

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Socialist candidates
campaign to get on ballot

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Court rejects Nebraska antiabortion legislation

BY MARGARET TROWE
AND ROLLANDE GIRARD

MIAMI—In a victory for a woman's right to choose abortion, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a September 1999 Nebraska law banning a medical procedure that opponents of women's rights call "partial birth abortion." The 5-4 vote on the *Stenberg v. Carhart* case ruled the Nebraska law unconstitutional. The ruling is expected to apply to similar laws that have been adopted in 30 other states since 1995.

In the majority opinion, Justice Stephen Breyer wrote that the "Nebraska's statute, making criminal the performance of a 'partial birth abortion,' violates the federal Constitution" as interpreted in the landmark *Roe v. Wade* decision that decriminalized abortion. The court cited the fact that the state law barred all such abortions and made no exceptions even when the woman's health was at risk, and that it "imposes an undue burden on a woman's ability to choose a D&E [dilation and evacuation] abortion, thereby unduly burdening the right to choose abortion itself." D&E is an abortion procedure used by doctors in the second trimester of pregnancy.

In a separate opinion, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor said she might view it as constitutional to ban the disputed abortion procedure if the law included an exemption for

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PRI loses Mexico vote for first time in 71 years

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

For the first time in its 71 years, the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) has lost the Mexican presidential elections. The new president, Vicente Fox Quesada, a rancher and former CEO of Coca-Cola in Mexico, was the candidate of the conservative National Action Party (PAN). Fox won 43 percent of the vote, to 36 percent for PRI candidate Francisco Labastida. Mexico City mayor Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) ran a distant third. The voter turnout was unprecedented.

Many workers and others voted for the PAN as a way to oust the PRI, which has increasingly been identified with economic crisis and corruption. "Our leaders need to know that if they don't do the job right, we're going to get rid of them," said Gustavo Sánchez, 32, an auto mechanic in Ecatepec, a huge proletarian suburb of Mexico City and historically a PRI stronghold.

Some left-wing forces, normally backers of the liberal PRD, gave their support to Fox in these elections, arguing that any way to unseat PRI rule was good.

There were few differences in the PRI and PAN presidential platforms. Fox has pledged to maintain the same basic economic policies—including opening up Mexico's

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St. Paul meat packers gear up for union vote

Union supporters counter bosses' propaganda

BY FRANCISCO PÉREZ

SOUTH ST. PAUL, Minnesota—With two and half weeks left before workers at Dakota Premium Foods will vote to decide whether or not they will be members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789, tensions are increasing.

In addition, workers in the plant report that the company is increasing the line speed again, getting production done in less than eight hours. Line speed was the main issue that galvanized the workers who organized a seven-and-half-hour sit-down strike on June 1.

The day of the strike, workers contacted United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 789 for help and launched an organizing drive to bring the union back to this plant of some 200 workers. Many strikers signed interest cards that day. The UFCW had been decertified in 1992 after it failed to win a contract from the company.

The workers ended their strike only after plant manager Steve Cortinas agreed to meet with them and conceded a number of the workers' demands. These included slowing down the line and instituting worker representatives to keep an eye on the line speed and to clock in and out all workers who are paid under the "gang time" system.

On June 12, the workers organized a march and rally in front of the plant demanding the company recognize their right to collective bargaining through Local 789. The following day, in face of the company's refusal, Local 789 filed a petition for union

recognition with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), turning in signed cards from the majority of the workers in the plant. The NLRB has set an election date for the afternoon of July 21 in the company's cafeteria.

eteria.

"To be most effective in preparing for the vote," said Miguel Olvera, a line worker and a leader of the in-plant union organizing

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L.A. airline workers win union



Militant/Carole Lesnick

After waging a two-year-long organizing drive, workers at Argenbright, a contractor at the Los Angeles airport, won a representation vote for the Service Employees International Union. See article on page 15.

Rightist Buchanan firms grip on Reform Party

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Patrick Buchanan, an incipient fascist politician, is in the process of taking control of the Reform Party, a nationwide party with ballot rights that has access to millions

of dollars in federal funds.

While many bourgeois pundits have dismissed Buchanan as increasingly marginal in U.S. politics, the opposite is true. The ultrarightist has been pursuing his goal,

which does not consist of short-term electoral gains but of building a cadre that can ultimately become a mass, popular street-fighting movement that can storm to victory. His likely capture of the Reform Party apparatus at the upcoming party convention will be one more step along this road.

Unlike Green Party candidate Ralph Nader, who acts as a left wing of the Democratic Party, Buchanan is one of the main elements threatening the two-party electoral system that has dominated U.S. politics for the past century, and that over the past decade has shown deepening fracture lines under the strains of political polarization. Resorting to demagoguery, the ultrarightist feeds on the growing discontent with the Democrats and Republicans and seeks to channel it in a reactionary direction.

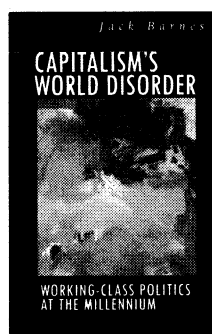
"Our two-party system has become a fraud on the people," Buchanan declared in June. Seven months earlier he had announced his break from the Republican Party and his plans to win the Reform Party nomination. "Neither Beltway party speaks for the forgotten Americans whose jobs were exported to finance the bull market we enjoy."

Buchanan, a former speech writer and aide in the Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan administrations, took advantage of his connections within the Republican Party, initially seeking to bore from within that party to assemble cadres for his ultrarightist movement. When he judged the time was ripe he made his break.

The Reform Party was founded by Ross

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Havana meeting calls world youth festival in Algeria — page 7

Volunteers on target in effort to digitize all Pathfinder titles

BY PEGGY BRUNDY AND TOM TOMASKO

OAKLAND, California—By the end of June Pathfinder Press will have one-third of its titles in fully digital form, thanks to the work of volunteers in the Pathfinder Reprint Project. Pathfinder books and pamphlets contain the political lessons of 150 years of the modern working-class movement. The Reprint Project is an international effort by scores of volunteers in the United States and seven other countries to put all these titles into electronic form and store them on CD-ROMs, converting them from outdated film and printing plates.

Most of Pathfinder's books were written before the age of computers. It has become a necessity to computerize the books in order to take advantage of the latest technology in printing. In the new computer-to-plate technology acquired by Pathfinder's printshop, plates can be made rapidly from compact disks.

The Reprint Project started in February 1998. As of June 15, the international team had converted 88 titles out of the 350 on Pathfinder's backlist. The Pathfinder editorial staff in New York has also produced numerous new titles using this new format. A total of 115 books are fully digitized now. The 33 percent mark is a goal the project set in January to complete by the end of June.

During the first two weeks of June, Reprint Project volunteers turned in to Pathfinder compact disks for *Art and Revolution* by Leon Trotsky, the first volume of *W.E.B. DuBois Speaks*, edited by Philip Foner, and *Thomas Sankara Speaks*.

Books completed electronically in April and May were *The Long View of History* by George Novack; *La revolución tracionada, En defensa del marxismo*, and *Portraits: Political and Personal*, all by Leon Trotsky; *Marxism and the Working Farmer* by Doug Jenness and others; *The Leninist Strategy of Party Building* by Joseph Hansen; *Is Biology Woman's Destiny?* by Evelyn Reed; and *What Is Surrealism?* by André Breton with

an introduction by Franklin Rosemont.

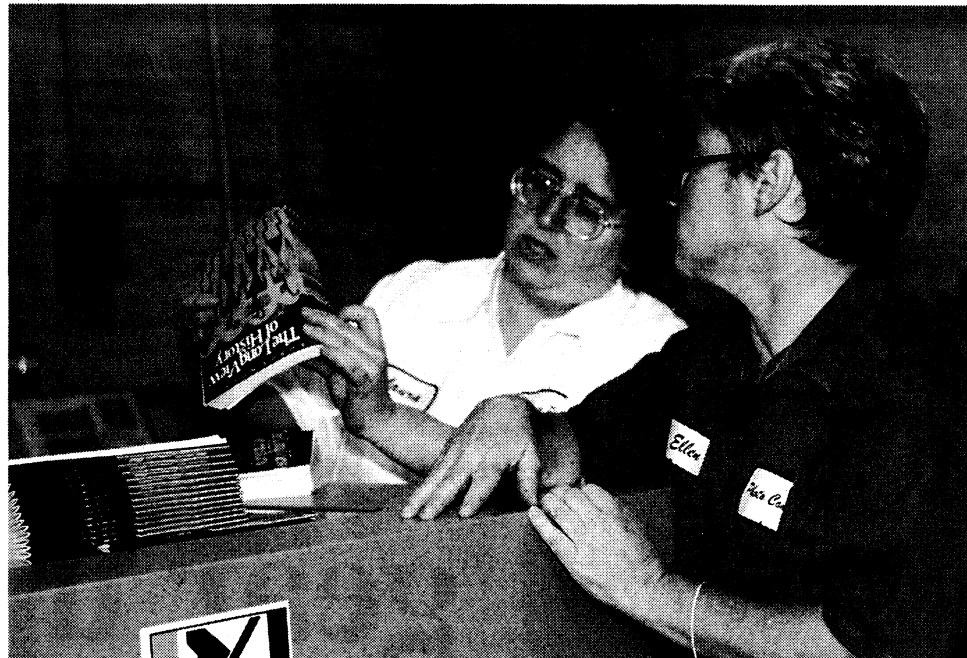
The number of supporters of the communist movement working on the Reprint Project has increased recently. Many signed up at a series of meetings held across the United States in February and March celebrating Pathfinder Press, the Cuban revolution, and the geographical expansion of the communist movement in the United States. In addition, a dozen volunteers who translate Pathfinder's English-language titles into Spanish and French recently joined the project. Today almost 200 people have signed up. Of those, 118 did actual work in May, the highest one-month total in the history of the project. Earlier in the year, the monthly participation was around 80 volunteers.

This influx of active new volunteers has made possible the reorganization of the final stages of digitizing the books. The formatting team has doubled to 25 volunteers. The graphics team has grown similarly to 19. The new volunteers usually start out in proofreading and indexing. There they learn to use the Reprint Project database on the Internet, improve their computer skills, and practice other skills they will use in all aspects of book digitization.

Having 25 volunteers instead of 12 has made an enormous difference to formatting. About a month ago, the formatting group divided into three production teams. Each one is headed up by two or three experienced formatters, and includes five or six people who are at various stages of learning the process. Trainees usually start by learning how to check the quality of the work of other formatters.

The workflow for formatting a book was also revised. Previously one formatter processed an entire book. This could take weeks and, on occasion, months. Now an experienced formatter divides a book into smaller chunks, formats a section as an example, and does initial formatting steps on the rest of a book. The processed sections are then handed out to the trainees.

The 19-person graphics team has also



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Laura Garza, left, and Ellen Brickley in Pathfinder's printshop inspect *The Long View of History*, one of the titles completed this spring by Reprint Project volunteers.

reorganized. More and less experienced volunteers are being paired up to speed up skill acquisition. Other team members have taken on additional responsibilities for quality control.

The focus of the final stages of work of the production teams in April, May and June has been on training. In the near future we expect to see the impact of this training pay off in increased production by the volunteer teams.

The next challenge facing the Reprint Project is to meet its goal of putting 50 percent of Pathfinder's books in digital form by the end of the year 2000. With 83 Pathfinder books now out of print, and increasing opportunities to sell these books, reaching the goal becomes ever more pressing.

Scores of supporters of the Socialist

Workers Party who are active in this project will be attending the Active Workers Conference at the end of July in Oberlin, Ohio. The volunteers will have a chance to see firsthand how their efforts to keep the irreplaceable arsenal of revolutionary books in print are contributing to building the communist movement today. Following the conference, the reprint project steering committee will organize training workshops for volunteers who attended the gathering.

For information on the conference, contact the branch of the SWP nearest you. For more information about the Reprint Project contact Ruth Cheney at ruthchen@flash.net.

Peggy Brundy and Tom Tomasko are members of the San Francisco Bay Area-based steering committee of the Reprint Project.

Racist flag moved from S. Carolina capitol

BY LAUREN HART

COLUMBIA, South Carolina—Until July 1 of this year, workers at the Columbia Farms poultry plant could see the Confederate battle flag waving above the state capitol from the plant's parking lot. Many of the poultry workers are Black, and a lot of them participated in the historic march of 50,000 on Martin Luther King Day last January to demand the flag come down.

"It won't be there in a year," one worker told this reporter in February. At noon on July 1 the racist symbol that had flown above the state house since 1962 came down.

A short time later, another version of the battle flag was raised on a pole at the Confederate soldiers monument, directly in front of the state house on a busy downtown street. This was the "compromise" promoted by the governor and adopted by the state legislature earlier this year, as pressure mounted, including from a tourism boycott called by the NAACP.

"They're just putting it closer to my face," declared Leon Harper, who works in a restaurant near the state house. "It should be in a museum." Harper was one of hundreds of people who rallied on the south steps of

the capitol before noon to protest the fact the flag will still fly on the state house grounds. That action was called by the Assembly of African-American Leaders.

Hundreds more took part in a silent march through downtown called by the NAACP earlier in the morning. The civil rights group has decided to continue its tourism boycott until the flag is removed entirely from the state government center.

A similar number of people rallied in support of the flag throughout the morning on the north side of the capitol, where the Confederate soldiers monument is located. At noon, a couple dozen of them marched around the dome provocatively chanting, "Off the dome and in your face."

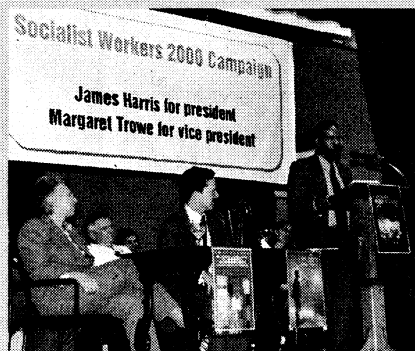
As the pro-flag rally continued, clumps of anti-flag protesters mingled with those waving Confederate flags—some quietly observing and others blowing whistles and responding to the rightists.

Andrew Hughes, a University of South Carolina student who came to see the flag come down, expressed the view of many protesters when he stated, "It's a first step, but it shouldn't be anywhere on the state house grounds."

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Woodworkers in Canada battle concessions

BY NED DMYTRYSHYN

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—A major labor battle is under way here as 12,000 forestry workers set up picket lines June 27, halting production at 120 operations on the British Columbia coast.

The strikers, members of the Industrial, Allied and Woodworkers Union (IWA), may soon be joined by 20,000 other members from the South and North Interior regions of the province.

IWA members on the coast bargain with Forest Industrial Relations, which represents 70 Forest companies. Some of the larger companies are Weyerhaeuser, Canadian Forest Products, International Forest Products (Interfor), Timberwest, and Doman Industries. Twenty-thousand IWA members

bargain separately with companies in the North Interior and South Interior regions.

Workers in the South Interior have voted more than 90 percent for strike action. The IWA is currently negotiating with Canadian Forest Products in the northern interior, which covers 1,700 union members. This strike is the first coast-wide shutdown since the six-month walkout by the IWA in 1986. The IWA is the largest private sector union in British Columbia.

"We had no choice but to go on strike. The companies refused to discuss anything else except their concessions package," explained IWA striker Darshan Atwal on the picket line at Doman industries in Vancouver. Strikers are in an upbeat mood and confident. Atwal, a lumber grader, has

been at Doman for eight years and is near the bottom of the seniority list although he has been working in the industry for more than 20 years. "These concessions will mean that I could easily get laid off," added Atwal.

At the picket line in front of Interfor in New Westminster, a suburb of Vancouver, IWA strikers and members of Local I-3567 spoke about the bosses' drive for concessions. "The number one issue is flexibility. The companies want to be able to eliminate overtime pay, and change our schedules to their liking. Work Monday, Tuesday, and come back Friday, Saturday, and maybe even change our workdays each week," explained striker Paul Dorn, an electrician for 14 years at the plant. "There's no way we're going to accept this," emphasized IWA

member Steve Miskinis.

"With this flexibility, family life will be gone and the bosses will be able to lay more workers off. We should do what the workers in France did—fight for shorter work time to save the existing jobs," added striker Inder Sangha. "What they [the bosses] really want is to have us work seven days a week for awhile then shut down for six months," explained Satnam Bhatia.

Strikers explained that another important issue in the strike is defending their right to earned vacations, which has been in the contract since 1964. The bosses are also attempting to cut back their contribution to the pension fund to 90 cents per hour from \$2.40 when it becomes fully funded in two years. The IWA is demanding 3 percent per year wage increases for three years. The forest companies, represented by Forest Industrial Relations, have put 2 percent per year on the table. Bosses are worried about the level of resistance in this major industry to their drive to intensify exploitation of the workers in face of a deepening capitalist economic crisis, declining profit rates, and increased international competition.

Bourgeois analysts point to a glut in the market and low lumber prices of just over \$250 per 1,000 board feet today, compared with \$410 per 1,000 board feet in 1999. The June 28 *Vancouver Sun* contended that "the coastal industry is already in crisis caused by the collapse of the Japanese market, lack of access to the U.S., and high operating costs."

Forestry in British Columbia is a major industry accounting for one half of the province's export revenues and cash revenues of \$16 billion annually. In 1998 the forest sector employed 91,000 workers. Statistics Canada figures show that the forest industry in 1997 contributed 23.1 percent to British Columbia's gross domestic product. In response to the bosses crying poverty, the financial secretary of the IWA Local 1-3567 explained that "the industry made \$250 million in the first quarter of this supposedly terrible year."

Strikers are determined to win. "You've got to do what you've got to do: put up your house for sale, cash in your RRSPs [pension funds]," explained picket Manjeet Besla at the White Pine plant.

As of July 1, the IWA has reached a tentative agreement in the Northern Interior with Canadian Forest Products and other forestry companies covering 4,000 workers. IWA members in this region will be voting on the proposal over the next two weeks. Picket lines remain up on the coast with thousands of forestry workers in the interior regions of British Columbia poised to take strike action.

Ned Dmytryshyn is member of the International Association of Machinists Local 11 in Delta, British Columbia.

Marchers protest killings by cops in Missouri

BY ALYSON KENNEDY AND ELLIE GARCÍA

CLAYTON, Missouri—Chanting, "No Justice, No Peace" and "Jail the Killer Cops and Throw Away the Keys," about 100 protesters marched through the business section of Clayton, Missouri, to the St. Louis County Justice Center.

The June 28 demonstration took place at noon with protesters demanding justice for Earl Murray and Ronald Beasley, who were killed by a team of local cops and agents from the federal Drug Enforcement Administration. The two men were shot June 12 by cops while sitting in their car in a fast food parking lot. The police fired at least 20 shots into the automobile.

The march was the latest event in a series of protests against the killings by the cops. The protesters gathered in the parking lot of the Jack in the Box restaurant in Berkeley, where the killings took place, and caravanned to Shaw Park in Clayton. The demonstrators then parked their cars and marched to the Justice Center and demanded to see County Prosecutor Robert McCulloch.

Mary Williams from Pagedale said she was there because "when I heard about the murders of Beasley and Murray, I wanted to support the families, so I went to their funerals. And then I went to the meetings and have been coming to the protests. This is happening to all of us."

A videotape of the shooting, taken by one of the surveillance cameras in the Jack in the Box parking lot, was confiscated by the police. McCulloch refused to meet with the protesters. He told the news media that he would not release the tape to the public.

Clayton police ordered the protesters to leave the inside entrance of the Justice Center building or they would begin arresting them. More than 20 people were eventually arrested. The remaining demonstrators began marching through Clayton, a mostly white suburb of St. Louis. At one point, they marched out into a circular intersection, tying up traffic for several minutes.

Office workers and others stood on the sidewalks watching the march. Some waved



Militant/Alyson Kennedy

June 28 rally in Clayton, Missouri, condemning cop killing of two Black men.

and cheered the protesters. Paul Naugles, who works at a Schnucks grocery store and is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 655, joined the march. "When I saw the march, I thought it was my duty to be with the people protesting this injustice," he said.

Following the release of those arrested, the crowd was invited to come to a meeting the next night at the All Saints Episcopal Church in St. Louis. About 70 people attended. The meeting was organized by the National Action Network, the NAACP, the Rainbow Coalition and Eric Vickers, a local attorney and Democratic party candidate for Congress.

The speakers told the crowd that if the tapes are not released, on July 12 they would organize a shutdown of Interstate 64/40.

Candlelight vigils condemning the killings have been taking place in the Jack in the Box parking lot in Berkeley over the past several Mondays.

Tiahmo Ra-uf from the National Action Network has announced that on August 26 a reenactment of the March on Washington is being organized to protest cop brutality and racial profiling.

Alyson Kennedy is a member of UNITE and the Socialist Workers Party candidate for the U.S. Senate in Missouri

Iceland bus drivers strike to defend union

BY SIGURLAUG GUNNLAUGSDÓTTIR AND ÓLÖF ANDRA PROPPÉ

REYKJAVIK, Iceland—Some 160 bus drivers have been on strike here since June 8. Most of the drivers, members of the union Sleipnir, drive tourist buses, while others drive public transport buses in the area of this capital city. Standing up to the employers and court injunctions, they are fighting to defend their union, win wage increases, and improve deteriorating conditions on the job.

The unionists are demanding a raise in basic monthly wages from US\$1,155 (80,000 Kronur) to \$1,300 for new employees, and from \$1,300 to \$1,660 for workers with more seniority.

Strike committee member Heimir Bergmann, a public transport bus driver, described the conditions facing the drivers. If a worker is sick, instead of providing a replacement, the company forces a driver who already has been driving a whole shift to fill in.

Some drivers are forced to work very long hours for extended periods, especially in the summer months of June to August. In addition, there are not enough buses, leading to overcrowded vehicles and more chances of passengers getting hurt in traffic accidents, for which the driver is usually held responsible.

"The strike is not primarily about money,"

Ingi Sverrisson, a member of the union negotiating committee, emphasized. "The employers want to prevent the growth of the union."

About one-third of the Reykjavik city bus drivers, today organized in the Staff Union of the City of Reykjavik, are in the process of leaving that union and joining Sleipnir before the end of this year. The Reykjavik City Buses company has been on a campaign to try to prevent them from doing so by claiming they will lose their pension rights. That is a lie, Sverrisson explained, because workers who change unions will remain members of their pension fund program.

Truck drivers, who to a large extent are not organized, are discussing joining Sleipnir too.

"The union died but came to life again over a decade ago," said Sverrisson. And it has been a fight. "Some owners of bus companies tell newly hired drivers they cannot be members of Sleipnir, that if they join it means dismissal." The strikers have received wide support, explained Sverrisson and strike committee member Sigurdur Flosason.

Icelandair, an employer with a notorious antiunion history, initially had scabs drive the buses inside the airport area and prevented pickets from going into the airport. So the striking drivers appealed for support

from workers there.

The first union to declare its support to Sleipnir was the flight attendants union, which announced a meeting to discuss whether to call a solidarity strike. Faced with a call from the International Transport Workers Union for solidarity actions in airports where Icelandair lands, the airline bosses backed down.

The employers have used the courts against Sleipnir. In the first three weeks of the strike, judges issued three injunctions against the union.

The court orders forbid picketing against companies that claim they do not have to respect a contract with Sleipnir even though they are members of the employers' organization, which is negotiating with Sleipnir.

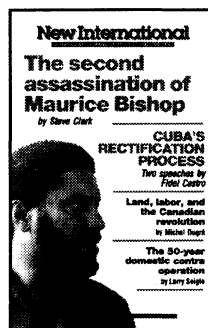
The injunctions have been issued on the basis that these companies have succeeded in keeping Sleipnir out, allowing in other unions whose leaderships are more accommodating to the bosses' demands, Sverrisson explained.

Workers interviewed expressed confidence in their ability to win their strike. The mood was registered at the union meeting where all but two workers voted in favor of walking out.

"Some people were saying this [strike] would spell the death of the union," Bergmann said. "But it is the opposite—the union is stronger now."

from Pathfinder

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UMWA strikers fight bosses' demand for 12-hour workdays

BY DANNY WILSON

KEMMERER, Wyoming—Downtown was filled with horns blowing for hours in support of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) and its strike against Pittsburg and Midway Coal Co. Standing along Central Avenue, 20 union supporters, mostly women, carried signs saying, "UMWA All the Way!" "We'll Last One Day Longer!" "Honk if you Support the UMWA!" and "0% Scab-100% Union!"

This event capped off an early morning expanded picket line June 30 at the Pittsburg and Midway (P&M) mine gate. The two activities were called in response to four UMWA members who crossed the line in the past week.

"We wanted to let P&M and [parent company] Chevron know that we're not demoralized or scared and that we're stronger than ever," Sue Hunzie told the *Militant*. Hunzie is a substitute teacher and wife of a striker. She along with 50 other wives of miners, women miners, and other supporters in the community helped organize, make the banners for, and lead the expanded picket. One hundred supporters attended the event, which was called on short notice. Among them were members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the Letter Carriers union, and the United Steelworkers of America (USWA).

Strike supporter Barb Carlisle and Hunzie explained how their grandfathers helped organize the UMWA in Kemmerer in the early 1900s. Hunzie said the miners "organized meetings in secret in my grandfather's wine cellar."

Carlisle said, "My grandpa helped start the union that got us our first eight-hour day at the mine. He died from black lung 47 years ago." Another supporter, Mary Service, explained, "We fought hard and long to get the eight-hour day. We aren't going back!"

Six weeks into the strike by UMWA Local 1307, there have been no new negotiations. Bosses at P&M, a division of Chevron Corp., want the workers to accept a 12-hour workday, seven days a week. Under the expired contract miners worked three eight-hour shifts, Monday through Friday, with overtime paid for weekend work. The company is offering neither a pay raise for working miners nor a pension increase for retirees. It demands miners pay a portion of their medical benefits. Under the old contract miners were covered for 100 percent of their health-care costs.

Retired miner Richard Peart and his wife Christina were at the downtown triangle June 30. Peart worked at Kemmerer for 20 years and retired in 1987 at age 62. Suffering from chronic obstructive pulmonary dis-

ease, he is confined to a wheelchair and needs an oxygen breather at all times. "What happens in this contract will affect me and other retirees," Peart stressed. "I retired with \$385 for a pension. If it wasn't for Medicaid and Social Security we couldn't survive. Even with that it's not enough. We'll be out here as long as it takes." Peart and his wife are regulars at all strike support events.

The 230 members of UMWA Local 1307 in Wyoming joined 300 miners from sister UMWA Local 1332 two weeks after they went on strike at P&M's McKinley mine in Tse Bonito, New Mexico, located in the Navajo Nation.

Contracts to expire at other mines

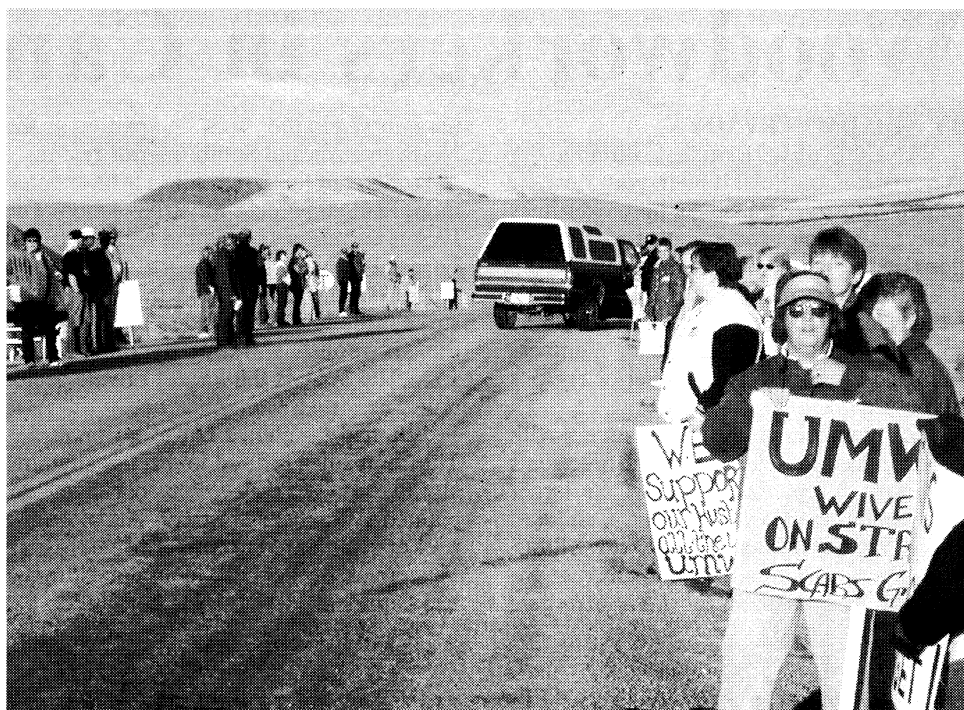
The UMWA faces contract expiration dates at five additional coal mines in the West within the next two months. These include Peabody Coal's Kayenta and Black Mesa mines on the Navajo reservation in Kayenta, Arizona, where the contracts expire August 31.

The *'Little Chicago' Review* and *Kemmerer Gazette*, both published here, carried a written statement by P&M as well as comments made by UMWA international president Cecil Roberts from a June 26 radio interview conducted by KMER/KAOX. The radio station allowed Kemmerer mine manager Steve Johnson to read the statement for P&M. Roberts was interviewed but not afforded the same courtesy to prepare a statement.

Miners called the radio station and protested the unfair treatment, causing the station to pull the program. This, together with Johnson's denial that the coal company was demanding a seven-day work schedule and his claim that the union has not requested negotiations, set off a flurry of letters from miners to the editors of the two papers.

In the same issue, the *'Little Chicago' Review* printed the company's proposed Memorandum of Understanding, a rider attached to the contract. It states, "The parties have agreed that the employer may establish flexible work assignments at the operation and all related facilities...in order to provide continuous operations seven (7) days a week.... The employer shall be entitled to operate its mine continuously. The basic workweek shall be established by the employer."

Hoping to demoralize the strikers, the two local newspapers carried a letter by UMWA member LaVerne Marchione, one of the four line-crossers. In it, she says she went back to work to be able to keep her adoptive son. "The union could make something happen if they wanted to. But they're not!" Marchione wrote. "We all know nothing is happening to get us back to work. In the



Larry Linville

June 30 expanded picket line at P&M's Kemmerer mine in Wyoming. Miners are resisting coal company's attempts to impose longer hours and cut medical benefits.

event of the mine being shut down, this is an all too real and close possibility. Don't let that happen!... Tell your union you're going back to work with or without them. Turn it around, make them decide if they really are there for you! Come back to work! Provide for your families. Stand up for yourselves!"

In an obvious attempt to smear the strikers, the *'Little Chicago' Review* ran a front-page picture of a "jackrock" beside the interview with UMWA international president Roberts. The caption under the photo read, "Motorists are advised to be on the lookout for these spiked devices, caltrops, which were dispersed along the road to the power plant and BTI, most likely by someone on the miners' side of the strike issue. Sergeant Scott Miller of the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office said damage done to a vehicle...plus lost time, etc., added up to a felony charge."

Strikers report harassment of the unionists by the local police and sheriff's department. At the June 30 support action in the downtown triangle park, cops threatened to arrest some of the protesters for disturbing the peace because passing motorists were honking in support. Several strikers said company people have been visiting shop and restaurant owners in the area. According to Local 1307 president Elbert Harmon, company people tell the store owners that "if they continue to support the UMWA they will discontinue affiliation and business with their stores."

Support grows for strikers

Support from the community is evident from the number of pro-union signs and banners one sees when driving into Kemmerer and nearby Diamondville. On June 27, a delegation from USWA Local 15320 at General Chemical, a soda ash deep mine near Green River, Wyoming, came to the strike headquarters with cash and food donations for Local 1307's new food pantry. The strikers held a lunch time rally with the Steelworkers. Representatives from

USWA Local 13214, which organizes the FMC soda ash mine near Green River, also donated cash and joined strikers on the picket line.

On June 30 Ed Hinkle, a member of UMWA Local 1984 from Rangely, Colorado, traveled with his daughter Starla Hinkle, an oil pipeline worker, to present strikers with a check and letter of support from his union local. Hinkle works at Blue Mountain Energy's Deserado mine, where they went through a 76-day strike last year. Hinkle told those at strike headquarters, "We heard what they [P&M] were demanding. If they get away with it we'll be next."

Hinkle told the *Militant*, "The key to winning this thing is organizing solidarity. We're discussing in my local and the Hayden, Colorado, local doing a food drive and we'll come up with other ways to support this fight. I'll report to my union local and we're going to discuss what more we can do to expand solidarity." Ed and Starla Hinkle joined the picket line and support activities in downtown Kemmerer.

Local 1307 president Harmon reported, "We have gotten support from UMWA locals in Utah, North Dakota, Colorado, and Wyoming. People from the community who have lived here all their lives have stopped by to donate cash or to the food pantry. Other unions have sent support and walked our picket line. Just recently a national appeal has gone out to all AFL-CIO-affiliated unions to organize solidarity with our fights at McKinley and here at Kemmerer."

Striker Matt Krall, a miner for 27 years, explained, "The company thinks they are in a stronger position since four members crossed the picket line. They don't realize it, but they created a stronger union here. The rally we held yesterday is an example of this. When the four crossed the picket line you could tell people got a little worried. But when the Steelworkers from the soda ash mines brought that support it helped change that. The support and the rally we did was a big help to turn the tide."

Krall added, "Any union or organization that wants to help us out, we are asking for and welcome your support. We want you to come to Kemmerer with your support. This fight is everybody's fight."

Letters of support or contributions and requests for more information can be addressed to: Kemmerer Miners Relief Fund, c/o UMWA Local 1307, P.O. Box 261, Diamondville, WY 83116-0261 or call (307) 877-1443.

—YOUNG SOCIALISTS AROUND THE WORLD— Twin Cities YS builds solidarity with labor battles

The Young Socialists is an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information write to the Young Socialists, P.O. Box 33, Times Square Post Office, New York, NY 10108, or call (212) 695-1809, or send an e-mail to: young_socialists@hotmail.com

BY JOHN HAND
AND ANNA HARRIS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—The Young Socialists chapter has been actively building solidarity with the deepening labor struggles that are taking place here. These struggles include the union-organizing drive at Dakota Premium Foods, the strike by more than 1,400 hotel and restaurant workers, and the fight by 450 Teamsters Local 792 strikers at Pepsi-Cola. These fights have strengthened each other and given militant workers a chance to link up with one another. The YS has also taken this opportunity to further orient ourselves to the working class and help build a revolutionary youth organization.

Several teams have gone out to the picket lines at Pepsi-Cola in Burnsville and to several hotels in the area during the strike by the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees union. Socialists workers and youth from Canada joined the teams for one week to get a feel for the depth and interconnection of these different struggles and to be part of their fights. We have campaigned with the *Militant* in working-class neighborhoods, on street corners, university campuses, and at several plant gates. By using the *Militant*, our teams actively build solidarity with the fights taking place and bring broader politics to the fighters themselves.

On June 23 alone, two teams sold to Steelworkers on their way to work. We then walked the picket line of striking hotel workers, who were quick to explain their fight and gave us signs so we could join in the picket. Another team went to the university campus where they sold four *Militants* to students in summer session classes.

Our team later went to the Pepsi picket lines where the workers were excited to see the *Militant's* coverage of their fight and

passed the paper from one person to the next. One worker who bought the *Militant* has been in several roving pickets. These teams of strikers follow the scab trucks and throw up a picket line wherever they deliver. We spotted a team of roving pickets at a convenience store in St. Paul, and the hotel strikers reported that the team of striking Teamsters had visited their picket line the day before. All in all, we sold seven copies of the *Militant* at the Pepsi picket line.

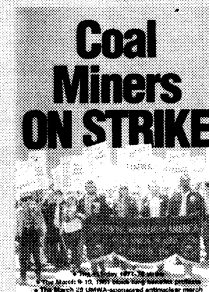
Through participating in these struggles, the Young Socialists have built the YS summer school sessions in the Twin Cities. These classes have taken up such things as the necessity of centering our politics in the industrial unions, why revolutionary-minded youth should orient to the working class, and why working people must build a proletarian party.

The sessions have been enriched by the militancy and combativeness shown by the Dakota Premium, Pepsi Cola, and hotel workers, and have been attended by workers, students, and young people interested in the Young Socialists.

for further reading...

Coal Miners on Strike

Articles on:
the 111-day 1977-78 strike, the 1981 strike and the contract rejection vote, the United Mine Workers of America and the fight against nuclear power, the fight for health benefits and compensation to black lung victims, and more \$5



Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12

New Jersey cops indicted for killing Black man

BY LEE OLESON
AND JANE HARRIS

ORANGE, New Jersey—Five cops were indicted here June 21 in connection with the death of Earl Faison, a 27-year-old Black man who was killed on April 11, 1999, while in the custody of the Orange police. The cops, released on bail, were indicted on federal charges of violating the young man's civil rights.

Fifty supporters of the fight for justice for Faison gathered here for a press conference the following day. Among the speakers were Earl Williams, Earl Faison's father; Larry Hamm of the People's Organization for Progress; and a representative of Black Cops Against Police Brutality.

Williams expressed dismay that no murder charges and no state charges had been filed. He called for protests in Trenton, the state capital. Williams told the press, "We

like a little ray of sunshine, [but] we have a long way to go before justice is done."

Faison was one of four men arrested separately during a police rampage following the killing of Orange policewoman Joyce Carnegie on April 8, 1999.

Orange cops kicked, beat, pepper-sprayed, and robbed Faison, then lied about the incident. Another man, Condell Woodson, subsequently pleaded guilty to the killing of the police officer and was sentenced to life in prison.

The five cops, four of them white and one Black, were not indicted for Faison's death but for violating his civil rights. Faison, who was asthmatic, went into cardiac arrest soon after he was pepper-sprayed. A preliminary autopsy found that he died suddenly "due to acute exacerbation of bronchial asthma."

Federal authorities have declined to specify the cause of death. A full medical

examiner's report is not yet public, and U.S. Attorney Robert Cleary said the investigation is continuing.

According to the indictment, as Faison lay on the sidewalk, hands handcuffed behind his back, one cop kicked him so that he was unable to walk, then another threw him into the back seat of a police car where he was beaten by two other cops.

Although Faison was injured, the two cops drove past the Hospital Center in Orange and went to police headquarters, where they took him in through a back stairwell, the indictment said. There he was robbed and pepper-sprayed in the nose and mouth while still handcuffed. He died shortly afterwards.

Within days of Faison's death, 100 people protested in front of Orange police headquarters demanding justice. A week later 300 demonstrated there to renew their de-

mands. Over the last year, public protests in the Faison case have continued, uniting with efforts to win justice in other cases of police brutality in New Jersey.

Protests have also demanded prosecution of the killers of Stanton Crew, a Black man fatally shot by cops on Route 80 on June 2, 1999. In December 1999, a grand jury cleared two state troopers and two local police officers of criminal wrongdoing in the Crew case.

On the June 2 anniversary of the killing of Crew, a car caravan drove from Newark through Orange to Morristown to the home of his family to demand justice in both the Crew and Faison cases.

Lee Oleson is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union. Jane Harris is a member of the United Transportation Union.

Good response to socialist petitioning in Washington

BY DON PANE

WASHINGTON—Some 850 people signed to place the Socialist Workers presidential and vice-presidential candidates on the ballot in the first five days of the petitioning drive that campaign supporters here are carrying out. The socialist candidates are James Harris for U.S. president and Margaret Trowe for vice president.

Socialist campaigners plan to collect well over the 3,320 signatures required by the Board of Elections by the August 15 deadline.

Fresh from a campaign rally in New York City launching the national presidential ticket, Washington supporters began their efforts June 28 at a rally in front of the White House to protest the U.S. government's resumption of bombing practice on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques. A small crowd gathered in the light rain holding signs and chanting their opposition to the bombing. Five demonstrators signed the petitions; three people purchased the *Militant* and two others *Perspectiva Mundial*, the Socialist Workers campaign publications in English and Spanish, respectively.

The petitioners then moved to campaign on a public sidewalk near a working-class neighborhood known as Mt. Pleasant where many Spanish-speaking workers live. A sign in front of the campaign literature table urged passersby to sign to place a socialist worker on the ballot.

Juan Ortiz, a young Mexican-American, approached the table and said he has been looking for a communist organization, commenting that he admires Cuban revolutionary leaders Fidel Castro and Ernesto Che

Guevara. He purchased the book *Capitalism's World Disorder* by Jack Barnes and a subscription to the *Militant*. He took a petition and some campaign literature to circulate among his co-workers and friends.

The next day, petitioners went to a public transportation center that workers use to get to and from work, where almost 200 people signed petitions. Anita Bradley, a clerical worker at the Board of Education didn't sign the petition right away, but first took time to read the flyer. She decided to sign but asked, "Why should the U.S. get out of Sierra Leone?"

She agreed when petitioner Sam Manuel explained that the same government that brutalizes working people in the United States to protect big-business interests is responsible for brutalizing and enforcing the exploitation of fellow working people in countries such as Sierra Leone. Manuel is the socialist candidate for delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives; his campaign supporters will begin petitioning for a ballot spot July 7.

Xavier Lucky, wearing his army fatigues, stopped to sign. He read the flyer and said in reaction to the slogan for the right to abortion, "Women should make the decisions that affect their bodies."

Clarence Atkins, a young construction worker, recently moved to this area and got his first union job. After clarifying the pro-union stance of the campaign he readily signed. He explained that he now works with workers who hail from Eritrea. "I didn't know how bad things are around the world," he said. "But this is not a free country. A working person here doesn't get anything



Militant
Sam Manuel, Socialist Workers candidate for Washington, D.C., delegate to House of Representatives, collects signatures for presidential campaign.

without the blood and sweat of our work. And the companies are pushing to drive down wages and downsize."

On the third day, petitioners set up a campaign literature table in a working-class district at midday and returned to the transportation center in the late afternoon. Sabur Rubas didn't sign right away but took a leaflet to read while waiting for his bus to come. He came back and said he agreed with the program but had a question on the socialist position that workers should pay no taxes. He said he believed rich people didn't pay "their share" of taxes, but thought everyone should contribute to society's needs.

The socialist campaign supporters replied that capitalism is a system based on a hand-

ful of parasitic billionaire families exploiting the labor power of working people, who produce all wealth. The regressive tax setup is one aspect of how the employers through their government extract as much as they can from the value produced by working people, and it shows that workers and the wealthy rulers have opposing class interests.

Socialist campaigners met every evening to turn in the petitions, discuss the day's experience, and make plans for the following day. During the five days, socialists sold 25 copies of the *Militant*, 5 copies of *Perspectiva Mundial*, 1 *Militant* subscription, and 2 Pathfinder titles.

Janice Lynn contributed to this article.

Socialist Workers slate of candidates for 2000 elections

Below are the Socialist Workers candidates announced so far.

ALABAMA

U.S. Congress in the 7th C.D.: **Susan LaMont**, 53, is a steelworker and member of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 2122.



Militant/Aaron Armstrong
Argiris Malapanis, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida.

FLORIDA

U.S. Senate: **Argiris Malapanis**, 42, is a garment worker in a nonunion shop.

Miami-Dade County Commission District 3: **Rachele Fruit**, 50, works at an aerospace plant and is a member of the International Association of Machinists (IAM).

Mayor of Miami/Dade County: **Rollande Girard**, 36, is a garment worker at an organized shop.

U.S. Congress in the 17th C.D.: **Michael Martinez**, 18, is a garment worker in an unorganized shop and a Young Socialists member.

GEORGIA

U.S. Congress in the 4th C.D.: **Paul Cornish**, 25, is a garment worker and member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE).

U.S. Congress in the 5th C.D.: **Dan Fein**, 55, is a textile worker at an unorganized plant.

ILLINOIS

U.S. Congress in the 4th C.D.: **Elizabeth Stone**, 61, is an airline worker and member of IAM Local 1487.

U.S. Congress in the 5th C.D.: **Lisa Potash**, 48, is a garment worker and member of UNITE Local 39-C.

NEW JERSEY

U.S. Senate: **Nancy Rosenstock**, 51, is a garment worker and member of UNITE.

U.S. Congress in the 13th C.D.: **Kari Sachs**, 35, works at Ford and is a member of the United Auto Workers union.

U.S. Congress in the 10th C.D.: **Maurice Williams**, 43, is a staff writer for the *Militant* newspaper.

OHIO

U.S. Senate: **Michael Fitzsimmons**, 40, is a garment worker and member of UNITE.

PENNSYLVANIA

U.S. Congress in the 1st C.D.: **John P. Crysdale**, 21, is a textile worker and a member of UNITE.

TEXAS

U.S. Senate: **Lea Sherman**, 51, is a meat packer in an unorganized plant.

U.S. Congress in the 18th C.D.: **Dave Ferguson**, 44, is a sewing machine operator in an unorganized shop.

U.S. Congress in the 22nd C.D.: **Dean Cook**, 37, is a machinist and a locked-out worker and member of the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers Union at Crown Petroleum.

WASHINGTON STATE



Militant/Aaron Armstrong
Lea Sherman, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate in Texas.

U.S. Senate: **Scott Breen**, 48, is a production worker at Boeing and member of the IAM.

Governor: **Chris Rayson**, 50, is a rail worker and member of the United Transportation Union (UTU).

WASHINGTON, D.C.

D.C. Delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives: **Sam Manuel**, 50, is a rail worker and member of the UTU.

Hotel workers tell how they beat back INS

BY FRANCISCO PÉREZ

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—One of the best-known recent working-class struggles in this area is the unprecedented victory by immigrant workers at Holiday Inn Express against both their union-busting employer and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

Last October, during a union-organizing drive at the hotel, the INS arrested eight Mexican-born union supporters and sought to deport them, and the company fired them. The eight workers decided to take on their boss and the INS from their jail cells. They received the backing of their union, the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union (HERE), as well as their church, the Holy Rosary Church in Minneapolis.

The workers defeated their boss in an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission case, with the Centro Legal Inc., a non-profit organization, providing legal representation. In January the Holiday Inn Express agreed to pay each worker \$8,000 for workplace abuses.

In addition, seven of the eight workers won a reprieve from the INS April 25 allowing them to stay and work in the United States for two years. The INS refused to include an eighth worker, Anado Flores, in the agreement because he appeared on INS records as having previously been deported and reentered the country without proper documentation.

When the victory for the immigrant workers was announced, more than 100 cheering supporters were on hand outside the immigration court in the suburb of Bloomington, Minnesota.

Workers tell their story

At a June 12 march and rally organized by meatpacking workers at Dakota Premium Foods in South St. Paul, two of the Holiday Inn Express workers who joined the action



Hotel workers join June 12 rally by meat packers fighting for a union at Dakota Premium Foods. Immigrant workers at Holiday Inn Express won victory both against their union-busting employer and *migra* cops.

in solidarity, Rosa Albino and Evertina Albino, told their story to the *Militant*. The packinghouse workers are engaged in a battle against their employer to organize themselves into United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789.

"It all started because we decided we had to do something about the treatment we were getting on the job," said Evertina Albino. "They would give us too many rooms to clean, we would get no breaks, and the supervisor treated us poorly. They would give us 15 minutes to clean each room."

"We would have to go get our own towels and sheets, and if they weren't clean, we would have to wait for them," explained Rosa Albino. "The supervisor would try to

punch out our time cards if we didn't finish on time—even if we started late because he hadn't shown up on time." Rosa is Evertina's younger sister. She had been working at the Holiday Inn Express for about a year, and Evertina for four months.

"And they wouldn't give us uniforms, only a T-shirt," Rosa Albino added scornfully.

"We were upset," she said. "We weren't treated like other people on the job. They treated us like that because we are Mexican, and we wanted equality."

"We had a co-worker that had worked in a hotel where there was a union," Evertina explained when asked how the union began to be discussed. "And she started talking

about it at work. Then we met a union organizer and we began to have meetings, being careful in the process."

The boss became aware of the ongoing organizing drive and arranged for the INS to come to the hotel to arrest the immigrant workers.

"The boss told us we had a meeting at 10:30 a.m.," Evertina Albino said. "We went to the meeting expecting to hear a lecture from the boss. The meeting would not start, but he kept us there saying an interpreter for the meeting was late. A short time later he walked in the door—with the immigration officers."

The two sisters reported that all the workers, including another sister, were handcuffed and taken to a van. "They took us to a place two hours away from Bloomington. They took all our belongings—earrings, rings, hair suspenders, everything. And we had to put on orange uniforms," Evertina said.

"They put us in a cell that was cold and filthy," said Rosa. "The food was bad and we each had to sit next to the toilet in our cell."

"Our sister got sick in that place. She was sick for two days. We waited for medicine for 12 hours," Evertina explained. "Seven days after they arrested us, they brought us to the INS offices in Minneapolis and made us sign [a voluntary leave form] to leave the country, because we had to pay a \$6,000 dollar fine otherwise."

The Albino sisters reported that while they were in jail at the INS facilities, Father Edward Leahy, from the Holy Rosary Church in Minneapolis, contacted the workers. He told them they did not have to leave the country and that the union would pay the fine. "We knew Father Edward because we sang in the church's choir. We talked about it and decided we would stay."

At the June 12 Dakota Premium rally, several workers were introduced to Rosa and Evertina Albino, including some of the leaders of the union-organizing drive at the packing plant.

Miguel Olvera, a worker in the boning department at Dakota, told Rosa and Evertina Albino that he was grateful "for your participation in the protest and for your example. We all know about your struggle."

"I tell people we shouldn't take abuse," said Evertina as the march began, "because if you don't speak up, you won't be able to get anything. We are all human beings."

"Besides," said Rosa Albino, "if we were not here they wouldn't get their work done. They hire us because we are good workers."

Rubber workers in Oklahoma make progress in drive to organize a union

BY PAUL DUNN

ARDMORE, Oklahoma—"The company's strategies all make sense. None of them are good for the working person." This was the reaction of Danny Fancher to the company's attacks on workers at the Michelin tire plant here, and what persuaded him to support the current drive to organize into the United Steelworkers of America. Fancher is an inspector with 26 years' seniority at this former Uniroyal Goodrich plant.

"During the last organizing drive I was on the other side," Fancher explained. "I was a member of the company committee to drive the union out of town. What convinced me we need a union was that the company kept cutting jobs and replacing them with contractors. Security, sanitation, and half the warehouse jobs are all contracted out." He said the company is "eliminating all jobs that older workers could hold as they approach retirement."

The plant of nearly 1,600 workers is one of the largest employers in this part of Oklahoma, midway between Dallas and Oklahoma City.

Michelin bought out Uniroyal Goodrich in 1990. Of the former Uniroyal Goodrich plants, three were organized by the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) in Tuscaloosa and Opelika, Alabama, and in Woodburn, Indiana. These are currently the only Michelin plants with a union in the United States.

The history of unionization campaigns at Ardmore goes back to 1976. The latest organizing drive began in September 1999; the process of collecting union authorization cards started in February. Well over the percentage required by law to file for a representation election has been collected at this point, but with 100-200 workers hired by the company in the past few weeks, union supporters are targeting this layer of young new hires to beef up their margin.

Union supporters sign up new hires

In face of company attempts to restrict organizing activity in the plant, union supporters have taken their campaign into the community and surrounding towns as they

seek opportunities to sign up prospective union members.

Danny Fancher, one of the organizers, prepared to attend this evening's Pioneer Days celebration in Lone Grove by wearing his union hat and numerous buttons pinned to his shirt and to the sling his arm was in from an on-the-job injury. He explained, "I go there looking like this to let everyone know where I stand." The last six cards were secured at a swimming party that usually follows the last night shift in a crew's rotating schedule. "Four of the six were from new hires," Fancher stated.

The fight to get recognition for the Steelworkers union in 1995 was met with a vicious campaign by the company and the local capitalist class. The Ardmore Chamber of Commerce sponsored an "All Out" public meeting at the city auditorium, with publicity broadcast over local radio stations. Of the nearly 100 people who attended, 70 drove down to the weekly meeting of union supporters and organized an antiunion rally outside.

The tables have turned in the current organizing drive. Attempts to organize union busting pickets have fizzled, despite the company allowing employees four hours off work to attend antiunion rallies and the issuing of three editions of antiunion T-shirts and hats.

The first week, only 26 managers, mostly retired, picketed the union meeting, and they were met by 80 union supporters who chanted "What do we want? Union! When do we want it? Now!"

"Twenty-five showed up the following week. Only two came the third week. They didn't even bother taking their signs out of the truck," said Kenny Potts, a mold changer with 27 years seniority and a veteran of the previous organizing drives.

Potts pointed to the negotiations between the USWA and Bridgestone/Firestone, whose contract expired April 23, as a concern among many union supporters. Although there is no national "pattern" bargaining, these talks are selected as a target that will set the standard for the tire industry.

"A favorable outcome in their negotia-

tions will really help us," Potts said. "In the last organizing drive the company used the long strike at Bridgestone/Firestone against us here." The demands on the table by Bridgestone/Firestone include adding five years to the 30-year-and-out early retirement, eliminating two weeks of vacation, and introducing the hiring of temporary workers.

Members of USWA Local 998L from the Bridgestone/Firestone plant in Oklahoma City have participated in the past several organizing drives in Ardmore, according to Potts.

A weekly newsletter called *The Workers Voice* has been produced since February. It includes signed articles from union supporters and humorous cartoons depicting union solidarity and company deceit. Weekly women's meetings are held three times during the day on Tuesdays, and general meetings three times on Wednesdays to accommodate the various shifts.

The company attempted to depict the union as outdated and incapable of delivering by using the saying "This dog can't hunt" in its propaganda. In response, union supporters came up with a new logo for their T-shirts, which depict a muscular guard dog defending union gains such as pensions and retirement.

Enlisting the help of other unions in the area has been central to the union supporters' strategy. Labor groups have been contacted to enlist two workers from every local to meet any of their neighbors who work at the plant and explain the benefits of union membership.

At their April 26 meetings, supporters heard locked-out Kaiser worker Sam Horvath from Gramercy, Louisiana, talk about their fight. The company used the Kaiser lockout in its antiunion video. Horvath answered questions and won the support of the Ardmore fighters. In solidarity, 25 rubber workers took a bus down to the May 23-24 protest actions in Houston in support of the Kaiser Steelworkers.

A solidarity action is in the works for the end of summer. Union cards will be filed with the National Labor Relations Board close to that time.

U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War

by Jack Barnes

The Communist Strategy of Party Building Today

by Mary-Alice Waters

Socialism: A Viable Option

by José Ramón

Balaguer

Young Socialists Manifesto

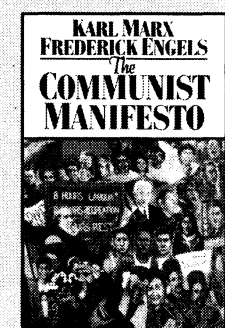
In *New International* no. 11. \$14



The Communist Manifesto

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Meeting in Havana calls world youth festival in Algeria

BY ARIS HARAS
AND JAKE PERASSO

HAVANA—“We stand for an anti-imperialist festival, an eminently political one, that will provide an appropriate setting for denouncing what neoliberalism, that is capitalism, offers the new generations in terms of jobs, education, equality, and democracy,” said Yosvani Díaz Romero. “We stand for a festival that will address the problems youth and students of our planet face and how to go about changing the world.”

Díaz Romero, president of the Continental Latin American and Caribbean Students Organization (OCLAE) and a leader of the Union of Young Communists (UJC) of Cuba, was speaking here June 20 at the opening session of the first international meeting to prepare the 15th World Festival of Youth and Students.

More than 100 representatives of 73 youth organizations from 45 countries attended the June 20-22 gathering. Participants decided to call the next world youth festival for August 2001 in Algeria. It will be the first such festival to take place on the African continent.

The gathering was preceded by an expanded meeting of the Coordinating Council of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY). The Union of Young Communists (UJC) of Cuba and WFDY then hosted the broader youth conference. WFDY, with some 160 affiliates in more than 100 countries, is the main international youth organization that has sponsored the youth festivals.

In addition to the UJC and Federation of University Students (FEU) of Cuba, participants from Latin America and the Caribbean included those from the Communist Youth of Colombia; October 8 Revolutionary Youth, Union of Young Communists, and Union of Young Socialists of Brazil; Youth of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front of El Salvador; National Party Youth of Jamaica; Youth of the Popular Socialist Party of Mexico; Communist Youth of Uruguay; and Patriotic Front, Communist Youth, and Federation of University Students of Venezuela.

From North America, the Young Socialists and youth and students commission of the Communist Party in Canada; and the Young Communist League, Young Socialists, and United States Students Association in the United States sent representatives.

Delegates from Africa came from Algeria, Eritrea, Libya, Morocco, Namibia, Western Sahara, and South Africa. Besides the General Union of Palestinian Students, most other groups that sent delegates from the Middle East were affiliated to Communist Parties in Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, and Syria. Asian delegates came from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), India, Japan, Nepal, and Vietnam.

Participants from Europe included representatives of youth groups affiliated to

Communist Parties in Germany, Greece, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Russia, and Spain. In addition, the Proletarian Anticapitalist Movement and Friends of Algeria from Italy; Rebelle, the youth group of the Workers Party of Belgium; Young Socialists in the United Kingdom; and Youth of the Socialist Party of Serbia, and Socialist Youth Movement of Yugoslavia sent delegates.

Debate on anti-imperialist struggle

Much of the discussion and debate at the meeting centered on the character and the main slogan for the upcoming world youth festival. The Latin American regional delegation proposed early on in the discussion that the central slogan be “For anti-imperialist struggle, peace, and solidarity.”

Several other delegations—mainly the representatives of the two youth groups from Algeria, which are politically affiliated with the government in Algiers, the Movement of Communist Youth of France, and the Pan African Youth Movement based in Senegal—objected to organizing a festival that has an explicitly anti-imperialist character.

Aziz Abdelaziz, general secretary of the National Union of Youth of Algeria, said his organization had strong reservations about approving a slogan like the one proposed by the Latin American delegates. Abdelaziz said that after consultations with various youth organizations in northern Africa, it is clear to him that a number of progressive youth groups would not go to the festival if the slogan included an explicit reference to anti-imperialism. He was inclined toward another proposal, made by a delegate from the October 8 Revolutionary Youth of Brazil, that the slogan be “Against neoliberal globalization, for peace, and solidarity.”

A large majority of delegates did not agree with this approach. A number, such as Iraklis Tsavdaridis, president of WFDY and leader of the Communist Youth of Greece, said keeping anti-imperialism in the main slogan was necessary to safeguard “the traditions of the festival movement.” The first 13 festivals initiated by WFDY took place when the federation was dominated by groups that looked to Moscow for political leadership.

Other delegates who supported this view said more young people around the world are involved in struggles against imperialist domination. Israel Smith, representing the Young Communist League of the United States, for example, pointed to demonstrations in Seattle last year and in Davos, Switzerland, against the World Trade Organization (WTO) as a “hallmark of the progressive youth movement.”

Other delegates were more oriented toward the class struggle around the world. Maureen Hinda of the SWAPO Party Youth League of Namibia said U.S. imperialism above all, and to a lesser degree French,

300,000 rally in Cuba against U.S. embargo



A huge crowd rallied in Manzanillo July 1 to protest the U.S. embargo and the Cuban Adjustment Act, which promotes risky attempts to emigrate to the United States outside legal channels. “Whoever is the next president of the United States should know that here is Cuba with its ideas, its example and the rebelliousness of its people; that all aggression and all attempts to strangle us or bring us to our knees will be defeated,” said President Fidel Castro in a message to the rally.

British, and Portuguese imperialism, are intensifying the exploitation of peoples in the Third World, especially in Africa, under the guise of “development.” She pointed to the example of the internationalist aid of Cuban volunteers in Angola in contributing to Namibia’s independence and in aiding other national liberation struggles in southern Africa.

Anne Howie, representing the Young Socialists in the United Kingdom, argued for condemning all aggression by the imperialist powers, including military intervention by London and Washington in Sierra Leone under UN cover. Hwang Won Jun from the DPRK said that Washington continued to characterize his nation as a “terrorist” country for daring to stand up to imperialism, even after announcing it may drop some economic sanctions against the DPRK.

Jake Perasso of the Young Socialists in the United States pointed to growing resistance by working people in the United States—from the union-organizing struggle at Dakota Premium Foods in Minnesota, to the striking miners, to the 20,000 rallying in Los Angeles for immigrant rights, and mobilizations in the South against the Confederate flag and for affirmative action—a resistance that is evident in other imperialist countries and in Latin America. These bode well for winning young people to a revolutionary perspective and for attracting youth to a festival that has a clear anti-imperialist character.

The YS leader also said that the character of the anti-WTO protests in Seattle was nationalist and reactionary. Perasso and other

YS representatives said the fight for national self-determination from Quebec to Puerto Rico to Ireland is at the center of the struggle against imperialism, which is not as powerful as it seems.

The last day of the meeting a compromise was reached among the various political forces represented. “Let’s globalize the struggle for peace, solidarity, development, against imperialism!” was the slogan for the next world youth festival approved by consensus.

An appeal to the youth and students of the world was issued by the meeting calling the festival in Algiers. “World peace and security are threatened today by imperialist domination, intervention, and conflicts,” the communiqué stated. “People’s basic rights are deprived by neoliberal policies. Exploitation and repression are worldwide. The global struggle of all democratic, progressive and anti-imperialist forces is urgently needed.”

Discussion on 1997 festival in Cuba

The appeal also stated that “the struggle of youth and students in the world to face these challenges was strengthened by the success of the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students held in Havana, Cuba, in 1997.” Substantial discussion on this point was held during the meeting.

A number of delegates pointed to the success of the 1997 youth festival in Cuba in being nonexclusionary. It was open to many political tendencies and organizations that are part of the struggle against imperialism around the world but were excluded from previous festivals—from Sinn Féin Youth in Ireland to supporters of Quebec independence in Canada to the Movement of Landless Rural Workers in Brazil. That festival embraced delegations even from countries that had more than one national preparatory committee organizing participation. And it was dedicated to Ernesto Che Guevara, the Argentine-born leader of the Cuban revolution.

Several other delegates, however, pointed to some of these features as problems not to be repeated in the upcoming festival. Anke Dzewas of the Communist Party youth of Germany said, for example, that this openness led to “chaos” at the festival in Cuba. She proposed that only one national preparatory committee be permitted per country, which should go through a process of selection in determining delegates, the number of whom should be limited by a cap in each country.

These questions were not decided at the Havana meeting. They will be discussed further and settled, along with the agenda, program, and exact dates of the 15th world youth festival, at the next international preparatory meeting set for New Delhi, India, the third weekend of November.

Volunteers needed to help post ‘PM’ web site

BY PATRICK O’NEILL

Since its June 26 issue, themilitant.com has appeared in a new, more attractive design for more effective use. And *Perspectiva Mundial* magazine is ready to roll out its new web site. The editors of the Spanish-language socialist monthly are now appealing for volunteers to help post the monthly web edition.

Additional volunteers are also needed for preparing the weekly online version of the *Militant*.

The design of themilitant.com, which has appeared since September 27, has been upgraded, incorporating more navigation tools and other features, and using more color and graphics to eye-catching effect.

“Just as important as the appearance of the site is the improved ease of use, especially for new readers,” said Patricia Smith in Chicago, who helped design the new site. The front page and feature articles, as well as the pages listing articles, editorials, cal-

endar notices, and columns, are all one click away from the home page. Several of these links are integrated as buttons into the masthead. Others are arrayed in a simple navigation bar at the left of the home page.

“The new site is more interactive,” Smith continued. “You can easily use it to submit standardized notices on Militant Labor Forums and send in announcements of other political events of interest to workers and farmers. And *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* distributors can use it to order their regular bundles.” All Militant Labor Forum and calendar announcements sent to the *Militant* through the web site will now be available on that site until the day of the event.

Militant editor Martin Koppel reports that socialist workers and young socialists around the world are already taking advantage of these online features.

The online version of the *Militant* will continue to be improved as it is used. Peter

Link, webmaster of themilitant.com, explained that “as we develop the site, we are working to maintain its accessibility for sight-impaired readers and others who use specialized browsers—including text-only browsers, as well as international readers who often have slow or expensive Internet access.”

More volunteers are needed for the work of converting each week’s articles into files to be posted onto the web. The paper’s editors will start posting articles—in advance of the newsprint edition, as they are edited for publication—in the “new and in the next issue” section of themilitant.com.

The web edition of *Perspectiva Mundial* will be welcomed by working-class fighters in the United States whose first language is Spanish. And it will be especially valuable for readers of the socialist press throughout Latin America, who often have to wait for weeks to receive the magazine

Continued on page 12

Striking Teamsters stand up to bosses in Minneapolis area

BY BILL DUFFY

BURNSVILLE, Minnesota—More than 450 workers at Pepsi Bottling Group's bottling plant here have been on strike since June 11. The workers, members of Teamsters Local 792, are striking for a wage increase, improved pensions, and a halt to rising health-care costs. The strikers include drivers, production workers, and merchandisers.

Work is physically demanding and pickets report that many of them work very long hours, some up to 16 hours a day. The strikers are fighting for a pension plan that would allow them to retire before the age of 62 without any penalties.

The strike began when workers rejected the company's "final" contract offer by a vote of 364 to 14. Workers said that in the week before the contract vote, Pepsi brought in private security guards from Huffmeister Security in an attempt to intimidate the unionists.

Dick Perron, a filler operator on the production line, said, "I've never seen intimi-

dation like this in my life." He said the security guards were at all the gates and were always "just trying to stare you down."

Perron explained also that Pepsi started bringing in management personnel from other bottling plants to work as strikebreakers. The managers would go from worker to worker asking them how to run the machines.

When one manager asked Perron how to run the filler operator, he said, "I'm not comfortable telling you anything." Most workers, he said, refused to tell the bosses how to run the machines.

Local 792 also organizes more than 500 workers at a nearby Coca-Cola bottling plant, as well as the workers at several beer delivery companies. The Coca-Cola workers just approved a new contract, but union officials have not yet released details.

Strikers report that Pepsi production is down. A survey by the June 23 Saint Paul *Pioneer Press* of eight convenience stores and one drug store "found that most [stores] had experienced dwindling Pepsi supplies



Militant/Dennis Drake

Pickets at Pepsi bottling plant. Strikers also dispatch roving pickets around town.

during the past 10 days. A couple of store managers said they ran out of Pepsi products for a short time." Strikers are hoping to affect the production and distribution of Pepsi products just as the demand for them increases during the hot summer months.

The strikers picket the Pepsi plant 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at all five plant gates. They report that none of the union members who walked off the job have crossed the picket line. Besides the picket

line at the plant, the union also sends out roving pickets who throw up picket lines at the stores to which the scab trucks deliver.

The picket lines at the plant are lively. When a scab truck tries to leave, it is immediately surrounded by strikers who try to persuade the driver not to cross the line. While this is happening, other Teamsters collect information on the truck and pass it on via radio to the roving pickets so they can identify the trucks and follow them.

The union has called a boycott against all products made and distributed at the Burnsville Pepsi bottling plant. Products from the plant are distributed throughout the upper Midwest.

One worker said that about 20 strikers a day have gone to a food festival sponsored by Pepsi to pass out leaflets on the boycott and talk to other working people about the strike. The festival, called "A Taste of Minnesota," is taking place on the grounds of the state capitol.

Strikers report they have been visited by Northwest Airlines workers, United Auto Workers members, beer delivery drivers, and hotel workers who recently concluded a strike. One striking Teamster said, "It takes us by surprise, the amount of support we get from unions and the public."

"We will stay out until we win," is a conviction commonly expressed by striking Teamsters on the picket line.

Minnesota hotel strikers: 'We became stronger'

BY ROBERTA BLACK

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—Striking members of Local 17 of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees union in the Twin Cities voted to accept a contract proposal July 28. The workers involved in the strike are employed at seven hotels—the Radisson South, Thunderbird, Hilton, Regal, Marquette, Holiday Inn, and Crowne Plaza. Workers from the Sheraton and Best Western hotels are part of the same bargaining unit but did not walk off the job.

Workers who took part in the strike felt a sense of victory and greater confidence as they went up against big corporations. Kathy Kendle, a housekeeper at the Hilton, stated, "I have become a stronger person because I fought against the hotel for demands we all deserve."

The new contract includes a 20 to 26 percent pay increase over the next five years. The 26 percent pay hike is primarily for the lowest-paid workers, such as banquet servers and housekeeping, while the 20 percent increase is for the bartenders and other workers.

Workers also will receive a 75-cent-an-hour increase over five years in employer contributions to their medical insurance fund. In addition, the contract establishes a fund to provide medical benefits to members of the families of the hotel workers. Before the strike only the hotel workers themselves received any medical benefits.

The new contract covers 1,450 workers. Union officials reported that a big majority of the workers voted for the contract, but did not give figures. Some workers thought that if they had stayed out longer, the strikers could have won more.

Most of the hotel owners stated that they were not affected by the strike. Many workers explained, however, that the hotels were deeply hurt by the strike.

Jerome House, a banquet server at the Hilton, said, "The city was forcing the hotels to come up with an agreement. They needed us back desperately, because the work was not being done right." House was referring to the fact that capitalist politicians in the Twin Cities put pressure on the hotels and the strikers to come to an agreement

because of its effect on business in the area.

A worker at the Thunderbird Hotel told the *Militant* that he knew from his wife, a manager there, that many of the rooms were dirty and customers were complaining. Several hotels hit by the strike had ceased to offer room service or maintain their restaurant service.

Esther Howard, a worker at the Hilton Hotel, expressed her opinions of the strike and the new contract. "We have to stick together, the workers with the union. The company lost the good service we gave them and now they want us back. I want to go back to work—now that we are going to be receiving from the company the things we fought for."

300 demonstrate against ultrarightist in New Jersey

BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK

MORRISTOWN, New Jersey—Three hundred people mobilized at the Morris County Courthouse here July 4 against the presence of white supremacist Richard Barrett, leader of the Mississippi-based Nationalist Movement.

Barrett had organized an "Independence from Affirmative Action" rally in this suburban New Jersey town. The previous evening, 1,000 people attended a meeting and candlelight vigil at a local church, organized by the Morris County Area Clergy, to show opposition to Barrett.

Speaking behind a banner that read "America Arise: Destroy Minority Tyranny," Barrett gave a talk that was drowned out by chanting and music from the protesters. The racist and his eight supporters chose Morristown in part because it is the home of former state police superintendent Carl Williams.

Williams resigned from his post last year in the face of rising outrage against "racial profiling" carried out by the state cops. "Racial profiling" is a euphemism for the racist police policy of targeting Blacks and Latinos on the roads for traffic violations.

During the ultrarightist rally, Barrett stated, "No one takes issue with Carl Williams when he said, candidly, that minorities carry on the illicit drug trafficking. He told the truth. In doing so, he was in the company of George Washington, who never told a lie."

The mobilization against Barrett's group was joined by a group of demonstrators from Newark, New Jersey, organized by the People's Organization for Progress (POP). A caravan of 50 cars, with slogans like "Stop

Racism Now" taped to their doors, had driven from Newark to the Morristown home of the family of Stanton Crew, a young Black man killed by New Jersey cops who chased him on Interstate 80 in June 1999.

The caravanners then marched, chanting, to the protest against Barrett's group, where they held a spirited rally. Chants included "How many bullets? Twenty-one!" referring to the number of police shots fired at Stanton Crew. Speakers at the rally included Max Antoine, a Haitian-born worker attacked by police in his own home in 1996. Antoine, who suffered blindness in one eye and paralysis as a result of the attack, joined the march in a wheelchair. Other speakers included Ingrid Crew, sister of Stanton Crew, Larry Hamm, organizer of POP, and Margaret Trowe, Socialist Workers candidate for vice president of the United States.

Another contingent that grouped nearby and then marched to the protest was organized by the National Organization for Women in New Jersey. The contingent of 25 was led by Mareta Short, a leader of New Jersey NOW's Affirmative Action Task Force, and others.

Police contingents, many in riot gear and some on horseback, gathered in force at the site. A heavy police escort accompanied the handful of fascists on a short march. Morristown police chief Carol Williams told the press that 267 police officers from 20 cop agencies were present. Police arrested 10 people, all demonstrators against Barrett.

Nancy Rosenstock is a member of UNITE and the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate from New Jersey.

SWP candidate gets good response at antiracist protest

BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK

MORRISTOWN, New Jersey—Socialist Workers campaign supporters got a good response when they participated in a protest here against the rally for Richard Barrett, leader of the fascist-like Nationalist Movement.

Socialist Workers vice-presidential candidate Margaret Trowe spoke at a rally organized by the New Jersey National Organization for Women, and at another organized by the Newark-based People's Organization for Progress. Supporters of Trowe and Nancy Rosenstock, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in New Jersey, traveled in a 50-car caravan from Newark to Morristown, their cars adorned with slogans against racism and the names of recent victims of police brutality.

"The fascists here today had a banner that said, 'America Arise: Destroy Minority Tyranny,'" Trowe told the protesters. "But we know that the majority of working people support the fight against racist attacks and police brutality. We know that affirmative action, which helps unify the working class and bring up the wages and working conditions of the most oppressed, is in the interests of all working people."

Trowe said that while the Nationalist Movement group was small, anti-racist fighters must be alert to the increasing ac-

tivity of incipient fascist politician Patrick Buchanan, who has been steadily gaining control of the Reform Party. "You haven't heard much from Buchanan lately, but he is getting his base in the Reform Party in place, and he will be actively putting forth a similarly reactionary political message to Barrett's in the coming months," Trowe explained.

"We have to keep our marching shoes ready. But there are more people today who are ready to join us—workers, including many immigrants, who are organizing unions in packinghouses in the Midwest, striking miners, hotel workers and janitors, and others. The potential to build a fighting movement of workers and farmers is greater than ever. James Harris and I are traveling across the country along the lines of resistance by fighters like those here today. You can see today the beginnings of the movement that can take power away from the capitalists and establish a workers and farmers government," Trowe concluded. James Harris is the Socialist Workers presidential candidate.

Supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign met a number of people at the event who were eager to find out more about the campaign. Several gave donations, and 16 bought the *Militant* or *Perspectiva Mundial*.

St. Paul meat packers prepare for union vote

Continued from front page

committee, "we are dividing up the entire production line in both the cut and kill among the key activists fighting for union representation." He added, "This way we can better organize to talk to whoever we need to talk to and verify who gets to vote."

"Getting to talk to everyone is critical," said Samuel Farley, a boning department worker and a leader of the organizing drive. "Before I could finish explaining why we

and given the current weather, if you give them a glass of ice water you will make them smile," it concludes.

"Another lie the company is circulating now," said Miguel Olvera, "is that workers will not be able to get their jobs back when we travel to see our families in Mexico if we win union recognition. But this is just not true. What happens right now is that some workers are forced to quit while others get leaves to go to Mexico based on fa-

Colorado, in a recent beef industry report.

Dakota Premium is owned by Rosen Diversified, Inc. (RDI). In an interview last year in *Connect Business Magazine* at its headquarters in Fairmont, Minnesota, the corporation's owner and CEO, Thomas Rosen, explained the industry's productivity drive. "I have read that the nationwide kill at slaughterhouses is increasing while the number of slaughterhouses is decreasing," said reporter Daniel J. Vance.

"That's true," explained Rosen. "There has been way too much capacity in the hog and cattle industry. Up until the last three years, it has been a pretty tough go in the meat packing industry. The industry has returned to profitability by eliminating some facilities and by consolidating capacity. We'll probably see more of that."

"Consolidation of capacity" translates into a nightmare for meat packers on the production line. "A year ago when I got hired," said Javier Quintal, a boning department worker at Dakota Premium, "we were getting out 450 cows in a 10 hour day. Now they had us doing 800 cows in a seven-and-half-hour day," he said.

"I take out the shank," Quintal continued, "and I would ask my supervisor to put me on another job because my hands were getting messed up. 'You've got to stay there,' he would tell me, and he would give me painkillers for my hands. My fingers were swollen way past their normal size and I would go home unable to close my hands all the way. It wasn't till they warmed up, after being on the line for a while, that I would be able to close them again."

Quintal was a fisherman in his hometown of Quintana Roo, in the southernmost province of Mexico. He told this reporter that he and his family could not make a living despite their best efforts, and they decided to try their luck in the United States after a friend of the family suggested it.

"Being a fisherman is a hard and dangerous trade," said Quintal. "It is not just the hard work and the long hours, but it is also dealing with sea, the sharks, and other animals too. But," said Quintal, qualifying his

words, "I never thought I would end up having to do something that is much worse here in this country."

RDI, a major corporation

Founded in 1970 by brothers Elmer and Ludwig Rosen, RDI ranks number seven among the top U.S. beef packers, according to industry statistics compiled by North Dakota University.

In addition to Dakota Premium Foods, RDI owns slaughterhouses in Long Prairie, Minnesota, and Yankton, South Dakota, with a combined production of some 2,000 heads of cattle per day. RDI also owns Skylark Meats, a plant in Omaha, Nebraska, that processes liver, cut steaks, and ground hamburger, and distributes a number of lines of food products for retail purchase out of there. It sells the Cimpl Dakota Brand of meats.

RDI also operates a barge terminal in Winona, Minnesota, for sales of fertilizer and salt. It owns a regulatory company in Lawrence, Kansas, doing regulatory compliance, insurance audits, and loss control for insurance companies operating all over the United States. It has sales operations for its chemical distribution business in Fairmount, Minnesota in 14 states. Its overall workforce is 1,500 employees. In 1998, RDI grossed \$550 million in profits. With revenues of \$600 million in 1999 it is listed by Forbes among the 500 largest private U.S. companies.

Rosen Diversified is not new to trouble with its employees. In a sexual harassment lawsuit filed on behalf of workers at its packing plant in Long Prairie, Minnesota, RDI agreed last August to an out-of-court settlement with the U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission for \$1.9 million.

One male worker said in court documents that he was jumped by groups of men who held him down, sometimes in a bin of raw meat or a trough of blood. He said the sometimes-daily occurrences involved simulated sex acts on him, with at least one supervisor taking part and another threatening to fire him when he complained.

The workers' voice

Newsletter of the workers from Dakota premium foods
Volume 1 - issue No.5



The union is a workers' organization.
It is not a company

The company has stepped up their campaign against the union

Let's remember what were the demands of our sit-down strike last June 1:

- 1) Slow the line down.
- 2) Fair and equal treatment. Stop forcing workers to work while injured.
- 3) A forty hour week.
- 4) No "gang time".

It is the company, and the company alone who is responsible for these problems. And even though they conceded at first, we are beginning to have shorter days at a faster line speed again!

Intimidation
This past week the company supervisors and Mr. Cortinas himself tried to intimidate a number of workers like Matias Loya and Miguel Gutierrez by telling them to stop "harassing people" because they were talking with coworkers about the union during their break. We know that continued pressure has been put on our brother Gutierrez, who as everyone knows, has played a central role on this fight for union representation from the very beginning. Let's all show our solidarity with this brother, let's make it clear to everyone that if they attack one of us, they will attack all of us.

Letter to the National Labor Relations Board

At our last Organizing Committee meeting, Bill Pearson, our local president, explained that he would send a letter to the NLRB noting that the company is harassing workers for exercising our legal right to talk about the union during their break. This means that if we are

Union supporters at Dakota Premium have answered company antiunion propaganda in *Workers' Voice* newsletter, published in English and Spanish. Above is issue no. 5.

so badly needed the union to a couple of workers, they cut me off and said, 'Look, you don't need to go into all that—we are for the union. We haven't been to meetings and don't want to be identified with the union right now because our supervisor is real bad news, OK?'"

'Workers' Voice' answers lies

The fifth and latest issue of *The Workers' Voice*, the bilingual newsletter of the workers at Dakota Premium, reports that workers are getting harassed by supervisors and by plant manager Cortinas. Under the headline "Intimidation," the newsletter says the bosses "tried to intimidate a number of workers like Matias Loya and Miguel Gutierrez by telling them to stop 'harassing people' because they were talking with coworkers about the union during their break."

The newsletter also reports that UFCW Local 789 president Bill Pearson would send a letter "to the NLRB noting that the company is harassing workers for exercising our legal right to talk about the union during our breaks." The bulletin also urges all workers to "write down the date, time, place and circumstances of" any harassment by the employers in order to "start building up a file of company violations that can be presented to the NLRB."

The newsletter answers company propaganda that describes the union as being another company that will crowd in the work place and leave workers in the middle with no say on matters. "Isn't it better you just meet with us?", the company's personnel director is quoted saying in the newsletter.

"The union and the company are very different," the union newsletter states. "The company owns this plant and many others. They make money by hiring us to transform the cattle into the product they sell on the market. The union does not own any factories and it does not exploit workers and their labor to make money. Unions were created by workers out of our need to defend ourselves from the greed of the company owners."

House visits

The Workers' Voice announces that last week union activists led by Tish Ramirez began house visits to workers at Dakota. "Thank you for the warm welcome you have given to them and more of you can expect calls and visits this week. These visits are a real opportunity for you to get clarity and have a relaxed conversation without the boss watching over your shoulder. Take advantage of the visit, get your questions ready,

voritism," he said.

"If you are forced to quit they will maybe hire you back, but as a new worker with the lowest pay and no benefits. By winning union representation we will be a position to fight for equal treatment for all of us and for the right to have adequate leaves to visit our families." Olvera told the *Militant* that, this and many other questions would be taken up at the next general union meeting scheduled for July 6.

"I'm not giving up. It has not been in my nature to give up, and I am not about to start now," said Marie Sandoval, a Dakota Premium Foods worker who was fired by the company last week. Sandoval, a worker in the plant for several years, was forced to leave her job in the production line at Dakota Premium after her foot was hit accidentally by a passing load of pallets.

Sandoval is currently employed in another meatpacking plant in South St. Paul, but intends to keep fighting Dakota Premium for the injustice done to her. She has been an active participant in the fight for union recognition at Dakota Premium going back many months, when a group of workers in the plant organized trips to the Labor Board denouncing unfair treatment by the bosses.

Speed-up in all meatpacking industry

Even though she was home recovering from the accident, Sandoval got word from co-workers and came into the plant and participated on the strike of some 120 workers in the plant's cafeteria to demand a safer production line speed.

"Before the strike, there had been many fights in the plant," explained Sandoval. "A group of us had gone to the Labor Board complaining about being shorted for time worked in our paychecks. There had been groups of boning line workers who would go into the management office and put forward demands and got some things changed at times," she said. "I had been arguing with co-workers about the increasing line speed for a long time," she said. "I would tell co-workers: 'Don't kill yourself, let the pieces of meat go, let them pile up. But many people would quit working in the plant because they couldn't take the abuse to their hands,'" she concluded.

The speed-up at Dakota Premium Foods is not an exception in the meatpacking industry. "The beef industry needs to learn how to get the cost out of the production cycle like poultry and pork have done," noted Alan Gluek, representative of Con Agra Red Meat Companies in Greeley,

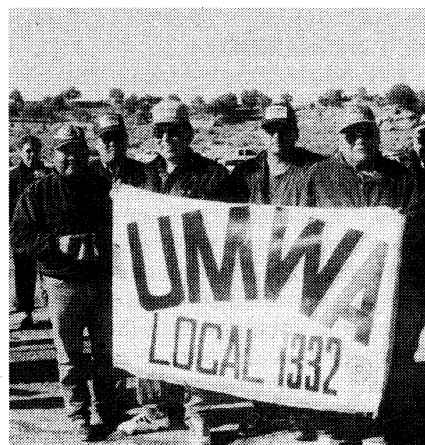
¡Sí se puede!

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L.A. march for labor, immigrant rights

Supreme Court overturns antiabortion law

Continued from front page
the mother's health and life.

The 1973 *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision came in the context of a growing mass movement for women's rights, and the powerful social movements for Black rights and against the U.S. war against Vietnam. Since then, opponents of women's rights have sought to undercut and reverse the gains it registered.

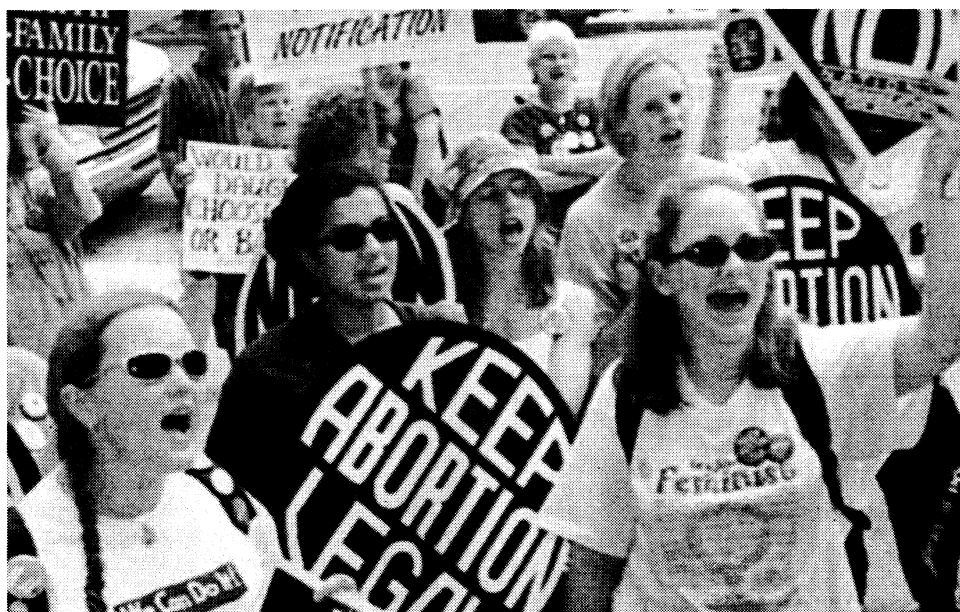
Over the years, moves by federal, state, and local courts and legislative bodies have in practice limited access to this medical procedure, especially for working women. In 1998, according to statistics, 86 percent of the counties and one third of the cities in the United States have no abortion providers.

Capitalist politicians abet rightists

Big-business politicians, despite the posturing by many of them as friends of women's rights, have abetted the propaganda war against a woman's right to choose.

Liberal Democrat Daniel Patrick Moynihan, for example, who portrays himself as "pro-choice," is one of those who compares the medical procedure targeted by the Nebraska law as "infanticide."

With the aid of these reactionary moves by Democratic and Republican politicians, rightist forces have made a woman's right to choose a central target. These include the forces around incipient fascist politician Patrick Buchanan, which scapegoat women along with immigrants and workers receiving welfare for the economic and social problems in the country.



June 14 rally in Trenton, New Jersey, protesting a parental notification bill.

"In the '40s and '50s," Buchanan told an anti-choice crowd in a typical speech in 1995, "America was a peaceful country," but that "correlation between the violence in our society and what has happened to 30 million unborn children is absolute." Buchanan opposes the right of a woman to abortion because the right of a woman to control her body it is at the heart of the struggle for women's equality.

Despite the bipartisan attacks over the past quarter century, a woman's basic right to control her body continues to have the support of the majority of working people in the United States today.

Right-wing organizations such as Operation Rescue launched a nationwide offensive in 1992 and mobilized their forces to block the entrances of clinics to women who were exercising their constitutional right to have an abortion. After having shut down the clinics in Wichita, Kansas, in the absence of a concerted defense by pro-choice organizations, the rightist forces bragged they would shut down abortion facilities across the country.

Those forces were defeated by counter-mobilizations of thousands of supporters of a woman's right to choose, many of whom traveled all around the country, from Baton

Rouge, Louisiana, to New York City, in order to defend the clinics under attack. Hundreds of thousands demonstrated in Washington in April 1992, and 100,000 rallied in 1995 in support of the right to abortion.

The latest victory registered by the Supreme Court ruling was celebrated by participants at the National Organization for Women conference, which took place in Miami Beach, Florida, from June 30 to July 2. Conference participants at the workshop on reproductive rights discussed this decision as well as the challenges that women face in many states today.

One woman described how she had been forced to run a gauntlet of right-wingers in order to enter an abortion clinic in Louisiana recently. Another woman from Louisiana reported that the state government periodically carries out "investigations" of the clinics that involve wholesale dumping of files and other disruptions.

Women from Gainesville, Florida, most of them students, spoke about the struggle they led in order to make the "morning after" pill available at the infirmary of the University of Florida. The high cost of abortion is an issue for many women, including young women.

Destry Taylor, a 26-year-old student at the University of Florida, said women need "more access to abortion and it should be a priority for actions until the elimination of abortion restriction laws." If women's rights supporters lose this battle, "we will all be at home with our kids and would not be able to fight on other battles," she commented.

The NOW conference adopted by acclamation a resolution demanding that mifepristone, also known as the "morning after pill," be available to women in this country.

Margaret Trowe is the Socialist Workers candidate for vice president of the United States. Rollande Girard is a sewing machine operator in Miami.

Trowe brings campaign to NOW meeting

BY MIKE ITALIE

MIAMI BEACH, Florida—Margaret Trowe, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. vice president, spoke to dozens of women's rights fighters at the June 30–July 2 national conference of the National Organization for Women (NOW). The booth, set up by supporters of the campaign for Trowe and presidential candidate James Harris, featured displays with large photos of the women and men at Dakota Premium Foods in St. Paul, Minnesota marching for a union. Workers there, a majority of whom are immigrant workers born in Mexico and Central America, carried out a sit-down strike June 1 against the company's intense speedup of production.

Jeanne Cashen, a 22-year-old women's studies student at the University of New Orleans, liked what the socialist candidate had to say about working-class struggles today. She is active in Community Labor United (CLU), a coalition of labor, women's rights, religious, and community groups that has been focusing on union-organizing efforts in New Orleans. "The first target was the Convention Center," said Cashen, "where many workers were angered by strip searches of women workers there carried out by the management."

Cashen bought a copy of the Pathfinder book *Capitalism's World Disorder* and renewed her subscription to the socialist campaign newspaper *The Militant* for one year. She had first subscribed at last year's NOW convention. Five conference-goers purchased *Capitalism's World Disorder* in English or Spanish, and five bought subscriptions to the *Militant*. Sharon Russ got one of each, and also picked up a copy of the book, *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*. Russ, a Teamster from the Tampa, Florida, area who was injured on the job at UPS, talked with Rollande Girard, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Miami-Dade County, about the March 7 rally of thousands of people for affirmative action they had both attended in Tallahassee.

Russ said she spoke at a February hearing in Tampa where she explained that "I am for affirmative action and abortion rights." After she spoke, "One of [Florida governor John Ellis] Bush's cabinet members asked me if I was 'a Christian,' implying that supporting abortion rights was antireligious. They just try to control us and try to divide women and Blacks."

Three activists at the conference bought copies of the pamphlet *Feminism and the Marxist Movement*.

A total of 18 people signed up to get more information about the socialist campaign,

including a waitress who is a member of the hotel and restaurant workers union at the convention site. She explained that "there is a mini-revolution going on here" in the consciousness of the hotel workers in comparison to a year ago when she was hired. Workers are now much more likely to confront the bosses who insult them or when their paychecks are missing overtime pay or other benefits, she said. She pointed out that their determination to "stand up to abuses" shows through in their demands for a new contract that in addition to wage increases includes measures to respect their dignity and job conditions.

Socialist candidate Trowe explained to activists who came by the campaign booth that the Democratic and Republican parties have been targeting a woman's right to choose ever since the 1973 Supreme Court ruling decriminalizing abortion. They have sought to push back affirmative action as well.

In addition, ultrarightists, such as Reform Party presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan,

make the assault on abortion rights a central part of the "culture war" against working people as a whole. Trowe pointed to the growing confidence of millions of women in the United States who are engaging in struggles in factories, on farms, and in the streets today. "The nucleus of the forces necessary to take on the Buchanan Brigades, as well as those who block women's access to abortion clinics, can be found among the workers standing up to the bosses' attacks—such as those at Dakota Premium in St. Paul who are fighting for a union."

"They are part of the growing resistance of working men and women that will build the kind of movement that will place the fight for women's liberation at the center of the struggles of working people. They can not only defeat Patrick Buchanan and other rightists but organize a revolutionary movement that can fight for political power in this country," Trowe said.

Mike Italie is a garment worker in Miami.

Ruling party suffers blow in Zimbabwe election

BY T.J. FIGUEROA

PRETORIA, South Africa—The opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) won 47 percent of the seats contested in Zimbabwe's parliamentary elections. The ruling Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) took 62 seats to the MDC's 57.

The June 24–25 elections registered the growing opposition among working people in city and countryside to the policies of ZANU-PF and its leader, President Robert Mugabe. The government's failure to carry out a thoroughgoing land reform, and an economic crisis heightened by imperialist domination, have fueled political polarization in this southern African country.

The result was an unprecedented rebuke to ZANU-PF, which has governed the country since independence in 1980 on the basis of its record as a leading actor in the fight to end British colonial rule and bring down the white-minority regime of what was then Rhodesia. Among other results, at least seven cabinet ministers lost their seats in Parliament.

Voter turnout was high at 60 percent, as against about 30 percent in previous polls. Since independence, opposition parties have never held more than a total of three seats in the national legislature.

ZANU-PF's majority is expanded by the 20 seats in the legislature filled by individu-

als nominated by the president and the 10 selected by local chiefs.

Presidential elections are scheduled for 2002. MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai, a former trade unionist, has already declared he will challenge the ZANU-PF candidate in that race.

The MDC won the majority of seats in urban areas, with most rural districts going to ZANU-PF. The opposition party said it would contest 20 seats awarded to ruling-party candidates.

Public divisions quickly surfaced in the ruling party following the poll. "Clearly there is a revolution taking place," said Chenjerai Hunzvi, the leader of the war veterans association that has carried out government-supported farm occupations since February and who was himself a ZANU-PF candidate. "The party has to rejuvenate. To meet the challenge we need an overhaul from the grassroots to the top."

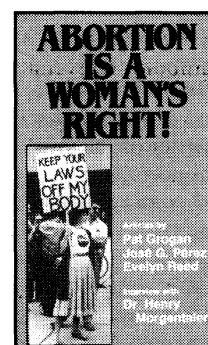
The *Financial Gazette*, published in Harare, reported June 29 that "several new ZANU-PF legislators and provincial heads this week said they will pressure President Robert Mugabe to relinquish the party's leadership within six months to allow for the election of a new leader who would rejuvenate the party and prepare for state presidential elections in 2002."

The MDC, formed less than a year ago with the backing of the labor movement, has

won support from many working people in face of a spiraling economic crisis. The country's debt to the imperialist powers is \$4.9 billion. Belt-tightening programs demanded by London and Washington have resulted in rising prices for basic goods, high inflation and 50 percent joblessness.

The MDC also received support from some white capitalist farmers—who control 70 percent of the country's most fertile, arable land—and imperialist backers in the United Kingdom, United States, and South African businesses. These forces see the opposition party as an empty canvas on which they hope to paint a picture of continued debt pillage and defense of existing property relations in the country, where half the population is made up of landless peasants. The MDC has said little about land reform, other than declaring that it wants "national dialogue" on the issue.

An army of "observers" sent by the United Kingdom, United States, European Union (EU), and others descended on the country prior to the election. In a violation of Zimbabwe's sovereignty, they declared they would pronounce whether the election was "free and fair." This marked a continuation of the imperialist campaign, led by London, to press for an outcome to its liking. The EU delegation, for example, said that the term free and fair "was not applicable" in the poll.



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FROM PATHFINDER

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French rulers push for 'core' Europe to challenge U.S. rivals

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—In a keynote speech at the Reichstag in Berlin June 27, French president Jacques Chirac urged the German government to join Paris in spearheading a "core group" of European Union countries that would move faster than others in economic and political cooperation. Chirac made his speech just days before the French were due to assume the presidency of the European Union, which will go from July through December this year.

"Those countries that want to proceed further with integration, on a voluntary basis and in specific areas, must be allowed to do so without being held back by those who, with every right, do not want to proceed as quickly," he said.

The speech was intended to be the high point of a two-day visit to Berlin to revive the Franco-German relationship, which had been cooling in the 1990s as the German rulers began to increasingly look to their east after reunification.

Military, economic cooperation

Some steps had already been taken at a meeting in Mainz in early June, where German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and Chirac insisted their alliance within the European Union remained solid. They confirmed they would work together on producing a satellite reconnaissance system open to other governments in Europe, and agreed to order 125 new Airbus A400M military transport aircraft. Both heads of state also criticized Washington's plans for developing an antimissile shield.

These moves by Paris and Berlin are intended to reduce their reliance on Washington's military might.

This past May, Joschka Fischer, German foreign minister and head of the Green party, delivered a speech at Humboldt University that drew much attention and provoked harsh reactions in most camps in Europe. The speech, put forward as his personal opinion, suggested that a European federation with a directly elected president and a parliament sharing real executive and legislative powers was needed for the union to function effectively.

The fact that Fischer spoke out at all, though, was widely applauded in some quarters because of the objectives he has in mind, which are to revitalize the European Union, with a revived Franco-German relationship as its motor force, as a means to put the European imperialist powers at a better competitive advantage vis-a-vis their rivals in the United States.

There is an economic upturn going on in both Germany and France, and in the Scandinavian countries as well. Sales of German goods overseas have been powered by the

economic recovery in other parts of the world and the 20 percent fall of the euro relative to the U.S. dollar since its launch in January of 1999. German exports this year are expected to break the DM 1,000 billion barrier for the first time, for a total increase of 12 percent. With a possible slowing of the U.S. economy this year, though, German finance minister Hans Eichel was quoted in London's *Financial Times* worrying that Germany is too heavily dependent on exports and, as a result, "international crises are affecting our economy too hard."

Holding down wages

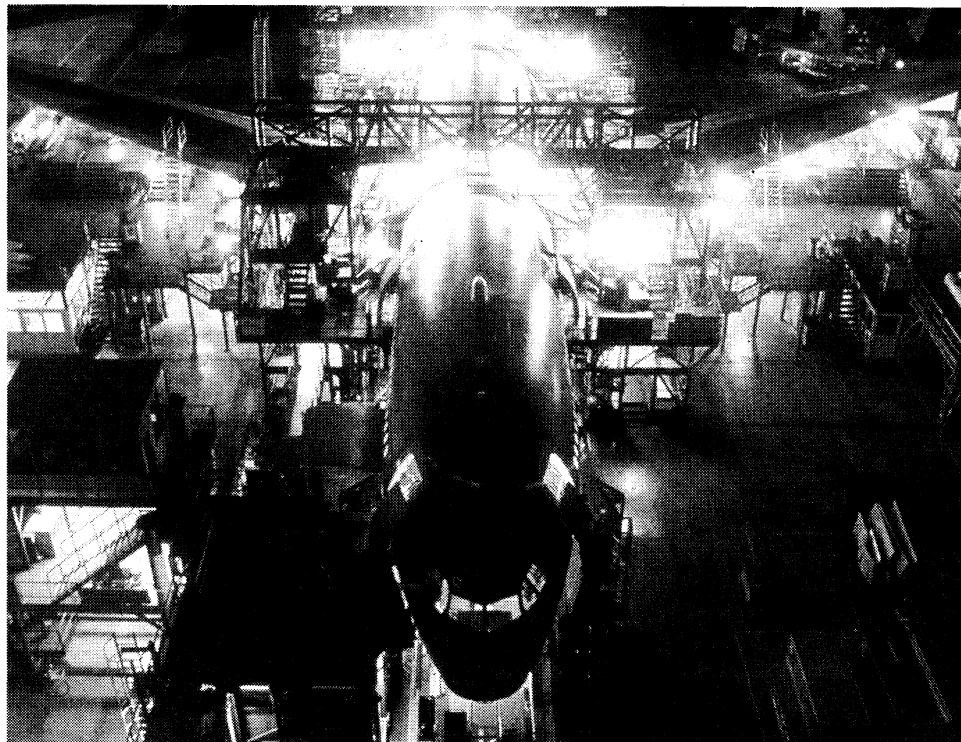
This year, the German social democratic government and the employers have been comparatively successful relative to other countries in Europe in holding down wages by promising job security. Although the more than 3 million public workers in Germany recently voted to strike, a new contract proposal was endorsed without a strike, in a vote by the unions two weeks later. The pact contained only cosmetic changes and a lump-sum bonus of 400 D-marks to buy a "yes" vote. The capitalists in France, Germany, and the countries in Scandinavia are also pushing for—and making some headway in imposing—more "flexible" work hours, a code word for lengthening the work day, thus strengthening their competitiveness.

These attacks on the workers in Europe take place at the same time as workers in the United States are putting up more resistance to a relentless assault by the bosses there. This creates a more favorable situation for the capitalists in Europe, and especially those in Germany and France, to make inroads into the competitive advantage held by capitalists in the United States. The strength of U.S. imperialism, for example, has been reflected in the decline of the euro against the dollar since its launch.

Paris and Berlin the motor force

The enlargement of the European Union into eastern and central Europe, which has been said to be the reason for changing the European Union institutions, such as the redistribution of the national votes in the Council of Ministers, is actually more and more being put off. Meanwhile, a Europe with Berlin and Paris as the locus of cooperation by a few countries on the military, economic, and policing fronts, is now becoming a central aim of the ruling classes in the two countries.

The French presidency of the European Union is planned to end with a summit in December this year in Nice. The meeting will most likely focus on issues like adjusting the weighting of member states' votes in the council of ministers and getting rid



Airbus production line. Paris and Berlin plan to order 125 military transport aircraft from the European manufacturer. Airbus has cut into markets of U.S. giant Boeing—an example of sharpening competition between European and U.S. capitalists.

of the veto power held by some of the member states. This move will make it easier for small groups of EU member states to forge ahead with "cooperation."

Berlin has floated the idea that because it is the most populous state in the EU, with about 80 million people, it should receive more voting power compared with France, Britain, and Italy, which have a population of about 60 million each. But such a move would have to have the backing of Paris. At the meeting in Berlin, president Chirac promised to push for a permanent place for Germany in the UN Security Council as a further sign of Paris's willingness to revive its relations with Berlin.

UK opposes "two-speed" Europe

The United Kingdom is not part of the European common currency, the euro, but has been playing a leading role in the military cooperation among EU states, pushing plans to set up a 60,000-strong rapid deployment force. It has traditionally opposed a two-speed Europe, and advocated incorporation of more countries in the European Union. The government of Anthony Blair has also tried to set an example in taking on the trade unions and the workers in order to improve the competitiveness of the capitalists in the UK, who have been pushed back more over the last decade than in any other

country in Europe.

Blair moved soon after Chirac's visit to Berlin to rebut Paris and Berlin's calls for deeper integration among a core group of European Union states, saying that any attempt to split the union into a two-tiered bloc would threaten Britain's interests as well as the prospects for EU enlargement.

A spokesman for Mr. Blair said that Britain was not prepared to give up its veto over future policy initiatives by a core group.

Blair visited Berlin the day after Chirac left. While President Chirac spoke in the Reichstag on his proposals for changes in the European Union, Blair had a private meeting with Chancellor Schröder and later spoke on "globalisation" at the University of Tübingen.

It is unlikely that London will allow Paris and Berlin to move ahead with the cooperation they propose, nor give up the right to veto cooperation between them that is not in London's interest.

The Swedish daily, *Svenska Dagbladet*, noted July 2 that Paris plans to do outside the European Union what is not possible do within it. The paper quoted unnamed French officials threatening, "you can't stop the inevitable."

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

Greek church leaders hold reactionary rally

NATASHA TERLEXIS
AND GEORGES MEHRABIAN

ATHENS, Greece—About 130,000 people were mobilized in a mass rally here June 21 called by Greece's Orthodox Church. The event was part of a reactionary protest campaign against a government decision to remove religious identification from police-issued identity cards, which every citizen is required to carry at all times.

The church bused people in from various parts of the country and most contingents were led by priests, monks, and nuns who were present in large numbers. The crowd was in its majority women and older people, although there were many youth present too. All banners and icons were forbidden by the church hierarchy; instead, a sea of Greek and

Byzantine Empire flags marked the rally.

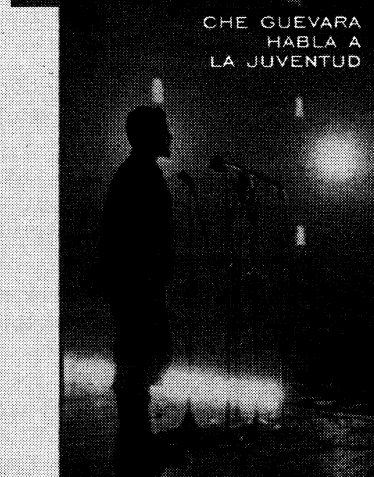
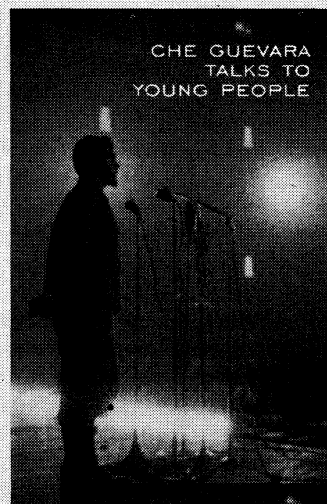
A similar rally of 120,000 was held in Thessaloniki, Greece's second largest city, June 14. Ultraright and fascist forces have felt able to openly participate in these rallies and in the TV debates that have abounded since, peddling anti-Semitic, anti-immigrant views.

Religious identification was imposed on ID cards in 1942 during the Nazi occupation of Greece for use in identifying and deporting Jews to concentration camps. Discrimination against national and religious minorities is widespread here, evidenced in the depressed living standards of Muslim Turks and Gypsies. The constitution prohibits anyone who is not Greek Orthodox from holding certain public posts, such as that of an elementary school teacher.

But the move by the government does nothing to end this long-standing discrimination, and it comes as a part of the Greek government implementing what are known as the Schengen Agreements. Under the guise of combating crime, terrorism, and drug trafficking, the agreements are laying the basis for a Europe-wide ID card aimed at bolstering government surveillance and police measures.

From Pathfinder

Che Guevara Talks to Young People



"We are attacked a great deal because of what we are. But we are attacked much, much more because we show to every nation of the Americas what it's possible to be. What's important for imperialism — much more than Cuba's nickel mines or sugar mills, or Venezuela's oil, or Mexico's cotton, or Chile's copper, or Argentina's cattle, or Paraguay's grasslands, or Brazil's coffee — is the totality of these raw materials upon which the monopolies feed."

—Che Guevara; July 28, 1960
(from *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*)

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Buchanan firms grip on Reform Party

Continued from front page

Perot, who in 1992 won 19 percent of the vote, stunning the bourgeois commentators and pollsters. Perot, posing as a champion of the "little guy" who promised to "clean out the stables" of Washington and bring economic stability with an iron hand, appealed to millions in the middle classes who, in face of an increasingly insecure future, are susceptible to radical "solutions." Unlike Buchanan and his cadre of faithful "Buchanan Brigades," Perot built a primarily electoral movement. But his reactionary demagoguery greased the skids for Buchanan.

The election of Jesse Ventura as governor of Minnesota had many similarities with the Bonapartist appeal of Perot, and Ventura rapidly gained prominence in the Reform Party.

Shoves rivals out of his way

But over the past months, Buchanan has gradually moved to gain control over the Reform Party, taking on political figures who are obstacles in his path. Ventura was one whom he defeated in spite of the Bonapartist governor's influence over large sections of the Reform apparatus. Ventura, the most prominent politician to win office on the Reform Party ticket, eventually left the party in February, politically unable to take on Buchanan's challenge.

"I believe he has run away from a fight," Buchanan said derisively of Ventura. "I was looking forward to this great battle of Minnesota, a struggle for the soul of the Reform Party."

The day after Ventura bailed out, the Reform Party's national committee held a convention in Nashville where it dumped the party chairman Jack Gargan, a Ventura ally who was elected chair at the party's convention last July. Gargan was replaced by Pat Choate, Perot's running mate in the 1996 presidential race.

In consolidating his base in the Reform Party, Buchanan initially recruited Lenora Fulani, former presidential candidate of the New Alliance Party, a reactionary middle-class outfit that gained influence in the Re-

form Party—especially in New York. Buchanan used Fulani's image as a "socialist" to promote his own increasingly anti-capitalist rhetoric and national socialist trajectory.

Once Fulani's usefulness to him within the Reform Party was exhausted, Buchanan forced her resignation as cochair of his presidential campaign.

In mid-June, Buchanan's supporters succeeded in unseating delegates backing party founder Ross Perot in his home state of Texas. On June 4 Perot's supporters in California backed away from a maneuver to keep Buchanan off the ballot there.

Buchanan is expected to receive the Reform Party's presidential nomination at its convention, scheduled for August 10-13 in Long Beach, California. Along with the nomination, the ultrarightist candidate would be entitled to \$12.6 million in federal funds.

Buchanan's takeover of the Reform Party makes his forces the most prominent organizing center for incipient American fascism. Taking over a third capitalist party enhances his campaign against "the estab-

lishment" and makes the party a pole of attraction in the national election arena to advance his reactionary aims. Other ultrarightist forces, such as the supporters of the *Spotlight* newspaper, have been coalescing around his campaign.

Calls for 'America First'

Buchanan continues to pose as a champion of "American workers," sprinkling his speeches with anticapitalist, national socialist rhetoric. He states that his running mate should be "someone who fundamentally believes in a new, America First foreign policy and a trade policy that looks out for working folks."

Referring to the nationalist stance of the Teamsters bureaucracy on U.S. trade relations with China, Buchanan declared, "I stand with the Teamster folks that we ought to put human rights and national security above the profit margins of the Fortune 500, which I think this trade deal is appalling. It's not a deal for American workers."

In making his America First appeal, Buchanan has carefully tempered any overtly racist overtones that could be attrib-

uted to his campaign. In a May 30 interview on National Public Radio (NPR) he stated, "Of the folks we travel around the country—some of the friendliest ones are African-American folks and other minority folks because they do believe I'm fighting to keep in the United States the kind of jobs that their kids are going to need."

Buchanan is waging a fight for the right to appear on nationally televised presidential debates, launching a suit against the Federal Election Commission. "The Presidential Debate Commission is supposed to be nonpartisan. It is not," Buchanan declared during the interview on NPR. "It has been set up with the specific purpose of...keeping third parties out of the presidential debate."

The Democrats and Republicans can be expected to make every effort to keep Buchanan out of the debates. Unlike the mainstream candidates, who are carefully dancing around controversial political issues with the goal of getting elected, Buchanan will take the reactionary thrust of Democratic and Republican politicians' positions to their logical extreme—from his calls for building an anti-immigrant wall along the U.S.-Mexico border to his chauvinist campaign against China.

Volunteers needed for 'PM' web site

Continued from Page 7

by international mail.

"We've modeled the design of perspectivamundial.com on the new *Militant* web site," said Pat Smith. A team of volunteers around the country translates selected *Militant* articles for the print edition of *Perspectiva Mundial* every month—and for special editions produced in response to class-struggle developments.

Perspectiva Mundial is appealing for volunteers to prepare the magazine's web page every month. "We will provide any training necessary," said Smith. Familiarity with Spanish and a commitment to making the working-class publication available every month through this medium are the qualifications required. Readers who want to help can contact the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* at themilitant@compuserve.com or write: 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.

Mexican election

Continued from front page

economy to further privatization and U.S. corporate investment—as those pursued by outgoing president Ernesto Zedillo. He also promised to bolster ties with Washington. Raising expectations among working people, he pledged to double the education budget and portrayed his policies as capable of addressing the poverty and unemployment affecting millions.

Of Mexico's 100 million inhabitants, 27 percent live below the official poverty line. The nation's foreign debt to international banks is more than \$150 billion.

U.S. capitalists were pleased with the Fox's election, hopeful that his regime will accelerate the opening up of Mexico to imperialist investment and plunder. Despite rhetoric in the U.S. media praising "democracy" in the Mexican elections, what Washington and Wall Street want is a strong-handed regime that can keep a lid on social instability and guarantee their profits.

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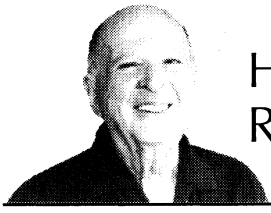
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Maybe they can patent such a novel idea—The state of New Hampshire plans to slice its budget

part by a hiring freeze. The plan, an official said, is not to trim services, but to make employees work harder.



Harry Ring

by \$20 million from the Health and Human Services budget, in good

Have to put them somewhere—“The [British] Ministry of Defense is planning to cut up and store the radioactive sections of decommissioned nuclear submarines on land after running out of dockyard space for them.”—The *Times*, London.

Do they sharpen their teeth?—California’s Vest-A-Dog Foundation donated five bullet-proof vests

for police dogs in Tucson, Arizona.

At union scale or in chains?—City officials in Washington, D.C., urged citizens to report potholes and rapidly developed a backlog of 2,000. They’re talking about using folks on welfare to do the work.

A few more ‘bad apples’—In the United Kingdom, an elite anti-violence police squad had to be disbanded for car-jacking, theft, torture and killings. Many “suspects” were brought into court on stretchers.

We thought pizza was getting pricey—Ginza Sushi-ko is said to be the most exclusive, and expensive, restaurant in Los Angeles. Dinner is \$250 per person, or more. Reservations required. Granted it’s expensive, writes an *L.A. Times* reviewer, but it’s worth cashing in your tech stock to eat there.

Sushi, everyone?—“California is a state of tenants. Almost half of us rent. The proportion is higher in major urban areas: 61 percent rent in the city of Los Angeles. These

are working people.... The child-care workers, bank tellers, janitors and cooks in our communities earn \$7 to \$9 an hour, or \$14,000 to \$18,000 annually. These folks may never buy a home but in the meantime they have trouble even paying the rent.”—A *Los Angeles Times* op-ed article.

Thought for the week—“Every time a miner retires, they replace him or her with a bigger shovel.”—Robert Wayman, striking Wyoming coal miner. The *Militant*, June 23.

The capitalist assault on the social wage

The excerpt below is taken from “The Vote for Ross Perot and Patrick Buchanan’s ‘Culture War,’” a talk presented at a Militant Labor Forum in New York on Nov. 7, 1992, four days after the presidential elections. The entire talk appears in the pages of *Capitalism’s World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*. The excerpt can be found on pages 332-336. Copyright © 1999 Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY JACK BARNES

Workers should rid ourselves of the illusion that anything we or fellow working people have put away somewhere—in a bank, an insurance policy, a pension fund—is secure. There never has been and never will be any individual solution to weathering layoffs, illness, or a disability, or preparing to make it through retirement. Especially during a period such as we have lived through the last fifteen years, the only sure thing is that instability will increase. Insurance companies, banks, and pension funds are not immune from collapse. And in a really deep crisis, nothing “stands behind” these institutions, no matter what we have been told about alleged government guarantees.

What if someone had told us even one year ago that some of the largest banks and



Public workers demand government-funded health care in New York City, October 1990. “There is never any individual solution to weathering layoffs, illness, or a disability, or preparing to make it through retirement.”

from the pages of *Capitalism’s World Disorder*

insurance companies in Sweden—supposedly one of the most stable capitalist economies in Europe—were going to be on the verge of bankruptcy and face a forced financial reorganization before the end of 1992? That the Swedish government would raise short-term interest rates to 500 percent for several weeks in an effort to fend off devaluation in face of a massive run on the krona? And that the officialdom of the trade unions and Social Democratic Party—in order to “save Sweden” and find a way for Swedish business to compete successfully in Europe—would openly support measures that began dismantling piece by piece government-financed health care, pension benefits, and other social rights won by the working class? All that happened this year.

What is happening to the so-called welfare state in Sweden is symptomatic of the growing pressures throughout the imperialist countries on the social wage. The capitalists and their governments are stepping up attacks on the right of the working class to get back a small portion of the wealth we produce, so that we and our families can make it through a lifetime.

Since the end of World War II, workers in industrially advanced capitalist countries have, to varying degrees, come to consider as fundamental rights certain kinds of lifetime social security we have fought for and won. In a few capitalist countries, including Sweden, these social conquests by the labor movement were quite extensive. But today it is as if the film is being run backward, and we are watching the modern capitalist world regress toward its infancy. In reality, however, what we are seeing are not newsreels but previews—previews of what capitalism always reverts to as a crisis sharply accelerates. The capitalists are pushing to recreate conditions in which those of us who are young enough and well enough

to work are forced to do so for as little pay as possible—and those who are too old or too sick, to hell with them!

If a worker faces desperate economic pressures, the bosses insist, such problems ought to be taken care of largely by that person’s family, or by charity, or by the church. Any government programs that do exist, they say, should be based purely on “need,” not provided as a social right, as an entitlement, to the entire working class and population. The capitalists’ goal is to deepen a division within the working class between those who earn, and those who “live off” others who earn (or are taken care of by charity). The goal is to demoralize layer after layer of the working class.

As from the earliest days of industrial capitalism, the rulers use sanctimonious religious and moral terms about charity to justify workhouses and the most heinous conditions for working people. University professors begin proposing that private orphanages be reopened across the country as the only solution to the “crisis of the single mother” and growing expenditures on Aid to Families with Dependent Children. And politicians begin echoing these reactionary proposals.¹ This is truly a battle for the soul of the working class as a class!

Driving down value of labor power

Moreover, beginning in the early 1970s, real wages—wages discounted for inflation, what workers can actually buy with what we bring home each week—began to slide in the United States. Last year, according to the government’s own figures, average

wage temporary or part-time jobs or who are not counted as “looking for work” by

hourly wages for manufacturing workers were lower than in 1967! The true situation is even worse when the decline in the social wage of the working class, and of the public services we use, are included. For the first time since the Great Depression of the 1930s, the capitalists may be actually driving down the value, not just the price, of our labor power.²

Unemployment rates are also substantially higher today on average than they used to be. In the United States, official jobless rates of 6 percent or even more—which were sure signs of a recession prior to the mid-1970s—are today the norm during upturns in the capitalist business cycle. The average annual unemployment rate since 1974 has been just above 7 percent, compared to 4.8 percent for the quarter century prior to that. And those jobless figures—the ones Washington releases each month—do not include the growing numbers who have been forced into low-wage temporary or part-time jobs or who are not counted as “looking for work” by

government agencies. That figure, which the government does not publicize very much, has averaged 10 percent since the mid-1970s, and the true situation is undoubtedly worse than that.

Unemployment is even higher across capitalist Europe. The average jobless figure for the countries that make up the European Community is 10 percent, and that has been the average for most of the past decade; it has not dropped below 8 percent since 1981. And the figure is substantially higher in several of the weaker imperialist countries; in Spain, for example, the official jobless rate is more than 18 percent. Contrast those figures for Europe to the average during the two decades prior to 1974—2.7 percent.

At the same time that unemployment is rising, overtime is stretching out the workweek the longest it has been since the end of World War II, further dividing the working class. And speedup is taking a heavier and heavier toll on health and safety on the job—and increasing the incidence of explosions, derailments, crashes, and other accidents that endanger the general public as well.

The experience of the working class over the past decade once again confirms Marx’s assessment some 130 years ago that “the same circumstances which allow the capitalist in the long run to prolong the working day also allow him at first, and compel him finally, to reduce the price of labor nominally as well until the total price of the increased number of hours goes down, and therefore the daily or weekly wage falls.”³

2. Six years after this talk was given, at the opening of 1999, median real earnings of workers in the United States—despite modest annual increases from 1996 through 1998—still had not surpassed their level of the early 1970s, nor had median family income.

3. Capital, vol. 1 (Penguin), p. 689.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

25 CENTS **THE MILITANT** A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

July 18, 1975

NEW YORK—Ten thousand striking sanitation workers returned to their jobs here July 3, but there was little enthusiasm for the settlement that ended their three-day wildcat protest against layoffs.

The workers had closed down garbage collection July 1 when Mayor Abraham Beame tried to fire 2,934 of them. The walk-out was officially opposed by John DeLury, president of the Uniformed Sanitationmen’s Association, who said he could not control the ranks.

To end the strike Beame agreed to temporarily rehire all the sanitation workers while he continued to search for federal and state aid. As a direct result of the strike, the state legislature agreed to give the city \$330 million in new taxing authority. But by July 8 only 750 sanitation jobs had been “permanently” restored, and Beame was making no promises that any more would be forthcoming.

In an ominous sign, the city refused to suspend legal action against the union or individual strikers. They may still be victimized under New York’s infamous Taylor Law, which forbids strikes by public employees under penalty of jail terms and individual fines of two days’ pay for every day on strike.

1. In August 1996 Clinton signed into law the “Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act,” eliminating Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

THE MILITANT PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

July 17, 1950

According to the Constitution, Congress alone has the right to declare war. But Truman, taking advantage of the flimsy subterfuge that he has not “declared” war, has put the United States into a war that is as real and as bloody as if it had formally been “declared.”

Instead of resisting these usurpations of power, Congress has acted like a door mat. Even though it was in session and could be called together for action by the President in a few hours, it has not challenged his demonstrative assumption of war-making powers.

A few Republicans questioned the legality of Truman’s moves, but only for the record.

The issue, however, goes far beyond the question of legality, and the relations between the White House and Capitol Hill. If Truman is permitted to fling the country into a “little” war on his own initiative and decree, then what is going to stop him from doing the same in the case of a full-scale world war?

Congress must be condemned not only for its cowardice on the Korean crisis but also for permitting the establishment of a precedent that may later be used on a much broader and much more fateful occasion.

Abortion is a woman's right

The recent Supreme Court ruling upholding a decision that a Nebraska antiabortion law was an unconstitutional ban on a woman's right to choose abortion is a victory for working people. The Nebraska law—like similar ones in some 30 states—was intentionally worded in such vague terms by opponents of women's rights that many doctors feared prosecution for standard methods of performing an abortion. The intent of the law was to have a chilling effect on abortion providers in order to restrict even more access to abortion by millions of women.

Dr. Leroy Carhart successfully challenged the Nebraska law, preventing it from ever taking effect. Under the law doctors who performed abortions faced up to 20 years in prison if their method fell under a sweeping definition of "deliberately and intentionally delivering into the vagina a living unborn child, or a substantial portion thereof" before terminating the pregnancy. The Supreme Court held that under the law doctors "must fear prosecution, conviction, and imprisonment" using a common procedure after the first trimester of pregnancy known as dilation and evacuation, or D & E.

The 5-4 court decision reflects the fact that despite an offensive against abortion rights since the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court ruling, the government and the wealthy ruling class have been unsuccessful in undermining support for women's rights, including the right to choose to have an abortion. It is a reflection of the fact that working people—men and women—are fighting and resisting the assault on democratic rights, their standard of living, union organization, and basic dignity of human beings.

The ruling class, under successive Democratic and Republican party administrations on both the state and federal level, has been successful in making access to abortion nearly impossible for millions of working women. This includes the denial of Medicaid funds for abortion under the Hyde amendment in 1976, the growing number of counties where abortion services are unavailable, laws subjecting young women to undemocratic "parental notification," and measures to impose waiting periods in order to receive an abortion. These moves all have a class bias, in that they affect working women in disproportionate numbers.

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

Freedom from enforced motherhood is a precondition to women's liberation. Only with the right to control their own bodies can women begin to reassert their full human

identity as productive, not only reproductive, human beings. It helps open the door to women being equals in all aspects of social and political life, hastening the development of a proletarian vanguard of fighting women and men who can build a mighty social movement that heads in a revolutionary direction in the United States.

It is for these very reasons that the superwealthy rulers fear abortion rights and that fascist demagogues, such as Patrick Buchanan, put abortion rights among the central targets of his scapegoating campaign. Buchanan calls abortion a "calamity" and "the greatest tragedy in the history of mankind."

Opponents of a woman's right to choose have insisted on using the unscientific term "partial birth abortion" as part of whipping up opposition to women's rights. They portray women as irresponsible, as murderers, as destroyers of the fabric of society.

Meanwhile, bourgeois politicians warn that the closeness of the vote in the High Court means the way to defend abortion rights is to elect Democratic presidential candidate Albert Gore so that future nominations to the Supreme Court will be "abortion friendly."

In fact, the Supreme Court decision is an expression of the support in the working class and in U.S. society as a whole for abortion rights, not a result of the predominance of sympathetic justices. It is useful to recall developments in the early 1990s, when right-wingers, who began street mobilizations to shut down clinics and deny women access to abortion, were out-mobilized and decisively defeated by thousands of counterdemonstrators in city after city.

Then, in October 1992, a huge march to defend abortion rights took place in Washington, D.C. And in 1995, 100,000 more turned out in the capital. These mobilizations included unions, fighters against racist attacks, and many militant young people. As a result, the back of the rightist offensive was broken. In this way, over the years, abortion rights has become a conquest in struggle of working people.

This has taken place in the context of a steady increase of women in the workforce. As more women become workers, the fight for equal pay, for access to jobs that traditionally were male-only, and against sexist treatment is strengthened. The fight for women's rights is in the interests of all working people.

Pictures over the past months in the *Militant* of confident, militant women on picket lines, at working-class protest actions, at rallies to fight for a union and to demand immigrant rights, and protests to defend abortion rights show the real problem the employers and their government face. They also help show the stakes for the labor movement in defending abortion rights and joining the struggle for women's liberation.

Canada woodworkers set example

The strike by 12,000 members of the Industrial Allied and Woodworkers Union (IWA) on the coast of British Columbia, now joined by more than 2,000 hotel workers in the Vancouver area fighting for a contract, deserve support from workers and farmers everywhere.

Their example of united action and resistance to the bosses' profit drive shows the way forward for all working people—in Canada, the United States, and elsewhere.

The British Columbia Federation of Labor has called on unionists to refuse to handle logs from the struck companies, which include Weyerhaeuser, International Forest Products, and other forestry giants.

The woodworkers are standing up to job conditions and employer demands that will sound very familiar to many workers. The bosses want to be free to impose "flexible" schedules—that would mean changing work schedules at will, job losses, and eliminating overtime pay.

Other concessions include attacks on vacation rights and pension cutbacks. Throughout North America, employers have been driving to speed up production and stretch the workday to the max, while slashing pensions, health-care coverage, and other social gains.

The forestry companies, big-business media, and capitalist politicians are waging a propaganda campaign to try to convince other workers that we have common interests with the bosses and that "our" forest industry is in trouble with a market glut, limited access to the U.S. market, a slowdown in the Japanese market, and "high labor costs."

This is a lie. *We*, working people, have no interests in

common with *them*, the employers. The only way to defend our interests as workers is to reject the bosses' framework and fight for what our class needs, both at home and across national borders. This is what the striking IWA members are demonstrating by standing up to the lumber, paper, and pulp bosses.

The forestry strike coincides with other working-class battles in that region. Members of the Hotel, Restaurant, and Culinary Employees and Bartenders Union have set up picket lines at seven major hotels in the Vancouver area. Thousands of Vancouver area city workers organized by the Canadian Union of Public Employees are discussing strike action.

And, taking a stand for human dignity, 150 Chinese immigrants who have been imprisoned since they arrived in Canada one year ago, have revolted and occupied a prison in northern British Columbia to protest inhuman conditions and the threat of deportation by the Canadian authorities.

These fights reinforce each other. They create openings for workers to join forces, learn from each others' struggles, and reach out to broader numbers of working people.

This includes militant workers in the United States—from meat packers fighting for a union in the Midwest, to striking coal miners in the West, to Mexican-born workers opposing attacks by the immigration cops.

Support the striking forestry workers and hotel workers! Stop the deportations of Chinese immigrants—release them from prison now!

Mexico's debt bondage to U.S. imperialism

The excerpts below are from a talk presented at a socialist educational conference held in Los Angeles over the 1994-95 New Year's weekend. The entire talk appears in *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*. Copyright © 1999 Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

BY JACK BARNES

Back at the opening of this century, Porfirio Díaz—the president of Mexico whose corrupt rule helped precipitate the Mexican revolution of 1910—is said to have lamented, "Poor Mexico, so far from God and so close to the United States."

As recent events confirm, that fundamental relationship between U.S. imperialism and the rulers in Mexico has not changed. Moreover, what is happening to toilers in Mexico right now is not exceptional. It is just one variant of the future facing every country held in economic bondage to world finance capital. This relationship between oppressed and oppressor nations accelerates conflicts among the imperialist countries themselves. And it underlines the fact that, in the context of world capitalism's deflationary conditions, the stability of the imperialist countries is increasingly held in bondage to the effects of crises and breakdowns in the exploited Third World.

Until less than two weeks ago, Mexico was one of a handful of models pointed to by boosters of the so-called free-market system of how the entire "post-Cold War" world was now going to develop, grow, stabilize, and democratize together. They painted a radiant picture of economic growth, booming profits, national development, expanding democracy, better education, and rising incomes for all. Far from capitalism becoming less volatile, the new debt crisis that will eventually emerge will make the one in the 1980s look mild.

The economics and the politics of all this cannot be untangled. Those who lend vast amounts of money to reap enormous interest payments, those who seek to take over whole parts of the Third World to squeeze profits from superexploitation of workers and peasants—those same barons of finance capital simultaneously put their tentacles in every powder keg all over the world and add to its instability. They are ultimately held hostage by their own rapaciousness and by their own successes. Where have the capitalists ever had such success—on their own terms—as they have proclaimed in Mexico over the past decade?

And do not believe a word you read in the press about the irreversibility of the "trend toward democracy" in Mexico. Do not believe a word about how much the U.S. rulers and those around Zedillo in the Mexican bourgeoisie want to break up Bonapartist party rule there. Given the volatility and uncertainty in Mexico, what the bourgeoisie needs and wants is an even stronger Bonapartist state. But what is happening right now underlines both why they need a "stronger" state in Mexico and the problems they'll have in getting one.¹ We are just beginning to see the results in Mexico for working people and also for the newly arising professional and commercial petty bourgeoisie.

Zedillo can go on television next week and announce the "rescue plan" that capitalists in the United States and Mexico have worked out. But implementing it will be another matter. Even by the Mexican government's own figures, it was only two years ago that workers' real wages finally began to recover from a decade-long plunge. A lot of workers remember that as recently as 1987, prices were leaping by more than 150 percent annually.

Not everybody in Mexico is going to cheer when they hear the new president talk about permitting big U.S. banks to begin buying up Mexican banks. Millions will not look kindly on allowing Wall Street to seize more and more of the national patrimony as collateral to ensure payment of blood money on new loans. There are sure to be protests against beginning to give away little hunks of Pemex to the Yankee colossus—directly or indirectly.

1. Originating in periods of deep social crisis, a Bonapartist regime relies on a centralized executive power that presents itself as standing above conflicting class interests in order to maintain the power of the dominant social layer. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels coined the term from the experience with Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte's regime in France from 1852 to 1870, as the bourgeoisie strengthened its dominance over the working class in the wake of the retreat of the democratic revolutions of 1848-49. In Mexico the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) has used Bonapartist methods of rule since 1929 on behalf of the rising capitalist class, claiming the mantle of the revolution as a political weapon against any challenge by workers and peasants to their rule. The PRI initially presented itself as the arbiter between, on the one hand, the rebellious peasantry that powered the 1910 revolution and its allies among a small but growing industrial working class, and, on the other hand, the traditional landowning class and commercial capitalists most directly tied to U.S. and British imperialism.

In midterm elections in July 1997, the PRI for the first time ever lost its majority in the House of Deputies, as well as the powerful post of mayor of Mexico City. Between 1997 and early 1999, the PRI also lost several more state governorships; until 1989 it had filled this office in all thirty-one of Mexico's states. This shift registers the Mexican bourgeoisie's growing difficulties in maintaining the stability of its Bonapartist rule.

U.S. intervention in Colombia escalates

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

With bipartisan U.S. Congress approval of \$1.3 billion in military aid to the Colombian government over the next two years, Washington is accelerating its military and political intervention in this South American nation—all in the name of fighting drug trafficking.

As part of the massive "aid" package, more U.S. military personnel will be sent to train three Colombian "antinarcotics" army battalions. Between 100 and 150 members of the U.S. military, including members of the Seventh Special Forces Group based in Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, are training an Anti-Narcotics Battalion of the Colombian Army. Washington has built radar and electronic surveillance stations in the country.

The U.S. government will also supply the regime with an armada of 18 Blackhawk and 42 Huey military helicopters to ferry troops,

capitalist media that the U.S. military "anti-drug" efforts are inseparable from the Colombian government's bloody counterinsurgency war, which targets the guerrilla movement and working people in the countryside. The main guerrilla organizations are the 20,000-strong Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), which controls up to 40 percent of the country, and the smaller National Liberation Army (ELN).

Drug production and trade is a massive capitalist business, controlled by billionaires in both Colombia and the United States. Drug-trafficking capitalists are big landowners who fund private armies and death squads with strong ties to the Colombian military. These paramilitary gangs and the army carry out a campaign of terror against peasants and workers in the rural areas.

Regional U.S. military presence grows

U.S. moves in Colombia are part of a larger effort to beef up Washington's military presence in the region. At a hearing of the House Armed Services Committee March 23, Gen. Charles Wilhelm, commander-in-chief of the U.S. Southern Command, labeled Colombia the most "threatened nation" in the Southern Command's "Area of Responsibility." In addition to Colombia's strategic position, he pointed to Panama as an area of U.S. interest.

Ever since the U.S. rulers were compelled to hand back the Panama Canal to Panama on Dec. 31, 1999, and transfer the Southern Command to Puerto Rico, they have been seeking another base of operations in Central and South America. In his statement to the Congressional subcommittee, Wilhelm outlined his view of "disquieting changes during the past year in the region's political climate." In addition to the guerrilla insurgency in Colombia, he pointed to instability in Panama and insisted on Washington maintaining the military capability to "en-



Gen. Barry McCaffrey, White House "drug czar," visits Colombia in February. U.S. "antidrug" funds for Colombian army will bolster its bloody counterinsurgency war.



and will hand \$500 million to the Colombian army and police. In addition, \$52 million will go to regional "antidrug" programs in Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador.

Washington has sharply escalated its involvement in Colombia in the last two years. U.S. "counternarcotics aid" to the regime went from \$50 million in 1998 to \$309 million last year, mushrooming to \$1.3 billion for the next two years. The Colombian government is now the fourth-largest recipient of U.S. military funding after the regimes of Israel, Egypt, and Jordan.

The U.S. government and big-business media claim this growing foreign intervention in Colombia is essential in waging a "war on drugs." The U.S. Senate's approval in late June of the \$1.3 billion package "will greatly enhance counterdrug efforts in Colombia and neighboring Andean countries in their struggle against illicit production and trafficking, and drug-funded criminal organizations," stated Gen. Barry McCaffrey, White House "drug policy director" and former Gulf War military commander.

In fact, it is widely acknowledged in the

sure the permanent neutrality of the canal".

"We must better position our assets to conduct sustained operations" throughout the region, said Wilhelm. The U.S. Southern Command has established the port of Manta, Ecuador, as a major base of operations, and signed a 10-year access agreement with the Ecuadoran government last November. The U.S. base "in Manta is my number one priority," the general declared. The Southern Command also plans to set up bases on the Dutch colonies of Curaçao and Aruba.

The U.S. rulers are worried about the social upheaval throughout that region of South America, from Peru to Venezuela.

One source of concern is Ecuador, where popular rebellions have already toppled two governments in the past three years in response to those regimes' brutal attempts to impose economic austerity measures. Massive protests have also shaken Bolivia and Paraguay recently.

While U.S. capitalist politicians decry drug trafficking in Colombia and seek to pin responsibility for it on the antigovernment guerrillas, they fail to mention that the production and trade of drugs is a capitalist business in the hands of billionaires both in Colombia and the United States. The capitalists in both countries fund, organize, and reap the benefits of the drug business.

Los Angeles airline workers win union

BY MARK FRIEDMAN

LOS ANGELES—After a more than two-year organizing drive, which included marches, walkouts, vigils, and testifying before the city council, Argenbright workers at Los Angeles Airport (LAX) will now be represented by the Service Employees International Union. The 600 workers are baggage screeners, wheelchair attendants, and baggage handlers contracted by the major airlines. The final tally was 285 for and 50 opposed. Argenbright immediately agreed to honor a similar balloting process at the San Francisco airport.

At one terminal controlled by Northwest, Hawaiian, and Air Canada, the employers

fired 200 soon-to-be-union members on June 24. They accomplished this by terminating the contract with Argenbright and contracting with Aviation Safeguards, another nonunion outfit. Under pressure from the workers fighting to retain their jobs, the Los Angeles City Council voted to delay the renewal of Northwest's operating agreement.

"People have worked here for up to 13 years and now they are out of a job," stated Dionicia Robinson, a fired worker and union activist. "We are demanding that workers with more than one year seniority be immediately hired by Aviation Safeguards. This is union busting, we have fought for

more than two and a half years to form a union and 95 percent voted union in a straw poll organized last year by Respect at LAX, a coalition of labor, religious and community groups and individuals. You can't survive on \$5.75 with no benefits."

Less than five Argenbright workers were hired by Aviation Safeguards, which is paying \$8.76 an hour without benefits, due to the implementation of the city's Living Wage law on June 20. Some 100 Argenbright workers were never given an interview by the new contractor, who clearly does not want the pro-union work force.

"We decided to join the union because we have no rights, no medical and dental coverage. I was going to vote union tomorrow, but we were put out the door," said Tommy Woo, who has worked at Argenbright for two years.

A march at LAX June 29 attracted about 40 fired workers, several members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) union, and a delegation of United Steelworkers of America Road Warriors, who have been locked out by Kaiser Aluminum in Spokane, Washington, for nearly two years. They received support from passengers and Teamsters-organized Northwest flight attendants. Ramp workers at the airline were also furious about the bosses' decision to fire the workers who had spoken at IAM union meetings and in the ramp break room appealing for support over the course of the organizing drive.

Hotel workers in L.A. area fight to organize union

BY MARK FRIEDMAN

LOS ANGELES—Nearly daily protests by workers involved in a union organizing drive at Santa Monica's Loews Hotel are winning support.

The Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union (HERE) Local 814 is in an organizing drive at the luxury Loews Hotel after recently winning union certification of workers at the nearby Fairmont Miramar hotel.

"We need a living wage, not a minimum wage," chanted some 150 protesters who marched June 27 in support of unionization at Loews. The action attracted other HERE members, community activists from Santa Monicans for Responsible Tourism, high school students, and a handful of students from Santa Monica Community College.

Vera Miranda, who has worked at Loews for 11 years, told the protesters, "We want the right to organize freely without harassment. The contract at Miramar inspired us to fight to get the same wages, benefits, and job security. But when we launched the public organizing campaign on May 25, Loews hired a special security force, and a notorious union-busting labor firm, Cruz and Associates, to break our efforts to organize the nearly 400 workers. We will not be intimidated."

Julio Aviles, a HERE Local 11 member from a different hotel, said, "I am here because I know the benefits of a union. I've worked 14 years at union hotels. We need

to organize Loews and the others."

The Santa Monica City Council has been considering a "living wage" ordinance that would require hotels to double wages paid to about 3,000 hotel workers. The proposal for the pay raise would increase the minimum wage to about \$10.69 an hour for workers who currently receive \$6.50-\$8.00 an hour. Hotels, backed by local businesses, are fighting this with their own ballot proposal.

In another development, home care workers, more than 72,000 of whom work in Los Angeles County, have been demonstrating

for wage increases and medical benefits. Last year they joined Service Employees International Union Local 434B. About 300 protested in downtown Los Angeles June 27 with their "Invisible No More" T-shirts. They currently earn \$6.25 an hour with no benefits. Nearly 85 percent of home-care workers are African American and Latina women. Representatives from 20 community groups joined the rally.

Mark Friedman is a member of the International Association of Machinists Local 2785 at Los Angeles International Airport.

—LETTERS—

Protest killing of Black man

Some 80 people attended a meeting at New Galilee Missionary Baptist Church on the east side of Detroit on June 28 to plan a protest around the death of a Black man at the hands of security guards in the parking lot in front of the Lord and Taylor store at Fairlane mall in Dearborn, a suburb just west of Detroit.

Frederick Finley died June 22 when security guards at Lord and Taylor put a chokehold on him, using the gold chain he was wearing as a garrote. He had interceded to prevent the guards from handcuffing his 12-year-old stepdaughter, who the guards said was trying to steal a \$4 bracelet. The June 28 meeting issued a call for a protest

outside Lord and Taylor at Fairlane mall at 6:00 p.m. July 5.

Chuck Guerra
Detroit, Michigan

UAW fight at Accuride

Members of United Auto Workers Local 2036 at Accuride in Henderson, Kentucky, continue to pull picket duty and are persisting in their efforts to negotiate a fair contract. The 400 workers were forced out on strike in February 1998 by the maker of giant wheels for Peterbilt, Ford, General Motors, Mack, Navistar, and others.

After making an unconditional offer to return to work at the end of March 1998, the company locked them out. In Septem-

ber 1999, the UAW International cut the local's strike benefits and health insurance. On June 24 they held a "Mini-Rally" and cleanup day in the union parking lot. A couple of dozen workers cleared garbage, cut up firewood, hauled off brush, and feasted on barbeque, while discussing plans to continue their fight.

Marian Russell
Cape Girardeau, Illinois

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.

Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

South Korea marchers say 'U.S. troops out!'

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Thousands of people in the south Korean capital of Seoul marked the 50th anniversary of the start of the Korean War with a June 25 march demanding the withdrawal of all U.S. troops from the country. "Let's kick out the U.S. military," shouted 2,500 students and other marchers.

In Maehyang-ri, on the coast southwest of the capital, hundreds of villagers and their supporters continued protests begun in early May, calling for an end to bombing runs and other U.S. military exercises.

The U.S. and south Korean governments have insisted that the troops will stay.

Washington has maintained a massive military presence in south Korea since the end of the Korean War in 1953. Around 4 million people died in that war, in which Washington led an invasion under the United

Nations flag. Despite massive destruction and loss of lives, the U.S. imperialists failed to conquer the north, where working people overturned capitalist rule. Since Washington signed an armistice dividing the country in two, north and south Korea have remained officially at war.

Washington and Seoul have maintained an aggressive military and diplomatic stance against north Korea and have sought to isolate it economically. The 37,000 U.S. troops in the south conduct yearly exercises with the half-million strong south Korean army.

In recent years, a rise in political protests and union struggles has opened up democratic space for the population in the south. The demand for the reunification of the country—for which the Pyongyang government in the north has long campaigned—is increasingly being expressed among work-

ing people in the south, despite the fact that its public advocacy is still illegal.

The recent Pyongyang summit between the heads of state of north and south Korea reflected these changes, and dealt a blow to the demonization of the workers state in the north by Washington and Seoul. Washington is a little harder-pressed than before to publicly justify its military presence.

Nonetheless, the U.S. rulers cannot reconcile themselves to the existence of the workers state in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and they are concerned about the rebelliousness of working people in the south. On a visit to south Korea June 23, U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright said that "the situation in North Korea, while promising, has not been resolved."

Albright described the troops as a force

for "stability"—the same word earlier used by the south Korean president Kim Dae Jung—and, in the words of a *Washington Post* reporter, said they will stay "for the foreseeable future." She stressed that "the United States is a Pacific power as well as an Atlantic power." The message could not be clearer that the U.S. troops and weaponry are aimed at Koreans in both the north and south.

As the streets of Seoul echoed to the chants of "Yankee go home," Seoul canceled a military parade and battle reenactment scheduled to commemorate the war's 50th anniversary. The move followed Pyongyang's cancellation of all ceremonies. At the same time Kim Dae Jung ordered south Korea's military to remain on alert.

Red Cross officials from south and north Korea signed an agreement June 30 to begin reuniting families divided for more than 50 years—a step outlined at the recent summit. South Korean officials estimate that there are nearly eight million people in the south with relatives in the north.

The agreement also addressed the situation of prisoners of war held in the south. The *New York Times* reported that "the prisoners were kept...for several reasons: most refused to denounce Communism...and the south sought to use them as bargaining chips in negotiations with the North."

Meanwhile, U.S. corporations continue to buy into south Korean conglomerates weakened by the capitalist economic crisis that rolled through Asia in the late 1990s. On June 29 Ford Motor Co. beat out several competitors to win buying rights to the Daewoo Motor Co. The negotiating price of \$6.9 billion does not include the assumption of any of Daewoo's estimated \$18 billion debt. The bargain purchase of a company with a productive capacity of two million vehicles a year provides Ford's owners with a production base in Asia, a region they hope will provide an expanding market.

A Ford spokesperson sought to dampen union fears of mass layoffs. In April unions organized stoppages at Daewoo and other south Korean auto manufacturers to oppose the company's sale to foreign investors.

The combativity of working people in south Korea—and the nature of the government in the south—was exemplified during a hotel workers strike in Seoul that began in early June. On June 29 some 2,000 riot police mounted a predawn raid on the Lotte Hotel, employing smoke bombs, batons, and riot shields to expel 1,100 striking unionists. The workers, who defended themselves from the assault for two hours, have been demanding wage increases for all and improved conditions for part-time and casual workers.

120 anti-Navy protesters jailed in Puerto Rico

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—Opponents of the U.S. military's use of the Puerto Rican island of Vieques for war practices held demonstrations and other actions around Puerto Rico on July 4. Meanwhile, dozens of protesters have been jailed by U.S. authorities here.

Thousands of people rallied outside the U.S. prison in the San Juan suburb of Guaynabo where dozens of leaders and members of the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) have been jailed since June 30.

Meanwhile, 8,000 marched and rallied in the southern city of Ponce. The demonstration, called by the coalition "All the South with Vieques," was addressed by Ismael Guadalupe, a leader of the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques, and Carlos Zenón, a leader of the Vieques fishermen. It was supported by the mayor of Ponce, Rafael Cordero, of the pro-Commonwealth Popular Democratic Party. Guadalupe called for the immediate end of U.S. bombing practice on the island and the withdrawal of the U.S. military.

The protests accelerated in the last week of June when the U.S. Navy resumed the first large-scale use of the bombing range in over a year. Ships and planes from the battle group of the aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* dropped more than 1,000 rounds on the firing range.

On June 25, a group of Vieques youth on horseback entered the U.S. military restricted zone in the early morning hours. "The resumption of the bombings threatens the safety, health, and lives of Vieques residents," said Harry Félix Matta, one of the protesters.

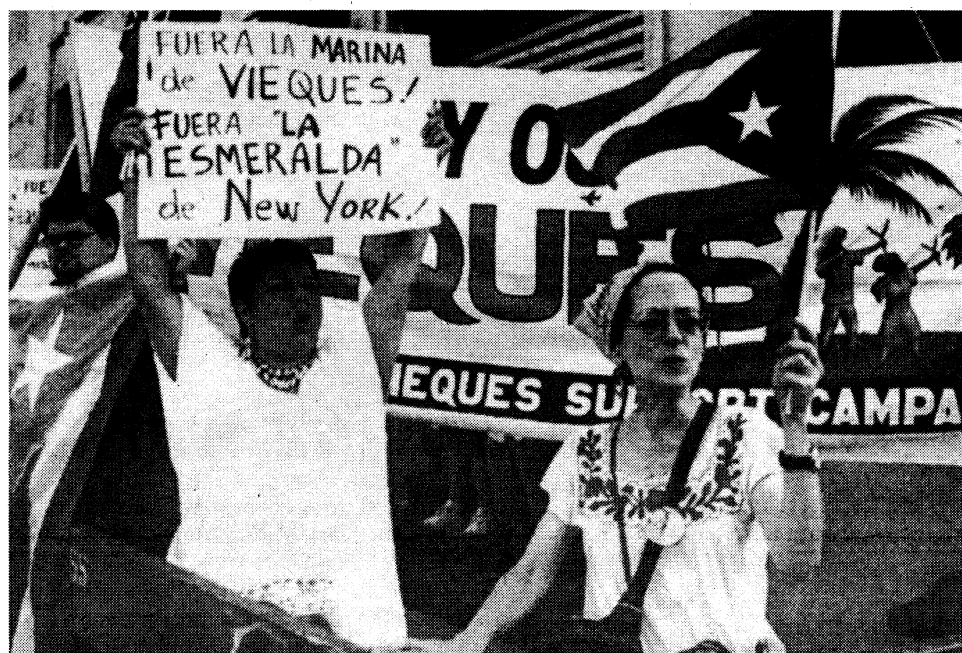
A similar group of 16 youth, mostly students from the law school at the University of Puerto Rico, briefly entered the Navy zone July 3 before they were arrested. A student assembly had voted to organize the protest.

Since May 4, when U.S. marshals, FBI agents, and Marines evicted protesters on Vieques territory used by the Pentagon for naval bombing practice, a total of 600 Puerto Ricans—trade unionists, fishermen, students, environmental activists, and others—have been detained for "trespassing" there. The numbers increased in the last week of June, with more than 180 who were arrested and released on condition they post \$1,000 bail within a few days.

PIP members have defied the bail requirement. On June 30, judge Jesús Castellanos ordered them rearrested and held until their trials, due within 60 days. U.S. marshals fanned out across Puerto Rico on the weekend before July 4, detaining more than 120 PIP leaders and activists, including many of its candidates in the upcoming elections. The first to be rearrested were PIP vice-president Fernando Martín and Vance Thomas, the party's candidate for mayor of San Juan.

"We do not recognize any moral authority nor the legitimacy of the U.S. court in this matter," said senator and PIP leader Manuel Rodríguez Orellana.

The first two to have been tried so far are



Dozens protested July 4 in front of *USS Intrepid* in New York demanding U.S. Navy leave Puerto Rican island of Vieques. Sign also condemns presence in New York of *Esmeralda*, a ship used by U.S.-backed dictatorship in Chile in 1970s to torture opponents.

PIP president Rubén Berrios and Jorge Fernández, who were sentenced to token sentences of six and four hours, respectively.

Of the initial 200 protesters who were detained and removed from Vieques on May 4, none was charged with a crime. The hundreds who have entered the bombing range since then have been charged with misdemeanor trespass, which carries a maximum penalty of six months in jail and a \$500 fine. The requirement of \$1,000 bail represents another escalation in Washington's offen-

sive against the anticolonial movement.

In New York on July 4, in the midst of a big naval procession staged on the Hudson River to celebrate the U.S. independence day, dozens demonstrated in front of the *USS Intrepid* Museum to demand the U.S. Navy get out of Vieques and expose Washington's colonial rule over Puerto Rico. The action was sponsored by the Vieques Support Campaign and other New York groups.

Martin Koppel contributed to this article.

Two S. African parties fuse, challenge ANC's antiracist policies

BY T.J. FIGUEROA

PRETORIA, South Africa—The two political parties most vociferous in their defense of class privilege accorded to whites in South Africa have merged.

The New National Party (NNP) and the Democratic Party (DP) announced June 24 they had formed the Democratic Alliance, with the principal goal of challenging the ruling African National Congress (ANC), which controls 66 percent of the seats in Parliament. The two will be separate in name only until national elections in 2004 to avoid a loss of parliamentary seats, but for all other intents and purposes will function as one entity, including joint campaigning in local elections later this year.

The NNP is the remains of the National Party, which presided over apartheid white-minority rule from its birth in 1948 until the democratic, nonracial elections in 1994. The party changed its name in 1998 in an attempt to slough off some of its past.

Having won about 20 percent of the national vote in 1994, the party slumped to about 7 percent last year. Today it also draws support from a section of the black population—those whom apartheid classified as

"Coloreds," who had relative privileges in housing, education, and employment compared with Africans, the majority. However, last year a larger number of so-called Coloreds from the working class and middle classes voted for the ANC than before.

The main beneficiary of the NNP's declining support was the Democratic Party, historically the liberal capitalist opposition to National Party rule.

The DP went from less than 2 percent of the vote in 1994 to about 10 percent last year. A host of prominent right-wingers from the NNP have also defected to the DP.

The Democratic Party and its leader, Tony Leon, have emerged as the most vocal opponents of ANC-sponsored measures to wipe out apartheid's racist legacy. The party has sharply opposed affirmative action measures, called for a repeal of labor legislation guaranteeing workers' rights, and attacked the ANC as corrupt and "racist."

It campaigned last year under the slogan "Fight Back"—which many working people summed up as "fight blacks." This stance has earned it kudos from the big-business press, which continually insists on the need for "an effective opposition" to the ANC.

Leon, who heads the new entity with NNP leader Marthinus van Schalkwyk as his deputy, emphasizes that its goal is to win growing black support. Both parties give lip service to nonracialism.

The ANC's National Working Committee called the merger an attempt to "bring back racism through the back door." It said its purpose "is to weaken the ANC and the government and thereby block the transformation process. In the event of the [success of] this merger, which goes under the new tag Democratic Alliance, succeeding in weakening the government, the end result would be to justify their timeworn assumption that a black government cannot succeed."

Democratic Alliance spokespeople responded by charging the ANC with "racial prejudice" and "sowing the seeds of needless racial conflict."

DP and NNP leaders say apartheid is a thing of the past and therefore no special measures are needed to dismantle its legacy. They argue that affirmative action is discriminatory to whites and reject the nonracial program and record of the ANC, claiming it is out to help Africans at everyone else's expense.