

# THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

# Stop U.S. threats against Cuba!

The following statement was released September 12 by Andrew Pulley and Matilde Zimmermann, Socialist Workers Party candidates for president and vice-president in 1980.

Washington's escalating campaign against Cuba poses a deadly threat to the Cuban people, the Nicaraguan people, and the American people.

From the White House to Congress, from liberal Democrats to conservative Republicans, the U.S. rulers have taken up the cry that "something must be done" about Cuba.

The pretext for this scare campaign—the alleged presence of some 2,300 Soviet combat troops in Cuba—is a transparent fake. Even

Carter has had to admit that the Soviet forces have been in Cuba for many years and that they pose no military threat whatsoever to the United States.

Cuba has never invaded the United States.

Cuba has never bombed the United States.

Cuba has never blockaded the United States.

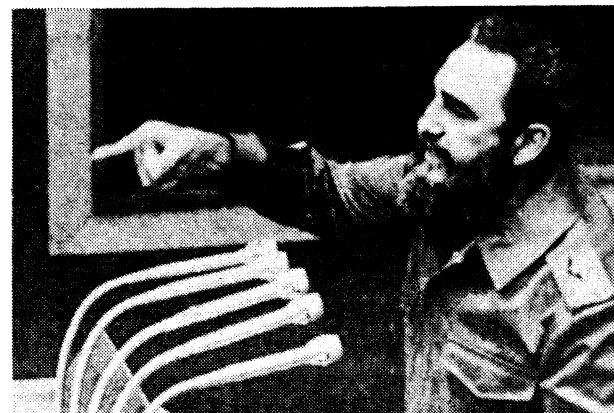
Cuba has never tried to assassinate U.S. leaders.

It is the U.S. government that has committed all these crimes against revolutionary Cuba.

And it is Washington—not Moscow—that maintains a military base and thousands of troops in Cuba against the will of the Cuban people. That is the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo.

In the face of real and proven U.S. aggression, Cuba has every right to organize the strongest possible de-

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**Full text of  
Fidel's  
speech  
to Havana  
summit**

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PULLEY

ZIMMERMANN

**Open letter  
from  
Iranian  
women**

**'Life sentences  
will not  
silence us'**

—PAGE 10

**Nicaragua youth: 'No one will  
ever take our freedom away'**



Sandinista troops march in Managua. For eyewitness reports and interview with revolutionary youth, see pages 7-9.

Militant/Fred Halstead

## ...Cuba

Continued from front page

fense, including obtaining all the military help it can get from the Soviet Union.

The new anti-Cuba campaign has nothing to do with Soviet troops. It has everything to do with the Cuban revolutionary government's consistent solidarity with struggles against U.S. imperialism all over the world—*first and foremost in Nicaragua today.*

Cuba never wavered in its support for the Nicaraguan people's long struggle against the Somoza regime, a murderous dictatorship installed and upheld by Washington to protect U.S. corporate interests. The Cuban government's warning of the consequences of threatened U.S. military intervention last summer helped block Carter from sending troops to save Somoza.

Today Cuban doctors and teachers are helping the new Sandinista government eradicate illiteracy and disease—something U.S. imperialism never tried to do in the sixty years it ran Nicaragua.

Washington hates and fears the way the Sandinista leadership is mobilizing and organizing the Nicaraguan workers and peasants to

### To our readers

*In order to make available the special international coverage in this issue—eyewitness reports from Nicaragua, Castro's speech to the nonaligned meeting, and an appeal from imprisoned Iranian socialists—we are not publishing our regular columns, letters, or 'In Brief' this week. These features will return in next week's 'Militant.'*

defend their interests. It fears they will follow the Cuban example of booting out imperialism and ending exploitation altogether through a socialist revolution.

So today—behind smiling promises of aid if "moderation" prevails in Nicaragua—Washington is trying to strangle the Nicaraguan revolution by refusing to provide the food and medicine desperately needed in that war-ravaged country. And it is using the smoke-screen of "Soviet troops in Cuba" to justify an American military buildup that ranges from the multibillion dollar MX missile program to increased U.S. troop deployment in the Caribbean.

The U.S. threats are also aimed at El Salvador, where tens of thousands of impoverished workers, peasants, and young people are trying to get rid of a brutal U.S.-backed military regime.

And the threat is directed against the tiny island of Grenada, 100 miles off the Venezuelan coast, which is defying Washington by establishing friendly ties with Cuba.

The U.S. rulers have been stung by other recent moves of the Cubans, as well:

- At the recent conference of nonaligned nations, Castro outraged Washington by telling the truth about the real threat to peace in the world—the U.S. war drive—and the real cause of poverty in the "underdeveloped" countries—capitalist domination.

- Cuba has exposed Carter's "human rights" pretensions by throwing open its prison doors and releasing every political prisoner in the country. Castro's related campaign to defend the human rights of the Puerto Rican Nationalists in U.S. prisons played a decisive role in winning their release last week after twenty-five years behind bars.

- The Castro government has encouraged tens of thousands of Cubans living in exile to visit their native country and see what the revolution is like. Two weeks ago Washington responded to this intolerable breach of its blockade by canceling the license of the travel agency that organized the family reunification tours.

Carter knows the American people want no part of any new Vietnams in Latin America. Working people in this country are in no mood to sacrifice our lives to suppress workers and peasants in other countries.

That's why the U.S. rulers are going all-out to frame up the Cuban revolution and portray U.S. war moves as "defense" against Soviet troops. If Carter is successful in escalating U.S. military pressure against the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions, American working people will pay a heavy price.

How great that price could be was signaled when liberal Democrat Frank Church pointed to the "missile crisis" of October 1962 as an example of U.S. "options" today. At that time President John Kennedy imposed a naval blockade against Cuba. He threatened the world with nuclear destruction unless the Soviet Union removed missiles it had placed in Cuba in order to deter a U.S. invasion.

For the capitalist rulers of this country, nuclear holocaust is always an "option" in their struggle to destroy the Cuban revolution and prevent its spread. The danger of a "miscalculation" that could wipe out humanity is built into the anti-Cuba drive.

Working people have a life-and-death stake in opposing the new war cries against the Cuban revolution. We should demand that Carter and Congress put a stop to the attacks

against Cuba, lift the economic and diplomatic blockade, and end all restrictions on travel to Cuba.

The U.S. base at Guantánamo must be closed down and all the U.S. troops brought home.

Hands off Cuba!

Hands off Nicaragua!

## Cleveland busing

After a three-year court battle, which culminated with a U.S. Supreme Court order, buses rolled as Cleveland began the first phase of school desegregation September 9.

The national and local news media encouraged antibusing forces by playing up the possibility of violence during the weeks before the opening of school.

Mayor Dennis Kucinich, a staunch opponent of busing, also kindled the racists' hopes. Although invited, Kucinich did not attend a teachers' conference to discuss implementing the desegregation order. His only public comment—through a secretary—was that he "personally opposed busing, but was committed to safety."

But city officials admitted that they could not guarantee the safety of the students—an invitation to racist attacks against Black school children.

Despite all that, the first days of busing went off without a hitch. Working people didn't take the racist bait.

Although there is still a lot of confusion over busing, the attitude of a growing majority of workers—white as well as Black—is to support equality in education for Blacks and to oppose segregation. And there is overwhelming majority opposition to the use of racist violence to try to stop desegregation.

The stance of the unions is a reflection of this sentiment for equality.

The United Auto Workers and the AFL-CIO have strong stands in support of school desegregation.

When the desegregation plan was announced in 1976, the Cleveland Federation of Labor organized an educational campaign for its peaceful implementation.

By supporting school desegregation through busing, the unions have taken a positive position in defense of Black rights. The understanding that equality is in the interest of *all* workers has been strengthened by labor's victory in the Supreme Court *Weber* decision, where the unions successfully defended affirmative-action quotas and union rights on the job.

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### International Socialist Review

How imperialism's bombing, economic blockade, backing of Pol Pot, and refusal to deal with new government have brought a new famine to Kampuchea. Also *Labor Struggles in the Changing South: The Impact of the Civil Rights Movement*, by Nelson Blackstock. Pages 13-20.

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# Pulley takes campaign to Detroit auto workers

By David Frankel

DETROIT—Defense of the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions . . . solidarity with our brothers and sisters thrown out of work by the profit-hungry auto companies . . . the need for the unions to break from the Democratic and Republican parties and form a labor party.

These were the main ideas brought to working people in Detroit by Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Andrew Pulley during his four-day tour here September 7-10.

Pulley, a steelworker from Chicago, hammered home the socialist message at plant gates, at meetings held at workers' homes, in interviews with the news media, and at a forum on the crisis in the auto industry.

On September 10, Pulley campaigned at Chrysler's Dodge Truck plant. It was the first day back for more than 2,000 workers who had been laid off their jobs since July 2. Another 3,500 workers were not called back at all.

Lewis Ferguson, a young Black production worker, replied to a question about what should be done by saying: "I think first of all they should cut off some of the management. They are making millions, and they're taking it away from us anyway."

## 'All should go out'

"If we had a stronger union, we could better equip people to face what's happening in society," he said. "We get sold out every year. We're so separated, so divided, that we can't get anything."

Asked about the UAW leadership's one-at-a-time strike strategy, Ferguson



SWP presidential candidate Andrew Pulley (left front) talks to Ford Rouge workers. Militant/Elizabeth Ziers

replied, "When one goes out, all should go out."

John Ferguson (no relation to Lewis), another Black worker, with fifteen years at Dodge Truck, added: "At least the whole plant should go out. You can't have half the plant laid off out here and the other half working."

Pulley agreed. "That divides the union. And there shouldn't be forced overtime, especially when half the plant's laid off."

Asked if he was worried about getting laid off, despite his fifteen years of seniority, John Ferguson said, "Hell yes! We've got no security, no nothing."

Pulley, who was recently laid off by U.S. Steel, noted that "problems that we face are not different from the

problems other working people face around the country."

The Dodge workers liked the ideas of labor solidarity Pulley was talking about, but they hadn't thought it all the way through. One felt that the Arab oil-exporting countries were to blame for the energy ripoff. Another thought immigrant workers were a problem. "Foreigners come here and buy up businesses. The government gives them jobs."

Pulley explained that anti-foreign sentiment is used by the bosses to divide working people. "The people we should be against are the ones who are running this country. They're the ones who are giving us hell," he said.

Just what kind of hell working people are catching was the subject of a

forum held September 9. Jeff Stephenson, co-chairperson of UAW Local 1058's solidarity committee in Toledo, described the situation workers there face.

"After working forced overtime stockpiling parts during the spring and summer," Stephenson said, "one-half of my plant is laid off, with more scheduled to go this month. We were told to look for another job."

"There have been massive layoffs in auto and glass in Toledo, the two biggest employers there. Workers at the oil refineries and on rail lines felt the ax too."

## Unemployed committee

Alyson Kennedy of UAW Local 1250 in Cleveland described that local's formation of an unemployed committee, which has initiated a demonstration against the energy crisis swindle.

Bill Arth, one of 24,000 Chrysler workers laid off in Detroit, told the audience that "the auto barons intend to use the Chrysler layoffs as a club over the heads of all auto workers in this contract round." Arth discussed how UAW members could wage a united fight to defeat this blackmail.

Summing up the situation, Pulley declared: "The ruling rich of this country are stepping up their class war against auto workers and the entire working class. The owners of energy, banking, and industry are compelled to do this to make more profits."

"When it becomes difficult for them to sell their product and get the profits they require, they just chuck hundreds of thousands, and in fact millions, of working people onto the unemployment lines. The needs of the workers

*Continued on next page*

## Labor party: 'It would fight for needs of majority'

In the midst of Andrew Pulley's campaign tour of Detroit, the socialist presidential candidate learned that officers of the California AFL-CIO had declared it time for unions to consider forming a labor party.

"The federation's executive secretary-treasurer, John Henning, and other officers there have called for American labor to study the prospects

*For full text of labor party statement by California AFL-CIO's John Henning see page 30.*

for a labor party during the coming year," said Pulley. "I think that's a timely suggestion."

Pulley is a member of United Steelworkers Local 1066. He and Socialist Workers Party vice-presidential candidate Matilde Zimmermann are campaigning on the need for labor to form its own party independent of the Democrats and Republicans.

"Just in the short time we've been out campaigning," Pulley reports, "we've found working people really open to the idea of labor having its own party, its own political voice."

"Unionists are facing massive layoffs, soaring inflation, and a general deteriorating standard of living."

"They're fed up with the Democrats and Republicans talking about 'equality of sacrifice' when they know perfectly well that the corporations are raking in profits uninterrupted."

"Workers have pretty much had it with the so-called friends of labor in the Democratic Party."

"With our unions tied to the parties of the bosses, our power is severely limited," Pulley continued. "We are less and less able to defend ourselves from attack on any level—from shop-floor grievances to Carter's wage controls."

"It's time to untie our hands—to exert labor's power in politics in its own interest. With more than 20 million members, with offices, newspapers, printshops, organizers—just think of the political force the unions could be!"

"Most of all, a labor party would be an attractive, popular party because it would fight for the needs of the majority—the working people. It would give us a weapon not only for resisting the employers' attacks but also for fighting politically for jobs, better schools, free health care for all, a safe and clean environment, and other urgent social needs."

"A labor party will be a party of Blacks, of Latinos, of women fighting for their rights. When the labor party gets off the ground it will attract to it all the oppressed. It will be an antiwar party against the two war parties."

"This coming year will certainly be a

good time to discuss the political needs of the working class, as the California AFL-CIO has suggested. The Democrats and Republicans will be crawling out of the walls to ask us—unionists—for endorsement and money. Let's discuss in our unions what the real record of these capitalist politicians is."

"And let's discuss what the alternatives are, what kind of party we need, what it can fight for. Socialist workers across the country will have a lot of ideas to contribute to this discussion, and so will thousands and thousands of other workers."

"We think this discussion of the labor party can and should move on to action. We can stop throwing away our endorsements and financial support on anti-labor Democratic and Republican politicians. And our unions can start running their own independent candidates."

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# At River Rouge: talk about layoffs

By David Frankel

DEARBORN, Mich.—Ford Motors' giant River Rouge complex dominates this Detroit suburb. Despite widespread layoffs in recent months, some 30,000 auto workers are still on the job here.

Layoffs were on the minds of many River Rouge workers who stopped and spoke to Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Andrew Pulley September 7.

As a group of older workers getting off the day shift looked on, Frank Ormanica told Pulley, "It seems like everybody who works here is working a day at a time."

"If the labor movement fought to cut the workweek with no cut in pay, it could cut employment. It could eliminate it," Pulley replied.

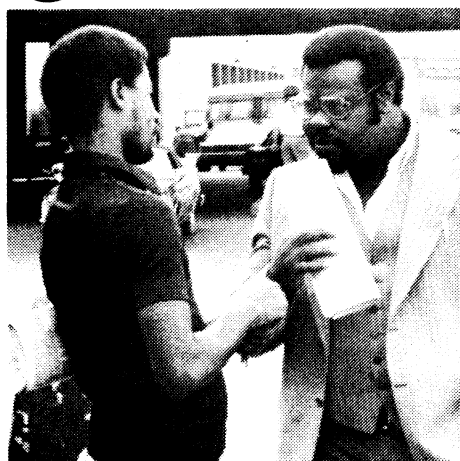
At first it was hard to get discussions going as workers hurried by to get to their cars. Campaign activists felt a literature table would have made things easier. But some workers stopped, and things began to pick up.

Nathaniel Winston, a worker in the stamping and welding section, said to Pulley: "If you get in there, if you stand up according to the way you're speaking, I think you'll do a pretty good job."

"It's not a question of personality," Pulley pointed out. "Our program represents the interests of the working class. If the Democrats and Republicans represented the interests of working people instead of the rich, they could build enough schools, they could pass a real national health care plan, they could eliminate unemployment. All they'd have to do would be to take the money from the military budget."

"That's all they've got to do," Winston agreed with a smile. "But they're not going to do that."

Not everybody was favorably impressed.



Militant/David Frankel

**'If the labor movement fought to cut the workweek with no cut in pay, it could eliminate unemployment,' Pulley (right) told Ford workers.**

"Don't talk about Kennedy. I like Kennedy," a young Black woman insisted. "Rich people are not all bad," she declared.

The big majority of those who stopped were friendly. Bernard Tony, a young Black worker in the assembly plant, was especially interested in the idea that the Chrysler corporation, currently asking for a massive government handout, should be required to open its books.

"You think they're going to do that—open their books? Let the people see?" he asked. "Has this been put to Chrysler? What's their response?"

Pulley explained that the demand that Chrysler's books be opened is one that the United Auto Workers and the entire labor movement should raise. It is part of a strategy for mobilizing the workers to fight in their own interests.

"Ultimately," Pulley said, "the workers must take power. What's more important—the lives of working people or the profits of these corporations?"

"Right now," Pulley said, "what

they're really trying to do is to get people [at Chrysler] to accept less. That would threaten workers here at Ford, and at GM."

Michael Cox, another worker from the assembly plant who had joined the discussion, referred to the 1937 sit-down strikes that had established the UAW at GM.

"If that tradition were alive today, there wouldn't be any problem," Cox declared.

Tony agreed. But he noted that the existing union "leadership stands in the way. How are we going to change it?"

"There are lots of people out there who feel like we do," Pulley said. "What we all have to do is to get together, to build a movement to change society."

"If you have a strike, you have to get all forces out, work together, regardless of our differences [with the union officials]. But we have to build a revolutionary current in the unions."

Cox agreed that "socialism is a good thing." At twenty-nine, he has been working at the River Rouge plant for more than six years. Before that, he was a student at Wayne State University, where he was in contact with radical and antiwar groups.

Referring to the divisions between Blacks and whites, Cox said, "We have to pull together. We can't let them divide us."

Then, at the same time, he wondered if the corporations "could make a profit without going so far."

The logic of the profit system is that the bosses always go too far, Pulley said. He pointed to the artificial energy crisis and to the deadly threat of nuclear power, the fruits of the profit system.

"They have no heart when it comes to profits."

abroad against people struggling for a better life.

"More and more working people are beginning to realize that we need an alternative to the bosses' parties. As John Henning, secretary-treasurer of the California Federation of Labor, said in his Labor Day speech, 'The two-party system is not serving the interests of the American people.'

"Henning drew the conclusion that 'labor must consider the advantages of a separate political party—a labor party.'

Pulley's explanation of the need for a labor party and what it could do was well-received by auto workers, steel workers, and Teamsters at the forum, and also by workers at a smaller get-together organized by socialist campaign supporters in industry.

Pulley himself was enthusiastic about the success of the tour. "You know," he told the *Militant*, "those workers we talked to today were radical."

## ...Detroit campaign

Continued from preceding page

and their families be damned. The capitalist junkies are only interested in their profit fix."

Turning to the hue and cry over Soviet troops in Cuba, Pulley recounted the history of attacks on the Cuban revolution by the U.S. government—from the U.S.-sponsored Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961 to the current threats by Carter.

"The question naturally emerges, Why has the U.S. government been so hostile to Cuba? . . . What do the rich, powerful rulers of a country of 200 million have to fear from a little country of only 10 million people?"

"They fear the example. They fear that others will emulate it."

It is no accident, Pulley noted, that the campaign against Cuba has escalated just when the Nicaraguan masses succeeded in throwing out the U.S.-

backed Somoza dictatorship.

In a statement taped by several radio stations the following day, Pulley declared, "instead of throwing its weight around threatening the Latin American masses struggling for a better life, and defending the imperialist corporations, whose only interest is to rape the poorer countries, the U.S. government should end its blockade of Cuba and restore normal diplomatic ties. It should send food, medicine, and economic aid to help the people of Nicaragua rebuild their country."

"But the course being charted by the Democratic and Republican party servants of big business is for more attacks on working people here at home and around the world. Their program is to protect corporate profits above everything else. That means recession and inflation here at home, and preparation of new Vietnam-style wars

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For more information call the SWP branch nearest you. See the directory on page 29 for phone numbers and addresses.



# Behind Carter's lies about Cuba

By Larry Seigle

Behind Washington's escalating propaganda barrage against Cuba is the danger of new U.S. aggression against that revolutionary island.

The bipartisan chorus of threats following the belated "discovery" of a Soviet "combat brigade" in Cuba is aimed at preparing the American people for the use of military might against the advancing revolution in Central America and the Caribbean, and possibly against Cuba itself.

The timing of Washington's new anti-Cuban drive was determined by Cuba's active solidarity with the triumphant Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua and by Fidel Castro's leadership role in delivering stinging blows to U.S. imperialism at the Non-Aligned Conference in Havana last week.

These events come after nearly half a decade in which Cuba has played an increasingly prominent role in anti-imperialist struggles around the world. Cuban troops in Angola beat back the South African invasion of that country in 1975. And Cubans were decisive in defeating the imperialist-inspired invasion of Ethiopia by Somalia in 1978, a move aimed at reversing the course of the deepgoing revolution in Ethiopia.

Earlier this year, the Cubans offered to "shed our own blood" to defend Vietnam against the invasion by Beijing in collusion with Washington. They stood up to Carter's threats to intervene against South Yemen.

Most recently, the Cubans have gone all out in solidarity with the deepening revolution in Nicaragua. They are leading the international campaign for support to that war-ravaged country, and to block any moves by the U.S. to intervene militarily.

Washington's stepped-up pressure against Cuba is directed at forcing the Castroists to back off, and, if they don't, to try to justify to the American people a new military crusade to halt the "red menace" in Latin America.

Washington also has a message for the Soviet Union: No aid to Nicaragua! Meanwhile, the Carter administration continues its covert support to units of Somoza's National Guard which have retreated for the time being into Honduras and El Salvador.

## Liberals lead pack

Reflecting the deepening class polarization in the country and the rightward shift in capitalist politics, the liberal Democrats are leading the war whoops in Congress. The lead has been assigned to Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho), who was a prominent "dove" toward the end of the Vietnam War. This is a "test of U.S. firmness or lack of it," Church warned.

Carter chimed in by denouncing Cuba as "a country which acts as a Soviet proxy in military adventures in other areas of the world like Africa."

Sen. Henry Jackson (D-Wash.) upped the ante by demanding not only the withdrawal of the "combat units" but the removal of advanced Soviet-built aircraft and submarines. Jackson said that "even a small number" of submarines in Cuba are a threat to the U.S. because they "are especially well-suited for covert insertion of personnel and small arms throughout the Caribbean and Central America."

In its patriotic mood, the House of Representatives voted on September 11 to reaffirm the Monroe Doctrine.

As the members of Congress worked themselves up into an orgy of jingoism, the original pretext for the war drive was left in tatters.

On August 31, the State Department, in its initial statement on the affair, claimed that "this is the first time we have been able to confirm the presence of a Soviet ground forces unit" in Cuba.

However, five days later, the *New York Times* reported that the "United States intelligence community has been receiving reports indicating the presence of Soviet combat units in



FOREIGN TROOPS ON CUBAN SOIL: U.S. Marines at Guantánamo Naval Air Station, occupied by U.S. forces against the will of Cuban people.

Cuba for at least eight years. . . ."

On September 10 the *Times* conceded, "Intelligence officials have said that there was reason to believe that a Soviet combat force had served quietly in Cuba for years, perhaps as far back as 1962. . . ."

## Revolution in Nicaragua

Why, after all these years, has Washington suddenly decided to "draw the line?"

David Binder, writing in the September 6 *New York Times*, provided part of the answer. Binder quoted one "high-ranking Administration official" as saying, "Recently we've gone back to look more carefully at Cuba in the light of Central America." The official, Binder explains, was "alluding to the revolution in Nicaragua and the insurgency in El Salvador. In both cases, Cuba has been charged with contributing logistical support and training."

The September 7 *Los Angeles Times* summed up the chain of events this way:

Washington was feeling "a heightened sensitivity about Cuba, which had sent increasing numbers of troops into trouble spots around the world. . . ."

"In March, a coup against the government of Grenada, a small eastern Caribbean island, led to a Cuban-oriented government and the arrival of Cuban civilian and military advisers over the next few months.

"By early June, White House and Pentagon officials watching Soviet-made arms funneling into Nicaragua, apparently through Cuba, began ask-

ing each other: 'What the hell are the Cubans up to in Central America?'

"The intelligence community . . . was ordered to take a new in-depth look at Cuban activities."

The results of the "in-depth look" were turned over to Senator Church just in time for him to make them public on the very eve of the opening of the Havana Conference of Non-Aligned Nations.

*Time* magazine quoted an anonymous guest at a White House breakfast as reporting that "The President felt that it was advantageous to us to expose [the brigade] at this time to embarrass Castro." This was a reference to the meeting of the nonaligned nations."

## Fundamental challenge

But Carter's clumsy attempt to disrupt the Non-Aligned Conference—an attempt that fell flat—determined only the immediate timing of the escalated war threats. What Washington really fears is the challenge posed by Cuba's growing role in world politics. By throwing its weight on the side of anti-imperialist struggles and refusing to knuckle under to pressure from Washington, Cuba has acquired influence and a strategic weight far beyond its small size.

Richard Burt, writing from Washington in the September 11 *New York Times*, gave away Washington's real concern:

"A senior Administration official said today that an evaluation of Soviet military aid to Cuba over the last several years has shown a general increase in Havana's military capacity

that is a more important strategic problem for the United States than the presence of a few thousand Soviet troops. . . ."

"Officials said that national security aides had expressed concern, in private, about the growth of Cuban military potential before the presence of the Soviet combat brigade became apparent. . . ."

What has Washington upset is Cuba's "more assertive military role in Africa and elsewhere. The officials traced the buildup to the civil war in Angola in late 1975. . . ."

## Arm-twisting from Moscow

Cuba's foreign policy is the opposite of Moscow's "détente" policy. Moscow uses its influence and power to sabotage revolutions in return for trade and diplomatic concessions from Washington.

Part of the détente deal is the Kremlin's agreement to keep pressuring the Cubans to play along. By maintaining its economic blockade of Cuba, Washington hopes to keep the Cubans dependent on the Stalinist bureaucracy for economic and military aid, thereby increasing Moscow's leverage in these efforts.

That is where the threats in Washington about delaying or even scuttling ratification of the SALT II pact come in. The imperialists are squeezing Moscow to put pressure on the Cubans to pull back from their internationalist activities.

According to the September 11 *New York Times*, once the issue of the Soviet troops is resolved in talks with the Soviets, "the United States will address the larger questions of Soviet military support for Cuba as well as Cuba's military role in the Caribbean and beyond."

The Cubans, however, have shown no signs of backing down.

"Cuba," Fidel told the Non-Aligned Conference, "has never ceased to practice a policy of close solidarity with the national liberation movements and all other just causes of our times. Cuba has never hesitated to defend its political principles with determination, energy, dignity, honesty and courage, nor, in over twenty years, has it ever stopped fighting against the aggression and the blockade imposed by the most powerful imperialist country in the world simply because Cuba carried out a genuine political and social revolution just ninety miles from that country's coast."

The Carter administration is using the propaganda against Cuba to justify stepped-up military pressure against Cuba, Nicaragua, and other countries that might refuse to accept the commands of Yankee imperialism.

What's more, in a world armed to the teeth with nuclear weapons, in which planned crises can quickly become nuclear showdowns, Carter's newest escalation of the war drive of U.S. imperialism poses a deadly threat to all of us.

## Anti-Cuba threats embolden terrorists

By Pat O'Reilly

MIAMI—On August 10 Mayor Dale Bennett of Hialeah, Florida, gave the key to the city to Isidro Gomez, an official of the Cuban government. Bennett wanted to show that Hialeah is interested in trade with Cuba if the U.S. lifts its economic blockade against the island.

Bennett was urged to take this step by the president of the Hialeah Latin Chamber of Commerce. About 65 percent of the population of this city near Miami are Cubans.

On August 21 the city council adopted a unanimous resolution censuring Mayor Bennett and demanding that the Cuban government return the key. That night several fire

bombs were hurled at the offices of the Latin Chamber of Commerce. Fortunately they landed in a puddle of water and were extinguished.

Bennett received numerous bomb threats.

The August 28 meeting of the city council was picketed by 200 right-wing Cubans calling for Bennett's resignation.

But other voices made themselves heard. About 200 Cuban supporters of normalization showed up to support Bennett's action. The group was led by Rev. Manuel Espinosa. He is a leader of the Committee of 75, a group of prominent Cubans favoring diplomatic and trade relations with Cuba.

The shattering of the myth that all

Cubans favor continued U.S. hostility to Cuba was upsetting to the council members and the news media.

Although several well-known terrorist groups participated in the anti-Bennett protest, Hialeah Police Chief Lawrence Leggett said that there are no suspects in the attempted fire bombing.

Encouraged by his attitude, the right wing continued its terrorist acts. On September 8 a bomb was found outside Reverend Espinosa's church.

One effect of the Carter administration's anti-Cuba scare campaign will be to embolden such right-wing violence.

# Nicaraguan consul urges immediate aid

The following interview with Franklin Chávez, Nicaraguan consul general in Miami, was obtained August 23 by 'Militant' correspondent John Ratliff.

**Question.** What are conditions like in Nicaragua today?

**Answer.** People are 100 percent better off than before the fall of Somoza, of course.

Before he fell, however, Somoza unleashed a war of terror against the people. Somoza's air force bombed all the cities of the country.

Food is in very short supply. The people are hungry. We need 300-400 tons a day to meet our needs. But we have been able to obtain only a small part of that—80 tons or so of grain a day.

**Q.** Where is the food coming from now?

**A.** From other Latin American countries; some from the United States.

**Q.** Has the United States been sending the aid it has promised?

**A.** For some reason which we do not understand, the U.S. has been very slow in sending the assistance it has



FRANKLIN CHAVEZ

promised. Because of this a very critical situation has developed. Over 250,000 children are seriously endangered for lack of food.

It is hard to say why the food has not started flowing in all this time. Perhaps it is bureaucracy, perhaps something more is involved.

Hopefully no one thinks that even in the conditions of extreme need now facing the Nicaraguan people, the masses will sell the fruits of their revolution for a few dollars.

**Q.** What does the revolution mean to the Nicaraguan people?

**A.** Too few understand how much the Nicaraguan revolution means to our people.

It began forty-eight years ago when Sandino took up his struggle against foreign rule. For the past forty-six years the people have struggled against the Somoza dynasty.

During this struggle the people became class conscious. The Nicaraguan revolution has to be, will be, and is a revolution for and by the Nicaraguan people. By this I mean the major class of the people, the workers, peasants, and poor; those who were robbed, those who starved under Somoza; those whose children were denied hope for a better life.

You can't compare the Nicaraguan revolution to any other—the Cuban revolution, the Bolshevik revolution, or even the American revolution. It is the Nicaraguan revolution, and just that. However, the Nicaraguan people naturally feel solidarity with all movements which aim to better the lives of the people.

**Q.** Are efforts under way to overturn the revolution by supporters of the dictatorship?

**A.** The counterrevolutionary movement has already begun. It is led directly by Somoza and his henchmen, who stole millions from our poor country. The counterrevolutionaries are moving very quickly and have unfortunately succeeded in getting support from some quarters.

American companies refuse to return to Nicaragua items of property owned by the Nicaraguan government. Dozens of reasons are given, but somehow these companies cannot organize themselves to perform simple tasks and return to our government things that clearly belong to it.

We have had to be very concerned about security as well. Our consulate has been threatened. Personally, my life has been threatened and I have been fired at twice. Of course, such violence will not deter me from my work.

They cannot destroy our revolution with such violence. They would have to kill two and a half million Nicaraguans to kill the revolution.

Some leaders of the Cuban exile community in Miami have been hostile to the Sandinista movement and to the Nicaraguan revolution. Some have even tried to make a hero of the dictator and butcher Somoza. I invite the leaders of the Cuban community in the United States to come to Nicaragua and see for themselves how this revolution of ours works.

The Sandinista movement is unique to Nicaragua. It is not communist, it is not capitalist, it is Sandinista. Every country has its own issues and will find its own road.

Nobody can stop the revolution of the masses, of the workers. Nobody here or anywhere. After we have tasted freedom, money will certainly not tell my people what to do.

**Q.** How can the American people help?

**A.** We need a lot of help. We need the help of the American people and others. The Nicaraguan people know that the American people are generous. Solidarity of the Nicaraguan and American peoples is important to both. We are brothers, all human beings.

We have acted in good faith and will continue to act in good faith. Hopefully the United States government will do the same.

The Nicaraguan people will fight to the utmost against any intervention, however. We insist that all aid, from any source, be free of strings, military or ideological.

We also demand that the rightful property of the people of Nicaragua, such as the planes in the national airline and the ships of the merchant marine, be returned to the people.

## N.Y. support meetings held

NEW YORK—More than 200 people gathered at a forum on "The Revolution in Nicaragua," sponsored by the Militant Forum September 9.

Featured speaker Olga Rodríguez, a national committee member of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), stressed the need to defend Nicaragua against U.S. intervention and to demand that the Carter administration send the material aid promised to the new government.

Salvador Orochena, of the Coalition for a Free Nicaragua, thanked those present for their solidarity with the Nicaraguan people as they

begin the task of reconstruction.

Alexis Irizarry, of the SWP, hailed the victory for Puerto Rican independence won through the recent release of the four nationalists by the U.S. government.

Marilyn Vogt of the New York Committee to Save the Iranian Fourteen also spoke.

On September 8, there was a Chile and Nicaragua solidarity rally sponsored by the Non-Intervention in Chile and the Comité Chilena Anti-Fascista groups. The event commemorated the sixth anniversary of the Chilean coup.

—Osborne Hart

# Nicaragua solidarity group describes aid drive

By Suzanne Haig

In July the tyrant Somoza was overthrown by the Nicaraguan workers and peasants—but at a tremendous cost.

Somoza bombed cities and factories indiscriminately. Agriculture was severely disrupted. Today there is a desperate need for food, medicine, and clothing.

This is a question of survival for the Nicaraguan people and their revolution. American working people can make a major contribution.

One of the organizations in the United States that is coordinating supplies for Nicaragua is Humanitarian Aid for Nicaraguan Democracy (HAND). HAND was established in March 1979

needed, he said, is the continued refusal of the Carter administration to send massive aid to Nicaragua.

Funkhouser called the U.S. government's response "very conservative and cautious." He pointed to the immediate, massive aid sent to Nicaragua by the United States after the 1972 earthquake. Much of this aid went right into the pockets of Somoza and his cohorts.

"At this time when the destruction and loss of life is much, much greater, the United States, basically from our point of view, has been dragging its feet," Funkhouser said.

At the current time nearly half the Nicaraguan population—some one million people—is dependent on food aid.

From April to August HAND raised more than \$60,000 toward this effort. HAND primarily focuses on money contributions because of the difficulties in shipping food.

Contributions of money should be sent to HAND's national office in Washington, D.C. Funkhouser explained that funds are deposited in a bank account there and then transferred directly to Nicaragua for food and medical relief and for development projects.

"During the war in Nicaragua," he said, "funds were channeled through Mexico. Had they gone to a Nicaraguan bank, they would have ended up in Somoza's hands."

"Now we channel funds directly to the Ministry of Social Welfare in the Nicaraguan government."

HAND has a brochure available for

use in raising funds from individuals, unions, community groups, and churches.

The group also has a medical aid campaign, Funkhouser explained. Medicines are being shipped by HAND through the American Friends Service Committee, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102. Packages of medicines should be sent to AFSC marked "For Nicaragua." A full list of instructions on medicines can be obtained from the HAND national office.

HAND says food supplies needed are dried grains, beans, and rice—not canned goods or food packaged in glass. HAND ships food through its Miami and New Orleans chapters. In

Miami, send food c/o Franklin Chávez, Consulate of Nicaragua, 1240 Ingraham Building, 25 S.E. Second Avenue, Miami, Florida 33131. Telephone: (305) 373-6996. In New Orleans, c/o Kenneth Torres, 200 LaSalle Court, New Orleans, Louisiana 70118.

Nicaragua solidarity groups in many cities are working with HAND to raise funds. A Washington, D.C., fair and raffle are planned for September 15. A full list of groups around the country is available from HAND.

HAND will also have a slide show that can be used for education, which Funkhouser called "an important part of the whole effort."

HAND has made an application for tax-exempt status, which it expects to receive in November.

The national office of Humanitarian Aid for Nicaraguan Democracy (HAND) is located at 1322 Eighteenth Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Telephone: (202) 223-2328.

Send checks made out to Humanitarian Aid for Nicaraguan Democracy.

as the fund-raising wing of the National Network in Solidarity with the Nicaraguan People. The Network is a clearinghouse for information on Nicaragua solidarity activities.

In a phone interview with the *Militant*, David Funkhouser, Network coordinator, explained the aid campaign.

One of the reasons food, medicine, and other supplies are so urgently

## Forums on Nicaragua

### MISSOURI

#### ST. LOUIS

**THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION.** Speakers: Alverto Villa, Chilean Socialist Party; Gary James, Latin American Solidarity Committee; June Percy, Socialist Workers Party; others. Sun., Sept. 23, 7 p.m. 6223 Delmar St. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (314) 725-1570.

### OHIO

#### CINCINNATI

**THE VICTORY IN NICARAGUA.** Speakers: Mark Rahn, Socialist Workers candidate for city council, member of Steelworkers Local 1858, chairperson, Cincinnati Young Socialist Alliance; Kathleen Denny, recently returned from Cuba. Sun., Sept. 23, 7 p.m. 970 E. McMillan. Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (513) 751-2636.

### WASHINGTON, D.C.-BALTIMORE

#### NICARAGUA: SOLIDARITY WITH THE VICTORY OF THE REVOLUTION.

Speakers: Toba Singer, Socialist Workers Party and member of Steelworkers Local 3185; others. Sun., Sept. 16, 7 p.m. All Souls Church, 16th & Harvard Sts. N.W., Washington. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (202) 797-7699 or (301) 235-0013.

### CALIFORNIA

#### EAST BAY

**DEFEND THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION—U.S. HANDS OFF!** Speakers: Catarino Garza, Socialist Workers Party National Committee member; CASA Nicaragua representative. Fri., Sept. 21, 7:30 p.m. 1467 Fruitvale, Oakland. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant and *Perspectiva Mundial*. For more information call (415) 261-1210.



## 'We signed no pact with business'

# Sandinistas spur worker & peasant organizing

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA, Nicaragua, Sept. 11—There has been an explosion of organization among the worker and peasant masses here since the triumph of the Sandinista-led popular insurrection on July 19.

Sandinista Defense Committees have arisen in the cities on a block-by-block basis. These bodies, usually centralized by neighborhood and zone, oversee the distribution of emergency food aid and organize special campaigns, such as the mass immunization of children against polio last week.

They also collaborate with the militia units and the newly formed Sandinista police force in guarding residential areas against counterrevolutionary bands of Somocistas that are still active.

Trade unions are being organized for the first time in many workplaces, while other unions that were forced to function underground during the dictatorship are now organizing publicly.

Most of the new unions are affiliating immediately to the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST). The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) is urging the other union organizations here—the CGT, CGTI, CAUS, and CNT—to join with the CST in a single federation. Discussions are under way to achieve this.

In the countryside, the Sandinista-led Field Workers Association (ATC) is organizing peasants and agricultural laborers both on the big estates expropriated from Somoza and the Somocistas as well as on land that is still in private hands.

### Aid to small producers

A further step toward organizing the oppressed in the countryside was announced by Agrarian Reform Minister Jaime Wheelock in Matagalpa on September 7.

Speaking to a meeting of several hundred coffee cultivators, Wheelock called for the organization of a National Association of Small and Medium Sized Coffee Producers. It was these, he said, who had suffered "the heaviest blows and the most extortion at the hands of the Somoza regime."

Wheelock emphasized that the lands of the small producers would no longer be mortgaged to any institution and that a price stabilization fund would be created to assure them of an adequate income.

Some big landholders at the Matagalpa meeting accused the Sandinistas of trying to "divide" the coffee producers with such measures. Wheelock responded:

"What is involved is that the interests of the small producers are different from those who have all kinds of facilities at hand. How can there be equality between the barefoot son of a peasant and the son of a big producer who is studying in the United States?"

"It's the barefoot ones we have to think about. That is why the government is going to provide incentives to the small producers."

### Capitalist disquiet

These and other such progressive measures taken by the new government, along with the rapid spread of organization among the masses, which is being encouraged and led by the FSLN, have given rise to increasing disquiet on the part of the anti-Somoza capitalists and their political representatives.

At a news conference held by Sandinista leaders attending the Conference of Nonaligned Nations in Havana, a Mexican journalist asked Comandante Daniel Ortega to comment on a statement signed by a number of Nicaraguan businessmen that is reportedly circulating in Venezuela.

"The people's revolution and the Sandinista National Liberation Front



Militant/Fred Halstead

Military parade in Managua, September 1. Militia units are being devoted both to needs of regular army and to tasks of national reconstruction.

have not signed an agreement of any kind with businessmen or sectors of private enterprise in our country, so that today they might demand of us the fulfillment of such accords," Ortega replied.

The account of the Havana news conference in the September 8 issue of the FSLN daily *Barricada* continued, "[Ortega] added that the Sandinista National Liberation Front launched a call for all sectors to unite as one people in the struggle, but that at no time did this mean the establishment of any particular pacts or agreements."

"We cannot deny the participation of some sectors of private enterprise that joined the struggle and showed themselves to be on the side of the people, but they never played a firm role in the liberation process," Comandante Ortega added.

"What is more," he continued, "they always were looking for negotiated solutions to the Nicaraguan problem. They proposed the retirement of the dictator, which was the solution the imperialists proposed to these reactionary groups."

### Attacks by Social Democrats

On September 7 a news conference was held here in Managua to announce the formation of the "Sandinista Social Democratic Party" (PSDS).

Despite the name, this new formation has no relation to the Sandinista National Liberation Front, nor does it have the mass working-class following of European Social Democratic parties.

In fact, a number of the leaders of the new PSDS played important roles in the old Democratic Conservative Party—one of the main political forma-

tions of the anti-Somoza capitalists.

The PSDS presents a program calling for free elections and a series of social reforms, and they claim to support "the Government of National Reconstruction and the Joint Directorate of the FSLN in their efforts to reconstruct the country and guide the Nicaraguan people toward an authentic democracy with equal opportunities for all."

However, the PSDS has also launched a veiled attack on the Sandinista Front, seeking to portray it as "totalitarian":

"In view of our Social Democratic principles, we reject all totalitarian ideas that tend toward the creation of a single party, a single workers federation, or the orientation of the army toward the service of a single political institution, however important its contributions to national liberation."

After reading the PSDS program to the news conference, party General Secretary Wilfredo Montalván concluded with the slogan, "Sandinism yes, Communism no!" He was applauded loudly by the PSDS members present.

This McCarthyite display outraged many of the Nicaraguan journalists present. Several of them took the floor to point out how the Somozas had used anticommunism to justify their brutal rule.

Eventually, PSDS Political Secretary Luis Rivas Leiva was forced to say that the party would withdraw the slogan.

In subsequent days, leaders of the Sandinista Front challenged the PSDS's use of the name "Sandinista" to describe their party.

At a September 11 news conference

at army headquarters here, Comandante Luis Carrión was asked his opinion of the new party. "I think the Sandinista Social Democratic Party, in a rather abusive way, is trying to grab for itself a name that was duly won by the Sandinista fighters in a long and bloody struggle."

The PSDS forgets, Carrión said, that "for many, many years Sandinism has meant a revolutionary attitude and a revolutionary way of action—a revolutionary commitment to our people that has been assumed in the first place by the Sandinista National Liberation Front. So there is really only one Sandinism—the revolutionary Sandinism that the Sandinista Front represents."

### Role of militias

Carrión also took the opportunity of the news conference to clarify a question the Sandinista leaders have been grappling with—the relationship between the new Sandinista Peoples Army (EPS) and the militias that arose out of the fight against Somoza in the cities.

"The EPS is a regular, permanent force," Carrión explained, "while the peoples militias are a force that is not mobilized constantly. Many of the militia compañeros are now being incorporated into the regular army, while the rest—who will make up the militias as such—are going to remain organized on the basis of neighborhood, factory, agricultural unit, and so on."

"They will receive training, but will not be permanently under arms. Instead they will be incorporated into useful activities—into production or school. Our main concern is that all the militia personnel be involved in the process of national reconstruction."

## FSLN paper prints SWP message

MANAGUA, Nicaragua, Sept. 11—Today the newspaper of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), *Barricada*, printed in full a message from Andrew Pulley and Matilde Zimmermann, the Socialist Workers Party candidates for president and vice president in 1980.

Under the four-column headline, "Socialist Party in the United States Pledges Solidarity and Support," *Barricada* wrote:

"We have received a letter from the Socialist Workers Party of the United States in which this organization, in the name of the U.S. working people, salutes our revolutionary process and pledges absolute solidarity to help educate, organize, and mobilize the North American people with the aim of neutralizing any counterrevolutionary imperialist adventure that might be promoted

against our country."

The full text of the letter followed:

Sandinista National Liberation Front,  
c/o *Barricada*  
Compañeros,

Fifteen hundred of us, gathered at the Socialist Workers Party Thirtieth National Convention in Ohio, salute your historic victory over the bloody Somoza tyranny which was installed and maintained in power by U.S. imperialism.

The blood of your martyrs has not been spilled in vain. Nicaragua is at long last free of the imperialist yoke and must remain so. We pledge our full solidarity to help educate, organize, and mobilize the North American people against any imperialist counterrevolutionary venture.

We are demanding that the U.S.

government immediately provide food, medicine, and other material aid needed by you to reconstruct Nicaragua after the imperialist organized devastation you have suffered. We are convinced that the North American working people will respond with internationalist solidarity, in behalf of Nicaragua.

Working people in the U.S. will oppose any moves toward U.S. military intervention in Nicaragua.

U.S. Hands off Nicaragua! No more Vietnams!

Long Live the Nicaraguan Revolution!

Long Live the FSLN!

Andrew Pulley, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president

Matilde Zimmermann, Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president

## 'Our march toward victory doesn't stop'

By Fred Halstead

MANAGUA—During the Nicaraguan insurrections in September 1978 and June 1979 news photos were widely published around the world of lightly armed teenage youth, often only with .22 caliber sporting guns, fighting the National Guard of dictator Anastasio Somoza.

I recently interviewed a group of five such youths who had fought together as part of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) forces.

These young workers had been involved in clandestine work in Managua under FSLN command before the large-scale revolt broke out a year ago. They operated in the eastern neighborhood of the capital city, where some of the heaviest fighting took place in the final insurrection.

The interview was arranged by a fellow journalist from Pacifica Radio in San Francisco, who had met one of the five quite by chance in a taxi a few days before. He had already recorded one interview with some of them on their experiences up to the victory of the Sandinistas on July 19. In this interview I decided to find out what they were doing now—six weeks after the victory—and what they thought about the present situation.

\* \* \*

*Question. What are you doing now?*

**Alfredo Selva Tavilla** (age fourteen). I am unemployed right now. But I'm looking for work and have the help of the Sandinista army, which is for the common people. During Somoza's time you needed a letter of recommendation to get a job, and if you didn't have years of experience, or if they thought you were a Sandinista, you couldn't get work. Now any person can go to a unit of the Sandinista army and ask for help.

### Armed people

**Victor**. I work in an ice cream factory now. I'm seventeen. I was organized in 1976. Once I was arrested by the National Guard. Some of us had gone out of the neighborhood to the marketplace for supplies of food. They caught us, arrested us under suspicion, and held me for fifteen days. They would beat me on the chest and on the stomach to the rhythm of 100 strokes. We had a slogan, a chant, "The people united will never be defeated."

They would hit us and shout, "The National Guard united will never be defeated."

Now the FSLN has added to our slogan, "The people armed will never be crushed."

**Carlos Zamora** (age nineteen). Right after the victory I was fulltime in the militia. But I have many family re-



Fred Halstead and Sandinista fighters. From left: Rigoberto Ortega, Antonio Selva Taucera, Alfredo Selva Tavilla, Victor, Carlos Zamora.

sponsibilities and the militia is not being paid now. I asked to resign so I could work. I explained the problem to my commander and asked him for a document that could help me get work. Now I have a job at the Victoria Brewery, in the bottling section.

I became active when I realized how the people were being repressed; how the workers were being exploited; how the peasants' land was being taken away. I began to understand things with the help of compañeros who were much more politically developed. Then I got active.

I began to carry out operations. They taught me how to make contact bombs that explode when they hit something. We would ambush individual National Guardsmen or a single jeep. But I finally got my first gun—a .22—when we took it from the house of a Somocista.

There were members of the National Guard who had some sympathy with us, a higher level of consciousness than the rest. They knew us from the neighborhood, and when they learned we were organized, they would slip ammunition to us. They defected in the insurrection.

*Q. When did this happen?*

**Carlos**. During both insurrections; some defected in September, some in June.

### Turned to politics

**Antonio Selva Taucera**. I'm twenty years old. I have been active in the FSLN for five years. I have a job, but

the factory is now in ruins, and they haven't reopened it yet. So for the time being, I drive a taxi. Now that victory is in our hands I'm no longer in the army. I've turned to politics to find ways to open the eyes of our people to make them more conscious and to organize them.

This is a job we can't do with guns. It's a job we have to do in the factories, barracks, cities, and mountains, so that the workers and peasants will kick out the bourgeoisie and take power one day. To take power is what we have been fighting for all along.

I'm working on national reconstruction on a political level. As our slogan says "The march toward victory doesn't stop."

We have won a great battle in overthrowing Somoza, Somocismo, and Yankee imperialism. But we still have a struggle ahead of us. All of us are not yet clear on our ideals, on goals for our children. We have to prevent the Nicaraguan revolution from being aborted, as the revolution of Pancho Villa in Mexico was aborted. Those of us who are more conscious, who have always fought for the workers and peasants, have to open their eyes.

I think the revolution is on the right track. I am organized, but I am not a full member of the army, because I have to work to help my mother. To be in the militia doesn't mean just to carry a gun. It also means organizing block by block and opening people's eyes.

Many people joined only at the very end. They took up arms at the last minute when they saw that their lives were about to be lost. They said to themselves, "If the Somocista guards are going to shoot me like a dog, I'd rather die fighting."

So we have a responsibility to go to these compañeros, to talk to them and make them understand the cause, that they have to defend their people, the workers and peasants. Otherwise what could happen is that the bourgeoisie could train another force like the Somocista guards.

Many compañeros are walking around with guns, but do not as yet have a clear political perspective. As is the case with most Nicaraguans, they do not have much intellectual training. The majority of us who went to school only finished the sixth grade.

### Teach the compañeros

Those of us who know a little bit more have to go to the compañeros and teach them the little we were able to learn from reading and finding out facts about the dictatorship, so that the bourgeoisie won't be able to fool

them by telling them they are going to give them houses and other things. People who don't have such things can be tempted.

We have to open the eyes of these compañeros so they won't abandon the Nicaraguan common people.

*Q. Are you still organized into militia units?*

**Antonio**. We are always in contact with the Sandinista army. If we see any abuses, our duty is to report them immediately, as is the duty of all Nicaraguans.

The militias have headquarters in every barrio, and we're ready to take up our arms and to give up our lives at any moment.

*Q. Do you work with the Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS)?*

**Alfredo**. Yes, the CDSs are organizing the people block by block, so that the development of the country can happen faster. They clean the neighborhoods, trim the trees, organize the vaccination of children, improve hygiene. That's where the political discussions take place. That's where the political educators go to give talks.

**Antonio**. And there are now political education schools throughout Nicaragua for people who don't know anything about politics. The Somoza regime kept the people ignorant. Many people don't understand what the struggle is about because they are illiterate. That's why these schools are set up—to teach people why we fought. We need to learn about the rest of the world as well, to really be political.

### Open people's eyes

*Q. How often do the CDSs meet for discussion?*

**Alfredo**. Every three days or so.

**Antonio**. What we are teaching right now is Nicaraguan politics, not international politics. But later on we're going to open people's eyes to what is going on in the world.

We have Torrijos, head of the Panamanian army, or that ex-president of Venezuela, or the president of Costa Rica come here and we all applaud. Actually these gentlemen come here to associate themselves with throwing the Yankees out. But in their own countries there is a great deal of exploitation. What they have there is bourgeois democracy; we don't want that to happen in Nicaragua.

Some people think these gentlemen are angels, but they don't know what's going on inside their countries. We'll explain this later on. We can't do it right now. To talk to our people this way right now would be wrong, provocative, would be even counterrevolutionary because we are not prepared.

*Q. Where are the CDSs organized?*

**Antonio**. The CDSs are being organized in all the poorest neighborhoods and throughout Nicaragua. The purpose is to teach people about the Sandinista cause, to explain the revolution, and to explain how we are going to carry out national reconstruction so that we will all be united in case the bourgeoisie tries to impose on us Somocismo without Somoza. If later on they try to exploit us, we'll be adequately organized, we will be united, and we will have the strength and the power to force the bourgeoisie to step down.

*Q. If you had a chance to speak to American young people today, what would you say?*

**Alfredo**. I would tell young people in the U.S. to become aware of what the government of their country is doing. They should analyze what it's doing to



Members of neighborhood committees march in Masaya in August. These committees will help organize and educate the masses, the young Sandinistas said.





Militant/Fred Murphy

'My cause is the people's cause, the cause of America, the cause of all oppressed people.' Taking these words of Augusto Sandino to heart, the young Sandinistas are internationalists in outlook.

its own people. Is it exploiting them? Is it charging too much in taxes? I would tell them to get organized, to follow our example, to go out on street demonstrations and protest the oppression they suffer. This is what I would say to a young compañero.

But not only to the youth. Here in Nicaragua, for example, old people got organized and fought. In my squad there were two old men.

### Revolutionary cause

**Rigoberto.** The people of the U.S. should realize that here in Nicaragua, the people as a whole are prepared for a counterrevolution and any international intervention. We have fought with blood and sweat and death, and we know what the revolutionary cause is and what our ideals are.

**Q. What is your idea of democracy?**

**Rigoberto.** For one thing the army is not to oppress the people. If workers go on strike, they can call on the army to help. So we say to the people of the U.S. that every Nicaraguan is a Sandinista fighter who is going to fight for our country and who is not going to allow any international intervention.

We will fight for our liberated nation and no one will ever take our freedom away from us. Free nation or death—we will win.

**Carlos.** We want to tell Yankee imperialism that if they come to Nicaragua, we'll run them out. And if they think the Nicaraguan people are afraid of them, they should know that the one thing we have is courage. Because everyone who picked up a gun did so with courage and with love. So we say to Yankee imperialism that if they come to Nicaragua they are making a big mistake.

**Alfredo.** That goes for any other interventionist army, from any other country.

**Antonio.** What I wanted to tell the American people is that they should be conscious and they should start to think about what their government is doing. It is looking for a way to bring about a counterrevolution in Nicaragua. Your government is an octopus; we have cut off a tentacle of this octopus that was sucking the blood of all Nicaraguan working people. The octopus is looking for a way to suck our blood again. But we are not willing to let it.

I know that even though the U.S. is an advanced country, the people there are also oppressed. To be oppressed doesn't mean one doesn't own a car or an apartment. To be oppressed also means to see your brothers being oppressed in their own nation, like the Blacks in the U.S. To be used by a government which has oppressed Latin America, torn up Vietnam, put Cuba under blockade—that too is oppression.

## El Salvador

# 'We're going to do like Nicaragua'

By Aníbal Vargas

MEXICO CITY—Every day the reports in the newspapers here point up the sharpening class struggle in Central America.

There is always an implied question. Will the other Central American dictatorships suffer the same fate as the Somoza regime, once the example set by the Nicaraguan people makes its impact felt?

It is not surprising that a "minisummit" was held in mid-August in the Guatemalan capital, attended by the head of state of El Salvador, Carlos Humberto Romero; of Guatemala, Romero Lucas García; and of Honduras, Policarpo Paz García.

According to the August 30 issue of the Mexican daily *Uno más Uno*, "The official story was that the meeting discussed how best to aid in the reconstruction of Nicaragua. But it is being said in political circles that what was actually discussed was the formation of a political and military united front that would enable the military regimes to combine their forces against any rise in insurrectionary struggle in the region."

Today all reports seem to indicate that the people of El Salvador have the best chance to repeat in their own way the experience of the Nicaraguan people in carrying out a revolutionary overthrow of a neocolonial regime imposed by the United States.

Since early 1979, the mass movement has been on the rise in El Salvador, and with the victory of the Sandinista Front in Nicaragua, this upsurge has gained more momentum.

On July 30, hundreds of supporters of the Revolutionary People's Bloc came out into the streets in several cities in El Salvador. They demonstrated to commemorate the fourth anniversary of the founding of the organization and to protest against the repression.

### Stepped-up repression

The military dictatorship headed by General Carlos Humberto Romero has stepped-up its repression in order to prevent the masses of the people from mobilizing. The result of this, the communiqué by the Revolutionary People's Bloc notes, is hundreds of persons dead, disappeared, and arrested.

On August 12, members of the February 28 People's Leagues occupied the cathedral in the city of Santa Ana, the second largest city in the country, as well as three other churches in San Miguel, Usulután, and San Vicente. The organization demanded the release of one of its leaders, the firing of a National Guard sergeant, and satisfaction for the workers in the conflicts going on in several industries.

On August 14, striking women workers at the Yankee-owned Atex



El Salvador National Police stand by moments before firing upon demonstrators in May.

textile company plant on the outskirts of San Salvador occupied the factory and took as a hostage the general manager, William Boorstein, an American. On the same day, more than 300 workers at the Minerva-Molines factory occupied the management offices in the plant and took three Salvadorian company heads as hostages.

The unionists at Minerva-Molines, who are also members of the Revolutionary People's Bloc, demanded new contract negotiations, better wages and benefits, as well as the reinstatement of several fired workers.

On August 24, Boorstein escaped from the Atex factory. But as of September 3, the workers were continuing their occupation. On August 27, the Minerva-Molines workers released their hostages, since they had gotten an agreement with the company that all their demands would be met.

In the context of these demonstrations, occupations of factories and churches, strikes, and sitdowns in the main cities in El Salvador, on August 21 General Romero announced a series of measures to implement an "electoral reform."

### Fake reforms

As part of this operation, a few days before General Romero's statement, the government offered to let the exiles return and promised that in the coming months free elections for the city governments and the national legislature would be held.

These promises were hailed by the U.S. ambassador in El Salvador as "a

positive step toward democracy."

But, as the archbishop of El Salvador noted on August 5, "It's ridiculous to unleash this wave of repression and murders and at the same time talk about freedom of political expression. How would a poor peasant dare to cast a free vote under the shadow of the gun?"

Estella Calloni was in San Salvador as the correspondent of *Uno más Uno*. In the August 21 issue of this newspaper, she described the situation in the country as follows:

The predominant feature in the situation is terror. "The terror is to prevent our organizing," the peasants say. "This is deliberate and selective terror designed to intimidate activists and to block a uniting of forces," the workers say. The opposition press is being destroyed. For this they use dynamite or fire, they stop at nothing. There are too many tragic and peculiar things happening. Every day, six more deaths are registered.

The president [Romero] is either weak or giving way to pressure. He is offering a democratic opening without any substance. The far right . . . is unwilling to accept elections, perhaps because it sees how high the level of consciousness of the population is. In recent days, the electoral parties have said that they will not take part in this so-called opening up of room for democracy "in the midst of crime and repression."

The mass organizations are being caught up in the movement toward an insurrectionary explosion, which seems inevitable. And they are preparing themselves to lead it.

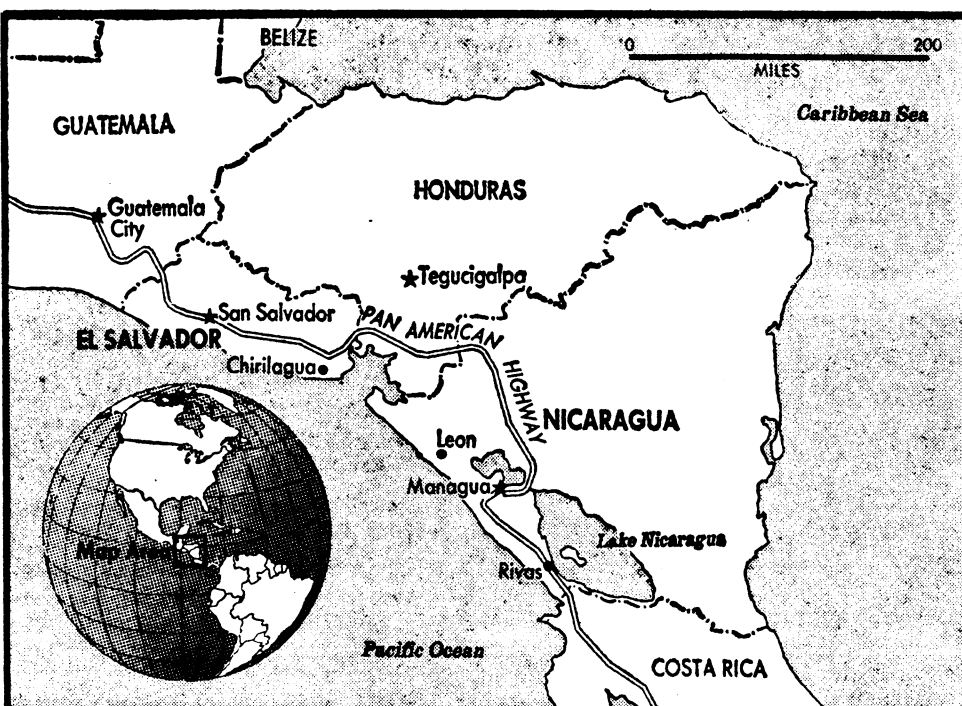
The armed organizations are divided into three tendencies in accordance with the ways they characterize the situation. But they have the same objective—the destruction of "the dictatorship." They are preparing for a deeper cutting offensive "in order to respond to the terror."

Calloni quoted an old peasant from the Cuzcatlán area, who told her "the insurrectionary feeling is spreading everywhere and is becoming part of our flesh and blood."

In a bus terminal in San Salvador, Stella Calloni noticed a dispute among some street sellers, "market women," and a policeman who was trying to take away an eleven-year-old boy. The women jumped on the policeman, beating him with their fists in order to free the boy. They shouted: "You'll see what happens when the people get arms. . . . You are not going to beat us any more. . . . You are not going to kill our sons and husbands."

When it was all over, they told Calloni, "Look at Nicaragua, the people there put an end to this injustice. So, we are going to do the same thing they did in Nicaragua."

—From *Perspectiva Mundial*



# Open letter from Iranian women

## 'Life sentences will not silence us'



'Our conviction is another effort to sow the seeds of fear in the hearts of our sisters, the women of Iran who are fighting for freedom.'

The following is an open letter by Mahsa Hashemi and Fatima Fallahi, the two women members of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS) who were sentenced to life imprisonment in late August by authorities in Ahwaz, Iran. The letter is from Dezfoul Prison in northern Khuzestan Province. It is dated August 30.

Life sentences will not silence us.

After ninety days of illegal detention by Mr. Satarian, the prosecutor of the Islamic Revolutionary Court, we, two women members of the HKS, were tried in absentia by the successors of Mr. Satarian.

This court—whose very existence we question—did not even allow us to read the prosecutor's brief or allow us to defend ourselves. The elementary right to have a lawyer and consult with him was denied us. This court—the identity of whose members is unknown to us—ruled behind closed doors and decided our fate in our absence.

After all the struggles and the martyrs who died fighting against the criminal courts of the Pahlavi regime, this unjust ruling will forever remain in the history of the struggle between the rulers and the oppressed people of Iran.

The consistent, repressive and inhuman conduct of the prosecutor's office did not end with our "trial."

After the "trial," armed guards transferred us blindfolded to an unknown

spot, which we later found out was the Dezfoul Prison. In response to our questions as to where they were taking us, we heard nothing but silence or "I don't know." In response to our protests that such unjust methods had been rejected by the great rebellion of the people, we heard the answer that "We will do much more than this."

Armed guards took us out of the car in the middle of the night and left us in the desert. Then they said, "Don't resist." We were blindfolded and told, "You only need two bullets. When you hear the guns go off you will die on the spot."

In this way they began our psychological torture.

In Dezfoul Prison they threw us into solitary confinement, into cells roughly four paces by three paces. Then they began to physically torture us, beating us up. We were told, "You were brought here to be killed by us."

We protested that we have no security here and that we want to see the prison officials. Their response was, "This prison has no officials." They even refused to give us a doctor to take care of our wounds.

### Answer to charges

Interestingly enough, we were only informed of our sentences and the charges against us two days later—through the media.

The Ahwaz Islamic Revolutionary Court has announced that the charges against us are as follows:

1. "Anti-Islamic activities."

Socialists do not fight against religion. We don't think the fight in Iran is between the Marxists and the Muslims. We believe that the struggle is continuing between the great masses of the people and the capitalists and landowners.

As was written in the HKS "Bill of Rights for Workers and Toilers," the socialists are for freedom of religion. We believe that our toiling brothers and sisters—be they Muslims, Christians, Jews, etc.—have common interests. The ongoing struggles of the Iranian masses for a better life—and the conspiracies

and provocations of the capitalists and landowners—is the best proof of this point.

The assault of world imperialism against the Iranian revolution is another example of this fact.

2. "Charging the government with repression and suppression of democracy."

What can stand out more than the fact that only six months after the victorious insurrection against the monarchy, imperialism, SAVAK, and Pahlavi terror, attacks on freedom of the press, on various organizations, and the revival of political prisoners have been initiated by the government? What has happened to us so far is an indication of repression, not of freedom.

3. "Membership in the executive committee of the Ahwaz branch of the HKS."

We ask, by which law is membership in the executive committee of a legal party such as the HKS a crime?

### 'Socialists struggle peacefully'

4. "Encouraging armed struggle against the central government."

Socialists struggle peacefully through educational activities around a revolutionary program of action. The patient explanation of our proposal for the new constitution and our peaceful propaganda activities testify to this fact. Nowhere in Ahwaz or elsewhere in Iran have we acted otherwise.

The meaning of our conviction by the prosecutor is clear. After a year and a half of struggle, the millions of Iranian people in the victorious insurrection of February 9-10 opened the shah's jails and overthrew the tyrannical regime of Pahlavi. In this struggle women, who constitute half the population of Iran, played a major role.

This victory brought about the possibility of establishing a society of freedom, abundance, social justice and peace. Workers and toilers showed through their heroic actions that they can run this society. We have been sentenced because we have not aban-

doned this realistic and realizable perspective.

We have also been convicted because we are women. The first attack by the central government after the insurrection was directed against women. Women are supposed to be driven back into their homes. They are only supposed to be means of production and to remain slaves as far as their mental abilities are concerned.

But women—through their great demonstrations—have shown thus far that they are not willing to be driven out of social and political life. The central government has implemented antiwoman policies in the family, society, employment, etc. Our conviction is another effort to sow the seeds of fear in the hearts of our sisters, the women of Iran who are fighting for freedom.

### 'Can't jail call for freedom'

If the prosecutor and the government have arrested, jailed, and sentenced us to life imprisonment to prevent us from telling the truth or to drive us out of political and social life by means of terror, they should know that they will not succeed.

You cannot forever imprison the call of the heroic women and people of Iran for freedom. Neither unfounded charges, nor falsifications, nor slanders will be able to hide our true faces for long.

The record of our struggle against the Pahlavi regime exists and we're proud of it. We will not stop struggling for a society which replaces prisons with child-care centers. Freedom of opinion, of association, and of political parties is one of the basic gains of our revolution. A lot of blood has been shed for this.

We demand to be tried in public court—not behind closed doors. We demand the right to be present at our trial, in front of the eyes of the people, not behind their backs.

We ask all organizations, all people fighting for freedom, all defenders of the Iranian revolution throughout the world to help us win our freedom.



Prisoners Fatima Fallahi (left) and Mahsa Hashemi: Proud of their record of struggle against the shah's regime.



## Unionists aid defense efforts

# World labor outcry makes impact in Iran

By Janice Lynn

The powerful international defense campaign on behalf of fourteen imprisoned members of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS) continues to be vital to winning their release and blocking moves by the Iranian government to execute them.

Twelve of the HKS members were condemned to death in a secret trial August 26.

In a recent move, six of these prisoners were returned to Karoun Prison in Ahwaz. They are: Hadi Adib, Firooz Farzinpour, Ali Hashemi, Mahmoud Kafaie, Kambiz Lajevardi, and Kia Mahdevi. All six had been arrested in Ahwaz on June 23 as they were circulating petitions in defense of other HKS members arrested earlier.

But six are still imprisoned in the jails of the Special Court Building. They are: Hormoz Fallahi, Morteza Gorgzadeh, Mustafa Gorgzadeh, Mohammed Poorkahvaz, Mustafa Seifabadi, and Hamid Shahrabi. Their lives remain in the greatest danger.

Two women members of the HKS, Mahsa Hashemi and Fatima Fallahi, who were sentenced to life imprisonment, are in Dezful Prison, fifty miles outside Ahwaz.

On September 4, the Tehran daily *Baamdad* published a statement by Vice-premier Sadeq Tabatabai which claimed that the HKS members were



Iranian masses mobilized to overthrow the shah and win democratic rights. Socialists have stood side by side with workers and peasants in these struggles.

being charged with explosions at oil pipelines in Abadan, with "armed actions against the Islamic revolution," and with killing people.

Not only did these explosions occur in July—when all the HKS members were imprisoned—but the HKS is well known in Iran as politically opposing individual terrorist acts.

These frame-up charges were answered in a letter by the HKS which was reported in all the Tehran major dailies—on the front page of *Baamdad*, in *Ettela'at*, *Kayhan*, and *Islamic Rev-*

*olution*. These papers have also been printing copies of protest telegrams sent to the government by trade unionists and others demanding a halt to the executions.

Among those who have recently sent protest telegrams from the United States are: Abe Feinglass, an international vice-president of the United Food and Commercial Workers; Alice Peurla, president of United Steelworkers Local 65 in Chicago; Bill Sheehan, president of the Cincinnati Central Labor Council; and Ed Mann, president of Local 1462, USWA in Youngstown, Ohio.

Also: Brenda Eichelberger, executive director of the National Alliance of Black Feminists; James Weinstein, editor of *In These Times*; Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, well-known civil rights leader; and Rafael Castillo, chairman of the national Hispanic Writers Guild.

A delegation of railroad workers visited the Iranian consulate in New York City September 7 to present petitions signed by seventy-five of their co-workers urging the immediate release of the Iranian socialists.

Petitions signed by steelworkers in Baltimore, Maryland; autoworkers in St. Paul, Minnesota; and electrical workers in Boston have also been sent this week to the Iranian government.

In Italy, numerous factory councils sent messages of protest against the death sentences facing the HKS members.

In Sweden, 350 people demonstrated September 1 at the Iranian embassy in Stockholm for the release of the HKS members. This followed hunger strikes

in Stockholm and Uppsala where leaflets were distributed with information on the imprisoned socialists. Three thousand signatures were collected on a petition demanding the prisoners' release, and several thousand Swedish kronas collected to aid in the defense efforts.

Already this international defense campaign has had a big impact in Iran. Thousands more telegrams are needed from all over the world. Delegations, news conferences, and petitions are also vital to keeping up the pressure to save the lives of these Iranian revolutionaries.

## Oil union: free Iran prisoners

The following resolution, introduced by outgoing Vice-president Anthony Mazzocchi, was approved by the delegates at the August 13-17 national convention of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union. OCAW represents 180,000 workers in the United States and Canada.

*Whereas:* As trade unionists in the United States and Canada we fully understand the fundamental importance to working people of the democratic rights of free speech and the right to organize, and

*Whereas:* a wave of political repression in Iran by the Khomeini government has led to the arrest and imprisonment of oil refinery and other workers in Khuzestan province in southern Iran, and

*Whereas:* leaders of the Iranian oil

workers union—which was key in the fight against the dictator shah—were earlier this year arrested along with militant workers in the oil and steel industries, and

*Whereas:* because of a worldwide protest, in which our international union played a part, against this repression, three of the leaders of the Iranian oilworkers union were released just a few days ago,

*Be it therefore resolved that:* we, the delegates to the fifteenth constitutional convention of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union, call upon the present Iranian government to release all the imprisoned workers in Khuzestan province and to create a climate in which free speech and the right to organize belongs to all.

I urge that this convention unanimously adopt this resolution.

## St. Paul UAW local joins int'l defense effort

The following is a resolution passed by United Auto Workers Local 879 representing 2,340 auto workers in the Twin Cities Assembly Plant of Ford Motor Company in St. Paul, Minnesota.

*Whereas:* Twelve members of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS) have been sentenced to death in Iran. Two other HKS members who are women have received life imprisonment sentences. These prisoners were denied the right to lawyers and were sentenced at a secret trial. The HKS members are anti-shah fighters who are innocent of any crime;

*and Whereas:* Also in peril are three leaders of Iran's oil workers council. They are among the hundreds of Arabs, Kurds, oil workers, steelworkers, and others who are under the threat of execution since the Khomeini-Bazargan government has sent troops to suppress the struggles of Arabs and Kurds demanding their rights;

*and Whereas:* The Iranian government has also banned opposition newspapers and political parties;

*Therefore Be It Resolved:* That United Auto Workers Local #879 go on record as condemning these actions of the Khomeini-Bazargan government and demanding:

Stop the execution of the twelve members of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS).

Free all twelve and free the two HKS members who have received life imprisonment.

Stop the execution of Kurds, Arabs, and other workers.

Free these political prisoners.

Lift the ban on political parties and their newspapers;

*Be It Further Resolved:* That Local #879 request Region 10 director Ray Majerus to take appropriate action on this pressing matter and bring this resolution to the attention of the International Union.

## How to help

Telegrams protesting the death sentences given the twelve HKS prisoners in Ahwaz and demanding the immediate release of all fourteen socialists should be sent to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Qum, Iran; Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan, Tehran, Iran; and Hassan Nazih, Director, National Iranian Oil Company, Takht Jamshid Avenue, Tehran, Iran.

Copies should be sent to the Tehran daily *Baamdad*, Hafez Avenue, 24, Zartoshtian Alley, Tehran, Iran; to *Ettela'at*, Khayam Avenue, Tehran, Iran; and *Kayhan*, Ferdowsi Avenue, Tehran, Iran.

Copies should also be sent to the Committee to Save the Iranian 14, 200 Park Avenue South, Room 812, New York, New York 10003.

## The Doomed Freedom Fighters of Iran

To the Editor:

According to the articles in *The Times* during the last week, a large number of Kurds were executed in Iran. The victims could not have lawyers to defend them or time to prepare their defense. Also in secret trials conducted without the slightest pretense of legality, 12 imprisoned members of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (H.K.S.) were sentenced to death in Ahwaz on Aug. 26. Two women members of the H.K.S. were sentenced to life imprisonment on Aug. 25.

The H.K.S. members are long-time fighters against the Shah's tyranny. They worked actively while in exile to win the release of political prisoners from the Shah's jails. Several helped to build the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran (CAIFI) while in exile in the United States.

None of the 14 socialists have been accused of any crime. They were convicted solely on the basis of their political opinions. Among the 10 charges leveled against the H.K.S. members

are: criticism of the central government for being undemocratic, having praised the "antirevolutionary Kurdish people" and membership in the executive committee of the H.K.S. in Khuzestan province.

Execution of the 12 socialists, scheduled to be carried out in the early hours of Aug. 27, was stayed at the last minute following emergency protests from around the world that secured the intervention of authorities in Teheran. These included an emergency appeal by Amnesty International.

Nonetheless, the lives of the 12 condemned H.K.S. members remain in the gravest danger. They cannot speak on their own behalf, so defenders of democratic and legal rights must speak for them. We must put an end to the secrecy, by making our voices heard in Qum, in Teheran and to Iranian representatives elsewhere.

GEORGE NOVACK  
MICHAEL HARRINGTON  
MURIEL RUKEYSER, I. F. STONE  
New York, Aug. 31, 1979

Letter in 'New York Times,' September 7, 1979

# Nat'l target week spur to Militant, PM sales

Peter Seidman

Members of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance are campaigning to save the lives of twelve Iranian socialists.

They're also working to get out the truth about Nicaragua—and to build a movement in solidarity with the revolution there.

The drive to sell more than 100,000 copies of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* this fall has been central to both these efforts.

Socialists decided to launch the circulation drive right out of their August 5-11 convention with special editions of both the *Militant* and *PM* on Nicaragua. This was a month earlier than originally planned. Events made clear the urgency of getting a solidarity campaign under way.

But as the scoreboard shows, the decision to begin the circulation campaign early has taken a certain toll.

After an initial week of very high sales of the special Nicaragua editions, there have been two low weeks.

There are various reasons for these lagging sales—late deliveries of bundles, the Labor Day weekend, and construction of new headquarters in some cities.

What's significant is that despite such problems, socialists have been able to get these politically urgent efforts successfully under way.

Now most branches report that they are putting these problems behind them.

To help that process along, and give a needed boost to the fall circulation drive, the SWP and YSA have decided to carry out a *national sales target week beginning September 28*.

The idea is to have a big week of socialist propaganda:

- We want to double the usual number of *Militants* and *PMs* we sell.

Both the *Militant* and *PM* will have special issues covering the start of fall tours by Andrew Pulley and Matilde Zimmermann, the SWP's presidential ticket.

Zimmermann will be kicking off her tour on the Mesabi Iron Range.

Pulley will be in Newport News, Virginia. Socialists there report plans to step up their sales and leafleting at the huge Tenneco shipyard and other local plants to help build Pulley's meetings.

Other areas—Albuquerque and Toledo, for example—may also be carrying out their special sales effort a week or two earlier or later than the national target dates. This is because of local campaign activities.

- We'll also be putting extra effort into selling subscriptions—especially to co-workers—that week. So far we've sold about 200 subs since the drive began.

The target week will give us a chance to take big steps towards our overall goal of 6,000 subs by November.

In addition to industrial subs, we can use the target week to build for future Pulley-Zimmermann campaign tours by selling subs door to door in working-class neighborhoods.

- The October issue of the *Young Socialist* newspaper will also arrive in local areas in time to be sold during this socialist propaganda blitz week.

The issue will feature an on-the-scene report from Nicaragua by YSA national chairperson Cathy Sedwick.

# 100 Boeing workers back Iran prisoners

By Margaret Trowe

SEATTLE—An emergency meeting here September 9 to save the lives of fourteen members of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS) drew 130 people, one quarter Iranians. More than \$500 was raised.

The meeting featured Farhad Nouri, HKS leader and staff writer for *Kargar*, the HKS newspaper. Nouri is touring the United States, Mexico, and Canada to win support for the case.

Other speakers were Morteza Aalami, co-chair of the Seattle Committee to Save the Iranian Fourteen; Said Nikkhab, a University of Washington teaching assistant who recently returned from a visit to Iran; Jim Levitt,

over the world," Levitt said, "are moving into action in defense of the HKS prisoners. At Boeing we have gathered one hundred signatures from our co-workers on petitions."

Levitt continued, "The Iranian people know Boeing as a company that profited from and supported the shah's dictatorship. We want to show them the other side of Boeing—the workers who support their struggles."

Nouri described the insurrection in Iran last February that overthrew the shah. "The Iranian people want the revolution to continue forward," Nouri explained. "Workers are still struggling in the factories—there are still strikes and work slowdowns mainly around factory conditions. Soldiers are not willing to go to Kurdistan to fight against their Kurdish brothers and sisters."

"The HKS is being repressed because it is active in the struggles of the Iranian workers and peasants," Nouri said, "especially among the Arab workers in Khuzestan province where the arrests took place."

At a special meeting the following night, Nouri spoke in Persian to a group of Iranians who gathered to discuss the case of the fourteen and the Iranian revolution.

Nouri was also interviewed by KOMO-TV and the *Seattle Times* and the Black community newspaper, *The Facts*, will be printing an article on the case.

Following is Farhad Nouri's tour schedule:

Mexico City	Sept. 16-18
San Diego	Sept. 19
Los Angeles	Sept. 20-21
Houston	Sept. 23-24
San Antonio/Austin	Sept. 25-26
Detroit	Sept. 27-28
Chicago	Sept. 30-Oct. 1
Iron Range, Minn.	Oct. 2-3
Minneapolis	Oct. 4-5
Philadelphia	Oct. 7-8
Baltimore/Washington, D.C.	Oct. 9-12
Toronto	Oct. 15-16
Montreal	Oct. 17-18
Boston	Oct. 19-20
New York/New Jersey	Oct. 21-27

member of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) and the Socialist Workers Party; Barbara Hennigan of the defense committee; and Tayebbeh Fallahi, sister of two of the HKS prisoners, Hormoz and Fallahi.

Other members of the Fallahi family also attended the meeting.

Publicity for the meeting included a Persian-language leaflet which members of the committee distributed to Iranians throughout the Puget Sound area. KING-TV covered the meeting.

Aalami described the work of the Seattle defense committee. "The lives of the HKS members are still in jeopardy," he said, and urged everyone to join with the committee to step up the campaign of protest telegrams to Iran.

Levitt, a Boeing worker and member of IAM District 751 Local C, talked about the importance of labor support.

"Working people and their unions all

## STOP THE EXECUTIONS



One hundred thirty hear Farhad Nouri at Seattle defense meeting.

## Sales scoreboard

City	Militant		PM		Totals			
	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Percent	% Ind.
Portland	90	113	0	0	90	113	125.5	20.4
Iron Range	75	86	0	0	75	86	114.6	30.2
Cleveland	100	81	0	29	100	110	110.0	23.6
Kansas City	110	117	7	10	117	127	108.5	8.7
Dallas	90	97	30	31	120	128	106.6	10.9
Piedmont	75	80	0	0	75	80	106.6	1.3
Louisville	100	104	0	1	100	105	105.0	26.7
Atlanta	120	122	5	8	125	130	104.0	16.2
Tacoma	125	123	0	4	125	127	101.6	15.0
Salt Lake City	110	110	5	6	115	116	100.8	2.6
Seattle	140	137	5	5	145	142	97.9	9.9
New York City	445	282	105	255	550	537	97.6	*
Albuquerque	115	119	25	11	140	130	92.8	11.5
Los Angeles	270	202	80	103	350	305	87.1	7.9
San Antonio	50	49	15	7	65	56	86.1	46.4
Boston	175	152	15	9	190	161	84.7	*
Denver	120	83	20	33	140	116	82.8	10.3
St. Louis	125	100	0	3	125	103	82.4	12.6
Cincinnati	100	82	0	0	100	82	82.0	13.4
Gary	90	73	10	3	100	76	76.0	27.6
Detroit	200	155	10	0	210	155	73.8	45.8
Pittsburgh	200	143	0	0	200	143	71.5	28.0
Washington, D.C.	140	76	35	46	175	122	69.7	10.7
San Diego	105	69	20	15	125	84	67.2	*
Toledo	100	53	3	8	103	61	59.2	49.2
New Orleans	100	56	5	0	105	56	53.3	37.5
Albany	100	49	5	4	105	53	50.4	18.9
Baltimore	125	62	0	0	125	62	49.6	50.0
Morgantown	100	49	0	0	100	49	49.0	*
Indianapolis	100	45	0	0	100	45	45.0	*
Phoenix	120	41	40	31	160	72	45.0	16.7
Milwaukee	115	50	10	3	125	53	42.4	*
Philadelphia	180	54	20	4	200	58	29.0	36.2
Oakland/Berkeley	190	27	25	0	215	27	12.5	*
Houston**		91		21		112		
Minneapolis**		43		0		43		
Newark**		127		52		179		
St. Paul**		25		0		25		
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>3527</b>		<b>702</b>	<b>5475</b>	<b>4229</b>	<b>77.2</b>	<b>13.8</b>

\* Figures not available \*\*Goals not announced

Not reporting: Birmingham, Chicago, Miami, San Francisco, San Jose, Tidewater

% Ind. indicates percent of total sold at plant gates or to coworkers in industry

Covers sales of issue number thirty-four of the *Militant* and the third week of sales of issue number sixteen of *Perspectiva Mundial*

## HKS refutes sabotage charge

The following article describes the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS) response to charges of "sabotage" made by Vice-premier Sadeq Tabatabai. It appeared in the September 6 issue of *'Ettela'at'*, one of Tehran's main bourgeois dailies. The translation is by *'Intercontinental Press/Intercon'*.

In a letter to Ayatollah Ghodsi, chief revolutionary prosecutor of Iran, the HKS has rejected the charges raised against its members imprisoned in Ahwaz. The HKS denies that its members had anything to do with gas pipeline explosions or armed attacks on anyone or armed action against the Islamic Revolution of Iran.

The HKS reiterated that its main task has always been to patiently explain its program, which is set forth in its Bill of Rights for Workers and Toilers, a list of proposals for the new constitution.

The HKS is not an armed organization and never has been, nor are its members armed. Moreover, they are completely opposed to violence. The HKS opposes terrorism, sabotage, and conspiratorial activity.

In its letter to Ayatollah Ghodsi, the HKS points out that its members in Ahwaz did nothing more than sell the party's weekly newspaper, *Kargar*, and explain their political views, which had to do with suggestions for the Constitution. Moreover, the Imam's Committee officials were always informed of their activities.

The letter noted that the fourteen HKS members were tried behind closed doors. It concluded with an appeal to Ayatollah Ghodsi to protect the lives of the imprisoned socialists and to make arrangements for their being transferred to Tehran. It stressed that an investigation would show the innocence of the Ahwaz HKS members.



# international **socialist** review

## Labor struggles in the Changing South

**The Impact of the Civil Rights Movement**

**By Nelson Blackstock**



**Month in Review**

## **U.S. Imperialism's Famine in Kampuchea**



# THE MONTH IN REVIEW

## Demand U.S. Food Aid to Kampuchea!

Ten years of U.S. imperialist crimes against the people of Kampuchea, beginning with secret bombing raids during the Nixon administration in 1969, are being compounded by a new one—perhaps the most brutal of all. This time the very survival of the Kampuchean people is threatened.

The Carter administration is holding up massive food supplies needed to overcome famine in the war-torn land. The U.S. rulers are willing to see millions of Kampucheans die in order to retain a foothold in Indochina.

Officials of the Heng Samrin government, brought to power when Vietnamese troops and Kampuchean rebels toppled Pol Pot in January, state that 2.5 million Kampucheans face starvation.

In a report in the August 8 *New York Times*, correspondent Seymour Hersh reported information from officials of the International Red Cross and UNICEF who had recently visited Kampuchea. According to these reports, the new government has had to "set the daily intake of rice per person at 130 grams, roughly 4.5 ounces. That is less than one-third the average quota for other Southeast Asian nations. . . ."

One factor in the famine, Hersh reported, "is the apparent absence of any significant population in the fertile rice-growing areas east of the Mekong River, the area between Phnom Penh and the Vietnamese border. 'My first impression after passing the border is that at present no more than 5 percent of the fields are cultivated,' one relief official explained. 'The eastern half of the country is a desert—no boats, no one on the roads,' he said.

"The people who had lived in that area, the official said, were viewed with special suspicion by troops of the Pol Pot regime because of its proximity to Vietnam, and thus they were forced to move out." (This further mass deportation, which took place at the end of 1975, was reported in the March 26, 1976, issue of the *Militant*.)

Another cause of hunger was cited by Nayan Chanda in the August 17 *Far Eastern Economic Review*:

In Kandal province, south of Phnompenh, he stated, "the rivers and lakes . . . are teeming with fish and could have staved off famine, but there are few fishing nets left. Many were lost during the massive transfer of population undertaken by Pol Pot in 1975, or destroyed by the Khmer Rouge to deprive individuals of any means of subsistence other than collective work on farms."

Due to inadequate nutrition, resistance to illness is low. The hospitals set up since the fall of Pol Pot—who abolished most medical care—are packed with the sick and dying.

"In 1975," wrote Nayan Chanda in the August 17 *Far Eastern Economic Review*, "the population of Kampuchea was 7 million; now, the government estimates that it is around 4 million. Of the adult population only about 20-30% are men, and most of the women are widows. According to Sauoeun, who is one of only 40 doctors in the country (in 1975 there were 500), there is now only one birth for every 10 deaths."

The U.S. imperialists have a ready answer to the problems facing the Kampuchean people: Blame Vietnam! The famine resulted from "the invasion and occupation of that country and from prior years of despotic rule," the State Department proclaimed August 9.

This won't feed the hungry, of course. But it certainly helps stoke the anti-Vietnam propaganda campaign. And it helps cover up for Washington's policy of maintaining a tight aid and trade boycott against Kampuchea.

The Carter administration is using the famine to maximize pressure on Vietnam to withdraw its forces from Kampuchea. This would make it possible to impose a government more to the liking of the U.S. imperialists than that of Heng Samrin.

But it is U.S. imperialism, not Vietnam, that has inflicted years of starvation and near-starvation on the Kampuchean people. Between 1970 and 1973, Washington dropped 442,738 tons of bombs on the Kampuchean countryside—more than 100 pounds for every man, woman, and child in the country. Dikes and waterworks were destroyed and draft animals slain by the hundreds of thousands. Full-fledged famine conditions already existed when the U.S.-supported Lon Nol regime fell in 1975. With typical cruelty, the U.S. government reacted by cutting off its food aid program.

All these problems were then compounded by the mass deportations, forced labor camps, and other repressive measures instituted by the Pol Pot wing of the Khmer Rouge.

When that regime was toppled last January, Khmer insurgents and the massive number of Vietnamese troops that accompanied them were greeted as liberators. But U.S. imperialism—with total support from the Peking bureaucrats—began to funnel support to Pol Pot's remaining forces through the U.S.-dominated military dictatorship in Thailand. The U.S. rulers feared that advances for the Kampuchean masses would strengthen the workers and peasants struggling against the Thai regime.

Pol Pot's forces were given sanctuary and rearmed in Thailand, and then trucked back into Kampuchea at less-defended points by Thai Army convoys.

With this imperialist backing, Pol Pot's forces were joined by units of the CIA-organized Khmer Serei—backers of the former Lon Nol regime. Together they set out to assure a devastating famine, while counting on the Thai regime to keep their troops supplied with food. Rice paddies were mined. Storehouses of grain were burned. Irrigation projects and dikes were wrecked. Tens of thousands of peasants were kidnapped or killed.

Now Washington is seeking ways to give support to the Pol Pot forces more openly, while fending off international pressure to provide aid to the great majority of Kampucheans who live under the Heng Samrin government.

According to a report by Elizabeth Becker in the July 20 *Far Eastern Economic Review*, "The only way we can help in Kampuchea is by giving support to aid for both sides,' an American official said. 'If we can't find a way to help the people on Pol Pot's side it's unlikely that we'll be in a position to do anything even indirectly for those under Heng Samrin.'"

As a condition for any aid program, Japanese officials have demanded that the Kampuchean government cease fighting the Pol Pot terrorists.

Nor has the United Nations deviated from the line set by U.S. imperialism.

The UN continues to recognize the Pol Pot forces as the government of Kampuchea, even though they control almost no territory and a small percentage of the population.

Prince Norodom Sihanouk is also among those who have been counting on famine to bring the

Kampuchean people to their knees and force the Vietnamese to accede to imperialist demands. This "great patriot" has been prominently mentioned as a candidate to head a coalition government acceptable to Washington.

Sihanouk told Nayan Chanda:

"The Soviets can give weapons to them but not rice. . . . With Kampuchea in ruins, with Laos without an economy, having to feed the Kampucheans, to feed the Laotians, to feed the Vietnamese themselves, Mr. Pham Van Dong, Mr. Le Duan [leaders of the Hanoi government] cannot go further. In a few years under the pressure of the whole world they will have to let Sihanouk go back to Kampuchea to solve the problems." (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 27).

Vietnam, itself hard-hit by food shortages and hunger, appears to be meeting its responsibility to help the Kampucheans fight off famine. "Vietnam so far has supplied 10,000 tons of rice seed, 20,000 tons of rice, 9,000 tons of fuel oil and 5,000 tons of consumer goods such as condensed milk, cloth and household utensils," Chanda reported. "Now each province in southern Vietnam is being asked to provide some assistance. In Mekong delta provinces like Cuu Long, Ben Tre and others, each Vietnamese family is being asked to contribute 3 kg of rice for the sister province in Kampuchea."

Nonetheless, some radical groups have fallen into the imperialist trap of blaming Vietnam for the famine in Kampuchea. For example, in the September 5 issue of the *New York "radical" weekly Guardian*, William Ryan writes:

"Prior to the massive Vietnamese invasion . . . there were no reports of starvation."

"According to a recent statement from the Pol Pot government," Ryan continues, "adequate irrigation ditches and reservoirs were built after the defeat of U.S. imperialism in 1975, with resulting large harvests in rice. These systems—which helped Kampuchea become an inchoate rice exporting country—have been destroyed in the fighting."

The agricultural utopia described by the *Guardian* bears no resemblance to real life under the Pol Pot regime. The export of small amounts of rice proved nothing about whether or not the population was adequately fed, especially since the Pol Pot regime attempted to force consumption below subsistence levels precisely in order to increase rice exports.

A more accurate picture of life in Pol Pot's agricultural labor camps was given to correspondent Chanda by Suos Kim Mong, an unemployed worker now living in Phnompenh.

"Along with 275 families, Mong had spent nearly three years in a cooperative in Battambang province. At the end, he believed, only some 80 families survived. The rest were either executed . . . or had died of disease and exhaustion. For months, he said, the meals consisted of rice soup with salt and *prahok* (fish sauce). Children under eight and men over 40 could not stand this diet very long. They ate leaves, roots and rats whenever they had a chance. This plus 12 hours of rigorous work and malaria and other diseases took a heavy toll. 'If the Vietnamese had come a few months later,' Mong said, 'we would all have been dead.'"

American working people have no stake in U.S. imperialism's criminal effort to starve Kampuchea into submission. This is simply a continuation of the war against Kampuchea, Laos, and Vietnam by different means. And as we learned from past U.S. aggression against Vietnam, capitalist attacks against working people abroad always mean more attacks on working people here at home.

We must demand that the U.S. government provide massive economic and food aid to the people of Kampuchea and Vietnam, drop its economic boycott against all the countries of Indochina, and recognize the governments in Hanoi and Phnompenh!

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# Labor struggles in the Changing South

## The Impact of the Civil Rights Movement



Strikers demonstrate in Newport News, Virginia, on March 5, 1979

By Nelson Blackstock

The following is based on a talk given at the August 1979 convention of the Socialist Workers Party in Oberlin, Ohio.

There have been important new developments in the South this past year.

In Newport News, Virginia—a "right to work for less" state—workers at the shipyard owned by Tenneco have been fighting a battle for recognition of their union, United Steelworkers Local 8888. They carried out a twelve-week strike, took everything the employers and the government threw at them, and went back to work last April with their heads held high. They didn't yet have enough muscle to win their main goal but they weren't defeated. And the struggle is continuing.

We saw the leading role that Black workers took in that strike, and how white workers accepted that. And we saw the solidarity of Blacks and whites in the face of club-swinging cops.

And there was the fight on the part of trade unionists and others in New Orleans to defeat Brian Weber's suit against an affirmative-action program at the Kaiser Aluminum plant at Gramercy, Louisiana—a program won by the United Steelworkers in their contract negotiations.

And just days ago, the workers at the big new General Motors plant in Oklahoma City voted in the United Auto Workers. This dealt a big blow to the capitalist goal of blocking further organization of southern workers.

So there are fresh winds blowing in the South.

Last month a meeting of Socialist Workers Party southern organizers and National Committee members took place in Birmingham, Alabama. Representatives came from the new branches of the Socialist Workers Party in Newport News, Virginia; Greensboro, North Carol-

ina; and Birmingham; as well as from Louisville, Atlanta, and Miami. (Miami, contrary to some misconceptions, is also part of the South. It was a Jim Crow city in a right-to-work state.) Some of the ideas I'll be presenting came out of our discussions there.

I'd like to place the changes we've seen with our own eyes in a broader historical framework.

I've always taken an interest in history. Not only does it tell you where you've been, but more importantly for people in our line of work—where you're going. Or, more precisely, where you want to be going.

If you're captive of a version of history built on myths and lies, you're not likely to know these things. I remember when I was six years old or so I was led to understand that there was a historical reason why people like my family in the South were so poor. I was told there was a reason why we didn't live in a big, fine house, why we lived in an old house, where to go to the bathroom you had to walk fifty yards to a two-seated outhouse we shared with another family. It was explained that about a hundred years ago the Yankees came through and burned everything.

I subscribed to that version of southern history for some years, reading all the books in my grammar school library on Robert E. Lee, Jeb Stuart, and Stonewall Jackson. But as time went by I began to read books with another point of view, and then, something called the civil rights movement came along. This helped me discover some of the truth. While I can't say General Sherman immediately replaced Robert E. Lee in my gallery of heroes, I began to feel I was on his side. And, I also found out, incidentally, that as far as anybody could prove, the only property my family ever owned was lost, not to Sherman's torches, but to a bank that took over our land. Like thousands of other families, my family began sharecropping until the 1920s, when the boll weevil hit north Georgia and you couldn't grow cotton any more. Then they packed up and moved near Atlanta to find a new kind of work.

Proceeding from this background, let's take a look at southern history—the real history of Jim Crow—how it worked, how it came about, how it

was gotten rid of, and what that means for us today.

By most standards, it was only yesterday that Jim Crow ruled supreme—and its effects were not limited to the South but spread throughout the country. But memory is short and many youth growing up in the South today have never known this curse firsthand.

What exactly was Jim Crow? To begin with, it was not simply a product of custom and tradition. It was a rigidly imposed system of strict separation of the races—backed and enforced with all the powers of the state. To find anything similar, you'd have to go to the apartheid system in South Africa or the caste system in India.

### Origins of Jim Crow

Where did it come from and when did it begin?

To answer that question we must first go back to the defeat of Radical Reconstruction in the South after the Confederacy was crushed. The post-Civil War state governments were profoundly progressive—instituting a wide range of reforms in the interests of both Blacks and poor whites. But Reconstruction stopped short of a radical land reform and other measures needed to implement the freedoms promised Blacks.

Instead, the victorious industrial and manufacturing rulers of the North collaborated with the newly emerged, proindustrial forces in the South to overturn the Reconstruction regimes. They decided that the freed slaves should be reduced to a form of peonage, bound to the land with virtually no democratic rights. The economic reason was the need for supercheap agricultural labor.

Over a period of years they adopted a system of laws that eliminated virtually all democratic rights of Blacks in the South. This process began with the overthrow of the Reconstruction regimes in the 1870s and was completed by the end of the 1890s and the first decade of this century. During this time the reaction received a boost from two factors.

One was the rise of imperialism. The deepening reaction in the South coincided with the subjugation by the U.S. rulers of peoples of color in the former Spanish possessions from Cuba to the

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Philippines. Racist "yellow peril" hate propaganda was promoted by the ruling class to justify their plunder. Literature, the likes of which had never been seen before, began to appear—*The Negro, A Beast* being but one example.

The second factor was the agrarian revolt of the 1890s. In many parts of the South poor-white and Black farmers banded together to fight the railroad barons and "New South" plutocrats. Alarmed by this development, the southern ruling class was able to enlist some components of the Progressive movement of this era into an anti-Black backlash. They came up with what they touted as a "progressive" reform—the disenfranchisement of Blacks, claiming they were too immature to exercise the vote. At first many white populists resisted. But they became bitter, stung by the fact that wealthy planters simply herded their Black sharecroppers and tenants into wagons, hauled them to the polls, and, under threat, forced them to vote their master's way.

Consequently, shortsighted and frustrated white populists were soon won to the proposals to eliminate Black voting rights. In fact, many former populist leaders like Tom Watson went on to become the most vicious racist demagogues, the prototype of a breed of loud-mouthed politicians that ruled the roost in much of the South for the next half-century. They combined race-baiting with antimonopoly demagoguery, acting all the while at the beck and call of big business.

By 1910 the Jim Crow system of legal segregation in the South was totally consolidated. Its purpose was to deepen the economic subjugation of Blacks and prevent unity at any level of Black and white workers and farmers against their common enemy.

These measures outlawed fraternization of Black and white at virtually every level. All public accommodations were soon segregated.

South Carolina passed a law prohibiting Black and white textile workers from working in the same room, using the same entrances, pay windows, exits, doorways, stairways, toilets, and drinking buckets. Ten states required separation of the races in jails and prisons.

City ordinances established and enforced a pattern of residential segregation where there had been none before.

Oklahoma passed a law requiring telephone companies to "maintain separate telephone booths for white and colored patrons."

These laws continued to be modified and strengthened up into the 1940s and early '50s. In 1930 the city of Birmingham even passed a law making it illegal for Blacks and whites to play checkers together!

Jim Crow, while not usually taking the form of law, spread to the rest of the country on a number of levels, where it weakened the unity and combativity of the exploited and oppressed.

The armed services of the United States were even set up along strict Jim Crow lines. "Colored regiments" were limited to dirty construction work and maintenance chores.

Though few people under the age of forty would know it today, the Jim Crow army remained fully intact throughout World War II. It wasn't until 1948, when the Black labor leader A. Philip Randolph threatened a campaign of civil disobedience, that President Truman ordered it brought to an end. Not until 1953, toward the close of the Korean War, was it actually done away with.

Make no mistake about it. Jim Crow laws were enforced. Not only against Blacks but often against whites who violated them. Enforced both legally and extralegally—through lynchings. Hundreds of Blacks were lynched—and so were some white union organizers seen as a threat to the system.

In the army, John Hammond, a white member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) National Board and a private during World War II, was officially punished time and again for such infractions as entering the "colored barracks." While stationed in the South, he was picked up on more than one occasion for illegally entering Black entertainment spots.

That's what Jim Crow looked like. But now it's gone. What happened?

We're usually told a story like this. In 1954 nine wise old white men in judicial robes handed down a decision ending school segregation. That started a civil rights movement. And pretty soon there were some more ingenious court rulings, a couple of laws got passed, and soon it was all over. And now we have Jimmy Carter in the White House, and he just loves Black folks.

That's the ruling-class version. As usual, they

give themselves almost all the credit. And also as usual, it has little to do with the truth.

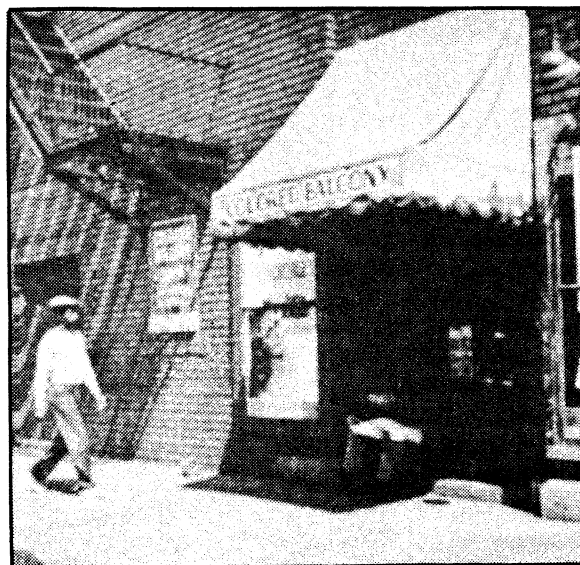
A while back Peter Camejo wrote a very good pamphlet called *Who Killed Jim Crow?* (Pathfinder Press, 1975). In it he singles out several factors responsible for its demise.

One was the rise of the colonial revolution. It played a part in ending Jim Crow, just as the rise of imperialism had played a role in its birth. After World War II, when American rulers posed as the guardians of freedom around the world, they figured that it just wouldn't do to have an apartheid-like system flourishing right in the heartland of the "free world." In fact, the secretary of state filed a brief along those lines with the Supreme Court.

The colonial revolution itself was likewise an inspiration to Blacks here.

While the army was segregated during World War II, the propaganda against Hitlerite racism made it harder to justify Jim Crow at home.

With the industrialization of southern agriculture, the advent of New Deal programs rewarding wealthy farmers for taking land out of cultivation, and the migration of Blacks to the North, there was less need for a huge source of superexploited



Under Jim Crow, segregation permeated every aspect of life.

agricultural labor. However, some southern entrepreneurs still depended on this cheap labor, and they're the ones who provided the base of resistance.

And the 1954 court decision did give Blacks a surge of hope that fueled the civil rights movement.

#### Role of the CIO

What I want to zero in on here is an additional factor that is usually sighted. That's the role of organized labor, and the CIO in particular.

Workers—Black or white—had no stake whatsoever in Jim Crow. Marx summed it up in his famous dictum: "Labor with a white skin cannot emancipate itself where labor with a Black skin is branded."

The oppression of Blacks, providing supercheap labor and an ample reserve army of unemployed, drags down the wages and living standards of white workers. Jim Crow not only denied Blacks democratic rights; it also curbed the rights of whites, both north and south, limiting their consciousness and combativity.

The first widespread union in the South was the Knights of Labor, which officially barred racial discrimination. In the course of helping to establish the Birmingham branch of the Socialist Workers Party, we naturally began to look into the history of the area. We learned that the Knights of Labor had been active in Birmingham, for example, primarily among miners in the 1880s.

The United Mine Workers was one of the first

successful industrial unions. They were influenced by the Knights of Labor and followed their policy of integrated locals. The custom was to have both Black and white officers. This was true in Alabama, where a lot of miners were Black. The mine union was wiped out in Alabama in the 1890s, but its progressive traditions remained part of the UMW and were revived in the 1930s.

When the American Federation of Labor (AFL) first came on the scene in the late 1800s it banned race discrimination. But its conservative, craft orientation made it susceptible to the growing pressures of Jim Crow. Beginning in the 1890s, unofficial Jim Crow became common practice. In some cases, Jim Crow was included outright in the bylaws—as in some rail unions.

The big drive to build the first industrial union in steel in 1919 foundered on the rock of Jim Crow. But things began to change in the 1930s with the advent of the CIO, for the following reasons.

First of all, certain lessons were drawn from the 1919 experience. The mission of an industrial union forces it to face squarely the question of Jim Crow. It has to organize everybody in the plant, regardless of craft. And even by the 1930s a section of basic industry had a significant segment of Black workers, enough to make the difference in a strike situation. In one sense, it came right down to a practical point: Black-white unity was imperative to organize the union, win a strike, and draw the Black community to the side of the union.

Blacks made up 8.5 percent of all iron and steel workers, and 9 percent of coal miners. Moreover, these workers were heavily concentrated in certain parts of the country. In Alabama 68 percent of basic iron and steelworkers were Black. Without including them, organizing an industrial union would have been hopeless.

In 1935 the UMW was solidly entrenched in Alabama. Fully 60 percent of the members were Black. It is said that John L. Lewis brought William Mitch, who headed the UMW drive in Alabama, up north to work on the Committee—later Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) campaign in steel because he was so impressed with his apparent ability to establish Black-white unity.

We've often said the CIO was more than a pure and simple union movement. It was a "social movement." In a sense it was also a civil rights movement, in that its very purpose—organizing these new unions—compelled it to challenge Jim Crow.

That's not to say its record was unblemished. Far from it. Segregationist practices were frequently tolerated or allowed to return, particularly in southern locals. Blacks usually got the dirtiest, hardest, lowest-paying jobs. Here the CIO did nothing to upgrade Blacks on the job. That would not come for many years.

However, as it became clear to Blacks that they would be accepted into the new unions on a more or less equal footing, the CIO was able to win their allegiance.

Both the NAACP and the Urban League, for example, after some initial hesitation, threw their support to the CIO. Some say that without the active intervention of the national NAACP in Detroit, the UAW would not have been able to organize Ford when it did. Henry Ford had a calculated scheme to win the allegiance of local Black leaders. Many preachers were on his payroll. Without the backing of the Black community and Blacks in the plant, Ford would not have been organized.

The steel industry had some 85,000 Black workers, and they had to be won to the union. Black support was crucial in organizing not only steel, but auto, rubber, and maritime, among others.

Before the CIO no more than 100,000 Blacks were in unions. By 1940 the figure had risen to around 500,000. Before the CIO Black union officials were rare, but by 1940 they were much more common. What's more, a broader layer of new leaders had been developed and trained.

In a bid for Black support, the founding convention of the CIO in 1937 unanimously adopted a provision calling on CIO officers to work for passage of a federal antilynching law—a measure President Roosevelt never endorsed.

The outstanding civil rights action during these years was A. Philip Randolph's call for a march on Washington in 1941. Its purpose was to protest Black exclusion from jobs in the burgeoning war industry. This took an especially odious form. One top executive came right out and said that Blacks would be hired, but only to push brooms and the like. The march was also called for ending discrimination in the armed forces. The move-



ment's symbol was the double V—victory in the war abroad and at home against racism.

Unfortunately, Randolph succumbed to intense pressure from the Roosevelt administration. He was induced to call off the march in return for the promise of a Fair Employment Practices Commission—a toothless body that was supposed to cajole the war profiteers into accepting some Blacks on the payroll.

But before Randolph caved in, the idea for the march caught on like wildfire. (Although one organization conspicuous by its denunciations of Randolph's movement was the Communist Party. It called for putting off any struggle for Black rights until after the war. To them the capitalist war for "democracy" came first.) But March on Washington committees sprang up in cities from coast to coast.

The project was initiated and led by an all-Black ad-hoc labor committee, with Randolph's Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters union in the lead. And it brought wide layers of the Black community in behind it.

This was an independent Black-led civil rights movement. It emerged from the labor movement as a whole at a time when the war drive was going full blast, the official labor movement opposed social struggles in the name of supporting the war, and privileged bureaucrats were tightening their grip in the new industrial unions.

While the march did not come off, the movement was an inspiration to millions of Blacks. They didn't forget it. In a way it was a preview of things to come. It surely contributed to the later civil rights movement.

Despite the CIO's shortcomings, many Blacks and champions of Black rights looked to organized labor to carry forward the struggle against Jim Crow. Gunnar Myrdal—the Swedish social democrat whose influential study in the 1940s of segregation in the United States, *An American Dilemma*, was cited in the 1954 court decision—held the view that labor would lead the way.

### Operation Dixie

Many had high hopes in Operation Dixie, a postwar CIO campaign aimed at organizing the South. The AFL launched a parallel and rival campaign. (The two federations were not to merge until 1955.) While the South was still much less industrialized than the rest of the country, it nonetheless contained considerable industry. And most of it remained nonunion.

While they put a lot of money and resources into it, both the CIO and AFL drives were timid affairs. Bowing to the growing cold war witch-hunt, the AFL viciously red-baited the CIO. The CIO in turn named an anticommunist right-winger to head its effort. In contrast to the stance taken during the mushrooming CIO in the previous decade, the organizers now declared that no communists would be allowed to take part in the drive.

A lot of time was wasted on mutual raiding operations engineered by narrow-minded, self-seeking union bureaucrats.

In reviewing the drives, however, two aspects stand out. One was the eagerness of southern workers, both Black and white, to join unions. As a result, some important plants were organized.

The other is the open appeal that both the CIO and AFL made to Blacks. By this time the CIO had a positive image among Blacks. The AFL, on the other hand, was viewed by many as a racist, Jim Crow outfit. A lot of Blacks wanted nothing to do with it. To counter this, the AFL went on a campaign to project itself as a better defender of Black rights than the CIO.

This was not, by the way, the first time the labor movement had vowed to go all-out to organize the South. It was on the agenda of the founding convention of the CIO in 1937. And some progress had been made during the thirties in steel, coal, and auto, among others. In fact, the very first sit-down strike in the United States was in Atlanta, at the Chevrolet plant in Lakewood. And others followed in the South before the famous sit-down hit GM in Flint.

In 1941 the CIO again vowed to make a push in the South. This time the need to fall into step with the employers' war drive got in the way. And yet another promise came later, in 1955, at the AFL-CIO merger convention. A big labor upsurge had just hit the South. But nothing came of it.

The prospects for organizing the South in the postwar time were actually quite good. The South saw continuous outbursts of labor militancy from the end of the war right up until 1955.

Many Black veterans, just home from the fight against "racism abroad," were doubtless in a mood

to take action on their own behalf. During the war there had been a surprising degree of agitation among Blacks against Jim Crow in the military. Some major Black newspapers were banned from military posts because they exposed these conditions.

In general there was a feeling of self-confidence among workers. The dramatic rise of the CIO, after all, was still a recent memory for many.

But one important factor was lacking. The labor bureaucracy refused to conduct a real fight. They didn't take on the Taft-Hartley Act, passed by Congress in 1947, with the kind of drive necessary to defeat it. This slave-labor law gave the go-ahead for union busting "right to work for less" laws in the South.

As it turned out, the labor movement neither organized the South nor took on Jim Crow—two totally interconnected tasks.

### Shift in Class Relationship of Forces

While in the end it wasn't organized labor that led the fight to kill Jim Crow, labor's role was greater than is realized.

First and foremost the success of the CIO—the organization of the bulk of workers in basic industry—caused a fundamental shift in class forces in favor of the working class. Without that, the overthrow of Jim Crow would have been impossible.

Looking back now, we can say that the CIO prepared the ground for the civil rights movement. For the first time Jim Crow had been taken on and severely weakened. Things were much different in this country before the CIO.

An inevitable consequence of the strengthening of the working class position vis-à-vis the ruling class was that a blow would be struck against the Jim Crow system. The struggle to build the CIO brought with it a repository of lessons and experiences, a surge in self-confidence among Black workers, that were a deep source of strength to the new civil rights movement.

Moreover, while few know it today, several figures who had been key leaders of the past labor struggles made outstanding contributions to the birth of the civil rights movement.

### Montgomery Bus Boycott

Perhaps most notable among them was E.D. Nixon.

In 1954, before the Montgomery bus boycott, the English edition of a book, *Negroes on the March*, appeared. Written by Daniel Guerin, a prominent radical French journalist, it set forth his observations on the American political scene. Guerin had made an extensive tour of this country, interviewing many prominent Black and labor leaders.

Guerin noted that a layer of strong Black leaders—leaders of both the unions and the Black community—had evolved out of the labor battles of the past two decades. Here's what he had to say about Nixon.

"A living example of this evolution was presented to me by E.D. Nixon of Montgomery, Alabama, a vigorous colored union militant who was the leading spirit in his city both of the local union of Sleeping Car Porters and the local branch of the NAACP. What a difference from other branches of the Association, which are controlled by dentists, pastors and undertakers! Nixon has both feet on the ground. He is linked to the masses. He speaks their language. He has organized the work of race defense with the precision and method of a trade unionist."

I had a chance to talk with Nixon in Montgomery this spring. He told me: "A. Philip Randolph was a great man. He made me everything I am today."

In 1955 E.D. Nixon became the architect of the Montgomery bus boycott, which marked the beginning of the civil rights movement.

Nixon certainly must have gotten some ideas about the strategy he employed from his mentor, Randolph. Randolph was influenced by Gandhi's use of massive resistance in India. Back in 1948, you recall, Randolph had threatened to use such tactics in a showdown with Truman over Jim Crow in the army. Randolph also had a hand in organizing a little-known pioneer freedom ride into the South in the late forties.

Rosa Parks, the near-legendary woman who refused to give up her seat at the front of the bus to a white man, thus touching off the boycott, was E.D. Nixon's secretary.

Not long before Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat, she had attended a seminar at the Highlander Folk School, a labor training center in Tennessee. It was conducted by another leading labor



E.D. Nixon was central organizer of Montgomery bus boycott of 1956. He is shown above as guest at celebration of tenth anniversary of boycott, sponsored by Socialist Workers Party in New York. Farrell Dobbs, SWP presidential candidate at time of boycott, is at right.

organizer of the 1920s and 1930s, the pacifist A.J. Muste.

It is one of history's injustices that Nixon gets so little credit for his role. (One group that does give him credit is the Socialist Workers Party. He told me he still has in his house a plaque our party gave him at a celebration in New York marking the tenth anniversary of the boycott. He also asked how Farrell Dobbs—a fellow union militant who was the SWP candidate for U.S. president in 1956—was doing. Farrell delivered a station wagon to Montgomery during the boycott—a gesture of support from the SWP in answer to their appeal for such aid.)

The reason Nixon got no credit, of course, is that it all went to Martin Luther King, Jr., then a young minister. Nixon tapped King to stand at the head of the movement. He figured that a preacher would be more easily accepted as a leader of such a campaign.

This bears reflection. The public leaders of most civil rights struggles in the South have been ministers. (An exception being the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, SNCC, which was a unique organization.) But I suspect that in the background was more than one figure like E.D. Nixon—a seasoned trade union leader.

I'm reminded of an incident in Decatur about two months ago, the day after Klansmen shot two Black demonstrators. Mohammed Oliver and I drove up to investigate, talk to people involved, and get a report for the *Militant*. We spent a good part of the day with Rev. R.B. Cottonreader, a field secretary for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the public leader of the struggle on behalf of Tommy Lee Hines, a mentally retarded youth framed up on rape charges, in that city. That evening, after a rally in a church, covered by reporters from all over the country, we went with Cottonreader back to his house to wrap up a discussion we had been having. We were there only a few minutes when two husky Black men in their early forties walked in and sat down. They had come to talk things over, to assess the day's events. Upon being introduced, we learned they were trade unionists. A few years earlier they had helped lead the campaign to bring a union into one of the plants that sits on the edge of Decatur's Black community.

Of course, this says something about recent changes in the South, with a new generation of Black unionists again starting to come to the fore.

Let's look at still another way the labor movement influenced the rise of the civil rights movement. On the eve of the Montgomery bus boycott some 89,000 southern telephone operators and rail workers waged a long and bitter fight. It involved both AFL and CIO workers and the picket lines and solidarity actions involved both Blacks and whites. These two strikes were featured for several weeks on the front page of the *Militant*. The struggle reached its high point in Birmingham when company thugs viciously attacked a picket of women telephone workers. Broad solidarity in the highly industrialized labor movement rocked the entire city. Workers at the big U.S. Steel mill and at several foundries walked off their jobs in solidarity. A serious movement for a general

strike developed. It was quashed only by a back-to-work edict from Steelworkers President David McDonald.

Such social ferment must have helped set the stage for the bus boycott in nearby Montgomery later that year.

This was the time of the merger of the AFL and CIO—a merger consummated not on the basis of a renewed commitment to seriously organize the South or end Jim Crow in spite of all the promises at the merger convention. To the contrary, it was founded by mutual agreement on deepening its class collaborationist policy of supporting the Democratic Party.

The civil rights movement had to go it alone, with only token help from labor officials. It's clear that if the civil rights movement hadn't kept the heat on the ruling class, exposing the vicious nature of Jim Crow and massing resistance to it, the capitalists would have been more than willing to let the system linger on for some time.

The peculiar phrase "all deliberate speed" in the Supreme Court order implementing its 1954 decision was not chosen without careful thought. The message was clear: take your time. And that the ruling class as a whole was ready to do; while Democratic politicians in the South were welding together a solid front of "massive resistance."

In the years following Montgomery the civil rights movement took various forms: direct challenges to segregated public facilities; lawsuits to carry forward the 1954 decision. (The original decision only applied to five school districts in the whole country. Separate court actions had to be initiated everywhere else.) And there were meetings, marches, demonstrations.

A new stage was entered with the sit-in movement in 1960. A fresh layer of youth were willing to put their bodies on the line. Even before the first sit-ins John Lewis and others who became leaders of the movement in Nashville attended a workshop by A.J. Muste—just as Rosa Parks had. Out of the sit-ins arose the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee—just as SCLC had sprung out of the earlier movement inspired by the Montgomery actions.

After the big sit-in wave, SNCC turned its sights to registering voters, mainly in small towns in the rural South.

The early sixties also saw the freedom rides. Often initiated in the North, the brave "freedom riders" violated Jim Crow laws pertaining to seating on buses and use of public accommodations in the bus stations in the deep South.

All these actions were a source of profound irritation and embarrassment for the ruling class. They kept the heat on and they kept the eyes of the world focused on this monstrous system—and the brutal acts of local and state officials who defended it.

By this time the civil rights movement had grown into a force that had a broad impact, influencing the thinking of millions who never took part in it. It led many to question some of their basic assumptions about life in America.

### Battle of Birmingham

Still, by 1963—almost nine years after the court decision and eight years after Montgomery—while important gains had been registered, Jim Crow remained essentially intact. Then something happened that played a big role in overturning the old order. That was the battle of Birmingham.

Until then most major actions had been in smaller cities and towns. But Birmingham was different.

Birmingham is by far the most industrialized city in the South. It has a higher percentage of union membership than some big northern industrial cities. Its economy rests on huge coal, iron, and limestone deposits. It's the only place in the United States—some say the entire world—where these resources, necessary to produce steel, are found in one concentrated area. As a result, a big steel and coal industry arose, beginning with the influx of northern capital right after the Civil War.

During the labor upsurge of the thirties, the UMWA swept the coalfields, and behind the miners came the steel union, organizing the great bulk of that industry.

Not only does Birmingham have a large unionized working class; that working population is largely Black. Unlike other areas, many coal miners live right inside the city.

As far back as the mid-fifties Birmingham had a movement against segregation. Its main leader was Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, a courageous man who personally led the fight to integrate schools and public accommodations. But progress had been slow or nonexistent.

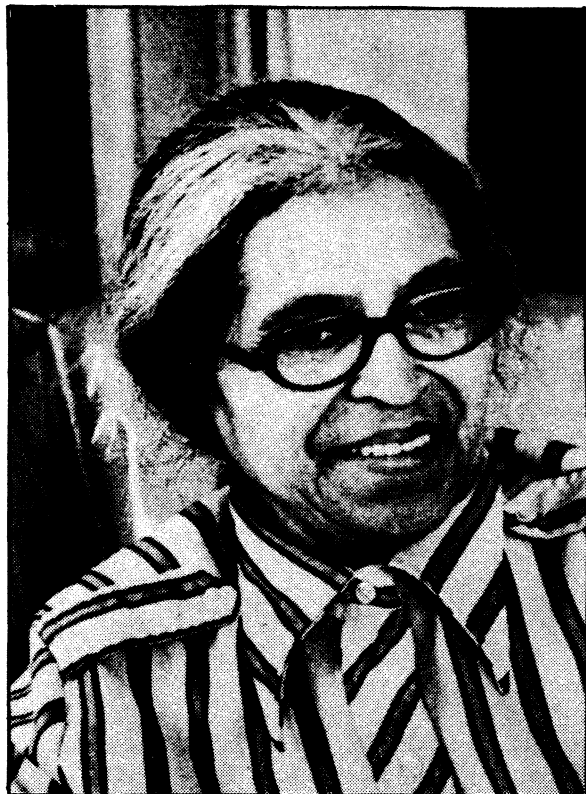
But by early 1963 a very broad movement was shaping up. Its goals included an end to segregation downtown; jobs for Blacks in stores there; fair hiring in city departments; dropping charges stemming from sit-ins; and the reopening of city parks and playgrounds, which had been closed to avoid desegregation.

On April 4, Martin Luther King came to town and vowed to stay until this battle was won. In the coming weeks deep struggles developed.

Public Safety Commissioner Bull Connor responded with dogs and fire hoses. Literally thousands were arrested, some many times.

At one point Reverend Shuttlesworth was injured by a fire hose and had to be carried away by ambulance. Bull Connor told the press that he only regretted missing seeing it and that "I wish they'd carried him away in a hearse."

The police auxiliary, the Ku Klux Klan, unleashed a wave of bombings. Things reached a



Rosa Parks. Her refusal to accept segregated seating on Montgomery, Alabama, bus inspired boycott.

head when they blew up the home of Dr. King's brother.

The struggle now went beyond the control of its leaders. Demonstrations in the South had almost always been marked by their semireligious, nonviolent character. But now an enraged Black proletariat, seasoned by a tradition of class-struggle militancy, entered the fray. They began to fight back in self-defense—particularly when cops invaded the Black community.

Millions watched on television, and Birmingham sent shock waves through the ruling class. The *Militant* defended the rights of Blacks to defend themselves—calling on the federal government to deputize Blacks for purposes of self-defense.

Throughout the country demonstrators took to the streets by the tens of thousands in solidarity with the Birmingham fighters. (In fact, from May to August 15, there were 978 demonstrations in 209 cities or towns in 36 states. Two hundred thousand marched in Detroit alone.)

This series of actions, the largest wave of civil rights protests in the country's history, turned the tide. In early 1963, President Kennedy had said there had been enough civil rights legislation. He was now forced to change his tune, and a new antidiscrimination bill began to be pushed through Congress.

In 1964 the civil rights bill barring discrimination in public accommodations was adopted. And Black people didn't let it stay on paper.

Nottie B. Andrews, a Black civil rights activist in Birmingham, described the impact this way: "After the Civil Rights Bill was passed, everybody knew we was going to town that morning. All the newsfolks in town was there—looked like everybody was there. We had a news conference and then we hit the streets."

"Around two o'clock we went to all the restaurants and theaters downtown and stayed there all afternoon. Where I went, they were real nice. The other people were staring at us to see how we would react, but we acted just like they weren't there. We stayed so long that when we got back we found Rev. Shuttlesworth was wondering whether we was in jail, because the others were all back."

"After that, every day for about two weeks we

would send a different group of people, in order to let them know we really meant that we were going to come in."

A point here on the August 28, 1963, March on Washington, in which 250,000 people participated. The march had originally been proposed at the 1962 convention of the Negro American Labor Congress, led by A. Philip Randolph. The march was to demand jobs and an end to industry and union bias. After the violence exploded in Birmingham, King proposed that the demands be expanded to include passage of the new civil rights legislation already called for by Kennedy. At first the Kennedy administration tried to get it called off, but soon switched its approach and gave it a semiofficial stamp of approval.

It's interesting to review Malcolm X's observations on what was behind the march and the attitudes of its sponsors. He sized it up as a conscious attempt by the more conservative Black leaders and the Kennedy administration to cool off the situation—to defuse the deepening struggle then brewing.

Malcolm traced the connection of the event with the explosions in Birmingham, and to the way these had shaken things up.

In Harlem during the summer of 1964, the first of what became a wave of ghetto rebellions occurred. The popularity of Black nationalist ideas grew tremendously.

The following year a struggle broke out in Selma, Alabama. The brutality of the Selma cops and their racist allies set off another massive wave of solidarity actions.

Like Kennedy before him, Johnson had claimed no more civil rights legislation was needed. But he too changed his stand and went on television to promise that a voting rights act would be pushed through. And it was pushed through.

These struggles, the laws that were enacted because of them, and the actions Black people took to make these laws a reality, broke the back of Jim Crow.

### Social Revolution

Looking back on the 1960s now, we can see that 1963 through 1965 was the climactic point that marked the death of Jim Crow. It didn't disappear all at once in every place. Nor were de facto segregation and other racist practices ended. But the civil rights movement had won a decisive victory in the South.

It was a landmark victory of Blacks and all working people.

As with all social upheavals of this magnitude, it sometimes takes a while for their full implications to work themselves through or for them to be fully recognized—even by very astute political observers.

The South underwent a social transformation, one that changed thinking all up and down the line. It changed the way whites looked at Blacks, the way Blacks looked at whites, and the way they looked at themselves. It changed the way they looked at their employers and the way they looked at the government.

These changes are reflected on some levels that are not so obvious. Religion, for example—long a bulwark of anti-union, racist, and other prejudices—has lost some of its grip in what is less frequently today called the Bible Belt. Baptist-inspired liquor laws have been adjusted to bring them more in line with common sense and good taste. (Although, unfortunately, Sundays are still bone-dry in Alabama.)

Probably the last time you heard of any place that was openly segregated by official policy was when Carter appointed a big shot like Attorney General Griffin Bell to fill a high government post and it came out that Bell belonged to a private club that banned Blacks and Jews. Some of the last strongholds of open Jim Crow are the plush sanctuaries and watering holes of the ruling class.

On the other end of the social scale is where you see the big changes.

If I might be permitted a personal observation, I'll tell you about a small scene I witnessed my first morning when I moved to Birmingham last December. It told me more than I might have learned from many weighty tomes written by learned professors.

Except for a few brief visits, I had been away from the deep South for ten years. And coming to Birmingham, which is more deep South than the area near Atlanta where I grew up, I frankly did not know quite what to expect.

My first morning I went to eat breakfast at a typical Southern home-style restaurant. It was white-run, and all the patrons seemed to be white.



As I was sitting there, I happened to notice a very old Black man come in the back door and order some food, which was given to him in a sack. His money was taken up to the front register and his change brought back to him, and he left. That brought back scenes I had witnessed time and time again growing up. That was the way it was under Jim Crow.

In white restaurants, Blacks had to buy food through the back door, or a little window cut in the wall in the rear. As I took this in, I said to myself, well, maybe this is how it still works in Birmingham today.

But, all of a sudden, I spotted three young workers—two white and one Black—who had just come in, sat down at a table, and were ordering food. Now, that might not seem like a very big thing. But I'll tell you it's something you weren't likely to see in Atlanta in the late sixties. At that point my spirits were lifted, because I knew things were different.

There's something else about Birmingham I still can't get over. Let me preface the point by recalling something that happened back in 1964. I was on the staff of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, when suddenly I found myself in New York City. I was nineteen and hadn't been north of south Tennessee since I was five. SNCC arranged for me to stay with some supporters in an apartment on the Upper West Side. I was there for two or three weeks.

Both Black and white families lived in this building, and I'd never seen anything like that before. And every day, as I would go in and out on the elevator, I would usually notice both Blacks and whites there. I would think to myself how proud I was to be living in a place like this, where there was no segregation. I don't think I'd be exaggerating too much if I compared my exhilaration to that of American socialists who describe their experiences in Cuba.

Let me tell you something else about Birmingham today. Birmingham—once called the most segregated city in the United States, the Johannesburg of North America—in terms of housing, is the most unsegregated place I've ever seen in this country. For example, members of our party live in two main areas, both seemingly covered with apartment buildings, middle to low rent, with Black and white tenants—workers, most young, but many not so young. And I'll guarantee, you would have been hard-pressed to find anything like this in Atlanta in 1969. At least I didn't see it when I lived there.

What does this tell you? Well, for one thing it confirms that Jim Crow housing laws have been knocked out. But it also tells you something else. There's been a change in the thinking of the people living in those places. And that changed consciousness has important implications for us.

Members of the Greensboro, North Carolina, branch of the Socialist Workers Party noticed some striking changes. During the truckers strike, for example, they saw white truckers who had been arrested appeal to the governor for a pardon by comparing their plight with that of the Wilmington Ten and the Charlotte Three, victims of racist frame-ups. They also noticed white truckers appealing to Blacks to support the strike by addressing them as "Sir," something that was strictly taboo not so long ago.

One person told me that in the textile industry, where racism was the bosses' prized weapon in keeping unions out, there is virtually no separation of the races when workers go to the lunchroom to eat. There is a good deal of solidarity among Black and white workers, especially women workers. Of course, they hear racist sentiments expressed, but they can notice some of them breaking down. That was certainly not the way it was under Jim Crow. As a result of these changes, many southern Blacks have gained a greater degree of self-confidence and combativity. Because the South was the battleground for the victory against Jim Crow, southern Blacks there have seen concrete, tangible progress in their lives—gains they themselves fought for and won. This new self-confidence is good preparation for the union organizing drives to come.

Surveys also show that the migration of Blacks northward has slowed down and stopped. Not only that, in recent years the pattern has reversed, and more are coming back to the South than are leaving. That fact alone makes you think about what's going on.

As for southern whites, their changed consciousness has big implications for the road ahead, too. There are many stories about this from Newport News. Whites following Black leadership, singing, "we shall overcome." The white union organizer

with the confederate flag tattoo who vows to kick the ass of anybody who uses the word "nigger."

It's important to remember that probably nobody is more aware of this beginning of change of consciousness among whites than southern Blacks. More aware than the whites themselves. The Blacks at Newport News would not have come to the fore in launching the shipyard struggle if they had not believed the whites would back them up.

This is not to say that a lot of whites still don't use the word "nigger." Or that a lot of them don't need their ass kicked because of it.

What it does say is that there are deep-going changes in the minds of many workers that may not be apparent at first—or may not take expression until the right moment arises.

This May the *Atlanta Constitution* ran the results of a survey on its front page. The headline read, "Poll Shows Dixie Racial Views Changing." Here are some of the results:

To the question, Among your closest ten friends, are any of them of another race? 52 percent of whites said yes, and 66 percent of Blacks said yes.

The question, Do you feel private businesses should be required to have racial quotas among their employees?



Drawing from June 17, 1963, issue of the 'Militant' by 'Militant' artist Laura Gray.

Among Blacks, 44 percent said yes. Among whites it was 12 percent.

And the following one was in many ways the most surprising to me.

In your opinion should interracial marriages be allowed?

Fifty-six percent of whites said yes. And 83 percent of Blacks said yes.

That answer becomes all the more significant when you recall that just a few years ago all southern states and many northern states outlawed interracial marriage.

I remember that in arguments back in the early sixties, the final clincher for a segregationist was to raise the specter of interracial dating and marriage. The normal answer of the southern liberal—an uncommonly weak-kneed breed: "Well, no, it really won't lead to anything like that."

Sometimes you can be too hasty in judging people. About four years ago one of my sisters in Georgia married an airline mechanic, an ex-marine. He was in his late twenties. When I first met him he made a couple of racist remarks about Blacks where he worked, and I kind of pigeonholed him and didn't think too much more about it.

Then the next time I saw him, some months later, he began asking me all sorts of questions about my views. Today he subscribes to the *Militant* newspaper—and while he's not going to join our party tomorrow, he talks about the need for a labor party at work, shows around the *Militant*, and is involved in a union organizing drive. My sister bought him one of the *Militant* T-shirts, which he wears to work.

The week before last he told me one of the guys where he works asked him why he was messing around with all this "socialist shit." He said he told him it was because he had had about all he could take of all this "capitalist shit."

It's worth noting that over the years there has been a lot of nonsense propagated about southern white workers and farmers. Much of it reflects a failure to view things in class terms—or, more accurately, to see them in terms defined by the enemy class.

Back before the Civil War, there were southern whites in the mountains who initiated the abolitionist movement and maintained the underground railway. During that war thousands of poor white farmers wanted nothing to do with the planters' army. In the mountains of Alabama and Georgia troops sent in to round up conscripts would be driven out by bands of guerrillas. One county in north Georgia flew the union flag throughout the entire war.

If you had fourteen slaves you didn't have to go into the Confederate army, which was made up overwhelmingly of poor whites corralled into fighting a war they had no stake in.

In the post-Reconstruction period a not insignificant number of poor whites sided with the Reconstruction governments, which instituted radical measures benefiting them as well as the emancipated Blacks.

When they were bringing Reconstruction to a close, one New York Republican newspaper writer expressed this view: "If to them were added the whole bulk of the Negro population, so vast a mass of ignorance would be found that, if combined for any political purpose it would sweep away all opposition the intelligent class might make. Many thoughtful men are apprehensive that the ignorant voters will, in the future, form a party by themselves as dangerous to the interest of society as the communists of France" (Peter Camejo, *Racism, Revolution, Reaction 1861-1877: The Rise and Fall of Radical Reconstruction*, p. 97).

In the 1890s poor-white and Black farmers joined to fight the big-business interests exploiting them both.

Even as late as 1912, Eugene V. Debs got a higher vote in Louisiana than in his home state of Indiana. The bulk of votes came from poor-white farmers switching from Populism to Debsian socialism. To be sure, there were racist elements among them. It's just that a stereotype has been inculcated that serves to make the ruling class appear all-powerful—yesterday as well as today.

The biggest barrier to joint struggle by white and Black has been Jim Crow.

The overwhelming majority of southern workers and farmers were not the lynchers and Klansmen. While class consciousness has been severely retarded and racism promoted by the Jim Crow system imposed by the ruling class, thousands of white workers were willing to take direct action that flew in the face of Jim Crow by organizing and joining industrial unions.

Now, today, with the demise of the pernicious Jim Crow system, we have entered a new stage.

At a time when the ruling class is intent on driving down the living standards of American workers as hard and fast as it can, they have lost one of their trump cards.

### Ku Klux Klan

I want to say a few words about the Ku Klux Klan. In recent months we have seen a series of well-publicized Klan actions in the South, and Alabama in particular. This is something we will be watching. At this point several observations can be made. One is that the most prominent activity has been in rural areas or small towns in response to initiatives by Blacks fighting injustice. This was true in Decatur around the Tommy Lee Hines case and in Northern Mississippi around protests by the United League, a Black organization.

So far, there has been relatively little action in the bigger cities, especially where there has been a strong civil rights movement. The Klan recently surfaced in Birmingham in response to Black protests around the cop murder of Bonita Carter. But so far their showing has been feeble when compared to either the Klan in Decatur or Blacks in Birmingham. In fact, most of the Klansmen arrested in Birmingham in one incident had addresses in Decatur and surrounding areas of North Alabama.

Recently the *Atlanta Journal* did a southwide survey of the Klan. In Atlanta itself, the site of much Klan agitation in the sixties, they had to search hard to find two young Ku Kluxers, who were afraid to give their names.

Recently a young white worker from Selma told me how the Klan came down from Decatur to try to have a march there. Twice as many Blacks gathered around, jeering and hooting at them. The white mayor, the same mayor who led attacks on Blacks in the sixties, grabbed the Klan bullhorn and told them they weren't welcome and to get out of town.

There has been Klan growth. And there has been a reason for it. That's the polarization abetted by the right-wing offensive of the ruling class.

It's a grave mistake to say, as some liberal commentators have, that the Klan is growing in response to affirmative action and Black gains, that Blacks are pushing too hard, that workers are joining the Klan because of this. The history of the last two decades shows the opposite to be the case. As Blacks have fought and made gains, white attitudes have become more progressive.

It's also worth nothing that, as far as I recall, whenever the press has bothered to identify a KKKer by occupation, he's turned out to be a small businessman.

We will be running into the Klan. The cops and companies like to have them in reserve so they can be pulled into action when needed. But right now, in the vast majority of instances, they don't have much need for them.

### Organizing the South Today

While the ruling class is on an all-out offensive against workers, racism hasn't disappeared—it won't under capitalism; but Jim Crow is gone. They've lost a weapon.

For more than two decades now, capitalists have been shifting industries south and building new ones there. This is no small or haphazard affair. This is a very conscious strategy—part of their general offensive. These are right-to-work states, making it harder to build strong unions. Local politicians offer big tax breaks and giveaways as bonuses for moving to their area. Industry is mostly nonunion, and they aim to keep it that way. The whole idea is to reap big profits from nonunion labor, while weakening the labor movement and working class as a whole.

From all indications they felt pretty confident about this scheme. But some developments transpired recently that must be causing some nervous stomachs in the corporate board rooms and counting houses of Wall Street.

Most notably, I'm talking about the big victory in Oklahoma City, where General Motors workers upset all their plans by registering a strong vote for the United Auto Workers.

This sets the stage for pushing the drive forward. GM has been a pacesetter in the so-called anti-union southern strategy. The UAW has been forced, as a matter of self-defense, to respond. They set up a Southern Regional Office in Nashville in March of last year to direct the southern campaign.

The Oklahoma victory is not the first, but it's the most important to date. I read an official 1956 UAW assessment of the GM situation in the South. It was quite gloomy. The answer seemed to be getting the Democrats to pass new legislation. That didn't happen. But now something has changed.

About two years ago, there was a breakthrough with the organization of the GM plant in Monroe, Louisiana. Then, in 1978 alone the UAW organized some one dozen southern plants, mostly in small towns.

GM, like other corporations, likes to set up shop in smaller towns, drawing on a largely rural or semirural work force, many new to industrial work and unions. Their hope is that the new employees will be far less likely to go union. But, as one worker at a newly organized plant in Hartwell, Georgia, put it, "We may be country, but that don't mean we ain't smart."

In these plants workers are taking the initiative themselves to get in touch with the UAW to get a drive going.

Even before the Oklahoma vote, UAW President Douglas Fraser held a press conference in Alabama to announce that, if the vote there was won, the next big target would be a sizable GM plant near Decatur—which, you will recall, has been the scene of Klan agitation and Black actions to defend themselves against the Klan and to defend Tommy Lee Hines.

There's a lot of union organizing going on in North Carolina. Since 1977 the Teamsters have won fourteen of eighteen National Labor Relations Board elections. There are signs that the steelworkers and other unions plan to make organizing moves in the state.

### Socialist Workers Party to Kennedy:

## Deputize, Arm Birmingham Negroes For Self-Defense Against Racists!

Birmingham's black community has no police protection whatsoever. Just the contrary! The city police, the state troopers, and the deputized white irregulars are the Negro community's worst enemies. They boast of their hatred of colored people. They are a danger to every Negro in the city. They are equivalent of a lynch mob patrolling the streets. Safety Commissioner "Bull" Connor, who commands the city's police and fire departments, is one of America's most notorious racists. Colonel A. J. Neo, who commands the State Highway Patrol 1st motley troop in sportshirts and helmets issued from Dallas County and sworn in as specialputies, is the white-supremacist who originated the use of electric prod poles (used to drive cattle the stockyards) against Freedom Walkers. Here are two examples of the "protection" these cops are giving Birmingham's Negro community: 1) "Bull" Connor's police were conveniently absent when the home of Rev. A. D. King and the Motel (headquarters of Martin Luther King

and his associates) were bombed after the big KKK rally. This can be explained only by outright collusion with the bombers or by deliberate removal of police to give the bombers a green light. All Birmingham knew that if there were any bombing these two places would be among the prime targets. Moreover, city police had been informed earlier that day of a bomb threat to the motel and the fact that suspicious-acting whites had been reconnoitering it.

2) Upon arrival the state troopers and deputized irregulars began attacking Negroes. *New York Times* correspondent Claude Sitton describes the scene as follows: "The irregulars, accompanied by a squad of state troopers, charged across the street minutes later and into the motel enclosure. Negroes fled in terror as they were clubbed with gun butts and nightsticks. The 'thunk' of clubs striking heads could be heard across the street."

The end of their night's reign of terror was described by *New York Herald Tribune* correspondent Charles Portis: "It was pretty much all over at

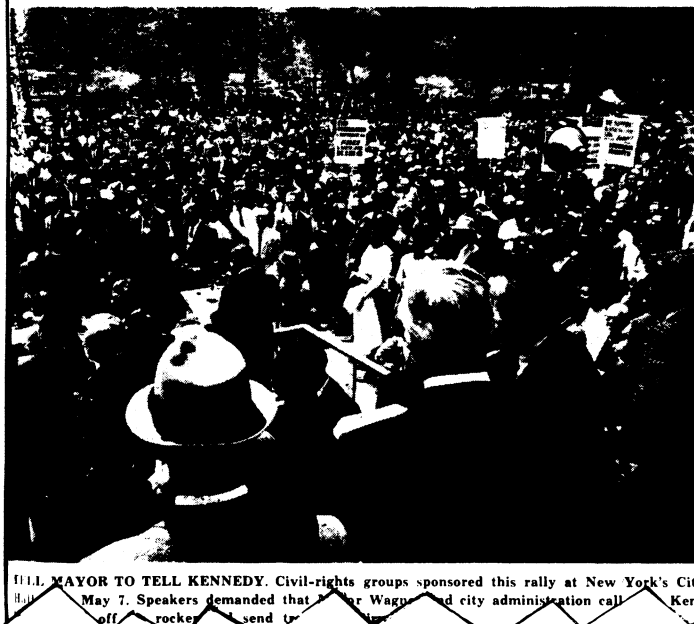
3:40, when the state troopers began clubbing Negroes sitting on their porches. They had been sitting there watching all along, taking no part in the fight. 'Get in the house, God damn it, get, get,' shouted the troopers, punching and pounding them with their nightsticks."

Kennedy, whose cowardly inaction is largely responsible for the development in Birmingham, finally invoked federal authority. But only as a threat—in the form of federal troops 40 miles away.

The right of self-defense is a basic human right. It is sanctioned by all American law including the Constitution's Bill of Rights.

Able-bodied men chosen by Birmingham's Negro community should be immediately deputized and armed by the federal government for that community's self-defense and to exercise police powers therein.

The time for President Kennedy to act is NOW! National Committee, Socialist Workers Party



FILE. MAYOR TO TELL KENNEDY. Civil-rights groups sponsored this rally at New York's City Hall May 1. Speakers demanded that Mayor Wagner and city administration call off the rocks and send the

Headline from May 20, 1963, issue of 'Militant'

## THE MILITANT

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## National Pressure Is Needed to Win In Birmingham

By Fred Halstead

MAY 15 — A victory for the Negro struggle for equality — even a token victory — is yet to be won in Birmingham. The May 10 settlement, which was hailed by Rev. Martin Luther King as "a great victory," has been sabotaged by the violence of Birmingham's white-supremacist officials. Even so-called "moderates" like Mayor Boutwell have staked themselves on the Negro winning in Birmingham.

movement—affirmative action on the job.

When Black workers in Birmingham—many of them steelworkers—rose up against Jim Crow in 1963, the *Militant* blasted Steelworkers President McDonald for not saying a "mumbling word" in their defense.

Contrast that with the current USWA attitude toward *Weber*. Or the unprecedented Steelworkers Civil Rights Conference of 1,000 in Pittsburgh last March.

Many union officials today like to pretend that they played a big role in promoting the civil rights movement. You'll see pictures of then UAW president Walter Reuther marching in Selma in 1965, having flown down there for the day. But in truth, while they could have done a lot, they did damn little.

That makes their activity around *Weber* all the more significant. These officials are pretty thick-skulled, but they seem to realize that there will be no Steelworkers Union at Newport News without the full and enthusiastic participation and leadership of Black workers there. This helps explain their stance on *Weber* and affirmative action.

History, as is often the case, does things you don't expect. Many thought it would take the organization of labor in the South to end Jim Crow. However, it's turning out that the end of Jim Crow is helping to accelerate the organization of labor.

Over the years, the South has been the scene of heroic class battles: the union organizing drives of the thirties, forties, and fifties. The massive civil rights movement of the fifties and sixties that did in Jim Crow.

But in all those struggles there was a power missing that is not missing today. That's the Socialist Workers Party—its ideas, its program, its activity.

We're very much on the scene in the South today. We played a part in the union opposition to *Weber* in New Orleans and around the country. We're doing everything we can to support the Newport News shipyard workers and to make their struggle known to the whole labor movement.

In Alabama, we're fighting for the right of Blacks to be free of police frame-ups, and for the right of Blacks, trade unionists, and all working people to be rid of Klan and employer harassment.

And out of these battles—and many, many others—will emerge a new leadership, one that will transform the American labor movement and help pave the way for the socialist revolution.



## Women withdraw until safety assured

# Company violence at new height in Ala. mine

By Nelson Blackstock

BIRMINGHAM, Sept. 12—Citing a deepening campaign of violence and terrorism by Jim Walter Resources, two women miners will announce at a press conference here tomorrow that, fearing for their lives, they will not return to work until the big coal operator brings a halt to such tactics.

"We have reached this decision out of concern both for our safety and the safety of other members of UMWA Local 245 at Jim Walter Mine Number 4," say Sara Jean Johnston and Ellen Bobroff in a statement to be released tomorrow.

"In recent days Jim Walter has shown that it is fully prepared to go beyond fire bombings and physical threats," they charge. "This anti-union outfit is now at the stage of resorting to open physical attacks, even murder."

The socialist miners will also announce broad-ranging National Labor Relations Board charges they have filed against the company. Also signing the charges is UMWA member Geraldine Lattimore.

"The NLRB action will document, case by case, the anti-union campaign," they say. "It will demand an end to all such tactics by Jim Walter, the right to safe jobs, and pay for lost time."

The three also plan to initiate an Equal Employment Opportunities Commission action.

"We are taking these steps in order to force the company to cease its drive against all United Mine Workers members," Johnston and Bobroff say.

The latest stage of the company's offensive came on Friday, August 31. In spite of an outpouring of protest from union officials and others around the country, the company went a step further in its terror tactics.

### Sneak attack

On that morning, management gave Johnston and Bobroff new work assignments—placing them at the feeder at the end of a mine section, a spot that left them the most vulnerable to sneak attack.

The company has increasingly relied on a small, well-organized right-wing group in the mine to do its dirty work. Twice during the day, members of this group made moves against Bobroff. Once she ducked her head just in time to dodge a large rock hurtling at her. If it had struck her it could have dealt a death blow.

As they were preparing to leave the mine that day, Black miners warned them that more than thirty right-wingers were gathering outside the gate at the mine entrance to attack them as they left. More than fifteen Black miners took the initiative to organize a contingent of cars to accompany them to safety.

But before they left company property, a Jim Walter guard opened the gate, letting in a gang of right-wingers.

Fortunately, the Black miners were able to escort the two women's car, along with a second car driven by supporters, through the mob and to the highway and safety. But not before an enraged right-winger punched out a side window of the second car. Shattering glass cut the driver, Diane Roling. She had come to accompany Johnston and Bobroff home.

Later, turning the victim into the criminal, the Tuscaloosa County sheriff's department, acting in collusion with the ringleader of the rightists—James Cotner—issued a warrant for Roling's arrest. This stands in contrast to the county cops' reluctance to provide protection for the two women, despite repeated pleas.

On September 6, Roling was booked on charges of leaving the scene of an accident. She is now free on \$1,000 bond.



Ellen Bobroff (left) and Sara Jean Johnston

Militant/Willa Madden

The same night as the attacks at the mine, Johnston's apartment was broken into and ransacked. Only documents and clippings relating to UMWA activity were taken. Jim Walter had earlier issued ominous warnings against the union activists, saying that it was unable to "guarantee their safety" off company property. The break-in occurred despite the Birmingham police chief's public promise to provide protection.

### Union safety battle

This company escalation is the latest stage in a battle that broke out in July between the employers and the union. The union aroused Jim Walter's ire by filing charges against blatant safety violations at Mine Number Four.

Then the union filed and won a major sex discrimination suit on behalf of all newly hired women miners. The company tried to force the women out of the mines by assigning them to the most grueling work. On the flimsiest of grounds, they fired five women, who later won their jobs back.

The bosses centered an attack on Bobroff and Johnston in mid-August when they learned the two had written an article for the *Militant* reporting on Walter's safety violations.

The same day the company reprimanded the two for writing the article, Johnston's car was smashed up in the company parking lot and swastikas were painted on it. The next day, both Johnston's car and one belonging to Geraldine Lattimore were fire-bombed in the parking lot. The arson attack occurred near management offices, at a time when almost all miners were underground.

In recent weeks the assault has included:

- the theft of Bobroff's truck;
- threats that Johnston's apartment building "was not safe" and was being surveilled by both city police and the Ku Klux Klan;
- the theft of both Bobroff's and Johnston's personal possessions from their lockers at the mine;
- placing them on punishing work details, causing Johnston to seriously injure her back.

In addition, after an August 26 union meeting, a mob of right-wingers gathered down the road, setting up a roadblock to halt a car in which three Black women miners were riding. They forced the driver to open the trunk in

search of Johnston and Bobroff. As it happened, the two had left by an alternate route.

### Tactical retreat

In an interview with the *Militant*, Johnston and Bobroff discussed the factors forcing their decision not to return to work now.

"Our decision is a tactical retreat. We had to make it because of the current relationship of forces at the mine," Johnston said. "Objectively, it represents a setback for the entire union."

"As the company deepened its offensive, it more and more used the right-wing grouping in the mine. And when their threats and intimidation didn't work they opted for something stronger. It became clear that a serious physical assault—not just threats—was on the agenda."

"There are several factors that could have stopped the company and its right-wing allies," Bobroff stated.

"One was the wave of protest telegrams coming in and the embarrassing publicity in the Birmingham area. But the events of August 31 showed that Jim Walter was not being fazed by this."

"If the county cops had moved to make some arrests for the fire-bombings, that might have forced them back," she continued. "But, as you would expect, the cops were working in league with the company and the right wing."

"The most important force that could have moved to counter the company's violence and quelled the right wing at the mine was the workers themselves."

"But the campaign of terrorism and violence was effective. Most miners were plainly scared, and many frankly told us so."

### Act of courage

"The miners that did come forward in the face of this were almost all Black," Johnston said. "Their decision to organize and get us out of the mine that Friday was an act of leadership and courage—its significance should not be missed. But alone they could not turn things around. The Blacks at this mine are a small minority."

"As for the whites, it would be a big mistake to conclude they are all reactionaries or anything of the sort," Johnston continued. "In their vast majority they didn't go along with the

company and the right wing. They wouldn't have anything to do with them."

Bobroff added, "One white miner who has been working there about three years gave us this assessment. He said that out of approximately 450 miners who work out there, he would estimate that about 80 percent were like him: while he didn't support our socialist ideas—didn't even know anything about them—he did favor our right to work there and be left alone."

"Out of the remaining 20 percent or so, he said, only a tiny handful belong to the right-wing core. But this core could whip up many more than its small numbers in a hysteria campaign."

"This situation was further complicated by the fact that the local is quite weak and new," Johnston pointed out. "This mine has been undergoing a big expansion. Most miners are new and inexperienced. They don't yet know much about the UMWA and the issues facing it. Many were more easily cowed by the right-wingers."

"On the other hand, some of the miners who'd been there awhile—who went through the big strike last year—seemed to understand more clearly that the real question was the fight with the company around the safety issue, that other things were being raised as a diversion."

"The UMWA district leadership could have played a crucial role in helping our local in this. But, unfortunately, they chose to take a hands-off attitude."

### Red-baiting frenzy

The intense red-baiting frenzy—which was initiated and led by the company—also served its purpose. It divided the local.

"The label most frequently used to describe us was, 'the communist girls,'" Bobroff said. "And, as the one miner told us, most had no idea at all what we stand for."

"A sectarian grouping called the Revolutionary Communist Party has been in the area awhile. A lot of miners probably thought we were with them—identified us with their ridiculous antics."

"The attempt to pin the 'communist' label on us was a conscious one," Johnston added. "They wanted to identify us with the Stalinist bureaucracies and their ban on freedom of speech and expression. But it's the right-wingers, the Klan types that lash out at those who hold opinions different from them, who are trying to deny others the right to work and make a living."

"And it's Jim Walter that bans the *Militant* and other newspapers. They tell workers what they can and cannot read."

"We were hampered by the fact that we were brand new in the mine," Bobroff pointed out. "We only started in mid-June. We had little opportunity to talk to workers, to introduce them to our ideas, to develop a layer of *Militant* readers who knew what we stand for."

"But it's good to remember that before the company opened the red-baiting offensive, we had gotten the *Militant* into the hands of more than a dozen workers who liked it," Johnston said.

"The Socialist Workers Party is new to Birmingham and few people have known who we are and what our program is," said Bobroff. "But that's all changing now with our campaign in the city elections, and the widespread publicity it's receiving. That's putting the party on the map. And, too, we have our new bookstore and headquarters."

"These things will make the work of all socialists in industry here a lot easier," Johnston concluded.

# Birmingham unionists greet SWP candidates



Mohammed Oliver and Eric Flint announce candidacy for mayor and city council August 30

Militant/Nelson Blackstock

By Michael Gillespie

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.—Co-workers of the Socialist Workers Party candidates for Birmingham mayor and city council have responded warmly to the recent announcement of the socialist campaign.

Mayoral candidate Mohammed Oliver, a production worker at Pullman-Standard's Bessemer plant, reported that a dozen co-workers stopped him to shake his hand at work the day after the SWP's widely publicized news conference.

"One welder, who had never talked about politics before, came up to say he was going to register to vote because he finally had someone he wanted to vote for," Oliver said.

Workers all over this city heard lengthy portions of Oliver's announcement speech broadcast over television

the night before. All the local TV stations aired the SWP candidate's remarks denouncing police brutality and threats by U.S. Steel to close its giant Fairfield Works here.

In addition, one commentator outlined the socialists' stand on unemployment, medical care, crime and the anti-union "right to work" laws.

The Socialist Workers Party is new to Birmingham and this was the first time thousands of city residents got a close look at the socialists' views.

One Black co-worker of Oliver's volunteered to distribute socialist campaign literature. Others congratulated him for his "good talk" and for "telling the truth."

Oliver, a member of United Steelworkers Local 1466, also said a number of older Black workers silently shook his hand, beaming with pride that a

Black worker would be running for mayor of Birmingham, the symbol of segregation and racist resistance in the 1960s.

Machinist Eric Flint, SWP candidate for city council, also reported a friendly response from several co-workers for his candidacy.

Flint was already well-known as a socialist on the job because of a June 7 goon-squad attack on Flint and Nelson Blackstock while they were selling the *Militant* at U.S. Steel's Concord coal mine.

The launching of the socialist municipal campaign expressed the determination and confidence of Birmingham socialists that socialist ideas will be heard and welcomed by workers in this city.

Media interest in the socialist cam-

paign has also remained at a high level. Several radio and television stations have called the campaign headquarters to arrange for interviews, and the SWP candidates are routinely included in press coverage of the city races.

In addition, Oliver has a heavy schedule of "candidates' nights" appearances sponsored by various civic and Black community groups, including a candidates' breakfast meeting with the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce.

Although the campaign is extremely short—the election occurs October 9—campaign supporters here have laid plans for campaigning on the campuses and at several plant gates, for a major rally in October, as well as for smaller meetings with political activists and co-workers.

## Mass. rail local fights job-cutting agreement

By Al Lewis

BOSTON—Do railroad workers have to accept a drastic job-slashing contract that was imposed on them from the top down?

This question is being asked by members of United Transportation Union (UTU) Local 1473 and its local chairperson, Michael Maloof. The local represents trainpersons working on Conrail in the Boston-Framingham area.

The local has filed suit against the 1978 crew consist [crew size] agreement on Conrail. Many other railroad workers, throughout the Conrail system, support their action.

Conrail is composed of seven former bankrupt railroads in the northeast. In 1976 UTU President Al Chesser appointed a negotiating committee of general chairpersons from the different lines to negotiate a new, single, collective bargaining agreement.

According to the UTU Constitution, Article 91, the negotiating committee can sign agreements binding the membership, providing the general chairpersons base it on a vote of the local chairpersons who elected them. This was not done. On August 30, 1978, an agreement was signed that included a reduction in crew size and a provision that anything that could not be settled would be sent to binding arbitration.

The *Militant* recently had the opportunity to interview Maloof, and ask him about the dissatisfaction with this agreement.

"What we have now is an illegally signed crew-consist agreement where they've taken the junior trainman and put him on a spare list," Maloof said. "Now the junior trainman on any particular job may have thirty years seniority, but he's still cut from the job and put on the spare list at the discretion of the company.

"The spare list doesn't have to be near his home, it could be one hundred miles away. He could be a yardman and end up on a passenger spare board in Grand Central Station, and he could come from New Haven, or Hartford, or Boston.

"That's the way the agreement is written. If that had been subjected to a referendum vote of the local chairmen the agreement would have been turned down. And I think the president of our union knew it would be turned down. That's why he didn't let them vote on it."

What happens to the junior trainperson's job? Under the crew consist agreement it is simply abolished, reducing the crew size from two brakepeople and one conductor to one brakeperson and one conductor. Maloof commented on how this would affect the workers covered by the agreement.

"Working shorthanded is dangerous. The third man was always used as a relay man between the hind-end brakeman and the conductor, he was used to relay motions.

"The crew consist agreement says that the third man can be eliminated by giving the other two men radios to work with. The only problem with radio communication is that it has been proven many times that it is not consistently safe.

"In any given railroad yard there can be eight or ten switches working at the same time, there can be freight trains going by, and what happens is an engineer or conductor is going to misunderstand a radio request to stop or go ahead, and somebody is going to be injured."

Although the local has been unable to get specific figures on injuries on shortened crews from Conrail nationally, Maloof stated that locally there clearly had been more accidents. He went on to explain how the agreement would affect the union.

"It's going to cost the union a third of its members. Where there were three, now there are two. The 22,000 trainmen on Conrail will eventually be 14,000."

The Conrail crew consist agreement—patterned after a similar agreement on the Milwaukee Road—has now become the beacon for other carriers who have served notice on the UTU that they want similar contracts.

Maloof was asked about the response of workers when they found out about the signing of the agreement. He began by telling how they found out about it.

"The majority of local chairmen on the railroad got their copy of the crew consist agreement from the carrier. Bear in mind the majority of the general chairmen neglected to read it. How did the majority of local chairmen react? They were very adamant. They felt they had been sold down the river, and they supported this suit since the beginning."

After failing in an appeal to the UTU Executive Board, Maloof and four other brakepeople filed a class action suit against Conrail, the UTU, and UTU President Chesser. The suit seeks a permanent injunction against all agreements signed without referendum of the local chairpersons. The suit will be heard in Federal District Court this month.

According to Maloof, donations totaling \$40,000 have been received from members of all 184 locals of the UTU on Conrail.

"Nobody's happy with their union. They are not unhappy with their local representation. The local guys have to live with these people every day, they do their best for them. The international has turned their back on the membership."

Last October a protest meeting of several hundred workers was held in the

Boston area to protest the job-slashing actions of the company. Forty-one workers received thirty-day suspensions, creating a severe financial hardship just before the holidays. The suit was filed soon after.

"The suit, win or lose," said Maloof, "made more members aware of what their union is and what it's supposed to do than ever before, and the membership is behind the suit and the union knows it."

Maloof described a regional union meeting where a number of local chairpersons signed up as plaintiffs in the lawsuit and contributed several hundred dollars to the case. There are many workers on Conrail today who would like to see the crew-consist agreement renegotiated.

Maloof pointed out that support was not simply coming from Conrail employees, but from employees of other carriers from around the country and from railworkers in other crafts.

"The International refuses to believe that a local has enough strength to take the international union and the railroad into court. It's like the mouse that roared."

Maloof commented on the continuing decline of jobs on the railroad while management continues to grow.

"All of the management on the railroad could be stricken tomorrow morning, and none of them available to run the railroad. The same trains would still run whether they were there or not."

"The employees of the railroad run the trains, they always did. There's no problem running a train. You don't need 45 vice-presidents to get a train from point A to B."

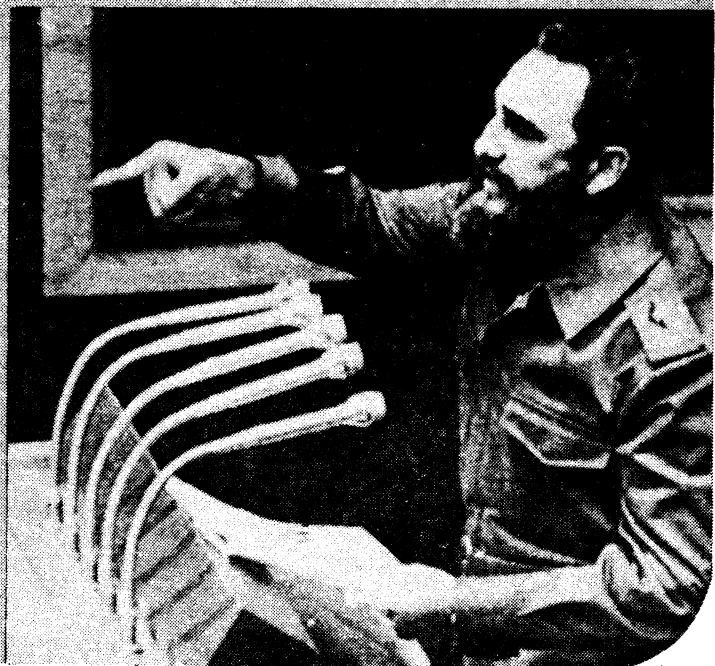
"All you need is the crew, the tracks, and the dispatcher, and it's still going to run."

Mike Maloof is a thirty-six-year-old brakeman, working the spare board in Framingham, Mass.



# Castro's speech to Nonaligned Nations

"The true measure of a revolutionary people is given by the imperialists' hatred"



The following is the full text of the speech given by Fidel Castro in Havana September 3, at the opening of the conference of non-aligned nations. The translation of the speech is by Prensa Latina.

Your Excellencies,  
Guests,  
Comrades:

I would like to ask that the first moments of this solemn event be dedicated to the memory of a beloved friend whom we all admired, a hero of his country's liberation and revolution who guided the Algiers Summit Conference brilliantly in 1973 and who did much for the strength and prestige of the non-aligned movement—the late President of Algeria, Houari Boumedienne. How it grieves us that he cannot be with us in Cuba to share this occasion in our movement's history. I ask this worthy conference to observe a minute of silence in his memory.

Mr. Chairman, Junius Jayawardene, I would like to express my sincere recognition of your constant concern for the future of our movement and democratic respect for the dissimilar components of this powerful association of countries and the wise prudence you have shown in every difficult situation our non-aligned countries have had to face in the past three years—which have not been easy. In spite of distance and economic problems, your small country has made a noble and worthy effort to live up to the honorable responsibilities entrusted to it.

I thank all of you for the tremendous honor you do us with your presence here. I greet all of you warmly and welcome you on behalf of our people.

## New members

I would also like to fraternally greet the new countries that are joining our powerful movement at this conference: Iran and Pakistan have become members following the toppling of the shah's throne and the breaking up of the aggressive, reactionary CENTO military alliance; Surinam, Bolivia, tiny Grenada, and the indomitable people of Nicaragua, whose heroic, self-sacrificing fighters have left recent signs of their historic march that brought freedom to Sandino's homeland and dignity to our America.

Ethiopia and Afghanistan now accompany us with a new revolutionary character, and the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe has full member status.

Our family is growing and increasing in quality, which is the way it should be.

The Philippines, St. Lucia, Dominica and Costa Rica are new observers and we have a number of guests, including

Spain, whose gesture of sending a delegation to this conference for the first time we view as a hope for friendly and useful relations with all the peoples of the world, without allowing itself to be drawn into the aggressive NATO military bloc, which would only serve to compromise and alienate the brilliant future of that self-sacrificing people whose historical, cultural and blood bonds with the nations of our America are so solid. We also need friends in industrialized Western Europe that are not tied to the imperialist wagon.

Ninety-four states and liberation movements are represented here as full members of this sixth summit conference. This summit conference is, therefore, the one with the largest attendance and with the greatest number of non-aligned and national liberation movement leaders ever held. This is not something for which our modest country should take credit; rather it is an unmistakable sign of the vigor, strength and prestige of the movement of the non-aligned countries.

## Sabotage failed

All efforts to sabotage the Havana summit conference have proved futile. All pressures, hectic diplomatic efforts and intrigues to prevent the conference from being held in our country were in vain.

The Yankee imperialists and their old and new allies—in this case I refer to the Chinese government—didn't want this conference to be held in Cuba.

They also engaged in dirty scheming, saying that Cuba would turn the movement of non-aligned countries into a tool of Soviet policy. We know only too well that the U.S. government even got hold of a copy of the draft final declaration, drawn up by Cuba, and made feverish diplomatic contacts in an effort to modify it. We have irrefutable proof of this.

We believe that the draft—which was submitted to all the member countries earlier than at any other conference and was even modified to include many of their suggestions—is a good draft, subject to improvement. Improvement means strengthening, not weakening, it in any basic sense. Since when does the United States have the right to involve itself in the non-aligned movement and decide how our documents should be drawn up?

What is the reason for the reactionary opposition to Cuba?

## Consistent anti-imperialism

Cuba isn't exactly a country that is inconsistent toward the imperialists. Cuba has never ceased to practice a policy of close solidarity with the na-

tional liberation movements and all other just causes of our times. Cuba has never hesitated to defend its political principles with determination, energy, dignity, honesty and courage, nor, in over twenty years, has it ever stopped fighting against the aggression and the blockade imposed by the most powerful imperialist country in the world simply because Cuba carried out a genuine political and social revolution just ninety miles from that country's coast.

It is all too well known—and has been admitted and officially published in the United States—that the authorities of that country spent years organizing and methodically plotting to assassinate the leaders of the Cuban revolution, using the most sophisticated means of conspiracy and crime.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that these deeds were investigated and publicized by the U.S. Senate, the U.S. government has not yet deigned to give any kind of apology for those vituperative and uncivilized actions.

The true measure of a revolutionary people, the unblemished honor of a country that cannot be bribed, bought or intimidated, is given by the imperialists' hatred.

In our international relations, we express solidarity with deeds, not fine words. Cuban technicians are now working in twenty-three countries that belong to our movement. In the vast majority of these countries, because of their economic limitations, this cooperation is provided without charge, in spite of our own difficulties. Right now, Cuba has twice as many doctors serving abroad as does the UN World Health Organization.

## Liberation movements

Noble, self-sacrificing Cubans have died thousands of miles from home while supporting liberation movements, defending other people's just causes and fighting against the expansion of the North American racists and other forms of imperialist attack on human dignity and the integrity and independence of other nations. They express the purity, selflessness, solidarity and internationalist consciousness that the revolution has forged among our people.

What charges can be brought against Cuba? That it is a socialist country? Yes, it is a socialist country, but we don't impose our ideology or our system on anyone, either inside or outside the movement, and being socialist is nothing to be ashamed of. That we have a radical revolution in Cuba? Yes, we are radical revolutionaries, but we don't try to impose our radicalism on anyone, much less on the non-aligned movement.

That we maintain fraternal relations with the Soviet Union and the rest of the socialist community? Yes, we are friends of the Soviet Union. We are very thankful to the Soviet people, because their generous cooperation helped us to survive and overcome the very difficult and decisive periods in our people's life, when we were even in danger of being wiped out. No people has the right to be ungrateful. We are grateful to the glorious October Revolution because it ushered in a new era in human history, made it possible to defeat fascism and created a world situation in which the peoples' self-sacrificing struggle led to the downfall of the hateful colonial system. To ignore that is to ignore history itself.

Not only Cuba but also Vietnam; the Arab countries under attack; the peoples in the former Portuguese colonies; the revolutionary processes in many other countries throughout the world; and the liberation movements that fight against oppression, racism, Zionism and fascism in South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Palestine and elsewhere owe a debt of gratitude to socialist solidarity. I wonder whether the United States or any other NATO country has ever helped a single liberation movement anywhere in the world.

## Threat of U.S. intervention

In fact, I am convinced—and I have said so on other occasions—that, without the power and influence which the socialist community exerts today, imperialism, harassed by the economic crisis and by the shortage of basic raw materials, would not hesitate to divide the world up again. It has already done so more than once. It is even threatening to do so again and, in point of fact, is creating special intervention forces aimed menacingly at the oil-exporting countries. To cite just one example of this, the United States has unilaterally decided to respect no more than a three-mile limit of maritime sovereignty.

If membership in the non-aligned movement depended on betraying our highest ideas and convictions, it would not be honorable for me or for any of you to belong to it. No revolutionary has the right to be a coward.

There are some who have made an art of opportunism. We Cuban revolutionaries are not and never will be opportunists. We are prepared to sacrifice our own national economic interests whenever necessary to defend a just principle or an honorable political position. We Cubans will never renege on what we said yesterday, nor will we say one thing today and do something else tomorrow.

We are firmly anti-imperialist, anti-

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# ...Castro's speech

*Continued from preceding page*

colonial, antineocolonial, antiracist, anti-Zionist and antifascist because these principles are part of our thinking; they constitute the essence and origin of the movement of non-aligned countries and have formed its life and history ever since its founding. These principles are also very fresh in the life of the peoples we represent here.

Was any country that now belongs to our movement really independent more than thirty-five years ago? Is there any member that hasn't known colonialism, neocolonialism, fascism, racial discrimination or imperialist aggression; economic dependence; poverty; squalor; illiteracy; and the most brutal exploitation of its natural and human resources? What country doesn't bear the burden of the technological gap, a lower standard of living than the former metropolises, unequal terms of trade, the economic crisis, inflation and underdevelopment imposed on our peoples by centuries of colonial exploitation and imperialist domination?

Cuba will be in the front line defending these principles, independence, and the unique, prestigious, fraternal and ever more constructive and influential role of the non-aligned movement in international life, so the energetic and rightful voice of our peoples may be heard.

Moreover, I believe that if you thought Cuba was not completely independent or lacked the loyalty and honesty it owes to the movement in line with its concepts and goals, you would not have given your generous cooperation, confidence, interest and enthusiasm to this sixth summit conference.

## No one tells us what to do

Throughout our revolutionary life, no one has ever tried to tell us what to do. No one has ever tried to tell us what role we should play in the movement of non-aligned countries. No one told us when or how to make the revolution in our country, nor could anyone have done so. By the same token, no one except the movement itself can determine what it should do and when and how to do it.

We have worked tirelessly to create the material and political conditions to make this event a success. We have respected and we will continue to totally respect the rights of all members of the movement. We have fully and scrupulously fulfilled our duties as host country and will continue to do so. Our views will not always coincide with those of each and every one of you. We have many close friends at this conference, but we don't always agree with the best of them. We hope that everyone will speak out with the greatest freedom and honesty and feel that he is being heard with interest, respect and concentration. The combined experiences of all of us gathered here can produce tremendous results. If certain topics displease anyone, please understand that we do not mean to hurt or wound. We will work with all member countries—without exception—to achieve our aims and to implement the agreements that are adopted. We will be patient, prudent, flexible, calm. Cuba will observe these norms throughout the years in which it presides over the movement. I declare this categorically.

We have grown and advanced. Fortunately, Mozambique, Angola, São Tomé and Príncipe, Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands are now fully independent countries, after a heroic and unequal struggle. Today, as sovereign states, they are prestigious and influential members of our movement. Just six years ago, at the Algiers summit conference, they were only liberation movements.

Vietnam is united and free after thirty years of extraordinary and admirable struggle.

The Shah is no longer the Shah,

CENTO no longer exists, Somoza is no longer in power, and the fascist Gairy no longer rules tiny, heroic Grenada. These are unquestionable victories for independence, progress and freedom. Our causes triumph because they are just.

Growing numbers of peoples are joining our ranks as they break the bonds of colonialism, neocolonialism, fascism and other forms of oppression and dependency. In one way or another, all these struggles have been supported by the movement of non-aligned countries, and these are victories for us as well.

Nevertheless, imperialism has not ceased its tenacious effort to maintain its subjugation, oppression and occupation of other peoples and countries, whose causes demand our resolute support. First of all I refer to the long-suffering, courageous Palestinian people. No more brutal pillage of a people's rights to peace and justice has occurred in this century. Please understand that we are not fanatics. The revolutionary movement has always learned to hate racial discrimination and pogroms of any kind. From the bottom of our heart, we repudiate the merciless persecution and genocide that the Nazis once visited on the Jews, but there is nothing in recent history that parallels it more than the dispossession, persecution and genocide that imperialism and the Zionists are currently practicing against the Palestinian people. Pushed off their lands, expelled from their country, scattered throughout the world, persecuted and murdered, the heroic Palestinians are a vivid example of sacrifice and patriotism, living symbols of the most terrible crime of our era.

Piece by piece, Palestinian lands and the territories of neighboring Arab countries—Syria, Jordan and Egypt—have been seized by the aggressors, armed to the teeth with the most sophisticated weapons from the U.S. arsenal.

## Palestinian cause

The just Palestinian and Arab cause has been supported by world progressive opinion and our movement for nearly twenty years. Nasser was one of the prestigious founders of this movement. Nevertheless, all UN resolutions have been scornfully ignored and rejected by the aggressors and their imperialist allies.

Imperialism has sought to impose its own peace, using betrayal and division. An armed, dirty, unjust bloody peace will never be a true peace.

The Camp David agreement is a flagrant betrayal of the Arab cause and of the Palestinian, Lebanese, Syrian, Jordanian—all the Arab peoples, including the Egyptians. It is a betrayal of all the progressive peoples of the world who, at the United Nations and all other international forums, have always supported a just solution to the problem of the Middle East, one that would be acceptable and honorable for all and guaranteed by all.

True peace in the Middle East will never be built on such injustice, such a Machiavellian policy, such betrayal and such flimsy bases.

Instead of one gendarme for the Middle East, the Arab world and Africa, imperialism now wants two: Israel and Egypt. If peace really exists between Egypt and Israel, why does Egypt need all the weapons it is getting—even though they aren't as sophisticated and modern as the ones that are going to the Israelis? How will these arms be used, except against the peoples in the area, including the Egyptians themselves?

International policy should be ethical. The movement of non-aligned countries should roundly denounce the Camp David agreement. Moral censure, at least, is essential.

We have witnessed ten years of imperialist maneuvers, deceit and



**'Pushed off their lands, expelled from their country, scattered throughout the world, persecuted and murdered, the heroic Palestinians are a vivid example of sacrifice and patriotism, living symbols of the most terrible crime in our era.'**

crimes in Zimbabwe. Six million Africans there are oppressed by a tiny arrogant and genocidal racist, fascist minority. We should firmly denounce and reject the so-called internal settlement and Muzorewa's puppet regime, which is a mockery of Africa's conscience, and give the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe—the legitimate representative of its people—the non-aligned movement's all-out support and solidarity.

The people of Namibia are also suffering from South Africa's scorn, mockery, and disrespect for United Nations orders and resolutions—and South Africa is fully supported by the NATO powers, including the United States. Racist South African troops that have no right to be there are depriving the Namibian people of their independence and imposing a Bantustan system on that long-suffering country, in defiance of the international community and world public opinion.

South Africa itself constitutes the most shameful blot for the peoples of Africa and the world. Human dignity cannot help but be offended by that repulsive stronghold of the Nazi-fascist spirit that remains in the southern cone of Africa, where 20 million Africans are oppressed, exploited, discriminated against and repressed by a handful of racists. Who spawned that system? Who supports it? They say the South African racists even know how to make atom bombs. I ask: Against whom are they likely to be used? Against the Black ghettos of Pretoria? Will they perchance be used to block the just and inevitable liberation of the people?

Why are the Rhodesian and South African racists allowed to bomb Mozambique, Zambia, Angola and Botswana almost daily, murdering with impunity thousands upon thousands of refugees and citizens of those countries as well? Why are the Zionist aggressors allowed to bomb the Palestinian refugee camps and Lebanese towns daily? Who has given them that right? Who has given them that power? Why are they allowed to use the most sophisticated weapons of destruction and death? Who supplies them? Isn't this undeniable proof of imperialism's aggressive role and the type of peace and

order it wants for our peoples? Isn't it a crime to kill a child, an old man, a woman, a Black adult, a Palestinian, a Lebanese? Can these methods and these concepts be differentiated from the methods and concepts that fascist Germany once used? Reports of genocidal acts of this nature are broadcast daily, even by the imperialist press agencies, as if to accustom us to accepting such deeds with resignation and weakness.

Another problem that concerns African and world opinion is that of Western Sahara. Cuba has no particular dispute with Morocco, whose government maintained diplomatic and trade relations with us even in the most critical period of the blockade of our country. But looking at the matter from a principled point of view, Cuba expresses its total support for the independence of the Saharan people, considering the occupation of their territory to be utterly unfounded and their desire for free self-determination to be unquestionably just. Cuba was a member of the UN commission that investigated the desires of the Saharan people prior to the conflict and can attest to the fact that 99 percent of the inhabitants want independence. We congratulate Mauritania on its courageous decision to renounce all territorial claims and hope that Morocco will reconsider its policy on Western Sahara, a policy that not only isolates and weakens its international position but also exhausts and impoverishes it economically. The right to independence of the valiant Saharan people and the Polisario Front, their legitimate representative, should be recognized by all.

We support the people of Cyprus in their struggle against the foreign occupation of a part of their territory and for the development of peace and fraternal coexistence by all components of that sister country's population.

Cuba's position on the problems in Southeast Asia is crystal clear. For our people, Vietnam is sacred. We once swore that we were willing to die for Vietnam.

## Vietnamese people

No other people of recent times has paid such a high price in sacrifice, suffering and death in order to be free.



No people has made a greater contribution to the national liberation struggle. No other people has done so much in this period to create a universal anti-imperialist consciousness. Four times as many bombs were dropped on Vietnam as were used in World War II. The most powerful imperialist country had its claws cut off in Vietnam. Vietnam taught all oppressed nations that no force can defeat a people that is determined to fight for its freedom. The struggle in Vietnam reinforced the respect and unity of all our peoples.

Now, when Vietnam has been made the victim of intrigue, slander and encirclement by the Yankee imperialists and of betrayal, conspiracy and aggression by the government of China, Cuba offers it its firmest support.

With all their talk about the problem of the Vietnamese refugees—who are the direct result of colonialism, underdevelopment and the thirty-year war of aggression—why don't the U.S. government and its allies even mention the millions of Palestinians scattered all over the world and the hundreds of thousands of Zimbabwean, Namibian and South African refugees who are dispersed, persecuted and murdered in Africa?

What right does China have to teach Vietnam a lesson, invade its territory, destroy its modest wealth and murder thousands of its people? The Chinese ruling clique, which supported Pinochet against Allende, which supported South Africa's aggression against Angola, which supported the Shah, which supported Somoza, which supports and supplies weapons to Sadat, which justifies the Yankee blockade against Cuba and the continued existence of the naval base at Guantanamo, which defends NATO and sides with the United States and the most reactionary forces of Europe and the rest of the world, has neither the prestige nor the moral standing to teach anybody a lesson.

We also support the Lao People's Republic against the Chinese government's threats of aggression and expansionism.

Cuba's position on the problem of Kampuchea is known. We recognize the only real, legitimate government of Kampuchea, which is the People's Revolutionary Council of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, and we endorse Vietnam's solidarity with that fraternal country. People keep saying that Vietnam sent fighters to support the Kampuchean revolutionaries. Why don't they say that the bloody clique that had seized control of the country, in complicity with China and imperialism, provoked and attacked Vietnam first and that there is indisputable documentary proof of mass murders perpetrated against Vietnamese women, old people and children?

### Condemn Pol Pot

With all our energy, we condemn the genocidal government of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary. Three million dead accuse them. Even Sihanouk has admitted that some of his relatives were murdered. It is a shameful thing for the progressive forces of the world that such crimes could ever have been committed in the name of the revolution and socialism.

Nevertheless, Cuba, mindful of its obligations as host country, offered the facilities for both parties to be present in Havana until the movement comes to a decision in this regard. It is inexplicable that, while some oppose the expulsion of Egypt, that allied itself with the United States and Israel, openly betraying the noble Arab cause and the Palestinian people, efforts are being made to condemn Vietnam for its acts of legitimate defense against aggression and the fiction is maintained that Pol Pot's bloody government, an affront to all mankind, still exists.

The movement should preserve its unity and always seek a peaceful solution to any difference that may arise among its members. But it is equally bound to maintain impartiality, real-

ism and political logic in its decisions. Tanzania was also obliged to defend itself against Uganda's aggression and to support the patriots of that country against the repressive regime. Now, the legitimate, revolutionary government of Uganda is represented in the conference. Why should we deny this right to People's Kampuchea?

We firmly support the Korean people's struggle for the unification of their country. We denounce the unjust division and virtual occupation of a part of their territory by U.S. troops. We denounce the inconsistency and hollowness of the U.S. government's promises, for, far from reducing those troops it is reinforcing them and increasing their aggressive potential.

### Solidarity with Puerto Rico

In our America, we reiterate our firm and staunch solidarity with the fraternal people of Puerto Rico, whose right to self-determination and independence is stubbornly denied by the colonizing power. Puerto Rico—just like Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa, Palestine and other countries—needs our help. And we must give it unhesitatingly and unswervingly, in spite of the strong pressures that the United States constantly brings to bear on all countries in this regard.

We support Panama's right to full autonomy over the canal and we condemn the reactionary maneuvers to obstruct the laws for the implementation of the new treaty.

We support Belize's right to independence, which is today thwarted principally by the opposition and threats by the cruel and pro-Yankee satrapy that oppresses Guatemala. The people of Belize, from the ethnic, cultural and historical points of view, have nothing to do with the people of Guatemala and both are in need of freedom.

The new Nicaragua requires the utmost cooperation from the international community for the reconstruction of the country, destroyed by almost half a century of Somoza dynasty, fathered by the U.S. marines. It is just that we offer them our solidarity.

The aspiration of Bolivia, whose territory was mutilated a century ago in a war stirred up by imperialist interests, for an outlet to the sea is absolutely justified and vital. Therefore, we consider it our duty to support it.

We are opposed to the continuance of any type of colonial enclave in this

hemisphere, where it still exists.

Cuba also needs solidarity. Our country is the victim of a criminal and cruel economic blockade imposed by the United States which includes even medicines and a piece of our national territory remains occupied by force.

Does the United States have the right to try at all costs to block our development? Does it have the right to possess military bases in another country against the wish of its people?

### Can we ignore imperialism?

In all these issues and struggles, which are cause for our concern and call for our solidarity, there is a constant and invariable element: the action of imperialism. Can our movement ignore this? Is it just extremism on our part to clearly bring the deeds to light?

Although the underdeveloped countries, with great poverty, a very low living standard and life expectancy, are the ones who have the least to lose in a war, we cannot be insensitive to the need for peace in our planet. This would be tantamount to renouncing the hopes for a better future for the peoples. We do not agree with the thesis that a nuclear war is inevitable. Such a fatalist and irresponsible attitude is the best way to assure that humanity be annihilated by a universal holocaust. Never before in this life of humankind has such a real technological possibility existed. It is not possible for us to be so insensitive as to ignore this. For the first time in history, it has corresponded to our generation to confront such risks.

In our world of today, mountains of more and more deadly arms accumulate alongside mountains of problems of underdevelopment, poverty, food shortages, squalor, environmental pollution, school and housing shortages, unemployment and an explosive population growth. Such natural resources as land, water, energy and raw materials are beginning to be in short supply in various parts of the world.

The developed capitalist societies not only created wasteful and untenable models for standards of living and consumption but also countries in our area conceive of development only as the aspiration to get to be and live like New York, London, or Paris.

One way or another, the world economic crisis, the energy crisis, inflation, the depression and unemployment oppress the peoples and governments of a large part of the earth. Very few, if any, of the members

of our movement are free of these difficulties, because we bear the brunt of these calamities.

The struggle for peace and for a just economic order and a workable solution to the pressing problems that weigh on our people is, in our opinion, increasingly becoming the main question posed to the movement of non-aligned countries.

### Peace with freedom

Peace, with the immense risks that threaten it, is not something that should be left exclusively in the hands of the big military powers. Peace is possible, but world peace can only be assured to the extent that all countries are consciously determined to fight for it—peace not just for a part of the world, but for all peoples. Peace, also, for Vietnam, the Palestinians, the patriots of Zimbabwe and Namibia, the oppressed majorities in South Africa, Angola, Zambia, Mozambique, Botswana, Ethiopia, Syria, Lebanon, and the Saharan people. Peace with justice. Peace with independence. Peace with freedom. Peace for the powerful countries and the small countries. Peace for all continents and all peoples. We understand perfectly well that we will not achieve it without a tenacious, resolute struggle. But we should believe in the possibility of achieving it in spite of imperialism, neocolonialism, racism, Zionism, expansionism and the other regressive elements that still exist in the world. The strength of our united countries is very great. Never before have the forces of progress and the advanced political awareness of the peoples attained such high levels. Even within the imperialist, reactionary countries themselves, important progressive sectors are determined to struggle for the same ends. The important role that the people of the United States and world opinion played in ending the criminal imperialist war against Vietnam should not be forgotten.

We must demand peace, détente, peaceful coexistence and disarmament. We must demand and win them, because they will not come about by spontaneous generation, and there is no alternative in today's world, if we are to preserve the very existence of mankind.

Likewise, we must encourage all progress in this field. Thus, we must greet with satisfaction the SALT II agreements between the Soviet Union

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Militant/Evelyn Kirsch

**'Cuba's position on the problems in Southeast Asia is crystal clear. For our people, Vietnam is sacred. We once swore that we were willing to die for Vietnam. . . . The most powerful imperialist country had its claws cut off in Vietnam.'**

# ...Castro's speech

*Continued from preceding page*

and the United States, as well as other steps in this field. We must also denounce the reactionary forces which advocate a cold war policy and are involved in the dirty arms trade business, destruction and death. They also oppose ratification of the treaty by the U.S. Senate.

However, we recognize that these steps, positive and important though they be, are still a long way from the ideal of gradual denuclearization leading to the total disappearance of nuclear weapons, which in the end would be the only equitable and just solution for all nations, and a halt to the arms race.

The day must come when humanity resolutely condemns the manufacturing and trade of arms.

## Military expenditures

Statistical publications indicate that the world spends more than 300 thousand million dollars a year on arms and military expenditures, and this is probably a conservative estimate.

The forces of the United States alone use up, for example, 30 million tons of oil which is more than the total expenditure of energy by all the nations of Central America and the Caribbean put together.

Three hundred thousand million dollars is enough to build 600,000 schools a year with a capacity of 400 million children; or 60 million comfortable homes with a capacity of 300 million people; or 50,000 hospitals with 18 million beds; or 20,000 factories to provide employment for more than 20 million workers; or make possible the irrigation of 150 million hectares of land, which with an adequate technical level could provide food for 1,000 million people. That's what humanity wastes on military expenditures every year. We must also bear in mind the huge drain on manpower, in the blood of youth, scientific and technical resources, raw materials and other goods. This is the price for there not being a true climate of confidence and peace in the world.

As far as we Marxists are concerned war and weapons are inseparably linked in the course of history to the system of the exploitation of man by man and the tremendous greed of that system to take over the natural resources of other peoples. As we one day said at the UN, "Halt the philosophy of plunder and the philosophy of war will be halted."

Socialism as a system does not require arms production for its economy. It doesn't need armies to seize the resources of other people. Had unity and fraternity among peoples and men been a reality there would have been no need for arms to attack or oppress anybody, nor for arms to win and defend freedom.

## From rhetoric to action

Regardless of how long and utopian the path may seem, regardless of the setbacks and even the betrayals in the progressive movement, we must never be discouraged nor cease our effort to achieve these objectives. At all international organizations and platforms we must demand a shift from rhetoric to action.

The questions lead us directly to the topic of economics. More and more statesmen and leaders in our movement are stating the need to place this matter at the center of our concerns. You are statesmen who wrestle every day with the knotty economic questions of your countries. You know full well what the great difficulties are: the constantly rising foreign debt, a shortage of foreign currency, the soaring prices of fuel and other import products, unequal terms of trade, low prices on the foreign market that constantly and increasingly rob us of the products that are the fruit of our people's labor, inflation, the rise of domestic prices and all the social conflicts that arise from this state of affairs.

Progressive governments that are making a noble effort to develop and increase the well-being of their countries are overwhelmed and may even be wiped out by economic difficulties and unfair, unpopular conditions imposed by the international credit agencies. What political price haven't many of you had to pay because of the rules laid down by the International Monetary Fund? We Cubans, who are excluded from that institution because of an imperialist dictate, aren't quite sure whether that exclusion was a punishment or a privilege.

Some governments placed in power by the people's revolutionary struggles suddenly find themselves faced with horrifying conditions of poverty, indebtedness and underdevelopment that prevent them from responding to even the most modest hopes of their peoples.

I'm not going to tell you half-truths, nor am I going to hide the fact that social difficulties are much greater when, in any of our countries, a small minority controls the basic wealth and the majority of the people are completely dispossessed. In short, if the system is socially just, the possibilities of survival and economic and social development are incomparably greater. Some countries present the phenomenon of growing economies with equally growing poverty, illiteracy, the number of children with no schools to go to, malnutrition, disease, begging and unemployment—all of which show in no uncertain terms that something is wrong.

## Underdeveloped countries

The underdeveloped countries—some optimistically prefer to call them developing countries, when, in fact, the gap separating their per capita incomes and standard of living from those of the developed countries is constantly widening—contain 65 percent of the world population but account for only 15 percent of total world production and only 3 percent of industrial production. The conglomerate of countries in this category, which have no natural energy sources, now have a foreign debt of over 300 billion. It is estimated that around 40 billion a year goes to servicing this foreign debt—more than 20 percent of their exports. Average per capita income in the developed countries is now 14 times greater than in the underdeveloped countries. In addition, the underdeveloped countries contain more than 900 million illiterate adults. This situation is untenable.

One of the most acute problems facing the non-oil-producing underdeveloped countries—the vast majority of the members of our movement—is the energy crisis. The oil-exporting countries—all of which are in the underdeveloped world and almost all of which belong to the movement of non-aligned countries—have always been supported by the rest of our countries in their just demands for the revaluation of their product and an end to unequal terms of trade and the wasting of energy. These countries now have a much greater economic potential and negotiating capacity with the developed capitalist world.

This is not the case of the non-oil-producing underdeveloped countries. Sugar, bauxite, copper and other solid minerals, peanuts, copra, sisal, tea, cashews and agricultural products in general are terribly underpriced on the world market. The developed capitalist countries selfishly raise their tariffs against those few products that our countries manufacture and even subsidize goods that compete with ours, whenever possible. The European Economic Community and the United States do this, for example, with sugar.

The prices of the equipment, machinery, industrial articles and semifinished products that we import are raised constantly. The privileged exporters of these goods charge ever higher prices for them. It is easier for them than for the underdeveloped countries to pay for fuel. They even



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export tens of billions of dollars' worth of arms annually and often buy oil with this money. The Shah of Iran was one of their favorite multimillionaire clients, until he was rightly overthrown not long ago. Most of the surplus money from oil sales is deposited and invested in the richest, most developed capitalist countries. The funds are also used to supply them with fuel. But what recourse do the non-oil-producing underdeveloped countries have?

## Imperialism tries to divide us

It is absolutely necessary to be aware of this reality, because the situation of many countries, a large number of which are members of this movement, is truly desperate. We should consider and discuss this matter. A solution must be found. Imperialism is already maneuvering to divide us. It is trying to isolate the oil-producing countries from the rest of the underdeveloped world, blaming them for the economic crisis—whose cause really lies in the unjust order established in the world by the imperialist system. And, what is even more dangerous, it is looking for pretexts and covering up its aggressive plans against the oil-exporting countries.

Cuba isn't bringing this topic up in order to defend interests that affect it directly. Of course, we suffer from the indirect effects of the international economic crisis and the low prices established for our products in Western markets, but we have an assured supply of oil which we purchase with sugar, whose price is directly proportional to the price of oil and other articles which we import from the capitalist area.

Nevertheless, we should point out that, if all the sugar produced in Cuba—nearly 8 million tons in the 1979 harvest, the largest production of cane sugar in the world—had been sold to the Western world at the price now being paid on the so-called world market—around 8 cents a pound—it wouldn't have paid for the fuel that Cuba uses, at its present price.

We must look for solutions to the energy crisis, but not only for the developed countries, that already use most of the energy produced in the world. Basically, we must also find

solutions for the underdeveloped countries.

We appeal to the sense of responsibility of the large oil-exporting countries in our movement, asking them to strike out courageously, firmly and boldly in implementing a wise and farsighted policy of economic cooperation, supplies and investments in our underdeveloped world, because their future depends on ours.

I am not asking you to sacrifice your legitimate interests. I am not asking you to stop all-out efforts to develop and raise the well-being of your own peoples. I am not asking you to stop trying to safeguard your future. I am inviting you to join us and close ranks with us and struggle together for a real new international economic order whose benefit will extend to all.

## Future lies in justice

No money can purchase the future, because the future lies in justice, in our consciences and in the honest and fraternal solidarity of our peoples.

The solution to the economic problems faced by our countries requires a tremendous, responsible, conscious and serious effort of a world nature.

Those of us meeting here represent the vast majority of the peoples of the world. Let us close ranks and unite the growing force of our vigorous movement in the United Nations and in all other international forums to demand economic justice for our peoples and an end to foreign control over our resources and the theft of our labor. Let us close ranks in demanding respect for our right to development, to life and to the future. Enough of building a world economy based on the opulence of those who exploited and impoverished us in the past and who exploit and impoverish us today and of the poverty, the economic and social underdevelopment of the vast majority of mankind. May a firm determination to struggle and concrete plans of action come out of this sixth summit conference: deeds, not just words.

Perhaps this speech inaugurating this conference has been somewhat undiplomatic, not quite in line with protocol, but no one should doubt the complete loyalty with which I have spoken.

Thank you.



# Arthur Burch: a lifelong party builder

By Frank Lovell

Arthur Burch, a founder of the Socialist Workers Party, died August 28 at his summer residence at Cape May, New Jersey. He was eighty-two.

Until the end of his life he was keenly interested in world politics and in the activities of the SWP, and frequently attended public meetings of the party in New York. He was not, however, widely known to the present generation of political activists. Nonetheless, his contributions to the formation and early growth of the Socialist Workers Party helped prepare for the party's new turn to the industrial working class and its further expansion today. His active political life was similar in some ways to that of present day party organizers and leaders who were first trained on the campuses in the student radicalization of the 1960s.

Burch was the product of an earlier radicalization resulting from the 1929 economic collapse of capitalism. He was a World War I veteran, and in the 1920s was an attorney and successful investor in the stock market. He never shared the popular misconception that the economic boom of the 1920s would last forever, and always voted the Socialist ticket.

He was married in 1934. In those early years of the Great Depression, he and his wife Kay, then a recent Bryn Mawr graduate, came to the firm conclusion that capitalism as a world system was incapable of satisfying the needs of the vast majority of humanity. She had come upon a copy of the Communist Manifesto while a student.

Kay and Arthur Burch joined the Socialist Party in 1936 after learning that the members of the Workers Party of America were joining. The Workers Party was then the Trotskyist organization in this country, headed by A.J. Muste and James P. Cannon.

The Burches had discovered the ideas of Lenin and Trotsky through independent study, and they became convinced they needed a party. Having investigated the Communist Party and the Socialist Party, they found both wanting and kept looking until they found the Trotskyist current.

In the revitalized Socialist Party of those years the Burches became more deeply convinced that humanity's future depends upon the power of the working class to reorganize society, and that the workers will be able to exercise their power only if they can organize their own political party independent of the capitalist rulers.

The pressure of world events—such as the victory of fascism in Germany and Spain—drove them to this conclusion.

In 1937 the Socialist Party leadership expelled the party's left wing for its refusal to endorse the candidacy of the capitalist class candidate, Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, in the 1937 New York mayoral election. The Burches were expelled with all other dissenters. They identified organizationally and ideologically with Trotskyism from that time.

Both were founding members of the SWP in 1938, and prominent activists in the New York SWP local from the beginning. In 1939-40, when a petty-bourgeois opposition in the SWP, led by James



Arthur Burch in mid-1940s

Burnham and Max Shachtman, tried to overturn the Marxist principles of the party, Kay and Arthur Burch were staunch supporters of the majority's defense of Marxism, which was organized and led by James P. Cannon and Leon Trotsky.

The *Socialist Appeal*, the name of the SWP publication at that time, announced in its issue of February 8, 1941, that Arthur Burch, "labor attorney, veteran of World War I, and organizational secretary of the New York local of the SWP," was the party's candidate in a special congressional election. He subsequently withdrew to give critical support to Eugene P. Connolly, the candidate on the American Labor Party ticket.

The ALP was based on the New York union movement, and was capable of mobilizing a large segment of working-class voters. Burch campaigned for Connolly and for an antiwar labor party program. He sought to expose Roosevelt's scheme to drag American workers into World War II. He explained how the workers in this country could, with their own organized might, halt the imperialist war then raging in Europe.

It wasn't exactly true that Burch was a "labor attorney" as his campaign literature claimed. He was an attorney, but when he became interested in revolutionary politics he turned his back on the practice of law for two decades. His knowledge of law was always at the service of the party, as were his other achievements and talents. But he left the law business.

In 1941 leaders of the SWP and Minneapolis Teamster movement were indicted for "sedition" under the Smith Act because of their adamant

opposition to the capitalist war preparations in this country.

Burch was organizer of the Newark branch of the SWP in 1942 and helped launch in New Jersey the Civil Rights Defense Committee, the organization that provided aid for the Minneapolis defendants in this first test of the unconstitutional Smith Act. It was in New Jersey that the CRDC first won the broad support of the local CIO.

Burch was elected to the SWP national committee at the 1942 party convention in New York.

In 1943 he was assigned to work in Detroit, where most comrades were in war industries. He was elected branch organizer, and became the public representative of the party in Detroit during the war.

Arthur Burch was never one to seek the limelight. He did not thirst for public recognition. His ambition was to help build the party and educate party leaders in the mass movement. He explained the need for labor solidarity and tried to establish the SWP as the organization that stood for labor solidarity. In those war years this principle had been forsaken by the Stalinists and the Social Democrats who were deeply involved in promoting the imperialist war.

A front page article in the *Socialist Appeal*, May 8, 1943, dateline Detroit, reported that a United Auto Workers conference had voted support to the striking mine workers, overriding the opposition and fears of the UAW leadership. This article was signed "John Saunders," a pen name used by Burch.

This was a badly needed service to both the auto workers and the coal miners, because no other paper at the time gave an accurate report of how the auto workers were trying to reach out to help the embattled miners. When word of this got through to the miners, it gave them added courage to carry on their struggle against the wartime repression of the federal government.

During the war, Burch contributed to a basic document on the Black struggle, titled *The Struggle for Negro Equality*, published in 1943. It was a 32-page pamphlet signed by John Saunders and Albert Parker, a pen name used by George Breitman in those years. It proved to be the SWP's authoritative statement on the struggle of Blacks at that time.

In Detroit an important Black defense case arose during the war. A young Black doctor in the city, Edward Keemer, was drafted for military service. Keemer thought he should be inducted as a doctor with officer rank, but the U.S. military establishment had no place for Black officers in the medical corps. Keemer was given to understand that he would be no officer and probably would not be practicing medicine.

Burch visited Dr. Keemer and convinced him to make a public fight against this discrimination. Dr. Keemer readily accepted the collaboration offered by the local SWP organizer. Burch turned immediately to the labor movement and to the American Civil Liberties Union for support.

The local chapter of the ACLU, strongly influenced by the pro-war union bureaucracy, was not anxious to take up Dr. Keemer's case. Burch made a special trip to New York to consult with Roger Baldwin, then national chairman of the ACLU, and Baldwin gave full support. The local chapter filed a complaint with the government and the military machine dropped all charges against its intended victim and gave Dr. Keemer a deferment "for the duration."

This case and the successful outcome got little attention in the national press. But Blacks in Detroit knew about it. And during the last year of the war and in the immediate post-war period—during the big labor resurgence of 1945-46—the Detroit SWP branch welcomed into its ranks more Black workers than any other unit of the party. This was largely due to the work of Arthur Burch as organizer of the branch and builder of the party.

In the post-war years, Burch had an opportunity to collaborate with Vincent Dunne, who moved to Detroit after his release from Sandstone prison. Dunne was one of the Minneapolis Teamster leaders and a central leader of the SWP who had been jailed during the war. It was a brief period of close political collaboration, enjoyable to both Dunne and Burch. Dunne often spoke about his admiration for Arthur and the determined and methodical way that he set about the daily tasks of building a party branch.

Arthur Burch was not usually looking for ways to make himself prominent, but neither did he shirk the need to present the basic ideas of the party when that was possible and when he was the indicated comrade to do it.

*Continued on next page*



Chicago, 1946—Socialist Workers Party members join Black and union leaders in protesting racial discrimination. Burch's contributions to the Black struggle as a leader of the Detroit SWP helped win Black recruits to the party.

# ...nationalists hailed

Continued from back page

gua, Cuba, and Vietnam. "Cu-ba, Cu-ba, Cu-ba," the thousands chanted over and over.

When the chair announced the presence of a delegation from Vietnam, she added, "Puerto Rico vencerá, como Cuba y Vietnam (Puerto Rico will win, like Cuba and Vietnam)." This brought the crowd to its feet, wildly cheering and applauding.

"We are celebrating tonight," Lebrón told the crowd. "This is a very joyful occasion. But the motherland cannot celebrate tonight, the motherland lives a tragedy, the motherland is not free." Her speech was repeatedly interrupted by chants and cheers.

Flores spoke of other U.S. political prisoners. "The thousands of Black Americans, the Chicanos, the Native Americans that I met in the jails of the imperialists—they are also political prisoners that are victims of the system of imperialist oppression."

The opening speaker was Carlos Vélez, the seventy-one-year-old president of the Puerto Rican Nationalist

Party, of which the four are members. Vélez has been a member of the party since 1932.

"This is the most emotional moment of my life," he said. Vélez said the independence movement was going through the beginning stages of a resurgence, citing the struggle of the people of Vieques. Vieques, a small island that is part of Puerto Rico, has been used by the U.S. for target practice.

The rally concluded with the singing of "La borinqueña," the Puerto Rican nationalist song. It was sponsored by the Nationalist Party, the Committee for the Freedom of the Nationalists, and Puerto Ricans With Pride.

At a rally of 2,500 the previous night in Chicago, Collazo explained that the struggle for Puerto Rican independence was part of a worldwide fight.

"We have *compañeros* around the world who are fighting against imperialism. We see the great example of Iran, a revolution that has not finished, but that has definitely started. Then the great example of Nicaragua.

We see Zimbabwe and Namibia and South Africa.

"The revolutionary struggle of the Puerto Rican people therefore is not alone."

Lebrón hailed the Nicaraguan revolution as "the greatest thing that's happened in all Latin American since Cuba."

The release of the four was a concession by Washington to a growing worldwide outcry. For instance, last August 15 the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization asked "that the four Puerto Rican political prisoners . . . be immediately and unconditionally released."

Numerous rallies and demonstrations in Puerto Rico and the United States also raised this demand.

Much of the credit for this victory must go to the revolutionary government of Cuba, which has long sought the release of the four and independence for Puerto Rico. Most recently, the conference of nonaligned nations, meeting in Havana, backed the demand for independence.

Moreover, in recent months Cuba has shamed the U.S. government and

exposed Carter's "human rights" hypocrisy by releasing thousands of persons jailed for crimes against the revolution. And Cuba reportedly plans to set free four U.S. citizens convicted of espionage.

The joyous meaning of the freeing of the Puerto Rican nationalists was summed up by Irving Flores at the Chicago rally:

"They imprisoned us because we would not abandon our principles and because we would not deny our right to fight for our country's liberation. Our unconditional release is therefore a victory for our people."

## By Rich Ariza

Socialists sold more than 300 copies of *Perspectiva Mundial* and the *Militant* at the rallies in New York and Chicago to greet the Puerto Rican nationalists. This included 217 copies of issue 17 of *PM*, which had just come off the press before the New York rally.

In Chicago seventy-five copies of the *Militant* and *PM* were sold.

# ...Burch

Continued from preceding page

In November 1945 he made a series of three radio talks explaining why the Socialist Workers Party supported the candidacy of Richard Frankenstein, UAW vice-president, who was put forward by the union for mayor of Detroit. There was a great deal of labor party sentiment at that time, and even more talk about the need for a labor party. It looked like a possible beginning of the formation of a labor party locally.

The SWP put all its forces into the Frankenstein campaign, and Burch in his radio talks explained that the victory of Frankenstein and the slate of labor-endorsed candidates for Common Council would give greater impulse to the movement for a labor party in this country.

The Frankenstein campaign failed because neither he nor the rest of the union officialdom wanted to challenge the political monopoly of the ruling class. But through the SWP's activity around the campaign, the party won new support.

Burch remained in Detroit until 1947, the year that marked the big turning point in the relationship of class forces in this country. That came about because of the political unpreparedness of the working class. The union movement was dependent upon the Democratic Party and the union leadership prevented the workers from breaking out of the two-party capitalist political system. The Congress in 1947 enacted the Taft-Hartley law and the labor bureaucracy quietly submitted to its restrictions.

Burch could not have been fully aware, when he

was reassigned to New York, that a long period of repression against the union movement was beginning. As events developed it turned out that his steady and persistent habits of work were very useful in the SWP national center in the years that followed. When James Kutcher, the legless World War II veteran, was deprived of his pension by the government because he was a member of the SWP, Arthur Burch helped to organize his defense. At one point in 1948 Burch served as Kutcher's attorney when the emergency services of a competent attorney were badly needed.

The witchhunt of the 1950s was a difficult time for radicals and the SWP suffered a decline in activity and membership, as did the entire radical movement. But in all respects the SWP endured and survived this dry period better than any other working-class political tendency. This was possible for us because of comrades like Arthur Burch who were endowed by nature with a special tenacity and equipped by training in our party with a superior understanding of class society and the inherent contradictions of capitalist economy.

## Cochran fight

In 1953 a very important sector of our party, firmly embedded in the union movement and represented by Bert Cochran who had been the leader of the SWP auto fraction, became discouraged and gave up. They decided that the working class in this country would never fulfill its historic mission to transform society and create a new world. They convinced themselves that the great mass of workers will never be interested in anything more than "bread and butter" issues, like the union officials say. And anything else is nothing more than the dreams of radicals when they are young and inexperienced.

Arthur Burch never believed any of this. He opposed the pessimistic feelings of Cochran and his followers from the beginning. In some ways he had sensed their discouragement and felt the weight of their disparagement of party-building activities while he was still in Detroit. Without knowing exactly what it was at that early stage, he became aware that something was wrong with Cochran and his followers before they felt the full effects of their own illness.

In the years that followed, the SWP was unable to sustain a large fulltime staff. Many leaders of the party were forced to find part-time jobs or get work in industry to help maintain the party.

Arthur was a generation older than most of the party leaders who had developed in the 1930s. He eventually returned to the practice of law, but his steady political judgement and clear view of the party's goals balanced the deliberations and decisions of the party leadership. He continued to serve as a member of the SWP national committee until the 1960s, and during much of that time he participated as a member of the Political Committee. He left the committee with other older members when the new generation of party leaders began to develop.

Arthur Burch was not one of the central leaders of the party, but he was a necessary part of the leadership in the good years and the lean years. He always considered himself a trouper and a leader of the troops when needed. There were others like Arthur Burch in his time, and there will be many more in the future. Most will never be known by the generations of militants who follow them, but their contributions make continuity of the movement possible. And that is one of the great political advantages of the SWP today.

# What's Going On

## CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES

**STOP THE EXECUTION OF IRANIAN SOCIALISTS.** Speakers: Farhad Nouri, Iranian Socialist Workers Party; Rev. Philip Zwerling, minister, First Unitarian Church. Fri., Sept. 21, 7:30 p.m. International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 18, 4189 W. 2nd (two blocks east of Western). Donation: \$2. Aup: Committee to Save the Iranian 14. For more information call (213) 482-1820.

## ILLINOIS CHICAGO

**GRAND OPENING OF MILITANT BOOKSTORE.** 20%-off sale on books. Sat., Sept. 22, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., open house; 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. reception. 434 S. Wabash, 7th fl. Aup: Militant Bookstore. For more information call (312) 939-0737.

## INDIANA GARY

**RECESSION: WHAT IT MEANS FOR WORKING PEOPLE.** Speakers: Dick Roberts, staff writer for the *Militant*; Etta Ettlinger, member, Steelworkers Local 1014, chairperson of Gary Young Socialist Alliance. Fri., Sept. 21, 7:30 p.m. 3883 Broadway. Donation: \$1.50. Aup: Militant Forum. For more information call (219) 884-9509.

## MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

**SOCIALIST WORKERS CAMPAIGN RALLY.** Wind up the 1979 Boston municipal campaign and kick off 1980 presidential campaign. Speakers: Luis Castro, SWP candidate for mayor; Jeanette Tracy, SWP candidate for city council; Fred Halstead, recently returned from Nicaragua; representative from Committee to Save the Iranian 14. Sat., Sept. 22, 7 p.m. social hour, 8 p.m.

rally. St. Stephens Church 419 Shawmut Ave. Donation: \$1.50, \$2.50 with reception. Aup: Socialist Workers 1980 Campaign Committee. For more information call (617) 262-4621.

## NEW JERSEY NEWARK

**STOP EXECUTION OF IRANIAN SOCIALISTS.** Speaker: Gerry Foley, staff writer for *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*. Sat., Sept. 15, 7:30 p.m. 11-A Central Ave. Donation: \$1. Aup: Militant Forum and Bookstore. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

## PENNSYLVANIA PHILADELPHIA

**OPEN THE FRONTIERS!** A benefit concert to defend Héctor Marroquín, a young Mexican worker fighting for political asylum in the U.S. Performers: Suni Paz and Juan and Jenny Avila.

Sat., Sept. 22, 8 p.m. Tabernacle Church, 3700 Chestnut St. Tickets: \$5 in advance, \$6 at the door. Aup: Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee. For more information call (215) 849-1576.

**UNITED AUTO WORKERS CONTRACT BATTLE.** Speakers: Steve Knox, Socialist Workers Party and United Auto Workers Local 2068; others. Fri., Sept. 21, 8 p.m. 5811 N. Broad St. Donation: \$1.50. Aup: Militant Forum. For more information call (215) 927-4747.

## TEXAS DALLAS

**UNION WOMEN AND THE FIGHT FOR EQUAL RIGHTS.** Speakers: representatives from National Organization for Women; Coalition of Labor Union Women; and Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Sept. 22, 7 p.m. 5442 E. Grand. Donation: \$1.50. Aup: Militant Forum. For more information call (214) 826-4711.



# Inflation forces teachers across nation to strike

By August Nimtz

As of September 12, nearly 45,000 teachers in thirteen states were on strike. Since the beginning of this school year there have been 119 strikes in seventeen states—compared with 85 strikes at this time last year.

The major issues are wage increases and cost-of-living allowances.

Michigan leads the nation in the number of teacher walkouts. Twenty-three of the state's forty-five strikes so far this year are still in progress with the largest in Detroit. The 12,000 Detroit teachers rejected a contract offering them a 25 percent across-the-board wage increase over three years but no COLA or wage-reopener clauses.

In San Francisco, teachers voted 1,306 to 550 September 10 not to return to work until they get a contract and an agreement from school officials to rescind layoffs.

Of the seventy-four strikes in progress, fifty-eight are being led by the National Education Association, twelve by the American Federation of Teachers, and four by the American Association of University Professors.

## LOUISIANA

By Vickie Cofield

NEW ORLEANS—The strike by more than 2,000 teachers in suburban Jefferson Parish (county) is growing in

strength as the arrogant school board refuses to settle. The strike began August 24.

Supporting teachers with the slogan, "no deals—no wheels," the school system's 466 bus drivers joined teachers' picket lines on the eleventh day of the strike. The drivers have now formed their own union, vowing to stay out on strike until the board grants them bargaining rights.

The Jefferson Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 1559, is gaining support from parents and students and some are joining the picket lines. The board stubbornly refuses to close schools, paying scab substitutes fifty dollars per day. Parents have initiated a suit against the school board demanding that the system's eighty-two schools close since no education is going on and their children's safety is jeopardized.

Growing numbers of teachers' assistants and social workers, who are not part of the bargaining unit, are also walking teachers' picket lines. One picket sign reads, "Social workers support teachers: we have the same boss."

The school board claims it cannot afford the \$3 million necessary to grant teachers a 20 percent pay raise over the next two years. Yet they have already spent over \$1 million on strike-breaking activities.

In this school system with a reputa-

tion for conservatism, teachers are becoming more aware of their roles as workers. One teacher remarked as she walked the picket line, "I never believed in unions. I thought they were just for blue-collar workers but now I understand that unions are necessary for the bosses to respect you."

## OKLAHOMA

By Tanna Shaffer

OKLAHOMA CITY—In a close vote, teachers here decided to end this state's first teachers' strike September 9. The walkout had lasted nearly three weeks.

The city's all-out strikebreaking effort had included a district court ruling that the walkout violated a state law prohibiting public employee strikes. The court said that the school board should neither recognize nor bargain with the teachers union, the American Federation of Teachers Local 2309.

After the AFT appealed the decision, the state supreme court sent the case back to the district court. It is now being heard.

In the meantime, the union plans to seek a new representation election to reaffirm its support among the city's teachers.

As the strike ended, school board president Paul English declared that the strikers "will reap the whirlwind of

what they've done." To make good his threat, teachers are being docked seventy dollars for each day they were on strike.

During the strike, the school board went on a campaign to recruit scab "teachers." No teaching experience or certification was required and they were paid fifty dollars a day (normal substitute pay is twenty-eight). "Keep the schools open" ads were run offering jobs as "standby substitutes." And, for example, I received in the mail an offer to scab because I had once worked as a teacher's aide. At one elementary school, sixteen scabs were paid to fill six teacher vacancies.

The strike followed eight months of negotiations during which the board made one offer, a 5-6 percent pay raise. The union demanded a 12 percent increase plus improved benefits.

At one of the rallies held regularly during the strike, teachers listened to a tape recording of a conversation among school board members. "We cannot give them one copper penny," said one, "or the union will say that it has been there all along and we will lose our credibility."

Throughout the strike the teachers enjoyed the active support of the city's labor movement. Members of the United Auto Workers, Teamsters, and other unions regularly joined the picket lines.

# Mass. union moves against oil rip-off

By Kip Hedges

LYNN, Mass.—As the oil companies prepare to unleash their next attack on American workers in the form of \$1.29-a-gallon home-heating oil prices, cash-on-delivery payment plans, and cut-backs in heating oil allocation, workers here are preparing to fight back.

The fightback began at an August 14 Lynn City Council meeting. At the urging of the Lynn Energy Crisis Committee, motions were discussed that called for public ownership of U.S. oil companies and urged a special meeting where invited representatives of the oil companies could explain their side of the story.

While the council rejected the call for nationalization with a seven-to-four vote, it agreed to hold a public energy hearing.

The September 4 energy meeting was heavily attended by members of Lynn Fair Share, (a consumer group), Lynn Energy Crisis Committee, and

members of the International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE) Local 201, which represents workers at the giant General Electric plant in Lynn.

It was not, however, attended by anyone from the oil companies.

People were angry and demanded the council take action against the oil companies. But the council again rejected the call for nationalization, this time by six-to-five.

Al Hamilton, president of IUE Local 201, called on the council to endorse an early October public protest meeting called by a coalition that is led by Local 201 and Lynn Fair Share. This coalition took shape at two meetings attended by some thirty Local 201 members and several people from Fair Share.

Demands of the October rally include thirty days deferred payment for heating oil, an end to lies and phony shortages, opening the books of the oil companies, and an end to oil-company monopoly.

"The job of this coalition," says Hamilton, "is to mobilize the ranks of 201, the labor movement, and the community to fight the oil companies in an on-going campaign. This is the opening round of the fight."

The September 7 issue of Local 210's newspaper said, "A real shortage of oil does not exist. A U.S. shortage does exist because of the deliberate actions of the U.S. oil industry."

The same article also rejected blaming OPEC for the crisis: "Some OPEC producers actually cut prices on premium, higher-priced crude oil during the first quarter of 1978."

To build the October rally, the union is planning to mobilize the stewards council to talk to workers about the energy crisis, and to use the local's newspaper to explain the phony crisis and urge participation in the rally.

The union also plans massive leafletting of the ranks, as well as distribution of postcards to be sent to legislators.

## Socialist backs mobilization

LYNN, Mass.—One of those who spoke out at the energy hearings called by the Lynn City Council September 4 was Luis Castro, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Boston. Castro is a member of International Union of Electrical Workers Local 201.

"Talking to fellow workers," Castro said, "I see the hardships created by high home-heating oil prices. It's good that our union has begun to build a coalition to fight the oil companies for a fair price for oil and for an end to cash on delivery payments."

"The way to break the stranglehold the oil companies have on the American people," he continued, "is to put the oil companies under public ownership. It's the only way to get to the bottom of this ripoff."

## If You Like This Paper, Look Us Up

Where to find the Socialist Workers Party, Young Socialist Alliance, and socialist books and pamphlets

**ALABAMA:** Birmingham: SWP, Box 3382-A. Zip: 35205. Pathfinder Books, 1609 5th Ave. N. Tel: (205) 328-9403.

**ARIZONA:** Phoenix: SWP, YSA, 1243 E. McDowell. Zip: 85006. Tel: (602) 255-0450. Tucson: YSA, SUPO 20965. Zip: 85720. Tel: (602) 795-2053.

**CALIFORNIA:** Berkeley: SWP, YSA, 3264 Adeline St. Zip: 94703. Tel: (415) 653-7156. Los Angeles, Eastside: SWP, YSA, 2554 Saturn Ave., Huntington Park. Zip: 90255. Tel: (213) 582-1975. Los Angeles, Westside: SWP, YSA, 2167 W. Washington Blvd. Tel: (213) 732-8196. Zip: 90018. Los Angeles, City-wide: SWP, YSA, 1250 Wilshire Blvd., Room 404. Zip: 90017. Tel: (213) 482-1820. Oakland: SWP, YSA, 1467 Fruitvale Ave. Zip: 94601. Tel: (415) 261-1210. San Diego: SWP, YSA, 1053 15th St. Zip: 92101. Tel: (714) 234-4630. San Francisco: SWP, YSA, 3284 23rd St. Zip: 94110. Tel: (415) 824-1992. San Jose: SWP, YSA, 942 E. Santa Clara St. Zip: 95112. Tel: (408) 295-8342.

**COLORADO:** Denver: SWP, YSA, 126 W. 12th Ave. Zip: 80204. Tel: (303) 534-8954.

**CONNECTICUT:** Hartford: YSA, c/o Joe Carmack, Univ. of Hartford, 11 Sherman St. Zip: 06105. Tel: (203) 233-6465.

**DELAWARE:** Newark: YSA, c/o Stephen Krevisky, 638 Lehigh Rd. M4. Zip: 19711. Tel: (302) 368-1394.

**FLORIDA:** Miami: SWP, YSA, 8171 NE 2nd Ave. Zip: 33138. Tel: (305) 756-8358.

**GEORGIA:** Atlanta: SWP, YSA, 509 Peachtree St. NE. Zip: 30308. Tel: (404) 872-7229.

**ILLINOIS:** Champaign-Urbana: YSA, c/o Andy English, 1111 S. Third St. #304. Zip: 61820. Chicago: City-wide SWP, YSA, 407 S. Dearborn #1145. Zip: 60605. Tel: SWP—(312) 939-0737. Chicago, South Side: SWP, YSA, 2251 E. 71st St. Zip: 60649. Tel: (312) 643-5520. Chicago, West Side: SWP, 3942 W. Chicago. Zip: 60651. Tel: (312) 384-0606.

**INDIANA:** Bloomington: YSA, c/o Student Activities Desk, Indiana University. Zip: 47401. Indianapolis: SWP, YSA, 4163 College Ave. Zip: 46205. Tel: (317) 925-2616. Gary: SWP, YSA, 3883 Broadway. Zip: 46409. Tel: (219) 884-9509.

**KENTUCKY:** Louisville: SWP, YSA, 1505 W. Broadway, P.O. Box 3593. Zip: 40201. Tel: (502) 587-8418.

**LOUISIANA:** New Orleans: SWP, YSA, 3319 S. Carrollton Ave. Zip: 70118. Tel: (504) 486-8048.

**MARYLAND:** Baltimore: SWP, YSA, 2913 Greenmount Ave. Zip: 21218. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

**MASSACHUSETTS:** Amherst: YSA, c/o M. Casey, 42 McClellan. Zip: 01002. Tel: (413) 537-6537. Boston: SWP, YSA, 510 Commonwealth Ave., 4th Floor. Zip: 02215. Tel: (617) 262-4621.

**MICHIGAN:** Ann Arbor: YSA, Room 4120, Michigan Union, U. of M. Zip: 48109. Detroit: SWP, YSA, 6404 Woodward Ave. Zip: 48202. Tel: (313) 875-5322.

**MINNESOTA:** Mesabi Iron Range: SWP, YSA, P.O.

Box 1287, Virginia, Minn. Zip: 55792. Tel: (218) 749-6327. Minneapolis: SWP, YSA, 23 E. Lake St. Zip: 55408. Tel: (612) 825-6663. St. Paul: SWP, 373 University Ave. Zip: 55103. Tel: (612) 222-8929.

**MISSOURI:** Kansas City: SWP, YSA, 4715A Troost. Zip: 64110. Tel: (816) 753-0404. St. Louis: SWP, YSA, 6223 Delmar Blvd. Zip: 63130. Tel: (314) 725-1570.

**NEW MEXICO:** Albuquerque: SWP, 417 Central Ave. NE. Zip: 87106. Tel: (505) 255-6869.

**NEW MEXICO:** Albuquerque: SWP, 108 Morning-side Dr. NE. Zip: 87108. Tel: (505) 255-6969.

**NEW YORK:** Capital District (Albany): SWP, YSA, 103 Central Ave. Zip: 12206. Tel: (518) 463-0072. New York, Brooklyn: SWP, 841 Classon Ave. Zip: 11238. Tel: (212) 783-2135. New York, Lower Manhattan: SWP, YSA, 108 E. 16th St. 2nd Floor. Zip: 10003. Tel: (212) 260-6400. New York, Upper West Side: SWP, YSA, P.O. Box 1299. Zip: 10025. Tel: (212) 663-3000. New York: City-wide SWP, YSA, 108 E. 16th St. 2nd floor. Zip: 10003. Tel: (212) 533-2902.

**NORTH CAROLINA:** Piedmont: SWP, YSA, P.O. Box 733, Greensboro. Zip: 27401.

**OHIO:** Cincinnati: SWP, YSA, 970 E. McMillan. Zip: 45206. Tel: (513) 751-2636. Cleveland: SWP, YSA, 13002 Kinsman Rd. Zip: 44120. Tel: (216) 991-5030. Toledo: SWP, YSA, 2120 Dorr St. Zip: 43607. Tel: (419) 536-0383.

**OREGON:** Portland: SWP, YSA, 711 NW Everett. Zip: 97209. Tel: (503) 222-7225.

**PENNSYLVANIA:** Edinboro: YSA, Edinboro State College. Zip: 16412. Philadelphia: SWP, YSA, 5811 N. Broad St. Zip: 19141. Tel: (215) 927-4747 or 927-4748. Pittsburgh: SWP, YSA, 1210 E. Carson St. Zip: 15203. Tel: (412) 488-7000. State College: YSA, c/o Jack Craypo, 132 Keller St. Zip: 16801.

**TEXAS:** Austin: YSA, c/o Mike Rose, 7409 Berkman Dr. Zip: 78752. Dallas: SWP, YSA, 5442 E. Grand. Zip: 75223. Tel: (214) 826-4711. Houston: SWP, YSA, 806 Elgin St. #1. Zip: 77006. Tel: (713) 524-8761. San Antonio: SWP, YSA, 112 Fredericksburg Rd. Zip: 78201. Tel: (512) 735-3141.

**UTAH:** Salt Lake City: SWP, YSA, 677 S. 7th East, 2nd Floor. Zip: 84102. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

**VIRGINIA:** Tidewater Area (Newport News): SWP, YSA, P.O. Box 782. Zip: 23607.

**WASHINGTON, D.C.:** SWP, YSA, 3106 Mt. Pleasant St. NW. Zip: 20010. Tel: (202) 797-7699.

**WASHINGTON:** Olympia: YSA, c/o Deann Rathbun, Rt. 1, Box 504, Shelton, WA. 98584. Seattle: SWP, YSA, 4868 Rainier Ave., South Seattle. Zip: 98118. Tel: (206) 723-5330. Tacoma: SWP, YSA, 1306 S. K St. Zip: 98405. Tel: (206) 627-0432.

**WEST VIRGINIA:** Morgantown: SWP, YSA, 957 S. University Ave. Zip: 26505. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

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## 'Labor must consider its own political party'

By George Johnson

SAN JOSE—The call by California AFL-CIO leader John Henning for discussion of an independent labor party, separate from and opposed to the Democratic and Republican parties, is an important and welcome development.

This discussion is needed in every union local, not just in California but across the nation.

The antilabor policies and practices of the Democratic and Republican parties—"labor's dilemma," as Henning puts it—are all too apparent to most unionists. The ranks of the union movement are sick and tired of these lying big-business politicians, and are ready and willing to talk about the alternative, a labor party.

Our biggest problems, from Carter's wage guidelines and soaring layoffs to inadequate health care and pensions, are *political* problems. Working people have suffered many casualties on these fronts because we have no political voice of our own.

As Henning points out, only a labor party, which would be "free of corporate giving," could be "free of corporate control."

Every Democratic and Republican politician by necessity must prove his or her loyalty to the big-business interests that control the two capitalist parties. That's always been true. And in the midst of the current economic crisis—when the employers are aiming blow after blow at our wages, working conditions, and the very right of our unions to exist—we can see day by day whose side these politicians are on.

Here in California, the lack of political representation for workers is sadly apparent. Last year, attempts to ban forced overtime failed in the state assembly.

Such a measure relates closely to another demand that a labor party could champion—a shorter workweek with no cut in pay to provide jobs for all. That would be an especially important fight for members of my union, the United Auto Workers. Having suffered through long periods of forced fifty-eight-hour weeks in some plants, more than 80,000 of us are now laid off.

### Solidarity with strikers

One of the Democratic senators from California, Alan Cranston, spent Labor Day here lining up advance sup-

port from unionists for his reelection campaign next year. But he declined to offer comment on the biggest labor confrontation then occurring in the Bay Area—the lockout of Bay Area Rapid Transit workers. He was "not familiar with the details" and said that his participation in the dispute "would not be helpful."

For a labor party politician, knowing the "details" of the BART struggle would be top priority and would be accompanied with action in full support of the unionists.

The UAW has been negotiating for a new national contract. We may or may not end up on strike. But if we do, we'll be hard pressed to find any hint of support from a capitalist politician. A labor party, however, could mobilize broad solidarity with striking auto workers, strengthening considerably our union's bargaining hand. General Motors, and the other auto corporations, would have to take that into consideration on the first day they sat down to the negotiating table.

A labor party could build support for the 45,000 teachers now on strike across the nation. It could campaign for more money for education so that teachers have a decent wage and students have adequate school facilities and programs.

A labor party could take social issues that are frequently raised at the bargaining table by individual unions—like pensions and health care—and lead a fight for the government to provide these rights for the entire nation.

A labor party could launch an effective campaign against antilabor legislation, wiping Taft-Hartley and the so-called right-to-work laws off the books. It could fight to ensure that all working people have the right to strike for better contracts and over health and safety violations.

### Organize the South

A labor party could be an invaluable weapon in the drive to organize the South, which runs into political obstacles at every step.

It could lead the fight against the energy rip-off, calling for opening the oil corporations' books and putting the energy industry under public ownership.

A labor party could make its power felt to prevent the U.S. government from militarily intervening in Nicaragua, the Middle East, or Southeast Asia. It could fight to ensure that there are no more Vietnams.

A labor party could demand that the money for social needs come from our

## Text of Henning statement

The following statement, titled **Labor Day—1979**, appeared in the August 31 'California AFL-CIO News.' The article was signed by John F. Henning, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.

There are signs American labor may be entering a decade of historic political change as the 1980s approach with their possibilities for national progress or decline. Labor's dilemma is clear enough: the two-party system is no longer serving the economic and social interests of the American working people. Indeed, the two parties appear simply one institution, with Democratic and Republican departments alike financed by the corporate community. It is that way in state after state across the nation.

The party of Franklin Roosevelt is no more, save for the principled few. Democrats in high places preach contempt of social programs directed to the relief of slum families. Others deny public employees survival wages in a time of scandalous corporate profit. Others call for an end to inflationary spending while soliciting millions of dollars for political use.

As to the Republicans, their rigid party doctrines have been anti-labor

and anti-poor through most of this century and much of the last.

Political conservatism inevitably follows from the power of corporate contributions. The dimensions of political spending were dramatically displayed in the California General Elections of last year when in contests for state-wide and legislative offices, corporations provided 77.2% of all moneys given candidates. Labor's part of the whole was eight percent.

In the face of such financial realities and realizing there is no present alternative to the one-party structure, labor must consider the advantages of a separate political party.

Labor parties have long led the way to progressive law in such democracies of the western tradition as Britain, Norway, Australia and New Zealand. They have assured unions of bargaining freedom and have written inspiring history in such areas as health, medical care and housing. They are free of corporate giving and thus of corporate control.

American labor in the coming year should, through its vehicles of education, study and measure the Labor Party experiences of the democratic nations. Our blind acceptance of external political authority finds us beggars at the table of national abundance. We deserve better than that.

tax money now squandered on the \$130-billion-plus military budget.

And it could demand the tax burden be taken off working people and that instead the big corporations pay the tab.

A labor party could lead the fight against racist and sexist discrimination and campaign for the Equal Rights Amendment and for affirmative action.

A labor party based on the unions, fighting in the political arena for such social issues, could cut across the false image that the interests of the labor movement are narrow or selfish. This could be a party of all working people and our allies—women, Blacks, Chicanos, working farmers. It could truly be a party of the majority.

The Democratic and Republican parties would quickly be exposed for what they are—parties that represent only a tiny minority, exploiters who profit from the misery of society.

A labor party could unite the working class in a way that the labor movement has not done since the 1930s. It would be a new kind of political party.

### Other labor parties

Henning points to some labor parties as examples—those in Britain, Norway, Australia, and New Zealand. It is true that these are parties based on the unions, and as such are positive alternatives to the capitalist parties in those countries.

But the leaderships and programs of these parties are committed to maintaining the capitalist status quo.

The labor party I am talking about would be different. It would be formed by the ranks of a fighting union movement. It would be democratic and involve millions of working people.

Henning calls for labor to use its "vehicles of education" to "study and measure" labor party experiences. I think that's a great idea. Education committees could take on the project and discussions could be organized at union meetings.

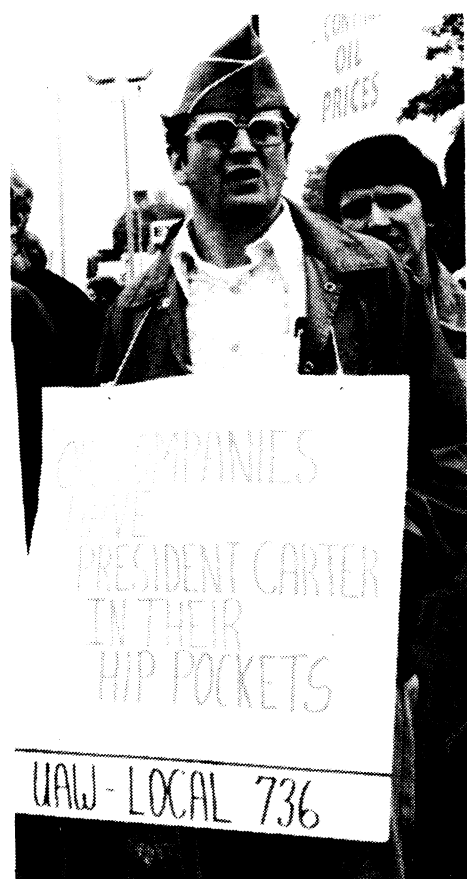
Henning's statement should be reprinted in local union newspapers, and columns in those papers opened up for members' contributions on the labor party idea.

The union membership should have the right to vote on any endorsement our unions make of political candidates. We could put a halt to the support our unions have generally handed the Democrats and Republicans.

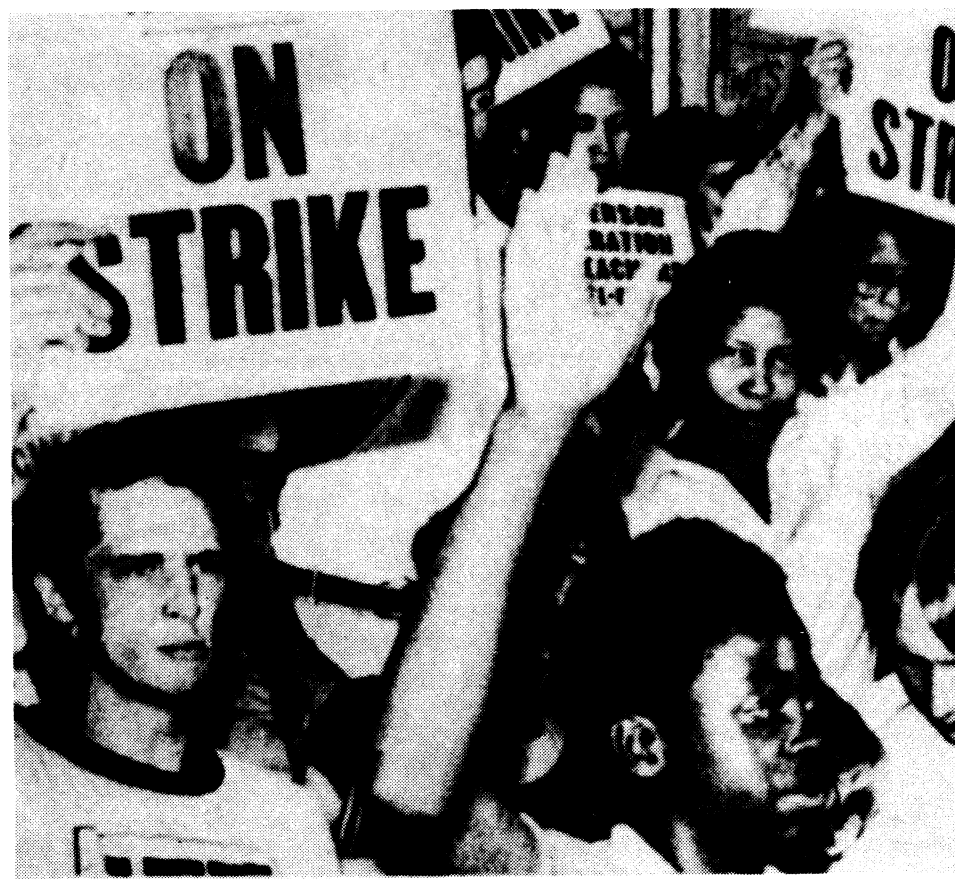
I believe it would get a great response because I know the positive reactions members of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance get when we talk about the idea of a labor party among our fellow workers.

The purpose of this discussion is not to scare the Democrats or to horsetrade labor's independence for more phony promises. We need to discuss the labor party so that we can act. We could begin by running independent labor candidates, here in California and elsewhere around the country.

George Johnson is a member of United Auto Workers Local 1364 at the General Motors plant in Fremont, California.



Militant/Arnold Weissberg



A labor party could lead fight against energy ripoff and campaign in support of 45,000 striking teachers.



# ...auto contract

Continued from back page

left before 1973, those who couldn't last for thirty years—must make do on far less. At GM the average pension payment is only \$300 a month.

As a result of soaring prices, many auto workers who have sweated out their thirty years can't afford to get out.

"We won't agree to any formula basis for adjusting pensions for our current retirees," said one company negotiator, who will undoubtedly enjoy a six-digit pension. "And we won't move."

GM's last offer was to raise pensions for those retiring after thirty years from \$700 to \$875 by the third contract year.

• **Shorter workweek with no cut in pay, including current overtime premiums.**

This is the only answer to the twin hardships of auto work—punishing stretches of overtime alternating with periodic layoffs. Auto workers have raised several demands that point in this direction—no forced overtime, thirty hours work for forty hours pay, no overtime while some are laid off, double-time for overtime.

UAW officials have pushed solely for more Paid Personal Holidays. PPH days are a few extra days off a year, scheduled at the company's discretion.

While any time off the line is welcome, PPH days don't amount to a shorter day or a shorter week. They fail to make any dent in unemployment. Moreover, the PPH system places no limits on forced overtime and excludes first-year employees, who are usually assigned the worst jobs and longest hours.

Ford and GM have reportedly offered seven more PPH days, bringing the total over the next three-year period up to nineteen.

• **Automatic recognition of the UAW in unorganized plants.**

In recent years GM has joined other employers in pursuing a "Southern Strategy"—opening new assembly plants in the South and moving key parts plants there in order to escape union demands. In response, the UAW won a "neutrality pledge" from GM in its 1976 contract. GM promised to observe a neutral stance during UAW organizing efforts. Company violations led the union to seek further concessions—an agreement in 1978 to

give preference to UAW members in hiring into these plants.

But wherever GM's promises have been put to the test—most recently in the UAW's organizing victory in Oklahoma City—they have been broken.

In this contract the UAW wants to close the loopholes and guarantee automatic union recognition in all GM plants. A victory on this demand would spell a tremendous advance in labor's southern organizing efforts.

GM and Ford are not eager for a head-on confrontation with the militant ranks of the 1.5-million-member UAW. The companies don't view it as realistic to seek big takebacks at this time. But they fully expect to hold auto workers' wages below the rate of inflation; to retain unchallenged control over line speed, overtime, hiring, and firing; and to allow no major extension of benefits.

In addition, the auto companies have singled out new employees for attack—the youngest workers, often Blacks and women. They are already the prime victims of the layoffs. Now the companies are trying to increase their starting-pay differential (from the current \$.45 to \$1.10 an hour) and to lengthen the probationary period it takes to qualify for union benefits.

Such attempts to create second-class citizens inside the plants and union are aimed at promoting divisions which can only sap the UAW's strength.

What will it take for auto workers to win their demands?

It will take a fight. One in which every UAW member has a role to play. The kind of fight members of Local 216 at GM's Los Angeles assembly plant were gearing up for when they voted in July to "take on the whole industry rather than just one company at a time."

A fight conducted through a real mobilization of union power—through elected strike committees, picket line rallies, marches, mass meetings, open negotiations—all tested methods of struggle from the UAW's past.

This kind of fight would rally the unemployed and the unorganized to the UAW's side. It would appeal for solidarity to the ranks of the entire labor movement—who share the auto workers' needs and whose own contracts will be greatly influenced by what the UAW wins.



## Pensions: 'Worth staying out for'

Militant correspondents in Detroit's auto plants have been talking to their co-workers about contract issues. Tom Headley, a member of United Auto Workers Local 262 at General Motors' Chevy Forge, reports that cost-of-living protection on pensions is the top demand in his plant, followed by higher wages, a shorter workweek, and more time off.

There is sentiment at the Forge for striking all the Big Three (GM, Ford, and Chrysler) to win these demands. "The auto companies have their own strike insurance and they all take care of each other," one co-worker told Headley. Striking all three would "get more people involved and make the strike more of an issue people would take note of," he added.

What about Fraser's proposal to stage selective strikes against key plants and suppliers? "If we go with selective strikes, GM will just lock everyone else out," thought this Forge worker.

"People here feel COLA on pensions is the number one issue," reports Jim Patch, a member of Local 163 at GM Diesel. "We feel it can be won and it's worth staying out for."

"The retirees can't do it for themselves," said one of Patch's co-workers. "We've got to do it for them."

Articles in the press that portray younger workers as uninterested in—or even opposed to—fighting for COLA on pensions are untrue, says Patch. "Younger workers can see the connection between inadequate pensions and unemployment. They know that jobs won't open up if older workers can't afford to retire."

Elizabeth Ziers, a member of giant Local 600 at Ford River Rouge, reports similar contract concerns among Ford workers.

"My father's worked here for thirty-two years," one of Ziers' co-workers told her. "He would have retired by now, but he's waiting to see if this contract will give him a pension he can live on."

"Contrary to what the business-owned media says, there is little or no animosity to workers who could have retired but haven't," says Ziers. "The workers understand their financial plight."

## \$1 a year?

Chrysler's two top executives, Chairman John Riccardo and President Lee Iacocca, made the headlines August 30 when they announced they would lower their own salaries to one dollar a year for the next two years. If the ailing company returns to profitability, however, they'll get their \$360,000 annual salaries back—with bonuses. This is their share of the "sacrifice" for Chrysler's bailout; now it's the UAW's turn.

Not surprisingly, auto workers are reserving their sympathy. Ford Rouge worker Mac Warren reported on a discussion he had with co-workers on this subject while waiting in line for their paychecks.

"Sure they can take one dollar a year salaries," one said. "Big deal. With \$360,000 salaries and all their bonuses, they don't have to worry. They can live off the interest of what they get."

"And then when Chrysler becomes profitable by lowering the wages of auto workers," added another, "they'll get all the money back and then some."

"This is just a show to convince Chrysler workers to take a pay cut," someone said. "Can you imagine an auto worker agreeing to one dollar a year? We'd be agreeing to starve to death."

## Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Jeff Pike, a member of Local 879 at Ford Truck in St. Paul, writes:

"Recently after work, Bob, a co-worker of mine, dropped his coffee cup for no apparent reason. 'Damn, I just can't seem to hang onto anything anymore,' he said. 'I've been waking up at night with pain in my hands. I can't move my fingers very well. I wonder what the hell is wrong.'

"Bob, like many auto production workers, may be suffering the symptoms of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS)—an occupational disease caused by prolonged use of poorly designed hand tools. Damage to the nerves in the hand result in pins-and-needles tingling and numbness. Treatment in the early stages is a splint on the worker's wrist; later injection of chemicals or even surgery may be necessary.

"Many new hires at Ford Truck who suffer from the disease are hesitant to report to medical for treatment. While on probation, management can simply axe them. GM and Ford are seeking to extend probation even longer in this year's contract.

"CTS could be greatly reduced if hand tools were designed with the health and safety of workers as the highest priority. Fighting for frequent job rotation and a shorter work-week are ways the UAW can check the spread of CTS and other crippling occupational diseases.

## Virginia organizing victory

One of the big contested issues in the GM contract talks is automatic recognition of the union in the company's non-union Southern shops.

The UAW's case was boosted September 6 when union negotiators reported a new Southern organizing victory. This time workers at GM's Delco-Moraine plant in Fredericksburg, Virginia, voted sixty-one to forty-six for the union. It was the seventh GM plant this year to be organized by the UAW. Four are in the South, including the giant Oklahoma City assembly plant.

GM opposes automatic recognition, claiming its Southern workers are anti-union. But, as the results show, GM is just trying to foist its own reactionary attitudes onto an increasingly pro-union work force.

Compiled by Shelley Kramer



In 1970 the United Auto Workers struck General Motors for increased pensions and restoration of unlimited cost-of-living allowance. Today auto workers are fighting to defend and extend these gains.

## What auto workers are fighting for

By Shelley Kramer

What are members of the United Auto Workers fighting for in new contracts with General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler?

"We're dealing with the fat cat of labor, somebody who's making over \$20,000 a year—not some guy you have to agonize over," an official at GM—the union's strike target—told the *Wall Street Journal*. "There's little an auto worker really needs."

Auto workers are among the top-paid industrial workers—thanks to decades of struggle by their union. But what do these "fat cats" really earn in dollars and cents?

The average auto worker earns about nine dollars an hour. After taxes his or her annual income (based on working a five-day week) comes to roughly \$13,000. Not much to support a family on at today's prices, and certainly not

the affluent picture painted by the news media.

Just to make ends meet, many auto workers are forced into dependence on grueling overtime, often ten hours a day, six or seven days a week. In working conditions notorious throughout the labor movement—deafening and filthy plants, understaffed and hazardous jobs, merciless speedup.

No matter how fast auto workers run to catch up with inflation, they can't get ahead. Prices are rising at an official annual rate of 13.2 percent (for bare necessities it's 18.6 percent).

As the recession deepens, growing numbers of auto workers join the ranks of the unemployed. Some 80,000 have already been laid off.

Chrysler, which employs 110,000 UAW members, is threatening to shut its gates for good if the government doesn't come through with a massive handout. And as the layoffs mount, the

industry's Supplemental Unemployment Benefit funds dry up.

As we go to press the union's negotiations with GM proceed in secrecy. If a settlement is not reached by midnight September 14, UAW leaders have announced plans to strike key assembly and parts plants, employing about 95,000 of GM's 460,000 workers.

Auto workers have made their demands known in local strike votes, inside and outside the UAW's bargaining convention, in demonstrations, and on the shop floor every day. Their concerns are concerns shared by all working people.

• **A substantial wage increase and improved cost-of-living allowance.**

At the least, auto workers expect the increased COLA formula won by the rubber workers in their strike this year—from one cent for every 0.3 increase in the Consumer Price Index to

one cent for every 0.26 increase.

GM, which raked in a record \$3.97 billion in after-tax profits last year, is offering only the standard 3 percent annual wage increase and no improvement in COLA. Company officials insist they must abide by Carter's 7 percent wage guidelines.

• **Cost-of-living protection on pensions.**

The UAW's 300,000 retirees watch helplessly as their fixed pensions are devoured by inflation. Their total benefits have risen 21 percent since 1974, while the cost of living has shot up 42 percent.

In 1973 the union won the right for any worker to retire after thirty years with a \$700 monthly pension. Try paying for rent, utilities, medical bills, and food on \$8,400 a year—you don't get far.

But many UAW retirees—those who

*Continued on page 31*

## Thousands hail Puerto Rican nationalists

By Arnold Weissberg

NEW YORK CITY—Waving Puerto Rican flags and shouting, "Viva Puerto Rico libre!", 3,000 people jammed into St. Paul the Apostle Church here September 11 to greet four Puerto Rican nationalists released from federal prison a few days earlier.

The four—Lolita Lebrón, Oscar Collazo, Irving Flores, and Rafael Cancel Miranda—had each served twenty-five years or more for taking up arms against the colonial status imposed on their country by the United States. They were the longest-held political prisoners in the Western Hemisphere.

The nationalist prisoners were granted unconditional executive clemency by President Carter on September 6 in a concession to world public opinion.

Labelled "terrorists" by the U.S. government, the four—plus a fifth, Andrés Figueroa Cordero, who died of cancer earlier this year—are national heroes of the Puerto Rican people. Their release from prison was demanded by both houses of the Puerto Rican legislature, four ex-governors of the island, and all the political parties, as well as numerous trade-union, student, religious, and civil organizations.

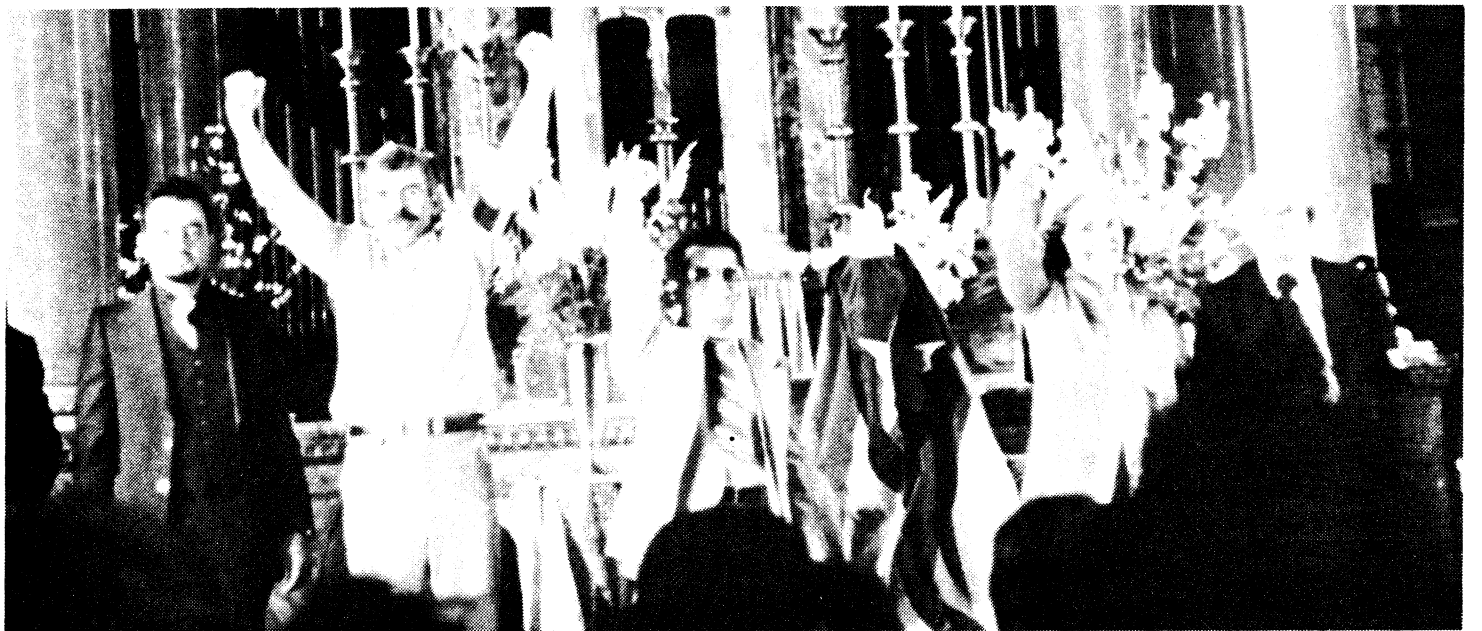
Despite their long imprisonment, none of the four ever wavered in their support for an independent Puerto Rico. They might have been released years ago had they been willing to ask for clemency, but all refused to acknowledge the U.S. government's jurisdiction over them.

"I intend to continue where I left off, to continue fighting for Puerto Rico's independence until I die," Collazo told a United Nations press conference before the rally.

At the rally here, the crowd roared its excitement for every expression of support to the independence struggle. The presence of delegations from Mexico, Grenada, Spain, and Bulgaria was cheered.

But the greatest applause was reserved for the delegations from Nicaragua.

*Continued on page 28*



Militant photos by Arnold Weissberg

Top: Three thousand people jammed into New York church to hear freed political prisoners. From left, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Irving Flores, Lolita Lebrón, Oscar Collazo. Bottom: hundreds at the rally waved Puerto Rican flags.