

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Radio interviews socialist candidate James Harris

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 64/NO.39 OCTOBER 16, 2000

Striking Los Angeles bus drivers win support

Reach out to passengers, unionists to defend public transport

BY NAN BAILEY

LOS ANGELES—"All I want is a little respect," sang many of the 2,000 striking bus drivers and their supporters gathered outside City Hall, as they danced to a recording of the famous song by Aretha Franklin.

This confident mood marked a September 29 rally in support of the strike by the United Transportation Union (UTU) against the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) as the strike entered its third week. Mechanics and clerks, who have joined the UTU-organized drivers on the picket lines, were also at the spirited rally. The mechanics are members of the Amalgamated Transit Union and the clerks are organized by the Transportation Communications International Union.

Many other unionists joined the protest. T-shirts and signs identified members of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union (HERE), International Association of Machinists, National Association of Letter Carriers, and American Federation of Television and Radio Artists—one of the unions representing actors on strike against the giant advertising companies.

Bus operators are fighting around the issues of work hours, overtime pay, work rules, and privatization of bus lines.

The MTA is proposing to "put about 400 operators on a four-day workweek requiring them to be on duty for 13 hours but paid for only 10, with no overtime," the union explained in the October issue of its newspaper, *UTU News*. "The three hours of unpaid time would be spent killing time in MTA recreation rooms or preparing for runs."

"Overtime is a significant part of the average bus driver's income, and the UTU es-

timates that the four-day week outlined by the MTA would reduce an average operator's earnings by 15%. Bus drivers earn \$8 an hour at the entry level; the most experienced make \$20.72 an hour."

The strikers also oppose the MTA's proposal to contract out bus lines in the Sun Valley to private companies.

"I'm here because there is so much in-

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Some 2,000 UTU-organized bus drivers and supporters marched and rallied at the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's headquarters September 21 in Los Angeles.

Militant/Elizabeth Lariscy

Strikes, protests engulf Yugoslavia

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

A wave of protests and strikes has spread across Serbia to demand that Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic concede defeat to challenger Vojislav Kostunica in the

country's presidential election that took place September 24. Roads and railways have been blocked, two major coal mines vital to Yugoslavia's electricity were shut down, and thousands of students have ral-

lied throughout the country.

Leading up to and following the elections, the Clinton administration has cranked up the pressure to remove Milosevic, having provided massive funding to the opposition forces and reminding the world that the devastating sanctions imposed on Yugoslavia will remain until he has been removed from office.

In response to the demonstrations, Milosevic announced a crackdown October 3, ordering the arrest of 13 organizers of a strike at the Kolubara mine, Serbia's largest coal mine. Truckloads of cops and soldiers swarmed into the mine compound after the regime declared the strike threatened electricity service. The cops backed off when up to 20,000 working people came to the miners' aid. One bus pushed aside a cop car blocking its way.

The protests were sparked by Milosevic's announcement of plans for a runoff presidential election, scheduled for October 8. On September 26 the nation's federal election commission called for the second round of voting after releasing figures stating that opposition candidate Kostunica failed to win an outright majority, winning 48 percent to 40 percent for Milosevic. Opposition forces declared that Kostunica won the ballot, receiving 54 percent of the vote to 35 percent for Milosevic.

On October 4 Yugoslavia's highest court

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The Working Class & the Transformation of Learning

The Fraud of Education Reform under Capitalism

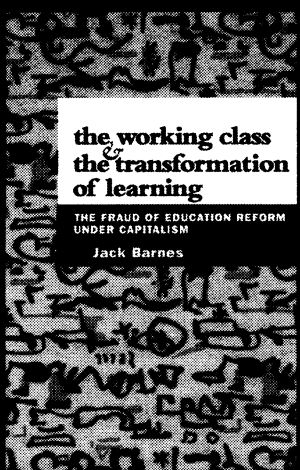
By Jack Barnes

"Until society is reorganized so that education is a human activity from the time we are very young until the time we die, there will be no education worthy of working, creating humanity. That is the historic truth." \$3.00

Available from bookstores listed on page 12.

NEW!

FROM PATHFINDER



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Palestinians face brutal Israeli crackdown

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

The Israeli government has unleashed brutal repression, using heavily armed troops and helicopter gunships against protests by Palestinians across Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. Israeli soldiers have attacked crowds of demonstrators with stun grenades, tear gas canisters, rubber-covered metal bullets, live ammunition, and armor-piercing rockets. As of October 5 the toll stood at 67 dead and more than 1,300 wounded, all but one or two of them Palestinians hit by Israeli gunfire and rocket attacks.

The latest conflict arose after the breakdown of talks between Yasir Arafat, Palestine Liberation Organization chairperson and president of the Palestinian National Authority, and Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak. The talks, sponsored by Washington in a high-profile session with U.S. president William Clinton, broke down when the Palestinian officials refused to accept demands by Washington and Tel Aviv to forfeit claims to sovereignty over Jerusalem. The Palestinian National Authority has nominal control of parts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, areas which Palestinian leaders are seeking to proclaim as a state with Jerusalem as its capital. Israeli military forces occupied the Palestinian areas soon after the lat-

Continued on Page 12

Marchers in Omaha back union drive at ConAgra

BY JOE SWANSON

OMAHA, Nebraska—"What do we want? Union! When do we want it? Now!"

This chant, along with "¡Si se puede!" (Yes we can) in Spanish, echoed along the streets as more than 250 meatpacking workers and supporters marched through downtown Omaha and held a highly spirited rally in front of ConAgra's corporate headquarters September 27. The action, held the day before the agribusiness giant's annual shareholders meeting, was organized by the United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) and Omaha Together One Community (OTOC), an organization of 38 religious congregations.

The march was led by a brightly decorated float, followed by a Mexican mariachi band, that displayed the UFCW logo and posters of almost 70 UFCW locals that organize ConAgra workers in 19 states and Canada. About 60 percent of ConAgra's 35,000 production workers are unionized. Marchers almost to a person carried signs with the UFCW logo together with a bilingual slogan, "Demand Justice and Respect! Demandamos Respeto y Justicia! No Fear! Sin Miedo!"

The first two speakers at the rally were leaders of the UFCW organizing drive at ConAgra's Northern States Beef plant, located in South Omaha, where the majority of the Latino meat packers live and work.

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Bush, Gore defend oil giants, scapegoat OPEC — page 8

See's candy workers strike against bosses' concession demands

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

SAN FRANCISCO—"Was the company surprised! They never believed it. I waited 30 years to see the unity we have here. People all said, 'We're fed up and we're going on strike,'" said Judy Rivera, a utility worker at the See's candy factory in South San Francisco.

Rivera is president of Local 125 of the Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM), which represents 300 workers on strike at this plant as well as See's candy plants in three other locations. Workers at See's set up picket lines September 21; the company had never been struck before.

Workers are fighting for a higher starting wage and for the company to respect seniority. Currently, starting pay is \$6.50 an hour. Workers can only get raises after working 800 hours, and benefits and seniority only after 1,000 hours, but in many cases See's lays off workers before that. When they are recalled from layoff, they must start accumulating hours all over again.

"People are called back from layoff out of seniority. We have plant-wide seniority but in reality the company picks and chooses," said Paulette Stabile, a shipping clerk who has worked at See's for 37 years.

The company is demanding a workweek of four 10-hour days, with overtime paid only after 40 hours in one week. The workers want to maintain eight-hour shifts. They are also demanding improved pensions.

"There is a big turnover with new hires because of the fast pace of the production line. The strike is to change conditions for

the better for everyone," said Rivera.

One worker who had worked only three days before the strike explained that she joined the strike because of experiences with abuse by employers at a previous job.

"I knew that if they're on strike, it's for better conditions for everyone, including me and that's why I'm supporting the strike," said the worker, who asked that her name not be used.

The company has beefed up security and tried to intimidate the strikers by using video cameras.

The strike has already won support from other workers. Safeway workers and others have donated food. UPS workers and members of the International Association of Machinists at United Airlines have stopped by the picket line at the plant, which is located near the San Francisco airport.

Jimmy Lee, who has worked at Guitar Chocolate for seven years and is a member of International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union Local 6, reported, "Every day I spend a couple hours at the picket lines and I will keep doing it until the strike is over. About 10 workers from Guitar Chocolate come to picket during their



Militant/Larry Lane

Pickets at See's candy factory in San Francisco. It is the first strike at this company.

lunch every day."

"See's has a plant in Carson, California, whose workers are in Local 83 of our union. We want to let them know there is potential for us to go there, just like the Earthgrains strikers in Fort Payne, Alabama, sent people to California," reported Ken Young, business agent of BCTGM. The workers at the Earthgrains bakery in Alabama, members

of the same union as those at See's, won important contract gains through their recent strike, during which strikers visited fellow workers at Earthgrains bakeries in several states who responded by honoring their picket lines.

Deborah Liatos is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union.

Norway unionists back Canada nickel strikers

BY ROSEMARY RAY

TORONTO—Members of the Norwegian Union of Chemical Industry Workers who work at the Falconbridge nickel and cobalt refinery in Kristiansand, Norway, have extended their support to 1,250 nickel miners on strike against Falconbridge in Sudbury, Ontario. The union sent a letter to Falconbridge saying they planned to refuse to process struck work from Sudbury. The Kristiansand refinery processes raw material from Falconbridge's mines in Sudbury and has been operating at 60 percent of capacity since the strike in Canada began August 1.

The strikers are refusing to give in to the

company's demands for concessions that would gut seniority, health and safety, and union representation on the job, as well as increase the use of nonunion labor.

The miners, members of Mine Mill/Canadian Auto Workers Local 598, are winning some ground in this fight. On September 15 a Superior Court justice in Sudbury denied Falconbridge's attempt to get a court injunction limiting the union's ability to hold up vehicles of supervisors crossing the picket line who are working in the smelter during the strike.

According to the company Local 598 had agreed to a "picket line protocol" before the strike, agreeing to a 10-minute maximum delay for vehicles crossing the line. A supervisor testifying against the union at the court hearing said strikers held up a bus he was on for three hours at the picket line and eventually company officials gave up and ordered the bus to turn around.

Falconbridge is the world's third-largest producer of nickel, behind Russia's RAO Norilsk Nickel mines in Siberia and Inco Ltd., in Sudbury. To become more competitive against these rival nickel producers, Falconbridge is planning to develop the world's deepest base metal mine, called the Onaping Depth project, beneath its current mines in Sudbury, which would extract ore from depths of more than 10,000 feet.

Falconbridge has boasted it could withstand the miners' strike "indefinitely," but

the potential closing of its refining capacity in Norway and the fact it has been forced to cancel all cobalt deliveries to its customers in Europe and the United States by November 1 tell a different story.

Rosemary Ray is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 5338.

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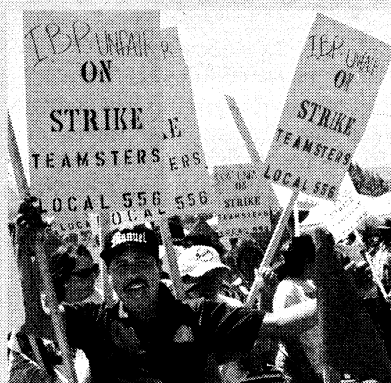
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THE MILITANT

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Abortion pill OK: a gain for women's rights

BY MARGARET TROWE

Registering a step forward in the fight for women's rights, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration September 28 approved the marketing of mifepristone, the first nonsurgical abortion method available in the United States. The medication, also known as RU-486 or the "morning after pill," has been available in European countries for more than a decade. The announcement met a polarized response from supporters and opponents of a woman's right to choose abortion.

The federal agency's approval of the drug will make it possible for women to terminate early pregnancies by taking the prescription oral medication, which will be available not only at abortion clinics but at doctors' offices, thus affording more privacy to those who seek abortions.

Government restrictions and rightist assaults have severely curtailed the ability of women, especially working women, to have an abortion. For example, there are no medical facilities that provide abortion in 86 percent of counties and 33 percent of cities in the United States, according to a 1998 study. The federal government has denied the use of Medicaid funds for abortion since passage of the Hyde amendment in 1976. The years-long delay in marketing of RU-486, which included a Federal Drug Administration ban on its importation in 1989, has been part and parcel of the efforts to limit the ability of women to terminate pregnancies under doctors' care.

While leaders of women's rights organizations such as the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) hailed the decision as long overdue, some capitalist politicians denounced it. Republican presidential hopeful George W. Bush said the decision was "wrong" and expressed concern that the availability of the procedure would make abortion "more and more common rather than more and more rare." Studies in Europe show that the frequency of abortions has not increased since the drug was made available some 10 years ago.

Rep. J.C. Watts Jr., chairman of the House Republican Conference, said electing Bush will reverse the decision. "Do-it-yourself abortion has no place in a civilized society," Watts said. Rep. Tom Coburn, a Republican from Oklahoma, said he planned to introduce legislation to limit access to the drug. Patrick Buchanan, the Reform Party presidential candidate whose anti-woman scapegoating is a central plank of his incipient fascist organizing efforts, called mifepristone the "death pill" and vowed to fight to ban it.

Kate Michelman, president of NARAL, which has endorsed Albert Gore for president, said, "While this is a sweet victory, it could be short-lived if we elect an anti-choice president."

James Harris, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, called the Federal Drug Administration ruling "a victory for all working people." Harris said, "This victory is a product of the support in the working class for the rights of women, including the right to choose abortion." Harris warned against having confidence in the Democratic Party to defend women's rights. "Over the past eight years, the Clinton/Gore administration has presided over a continued erosion of access to abortion, and outright restrictions, such as parental notification laws. It is this administration that has carried through massive assaults on working people. Clinton vowed to 'end welfare as we know

it," Harris said, "and he has fulfilled that threat, in addition to the rulers' assault through expanded use of the death penalty and attacks on Social Security."

"The Democrats, like the Republicans," Harris said, "represent the wealthy rulers who benefit from sexism, racism, and other prejudices that divide the working class."

Every gain we have won for women's rights—from decriminalization of abortion to affirmative action—has been won by the struggle of the women's movement, the union movement, and the gains made by the civil rights movement. The reason rightists were defeated in their efforts to shut down abortion clinics in the early 1990s is because

supporters of women's rights mobilized in the thousands in city after city and pushed them back."

Harris encouraged women's rights supporters to attend the World March of Women October 15 in Washington, which has among its demands defending a woman's right to abortion.

Pro-choice activists picket abortion foes

BY TIM LENNOX

BOSTON—Chanting, "What do we want? Abortion rights. When do we want them? Now!" and "Not the church, not the state, women must decide their fate," 50 defenders of a woman's right to choose formed a gauntlet that some 2,000 abortion foes had to pass as they marched in the 14th annual "Respect Life Walk" on October 1.

The countermobilization was organized by the Abortion Access Project. The protesters' signs not only defended abortion rights, they also explained the consequences for women when abortion is illegal. They read, "80,000 women die from illegal abortions worldwide each year" and "Over 200,000 women died from illegal abortions before *Roe v. Wade*."

In an interview with the *Boston Herald*, Cardinal Bernard Law, Catholic archbishop of Boston, reflected the gloom that hung over the antiabortion forces—that was evident at their rally—since the decision earlier in the week by the Food and Drug Administration to approve the use of RU-486, an abortion pill. "It has changed the landscape. It makes abortion accessible in a new way. It's rather chilling," Law, who later spoke to the rally, said.

In contrast, the overwhelmingly young pro-choice picket line was fired up. More than 30 of the participants came from Simmons College, a predominately women's school here. They were organized by the Feminist Union. Holly, a sophomore at Simmons College and a member of the



Militant
Students predominated among the 100 women's rights supporters who mobilized October 1 in Boston to oppose annual anti-choice "Respect Life Walk."

Feminist Union, explained, "We need to be out here defending our rights. If they take that away, what's next?" Students from Boston University also participated.

Students at Simmons College plan to hold a send-off rally for participants in the "World

March of Women," which will be held in Washington on October 15.

Tim Lennox is a member of Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

Pathfinder books sell at festival in Madrid

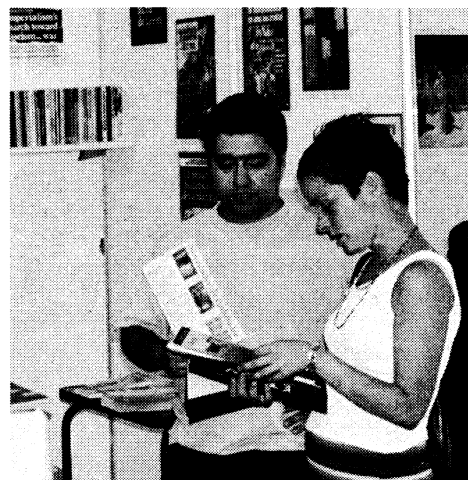
BY LUIS MADRID
AND DEBBIE DELACORTE

MADRID—Books and pamphlets on working-class politics in the United States and on the Cuban revolution drew the most interest at the Pathfinder booth during the annual festival sponsored here September 15–17 by the Communist Party of Spain (PCE). Two Pathfinder representatives found a similar interest when they visited some of the main bookstores in this capital city.

In all, the six-day effort resulted in the selling of more than 280 Pathfinder titles, amounting to \$2,300.

A team of volunteers from the United Kingdom, Sweden, and the United States staffed the New York-based publisher's booth at the Communist Party's event. It was the fourth time Pathfinder had a stand at the yearly festival, the first being in 1996.

PCE delegations from across the Spanish state set up large stands featuring food from their respective regions, and as did representatives of Communist Parties from 20 or so other countries. A few dozen solidarity and political groups, publishers, and others also had booths. Late-night concerts by known local artists were organized to help attract youth.



Militant/Luis Madrid
Discussing books on working-class politics at Pathfinder booth at Madrid festival.

The Spanish-language edition of *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* by Jack Barnes was Pathfinder's bestseller at the event. Many of the 47 people who bought the pamphlet pointed to the recently initiated debate in ruling circles here on "education reform" as a preparatory move for attacks on public education. Others expressed their interest in the broader class questions taken up in the booklet.

Carlos Tielve was among those who purchased the pamphlet together with a subscription to *Perspectiva Mundial* as a special offer. Two years ago he had stopped at the Pathfinder stand and picked up a copy of *Habla Malcolm X* (Malcolm X speaks). Commenting that he is interested in news and analysis on the class struggle in the United States, Tielve returned the following day with a friend to buy more literature.

Protests here and throughout Europe by farmers, fishermen, and truckers against skyrocketing fuel prices were the backdrop to the discussions that those visiting the Pathfinder booth engaged in. The discussions often took up the growing turmoil of the capitalist system and the need for a revolutionary working-class party. Twelve people purchased *Capitalism's World Disorder* to get answers to these questions.

After a discussion on *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*, three university students

from Murcia, in the southeast, pooled their money and bought two copies of this collection of speeches by the Argentine-born leader of the Cuban revolution. The three women said they planned to organize discussions on it. In addition, the Center for Studies on Che Guevara, which had a booth at the festival, bought 15 copies, for a total of 27 of this title.

Of those who purchased the eight subscriptions and 23 copies of *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 11 copies of the *Militant*, many said they were particularly interested in its explanation of the U.S. class struggle. Two young visitors from Berlin said they appreciate the *Militant*, whose web site they visit regularly.

Some 2,000 copies of a brochure specially prepared for promotion in Spain of Pathfinder's Spanish-language titles were distributed at the event.

Sales to commercial outlets in Madrid

During their stay in Madrid, Pathfinder sales representatives visited a bookstore located in the heart of the Gran Vía, a commercial thoroughfare here, where the head of imports met with them for an hour and a half. The store purchased five copies each of Pathfinder's newest titles, *Capitalism's World Disorder* by Jack Barnes and *Che Guevara Talks to Young People* in Spanish-language editions. After a careful review of the catalog, she also purchased *Polemics in Marxist Philosophy* and *Democracy and Revolution*, both by George Novack, to add to the store's philosophy section. Centrally located, the store receives walk-in traffic by customers who speak a range of different languages, particularly English. About half of the 43 copies ordered were in English.

Equally fruitful was a visit to a store that specializes in English-language books. The buyer took the opportunity to restock, increase the spread of titles, and add recently released books, ordering 37 titles, among them *Che Guevara Speaks*, *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*, and issues no. 5 through 11 of *New Internationalist*. The sales representatives' familiarity with the titles also helped convince him to purchase *Thomas Sankara Speaks*, Abram Leon's *The Jewish Question*, and two titles by George Novack.

FROM PATHFINDER

Abortion Is a Woman's Right

Pat Grogan and others

Why abortion rights are central to the fight for the full emancipation of women.

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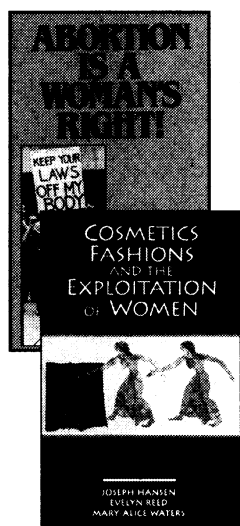
Cosmetics, Fashion, and the Exploitation of Women

Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, Mary-Alice Waters

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Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12.



Pathfinder titles spark discussions at Swedish book fair

BY ANITA ÖSTLING

GOTHENBURG, Sweden—The annual Gothenburg Book Fair, the largest in the northern part of Europe, drew 100,000 visitors over four days here. Some 700 exhibitors from more than 20 countries participated in the event, which attracts librarians and book buyers from across the area, in addition to the general public.

Six supporters of Pathfinder Press, including one from Iceland, staffed a table from the publishing house for the ninth consecutive year. Four of the six were under 25 years old. The first day and a half were open to trades people, including publishers, librarians, book chain representatives, and teachers. Representatives from several university libraries and other book buyers, including one from Norway, expressed interest in Pathfinder's titles.

In all, participants purchased \$350 worth of books from the Pathfinder table. The majority of those engaged in discussions at the stand were overwhelmingly young people, many of them women. A book that attracted many youth to the Pathfinder stand was the new title *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*. The best seller was the Swedish edition of *Socialism and Man in Cuba* by Ernesto Che Guevara, with 11 copies sold. Other books by the Argentine-born leader of the Cuban revolution sparked interest.

Six copies of the Marxist magazine *New International* were sold, five in Swedish and one in English. *U.S. Imperialism has Lost the Cold War* was the title that drew the most attention, with some finding its explanation of world politics very contro-

versial. Many visitors to the stand agreed when being told that the removal of the huge Stalinist obstacle to workers' struggles internationally has created new problems for the imperialist powers. Three copies of the Swedish edition were sold.

A young woman who at first decided to buy *Ny International* decided to take advantage of a special offer with a subscription to the *Militant* in order to follow week by week the growing workers' militancy around the world, and the development of the Cuban revolution. Five others also subscribed during the fair.

A student who has been taking a course on economics at the University of Gothenburg bought *Ny International* no. 2, featuring the article "What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold."

"The course I'm taking is worthless," he said. "It has nothing to do with the world we live in today, not even with the world 150 years ago, when capitalism was young." Pointing to the article, "Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution" in the same issue, he said, "I'm interested in Cuba, too. This will be a good book for me to buy."

A teacher stopped to look at the new pamphlet *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* by Jack Barnes. Hearing that the pamphlet argues that the main goal of the capitalist education system is not

NY sanitation workers strike for wages, benefits



Members of Local 108 of the Laborers International Union picket trucks of the Waste Management garbage disposal company in the Bronx, New York, on October 2, the first day of their strike. The 35 workers are demanding improved medical insurance and pension plans, an across-the-board wage increase of \$1 an hour, and an increase in machine operators' wages to match those of workers employed at other companies. Hourly wages stand at \$6.85.

to educate but to make students obedient, she said, "That's so true. That helps me understand something that I've been thinking about—why my students are so aggressive. As a teacher I represent the system, that's why. I mustn't take it personally." Five copies of the title were sold, mostly to young people. This was also true for *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, four of which were sold.

Individual titles by Thomas Sankara, Malcolm X, Leon Trotsky, and Evelyn Reed were also sold, along with one copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder*, also by Barnes.

Anita Östling is a member of the Transport Workers Union in Stockholm, Sweden. Dag Tirsén and Daniel Ahl contributed to this article.

Iowa meeting first of series for 'Militant' fund

BY DON MACKLE

"The writers of the *Militant* are just common folk, but with a special niche. They speak with a working-class perspective," said Larry Ginter, an Iowa hog farmer and activist speaking at the September 30 meeting held in Des Moines, Iowa, to raise funds for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*.

The meeting was the first of many now being organized around the country to win contributors to the \$110,000 *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* Fund. The operating expenses of both publications are financed through sales of the papers and contributions to the fund. The 10-week fund-raising effort will end November 13.

Ginter, a member of the Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement, shared the platform with Amy Roberts, a leader of the Young Socialists and a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789. Roberts works at the Dakota Premium Foods meatpacking plant in South St. Paul, Minnesota. Last June workers there carried out a seven hour sit-down strike to demand the line speed be slowed. Seven weeks later a large majority voted to join the UFCW.

Roberts updated the struggle taking place at the plant. She also pointed out the valuable role the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* have played in the workers' struggle in pointing to the need for workers and small farmers to join each others' struggles against their common exploiters.

At the meeting were activists from the Concerned Citizens for Justice, an organization that is fighting for justice for Charles Lovelady, a young Black man killed by security guards at a Des Moines night club.

Lovelady's father and mother were among those in attendance. Lamont Lovelady, Charles's father, thanked those at the meeting for their support to this fight.

The event raised close to \$400 in contributions and new pledges for the fund drive.

Cappy Kidd in Chicago reports the fund meeting there will be an eyewitness account of the workers and peasants uprising in Ecuador with *Militant* staff writer Hilda Cuzco. "We met some activists from Casa Guatemala who have been playing public service announcements on their radio show. At a meeting they organized we were able to announce the event to about 100 people," Kidd said. "They plan to interview Cuzco after her program this weekend."

In Atlanta, where supporters have already sent in 60 percent of their pledge, a fund-raising meeting is set for October 6. "We have been focusing our efforts on building

this event among the workers at the Earthgrains Co.," said Lea Bockman, Atlanta's fund drive director. Members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union struck the company for three weeks. They won solidarity from workers at 27 other Earthgrains plants around the country who refused to cross picket lines, winning important gains in the new contract as a result.

"We met with one of the workers who had been on strike—something we want to do with others we know. He really appreciated the coverage the *Militant* gave to their fight. He bought a subscription for himself and four copies of the same issue that he wants to show to other workers, and said he would attend the meeting," said Bockman.

Well organized and widely built meetings will be an important part of getting

the fund drive on track over the next several weeks. Setting objectives, such as winning new contributors, collecting enough money to get your area in the on-time category, and raising the local goal to help get closer to the \$110,000 international goal, are important for the overall drive.

To get and stay on schedule for the rest of the drive supporters need to send in \$13,200 a week to the *Militant* business office. Attention to getting on schedule is needed in every area. The receptivity to publications shown by strikers and the many others who are deciding to subscribe for the first time show the potential for also winning new contributors to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. Success in the drive depends on spending the time to talk to many of these fighters about the fund, opening the possibility for them to contribute.

Women's rights march set for October 15

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

A "World March of Women 2000" has been called for October 15, sponsored internationally by a range of organizations defending women's rights. A demonstration will take place that day in Washington, and similar actions will take place around that date in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver, Canada. Many international groups will converge on New York October 17 for a demonstration at the United Nations.

Events are also being organized in a number of countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, and the Middle East.

The organizers of the internationally coordinated action list a range of demands, such as equal rights, protesting violence against women, the fight against poverty facing millions of women, the right to health and education services, and cancellation of the Third World debt.

The march was initiated by the Quebec Women's Federation. In 1995 the federation organized a 10-day Women's March Against Poverty. The 850 marchers were greeted by 15,000 people when they arrived at the provincial legislature in Quebec City.

The Canadian Labour Congress and other union organizations in Quebec are helping organize the actions in that country. Demonstrations will take place in Montreal on October 14 and in Vancouver and Ottawa the following day.

The Washington march is being sponsored by the National Organization for

Women (NOW). Some 200 organizations have also declared their support for the action, including the United Farm Workers and the state AFL-CIO bodies in Ohio and Maine. Organizers expect people to travel by car and bus from virtually every state. A number of international delegations will participate.

"We are organizing this national mobilization to stop the backlash against women's rights, and to push forward on those rights," said Alexandra Leader, executive director of NOW's New York City chapter, in an October 4 phone interview.

A leaflet produced by the New York chapter to publicize the march demands unrestricted access to birth control, abortion, public health care, and child care. It also calls for an end to sexual harassment and antigay discrimination.

In New York, buses will be departing for Washington early on Sunday, October 15. A return ticket costs \$40. To reserve a seat call (212) 627-9895 or e-mail the office at mail@nownyc.org

That day, demonstrators will assemble in Washington at 11:00 a.m. at Freedom Plaza and begin the march and rally at noon.

Information on travel to Washington and other facts about the demonstration are available at www.worldmarch.org

In Boston, a rally has also been called for the day before the Washington action, sponsored by the Boston Coalition for the World March of Women 2000. For information, call Boston NOW at (617) 232-1017.

Contribute to Militant and Perspectiva Mundial Fund

	Goal	Paid	%
Sweden	530	370	70%
United States			
Atlanta	4,600	2,745	60%
Charlotte	2,800	1,505	54%
NY Garment Dist.	5,000	2,640	53%
San Francisco	10,000	5,120	51%
Newark	3,000	1,195	40%
St. Louis	1,800	675	38%
Houston	6,500	2,400	37%
Seattle	9,000	3,120	35%
Upper Manhattan	3,000	1,015	34%
Pittsburgh	4,000	1,250	31%
Boston	4,000	1,070	27%
Allentown	1,200	300	25%
Chicago	7,500	1,830	24%
Chippewa Falls	600	145	24%
Brooklyn	3,200	760	24%
Miami	2,300	495	22%
Washington	3,000	600	20%
Twin Cities	3,500	545	16%
Des Moines	1,800	265	15%
Detroit	3,750	500	13%
Los Angeles	6,000	750	13%
Birmingham	3,200	201	6%
Cleveland	1,600	32	2%
Philadelphia	2,500	25	1%
Fort Collins	1,400		0%
Fresno	200		0%
Other		175	
U.S. Total	95,450	29,358	31%
New Zealand			
Auckland	1,170	374	32%
Christchurch	520	128	25%
NZ Total	1,690	502	30%
Australia	900	170	19%
Iceland	250	30	12%
United Kingdom	870	30	3%
Canada	5,000	101	2%
France		320	
Int'l Total	\$104,690	\$30,881	29%
Goal/Should be	\$110,000	\$44,000	40%

Step up the pace to sell 'Militant' subs

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

"At a protest against rising fuel prices by truck drivers at the port in Savannah, Georgia, we met a worker who has been part of efforts to unionize the drivers over many years," wrote Floyd Fowler. "He wants to participate in a Militant Labor Forum being organized in Atlanta next week to discuss the growing labor resistance in the United States." Fowler, together with another campaigner for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, sold nine introductory subscriptions to the *Militant* to participants in the labor action.

Joining in demonstrations like the rally in Savannah and responding to political developments will help boost the subscription effort. This week partisans of the *Militant* launched a target week as part of the subscription drive. They are making special efforts to distribute the paper with the feature article, "Washington's Cold War against Cuba: a historical perspective," by Mary-Alice Waters. Waters presented the talk at a conference, "Ending the Cold War with Cuba," held at Yale University. Also of interest to fighting workers is a report on a meeting of socialists who work in meatpacking plants and are deeply involved in the growing struggles of workers in that industry.

Connects workers around the world

Reports in the *Militant* this week from Omaha, Nebraska, and Boston on union organizing drives by packinghouse workers; on the strike of transit workers in Los Angeles; protests by farmers; in defense of immigrant rights; and many more, point out the importance of the socialist newsweekly. The paper connects workers and farmers across the United States and indeed around the world. It helps those entering into struggle to see the possibilities of reaching out and broadening the fight, and the reasons for continuing to do so once the immediate strike or protest is over.

By reading the *Militant*, vanguard fighters more easily see the underlying weaknesses of the bosses and the government, as well as allies in unexpected places. The paper plays an important role in helping to dispel the lies and prejudices that underpin the divisions among working people fostered by the employers and the capitalist system.

This applies equally to the pamphlet *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning: The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism* by Jack Barnes. The results so far from the efforts of workers and Young Socialists show the importance of campaigning with a pamphlet and introducing a working-class perspective on central issues in U.S. and world politics to hun-

dreds of people. *Militant* partisans in every city are encouraged to review their goals for selling the pamphlet. The overall goal will be increased next week to reflect the success of this aspect of the drive.

Socialist workers who work in the garment and textile industries, meatpacking plants, and coal mines are organizing to win new subscribers among as many co-workers, fellow union members, and other fighting workers and farmers as possible. For example, supporters in eastern Pennsylvania are planning a team to reach out to the 2,000 coal miners in that region. They will also visit college campuses in the area.

In Morristown, New Jersey, business owners and local politicians have launched a campaign against immigrant workers who gather near a train station seeking construction and landscaping work from contractors who hire casual laborers. The Morristown city council tabled a resolution that would have banned this arrangement.

"We set up a literature table in the downtown area with signs in Spanish and English saying 'Equal rights for immigrants' and 'U.S. Navy out of Vieques,'" said Mary Nell Bockman from Newark, New Jersey. "All of the workers we spoke to knew about the attack on the two Mexican workers by racist thugs in Farmingville, New York, and the protests against this violence. A restaurant worker from El Salvador who had been one of these day laborers came by the table and purchased a *PM* subscription. He said, 'I understand what they're going through and I want to do something to help their fight.'" The team sold 10 copies of *Perspectiva Mundial*, 4 *PM* subscriptions, 1 *Militant* sub, 6 copies of the pamphlet *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning: The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism*, and several other Pathfinder titles.

In Los Angeles, where 4,400 transit workers have been on strike, "the union held a mass meeting October 4 of 3,000 to 4,000 workers," said Elizabeth Lariscy. "One worker I spotted at the meeting was a Latino bus driver to whom I had sold a paper and a Pathfinder catalog while he was on the picket line. He told me, 'I looked up your web site and it looked really nice.' He bought the subscription right there on the spot."

The goal of the target week is to get the circulation drive on or ahead of schedule. Now is the best time to step up the pace in reaching out with the socialist press to ensure successfully completing the subscription campaign. Setting up street tables and going door-to-door in working class neighborhoods are an essential part of every drive.

October 14 march planned to demand rights for immigrants

BY BETSEY STONE

CHICAGO—Defenders of immigrant rights will march in several cities around the country October 14 to press the government to grant legal residence to the more than 6 million undocumented workers living in the United States today.

A national march will take place in Washington that day. It will coincide with marches and rallies in New York; Chicago; Homestead, Florida; Austin, Texas; Fresno, California; and other cities.

Explaining why as many working people as possible should participate in the actions, Jaime Martinez, labor coordinator for the action in the U.S. capital, said in a telephone interview that the fight to build strong unions is tied to defending the rights of immigrants. "We are fighting for the right of immigrant workers to organize unions without reprisals," he said.

Martinez, organizing director for the International Union of Electronic Workers/Communications Workers of America, reported that marchers will be going to Washington from San Antonio, Texas; Tucson, Arizona; Los Angeles, and Washington State.

The October 14 march in Washington is sponsored by Coordinadora 96-2000. A brochure publicizing the march raises several demands, including: unconditional

amnesty for undocumented workers; human and constitutional rights for all; civil and equal opportunities for all; citizen review boards against police brutality, abuses by the immigration service, and racist attacks.

Endorsers of the October 14 march in Washington include the International Union of Electronic Workers, Farm Workers Organizing Committee, National Council of La Raza, Latino Organization of the Southwest, and Illinois League of United Latin American Citizens.

The march in Washington will assemble in Malcolm X (Meridian) Park at 16th Street and Euclid, and will end at the Lincoln Memorial. For more information call the Coordinadora 96-2000 at (800) 243-6771.

The October 14 march in Chicago will assemble at 10:00 a.m. at four different points and converge for a rally at the federal building at 1:30 p.m. Buses for Washington leave from Chicago the evening before at 6:00 p.m. from Benito Juárez High School (corner of Ashland and Cermak). Tickets can be purchased at Casa Aztlan; tel: (312) 666-5508.

The march in New York will assemble at 10:00 a.m. at Columbus Circle, at 59th Street, and march to the United Nations. For information call (212) 633-7108 or (212) 473-3936.



Socialist workers sell 'Militant' at shopping center in Hamilton, New Zealand.

Where we stand at week 3

	Mil	PM	Pamphlet
Week 9			
Week 8			
Week 7			
Week 6			
Week 5			
Week 4			
Week 3			
Week 2			
Week 1			

Subscription campaign to win new readers: September 9-November 12							
Country	Militant			PM		Pamphlet	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
Sweden	12	4	33%	5	1	15	7
Iceland	8	2	25%	1		12	5
United States							
N.Y. Garment Dist.	65	27	42%	35	13	150	79
Atlanta	20	8	40%	8	7	20	24
Washington	30	12	40%	10	7	70	52
Allentown	18	6	33%	3		35	12
Charlotte	15	5	33%	5		50	15
Miami	30	10	33%	15	1	60	24
Boston	25	8	32%	8		50	30
San Francisco	35	11	31%	20	6	75	12
Upper Manhattan	67	21	31%	25	18	140	47
Fresno	10	3	30%	6	1	6	3
Newark	55	16	29%	25	9	85	38
Chicago	45	12	27%	15	2	50	20
Chippewa Falls	15	4	27%	10	5	20	4
Seattle	30	7	23%	10	7	75	45
Twin Cities	55	12	22%	25	9	110	
Tucson	5	1	20%	3	1	8	6
Brooklyn	60	11	18%	30	22	120	34
Houston	50	9	18%	20	3	75	25
Birmingham	35	6	17%	2		50	10
Des Moines	35	6	17%	20	3	50	18
Detroit	20	3	15%	5		35	5
Cleveland	30	4	13%	6		50	26
St. Louis	25	3	12%	9		45	10
Pittsburgh	35	4	11%	2		50	15
Philadelphia	25	2	8%	5	1	50	
Los Angeles	40	3	8%	20	5	60	9
Fort Collins	20		0%	1		20	5
Tampa		1					
Other		1					
U.S. total	895	214	24%	343	120	1609	568
New Zealand							
Auckland	15	4	27%	1		20	7
Christchurch	8	1	13%	1		10	2
N.Z. total	23	5	22%	2		30	9
Australia	15	2	13%	3		25	7
Canada							
Vancouver	30	5	17%	5		40	8
Toronto	25	2	8%	6		35	9
Montreal	15	1	7%	5		30	4
Canada total	70	8	11%	16		105	21
United Kingdom							
London	30	5	17%	10	2	60	12
Manchester	18		0%	2		18	
UK total	48	5	10%	12	2	78	12
Int'l totals	1071	240	24%	382	123	1874	629
Goal/Should be	1000	330	33%	350	115	1500	500
In the unions							
United States							
UNITE	30	5	17%	25	2	60	25
UFCW	55			70		85	
UMWA	18					18	
U.S. total	103	5	5%	95	2	163	25
Australia							
MUA	2		0%			3	
TCFUA	1						
Australia total	3	0	0%				
New Zealand							
NDU	1		0%				

'For workers, "we" doesn't include bosses or their government'

BY TIM LENNOX

BOSTON—"There are two kinds of 'we' in the world, said Margaret Trowe, Socialist Workers candidate for vice president.

Addressing a class of two dozen students at Curry College here, Trowe was replying to a youth who asked, "Don't we need a strong military to defend us from China, which has the largest army in the world?"

Working people have nothing in common with any "we" that includes the bosses and their government in Washington. But "we as working people have everything in common with the workers and peasants in China," Trowe said.

The socialist candidate described the historic victory won by Chinese workers and peasants, who fought the Japanese imperialist occupying forces during World War II and then the U.S.-backed capitalist forces, leading to the revolutionary overturn of capitalism. These revolutionary conquests are what the U.S. government is targeting in its current anti-China campaign, she said.

The other hot topic in the classroom was immigrant workers. A couple of students argued that workers born in Mexico come to the United States, and, working for low wages, "take our jobs and should be kept out."

Trowe pointed to several current and recent struggles around the country involving immigrant workers who are organizing or defending unions. "They are part of the American working class today and are helping strengthen it through their experience in struggle," she said.

Two students remained unconvinced and continued to blame Mexican workers for the social problems U.S.-born workers face. The student who had asked the question about

China entered the debate and said, "That's what they use to say about Italians and Irish people who came to this country. I don't think that is right."

At the end of the class, two students bought a copy of the *Militant* and four students signed up for more information about the socialist campaign.

During her mid-September campaign swing through New England, Trowe also had a dinner discussion with five Brown University students in Providence, Rhode Island, and with a Vermont dairy farmer with whom she had visited Cuba a few months ago as part of a delegation of fighting U.S. farmers and workers. In addition, she joined a rally in support of 2,700 unionists on strike against Raytheon Co.

Campaigning in Vermont, Trowe urged working people to oppose the reactionary campaign against Vermont's new "Civil Unions" law.

In a victory for democratic rights for gay and lesbians, this law, passed earlier this year in the Vermont state legislature, allows health and medical benefits to cover domes-



Trowe (right) talks with International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers member on strike against military contractor Raytheon Co. in dispute over job security and other issues. During visit to Boston Trowe joined September 18 rally in solidarity with strike.

tic partners, not only married couples. Right-wing forces launched an anti-gay rights campaign to repeal the law under the banner "Take Back Vermont."

"The attacks on the democratic rights of gay and lesbians are aimed at dividing working people. Scapegoating gays and lesbians

or immigrant workers takes our eyes off who the real enemy is—the owners of corporations and their government, who drive down the wages and job conditions of workers, and who set prices below the cost of production on the commodities produced by working farmers," stated Trowe.

Trowe talks with Nebraska meat packers

BY JOE SWANSON

OMAHA, Nebraska—Socialist Workers vice-presidential candidate Margaret Trowe met with meat packers and their supporters here and in Marshalltown, Iowa, during her mid-September campaign stop in the Midwest.

Trowe visited the recently opened organizing office of Omaha Together One Community (OTOC) and the United Food and

Commercial Workers union (UFCW) here, which is located a short distance from three major packing plants. The UFCW is organizing workers in the plants to sign union authorization cards at ConAgra, Greater Omaha Packing, and Nebraska Beef, where 2,000 meat packers are employed.

One of the organizers welcomed the support of the Socialist Workers campaign to the union fight and invited Trowe and her

campaigners to join a September 26 protest rally against ConAgra at their downtown headquarters. The UFCW recently won a ruling from the National Labor Relations Board against ConAgra for harassing workers involved in the union organizing drive. ConAgra is appealing the ruling.

Next Trowe joined a campaign table at the nearby Nebraska Beef plant. Many of the workers there—the vast majority of whom are originally from Mexico—were already familiar with the socialist campaign because supporters of Trowe and her running mate James Harris have been at this plant gate numerous times over the months.

Many Nebraska Beef workers told Trowe of their conviction that they need a union. Guadalupe, a cut floor worker, explained, "Little by little we are going forward, but there is a lot of turnover—when we win people to the union, some later quit and get another job." Some workers said the main reason workers quit is the speed of the production line and the large amount of overtime. Workers there often put in 10 hour days, six days a week.

A number of workers purchased the *Militant* and the Spanish-language *Perspectiva Mundial*.

One of the Nebraska Beef workers who attended a meeting for Trowe at the Omaha public library had met campaign supporters at earlier campaign tables. The worker, a strong union supporter who is Black, explained that it is upsetting for him whenever Mexican-born workers he has come to know on the job later are compelled to leave because of pressure from the immigration police. He also explained to those at the meeting how the Omaha police had just been exonerated for the fatal shooting of a Black man. Thanking Trowe for the exchange of ideas, he said he would try to bring more workers to any future socialist campaign meeting.

The next day Trowe traveled to Marshalltown, Iowa, to meet with workers at the Swift packinghouse. Trowe herself worked on the cut floor at Swift before moving to Austin, Minnesota, last year. A few of her former co-workers hosted a luncheon to welcome her back to Marshalltown.

At the Swift plant gate, where a campaign table was set up, many of Trowe's former co-workers warmly greeted her. Some explained that the line speed is even faster than when she worked on it. Others said that the Swift supervisors have increased their verbal abuse.

They were interested to hear Trowe report on what she had learned around the country about resistance by packinghouse and other workers against similarly brutal conditions.

During her visit Trowe was interviewed by the daily Marshalltown *Times-Republican*.

Ohio students defend rights, protest cop attack

BY TONY PRINCE

LORAIN, Ohio—Students at Admiral King High School here have been protesting since September 14 against arbitrary and undemocratic rules imposed by the new principal, Anthony Cassano. In the course of these protests, the students were attacked by the police. Cop brutality has become a central aspect of the students' protests.

James Carter, a sophomore, said in an interview, "Originally the protest was about Mr. Cassano's rule about groups of four." This rule, instituted by Cassano and not a school board policy, prohibited students from gathering in groups of more than three. "Students were suspended for violating this rule on the second day of school," he said.

Mike Miller, a junior, explained, "On Tuesday [September 12] we had a junior-senior assembly where Mr. Cassano spoke. At first he said stuff like how we are the leaders of the future. But then he called us a bunch of charity cases and morons. We don't even know why he said that."

"When the word got around the school about that, people were really mad," Miller said. "One student and his mother put out a flyer calling for a protest on Thursday. So on Thursday morning there were about 100 students out in front of the school peace-

fully protesting. Then the cops came and told us we either had to go home or go into school. There's a big tree out in front of the school, and so a bunch of the students linked arms around the tree. Then the cops started hitting the students with their nightsticks and arresting them." Ten students were arrested and charged with aggravated rioting, a felony.

Carter said, "The cops hit me from behind on my shoulder with a nightstick as I was walking into the building. There were four or five cops pushing us into the building. All of them had their nightsticks out."

Esteban Báez, who graduated from Admiral King earlier in the year, said, "My younger brother Antonio was arrested on Thursday. He wasn't even part of the protest; he was just coming late to school. The cops ran up to him, picked him up, and slammed him to the ground so hard his shoes came off. When we came to pick him up at the jail he didn't have any shoes. They grabbed him so hard all three of the shirts he was wearing were ripped."

"About six students from a video class were videotaping what was going on," said Miller. "One of the teachers came out and yelled at them, 'Give me the f----- tapes!' But there was one student who was able to keep her tape. So at least part of what happened came out on the TV news."

The police attack only made the students more determined to continue their protest. "The next day we had an all day sit-in in the auditorium," said Miller. "There were between 200 and 250 students there."

Carter added, "We demanded that Mr. Cassano speak to us on Friday at the sit-in. He came, but he really didn't answer our questions. He would just take a question and then move right on to the next one without dealing with it."

Esteban Báez said, "The police arrested my older brother Samuel on Friday. He was at the school with my mother, and he had signed in to enter the school. He had a big

permit on his chest to show he was allowed to be there. When the cops told him to leave, he asked if he could get his keys from my mom. The cops grabbed him, held him in the air, kicked him, and then charged him with criminal trespass. These cops came out with dogs and batons against children."

The students went to the City Council meeting on September 18 to raise the issue of the actions of the police. About two dozen students went to the meeting along with several parents.

The students had a petition, with about 250 signatures, demanding Cassano's resignation. They were not given any opportunity to speak at the meeting.

One student, Wendy, said, "The cops should be punished. They should be suspended. We want an apology."

Daisy Rosa, who came with her daughter Teresa, described what happened earlier in the afternoon at a meeting scheduled for parents to talk to the principal. Schools Superintendent Nicholas Hutlock told the parents that he had told Cassano not to show up because he claimed he had received threats.

"Half of the parents walked out because Mr. Cassano didn't show up," said Rosa. "He looked like he was instigating the problem. We parents care about our kids and we defend them if we see they are right."

When the meeting reconvened City Council member Vinson Shipley, also a guidance counselor at Admiral King, proposed that a meeting be held the following Monday to discuss the actions of the police. This was agreed to and at that point the students left the room. Shortly thereafter, however, the Council rescinded its decision, and at this point there is no meeting scheduled on the issue.

They have already forced the administration to make some concessions. Carter explained, "Cassano has pretty much suspended the rule about groups of four or more." He told the media he had never implemented such a rule.

Tony Prince is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in Cleveland.

The Communist Manifesto

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FREDERICK ENGELS
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Founding document of the modern working-class movement, published in 1848. Explains why communism is derived not from preconceived principles but from facts and proletarian movements springing from the actual class

'Working people need to take political power'

Interview with SWP presidential candidate James Harris on WNYC radio

The following is an edited transcript of a September 26 interview with James Harris, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, on the New York City radio station WNYC, an affiliate of National Public Radio. The interview was conducted by Brian Lehrer, host of WNYC's *On the Line* program, which also took calls from listeners.

Lehrer: Right now, the presidential candidate of the Socialist Workers Party, James E. Harris.

With some "Marx was right" banners being prominently displayed by protesters in Prague this morning at the anti-IMF/World Bank meeting, maybe the timing of this appearance is right. Thanks for joining us Mr. Harris. Good morning.

Harris: Good morning. I'm glad to be here.

Lehrer: We've done this before, haven't we?

Harris: Yes, we have.

Lehrer: And with little to show for your past efforts at running for president, you're still at it.

Harris: I don't know you can say there is little to show. We direct our message to the working class as a whole, which is mounting resistance to the increasingly brutal conditions that exist in the country today, even with the so-called economic boom or economic miracle that is taking place. More and more working people are wondering why they are not included in it. They have said, "Enough. We must begin to fight." That's who we address.

Capitalism, not IMF, is the problem

Lehrer: Are you paying attention to the Prague demonstrations this morning? Is this an issue that concerns you—the IMF [International Monetary Fund] and the World Bank?

Harris: The IMF and World Bank aren't the central problems working people face. Here is the reason why: The central problem working people face is capitalism itself and the expansion of capitalism during this so-called economic miracle in this country. The IMF and the World Bank are merely tools of the capitalist system, tools of the predominant imperialist powers in the world, like the United States, Britain, France, Germany, and Belgium. I think when we talked before, one of the things I pointed out was that the issue is not a vague "globalization." The issue is imperialism.

Imperialism is based upon nation-states. It includes conflicts between imperialist powers, conflicts with the Third World nations and working people who live there, and conflicts with the working class in their own countries.

Lehrer: Interesting. A lot of people on the left today say it's not so much about nation-states anymore, but about corporate power,

and corporations—especially in the global era—becoming less accountable to the governments of nation-states.

Harris: Well, yes. That is one of the things I very much disagree with. That is why we use the term imperialism to describe the social and economic relations in the world rather than globalization. We want to pinpoint what the real problems are. The United States is the dominant imperialist power in the world. It dominates the United Nations, the World Bank, and other such institutions. It runs them in conflict with other imperialist powers, such as Canada or Great Britain, or France or Germany. It runs them both in conflict with their competitors on a world scale and in partnership with them against the Third World and the working class as a whole.

Lehrer: And who runs the United States?

Harris: The United States is run by a small handful of super-rich ruling families, about the same 60 families that have run the United States for over a century. It is run by wealth. There are class divisions in the United States that are on the increase. The gap between the rich and poor in the United States is on the increase. Real wages have been declining.

The source of the capitalist boom or upturn in the economy is what the employers have imposed on workers: increasing working hours, worsening of conditions among immigrant laborers, and a significant increase in the intensification of labor. This is happening at the same time real wages have continued to go down.

Lehrer: This is *On the Line* at AM 820, WNYC. My guest is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for president of the United States, as we continue to fulfill our pledge to have every candidate on the ballot in New York State for at least one appearance on the program. We can take a few phone calls for candidate James Harris at (212) 267-9292 as we continue to get his views.

If you were president and had a compliant Congress, what is the first law you might try to enact?

Harris: Our campaign points out that working people in the United States advance our interests through our own struggles. Gains we have made have only been through the fights we have engaged in. These have often been reflected in Congress and legislation. It is not voting or who is elected to office that decides these questions. Working people need to extend our organization, both through unionization of the working class as a whole, and through political organization, which is needed in order to break from the Democrats and Republicans and



James Harris meets Harvey Johnson, green bean farmer in Homestead, Florida, during mid-September campaign tour of state. "What is needed is a working-class party that puts forward a course in opposition to the parties of the rich," Harris explained on New York radio call-in show.

the two-party system. These are parties that represent the rich, not working people.

Lehrer: Ralph Nader has caught the imagination of much of the disenfranchised left in America this year as an alternative party candidate. What do you think about Ralph Nader?

Harris: One of the problems of the Nader campaign is that it aims to push the Democratic Party to the left. It is not a break with the Democrats, but it acts as a left wing of that party. The Democrats and the Republicans are part of a two-party system. The Nader campaign and the Green Party fit within the framework of the two-party system.

The problem with the two-party system is not that the two parties don't differ—they couldn't get people to vote for them if they didn't differ a little bit—but the problem is that it constantly poses a "lesser evil" to head off the independent organization of the working class outside of the parties of the rich.

What is needed is a real working-class political party that puts forward a program in opposition to the rich and uncompromisingly advances the interests of all working people in common with our brothers and sisters around the world.

Caller: I had two questions. The first is that, given the reality that either Bush or Gore is going to win the election, which of the two candidates do you favor as most in line with the needs you see. The second question is, who are the 60 families who run the United States?

Harris: The ruling class in the United States are real people and families with names, such as Rockefeller, Du Pont, Gates, and others. They are the multibillionaire families that through their social position, wealth, ownership of the means of production, and connections actually run the United States.

When working people begin to confront the fact that we can't change the United States and government policy just through electoral politics and voting, they begin to ask themselves: who is in control and why? Who profits from the big rise in oil prices? Who owns the oil companies? Who owns the basic industry in the United States that determines the lives of millions and millions of people? Who decides and profits when the United States intervenes through war and other means around the world? Why give \$1.3 billion to Colombia? It has to do with the opposing interests of the ruling class in the United States and those of the working class.

Caller: I'd like to ask Mr. Harris about what he thinks about the attacks on immigrants in Farmingville, Long Island.

Harris: I'm glad you asked that question. I think the whole labor movement should be involved in protesting this attack on the rights of immigrants and the attempt to murder two workers last week. The United States government is responsible for this, with their laws and propaganda that aim to criminalize this whole section of the population. Their aim is to make it a pariah layer in order to justify low wages, intolerable

working conditions, and denial of democratic rights.

The Clinton administration spearheaded the passage of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996. It took constitutional rights away from massive numbers of immigrant workers. It helped to criminalize them, giving a green light to right-wing attacks upon them.

Immigrant workers are a boon to the working class in the United States because they help bring combativity and more class consciousness to it. The aim of the ruling class is to keep the working class divided and at the same time keep immigrant workers in a position so they can be superexploited. But they are joining the fightback, asserting their rights and human dignity.

We don't need third pro-capitalist party

Caller: Mr. Harris, good morning. I'm wondering if you don't think that you are really doing a disservice to the overall movement by really taking a small splinter away from Ralph Nader's programs and his platform. In light of the fact that due to whatever the circumstances, fortuitous or otherwise, he's got such excellent name recognition, his candidacy would stand a much better chance if all the various organizations that stand for the same principles united behind it. What are your thoughts on that?

Harris: One of the reasons I never talk about a third party is that we don't need a third party. What we need is an absolute class break from the parties of the rich. Ralph Nader's party, the Green Party, views itself as a party that is a pressure on the Democratic Party. What we need is a class break from them....

Caller: But you are wrong on that. Your supposition is incorrect on that. The fundamental fact is that the Green Party has an international foundation, it is a real party, it has elected people in foreign countries and...

Harris: As long as the working class is in the position of subordinating its political needs to various capitalist parties, parties that think that capitalism can be reformed, then we are in a trap and we're not moving forward as a class.

What is the fundamental thing that is needed by the working class? The fundamental thing needed by the working class is independent organization on our part as a class to begin to put forward the demands of our class. It is not a man on a white horse. It is not the Green Party.

Workers are resisting the assault by the government and the employers in many ways. There are a growing number of strikes and attempts to organize a union. There are struggles and demonstrations. There is the beginnings of a social movement in the coalfields by mine workers, other working people, and youth.

The logic of this is to transform our unions into fighting instruments and establish our own political organization based on the experiences of our struggles and our organizations. We need to organize to take political power and put a workers and farm-

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FROM PATHFINDER

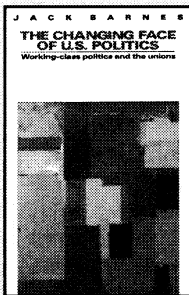
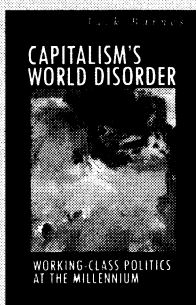
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Bush, Gore promote oil giants' interests and scapegoat OPEC

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

With the price of fuel hitting all-time highs and home heating costs projected to be one-third higher than last year, protests by truck drivers and farmers over exorbitant fuel prices continue to erupt in Europe as well as in the United States. This is the backdrop for the announcements by both the Democratic and Republican party presidential candidates of their "energy programs."

Both plans, though differing with each other on some points, seek to advance the interests of the big oil monopolies against working people at home and abroad. They scapegoat the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) for rising oil prices rather than telling the truth about the U.S. oil companies that continue to rake in higher than ever superprofits.

Declaring, "America, more than ever, is at the mercy of foreign governments and cartels," Republican candidate George W. Bush is calling for opening up for oil exploration 1.5 million acres in the heart of Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. He asserts that this area, which "could hold over 35 percent of current total proven U.S. oil reserves" could "replace the oil that the U.S. now imports from Iraq." Four previous efforts over the past 13 years have been raised in Congress to drill in this area, with all of them having gone down to defeat.

Bush also called for "aggressively [exploring] for oil and gas on our own continent" and streamlining the regulatory process for building new refineries and pipelines. He also promised "to use more diplomatic muscle in dealing with Middle Eastern oil producing nations" while seeking "more cooperation on energy with Mexico and Venezuela," according to a *New York*

Times article.

Like Bush, Democratic presidential candidate Albert Gore also put forward a plan aimed at achieving "energy independence." Gore expressed his opposition to oil drilling in the Arctic refuge, and called for the government to release some of the oil stockpiled in the nation's Strategic Petroleum Reserve. One day later on September 22, U.S. president William Clinton released an initial 30 million barrels of crude oil, and left open the possibility that a similar amount may be released in October. The reserve, which holds 570 million barrels of oil, serves as a stockpile for the U.S. imperialists to use in times of war or other such "national" emergencies. European Union members are also considering a similar use of emergency reserves as a stopgap measure to reduce prices.

In promoting his energy plan Gore demagogically proclaimed that as president he would "work toward the day when we are free forever of the dominance of big oil and foreign oil." Some 44 percent of U.S. crude oil—about 6 million barrels a day—is domestically produced, and 56 percent is imported.

Gore, Bush, and Richard Cheney, the Republican vice-presidential candidate, all have long-standing ties to the giant oil companies. And these companies generously fund both of these capitalist parties, which defend these oil monopolies' profits at home and abroad. Albert Gore's family, for example, owns at least a quarter of a million dollars' worth of stock in Occidental Petroleum and has maintained a long-standing political and economic relationship with the company.

Bush and his family have longtime ties to major oil companies based in Texas. Cheney



Truckers protest in Berlin against high fuel prices. Sign in foreground referring to German leader Gerhard Schröder reads, "Chancellor: Enough." Demonstrations by truck drivers and farmers over exorbitant fuel costs have erupted in Europe and the United States as oil monopolies rake in record profits.

was the chief executive of the world's largest oil-fields services company.

Oil prices have trebled over the past 18 months to about \$30 a barrel. In fact it traded for as much as \$37.80 on September 20. The price boost has had the most devastating effect on workers and farmers, especially in some of the poorest countries most exploited by imperialism.

Monopolies control output, distribution

While capitalist politicians rail against OPEC as the cause of the price rise, it's the giant U.S. oil monopolies led by Exxon Mobil, Chevron, and Texaco, as well as British Petroleum-Amoco-Arco, and Royal Dutch/Shell whose monopoly of the vast majority of oil production, refining, and distribution have the biggest impact on setting world oil prices. Exxon Mobil's net income, for example shot up to \$4.5 billion in the second quarter of 2000, from \$1.9 billion a year earlier—a 136 percent increase.

The 11-member nations of OPEC—Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Iraq, Libya, Algeria, Venezuela, Nigeria, and Indonesia—have sought a greater share of the oil wealth that's produced in their countries. It was one of the means, growing out of the nationalist upsurge in the 1950s through 1970s, to gain a measure of sovereignty and control of natural resources dominated by imperialist powers. The capitalist classes that dominate these countries, though, do not organize to utilize these resource for the benefit of working people.

Despite the large share of exports they control, OPEC does not dictate world market prices nor dominate world supply and demand for this raw material. In fact, OPEC has agreed to increase production three times this year by a total of 3.2 million barrels. But these steps have had a negligible effect on world oil prices.

At the end of September, leaders of the OPEC-member nations met in Venezuela for the organization's first summit conference since 1975. The final declaration of the gathering called on governments in Europe and the United States to take steps to reduce oil prices by cutting gasoline taxes and reducing the debt owed by these Third World countries to banks in the imperialist countries. Gasoline taxes are extremely high in Europe. In the United Kingdom, for example gasoline costs more than \$4 a gallon with taxes comprising 80 percent of the price.

At the summit, an Iraqi proposal for OPEC to endorse lifting the UN trade embargo imposed after the Persian Gulf War was blocked by the representatives from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. The Saudi Arabian government also broke with other OPEC members on production quotas, at the urging of Washington, announcing that they plan to unilaterally boost oil production to "the amount necessary to stabilize the world market," stated Crown Prince Abdullah. This announcement came shortly after the minister from Venezuela had stated that further attempts by Washington or the European Union to dip into strategic oil reserves would be met by cuts in OPEC production quotas.

Ali Rodríguez, Venezuela's minister of energy and now president of OPEC, pointed out that releasing oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve would only have a "temporary" effect on prices. He stated that rising prices are due largely to scarce U.S. refining capacity, not because of an actual shortage of oil.

In fact, U.S. refineries are running at virtually maximum capacity. Between 1982 and today, the U.S. oil companies failed to develop further refining facilities, while capacity utilization increased from 66 percent to 95 percent. Since 1990, some 30 refineries have been shut down in the United States and the number of refinery production workers dropped by one-third, from 95,000 to 60,000.

Though prices are at record levels, the big oil companies have not been plowing their money back into exploration, production, and needed storage facilities.

As big oil's profits soar to record levels, working people around the world finding it increasingly difficult to eke out a living and make ends meet are responding with street protests, blockades, and other solidarity actions that transcend borders.

Cuban general speaks at celebration of 'Making History' in Australia

BY LINDA HARRIS
AND RON POULSEN

SYDNEY, Australia—José Ramón Fernández, one of the Cuban revolutionaries interviewed in *Making History: Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces*, was the featured speaker at a celebration here of the publication of this Pathfinder book.

The September 21 meeting, co-sponsored by the Australia-Cuba Friendship Society, was held at the Cuban Sport Exhibition Centre set up during the Olympic Games. Fernández was in Sydney as president of the Cuban Olympic Committee.

Bonny Briggs, an Aboriginal activist originally from northern New South Wales, welcomed Fernández and other Cuban visitors to Australia. Briggs is a member of the Gamilaraay people and a media liaison representative for the Aboriginal Tent Embassy at Victoria Park in Sydney, which was set up in July to put an international spotlight during the Olympics on the Aboriginal struggle against racist oppression.

Briggs told the audience, "I became aware of Cuba in 1988 when I was part of the first brigade of indigenous people to go to Nicaragua" during the revolution in that Central American country. "It changed my life. I could never lay down and be silent about the fact that there is injustice and what America and the world have done and continue to do to Cuba. It makes me realize that the fight is never just here—it is so much bigger."

Benjamin Chand, a student at Wollongong University who had been involved in protests against the overthrow of the Labour Party—led government in Fiji, explained how he had come across Pathfinder books on Cuba on a stall at one of these actions. "This was the first time I was introduced to the Cuban revolution. I was aware of some of the achievements of the

Cuban revolution but I also thought Fidel Castro was a dictator," he said. "*Making History* is an important contribution to correcting misconceptions people may have about Cuba and certain events in Cuba's history. It allows the truth to be told about these."

Michael McGrath, a member of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union on strike for the past six months at Joy Mining Machinery in Moss Vale, explained that *Making History* was a book that took him by surprise. "It told a story that was reinforced page after page how one people's belief can make a difference," he said.

"As I read each page the message became clearer to me," McGrath said. "It's the people who win the battle. The struggle of the Cuban people is not one that is much different than so many other struggles in the world at the present time. Take the struggle at Joy in Moss Vale. It won't be the money or the vast amount of weapons at the company's disposal. It will be the people who win this battle."

"Having read the book *Making History* makes me all the more stronger," he concluded, encouraging everyone to read the book.

Felicity Coggan, a supporter of Pathfinder from New Zealand, then introduced Fernández. She explained how as a young military officer in the army of the Batista regime in the 1950s, Fernández had been one of a number of officers who worked secretly to depose the U.S. backed-dictatorship and who were eventually arrested. In prison on Cuba's Isle of Pines, he got to know a number of other political prisoners, including members of the July 26 Movement, and was won to their revolutionary perspective.

After the triumph of the revolution in 1959, Fernández directed the school for cadets to train Cuba's new revolutionary armed forces. In April 1961, working directly un-

der Fidel Castro, he was the field commander at the Bay of Pigs, where the Revolutionary Armed Forces and popular militias defeated the U.S.-organized invasion force within 72 hours. For two decades he served as Cuba's minister of education.

Fernández explained that before the revolution, the Cuban people, under the U.S. boot, "were not masters of our destiny." With the victory of the Cuban revolution, "not only was Batista defeated, but the energy of the people was liberated. Every man and woman gained the possibility of developing themselves."

"Among the men and women who fought in the Sierra Maestra and the cities were people of humble origin—peasants, young students, and some from the middle classes who were politically conscious," Fernández explained.

"The four of us who had the opportunity to tell some of our story in *Making History* are ordinary members of this people, of the millions of men and women who today are in struggle against the laws of the U.S. administration that is trying to suffocate us." He added, "Today we are struggling to defend what we've already won."

Ron Poulsen, director of Pathfinder Books in Australia, pointed to "the struggles of working people here and around the world that make the example of the Cuban revolution through the pages of this book even more important today. As a wharfie and member of the Maritime Union of Australia, I can attest to the impact of the momentous battle, over two years ago, when tens of thousands of people, a truly social movement, rallied to mass picket lines at docks around the country and prevented the capitalist rulers from smashing one of the most important industrial unions in the country."

More recently, he noted, "hundreds of thousands of ordinary people marched sym-

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Striking Los Angeles bus drivers win support

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justice," Rosa Díaz said as she held up a sign that said, "HERE supports the bus drivers." Díaz, who works as a waitress at a local hotel, added, "The only way we can get respect is to have a strong union."

Speaking to the crowd of mostly Black and Latino bus operators, James Williams, president of the UTU local that represents the drivers, said, "We call on the mayor to instruct the MTA bargaining team to remove their demand for a \$23 million pay cut. I call on the mayor to join me, as the leader of this city, at the bargaining table."

Meanwhile, as the *Militant* goes to press, the president of the Amalgamated Transit Union has asked the mechanics employed by the MTA to return to work, but the 2,000 unionists have refused to cross the bus drivers' picket lines.

Strength of strike

The strength of the strike and the support won by the striking drivers have contributed to two developments. First, capitalist politicians in the Democratic and Republican parties have divided over the strike and begun to debate openly how to resolve the crisis of the two-week shutdown of a mass transit system that normally serves 450,000 passengers daily.

Some, like Mayor Richard Riordan and County Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, have vigorously defended the MTA and its radio ads portraying bus drivers as overpaid and selfish. Others, like the dozens of capitalist politicians who addressed the September 29 strike solidarity rally, have decided to pose as sympathetic to the drivers. Among the politicians speaking at the rally were the majority of the members of the Los Angeles City Council, Rep. Maxine Waters, and two candidates for mayor of Los Angeles.

Another development registering the pressure on the government to settle the strike was the September 30 decision by Gov. Gray Davis to sign Senate Bill 1101, under which the MTA must abide by all existing labor contracts if it decides to create smaller suburban transit zones. The bill addresses one of the key issues in dispute in the strike—the MTA's plan to contract out transit lines. Davis vetoed a similar proposal one year ago.

Davis's actions provoked a sharp response from Bruce Ackerman, president of the Economic Alliance of the San Fernando Valley, a business organization, who said, "I really thought that the governor was beyond the threat of that union thug mentality. It's a sad day for the San Fernando and the San Gabriel valleys because it literally takes local control of transit out of their hands."

Unionists answer attacks

The bus drivers are answering the anti-union propaganda of the MTA, which blames the unionists for keeping the transit

system shut down. They are distributing a flyer, in English and Spanish, addressed "To the residents of the city of Los Angeles," that states:

"We, the bus operators of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, are on strike to defend our rights and the dignity of a fair and just wage. We are not asking for an increase in salary. We only ask that the MTA honor their past contract and their past promises and commitments to us and not pursue their intention of reducing our wages."

"At the same time we are totally opposed to the privatization of the public transportation system. This would result in the destruction of our workforce. As we all know the private companies that would be created would have, as their main goal, low wages for their workers."

"Don't allow yourselves to be fooled by Mayor Richard Riordan or County Supervisors such as Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Gloria Molina, and Zev Yaroslowski. Their only interest is to privatize public transport to benefit themselves and their big business friends and not for the benefit of the working people of L.A."

The statement concludes, "We are not the enemies of the transit dependent. You as passengers and we as bus operators are all working-class people. You also have the right to unionize and fight for fair and just wages. Organize against exploitation and for justice in the workplace."

MTA's privatization moves

The issue of "privatization," or "zoning," has been a heated one in this strike. The MTA has already contracted out some of the bus lines in Los Angeles to private companies. The breakup of the transit system to supposedly save money—at the expense of both transit workers and those who use the system—has been a long-range plan of the MTA board and the wealthy interests it serves.

"I worked for one of those lines, ATE, before I got hired by the MTA," said Sal, a Salvadoran-born worker who has driven an MTA bus for five years. When he drove for ATE, the line had just recently been contracted out by the MTA.

"A lot of passengers complained to me, saying—'Hey, what happened? You used to come every 10 minutes, now it's every 30 minutes!' " he explained. "And that's what they did to save money. They cut back the service. I only got paid \$7.50 an hour driving for that line. When I got hired by the MTA I started at \$11.40 an hour and the benefits are much better. Also, the MTA leases to those private lines the old buses that the MTA doesn't want to use anymore. That's why those contracted lines don't just hurt us who work—they also hurt the passengers."

Eddie Lopez is a driver in one of the Sun Valley divisions, the area the MTA is currently targeting for privatization, and secretary of the local union committee. "If they create their own transit system out here," Lopez said as he did picket duty, "they will take workers' jobs away because they would fire or lay us off. I think it's the main issue in this strike. There are about 1,200 drivers, mechanics, and other MTA employees out here in the valley who would be affected. They would get rid of us and our union and hire people for lower wages."

Transportation crisis

The refusal of the MTA to meet the bus operators' demands has led to massive congestion of freeways that were already overcrowded. The strike has brought into sharp relief the severe transportation crisis here—in which one of the world's major metropolitan centers lacks an adequate public transit system, forcing hundreds of thousands to rely on cars and overloaded high-



Strikers at rally at Los Angeles city hall. Issues in dispute include work hours and privatization of bus lines.

ways as the basic means of transportation. The city and county officials' plan is not designed to address this crisis.

Los Angeles was not always dependent on the freeways. Before World War II, the city and surrounding area were served by what was then the world's largest mass transit electric rail system. Pacific Electric operated 3,000 trains, carrying 80 million people a year.

This system was deliberately destroyed by General Motors, Standard Oil, and other corporations that stood to gain from replacing it with a transport system based on private cars, GM buses, and massive gasoline consumption, with the biggest burden on working people.

Other labor struggles

"Is half the world on strike, about to strike or coming off a strike?" asked the *Los Angeles Times* in a front-page article on September 29. "In Los Angeles, where janitors, librarians, teachers, bus drivers, and actors have appeared downright eager to carry picket signs, it sure feels that way. Labor strife is becoming the great unifier, cutting across lines of class, race, and ethnicity."

The article noted that, in addition to the transit workers, 60,000 actors have been on strike since May 1 against national ad agencies. Some 800 county doctors, members of the Union of American Physicians and Dentists, are planning job actions the week of

October 2. Also beginning that week, Service Employees International Union Local 660, representing 47,000 county workers, has announced the beginning of "rolling strikes," starting with animal control and registrar-recorder workers. Other county workers will carry out one-day strikes until October 11, when, if a contract hasn't been settled, union leaders say all the county workers will strike. The county employees are demanding a wage increase.

About 40,000 teachers in the Los Angeles United School District have voted to authorize a strike, with no date yet set, if a settlement isn't reached in the negotiations for a contract that expired June 30.

County workers and teachers were also among those joining the transit workers at the September 29 rally. Jesús Escandón, an elementary school teacher, wore a T-shirt that said, "An Injury to One is an Injury to All."

Escandón explained that he was at the rally because "I read in the *LA Times* about the economic boom crap, how Wall Street is shooting up to the breaking point, that LA has rebounded from recession. How do I fit into this picture? We've been shut out just like the bus drivers, the janitors, and the home health-care workers."

Nan Bailey is a meat packer and the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate from California.

Cuban general speaks at Sydney book launch

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bolically across major city bridges around the country in support of Aboriginal rights."

Poulsen pointed to the growing worker and farmer resistance in the United States today. In a number of these fights, where Spanish-speaking immigrants from Latin America are involved, "the same battle cry as Fernández cites from inside Cuba is also heard: '¡Sí se puede!'—Yes we can!"

"That is why the spirit of resistance demonstrated more so than ever today by the Cuban revolution is so important in this world," he said.

At the conclusion of the meeting people lined up to buy the book and have it signed by Fernández. Seven copies of *Making History* and two of the Spanish edition, *Haciendo Historia*, were sold that evening. McGrath obtained a signed copy to use as a raffle prize to raise money for the fight by workers at Joy.

Linda Harris is a member of the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia. Ron Poulsen is a member of the Maritime Union of Australia.

'Organize solidarity with transit strikers'

The following are excerpts from a campaign statement issued by Socialist Workers candidates Nan Bailey, Deborah Liatos, and Ned Measel. Bailey, from Los Angeles, is running for U.S. Senate; Deborah Liatos for U.S. Congress in the 8th District in San Francisco; and Ned Measel for U.S. Congress in the 20th District in Fresno, California.

The Socialist Workers campaign joins with the Los Angeles transit workers, whose strike advances the strength and dignity of all workers. We back their demands against the MTA. The transit workers are part of growing resistance in the labor movement across the country to attacks on wages, working conditions, and democratic rights. They join coal miners, meat packers, janitors, phone workers, farmers, truckers, and others in saying, "Enough!"

The Democratic and Republican politicians are crying crocodile tears over the difficulties facing bus riders after presiding over a decades-long crisis in mass transit. Money was poured into a rail system that only serves limited areas of the city, at a huge profit to bondholders,

while a woefully inadequate number of antiquated buses serve the overwhelming majority of working people.

Mayor Richard Riordan, Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, and the rest of the MTA demand that the United Transportation Union come up with a proposal on how to cut the costs of running buses.

We say inexpensive mass transit should be a right, with decent pay for transit workers. The money now going into the pockets of the wealthy bondholders and a steeply graduated income tax on the rich could pay for this many times over. But both the Democratic and Republican politicians uphold the system that puts the profits of a few above the needs of the vast majority and try to corral workers into greater sacrifices as the crisis of the capitalist system deepens.

The Socialist Workers Party campaign points toward another road: relying on the power of working-class action, such as the transit workers are magnificently demonstrating, instead of the promises of politicians who serve the employers' class.

We join with others to organize solidarity with the transit strikers and all others who stand up against capitalist injustice.

Rally backs organizing drive at ConAgra

Continued from front page

The two, Julio González and Guadalupe Campos, both work in the plant's fabrication department. González said that more than 50 percent of the 550 Northern States Beef workers have signed union support cards.

González reported, "To form a union we have organized meetings in and out of the plant, at workers' homes, and at local churches." He said he believed almost 70 percent of the Northern States Beef workers support having a union.

Campos, who has been working at ConAgra for five years, said, "In some ways ConAgra for the first few years treated me OK." But, she added, "I became active to get a union when I and my co-workers never got a pay raise and, most important, because when one of us is not there on the line, we have to do the same work as if they were."

The UFCW recently filed with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) for a union representation election, which could be held within one to six months, according to UFCW spokesperson Greg Denier.

Donna McDonald, president of UFCW Local 271 in Omaha, told the demonstrators, "We would like ConAgra to voluntarily recognize the union, but they have called for a formal election." She warned, "The company will try to intimidate you with threats of closing the plant, will enforce extra discipline on union supporters in the plant, will spread lies, and will harass workers as they force you to attend closed-door meetings with management to barrage you with antiunion information."

González told those at the rally that a ConAgra foreman recently had him taken off his regular job and placed at a different work station. He was ordered not to move out of a small square on the line, and, after he dropped his knife and moved to pick it up, the foreman screamed at him as though he was a child.

"When I requested a bathroom break, it took the foreman 20 minutes to get someone to relieve me, then he screamed at me again when I did not get back within a few minutes. This is why we need a union," González declared, as cheers of "Si se puede" rang out.

Damian Zuerlein, pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, located in the Latino community of South Omaha, pointed out, "I feel like I have been a military chaplain as I see workers come to the church with injuries that range from being cut by knives to torn muscles and broken bones. It is like they have been in a war. That is why I support these workers having a union."

Also speaking at the rally were Nebraska AFL-CIO president Ken Mass, a number of local UFCW officials from as far away as Worthington, Minnesota, and Nebraska state senator Shelly Kiel.

Company harassed workers

The NLRB recently issued a ruling against ConAgra, upholding a UFCW complaint that the company had intimidated, harassed, illegally videotaped, and prohibited workers from distributing union literature to workers at the Northern States Beef plant as part of an organizing drive.

ConAgra, the nation's second largest food company, reported on September 21 a 43.5 percent jump in fiscal first-quarter earnings from a year ago. As part of its recent reorganization, called Operation Overdrive, the company cast away 8,450 jobs and closed 31 food processing plants.

Placed on the defensive by the union campaign and the NLRB ruling, the company has tried to pretty up its anti-worker policies. According to the September 20 Omaha *World-Herald*, ConAgra's senior vice president, Timothy McMahon, said the company, which takes in \$27 billion in annual revenue, has rethought its "adversarial" relationship with unions such as the UFCW. "Our old corporate culture assumed there



Militant/Joe Swanson

More than 250 meat packers and supporters rallied in Omaha September 27

was a fight to be won" but "the new corporate climate is not about confrontation," he asserted. He declared that ConAgra plans to abide by the new "Nebraska Meat Packing Industry Workers Bill of Rights" and

improve conditions at its processing plants.

McMahon was referring to a new law promoted by Gov. Michael Johanns that supposedly guarantees workers the right to organize and join together for collective

bargaining purposes, the right to a safe workplace by establishing "management/employee safety committees," adequate restroom and rest break facilities, and adequate equipment without fear of harassment or reprisals. In fact, the measure is toothless and only reinforces antiunion "open shop" legislation.

Quoted in the September 20 *World-Herald*, Governor Johanns applauded ConAgra's statement about the Workers Bill of Rights and its announced workplace improvements. The Democratic governor gushed that ConAgra has "just set the bar a little higher for everyone," adding, "I'd like to give them a big pat on the back."

A week before the pro-union rally, a press conference was held outside the gate of ConAgra's Northern States Beef plant, which was attended by about 50 plant workers, UFCW officials, and members of OTOC.

The UFCW/OTOC launched a campaign in June to organize what they estimate are about 4,000 meat packers in the Omaha area. Seven nonunion meatpacking plants were targeted, including the Greater Omaha Packing Co. and Nebraska Beef, which are only a few blocks from the Northern States Beef plant. Organizers of the march and rally announced there will be more actions called in support of the union organizing drives.

Meat packers in Massachusetts fight for union

BY GARY COHEN

CHELSEA, Massachusetts—In response to intensified work, deteriorating conditions, and company abuse, workers at Kayem Foods Inc. are fighting for a union at this meat-processing plant here. Local 1445 of the United Food and Commercial Workers filed union authorization cards signed by nearly 200 workers with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) September 13 to petition for a union election.

Kayem Foods is the second-largest meat processor in New England, producing hams, roast beef, bologna, and hot dogs. With about 340 production workers, the plant is one of the largest employers in Chelsea, a suburb of Boston with many immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

One worker, who asked that his name not be used, described how the company has been trying to squeeze more labor out of workers. For example, he said, "Kayem built an expansion of the plant and then wanted the same number of sanitation workers to clean that area too. They said: 'Enough—let's get the union.'"

This is the fourth effort to organize a union at the plant, and the second in two years. In the past the company has been able to foster divisions among workers by national origin, getting some to oppose the union. Three-quarters of the workers are Latino, and others are Vietnamese, Bosnian, and Polish. "This time," the worker told the *Militant*, "everyone is for the union. The warehouse workers, which are mostly white and English-speaking, want the union too. They want better pay because they have a heavy job."

Last year the company organized a campaign against the union-organizing drive, including an antiunion rally—that involved a number of workers—to counter the pro-union rally outside the plant a week before the vote.

The antiunion propaganda has resumed. "During the past several days it has been apparent that union organizers are once again attempting to unionize employees at Kayem Foods," declared company president Ray Monkiewicz in an August 31 letter to all employees. "We believe these organizers are interested only in collecting dues and fees from our employees.... Our employees should not have to pay union dues and fees, give up the right to speak for themselves, with regard to wages, benefits, or other work-related issues, or face the potential of strikes."

Workers have been circulating pro-union flyers in the plant for several weeks. The company has tried to counter pro-union sentiment by organizing departmental meetings to disparage the union.

A worker told the *Militant*, "They just gave a written warning to one of the pro-union people for passing out literature on company time. Another guy used to be for the union until they made him team leader."

The company has promoted the circulation of antiunion literature. One flyer, de-

signed to give the false impression that it was produced by the union, called on workers to make sure that "all your immigration issues are in order and have proper work papers, since we want to be in good relation with the NLRB"—an obvious attempt to portray the union as intimidating workers.

Workers report that after the last union representation vote, the company arbitrarily fired a number of workers, including some who supported the union.

"In the packing room the women who work there have complained about the supervisors yelling at them. They don't treat us with respect," the pro-union worker said.

He also noted that forced overtime and disregard for seniority are also big issues. "When there is a lot of work they say, 'Come in on Saturday or you're fired.' And the company doesn't recognize seniority—they will put whoever they want to anywhere in the plant, even if someone else who has worked there longer asked for the position."

Workers hired as seasonal workers or permanent start at \$10 an hour, while those hired through a temporary agency make \$7 an hour. Seasonal workers and temporary workers receive no health benefits, sick pay, or vacation pay.

One flyer circulated by pro-union workers, addressed to company president Ray Monkiewicz, stated, "The supervisors don't

respect us as human people that we are and they abuse us by screaming at us." It listed other abuses: discriminatory hiring practices, supervisors who refuse workers' requests to go to the bathroom, arbitrary denial of workers' "personal days," and the firing of a number of workers, "some of them after having presented doctor's notes."

Since the union filed the request for a representation election, the company has claimed that it shifts personnel on a daily basis between Kayem and its recently acquired Genoa Sausage plant, and that all the workers at both plants should vote because they would be in the same bargaining unit. Genoa Sausage in nearby Woburn employs about 100 production workers. The union representatives have rejected this as a company stalling tactic to prevent an election at the Kayem plant.

In a flyer, union supporters explained, "The reason why our election has been delayed is because Kayem now feels they're losing the campaign. This is the only reason they are trying to include the Woburn (Genoa) employees in our election. We believe Kayem and Genoa are two different companies, therefore Genoa in Woburn should have their own election."

The NLRB is expected to issue a decision soon to determine the bargaining unit and set a date for the election.

State backs off plan to build prison on farmers' land, searches for new site



Militant/Betsey Stone

Basu at his farm in Pembroke Township, an overwhelmingly Black rural community 60 miles south of Chicago, shows where the Illinois government planned to build a new prison. The state government has canceled its plans, alleging the land is too costly. For the past year, area farmers and other residents have waged a campaign against the prison. The protests included a series of meetings and lawsuits challenging the firing of Pamela Basu, his wife, from her job as Hopkins Park's treasurer as well as the town's violation of state open meeting laws. State officials are considering other sites in Pembroke Township.

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Palestinian protesters face Israeli crackdown

Continued from front page
est round of fighting began.

The establishment of the state of Israel following World War II as a military garrison outpost for imperialism in the Mideast was based on the denial of self-determination of the Palestinian people. This has remained a central conflict in the Mideast as the Palestinians have refused to be dissipated as a people or to give up their struggle for national rights. The Israeli government is dependent on Washington, which provides political backing, military collaboration, and billions in yearly financial subsidies.

The protests and repression were sparked by a provocation by rightist Israeli politician Ariel Sharon, who visited the most sacred Islamic site in Jerusalem September 28 surrounded by an armed entourage of 1,000 cops. He declared this calculated move a demonstration of Israeli control over the site.

Clerics at mosques encouraged immediate protests against this outrage, and thousands mobilized in the face of deadly fire by Israeli forces. Protests have taken place throughout the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and some towns inside Israel's borders. Arafat's Al Fatah militia has been active in organizing the actions and at times shooting at Israeli forces. The Palestinian Authority security forces have also joined in, sometimes defending protesters from Israeli assault, at other times standing by during the demonstrations, which were marked by the number of youth and working people who faced Israeli troop and police mobilizations.

The head of Al Fatah in the West Bank, Marwan Barghouti, has been a central organizer of the protests. Barghouti issued a statement September 29 calling for an uprising, and mobilized the militias throughout the West Bank.

At the Netzarim junction between Israel and the Gaza Strip, Israeli troops fired on protesters September 30, killing a 12-year-old Palestinian boy who was passing by. The boy has become a symbol of the Palestinian protests against Israeli brutality and oppression.

Two days later, hundreds of Palestinian youths pelted the Israeli army outpost there with rocks and some gasoline bombs. The troops attacked the crowd with automatic weapons and armor-piercing missiles launched from a helicopter.

Meanwhile, the protests spread to the Palestinian population within Israel—also known as “Israeli Arabs” to try to divide the Palestinian population. Numbering 1 million of the country's 6 million people, they have Israeli citizenship, unlike other Palestinians. Demonstrators blocked highways and closed schools, paralyzing some areas

in northern Israel. Protests flared up in the Jaffa suburb of the capital, Tel Aviv.

The protests brought to the fore the systematic discrimination faced by Palestinians in Israel. The Israeli-Palestinian talks have revolved around limited autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the future of Jerusalem, and not around a change in these conditions.

“Israeli Arabs have long chafed at inadequate state budgets for their communities, land confiscations, inferior schools, and lack of housing and of industrial development plans for their towns,” admitted a *New York Times* correspondent, reporting from Umm Al Fahm, a town where Palestinian protesters attacked a post office as a symbol of government authority.

The Clinton administration sent U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright to reconvene talks in Paris between Barak and Arafat October 5. The talks broke down after one day.

The Islamic Resistance Movement, or Hamas, denounced the Paris talks saying the meeting represents “careless disregard for the blood of our martyrs.” Hamas has called for new confrontations with Israeli security forces.

The actions by Sharon, leader of the opposition Likud party in the Israeli parliament, show the divisions within the Israeli capitalist ruling class over what direction and how far to go in negotiations with the Palestinians. Sharon seeks to depose Labor Party prime minister Ehud Barak and said

he would move a vote of no-confidence when parliament reconvenes this month.

The evolution of the Palestinian leadership of the PLO, which has become increasingly bourgeoisified over the past two decades, has deepened since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority. Arafat has moved to quell opposition groups and more and more relied on ties with capitalist Arab regimes and negotiations with Washington to secure a Palestinian homeland.

The U.S. government is exerting pressure on the Israeli regime to reach a settlement aimed at stability, on terms favorable to imperialism. U.S. officials, while posing as even-handed, have directed most of their fire at the Palestinians, falsely blaming them for the violence.

Protests around the world condemn Tel Aviv

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

In cities throughout the Middle East and around the world, protesters have raised their voices against the murderous repression of Palestinians carried out by Israeli forces.

In **Beirut**, capital of Lebanon, some 20,000 people marched to the United Nations House October 3. The Lebanese *Daily Star* reports that thousands of Palestinian refugees were joined by students from two universities marching in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank, and inside Israeli borders. Demonstrations have

also occurred in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq.

Demonstrations took place in several cities in North America. In **Montreal**, 500 people marched October 2 to the Israeli consulate. The big majority were Palestinian students, who gave the demonstration its militant and boisterous character. Solidarity Palestine Human Rights, involving students from three local campuses, organized the demonstration. Signs declared: “52 years of oppression,” “*Pas de justice, pas de paix*” (No justice, no peace). “Israel out of Palestine” and “*Palestine-Québec, solidarité*” were chanted in English, French, and Arabic.

CALENDAR

ILLINOIS CHICAGO

Open House after the March for Amnesty and Immigrant Rights. Sat., Oct. 14, 4:00-7:00 p.m. 1212 N Ashland, 2nd Floor. Sponsor: Socialist Workers campaign. For more information, call (773) 342-1780.

March for Peace in Support of Vieques, Puerto Rico

MANHATTAN, NEW YORK
Sat., Oct. 21, 12:00 noon. From Columbus Circle (59th St. entrance to Central Park) to USS Intrepid Naval Museum on the West Side Highway (46th St.). For more information,

tion, e-mail: ViequesAlliance1021@hotmail.com, Voice mail: (212) 591-1103. Also see web page at <http://www.ViequesAlliance.org>

Stop Police Brutality, Justice for Otto Vass

TORONTO, CANADA
Stop Police Brutality, Justice for Otto Vass. Guest speakers and discussion. Wed., Oct. 11, 6:30 p.m. *Parkdale Activity and Recreation Centre, 1499B Queen Street West (3 blocks west of Lansdowne).* Sponsor: *Justice for Otto Vass Committee.* For more information, call (416) 656-2232. E-mail: justiceforotto@hotmail.com

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ILLINOIS CHICAGO

The Working Class and the Fight for Immigrant Rights. Panel discussion. Fri., Oct. 20, 7:00 p.m. 1212 Ashland, 2nd floor. Donation: \$4. Tel: (773) 342-1780.

IOWA DES MOINES

The Fraud of Education Reform under Capitalism. Speaker: Edwin Fruit, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in Iowa. Fri., Oct. 13, 7:30 p.m. 3720 6th Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (515) 288-2970.

NEW YORK BRONX

Struggles for Dignity, Rights, and Solidarity. Working People Confront Growing Brutality and Political Polarization of Capitalist Society Today. Fund-raiser for the Militant and Perspectiva Mundial Fund 2000. Speaker: Martin Koppel, editor of the *Militant*. Sat., Oct. 14. Dinner: 6:30 p.m., program 7:30 p.m. *The Community Center, 940 Garrison St.* For more information, call (212) 740-4611.

TEXAS HOUSTON

The Struggle for Palestinian Rights. Sun., Oct. 15, 6:00 p.m. 619 W. 8th Street. Tel: (713) 869-6550.

Capitalist education—(1)“In Southern California, students skip



Harry Ring

lunch and delay going to the bathroom because the lines are longer than the lunch period. Rushing to get to class on time, students fight their

way through narrow doors and cramped hallways”—*Los Angeles Times*.

Education (Cont.)—“For many students, school has become a matter of survival of the fittest... As surging campus environments continue to squeeze classroom space, throughout the state, many students say they spend more energy navigating crowds and coping with cramped conditions than learning.—*Los Angeles Times*.

Those gold-paved streets—

“High tech’s passport to nowhere. Lured to U.S. jobs with special visas, immigrants often face substandard pay and uncertain status. Now their lot may get worse.”—News headline.

Caring for some—California builders have found a new pocket-lining niche—senior housing for the wealthy. Like “assisted housing” units in Beverly Hills for widowed folks who don’t want to rattle around in the big old house, but don’t want to leave the neighborhood. Rents start at \$3,800 a month.

And, of course, meanwhile—“In Southern California, about 750,000 workers earn the state’s minimum wage of \$5.75 an hour full time, about \$12,000 a year. There’s a need for a variety of housing types, including senior apartments for independent living, facilities for assisted living, and less grim nursing homes.”—News item. Same day.

Want to ensure the best care?—A Turkish woman living 21 years as a legal resident in Germany was denied a necessary heart transplant

because her German wasn’t good enough. Her daughter, stepped forward as a translator, so far to no avail. Her daughter declared, “It smacks simply of racism.”

A confident imperialism?—It was revealed that the Italian army has a supply of military apparel on hand big enough to dress soldiers for 3,000 years. A portion, however, is in children’s sizes. This may suggest that the garment contractors enjoyed inside info on coming draft plans, or simply a concern to save cloth.

Gulf War: a U.S.-led war for oil companies

Printed below are excerpts from “The Working-Class Campaign against Imperialism and War,” a talk presented by SWP national secretary Jack Barnes in November 1990. At the time the U.S. rulers were preparing to launch their military assault on Iraq. The entire speech can be found in *New International* no. 7 featuring the article “Opening Guns of World War III: Washington’s Assault on Iraq.” Copyright © 1991 by 408 Printing and Publishing Corp. Reprinted by permission.

BY JACK BARNES

In one way, the war that is being prepared by Washington in the Middle East today is a “post-Cold War” war. That’s because, unlike any other war they’ve prepared since 1945, the U.S. rulers can’t present this one as part of the battle against communism or the Soviet threat. This too will be a pattern from here on out. The wars that Washington fights will be more nakedly imperialist wars—and imperialist in every sense of the word.

BOOK OF THE WEEK

Imperialist, first of all, in the most popular sense—like imperial Rome and its legions. The legions of a dominant power that exaggerates its contributions to human culture and ideas in order to rationalize marching off to dominate other parts of the world. A war fought by an imperial army, claiming imperial rights and prerogatives for an imperial race. A war against illogical heathens with strange gods. A war aimed at economically draining, politically oppressing, and militarily subjugating another people. An imperial power—often with high-flown rhetoric and practiced apologists—that claims the right to police the world.

It’s good to use the term this way. There’s nothing wrong or “unscientific” about it. It is an imperialist war in that most classical, most popular sense. It goes back thousands of years, and rings a bell with people throughout the world.

Moreover, it’s completely accurate in

another sense, too. Because Washington—the last of the world’s massive, brutal, imperial powers—is now embarking on a series of final wars to try to hold together a crumbling order, the capitalist order. And in the course of these conflicts—regardless of how long it takes—that empire will go down to defeat under the combined blows of workers and farmers at home and abroad.

War for Big Oil

It’s also an imperialist war in the popular economic sense—a war over oil. It will be a war to guarantee that the profits derived from the organization and control of petroleum remain in the hands of Big Oil, of the monopolies and the imperialist governments that defend their interests. That’s the sense in which you hear people say, “I’m not sure oil is worth a single life over there.”

We shouldn’t be hesitant to use the word *imperialist* in that sense, either. There’s a great deal of truth to the statement that the war is being fought over oil. It’s a battle over resources—a battle by the U.S. rulers to stop another capitalist class, in this case the Iraqi capitalists, from gaining too much control over those resources, directly or indirectly.

We should remember that the U.S. capitalists alone use 26 percent of the world’s oil production. Moreover, every aspect of the world oil market—right down to the gas pump—is highly monopolized by a handful of superrich capitalist families in the United States, Britain, and other imperialist countries.

Today, while the price of a barrel of oil remains well above what it cost four months ago, substantially more is being produced, sent through pipelines, and put on tankers than prior to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. In fact, in November world oil production reached a six-month high. Washington has played up information about the Saudi Arabian government bearing a big load in financing the U.S. military buildup there. But the windfall profits to the Saudi ruling families from the rise in oil prices since August 2 has produced five times as much income for them as they’ve laid out for Operation Desert Shield.

But it’s not the Saudi throne or the ruling classes of the OPEC countries that are the biggest victors of this price-gouging—although they do benefit, and at the expense of both the workers and peasants in their own countries and those in non-oil-producing countries throughout the Third World.

The big winners are the wealthy families who own the imperialist oil monopolies. They more than anyone else—more than OPEC—influence the world price of oil. This is true even though most of the Middle East oil fields have been nationalized in the decades since World War II, as well as those in many other semicolonial countries. The imperialist-owned monopolies not only own and operate their own massive oil fields, but also dominate world petroleum refining capacity, transportation, and distribution networks. The government of the Soviet Union, the world’s largest oil producer, has also benefited from recent price increases, helping to offset falling revenues from the declining output of its crisis-wracked petroleum industry.

The great losers economically—not to mention from the slaughter that is being planned—are working people in the United States and around the world. The majority of humanity—those in the semicolonial world—are being hit the hardest by the monopoly-rigged leap in oil prices. The Third World is being devastated. The working people of Eastern Europe are special victims too. They have been hit by the price



U.S. marines board helicopters for deployment to Gulf War in 1991. Washington’s war against Iraq was imperialist in every sense of word. U.S. rulers aimed at extending domination of oil industry over a big part of the semicolonial world.

hikes, the cutoff of Iraqi oil, the failure by the Soviet government to come through with contracted supplies, and—beginning January 1, 1991—with the necessity for the first time in decades of paying for Soviet oil in hard currency at the world market price.

So the war that is being prepared is an imperialist war in that sense too—a war for Big Oil.

There’s a third way in which it’s an imperialist war—the way Marxists have used the term for most of this century. It’s a war waged by finance capital. It’s a war over economic domination and control—redivision—of a big piece of the semicolonial world. It’s a war against other propertied classes in other coun-

tries for the domination of raw materials, markets, and access to the superexploitation of low-paid labor.

It even has the aspect of a war to redivide world power and influence among rival imperialist ruling classes. Despite the broad backing of the world’s capitalist ruling families for the war drive, the massive military operation in the Gulf is not a “coalition” effort. It’s not a partnership of equals. U.S. imperialism is calling the shots.

The bottom line, however, is that this will be a war in which all the imperialist powers—U.S. imperialism above all—stand to lose. It will be a war of a declining, not an advancing, imperialist power.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



October 17, 1975

NEW YORK—“I am a human not a sardine” is the rallying cry of Brooklyn high school students, who have been walking out of school and boycotting classes in record numbers to protest overcrowded classrooms.

Students report up to 90 in academic classes, more than 100 in hygiene courses. They are forced to perch on radiators and window ledges, and are lined up on the floor.

Strikes have taken place so far in at least nine high schools, all in the southern part of Brooklyn. The *New York Post* estimated that 20,000 students were on strike on Friday, October 3.

The boycott began at Grady High School and Fort Hamilton High School early that week and quickly spread to Sheepshead Bay High School.

Then the students began reaching out to other schools in the area, leafleting subway stops and sending delegations to other schools. Each day more schools emptied out as students ran through the halls yelling, “Overcrowded classrooms—walk out!”

Students from several schools called a joint demonstration October 6 at New York Gov. Hugh Carey’s office. Several hundred turned out and demonstrated for four hours against overcrowding.

The huge numbers in each classroom this fall are the result of thousands of teacher layoffs during the summer. Student demonstrators urged their teachers to support them, and carried signs from the recent United Federation of Teachers strike demanding smaller class sizes.



October 16, 1950

BOMBAY, India, Oct. 5—Some 225,000 cotton textile and 3,000 wool textile workers have been on strike here since Aug. 14 in a struggle without parallel in India’s working class history. Never before has so large a number of workers displayed such magnificent solidarity. For the first time since Aug. 15, 1947, the workers have engaged in a sustained struggle against not only their capitalist exploiters but the capitalist state as well.

The epic struggle of Bombay’s textile workers has heightened the growing awareness among ever new layers that the Congress rulers are as much the workers’ enemies as the British rulers in the past.

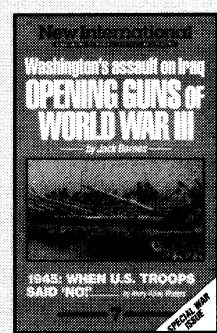
When the strike broke out, the government and the Congress union officials vied with each other in “killing” the strike in their press reports. Despite these notices of its “death,” the strike was so alive that the Government and Congress union officials resorted to direct methods of strikebreaking. Meetings were banned in the city, militants arrested for peaceful picketing and Congress goons given a free hand to beat the strikers. Strikers who tried to defend themselves against the violence of the company hirelings were arrested, while the police let the Congress “Volunteers” go scott free.

The government’s violence was climaxed when Home Guards, firing on people in private dwellings and on the streets, killed 10 and seriously wounded 60.

FOR FURTHER READING

Opening Guns of World War III

Washington’s Assault on Iraq
Jack Barnes



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Immigrants: part of our class

The labor movement needs to defend the rights of immigrant workers, from protesting the violent assault on two workers in Long Island, New York, to opposing the factory raids and deportations carried out daily by the U.S. immigration police around the country. Labor must also answer politically the anti-working-class arguments of the employers and rightist forces.

The government, Democrats and Republicans alike, is responsible for the attacks on immigrants. By targeting workers who originally hail from other countries, the employers and their government seek to divide working people and reinforce the second-class status of an entire section of our class.

Ultrarightist forces, such as the anti-immigrant thugs in Long Island calling themselves Sachem Quality of Life, seize on the reactionary arguments of the major capitalist politicians. They scapegoat immigrants, blaming them for unemployment, crime, the deterioration of living conditions, and other social problems. They feed on the insecurity among middle-class and some working-class layers that is bred by the capitalist social crisis.

Liberal opponents of the anti-immigrant campaign are unable to answer the demagoguery of the rightists. These liberals often argue that immigrants pay taxes, that crime statistics have fallen, and so on. But such arguments simply accept the framework set by the rightists, and fall right into their trap.

Whether crime figures are up or down, the exact figures on how much money undocumented workers pay in taxes—these questions are not only subjects of endless debate, they have nothing to do with the stance the labor movement should take. That stance must start with a class point of view.

Immigrants are part of our class. They strengthen the entire working class, helping broaden the horizons of fel-

low workers and bringing their experiences in struggle from their countries of origin. The attempt by the bosses, government officials, and rightists to criminalize a section of the working class is aimed at pitting us against each other. It is similar to other attempts to justify attacks on the rights and livelihood of working people—from the cops who brutally crack down on residents of Black communities under the pretext of “fighting drugs,” to those who oppose abortion rights and who blame women asserting the right to control their bodies for a “breakdown in moral values.”

The common enemy of working people is the employers and their profit system. It’s capitalism that generates unemployment and other fundamental problems facing workers and farmers. The unions need to reject any “America first” framework of defending jobs. Instead, what is needed is a fight to win jobs for all—and to organize all workers into the unions. The role immigrants are playing today in union-organizing fights, from meat packers in Boston and the Midwest to farm workers in Washington State, shows the potential power of the labor movement when it is united.

Taking up the interests of the entire working class is just as crucial in defending immigrants as it is in defending social security, democratic rights, and other hard-won gains of working people.

The ultrarightists on Long Island are a threat not only to immigrants but to our entire class. These Quality of Life thugs are one element of the rightist forces emerging in this period of increasing political polarization in the United States. They range from Patrick Buchanan’s reactionary movement to the Detroit cops and their supporters who have mobilized to oppose the fight for justice for auto worker Dwight Turner, recently killed by cops. All these are deadly dangers to all working people, and must be opposed.

Oppose Israeli, U.S. brutality

The following statement was issued October 4 by James Harris, the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. president.

Workers, farmers, and all those who support justice should stand in protest against the brutal massacre of Palestinians being carried out by the government of Israel. Nearly 70 Palestinians have been killed and the death toll rises daily. More than 1,300 have been injured to date. The full blame for the assault rests with the Israeli regime and its powerful backers in Washington, which continues its decades-long denial of self-determination to the Palestinian people through force and violence.

I urge all working people and our organizations, defenders of democratic rights, and supporters of the Palestinian struggle for a homeland to demand Washington break all ties to the Israeli government now. Similar demands should be placed on London, Paris, and other imperialist powers on which the Zionist regime depends.

The response by the government of Ehud Barak—turning on Palestinian demonstrations with live ammunition and rockets—is to instill fear in the Palestinian people and teach them that any attempts they make to fight for their national sovereignty will be crushed with ruthless violence. The courageous resistance of the Palestinian workers and youth, confronting fully armed contingents of Israeli soldiers backed up by tanks and helicopters, shows they will not succeed.

The visit by Likud party leader Ariel Sharon to the Haram al Sharif compound, which houses Islamic holy sites, was an intentional provocation. Sharon is particularly hated by Arab people because of his leading role in the massacre of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon in 1982. Sharon came to the compound flanked by six other members of parliament and 1,000 Israeli police. His purpose was to demonstrate that Israel was in control of Jerusalem.

The posturing of the Clinton administration as “peace-maker” should be condemned for the fraud that it is. Washington continues to provide massive military and economic aid to the Zionist regime in Tel Aviv—as it has for decades—while seeking to force a “solution” to the Palestinian national question, that is, to force the Palestinian people to give up their struggle for self-determination. For the U.S. rulers, “peace” in the Middle East means deepening their domination of the oil-rich region and establishing stable, profitable relations with the major capitalist regimes in the region, whose populations are predominantly Arab.

My campaign joins our Palestinian brothers and sisters in demanding that Washington break all ties to Israel. We demand a halt to the Israeli aggression and the immediate withdrawal of all Israeli forces from the occupied territories of the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem. We demand the right of the Palestinian people to national self-determination be upheld.

Interview with socialist candidate

Continued from Page 7
ers government in place. We need revolutionary change. That’s what we bring to politics.

Lehrer: If capitalism can’t be reformed, how far would you go? What would you replace it with? What would the society look like?

Harris: We are a revolutionary party. We think what is needed is a workers and farmers government that can lead the fight to overturn capitalism and lead tens of millions of people to start constructing a socialist society, based on cooperation with the rest of humanity. This is the only way forward for the working class.

Capitalism will lurch more and more toward crisis. Even in these times of the so-called economic miracle, the worsening conditions working people face are literally forcing us to engage in more strikes and struggles, such as there are among meat packers, unionized workers, and workers struggling for a union.

Lehrer: Is there a country in the world that is similar to the system that you envision?

Harris: The one country we talk about as an example for working people is Cuba. We point out what has been gained there and the revolutionary change necessary for it to come about. I recently went to Cuba, for example, with a group of farmers who are interested in Cuba because there have been no farm foreclosures there for 42

years since the revolution, which enacted a massive land reform. Look at their ability to send doctors throughout the world. Their ability to engage in an actual fight against apartheid in South Africa when it invaded Angola. Cuba is an example for working people to look toward, to study, and to get past the lies that are told about Cuba by the U.S. government. These are some of the reasons the U.S. government doesn’t want people to go there and see it.

Lehrer: A lot of poverty in Cuba, no?

Harris: Well, Cuba is a Third World country. A lot of poverty was imposed by what the United States carried out in Cuba before the revolution and since the revolution with the economic blockade. I would encourage you to compare Cuba to the rest of Latin America and other Third World countries in what it is able to assure for its citizens. But Cuba is a poor country. The fact that it is poor doesn’t mean it can’t be an example for those wanting to find a way to struggle forward and how working people can live our lives with dignity, some honor, and free of exploitation.

Lehrer: This has been James E. Harris, presidential candidate of the Socialist Workers Party, as we continue to have every candidate who is on the ballot before election day, November 7. Mr. Harris, thank you so much.

Harris: Thank you.

[Jacob Perasso, SWP candidate for Senate in New York, will be on Lehrer’s show October 11 at 11:15 a.m.]

Protests in Yugoslavia

Continued from front page

annulled parts of the September 24 election, posing the possibility of redoing the first-round vote. Kostunica called the decision a “trap.”

“They can say whatever they want. But they are defeated—history,” said Snjezana, a store clerk in Belgrade. “If we have to defend our victory on the street we’ll do that. We’ve had enough.” On October 3 some 40,000 people rallied in the industrial town of Kragujevac to support Kostunica. Earlier protests brought a series of towns to a halt, but failed to have much effect on Belgrade where road blockades have lasted a few hours.

“Milosevic is going down,” declared Vuk Obradovic, a former general in the Yugoslav army and now head of the opposition Social Democratic Party. He added, “We will probably start with mass protests aimed at paralyzing the entire country.” Obradovic and other opposition figures met September 28 to plan protest actions, including rallies and civil disobedience that they hope to culminate in a general strike several days later.

The 7,000 coal miners at Kolobara put down their tools the next day and 4,500 miners at the Kostolac mine in eastern Serbia walked off the job two days later. The two mines supply the largest power plants in Yugoslavia, which serve electricity to the water supply system, sewage system, city transportation, and other institutions. The miners say they will stay on strike until Milosevic resigns.

Copper miners in Majdanpek, who also walked off the job, parked dump trucks at the mine entrance, and unloaded dirt and rocks to build barricades. Other workers put up barricades in the central town of Cacak, but police stopped 500 people from reimposing a blockade on a highway near Novi Sad.

The Milosevic regime has already conceded a big defeat in local elections—the opposition will govern in almost 100 towns and cities in Serbia. In the winter of 1996 thousands of protesters marched every day for three months, forcing Belgrade to reverse its anti-democratic annulment of municipal election results that brought victories to an opposition coalition in 15 of Serbia’s 19 largest cities.

Washington bankrolls opposition

Washington and the imperialist powers in Europe have thrown their support to Kostunica, declaring him all but the winner. “It is increasingly apparent that the opposition prevailed and any claims to the contrary by Milosevic are false,” said White House spokesman Jake Siewert. Washington is pressing Moscow for help in forcing Milosevic’s ouster.

The Clinton administration has invested massive funds in its “pro-democracy campaign,” to the tune of \$77 million over the past three years, while intervening in Yugoslavia’s internal affairs. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the National Endowment for Democracy are the major financial conduits to the Yugoslav opposition forces.

“People assume we pick candidates. Our efforts don’t do that,” a U.S. State Department official scoffed. “We just make sure there’s an architecture for a fair election.” Meanwhile, U.S. Defense Department officials said Washington plans to bolster its military presence in the Balkans, which includes sending a warship, *USS George Washington*, to the Adriatic Sea.

Last year Washington organized a 78-day bombing campaign against the Yugoslav workers state and deployed a U.S.-led NATO occupation force in the Serbian province of Kosova. Some half a million workers lost their jobs due to the bombing, which destroyed factories, schools, hospitals, bridges, and other parts of the country’s infrastructure. The opposition forces blame Milosovic for this state of affairs and pointed to the promised lifting of the sanctions by Washington if the regime is defeated.

Most of Milosevic’s opponents have been unable to muster enough support in the past to oust him because of their links to Washington and the other imperialist states belonging to the NATO military alliance. One leading Serbian opposition leader, Zoran Djindjic, president of the Democratic Party in Serbia, was part of a delegation that received a warm reception in the U.S. capital last year.

For his part, Milosovic appealed to Serbian chauvinist sentiments, urging people not to choose the side of the NATO countries that bombed Yugoslavia. “With the money that they have received from abroad,” he stated, the opposition “is buying, blackmailing, and scaring citizens.”

Kostunica, also a Serbian nationalist, gained standing as an opposition figure when he was dismissed from Belgrade University law school in 1974 for defending a professor who was imprisoned for criticizing the regime of Josef Tito. Kostunica was the only one among several intellectuals who refused a 1989 offer by Milosevic to be rehired. He criticized the U.S.-led NATO bombing of Yugoslavia and called the bombing of civilian targets possible war crimes. Kostunica has sought to distance himself from Washington, saying Yugoslavia must not become “anybody’s protectorate.”

The opposition leader emphasizes in many appearances that he accepts no aid from the U.S. government and has called the imperialist-organized war crimes tribunal “an instrument of American policy and not of international law.” Kostunica said he would not deliver Milosevic, indicted last year for alleged war crimes, over to the Hague for trial.

'We stuck together,' say Massachusetts unionists at Raytheon

BY TIM LENNOX

LOWELL, Massachusetts—Members of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 1505 voted overwhelmingly October 2 to approve a contract offer with Raytheon Co., the country's third largest military contractor.

The workers had rejected a company offer August 27, and the 2,700 members went on strike. Major issues in the dispute were job security, medical benefits, and pensions.

The initial contract offer increased workers' average cost of medical coverage by 111 percent. The new agreement increases it by 91 percent. Raytheon also agreed to raise pension payments from \$34 per year of service to \$40; previously they had offered \$38 per year.

Raytheon, which has 10 plants in Massachusetts, also agreed to keep production of the Patriot and Hawk missiles, and two types of radar systems, in the state.

The new contract lasts four years. The previous contract was for two years and prior contracts were three years.

Commenting on what the strikers accomplished, Elizabeth Ortiz, with 19 years at Raytheon, said, "We stuck together. We are more unified." She noted that they learned during the strike, remarking that before "we didn't know how to strike and make noise." Referring to the contract, she said, "We got a little."

Ella Johnson, a 42-year veteran, was working at Raytheon in 1966 when the union last went on strike. She said in that strike, which lasted a couple of months, "We

stood up, but we did not gain at the moment. We gained for the future. Today I think we are not gaining very much, but we are gaining for the future. Without the union we wouldn't gain anything then or today."

José Maldonado, a mechanical assembler at the Andover plant, with 25 years' service, reported, "We got big support. We couldn't have made it without that. We won because we stuck together."

"I think it was horrible for them to take the medical," explained Carrie Boylorn, who has 33 years with the company, but added, "I think the strike did help." Workers expressed concern about aspects of the new medical benefits, especially the prescription plan. Certain drugs will not be covered by the new plan and no list of which ones will be covered was available.

Oscar Peña, a 19-year veteran, voted against the contract, commenting, "We should have stayed out longer and gotten more." He said co-workers voted for the contract because the company threatened that if the union did not accept it they would not negotiate again until after Thanksgiving. He also thought the cutoff of medical coverage by the company, days after the five-week strike began, weighed heavily on many.

The new pact increases wages about 3.5

Nurses in New Zealand strike



Militant/Christine Beresford

Nurses at the main public hospital in Wellington, New Zealand, held a one-day strike October 1 to press demand for a 7 percent wage increase and a union contract. About 250 nurses and midwives took part in the picket throughout the day.

percent a year over the course of the contract. Before the meeting, a worker with 26 years at Raytheon noted that in 1981 he was making more money per hour than today, due to job eliminations, combinations, and wage freezes over the last two decades.

During the strike, pro-union rallies were held by retirees, by women union members,

and by the Gay and Lesbian Labor Activist Network, which rallied to support a provision proposed by the union to guarantee benefits for all domestic partners.

Tim Lennox is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

Pathfinder volunteers to complete 30 titles

BY JERRY GARDNER

SAN FRANCISCO—Volunteers participating in the Pathfinder Reprint Project are on pace in their campaign to complete 30 more Pathfinder titles by Jan. 1, 2001. In September six titles were completed and put on compact discs, bringing the total for the campaign to 13. Several other titles are in the final stages of production and will be completed in October.

The titles completed in September were *Nelson Mandela Speaks*; *Palestine and the Arabs' Fight for Liberation*; issue no. 2 of the Spanish-language *Nueva Internacional*, titled "Che Guevara, Cuba, and the Road to Socialism"; *Writings of Leon Trotsky 1939-40*; *Lenin's Final Fight*; and *The U.S. War Drive and the World Economic Crisis* by Fidel Castro. All these books had been out of print and will now be available.

The Reprint Project is a campaign carried out by more than 200 supporters of the communist movement. Its purpose is to convert to electronic files the entire Pathfinder list of books and pamphlets—more than 300 titles containing the strategic lessons of the modern working-class movement.

In addition to the goal of reproducing at least 30 titles by the end of the year, the Reprint Project volunteers have been putting special emphasis on getting Spanish-language titles ready for the Guadalajara International Book Fair, a major Latin American cultural event that will take place in November. Last year 310,000 people attended the fair and more than 1,000 publishers from 26 countries displayed their books.

The Reprint Project set a goal of getting

five Spanish-language titles back into print for the fair and is making good progress. *Nueva Internacional* no. 2 is now on CD, ready for reprinting, and *Nueva Internacional* no. 3 on "The Rise and Decline of the Nicaraguan Revolution" has been formatted and checked by the Pathfinder editors. Text for *The Second Declaration of Havana* in Spanish is finished and the graphics files were recently sent for checking.

The book *Wall Street enjuicia al socialismo*, the Spanish version of *Socialism on Trial* by James P. Cannon, has been proofread and formatting has begun. And proofreaders skilled in the Spanish language are putting a final push on finishing the article *50 años de guerra encubierta*, which appears in English as an article in *New International* no. 6 titled "The 50-year domestic contra operation."

Completing this Spanish work was a big challenge for proofreading. To finish *Nueva Internacional* no. 3, two volunteers took a day off work. *Wall Street enjuicia al socialismo* required four people adjusting their schedules and two taking on new responsibilities.

As a result of the political confidence volunteers gained at the Active Workers Conference held in August, the Reprint Project registered a marked increase in production. This was true for all areas of the project. The pool of volunteers working on Spanish titles has expanded to 13. Some have been very productive.

First rounds of proofreading in Spanish will soon be completed for all titles. The challenge now is to train additional volun-

teers to be able to do the second rounds of proofreading in Spanish.

First reads for English-language Pathfinder titles will also be finished in a matter of months. The Reprint Project Steering Committee recently decided to ask all volunteers to consider training for other aspects of the project—index concordance preparation, formatting, graphics, and second reads. Some of these require slightly more computer skills than first reads, but it is not something that a dedicated volunteer cannot learn.

All areas of the project had excellent production in September. Proofreading sent 10 titles to formatting, while formatting sent 11 titles to Pathfinder for checking. Eighteen graphics volunteers did work that included 7 covers, 49 photo pages, 4 duotone photos, 1 full-color photo, and 74 black-and-white photos, maps, and drawings. In indexing 35 volunteers completed work on 109 assignments covering seven titles.

One of the final challenges to be solved by the Reprint Project involves getting titles onto CD. Any small glitch in the final stages of production, be it a software problem or last minute correction, slows production at that stage. Attention to this area will make it possible for the Reprint Project to realize its long-term goal of 10 titles per month.

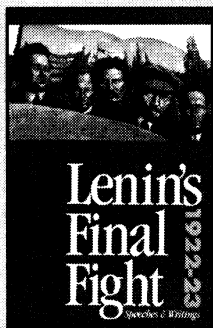
If you would like to take part in this effort to keep in print the political arsenal of the revolutionary workers movement, contact Ruth Cheney at RuthChen@flash.net.

Jerry Gardner is a member of the Pathfinder Reprint Project Steering Committee.

From Pathfinder

Lenin's Final Fight: Speeches and Writings, 1922-23

In the early 1920s Lenin waged a political battle in the leadership of the Communist Party of the USSR to maintain the course that had enabled the workers and peasants to overthrow the tsarist empire, carry out the first successful socialist revolution, and began building a world communist movement. The issues posed in Lenin's political fight remain at the heart of world politics today. 19.95



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LETTERS

Facts on cops, prisons

In preparing a talk on police brutality for a Militant Labor Forum in Miami, I ran across a web site for the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics (www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs). I was trying to find out exactly how many cops there are in the United States today, and how many people there are in prison or on probation. I thought *Militant* readers would be interested in some statistics I found on this:

* There are 16 federal agencies that employ at least 500 police. Three-fifths of federal cops work for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Bureau of Prisons, the FBI, and U.S. Customs. Together these four agencies employ

a little over 50,000 cops. The number of state and local police with arrest powers increased by 59,000 between 1992 and 1996.

In 1975, there were 211 state and local cops per 100,000 people. By 1998, it was up to 247 per 100,000. The 1996 Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies put the number of local police at 663,535. These figures do not include military police, campus police, certain housing and transit police, and railroad police.

* In 1990, the incarceration rate was 1 in every 218 U.S. residents. By 1999, the figure went up to 1 in every 147. From 1990 to 1999, federal, state, and local governments had to accommodate an additional 83,743 inmates per year, or 1,610

per week. In the year ending June 30, 1999, the number of inmates held in jail rose by 13,481; in state prison, by 34,238; and in federal prison, by 10,614. A Department of Justice press release dated July 23, 2000, begins: "The number of adult men and women under the supervision of Federal, state, and local correctional authorities rose to a record 6.3 million in 1999.... This number represents 3.1 percent of all adult residents in the United States, or one in every 32 adults." The press release goes on to explain that there were 1.9 million more people under correctional supervision in 1999 than in 1990. And of course, "Blacks were more than a third of probationers (1,310,000) and nearly half of parolees (312,000)."

The Bureau of Justice Statistics prepared a special table called "Lifetime Likelihood of Going to State or Federal Prison." "Assuming that recent incarceration rates remain unchanged," says the report, "an estimated 1 out of every 20 persons can be expected to serve time in prison during their lifetime." The report estimates that Hispanic males have a 1 in 6 chance, and "newborn Black males have a greater than 1 in 4 chance of going to prison during their lifetimes."

* At the end of 1998, thirty-seven states plus the federal government had 3,452 people on Death Row. The average age of the Death Row inmate is 28. Two percent are 17 or younger. Some 4, 446 people have been executed in the United States

between 1930 and 1999; 3,138 of this number were executed between 1930 and 1951. Since the death penalty was reintroduced in 1976, 587 have been put to death, about half in the last four years.

The fight against this monstrous machine of class terror is essential for the survival and organization of working people and our unions.

Bill Kalman
Miami, Florida

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.

Port truckers hold protests around U.S.

BY DAN FEIN
AND FLOYD FOWLER

GARDEN CITY, Georgia—Owner-operator truck drivers who haul containers staged work stoppages and rallies October 4 at 16 ports in the United States and Canada to protest high fuel prices, low wages, and lengthy unpaid waiting periods. The actions, coordinated by the Teamsters Port Division, were held as part of international protests organized by the International Transport Workers' Federation.

About 30 drivers rallied here, just west of Savannah, at Gate 4 of the Georgia Port to call attention to their deteriorating take-home pay and working conditions. Over the past several years, drivers at this major southeastern port have made several attempts to organize a union. Around 1,000 drivers work out of the port.

Robert Morgan told the *Militant*, "The trucking companies are skimming off the top. We never get paid what we should. We never see the bill of lading." He was referring to the 8 percent to 10 percent fuel surcharge the shipping carriers pay to the trucking companies to offset the increase in diesel prices. This is supposed to be passed on to the drivers, who are the ones who pay for the fuel.

Herbert Sanders, who has logged 2 million miles as a port driver, said, "When Wal-Mart opened a warehouse in Statesboro about three years ago, drivers got \$200 a box for that run. Now it's only \$115-\$120. After paying for fuel, it's not worth the trip. For an in-town run, the trucking company gets \$50. The driver gets only \$20 of that."

Independent operators have to pay for their own health insurance, repairs to their cabs, truck insurance, and fuel costs.

Sanders said, "Companies used to pay \$600 to drivers hauling from here to Atlanta. Now they pay about \$350 and it costs \$140 just for the fuel."

A common practice of the trucking firms is to deduct from drivers' wages the cost of any damage to trailers or containers. Larry Lee said, "I worked for one company that held \$1,500 of mine in escrow. When I left it took 90 days to get it back. They're always looking for an excuse to keep it. My tags cost \$800 last year and I pay \$350 per month for health insurance for me and my family. The companies operate on money they steal from us drivers—and I mean literally steal!"

Keith, a driver who joined what several drivers referred to as the 33-day "Christmas strike" three years ago and asked that his last name not be used, said, "For in-town hauling we used to get \$18-\$20 per load and maybe 10-15 trips a day. Now you are lucky to get five or six trips a day. We waste hours at the port waiting to get loaded and unloaded, all unpaid. The contracts you sign [with the trucking companies] are all for them. They won't negotiate anything. It's to be sure their ass is covered. I was out here for the Labor Day rally, and I'll be out here again. We've got to stand up."



Militant/Floyd Fowler

Savannah port truckers rally October 4 for better pay and lower costs

'Equal treatment for Haitian immigrants!'

BY CINDY JAQUITH

MIAMI—Supporters of immigrant rights were outraged when the U.S. Border Patrol threw 14 Haitians into the Krome Detention Center after they fled Haiti and landed near here on Dania Beach September 22.

Three days earlier, a crop duster was stolen from Cuba and flown toward the United States. It crashed in the Gulf of Mexico with nine people aboard, one of whom died. A U.S. Coast Guard cutter brought all the Cubans to Florida. The eight were accorded a hero's welcome by government officials and other big-business politicians who oppose

the Cuban revolution. They will be eligible for legal U.S. residence in less than a year.

"We were gratified last week when a group of Cubans were brought to shore and...quickly released," said Marleine Bastieu, executive director of the Haitian Women on Miami. "We want equal treatment for the Haitian refugees."

About 200 Haitians and supporters rallied in front of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) building here September 29. They chanted "Equal treatment for Haitians!" "Justice!" and "Stop racism—free the Haitians now!"

"The law goes for everyone," said Sandra Moreau, a young Haitian-American hoarse from chanting. She was referring to the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act, under which Cuban immigrants who set foot on U.S. soil without going through legal channels may apply for residence a year and one day later. If they are picked up at sea, however, they are supposed to be returned to Cuba.

Many in Cuba are opposed to this U.S. law because it is designed to lure Cubans to leave their country by risking their lives on flimsy boats and rafts, making them fodder for Washington's propaganda against the Cuban revolution.

Another demonstrator, Angel Rosario, said he moved to Florida from Puerto Rico six years ago. "If everyone is human, they should have equal rights," he observed. "They say the U.S. is free—but it's not."

About an hour after the demonstration began, a spokeswoman for the INS came over to the rally to speak to the media. Patricia Mancha announced that eight of the 14 detained Haitians would be released on their own recognizance that day. They will still have to appear before an immigration judge to fight for residence.

"This is a great victory for respect, for dignity," Marleine Bastieu told demonstrators after the INS announcement. "However, we will continue to fight." She noted that another 25 Haitians were arrested September 26 when they landed near here at Hollywood Beach. Bastieu also pointed out that there are immigrants who have been locked up at the Krome Detention Center "for months or years. They are from all over, including Jamaica and Africa."

"We will fight until all the refugees are released and they close Krome down," Bastieu declared. "We will also fight for permanent residence for immigrants who have been living here."

Chinese immigrants in New Zealand wage fight for their right to stay



Chinese immigrants stage protest and hunger strike in Auckland, New Zealand.

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—More than 100 Chinese immigrants began a protest camp in Aotea Square in the center of this city September 27. About half are on a hunger strike. The protesters, many of whom entered the country with applications for refugee status, are fighting for the right to stay and are protesting harsh new immigration laws.

Under these laws, which went into effect October 1, immigrants who have stayed beyond the expiration of their entry permits by more than 42 days will be subject to immediate deportation by police and immigration authorities without right of appeal. Previously, undocumented immigrants had 42 days to lodge an appeal after they had been notified by authorities.

To sweeten the introduction of these reactionary immigration measures, the New Zealand government announced a

partial amnesty for undocumented immigrants who can prove they are "well-settled." Of the more than 20,000 people estimated to be living in New Zealand after having overstayed their entry permits, up to a third are reported to be eligible for the amnesty. The remainder will face immediate deportation, and will be banned from reentering New Zealand for at least five years—a measure that will see them barred also from many other countries as well. Immigrants who have applied for refugee status are not eligible to apply for the amnesty. The Chinese protesters say this discriminates against them.

Around half the estimated "overstayers" in New Zealand come from Samoa and Tonga. Chinese and Indian immigrants make up close to 50 percent of those seeking refugee status.

—MICHAEL TUCKER

Vancouver city workers walk out

BY JOE YATES

VANCOUVER—City workers here set up picket lines September 28, rejecting by a 60 percent margin the city's latest contract offer. The strikers, members of Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), include 4,000 inside and outside workers, including garbage collectors.

Already a propaganda campaign against the strike has started in the big business media. The *Globe and Mail* proclaimed in a front-page article, "Vancouver residents were preparing for chaos yesterday as city workers launched a full-scale strike." A headline in the *Vancouver Sun* read, "Families feel impact as city strike hits high gear."

The walkout began when a deadlock was reached with management over the issue of work flexibility. Until two years ago, many of the workers had a four-day workweek. It was canceled by the city without any notice, and a five-day week enforced.

Picket captain Jim Leroux explained that this situation played havoc with the lives of union members. "Some people were faced with paying for day care for five days instead of four," he said. Leroux works in the Engineering Department and has more than 25 years with the city. Glen McNeil, who works in street design, told the *Vancouver Sun*, "We just get pushed around each time. This time, people are saying it's got to stop sometime."

Leroux pointed out that what the city management wants is "to create new and vacant positions which they can schedule on weekends without paying overtime." According to a September 8 union bargaining update, "The employer is demanding wording which, if allowed to stand, would identify that both the union and the employer recognize that 'the nature and the scope of their work may require work on Saturday and/or Sunday, afternoon, evening, or rotating shift schedules, or flexible work schedules.'"

Wages are not an issue according to Leroux, who explained that the city's latest offer included pay increases of about 2 percent a year. A city web site boasts that city worker's wage raises since 1987 are "below the Vancouver Consumer Price Index. In the last three years increases are less than half the rate of the private sector." Strikers showed the *Militant* a list of increases for management. City Manager Judy Roberts got a 7.5 percent wage increase effective March 10 bringing her salary to Can\$176,000 (Can\$1 = US 67 cents).

The last major strike took place in 1981 and lasted 13 weeks, during which time massive amounts of garbage accumulated waiting for pickup. The city workers join Vancouver-area meat packers at Fletcher's Fine Foods and Superior Poultry who have been on strike for several weeks.