Bob Aiken are members of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union in Sydney.

Actions will protest frame-up of Puerto Rican nationalist

BY JOSHUA CARROLL

CHICAGO—"The U.S. government can't win this case, because even if I am thrown in jail, the Puerto Rican independence movement will continue, and they only win when we surrender," explained José Solís Jordan, a Puerto Rican independence activist and professor of education at the University of Puerto Rico. Solís is scheduled to go on trial in Federal Court in Chicago on February 22 on frame-up charges of conspiring to bomb a military recruitment facility here in 1992. He was addressing about 40 people at a February 14 brunch organized to raise money for the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners.

When asked why he is being framed up by the FBI, Solís responded, "because I am Puerto Rican, I am an *independentista*, and because I don't believe in the United States government's right to control Puerto Rico." The indictment is based on the testimony of Rafael Marrero, a former independence activist turned government snitch. Marrero also gave the main testimony in a state investigation against supporters of Puerto Rican independence at Clemente High

School in Chicago, accusing them of misuse of funds. That probe fell flat.

Supporters of Solís' case have organized a number of public meetings in Chicago leading up to his trial. On February 17 Solís will be speaking at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago at 12:00 noon in Room 302 of the Champlain building; on February 18 he will be at De Paul University in Stuart Hall, Room 220 at 7:00 p.m.; on February 20 there will be a public rally in his defense at 6:00 p.m. in the Puerto Rican community at 2739-41 W. Division Street; and on February 21, he will be speaking at 2:00 p.m. at the Militant Labor Forum at the Pathfinder bookstore.

For more information on the case or on how to help, contact Mervin Mendez of the Committee in Solidarity with the José Solís Jordan at (773) 409-0801. Website: www.defendsolis.org. Contributions can be sent to the José Solís Jordan Defense Fund c/o the Law Offices of Jed Stone, 434 W. Ontario, Suite 400, Chicago, IL 60610.

Joshua Carroll is a member of the United Steelworkers of America Local 1011 at LTV Steel in East Chicago, Indiana.

BACK IN PRINT

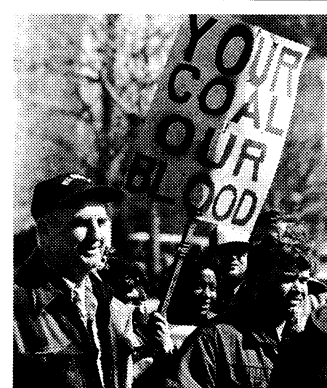
Coal Miners on Strike

Articles reprinted from the Militant

- ❖ The 111-day 1977-78 strike
- ❖ The 1981 strike and contract rejection vote
- ❖ The UMWA and the fight against nuclear power
- ❖ The fight for health benefits and compensation to Black Lung victims \$5.50

Available March 1999

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12.



'We aim to please' — A recent issue of the prestigious mag, *Foreign Policy*, did a glowing piece on the spread of privatized armies. The



Harry Ring

article, "Outsourcing War," does see one problem, "the tendency to brand them as 'mercenaries'... rather

than to recognize them as multinational entrepreneurs..."

Could use a union — The Mormon church denied its missionaries the right to communicate with families and friends by e-mail or fax. This is needed, a church officer said, because e-mail could easily lead to circumvention of the rules. Missionaries are allowed one letter a week, plus a phone call on Xmas and Mother's Day.

What does this guy drink? —

New York police commissioner Howard Safir declared people arrested for drunk driving will have their cars seized and not returned unless they're acquitted. If convicted, their impounded cars will be sold at auction.

Capitalist health care — In a National Health Service hospital in Birmingham, England, a 84-year-old critically ill man died after laying on a gurney 28 hours waiting for a bed. And in London, another man, 68, admitted with a bleeding stomach,

died after eight hours on a gurney.

How about the ocean? — Residents of a seaside suburb of San Juan, Puerto Rico, face having their homes demolished to make way for a humongous statue of Christopher Columbus. The site was a second choice. The initial one was deemed too close to a light aircraft airport. "I don't want to move these people, they know I don't," the mayor assured. "But there's no other place I could put it."

We can't all be blessed — The

lower House of Russia's parliament approved a 1999 budget of \$25 billion, with revenue of \$21 billion. In an average week, Uncle Sam collects and spends \$30 billion.

Thought for the week — "This is, unfortunately, a longer term project than anyone realized.... We don't give up before the job is finished. It's not going to be real soon that you're out of here." — Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, answering a GI's question in Saudi Arabia, "When will we go home?"

Land reform conquests in revolutionary Cuba

Below we reprint excerpts from "Land reform and farm cooperatives in Cuba — Introduction to three Cuban documents" by Mary-Alice Waters. It appears in issue no. 4 of the Marxist magazine *New International* together with two speeches by Cuban president Fidel Castro and "The Agrarian Question and Relations with the Peasantry," theses adopted by the First Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba in December 1975. The magazine is copyright © 1985 by 408 Printing and Publishing Corp. and printed with permission.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

"The party's policy toward the peasantry is based on the principles of the worker-peasant alliance.

"The worker-peasant alliance is the union in struggle of the working class and the working peasant; that is, with the small and medium peasants who work the land with their own labor and that of their families.

"It is the union in struggle between two laboring classes, two classes that were exploited, that suffered the domination (of the bourgeois-landlord regime....

"The worker-peasant alliance is not a temporary, tactical pact but rather a stra-

BOOK OF THE WEEK

tegic and enduring union between these two classes, a union whose final objective, as Fidel said, is to 'carry the revolutionary process forward until every single one of us belongs to a society without classes, a society of producers, a society of workers with equal rights.

— from "The Agrarian Question and Relations with the Peasantry," theses adopted by the First Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, 1975.

The revolutionary alliance between the workers and peasants of Cuba, the alliance in struggle to break the yoke of imperialist domination and end their exploitation by the big landowners and capitalists, has been and remains the backbone of the Cuban revolution. The roots of struggle by the toilers of Cuba's countryside and cities go back to 1868, to the beginning of the war for independence against Spain. Its history can be traced through the victorious liberation war of 1895-98, and the defeat of the Spanish colonizers — followed by the military intervention by Yankee imperialism and subjugation once again.

Throughout the twentieth century the struggle continued against the various brutal and corrupt dictators who ruled by the

grace of Washington. With the revolutionary destruction of the Batista tyranny on January 1, 1959, the struggle by workers and peasants entered a new stage.

"Without this alliance with the peasantry, the working class would not have united sufficient forces to expel imperialism and its puppet, overthrow the capitalist system, and free itself from exploitation," states the theses adopted by the First Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba.

"Without this alliance with the working class, the peasantry would not have been able to break the yoke of the latifundists and the bourgeoisie."

Without this firm alliance, consolidated through the agrarian reform and other far-reaching social measures of the Cuban revolution, the working people of Cuba would not have been able to withstand the quarter century of U.S. imperialist aggression, sabotage, and blockade.

While the roots of this alliance in struggle go back to the last century, the three Cuban documents that are published in this issue of *New International* address one of the most decisive questions of proletarian strategy in the epoch of imperialism: the place of the worker-peasant alliance in the political strategy of the working class, which strives to lead the exploited producers to take power, establish a workers' and farmers' government, and carry through the socialist transformation of the economic foundations of society....

The 1959 Agrarian Reform Law, which is referred to frequently throughout the three items that follow, was the measure that more than any other single fact "defined the Cuban Revolution," in Castro's words. Its rapid implementation consolidated the class alliance on which the revolution was based — the alliance of the workers, including the agricultural workers, and working peasants. It brought the revolution into head-on confrontation with U.S. imperialism and its Cuban allies.

The goal of the law was to expropriate the large plantations, eliminate the system of rents and mortgages crushing the peasantry, and guarantee use of the land to those who worked it.

The reform was administered by a newly created National Institute of Agrarian Reform. Staffed by cadres of the Rebel Army and the July 26 Movement (the organization founded by the *Fidelista* leadership team, which was the political vanguard of the revolution), INRA was granted sweeping powers over virtually every aspect of the economy.

The amount of land an individual family could own was limited to approximately 1,000 acres in most cases, and 3,300 acres for some types of agriculture such as cattle raising, or where the land was especially productive. The maximum size of landholdings was, in fact, the limit written into the 1940 constitution of Cuba, which forbade the holding of latifundia, i.e., individual properties of over a thousand acres.

The Agrarian Reform Law prohibited ownership of Cuban land by foreigners. (Before 1959 more than 50 percent of the most productive land in Cuba was owned by foreigners.)

Ownership of cane land by sugar mill owners was forbidden.

Large estates that had previously been worked as a single unit were kept intact and were soon turned into state enterprises.

Prior to the revolution, 85 percent of Cuba's small farmers rented rather than owned their land and lived under constant threat of eviction. Two hundred thousand peasant families did not have a single acre of land to till for their own use. The 1959 agrarian reform guaranteed each peasant family a "vital minimum" of 67 acres. Every tenant, sharecropper, or squatter cultivat-



National Agrarian Reform Institute of Cuba
Peasant militia members receive training, early 1960s. Alliance of workers and farmers "is a permanent union, written throughout the course of our revolutionary history and sealed with the sacrifices and blood of our peasants and workers," said Fidel Castro.

ing up to 165 acres was given clear title to that land.

Privately owned land could be mortgaged only to the state, which made financing available to poor peasants at favorable rates. Land could not be divided and could be inherited by only one person.

The law stated that agrarian reform land grants "may not be transferred other than through inheritance, sale to the state, or exchange authorized by the authorities charged with its enforcement, nor be the subject of lease agreements, sharecropping agreements, usufruct, or mortgage."

In short, with the 1959 reform, the system of rents and mortgages ceased to exist. Land was no longer a commodity and land speculation became a thing of the past. The legal maximum holding, nonetheless, was large by European standards; even in the United States a thousand acres is a sizable farm. The terms of compensation were more generous than those of the land reform imposed on Japan by the U. S. army of occupation government under Gen. Douglas MacArthur

following World War II.

But the Cuban and Yankee owners of vast landholdings in Cuba were stunned by the new law. They were outraged by the compensation offered: twenty-year government bonds at 4.5 percent, payable in Cuban pesos and not convertible into U. S. dollars. Property values were determined by accepting the evaluations previously set by owners themselves for purposes of taxation, which grossly underestimated the value of their holdings. Owners were given a choice: either pay up the back taxes they had evaded for years by undervaluing their property, or accept compensation based on tax assessment records....

The agrarian reform defined the Cuban revolution and put its stamp on the government precisely because — despite its bourgeois-democratic nature — only the alliance of workers and working peasants could carry it through and defend it. That class alliance, and the capacities of the vanguard leadership in Cuba, determined the dynamic of the revolution and defined its character.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



March 1, 1974

LONDON — The coming general election, scheduled for Feb. 28, will be held in the most turbulent period of class struggle in Britain since the general strike of 1926.

Tory Prime Minister Edward Heath called the election in response to the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) decision to launch an all-out strike by its 270,000 members. The strike decision by the NUM leadership followed a national ballot in which 81 percent of the country's miners voted in favor of strike action. No less than 22 of the NUM's 23 areas endorsed the strike call.

The miners' overwhelming backing for strike action showed their determination to stand up to the Tories' Phase 3 wage controls and take militant action to defend their standard of living. A prostrike Durham miner, told by a journalist that Durham miners were considered moderate, replied, "We were, but the prime minister changed all that."

Another threat to the Tories is the growing support for the miners. Only one day after Heath's election announcement, more than 35,000 students marched through London in solidarity with the miners and in support of their own demands for higher grants.



February 28, 1949

Except for the Truman administration with its inaccurate statistics and the union leaders who are keeping mum, everybody acknowledges that unemployment has become a serious problem. The time has come for nationwide labor action to put into effect a realistic program to protect the working class:

1. For a 30-hour week, six-hour day with no reduction in take-home pay. Almost every union has endorsed this program in the past. Take it out of cold storage and fight to make it a reality right now....

3. For an all-out wage campaign to raise mass purchasing power by boosting real wages to the level before June 1946 when run-away inflation began.

4. For unemployment insurance equal to full weekly union wages for all unemployed and for the entire duration of unemployment.

5. For public works of a socially beneficial character, including government-built low-rent housing, to provide jobs for the unemployed at union wages to be financed from the billions now going for war preparations.

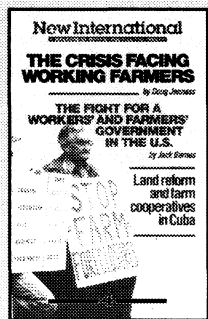
6. Call a United Congress of Labor of all unions to mobilize a militant, determined fight for this program.

NEW INTERNATIONAL NO. 4

Land Reform and Farm Cooperatives in Cuba, two speeches by Fidel Castro

The Fight for a Workers and Farmers Government in the United States by Jack Barnes

The Crisis Facing Working Farmers by Doug Jenness \$9.00



Available from Pathfinder bookstores on page 12.

Protest attack on 'Miranda'

All defenders of democratic rights should condemn the recent ruling by a federal circuit court in Virginia that cops can take the "voluntary" confession of an arrested person without informing the accused of their right to remain silent and consult an attorney. This assault on the "Miranda" rule is a probe by the U.S. capitalist rulers aimed first and foremost against working people who stand up to the bosses and their government.

It goes hand in hand with other recent moves to narrow democratic rights by the employing class, such as the proposal to establish a domestic military command under the pretext of fighting "terrorism." The Pentagon recently announced plans to spend \$250 million on the National Guard's Rapid Assistance and Initial Detection System — so-called Raids teams — supposedly to respond to "terrorist attacks."

Other antidemocratic measures include expanding the scope of FBI spying operations with "roving wiretaps" that would allow snooping on any telephone near an alleged "terrorist" suspect. And growing numbers of workers are familiar with government intervention against their struggles, from picket line injunctions and back-to-work orders to probes by the FBI — the federal political police.

The big-business potentates anticipate big class battles ahead and are preparing the mechanisms they hope can severely cripple and ultimately defeat developing leadership that will arise out of those struggles. This assault on democratic rights is the domestic counterpart to Washington's war moves against Yugoslavia, Iraq, and other countries it dubs as "rogue" states and "terrorists' host countries."

Similar moves such as FBI disruption, provocations, and spying were initiated by the capitalist rulers leading up to World War II. During the 1930s a mass social movement was on the rise and the bosses were concerned that anticapitalist and anti-imperialist positions advanced by class-conscious fighters were winning a hearing among broad layers of working people. The drive toward war necessitated an assault on democratic rights in general, which included the U.S. military rounding up 120,000 U.S. citizens of Japanese ancestry, as well as cop frame-ups of communists and other working-class fighters. The rulers sought to isolate working-class militants who could provide leadership to a broader movement that might develop. This question is beginning to be posed for the bosses today. This is why the entire labor movement needs to oppose the federal challenge to the 'Miranda' warning.

Pilots' fight encourages others

Continued from front page

of the Transport Workers Union at American Airlines in Miami, said most of his co-workers take the side of the pilots against the company, but many lack information on the true concerns of the pilots and the stakes involved in the fight.

"This is a struggle that was provoked by company attacks on the union contract," Walker explained. "The pilots have eliminated the two-tier wage scale from their contract. They also have a clause in the contract saying that all planes owned by American or a subsidiary must be flown by American pilots. The Reno pilots are now American Airlines employees and, according to the contract, should be paid equally."

"This is a big issue for all airline workers," Walker added. "The companies are always trying to find ways to put in a two-tier, to divide workers, to pay some less for the same job."

American Airlines was the first to introduce the two-tier system (known as the B scale) into the airlines and it continues to have one of the worst two-tier wage spreads in the industry. "We can be sure they'll try to impose the lowest wages they can on workers handling the baggage on the Reno planes," Walker commented. Walker also stressed the need for unionists to speak out against the intervention of the federal court into the pilot's fight.

On February 10 Judge Joe Kendall of the Federal District Court in Dallas ordered the pilots back to work. Kendall, a former cop, unleashed a tirade of attacks and slanders against the pilots and their organization. He charged, "The radical element that appears to be in control of the Allied Pilots Association seems determined to fly American Airlines into the side of the mountain, taking themselves, the company, their co-workers, and their customers with them."

After the back-to-work order, pilots showed their determination and rejection of the judge's action by calling in sick in greater numbers than before. On February 12 the judge then

cited the union for contempt of court and fined it \$10 million.

In a dangerous precedent for the whole labor movement, Judge Kendall then ruled in favor of the company's demand that that the union pay for the financial losses of the company during the sick-out. Hearings have begun in Dallas to determine how much money this is. The judge has declared, "What a federal judge can do, and what I will do, is to make people pay for what they break. So if the activity and consequent damages continue, when all the dust clears, all the assets of the union, including their strike war chest, will be capable of being safely stored in the overhead bin of a Piper Cub."

The current fight is the latest in a series of conflicts between American pilots and the company. In the mid-1980s, a two-tier scale was introduced, which paid new hires less. The pilots later fought successfully to get rid of the two-tier. In the early 1990s, American employees experienced layoffs and cut-backs. In 1997, the pilots went on strike against company demands that jeopardized job security. President William Clinton ordered them back to work after just four minutes, under the antiunion Railway Labor Act. Many pilots are still angry about concessions they were forced to accept by the Presidential Emergency Board Clinton then imposed.

After American's purchase of Reno Air, the company and the union negotiated for five weeks before the pilots, angry at the company's intransigence, began calling in sick.

Under threat of the large fines, most pilots are now back at work. Negotiations with the company have begun again and the struggle continues to get the company to honor the contract and to get the fines dropped. Many of the pilots are organizing to keep the pressure on American by refusing to work overtime and strictly enforcing work rules.

Betsy Stone is a member of the International Association of Machinists.

Hussein: loyal servant of imperialism

Continued from back page

ians across the country as the British-trained Jordanian army seized control of Palestinian communities and camps. At least 8,000 Palestinians were killed and tens of thousands wounded. Two-thirds of the capital was completely destroyed, as well as large sections of other heavily populated towns. Outgunned, the resistance was defeated and over the next months the Palestinian fighters were driven out of Jordan.

In 1973, Egyptian forces crossed the Suez Canal and entered Israeli-occupied Sinai. Simultaneously a Syrian force began moving down the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. Although the Egyptian and Syrian forces were driven back at the end, their sharply improved showing over the 1967 defeat gave a big lift to the morale of Palestinians and other Arabs, and dealt a blow to the Israeli image of invincibility.

"In the last 20 years, a number of generals in the Israeli army have made it plain that during the 1973 war, while the Israeli air force and army divisions concentrated their fire on Syrian troops in the north and the Egyptian army in the south, the Jordanian army could have easily marched west and reached Tel Aviv within hours," said Barakat. "But Hussein refused to do that."

Since then, the Jordanian monarchy has continued its balancing act, bolstered by economic aid from Washington and pressured by its majority Palestinian population. In 1986 Hussein attempted to get the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) to unconditionally accept the legitimacy of the Israeli regime, and also Jordanian sovereignty over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. When the PLO leadership refused, its offices were closed down in Jordan, and Hussein threatened to cut economic aid to the West Bank and remove Jordanian passports from Palestinians there.

At every turn of events, it was the Palestinian people's struggle for self-determination that scored some advances in

the fight for a homeland, despite the actions of the Hussein regime. That was the case when the *intifada*, the rebellion by Palestinians inside the West Bank and Gaza against the Israeli occupation, erupted in 1987. A year later Hussein formally dropped his claim to sovereignty over the West Bank and recognized the PLO as the only representative of Palestinians there. His government took this step without consulting the PLO and presented it as a pretext for proposing to cancel financial aid and other ties that Jordan had maintained with the people of the West Bank.

Hussein's action was a recognition of the blow the *intifada* had dealt to the hopes of the U.S. and Israeli rulers that a deal could be reached with Jordan concerning the West Bank, at the expense of the Palestinian people.

The future of Jordan and the evolution of the class struggle in that country continues to be completely linked to the struggle of Palestinian people for a homeland. Thousands of Palestinians were among the working people who rebelled against Hussein's austerity measures during the August 1996 "bread riots" in Jordan, for example. That was when Hussein imposed a curfew and suspended parliament as toiling masses rebelled against government-imposed price hikes on bread and other foodstuffs, first in the city of Kerak, 55 miles south of Amman, and then elsewhere in the country.

The parade of presidents and prime ministers, kings and queens, and other beneficiaries of world capitalism who turned out for the funeral of Hussein ibn Talal indicate the importance for imperialism of services rendered by the Jordanian monarchy. Among Palestinians, on the other hand, tens of thousands have not forgotten and are prepared to act against this legacy.

Anne Howie is a member of the Transport and General Workers Union in Manchester, England.

Irish farmers

Continued from Page 7

average size of a farm in South Armagh is about 42 acres. Some families have vacated their premises due to the unwanted presence of the RUC, who systematically harass and intimidate our people," she added.

"The farm land is not very arable, so the farming is confined to livestock like dairy farming and beef cattle. Sheep farming is extremely rare and poultry farming is completely nonexistent," Carragher continued. Cattle that sold for £900-1,100 two years ago now bring £500.

Peter Carragher, Toni's husband, bought 84 lambs in September of 1997. Within five months he lost £1,837, not including the feed and other costs of care for the sheep. According to Carragher, the price of a lamb two years ago was £55. It's now £18-19.

The ever-present British military makes farming even more difficult in South Armagh. Helicopters flying as low as 30 feet damage crops and scare dairy cows, which then won't give milk. On top of that, the British government set a quota on the amount of milk farmers could produce. "So if you had too much milk you had to just throw it out. And then you just have to cut down your herd," explained Caraher.

In a 12-month period, 38,634 head of livestock were killed or had to be put down due to injuries after low-flying helicopters caused the animals to stampede. Fences are often found cut down, most likely by RUC and British foot patrols, allowing animals to wander into the road and be killed.

Pollution from the military bases and lookout posts is another concern for farmers and other residents.

The South Armagh area is about 98 percent Catholic or nationalist. Systematic discrimination against Catholics and dispensing of caste-like privileges to the Protestant population has been a pillar of British rule in the north. But farmers who are Protestant "are as much affected by this garbage as we are," Caraher said. "We work together in the farm business. I was always angered by the portrayal in the media that we Catholics and Protestants can't live together. . . . Protestant people come into our house on a daily basis — selling feed or transporting cattle," said Caraher.

The farmers from South Armagh said they could relate to the fight of Black farmers in the United States to keep their land and against government discrimination. "You could say the same sort of thing is happening to ourselves in the North. There are hill subsidies and low subsidies, and we don't get any of that," said Carragher.

Nationalist resistance not broken

Despite the "peace process" currently under way, politicians in London as well as pro-British Unionists in Northern Ireland have actually called for stepped up policing of South Armagh. When asked why they thought this region in particular has been made into a British military training ground, Carragher replied, "It's just another line or tactic of oppression against the nationalist community."

There is constant harassment by the British forces. Carragher recalled one experience when a 12-year-old boy from the South Armagh area left school to go to the local clinic. The RUC stopped him, twisted his arm, and demanded to know the names of his brothers.

For almost 40 years the Gaelic Athletic Association in Crossmaglen has had to play with "the backdrop of intimidation and insults and the threatened glare of the watch tower," stated Caraher. "And the British government and RUC have taken a quarter of the playing field."

British "security" check points can be thrown up anywhere and at any time.

The area of South Armagh, Crossmaglen, and Newry have historically been an area of support for the fight for a united Ireland. The British military presence is probably an attempt "to provoke an IRA response which could break the cease-fire, thus ejecting Sinn Fein from the current talks process," Carragher said. "One of the obligations of the British government under the terms of the Good Friday agreement was to publish their demilitarization policy. This has not happened," she noted.

Just before leaving for the United States, Carragher and Caraher took part in a 2,000-strong march and rally February 7. The demonstration, called by the SAFRC to call for the demilitarization of South Armagh and the removal of all Army and RUC forces, was led by four tractors. Supporters of the Irish liberation fight came from as far away as Wexford and Cork in the southern part of the island. RUC police force closed all roads leading to the area, keeping hundreds of others from the demonstration.

"South Armagh houses a very proud people, which is evident when you visit the area," stated Carragher. "Their spirit has and will not be broken given the injustices our people have had to suffer these past 30 years."

Ohio: Teamsters strike for pay, less overtime

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 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.

working 10 hours every day! And they also said the next time I was absent I'd be terminated," Hammond said.

The strikers have received support from other members of Local 24, which is an amalgamated local. Workers from Preston Trucking staffed the picket line January 22 as the East workers were at their contract vote meeting.

While this reporter was at the picket line, a trucker from Consolidated Freightways and his wife drove up with a big tray of lunch

ON THE PICKET LINE

RANDOLPH, Ohio — Nearly 400 members of Teamsters Local 24 have been on strike at East Manufacturing Corp. here since January 21. East makes truck trailers.

According to welder Doug Rush, who has worked at East for 21 years, the workers voted against the company's contract proposal 342-3 on January 22. One of the main issues is wages. The company's proposal was for a 40 cent annual wage increase over a five-year contract, with a \$1,500 signing bonus. Rush said workers have proposed a four-year contract with a \$2.50 raise the first year and a dollar a year for the following three years. Workers now start out at less than \$9.00 per hour, rising to \$12.75 per hour.

Rush and crane repairman Bill Hammond described the hazardous conditions in the plant, which have led to high turnover. According to officials of Local 24, the company has hired 700 people over the past three years in order to keep the employee base at about 400.

Mandatory overtime is another major complaint. Hammond said, "We've had to work every Saturday for years." Rush added, "We proposed working every other Saturday, plus a cap on overtime."

Rush and Hammond described plant manager Chuck Moore as a "dictator." One of the company's practices is to consider any tardiness to be an absence. If a worker is five minutes late on the day after a holiday, he or she will not be paid for the holiday. Lower seniority workers are regularly forced to stay over, usually two hours, when the bosses can't get enough people to volunteer to stay. Hammond told how Moore gave him a three-day suspension because he had to leave a half hour early three times one week to pick up his eight-year-old daughter from school.

"They said I was absent three times that week, even though I was

meats and cheese. And a worker from Holland Freight stopped by with a friend in a pickup truck full of wood for the fire barrels.

This is the second strike at East since the union was established in 1981. So far the company has not tried to bring in strikebreakers. Given the level of support the workers have received, low unemployment in the area, and the fact that this is East Manufacturing's only plant, Rush and Hammond were optimistic that the union can win this fight.

Vancouver dock workers shut port to back union

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — Some 1,000 Longshoremen and other unionists gathered at Portside Park here February 2, refusing to go to work and effectively shutting down the port of Vancouver for eight hours. The action was called to support the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) and protest the growing use of nonunion labor at the port.

T-shirts, placards, and stickers with the slogan "Defend ILWU jurisdiction" were present throughout the rally along with banners of the Vancouver Labour Council, Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), Carpenters, and several other unions.

As a gesture of solidarity with embattled farmers, longshoremen volunteered to load grain cars and perishables. A representative from the grain handlers union Local 133 addressed the rally. Members of the Public Service Alliance who inspect the grain before it is shipped had struck the previous week, tying up grain cars in the port of Vancouver.

Peter Lahay, of the International Transport Workers Federation, also spoke at the event.

"This action today is part of an ongoing fight to defend ILWU jurisdiction on the waterfront, which

Copper miners strike in Cananea, Mexico



Militant/Betsy McDonald

Some 2,100 members of National Miners Union Local 65 struck Grupo Mexico's copper mine in Cananea, Mexico, November 19. Above, strikers picket the mine, the second largest in the Spanish-speaking Americas, in January. They are fighting company attempts to cut benefits and wages, now at \$8-12 a day. Other issues include job cuts, production quotas, and safety. The company won a court ruling declaring the strike illegal, and threatened to fire up to 198 union members they accused of vandalism. Union officials announced an agreement February 11, brokered by the Mexican government, that would close three departments of the mine and cut 700 jobs. The next day hundreds of miners protested the contract and vowed to continue the strike. Open since the mid-1600s, the mine was the site of a general strike in 1906 that sparked the Mexican revolution. The miners last strikethere was in 1989, after which the Mexican government sold the mine to Grupo Mexico.

is coming under increasing attack," said Marion Chorney, secretary-treasurer of Local 518 of the ILWU. Chorney and hundreds of other Longshoremen gathered at the union hall after the rally. "For example, Sultran, set up by the oil companies to handle the transportation of sulfur, decided to hire non-union labor last year to sample and inspect the sulfur before it is loaded onto ships. Longshoremen, including retirees, picketed the site throughout the summer," Chorney reported. "A number of us were arrested and charged for contempt of court for defying an injunction. Twenty of us pleaded no contest and were fined between \$250 and \$500 each. The president was fined \$1,000 and the union \$10,000. The retirees are pleading not guilty. The trial date is set for March 16."

Port authorities failed to have an arbitrator rule the February 2 action illegal. Bob Wilds, president of the British Columbia Maritime Employers Association (BCMEA), told the media he would be sending a bill to the union for losses incurred. The master agreement between the ILWU and the BCMEA expired in December 1998.

Continental Tire strikers solid after five months

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina — Strikers at Continental General Tire,

members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 850, are "99.9 percent solid after almost five months on strike," beamed Larry Little, a striker with 27 years at the tire plant. Only seven of more than 1,400 union members have crossed the picket line. Workers here gave concessions in past contracts and are in no mood to do so again.

The company broke off contract negotiations February 11. The next day a company spokesman told the *Charlotte Observer* "an agreement is not likely." The company's "last, best and final" offer in late January includes the demand that the 700 scabs currently working will keep their jobs, with strikers placed on a recall list at the end of the strike. Company president Bernd Frangenberg was quoted in the January 21 *Charlotte Observer*, "It will be a sticky point, but the (permanent replacements) are going to stay."

"The company's intent is to break the union, it has been all along," said striker Larry Gordon, "but the company's 'to hell with you' attitude unites us that much more."

Tire builder Bill Butler said, "The main thing now is the scabs. I think we are close on the economic package, but I'll vote against any four-shift language." The company wants to go from five shifts to four, which would mean fewer jobs, the introduction of rotating shifts, and the unionists working two week-

ends per month.

Butler added, "The union sent two strikers and their families to Germany to visit unions there to win support for the strike. They planned to spend 10 days there talking to tire workers." In 1988 General Tire was bought by Continental AG, a German tire company.

Many strikers are working other jobs since the strike began, and some are winning support. Charlie Sims, a tire builder for 26 years, is talking about the strike to co-workers at TJ Max, the 1,000-person warehouse organized by the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) where he now works. He explained, "I told them about the article in the *Charlotte Observer* about the strike, and we put union flyers on the bulletin board." Sims added that UNITE members will negotiate for a second union contract later this year, and three weeks ago the immigration cops raided the warehouse taking away 75 co-workers. For more information, call USWA Local 850 at (803) 548-7272 or (704) 333-2060.

Tony Prince, a member of UNITE in Cleveland, Ohio; Paul Kouri in Vancouver; and Dan Fein, a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers and Mike Italie, a member of the International Association of Machinists in Atlanta; contributed to this column.

LETTERS

Attack on Native rights

The growing polarization in the world is showing up in many forms. In the case of our rural area, a virulent racism is growing rapidly into a lynch atmosphere.

For the past 11 years, the Caldwell First Nation has fought for and won a 200-year land claim. In the tentative agreement with the Canadian Federal government, the landless Caldwell will be given \$23.4 million over the next five years to buy 4,500 acres to create a Native self-governing reserve. They now have 654 acres held in trust by their chief Larry Johnson.

A Native reservation in this area, which was the traditional homeland of the Chippewa, has caused the rise of a right-wing hate campaign aided

and abetted by the mayor of Chatham, who publicly advised farmers "to be careful who they sell to." In spite of federal government assurances that there will be no expropriation and that it will be on a willing seller/willing buyer basis, hundreds of "Not for Sale" signs have been tacked up by a right-wing outfit called Chatham Kent Community Network. A building on Native property has been vandalized and tools stolen. Many incidents of racism have been reported to the Band Council.

The city administration and the police have been harassing the Caldwell over building construction, although the Band has utilized inspectors and professionals through federal sponsored entities.

The Federal Indian Act provides that land held in trust or owned by a First Nation shall be treated as a reserve and is responsible only to the Federal government.

For messages of support, the Caldwell First Nation can be reached through Chief Larry Johnson, Blenheim, Ontario, Canada.

Bea Bryant
Blenheim, Ontario

Forum on labor struggles

I have been a subscriber since 1992 and work as a mechanic at Alaska Airlines, where AMFA [the Airline Mechanics Fraternal Association] is now the bargaining unit. I spoke at a Militant Labor Forum

January 29 in Seattle on "Challenges Facing the Labor Movement Today." The forum was very encouraging, with speakers from the Kaiser [Aluminum] strike and a SEIU [Service Employees International Union] local that just won a significant victory from the bosses.

I would like especially to thank you for your coverage of the AMFA situation in the airlines. Your assessment of what fighters should be doing to advance the working-class struggles on the properties where AMFA has won is absolutely 100 percent correct and once again demonstrates the ability of this publication to point the road forward for activists like myself. I feel that it would be very helpful to organize forums in cities where AMFA has

won and also at cities where they have active campaigns. Craft unionism is a step back for workers, and we need to open up the political debate on the impact that it represents.

Also, I really appreciate the ongoing coverage of the Cuban revolution.

Guy Blue
Seattle, Washington

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

U.S. bombings of Iraq do not let up

BY MEGAN ARNEY

Seeking to win public acceptance for wider assaults against Iraq, Washington has not let up its grinding campaign of nearly daily bombings on that Middle Eastern nation. In continued invasions of Iraq's airspace and attacks on defense facilities, U.S. warplanes killed at least 10 people and injured dozens the week of February 9-16.

In northern Iraq a U.S. electronic warfare jet fired a missile at an Iraqi defense installation February 15. That same day in southern Iraq, U.S. and British jets attacked four separate Iraqi sites after two of Baghdad's planes flew into the "no-fly zone" enforced by the occupying powers. U.S. forces killed 5 people and injured 22 that day alone.

The U.S. and British governments imposed the so-called no-fly zones, which cover nearly two-thirds of Iraqi territory, after the 1990-91 Gulf War, in which they slaughtered 150,000 Iraqis. Washington has used these zones to assert its "right" to violate that country's sovereignty and try to provoke Baghdad, using Iraq's defensive response as a pretext for its deadly bombings.

Iraqi deputy prime minister Tariq Aziz commented February 16, "You are being threatened by aircraft who enter your airspace and attack you. If you complain about that, is that a threat?"

Aziz went to Turkey over the February 13-14 weekend, attempting to persuade Ankara to stop letting Washington use the Incirlik air base, in southern Turkey, for its air attacks on Iraq. The Turkish base, where as many as 1,000 U.S. troops and 50 aircraft have been stationed in recent years, is essential to the U.S. government's military operations in northern Iraq, ostensibly to "monitor the no-fly zone."

Turkish prime minister Bulent Ecevit publicly rejected Baghdad's request. At the same time, the regime in Ankara has continued to maintain cordial relations with the Iraqi government. "Ecevit is under intense criticism for sitting in the lap of the United States and letting the Americans use the Incirlik base for bombing Iraq," noted one commentator quoted by the *New York Times*. The capitalist rulers in Turkey and Iraq share a common interest — their desire to squash the decades-long struggle by the Kurdish people for their self-determination in their region, which includes parts of what is today Turkey, Iraq, Syria, and Iran.

The struggle of the Kurds exploded once again into the world spotlight when, in response to the Turkish regime's arrest of Kurdish leader Abdullah Ocalan on February 15, protests by Kurds erupted across Europe, Canada, and Australia. Protesters denounced the fact that Ocalan was detained and kidnapped back to Turkey after he left the Greek embassy in Nairobi, Kenya.

Many Kurds directed their anger at the Greek, Kenyan, Israeli, and U.S. governments for their apparent complicity in Ocalan's arrest. Protesters stormed Greek and Kenyan diplomatic missions in dozens of European cities, from London to Bern to Moscow. Protests also took place in Ottawa, Canada, and in Sydney and Melbourne, Australia. In Berlin, Israeli guards fired on dozens of Kurds trying to occupy the Israeli consulate, killing 3 people and wounding 16. Many protests took place in Germany, where half a million Kurds live and work.

Despite U.S. denials of "direct" involvement, the Turkish daily *Yeni Yuzuil* reported February 17 that Washington had helped the Turkish regime seize Ocalan in return for Ankara's rejection of Iraqi demands to end U.S. use of Incirlik air base for attacks on Iraq.

The explosion of Kurdish protests was an unpleasant reminder to Washington of its fiasco in the Gulf War. Failing to achieve their goal of overthrowing the Iraqi government and installing a reliable client regime there, the U.S. rulers' slaughter in the Gulf only heightened all the conflicts and social instability in the region, from sharpened frictions among the imperialist rivals to the revival of the Kurdish struggle for self-determination, which Washington opposes. The



Militant/Terry Coggan

Demonstration in Auckland, New Zealand, December 20 to protest U.S. attacks on Iraq. The protest was organized by the Iraqi community there.

political weakening of imperialism in the Middle East has marked the limits on how far Washington has been able to push its assaults on Iraq.

At the same time, the Clinton administration's continuing provocations against Baghdad and military buildup in the Gulf, along with the uncontrolled forces this confrontation constantly sets off in the region, could rapidly escalate into a broader military conflict.

In one example of this volatile situation, Iraqi vice president Taha Yassin Ramadan demanded February 15 that Ankara stop its support of Washington and London's impe-

rialist war machines or face military retaliation. A few days earlier, Baghdad had issued a similar warning that it might launch an attack on U.S. bases in Kuwaiti and Saudi Arabia that are used to fly imperialist warplanes over southern Iraq.

U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright retorted with typical aggressiveness, "We have made [it] very clear that were there any attacks on our forces or on neighboring countries, our response would be swift and sure."

The big-business media often point to Baghdad's bluster about launching military retaliation as a sign of its weakness and isolation. What the U.S. rulers have consis-

tently underestimated, however, is that despite the inability of the capitalist government in Iraq to take the moral high ground, there is deep and growing hatred among millions of Iraqis for the imperialist brutalization of their nation.

More than two months of bombing

Since Washington and London's four-day bombing blitz in December, the U.S. government has waged a steady campaign of bombings. Warplanes have attacked Iraq at least 50 times since the beginning of the year. One top Air Force official claimed that the recent weeks of bombings have destroyed more of Iraq's air-defense system than was knocked out in the hundreds of attacks last December.

The attacks have not been limited to military targets. Three people were killed and many others injured February 10 when U.S. and British warplanes bombed a civilian building and a fishing jetty in towns in southern Iraq.

A few days later, U.S. Air Force officials nonchalantly announced that a January 25 U.S. missile attack on a residential area near the southern city of Basra, which killed 11 civilians and wounded dozens, had been the result of an electronic "glitch" in an otherwise sophisticated missile system. A senior official added that no U.S. military personnel would be sanctioned for the deaths of the Iraqis.

Meanwhile, demonstrators protested the U.S. and British daily assaults in London February 14. Other protests occurred in Jordan, the Palestinian West Bank town of Ramallah, and the capital city of Sanna, Yemen. Yemeni police arrested more than 16 people, including student leaders.

Hussein: loyal servant of imperialism

BY ANNE HOWIE
AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

JERICHO, West Bank — As the death of Hussein ibn Talal, King of Jordan, approached in early February, and the big-business media worldwide was filling up with eulogies to this most loyal servant of imperialism, Palestinian workers here reflected on his regime's true, murderous record.

On February 5, two days before the monarch passed away, these reporters found ourselves on the outskirts of this Palestinian city, on the West Bank of the Jordan river, within a slingshot's range of the Israeli-Jordanian border. On most news programs Hussein's state was the talk of the day.

Mohammed Barakat, a former hotel worker who now drives a minivan/taxi, referred to the hoopla in the news. "They try to give the impression that most people in Jordan loved 'their' king," he said, sipping coffee during that rainy afternoon. "I don't doubt he may be popular among many. But the media often fail to mention that the majority of the population in Jordan are Palestinians. And Palestinians who are refugees there, and many of us here, have different memories. We remember what happened in 1970, when King Hussein's government ordered the slaughter of thousands of Palestinian liberation fighters."

This was a common view. "The people don't forget," said Hamad Mahmoud, a falafel vendor in Ramallah, referring to events of Black September, which is what Barakat was talking about. That was the offensive organized in 1970 by Hussein that left over 8,000 Palestinians dead and thousands more wounded.

Nor do Palestinians forget that, while Hussein may have posed as defender of the Palestinians, at every opportunity he had instead betrayed them. The *Jerusalem Post* quoted a lawyer from Jenin, in the West Bank, who said "most of us believe Hussein's grandfather committed treason against Palestine. He sold out the Palestinians and Hussein continued to sell us out."

"I hate everything that King Hussein did," said a businessman from East Jerusalem.

"He did everything in his power to save his own neck and kingdom. He was the only Arab leader who gave Palestinians passports, not because he loved us, but because he needed to increase the population of Jordan."

Ramallah street vendor Mohammed Ceder agreed. "Would you give up your land for a passport?"

The Kingdom of Transjordan was created in 1921 when it was split off from Palestine, which was then under British rule, as part of carving up the region between British and French imperialism. Transjordan was also intended to create a safety-valve to ease the pressure created by Jewish settlers into the western part of Palestine and was itself closed to Jewish immigration. Winston Churchill, then colonial secretary of the British government, claimed he created the country "in an afternoon." British imperialism installed Abdullah ibn Hussein as king. In 1946 Transjordan was granted formal independence. But even its flag was artificial — designed by Mark Sykes, a British foreign service officer, and produced by his army's shop in Cairo. Two years later, its rulers changed its name to Jordan.

In 1947, the United Nations, under U.S. government pressure, agreed to a resolution dividing what had been British-ruled Palestine into Jewish and Palestinian states. In the 1948 war, during which Israeli forces extended and consolidated the colonial settler state of Israel, Jordanian troops struck a further blow against Palestinian sovereignty by taking possession of the parts of Palestine on the West Bank of the Jordan River, which had not been conquered by Israeli forces. Along with the Egyptian occupation of Gaza, this meant the entire territory promised to the Palestinian state under the UN resolution had been completely swallowed up.

One result of the occupation of East Jerusalem and the West Bank, along with the flight of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees into Jordan, was that the majority of the Jordanian population was now Palestinian. The Palestinians inside and outside the wretched camps provided for the

refugees — overwhelmingly peasants and workers uprooted from their villages by the Zionist occupiers — began to demand democratic rights and as a result they were granted Jordanian citizenship and half the seats in parliament. Opposition to Abdullah's rule was fueled by evidence that he was negotiating with Tel Aviv. Abdullah was assassinated in Jerusalem in 1951. He was succeeded, first briefly by his son Talal, and then in 1952 by his grandson Hussein.

During the 1950s many of the regimes put in place by the colonial powers in the 1920s were swept aside by popular anti-imperialist mobilizations. Hussein's rule was defended by London, however, when the British rulers sent 2,000 troops to prop up his monarchy in 1958.

Through the 1967 six-day war Israeli troops occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Tel Aviv also seized the Gaza strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt and the Golan Heights from Syria.

The Zionist victory in the 1967 war spurred a renewed growth of the Palestinian movement that progressively became less dependent on the Arab regimes in the region. In Jordan this began to undermine the autocratic rule of Hussein. The Palestinian fighters were an obstacle to his reaching an accommodation with Tel Aviv, through which Hussein aimed eventually to reclaim all or part of the West Bank. Palestinians also demanded democratic and political rights within Jordan.

Throughout 1970, a struggle mounted against Hussein. Palestinian guerrilla fighters were joined by thousands of armed citizens who were supported by a popular movement among the 1 million Palestinian refugees. A decisive section of the non-Palestinian Jordanians also sided with the Palestinians and condemned the corrupt, despotic, and backward Hussein regime.

In September 1970 — known as Black September — Hussein launched an all-out attack on the Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan's capital, Amman. The weeks that followed saw a bloodbath against Palestin-

Continued on Page 14