

D.C. cops tear gas, club anti-Klan demonstrators



Militant/Osborne Hart

Washington, D.C., November 27.

BY STEVEN FUCHS
AND OSBORNE HART

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Throughout the morning of November 27, hundreds of D.C. police protected a handful of Ku Klux Klanners. Throughout the afternoon, hurling tear-gas grenades and swinging clubs, they attacked thousands of anti-Klan demonstrators and onlookers. They arrested 38 people and injured an undetermined number.

The Klan had vowed to march in its hoods and robes through the streets of the capital. But they didn't march; and as they wandered around the Capitol grounds, intimidated by thousands of protesters nearby, they carried their robes in paper bags.

The Alabama-based Knights of the Ku Klux Klan tried to organize the first KKK

march in Washington since 1925. Originally they had threatened to march on November 6, but on that day there was no KKK demonstration. However, in response to the Klan's threats, 1,500 to 2,000 anti-Klan demonstrators did march. This action was backed by a broad range of union and Black community leaders.

In response to the latest Klan plans, the All People's Congress (APC) called for a rally in McPherson Square. The New York-based November 29 Coalition changed the site of its demonstration in solidarity with the Palestinian and Lebanese people, scheduled for the same date in New York, to D.C. in order to participate in the anti-Klan rally.

A number of D.C. community leaders, however, including some who had participated in the anti-Klan march three weeks

ago, did not urge people to participate in the countermobilization this Saturday. Instead they organized job counseling and other projects at local churches.

D.C. police not only mobilized hundreds of cops to protect the Klan. D.C. Police Chief Maurice Turner also warned people on radio broadcasts not to exercise their democratic right to join the anti-Klan protest.

Hundreds of D.C. residents ignored Turner's threats and joined the demonstration.

A thousand people marched from the Palestine solidarity rally at the Ellipse to McPherson Square to join the anti-Klan rally there.

Several thousand others assembled near the Capitol where the Klan's march was

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PLO meeting rejects Reagan plan

BY DAVID FRANKEL

For U.S. policymakers, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon has offered a golden opportunity for tightening Washington's grip on the Middle East. "The circumstances for progress in the Middle East are the best I can remember," Henry Kissinger crowed in an interview in the November 13 *Economist*, a British big-business weekly.

But there has been a major stumbling block to Washington's plans. Reagan has come up against the refusal of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to give up its struggle for national liberation and go along with imperialist dictates.

To the dismay of the U.S. rulers and of proimperialist regimes throughout the Middle East, that refusal was expressed once again by the PLO at its Central Council meeting in Damascus, Syria. The Central Council is the broadest and most representative body of the PLO to meet since the evacuation of the PLO forces from West Beirut last August. Its November 25-26 meeting specifically rejected the plan put forward by President Reagan September 1.

Reagan called for Arab governments to recognize Israel; for negotiations between Israel and Jordan's King Hussein over the future of the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, with their 1.3 million Palestinian inhabitants; and for some form of vaguely defined "association" between these areas and Jordan.

The aim of the proposal was to strengthen the political position of the Israeli colonial-settler state by getting additional Arab governments to join Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in recognizing Israel. In addition, the U.S. rulers hoped that after the defeat in Lebanon, at least some sectors of the PLO would be demoralized enough to succumb to pressure from Washington in return for promises to support an end to the Israeli occupation.

U.S. attempts to split the PLO have been supported by a spate of articles in the imperialist press alleging that various sectors of

the PLO leadership are in favor of accepting the Reagan proposal and are banking everything on gaining diplomatic recognition from Washington.

But in a statement read at the end of the National Council meeting by its president, Khaled al-Fahoum, and circulated by the PLO press service, Wafa, the Council declared that "the Reagan project does not meet the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people. This project ignores the right of our people to self-determination and the right to the establishment of an in-

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Church leaders oppose Washington's intervention in Central America

BY NELSON GONZÁLEZ

In a stinging denunciation of the Reagan administration's war plans against the people of Central America and the Caribbean, more than 300 religious leaders in the United States, including 22 Roman Catholic bishops issued a letter demanding an end to Washington's interventionist policy in Central America.

The letter was made public at a news conference in New York on November 26. It was distributed by the Inter-Religious Task Force on El Salvador and Central America, a national organization of religious groups across the country that organ-

izes activities in opposition to U.S. military intervention in Central America. The appeal is supported by more than a dozen religious organizations.

In addition to the Catholic bishops, the heads of several major Protestant denominations and nine rabbis signed the appeal.

The letter states that, "As citizens of the United States we are particularly sensitive to the responsibility that our government bears in the oppression and violence in Central America."

In a direct attack against the Reagan administration, the letter on Central America

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Nicaraguan war victims sue U.S. officials

BY IKE NAHEM

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A suit was filed here November 30 in the United States District Court charging that a conspiracy exists between U.S. government officials and right-wing Nicaraguan exiles to deprive Nicaraguan citizens of their basic rights. The suit was filed on behalf of a group of Nicaraguan citizens, California Congressman Ronald Dellums, and two U.S. residents who live near paramilitary training camps.

The suit, submitted by attorneys for the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) and the National Lawyers Guild (NLG), was announced at a well-attended news conference the same morning.

The suit focuses on the human rights violations that have characterized more than 400 documented raids into Nicaragua from Honduras. It charges that the U.S. government is involved in organizing these attacks, which include serious abuses to civilians involving murder, rape, and torture.

The plaintiffs include a 16-year-old boy, who was kidnapped and taken to Honduras; a doctor who was raped; Brenda Rocha, a 15-year-old girl who lost her arm as a result of injuries received in a raid; and several others who were wounded and lost family members.

The plaintiffs assert that a conspiracy, which aims at violent destabilization of the Nicaraguan government, contravenes accepted standards of international law and human rights. This gives them the right to sue here, they point out, under the Alien Tort Claims Act.

At the news conference, Michael Ratner, president of the NLG stated, "The case is of great historical, legal, and political significance. It's the first time in U.S. courts that victims of U.S. covert operations have ever filed a case against the United States and other officials. They're suing in the U.S. courts for damages caused to them and to Nicaraguan citizens, as a result of U.S.-sponsored paramilitary operations against the people of Nicaragua."

"What the case hopes to bring home to the American people . . . is that there are people, citizens of Nicaragua, who are being injured, killed, raped, kidnapped, and tortured as a result of the U.S.-sponsored covert military operation against the people of Nicaragua."

The defendants in this case include President Ronald Reagan, CIA director William Casey, former and current secretary of state Alexander Haig and George Shultz, Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger, U.S. Ambassador to Honduras John Negroponte, and Nicaraguan and Cuban counterrevolutionaries living in Florida.

The Nicaraguan plaintiffs are suing for damages and an injunction to halt continuing U.S. covert military operations against Nicaragua.

The two U.S. plaintiffs are suing to close down the paramilitary camps operating in Dade County, Florida, under provisions of Florida state law.

Dellums is joining the suit on the basis that the secret campaign against Nicaragua violates the Neutrality Act, the War Powers Act, and Congress' constitutional authority to declare or not declare war.

In a statement issued to the media, Dellums stated, "I feel deeply my responsibility as a member of Congress and a member of the House Armed Services Committee to insist that the executive branch not commit this nation to a covert, illegal war . . ."

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D.C. cops attack anti-Klan demonstrators

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scheduled to begin. The cops kept them all behind snow fences.

The KKK planned to march from the Capitol to nearby Lafayette Park across from the White House. Its rally was originally billed as a "Support your police" action. On the day itself, the KKK described it as a march against immigrant workers.

The Klan had previously boasted it would mobilize 200 to 300 hooded Klansmen. But they only mustered fewer than 40, who were afraid to even don their robes.

This small band wandered around the Capitol grounds until it was noticed by a few Black youth. Cops quickly escorted the Klanners to nearby Senate Park.

Hoisting a KKK flag the Klan assembled there for a media event. It was attended by more than 80 reporters and protected by hundreds of police.

Tom Robd, a KKK chaplain from Arkansas, told the media, "The Lord will reestablish the foundation of this nation upon . . . white Christianity and Western civilization."

Intimidated by the thousands of demonstrators nearby, the Klan evidently thought it wise to cancel its march. Herding the small group into an underground bathroom and through a tunnel, police bused the Klanners out in secret, reportedly to Lafayette Park.

The anti-Klan demonstrators saw this as an important victory. "We stopped the Klan, we stopped the Klan," they chanted. As word spread that the Klan would not march, the protesters headed toward Lafayette Park.

Rally nobody saw

When marchers reached the park, the Klan was nowhere to be found. The cops and *Washington Post* and other media claimed the Klan was brought to the park for a short rally and then spirited away. But if the Klan held a rally at all, it was organized so that nobody would notice. No photos or news reports have described any rally.

Meanwhile the anti-Klan rally had gotten underway in McPherson Square. The demonstrators there were joined by many from the protest at the Capitol. Others congregated in Lafayette Park a block away and in the streets between them.

The cops finished with their work protecting the Klan, turned on the anti-Klan demonstrators.

They charged a crowd of people about a block from the rally, lobbing tear-gas grenades into the air.

A few minutes later, with the odor of the pepper gas still strong, protesters gathered again on the street. They remained about a half block from the police line.

Suddenly, without provocation, the police charged again. Again they threw the

gas canisters at the crowd.

"Everything was quiet; then they [the cops] all of a sudden attacked," one local resident told the *Militant*. "It was like they incited the citizens."

Cops on horseback

Park police arrived on horseback trying to push people off the streets and sidewalks, but no one wanted to leave.

"Hey we live here," shouted some.

The mounted police began to charge the crowd swinging their batons and clubbing anyone in their path. They chased a young woman into hedges pinning her with their horses. They clubbed two men who were pushed to the ground.

By now the crowd had enough.

Digging up bricks and rocks from the sidewalk, the crowd defended itself from charging cops on horses.

The police were forced back. They regrouped and charged again. Again the demonstrators defended themselves.

"They were trying to intimidate us," one participant told the *Militant*.

People were not intimidated. The crowd chased the police back up Jackson Place, past Lafayette Park.

The police attack provoked nearly three hours of roving street battles between the mostly young demonstrators and cops.

Most bystanders sympathized with the crowd, not the cops. Typical was the sentiment of Alvin Middleton, a 31-year-old Black truck driver, who told the *Baltimore Sun* as he watched the fighting, "If they let one single Klanner march anywhere in this city, it had to happen. I don't condone it — this fighting I mean — but I think it's good that people are out here to show their feelings."

Some bystanders joined the growing crowd after they became victims of the police violence.

Often when police tried to pick off an isolated protester, a crowd of others came to the rescue.

Shortly after 3 p.m. the police announced they were going to break up the rally, which had continued in McPherson Square during the fighting. A police van circled the park announcing, "The permit has been revoked. You must leave the area. Arrests will be made."

The rally chairperson told the crowd, "The police want us out of the park. We're here to say, 'This is our park.'" Most people stayed.

The rally ended shortly afterward without police entering the park. Cops cordoned off a large downtown area. For along time after the rally, people moved in large crowds in the streets and sidewalks.

In a news conference later that day Police Chief Turner said, "It was blind, senseless rage, which cannot be excused or justified."

But to those who were there, nothing

could seem further from the truth.

Many demonstrators turned out in response to the appeals of the APC and others. But many protesters were not aware of the various organized anti-Klan rallies before they arrived. These young people, mostly workers, students, and unemployed youth from the D.C. area, came out on their own to tell the Klan to go home.

They came, as one person told the *Militant*, "because the Klan is out to destroy my race." And they were enraged to see the cops protecting the racists while they attacked antiracist protesters.

"The cops and the Klan work hand in hand," many chanted during the day.

Others chanted, "Reagan and the Klan work hand in hand," explaining they saw the government as the problem and not just the KKK. "If it weren't for Ronald Reagan, I don't think the Klan would even be on this resurgence," one protester said.

An auto worker from Ford's Rouge plant

Church leaders oppose intervention

Continued from front page

directly implicates Washington in the increased bloodshed there. "Our government is embarked on a course which we believe will only increase the bloodshed and the violation of the people's rights and dignity as well as increase the danger of a regional war," the letter asserts.

This statement from religious leaders comes just before President Reagan will begin a tour of Central America. Reagan plans to meet with the presidents of Honduras, El Salvador, and Costa Rica. This is part of the administration's attempt to strengthen conservative forces in the region and to arm these regimes for intervention against the Nicaraguan revolution.

In addition, President Reagan will meet with Guatemalan dictator General Efraín Ríos Montt. The November 29 *New York Times* describes this as the "clearest signal to date that Washington is about to normalize relations with Guatemala." This action is being considered despite reports by Amnesty International and other human rights groups accusing Ríos Montt of using his "born again" Christian evangelical rhetoric as cover for increased repression against the workers and peasants of that country.

In sharp rebuttal to this course the letter from religious leaders declares, "We deplore our government's role in the militarization of Central America, including the slow but steady increase of U.S. military advisors in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala."

According to the *New York Times* the letter urges that Americans, "should seek an end to all military aid and intervention in Central America, an end to covert operations by the United States Government

told the *Militant*, "Both the Nazis and the Klan are opposed to the unions, just as Reagan is. . . . They're on a concerted drive to destroy the unions."

"We want jobs," others shouted as they hurled bricks at police.

A leader of the November 29 Coalition told the 1,000 people at the Palestine solidarity rally that they were participating in the anti-Klan rally because, "the November 29 Coalition and the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization] oppose racism in all its forms on the national and international levels."

The bitter opposition to the Klan — not just of the demonstrators but of the working people of D.C. — was well expressed by civil rights leader Rev. John Gibson when he spoke to the McPherson Park rally. "We are here to make a statement, not just to the Klan — they're just the tip of the iceberg — but to all the racists. . . . We will fight you and we will win; here and all over the world."

there, negotiated political solutions to conflicts in El Salvador and between Honduras and Nicaragua, and temporary asylum for Central Americans fleeing oppression."

Reflecting the strong anti-intervention sentiment that exists in the United States, Bishop Rene Valero from Brooklyn, one of the signers of the letter, pointed out that there was a "greater awareness among American Catholics than ever before" concerning the problems the Church faces in Central America. He attributed this to the growing number of American Catholics from Latino backgrounds.

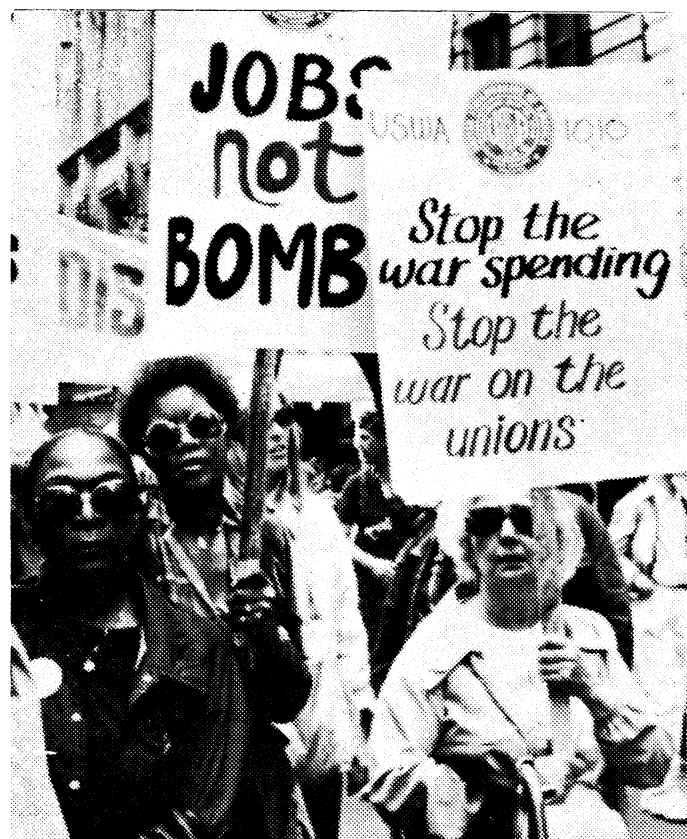
The letter from religious figures occurs within a broader campaign called the Campaign for Peace with Justice in Central America. In this campaign the Inter-Religious Task Force on El Salvador as well as other Central America solidarity groups will be collecting signatures on a petition that calls for a halt to Washington's war plans in the region. The results will be announced in a new conference scheduled for May.

Antievolution law annulled in Louisiana

A Louisiana law requiring public schools to teach "creation science" with the theory of evolution was struck down November 22.

Federal District Judge Adrian Duplantier granted a summary judgement sought by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of 45 plaintiffs. The state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, originally a defendant, switched sides during the litigation.

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UN/Milton Grant

Zehdi Terzi, PLO's UN representative

'Solidarity with Palestine' theme of New York meeting

'PLO will continue struggle by any means necessary'

BY DAVID FRANKEL

NEW YORK — Nov. 29, 1947, was the day that the UN General Assembly voted to partition Palestine and set up the Israeli state. This action, carried out despite the demands of the majority of the people of Palestine, was only possible because in 1947 almost all of Africa and much of Asia was still under colonial rule and not yet represented in the United Nations.

But in 1976 the UN General Assembly declared November 29 an international day of solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people for self-determination. It has been celebrated each year since then.

"That the 29 of November should become a day of solidarity instead of the day of dismemberment of my country is itself a great victory," Zehdi Labib Terzi, the Palestine Liberation Organization's UN representative, told some 300 people at a meeting in New York City November 28.

The meeting was organized by the November 29 Coalition.

Terzi explained that after decades of appealing to international bodies and the conscience of humanity, the Palestinian people resorted to "our only other option — armed struggle . . . for our right to self-determination, to live in our own state, our own country. For this, we have gained the support of the whole world."

One exception, Terzi said, was the U.S. government. Speaking of the so-called peace plan put forward by President Reagan in September, Terzi declared that "it just looks like a sugar-coated pill."

Terzi asked, "If they are really serious about their peace initiative, why does the U.S. continue to support Israel and its plans, its colonization and repression in the West Bank, its dirty war in Lebanon?"

The Palestinians, Terzi declared, would reject "all the plans, by Reagan and others, if they do not address the right to self-determination of more than 4 million Palestinians, the return of the Palestinians to their homes and their land, and their right to an independent state."

The PLO "will continue the struggle by all means possible, including armed struggle," Terzi vowed. "Our people have put all their faith and trust in us, and we are not about to lead them like sheep into the slaughterhouse."

Responding to the speculation in the imperialist media about splits within the PLO, Terzi declared, "We in the PLO believe in democracy." He asserted that the discussion in the PLO was just that — a discussion among fighters for national liberation. Such discussion was essential, Terzi said, because "what we are dealing with is the fate of an entire people."

The PLO, Terzi said, would take its time, examine all the questions before it, and give its answers to them in due course. In the meantime, he added, "Thanks to the

struggle and militancy of our fighters, the world now understands what we are fighting for."

The meeting was chaired by human rights activist and antiwar fighter Ralph Schoenmann. He spoke about his experiences in Lebanon in August and September and pointed to the U.S. responsibility for Israel's aggression there.

Emilio Caballero, a member of Cuba's UN delegation, spoke on behalf of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries. Caballero recalled Cuban President Fidel Castro's speech to the Nonaligned conference in Havana in September 1979, in which Castro said, "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 prac-

ticing against the Palestinian people."

The policies followed by the Israeli rulers, Caballero pointed out are endangering the Israeli people as well as the Arab masses. He took note of the protests within Israel against the aggressive course of the Begin government, and said that this course was possible "only because of the military, financial, and diplomatic backing of its main imperialist allies."

Valerie Van Isler of the November 29 Coalition linked the Palestinian cause to the liberation struggles in Central America, southern Africa, and Ireland. She pointed out that imperialism and colonialism cannot exist without racism, and that it was Zionist racism that was behind the massacre in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps.

Paul Saba spoke on behalf of the Lebanese National Movement, calling for the withdrawal of all Israeli troops from Lebanon.

1,000 protesters picket Begin in L.A.

BY SETH GALINSKY

LOS ANGELES — Chanting slogans that reverberated off the walls surrounding buildings, 1,000 demonstrators protested Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin's visit here on November 13.

Earlier in the day, Los Angeles residents were greeted by front-page pictures in all of the daily newspapers showing a smiling Mayor Thomas Bradley presenting Begin with the keys to the city. This "hero's welcome" for Begin, and indeed the entire

visit itself, deeply angered many people in Los Angeles, coming only a short time after the Begin government's genocidal invasion of Lebanon.

As the crowd of North Americans, Latinos, Blacks, Arabs, and Iranians began picketing, hotel guests could be seen observing from the Bonaventure windows and lobbies.

The protesters chanted, "Hey, hey Begin, smile while you can. Remember what happened to the shah of Iran!" and

Music was provided by the Rev. F.D. Kirkpatrick, Naomi Cohen, and Phil Wilayto, and Aruco, a group of Chilean musicians in exile.

The spirit of the evening was perhaps best summed up by Palestinian poet Fawaz Turki. Reading from his poem, "The Seed Keepers," Turke said:

Burn our land
burn our dream
pour acid onto our songs
cover with sawdust
the blood of our massacred people. . . .

Do that and more,
I do not fear your tyranny.
I guard one seed
of a tree
my forefathers have saved
that I shall plant again
in my homeland.

'The continuing crisis in Lebanon'

BY SUZANNE HAIG

NEW YORK — "The Continuing Crisis in Lebanon" was the topic of a teach-in here November 21, sponsored by the National Emergency Committee on Lebanon. Some 300 people attended.

Among the speakers was Columbia University professor Edward Said, a member of the Palestine Liberation Organization's National Council.

Also speaking were several medical personnel who had been working in Lebanon at the time of the Israeli invasion and the massacre of Palestinian civilians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps. They reported on what they had seen and on the continuing attacks on the Palestinian population.

Dr. Christopher Giannou, a Canadian surgeon, reported that the government hospital across the road from the Ain al Hilweh refugee camp was bombed at least five times while he was working there in June.

Mary Carol, a nurse at the Gaza Hospital in West Beirut, had just returned to the

United States November 1. She said that, as a result of the war, there are now hundreds of thousands of homeless people. Most have no access to medical care.

"The American University Hospital in Beirut, one of the largest and best in the Middle East, is a private hospital," she noted. "You have to have money to get in, so many are turned away."

Palestinians face constant harassment, Carol explained. "There are security checks all the time, where people are pulled off the streets for no apparent reason, whether their papers are in order or not."

Carol Berrigan and Blaise Lupo reported on an 11-day trip to Lebanon and Israel that they made as part of a women's delegation organized by the Palestine Human Rights Committee and the Middle East Council of Churches.

One child at the Shatila camp, who had been burned by an Israeli phosphorous bomb — made in the USA — asked Berrigan to photograph him standing next to a bombshell, "so the world will know who burned and wounded me."

Two Israelis living in New York, Yaa-kov Pipman of Jews Against the Massacre in Lebanon, and Tania Reinhart of the Peace Now Movement, also spoke.

"There is a polarization of attitudes in Israel," Pipman said. "Today, you can pass out leaflets supporting the Palestine Liberation Organization and for the right to self-determination for Palestinians. People are more likely to give you a hearing."

Also speaking at the teach-in were Ellen Siegel, a nurse who recently testified at the Israeli inquiry on the massacre at Sabra and Shatila, and Gail Pressberg of the American Friends Service Committee, who just returned from Lebanon.

"Jews, yes. Zionists, no. That's the line of the PLO."

Apparently these and other chants made some of the rich people in the hotel quite upset. Ten or 20 of them came out and started up a counterchant from across the street. They were immediately drowned out by loud chants of "PLO, PLO, PLO."

The first speaker at the rally was a representative of the Lebanese National Movement in Los Angeles. "I don't want a terrorist to have the keys to my city," he explained. Criticizing Mayor Bradley, he added that in spite of Begin's welcome by some sectors, "I promise you that the Lebanese National Movement, in coordination with the Palestinian forces, will continue to fight until every last kilometer of territory in the Middle East is liberated from Zionist terror."

Several speakers emphasized the connection between the struggle in Central America and the Middle East. Norma Chincilla of the Guatemala Information Center stated, "Lebanon and Central America have at least two things in common. Both are fighting for national liberation . . . and both have been killed by bullets fired from Israeli guns. Israel is the principal supplier of weapons to the Guatemalan government."

"But today the Central American people are winning their struggle," she went on, "and the Palestinian people will win the same way."

Tony Russo, prosecuted for releasing the Pentagon Papers during the Vietnam War and a representative of the U.S.-Vietnam Friendship Society made clear that, "Our task is to stay in solidarity with people fighting oppression everywhere." To those who accuse the Palestinian movement of being anti-Jewish, Russo answered, "Let there be no doubt we stand firmly against anti-Semitism. The idea that it is anti-Semitic to oppose Begin is totally false."

Other speakers at the rally represented the Committee for a Democratic Palestine, the National Black Independent Political Party, and the Southern California Communist Party.

The demonstration was endorsed by November 29 Coalition, Palestine Arab Fund, Lebanese National Movement, Committee for a Democratic Palestine, Committee in Solidarity with the Palestinian People, U.S. Anti-Imperialist League, Socialist Workers Party, Communist Party, Casa Nicaragua, and many others.

From Pathfinder

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Should women have right to abortion?

The following letter was received by *Perspectiva Mundial*, the Spanish-language sister publication of the *Militant*. The letter and reply by *PM* editor José G. Pérez is scheduled to appear in the December 20 *PM*.

Letter to 'Perspectiva Mundial'

I want to express my differences with your position on the right to abortion.

First of all, there are no individual rights that are above social needs; therefore, the supposed individual right of women to control their own bodies does not exist. In the *last* analysis, freedom of choice would belong to two persons, since two persons participate in the conception of a new life, which we know starts with the cell. But as I said, before this comes social needs.

One billion people could live comfortably in this country; yet there is only one-fourth of that figure, which greatly facilitates the domination of the exploiting minority. As Lenin said: Why not raise sons and daughters so they can fight? Not for nothing has imperialism carried out sterilization campaigns in many underdeveloped countries. The more people there are in this country, the worse will the situation become for the ruling class.

It would be much more justifiable to propose the physical elimination of all those born with irredeemable physical and mental defects.

The sexual act is not a question of pleasure. First and foremost it is a natural necessity to ensure survival of the human species; otherwise, we should demand freedom of prostitution.

This society as a whole is corrupt and even left organizations are not exempt from contamination.

P. Redward
Oakland, California

Reply by 'PM' editor

BY JOSÉ G. PÉREZ

P. Redward's letter says that "there are no individual rights that are above social needs" and therefore *Perspectiva Mundial's* position in defense of legal, safe abortion, available to all women, is wrong.

The fact is that the right to abortion — which is simply the right of women to control their own bodies — is a very pressing social need. That's why tens of thousands of women around the world have struggled to win this right, and why the Marxist movement has traditionally backed their demand.

Redward argues the question of "individual rights" and "social needs" abstractly, obscuring the class questions at stake in the right to abortion.

The issue is not women asserting their "individual" rights against other "individuals," such as men or government officials, doctors, or clergy.

Marxists approach all questions from the standpoint of the interests of the working class. On the question of abortion, we have to begin by recognizing that women are not a group of "individuals," but an oppressed sex. The majority of women in the United States are also exploited as workers.

At the heart of women's oppression is the denial of their right to control their reproductive capacities. That's what the abortion struggle is about — the democratic right of half the population to decide for themselves if and when they will bear children.

The oppressed sex

Redward ignores the deep-rooted discrimination women face in every facet of their lives.

But only by examining the ways women are oppressed can we understand why this issue is so important, not only for women, but for the working class as a whole.

The majority of women in the United States work outside the home. When they get off the job, they must put in long hours of unpaid overtime taking care of household chores.

On the job, women earn less than two-thirds of what men earn. The yearly median wage of women who work full time is \$6,760 less than what men earn. Multiplying this by the 45 million women in the labor force we get \$300 billion that the capitalists make — simply by not paying women as much as men.

For Black women and Latinas, who are triply oppressed as workers, women, and members of oppressed nationalities, the wage disparity is even greater.

Whereas white males have a median weekly salary of \$380, Latinas earn only \$209.

These differentials go against the interests of the entire working class, because it puts a heavy downward pressure on everyone's wages. Only the bosses profit from this.

In addition discrimination on the basis of sex — as on the basis of race, nationality, or language — is used to pit working people against each other, placing big obstacles on the road to a united struggle against the exploiters.

Women's 'natural' role

Bourgeois ideology justifies discrimination against women on the basis that their "natural" place is the home, performing tasks from rearing children, food preparation and cleaning clothes to nursing the sick and elderly. This is part of foisting responsibility for all these tasks on individual families rather than making them the collective responsibility of society as a whole. In this way the capitalist rulers and their government free themselves from providing such services as child care, adequate health care, decent education, and so forth.

This is justified by pointing to the biological capacity of women to bear children. Women's main role in society, the capitalists and their ideologists say, is reproduction, while men are the breadwinners, political leaders, and so forth.

What it comes down to is that women must limit their lives to taking care of their children and home, and not become involved in broader society. From an early age, there is a systematic attempt to convince women that they are weak and unintelligent, and therefore should be dependent on men.

Biology is not destiny

There are, of course, physiological differences between men and women. But biology is *not* destiny, as women themselves are proving in the United States and other countries.

Since the rise of the women's movement at the end of the 1960s, thousands of women have entered many jobs they were traditionally excluded from. Women coal miners, truck drivers, steel and auto workers have given the lie to the claim that these are "men's jobs" only.

In Central America, Nicaraguan women played a key role in the struggle against the Somoza dictatorship. A number of women reached the rank of commander — the highest military rank among the insurgent forces — and played important military leadership roles. In El Salvador, we see a similar process.

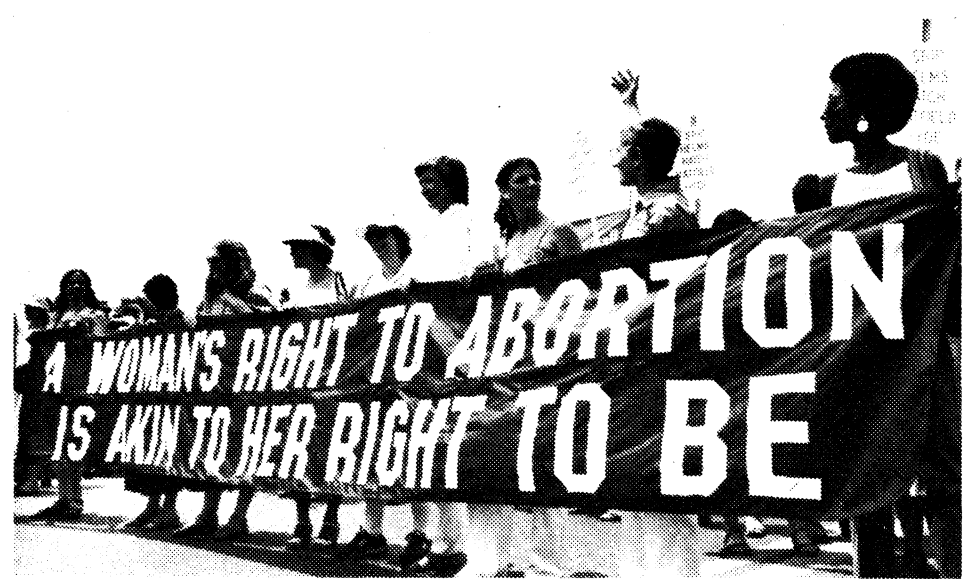
Restriction of women's right to control their own bodies is one of the most fundamental and barbaric methods of ensuring that women "stay in their place."

Without the ability to determine whether and when to bear a child, a woman's entire life is circumscribed by her reproductive capacities. At any time, no matter what her economic circumstances or individual goals, she can be forced to carry a pregnancy to term. Once she gives birth, she will bear the major responsibility for bringing up the child.

Since other forms of contraception are not 100 percent effective, it's no wonder that millions of women choose to have an abortion at some time in their lives.

Without the option of doing this, women's right to full humanity does not exist. Without being able to fully exercise control over their bodies, all other rights — including the woman's right to life itself are jeopardized.

When abortions were illegal in the United States, rich women could get them from skilled doctors in good hospitals. In capitalist society, there is no law higher



Militant/Lou Howort

Right to control their own bodies is starting point for women winning full liberation

than the almighty dollar.

But for most women, the situation was radically different. They were forced to go to back-alley butchers or try dangerous self-induced abortions. In 1969 some 10,000 women were admitted to New York City hospitals due to complications from illegal abortions. Although precise figures do not exist, it is estimated that anywhere from 300 (the official estimate) to several thousand women died yearly in the United States due to the antiabortion laws. In New York City, 80 percent of those who died were Black or Latina.

Effect of the Hyde Amendment

Even following the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision striking down antiabortion laws, this right was not equally accessible to all women. This was partly ameliorated by the Medicaid program, which covers some of the medical costs of people on public assistance. But in 1977, Congress's Hyde Amendment went into effect, cutting off Medicaid payments for abortions.

This measure is explicitly directed against the most oppressed layers of the working class, especially women of the oppressed nationalities. It is no coincidence that the first woman to die from an illegal abortion — because she could not afford a legal one following the Medicaid cutoff — was Rosie Jiménez, a 27-year-old Chicana from Texas.

The Hyde Amendment is part of a broader offensive by the ruling class against the rights and standard of living of working people. Women's right to abortion has been a central target of this offensive.

Who should decide?

Redward echoes one idea that has also been raised by right-wing opponents of abortion: "in the *last* analysis, freedom of choice would belong to two persons, since two persons participate in the conception of a new life."

This ignores the fact that it is the woman's body and the woman's life that is most directly and intimately affected by the pregnancy. The man does not carry the fetus within his body; the man will not lose his job or education due to an unplanned and unwanted pregnancy.

Passing a law giving men veto power over a woman's decision to have an abortion opens the door to further state interference. If approval of a man can be required, why not also that of the parents of a pregnant teenager? Or of doctors? Or of a judge?

Human sexuality

Redward also argues that "the sexual act is not a question of pleasure. First and foremost it is a natural necessity to ensure survival of the human species."

Human beings are distinguished from animals precisely because we are not slaves of our biology. Scientific advances now make it possible to enjoy sexual activity without fear of an unwanted pregnancy, surely a step forward for humanity.

The logic of Redward's statement would be to adopt the position of the Catholic church hierarchy that sex without procreation is immoral. This is used not only to oppose the right of women to choose abortion

— even to save the woman's life! — but also to oppose all scientific methods of contraception.

Abortion and population control

The main thrust of Redward's letter is that defending the right of women to control their own bodies means adopting the reactionary standpoint of population-control advocates.

Such people are often referred to as Malthusians, after Thomas Malthus, a late 18th and early 19th century writer who preached that there was no point in workers struggling for better wages and conditions, since any rise in their standard of living would be automatically canceled out by an increase in population.

History has refuted Malthus so thoroughly that today very few can be found who defend his thesis in its original form. Modern day neo-Malthusians turn his theory upside-down, in order to arrive at exactly the same political conclusions.

These people say that, while not inevitable, overpopulation is at the root of the poverty of colonial and semicolonial countries and layers of the working class in the United States.

Using this theory as justification, the rulers of the United States have carried out racist "population-control" drives that trample on the right of women to control their own bodies.

Various colonial and semicolonial nations, as well as Blacks, Latinos, and Native Americans in the United States, have been special targets of such campaigns. In Puerto Rico, some 35 percent of the women of child-bearing age had been sterilized by the mid-1970s. Sterilization is so common there that it is referred to simply as "la operación" — the operation. Often women are given incomplete or false information, such as that the operation is reversible, or are made to consent to sterilization as part of the price for obtaining an abortion.

The 'overpopulation' myth

It is easy to show that the neo-Malthusians are charlatans. For example, India is often mentioned as a country that is poor because it is overpopulated, although the real reason is that the British systematically looted it for hundreds of years as a direct colony and continue looting it today in conjunction with the American, Japanese, and other imperialists.

But how overpopulated is India *really*? India has 513 people per square mile. And Britain? 593!

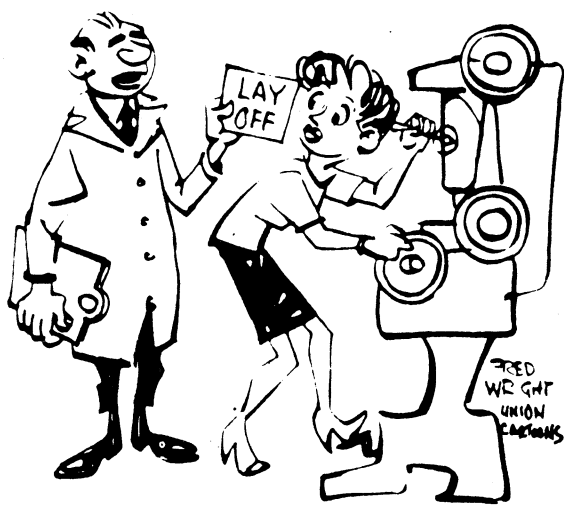
And this is not even one of the more striking examples. Overpopulated Mexico has 89 persons per square mile. Belgium — who nobody ever calls overpopulated — has almost *ten times* as many, 836 per square mile.

Neo-Malthusianism is an attempt to cover up the fact that, behind the poverty of the majority of humanity, lies, not overpopulation, but capitalist exploitation.

For this reason, Marxists are opponents of neo-Malthusianism. But this does not mean we should adopt a position that would be a mirror image of theirs, calling for maximum population growth instead of zero population growth.

The Redward letter falls into this trap. It

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"Our company's policy. . . . Ladies first."

Women electrical workers win suit against GE's sex discrimination

BY CHRIS GAUVREAU

LYNN, Mass. — Electrical workers here have won an important victory. In October, International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE) Local 201, representing 9,000 workers, settled a major sex discrimination suit with the General Electric Co.

The heart of the settlement was GE's agreement to raise the pay rates of approximately 400 jobs that have been traditionally held by women. The pay-rate increases themselves are expected to cost GE a quarter-of-a-million dollars a year.

GE was also forced to set up new training programs and to expand others for skills not traditionally open to women. For the first time, women can enroll in training programs without suffering a drop in their rate of pay. Tool and cutter grinding, welding, machining, and electronics classes must maintain slots for women in 1982, 1983, and 1984.

The union's ability to fight GE's violations of federal law on pregnancy-disability benefits has been strengthened by the settlement. The company must now consider leaves of absence for emergency child care for male and female employees.

GE must also make available a greatly expanded list of daily job openings for bidding and upgrading. The agreement on secondary job listings makes it more difficult for the company to manipulate the upgrading system. This makes it easier for all workers, male and female, to move into better jobs.

IUE recently settled a similar "comparable worth" case with Westinghouse, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the union's favor.

Legal action against GE began in 1969. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), in response to the growing militancy of the women's rights and civil rights movements, sued GE for discrimination against women and minorities. In 1978 the suit was settled out of court. GE was forced to spend \$32 million to clean up its act. In Lynn, it resulted in some job-rate increases, a machine operator training program (MOTP), special bonus incentives for upgrading, and some quotas for hiring women and minorities.

Two hundred women workers at the Wilmington, Massachusetts, GE plant, one of Local 201's bargaining-unit plants, held a meeting after work and decided that this national settlement did not go far enough. Forty percent of the employees at the electronics assembly plant are women. The plant has a large concentration of "women's jobs" that have historically been low rated and low paid.

Grievances filed before the War Labor Board in 1944 and GE management manuals show that this was a deliberate company policy. When many women workers were hired into the plant during World War II, managers were told to reduce the wage rates 33 percent on the jobs they held. This meant thousands of dollars in extra profits for GE every year. The national EEOC settlement did not change this discriminatory rate structure, and GE refused to negotiate individual rate grievances.

In response, IUE Local 201 filed a class-action suit in federal court on behalf of all women in the GE Riverworks, Everett, West Lynn, and Wilmington plants. GE filed, and won, a motion in court that IUE could not represent its own women members because it was a "predominantly male union." The courts bought this argument, but the union and the women plaintiffs did not. Local 201 circumvented this attack by encouraging the women plaintiffs to get their own lawyers. The case proceeded, with union backing.

GE workers did not wait for this case to be resolved in the courts. Between 1978 and 1982, many grievances were filed, some strike actions taken, and several campaigns were launched over job categories and other questions of women's rights.

In October 1979, workers struck, some for as long as five weeks, over GE's unfair pay rate for the "prep-to-braze" job, a job done primarily by women at the Riverworks plant.

In August 1979, thermocouple workers struck over job rates at the Wilmington plant. By 1980 Wilmington assembly workers had threatened several strikes and discussed new legal action over rates and transfer rights.

In January 1980, a Black woman worker was raped in the Riverworks plant. Union activists involved community groups in a campaign to demand that GE provide women with a safe working environment. The company blunted this campaign by launching a racist and sexist attack on the rape victim's character. Nonetheless, it heightened awareness of women's rights issues in the plant. This led to much discussion on the shop floor.

In April of 1981, two GE managers sexually harassed and physically assaulted a secretary they had taken to lunch for National Secretary's Week. One hundred and twenty four machinists in her work area

walked off the job in protest. Local 201 sponsored a plant-gate demonstration and a picket line at the exclusive Marblehead home of a top GE executive. One manager was forced to leave the company; another was assigned to a job out of contact with hourly workers. Local 201's women's committee initiated a program to train shop stewards to deal with sexual harassment on the shop floor.

This high level of union activity in defense of women workers and the approaching national contract deadline pushed GE to agree to a settlement of the Local 201 suit in the spring of 1982.

On May 15, 1982, 300 Local 201 members turned up at the Lynn City Hall to vote "yes" on the proposed sex discrimination settlement with GE.

Every one of these battles against sex discrimination has strengthened the rights of all union members, men and women.

In the recent settlement, 325 women and 75 men won rate increases and the two lowest pay rates were eliminated altogether. Expansion of training programs opens new job skills to all workers. Fighting the segregation of women into the two assembly plants has resulted in all the workers at the Wilmington and West Lynn plants winning equal transfer rights for the first time in 25 years.

Most important, these battles have strengthened Local 201 by raising the con-

sciousness of all workers about the company's use of racism and sexism to "divide and conquer." Women workers are more confident and more likely to turn to their union to defend their rights on and off the job. Male workers are learning that if the company can victimize the most oppressed workers without a fightback, it can victimize them as well.

Despite the recent victory, women still face discrimination at GE. Women remain concentrated in the lower-rated jobs. Eighty percent of all female hourly workers are working in jobs considered unskilled. Only 35 percent of male hourly workers are in the same category. Minority women are still the worst off. Only 1 percent of the factory workers in the Riverworks and Everett plants are minority women.

The Wilmington and West Lynn plants, where the largest number of women are concentrated, have suffered the most layoffs. Both plants are regularly threatened with shut down.

More than two-thirds of the women currently working at Riverworks and Everett have been hired in the last seven years. At another GE plant in Schenectady, layoffs have already cut the workforce back to those with eight years seniority. These statistics show that GE can use layoffs as a way to redivide the plant along race and sex lines. The company can make sure that the last hired will be the first fired.

Should women have right to abortion?

Continued from Page 4

argues that population has some decisive relation to the advance of the revolutionary movement. But history shows that what determines whether or not capitalism is overthrown are political factors, above all the degree of organization and consciousness of the working class, and its ability to rally round itself the rest of the oppressed and toiling masses of the cities and the countryside.

Lenin's position

This was the point V. I. Lenin — central leader of the October 1917 Russian revolution — was driving at in "The Working Class and Neo-Malthusianism," the article to which Redward refers and which can be found in Lenin's *Collected Works*, Volume 19, pages 235-237.

Lenin describes a 1913 congress of Russian population-control advocates, where one of the speakers exclaimed ironically, "We have to convince mothers to bear children so they can be maimed in educational establishments, so that lots can be drawn for them, so that they can be driven to suicide!"

Lenin explained that this captures perfectly the outlook of the middle classes who, by themselves, can present no coherent program against exploitation and oppression under capitalism. Their call for no

more children is both an expression of despair at their situation and an attempt to find an individual way to ameliorate it.

Lenin contrasts this standpoint with that of the workers.

"... Bear children so that they can be maimed . . . For that alone? Why not that they should *fight* better, more unitedly, consciously, and resolutely than we are fighting against the present-day conditions of life that are maiming and ruining our generation? . . .

"Yes, we workers and the mass of small proprietors lead a life that is filled with unbearable oppression and suffering. Things are harder for our generation than they were for our fathers. But in one respect we are luckier than our fathers. *We have begun to learn and are rapidly learning to fight.* . . . We are fighting better than our fathers did. Our children will fight better than we do, and *they will be victorious.*"

A political question

Lenin was not counterposing a different population policy to that of the neo-Malthusians. He was counterposing the revolutionary political perspective of the working class to the reactionary social outlook of the neo-Malthusians.

"That is the reason — the only reason — why we are unconditionally the enemies of neo-Malthusianism," Lenin emphasized.

And to ensure that there would be no misunderstandings, Lenin added:

"It goes without saying that this does not by any means prevent us from demanding the unconditional annulment of all laws against abortions or against the distribution of medical literature on contraceptive measures. . . . Freedom for medical propaganda and the protection of the elementary democratic rights of citizens, men and women, are one thing. The social theory of neo-Malthusianism is quite another."

Upon coming to power, the workers and farmers under the leadership of Lenin's



Lenin supported women's right to abortion but forcefully rejected population control arguments.

Bolsheviks carried out this program and abolished all antiabortion laws. Other revolutionary governments have adopted similar measures. For example, abortion is provided free to any woman who desires one in Cuba.

We believe that in fighting for women's right to control their own bodies — supporting access to abortion and contraception and opposing forced sterilization and reactionary population-control schemes — we stand in the tradition of Lenin and the Bolsheviks.

We believe the struggle against women's oppression is a central strategic question for the revolutionary workers' movement in the United States.

Only by championing the demands of all the oppressed — including defending to the end women's right to control their own bodies — will the U.S. labor movement succeed in mobilizing all the victims of capitalism in a struggle to abolish this outdated social system.

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Biweekly, Spanish-language sister publication of the *Militant*. Rates: \$2.50 for 6 issues, \$8.00 for 6 months, or \$16.00 for one year. Send name, address, and payment to *Perspectiva Mundial*, 408 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Sales campaign was a huge success

Results show growing interest among workers for socialist ideas

BY LEE MARTINDALE

As the Thanksgiving holiday approached, supporters of the *Militant* and its Spanish-language sister publication *Perspectiva Mundial* celebrated the success of our fall campaign to increase the circulation of these publications.

The aim of this sales campaign was to introduce 45,000 new readers to the *Militant* and *PM* over the course of eight weeks. Each branch of the Socialist Workers Party adopted a weekly sales goal as part of this campaign. Local chapters of the Young Socialist Alliance actively participated in the drive.

The final results show that this sales drive was a giant step forward for our press:

- Over 55,000 copies of the *Militant* and *PM* were sold as part of the eight-week campaign, more than 10,000 over our goal.
- Nationally, the weekly goal was surpassed every single week of the drive.
- Twenty-one areas raised their weekly goals in the course of the drive, raising the national weekly goal from 5,197 to 6,287.
- Average weekly sales of *Perspectiva Mundial* were 830, the highest average weekly sales ever in a sales drive for the biweekly magazine.
- Socialists fielded sales and campaign teams to plants and communities outside their cities, introducing new groups of workers to the *Militant* and *PM*.
- Reports from local areas indicate that the *Militant* and *PM* were sold to many working and laid-off auto, rail and steelworkers, miners and machinists, garment and oil workers.

Contribution to discussions

Big events in the class struggle — like the U.S.-backed Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the escalating U.S. war against Nicaragua, the Chrysler and steelworkers rejection of takeback contracts — have led to a deepening process of thinking and discussion among working people.

The *Militant* and *PM*, through reports from correspondents in the mines, steel mills, and auto plants, have reported on this process.

And these two publications have also offered a priceless contribution to these discussions — the socialist strategy of independent working-class political action.

The results of the sales drive show the confidence and conviction that socialist workers have in this strategy. This is reflected in their eagerness every week to participate in selling the *Militant* and *PM*. The results also show the openness to these ideas among other working people.

Election campaigns

At the heart of the socialist fightback program is the idea that working people must rely on ourselves, must organize to take on politically the bosses and their representatives in both big-business parties, the Democrats and Republicans.

In the congressional, state, and local elections this fall, Socialist Workers Party candidates ran aggressive campaigns. Their aim was to explain and win workers and farmers to this perspective. The *Militant* and *PM*, as the campaign newspapers of these candidates, have played an important role in this effort.

Socialist campaigners sold the *Militant*

and *PM* by pointing out that these papers support revolutionary change in this country, that they propose a government run by workers and farmers.

Through the election campaign and the sales drive, the socialist program reached workers in new areas of the country. In the 10 days preceding the election, teams of socialist campaigners took the *Militant* and *PM* to mining towns in Utah, Colorado, and Arizona; to workers at the huge chicken farms of eastern Maryland; to farmworkers in the Salinas Valley of California; and to a large number of other plant gates, unemployment offices, and working-class neighborhoods.

In all these places, workers welcomed the opportunity to read about and discuss the socialist strategy. Some, such as 10 Navajo miners in Kayenta, Arizona, bought subscriptions to the *Militant* in order to follow the socialist press every week.

Plant gates and unemployment lines

As the sales drive continued, socialist campaigners more and more sought out workers in those industries where the most intense discussions are taking place in response to major union-busting offensives by the bosses.

Sales at auto, steel, and electrical plant gates, rail yards, and mine portals were established on a regular weekly basis in many areas. The numbers of papers sold at these spots also increased, as workers came to know the *Militant* and *PM* and to look for them each week.

Regular sales were also established at unemployment offices, where socialist workers met, talked, and sold to laid-off workers. Sometimes they met people they used to work with, or sold to at plant gates.

In Chicago, Detroit, and on the Mesabi Iron Range in northern Minnesota, where socialist steel and auto workers and many of their former co-workers are on long-term layoff, socialists found that they met and had a chance to talk to these workers in the course of selling the *Militant* and *PM* door to door in the communities where they live.

While the drive targeted sales of single issues of the *Militant* and *PM*, 800 subscriptions were also sold in the course of the drive. Fifteen percent of these were bought by people who described themselves as workers in the auto, steel, oil, garment, textile, aerospace, electrical, rail, or coal industries.

Winning supporters

Through the sales and election campaigns, new people were won to active support of the socialist program. After buying a paper or hearing about the campaign, a significant number decided to participate in Saturday sales and campaign teams.

Many areas report that the number of people attending socialist forums and campaign events has grown as a result of the sales effort. In addition, new members have been won to the Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party.

Plans for the future

The success of the sales campaign has convinced socialist militants to put a big priority on continuing sales of the *Militant* and *PM*. In particular, the SWP and YSA will continue to emphasize the need for every member to be involved in sales of the press to workers in those strategic industries where the showdown between bosses and workers is taking shape.

For example, socialists in Chicago, Gary, Indiana, and Baltimore have decided to go on a three-week campaign to get the series of articles on steel, which continues in this issue, into the hands of as many steelworkers as possible.

In California, the socialists in Seaside are discussing traveling to Salinas with each new issue of *Perspectiva Mundial*, inspired by the eagerness with which Salinas residents, many of them farmworkers, greeted the magazine during the sales drive.

In Baltimore, the SWP branch has voted to maintain a weekly sales goal of 200

Militants and *PMs*. Other areas have decided to maintain the weekly sales goal they had during the drive.

In Newport News, Virginia, socialists are following up the sales drive with a three-week effort to sell subscriptions to workers in the community around their new headquarters.

A major focus of these continuing sales will be building the YSA convention,

which will take place December 30 – January 2 in Chicago. Chicago socialists have adopted a goal of selling 800 papers in the month remaining before the convention, including 400 copies of the YSA's paper, the *Young Socialist*.

Combined with public forums and class series, these continuing sales lay the basis for increasing the readership of the socialist press and the influence of socialist ideas.



Militants and *PMs* are sold at workplaces, unemployment lines, and demonstrations. Here salesperson talks with demonstrator at September 11 action in Washington, D.C. protesting Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

SALES SCOREBOARD

Area	Final Sales Results				
	Cumulative	Goal	Militants Sold	PM's Sold	Total Sold %
Philadelphia†	1,700		2,881	382	3,263 192
New Orleans	800		1,195	10	1,205 151
Miami†	740		1,052	67	1,119 151
Wash., D.C.†	1,520		1,845	352	2,197 145
Seaside†	425		507	79	586 138
Harrisburg	440		563	42	605 138
Dallas	570		439	335	774 136
St. Louis†	1,350		1,764	5	1,769 131
Piedmont†	770		1,006	1	1,007 131
Oakland	865		1,046	88	1,134 131
Iron Range†	370		466	0	466 126
Twin Cities†	1,510		1,852	11	1,863 123
Milwaukee†	1,530		1,775	102	1,877 123
Los Angeles	1,320		916	708	1,624 123
San Antonio	880		584	490	1,074 122
Morgantown	680		809	0	809 119
Atlanta*	730		866	6	872 119
Price	480		522	46	568 118
Cincinnati	720		838	2	840 117
Tidewater†	760		865	0	865 114
Newark	1,475		1,245	426	1,671 113
Charleston	560		632	0	632 113
Salt Lake City	755		799	49	848 112
San Francisco†	1,060		900	268	1,168 110
Phoenix†	1,565		1,212	513	1,725 110
Schenetady	816		874	25	899 110
Louisville†	630		688	0	688 109
Detroit†	788		773	89	862 109
Pittsburgh†	1,635		1,759	7	1,766 108
Birmingham	880		942	0	942 107
Baltimore†	2,700		2,891	2	2,893 107
Brooklyn†	1,750		1,378	485	1,863 106
San Jose†	940		806	181	987 105
Toledo	560		576	8	584 104
Manhattan†	2,675		2,031	752	2,783 104
Houston	920		718	242	960 104
Cleveland	920		914	46	960 104
Portland	480		488	1	489 102
Denver†	880		816	78	894 102
Chicago	1,280		1,081	221	1,302 102
Albuquerque	520		464	67	531 102
Seattle	880		857	35	892 101
San Diego	640		525	123	648 101
Gary	560		531	35	566 101
Tucson	480		338	142	480 100
Lincoln†	465		461	5	466 100
Kansas City*	700		685	18	703 100
Indianapolis*	430		426	6	432 100
Boston	1,200		1,066	139	1,205 100
Totals	45,000		48,667	6,689	55,356 123

† = raised goal

* = petitioned to put socialist candidates on the ballot during the drive.

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U.S. press falsifies Nicaragua's problems

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — The imperialist enemies of the Nicaraguan revolution control most of the information the rest of the world receives about the revolution.

Naturally, they do not hesitate to use this weapon to their advantage. They act according to the old maxim: "A lie repeated a thousand times must be true."

According to the U.S. press, the Nicaraguan revolution has produced a bumper crop of failures and setbacks, particularly of the economic variety.

"Growing disillusionment in the revolution" among the Nicaraguan people is another popular theme. So is, "Things are worse than they were under Somoza."

Such lies are intended to prepare American workers for a war to "save" Nicaragua.

What are the facts?

Economic crisis in Central America

Three years after the workers and peasants overthrew Anastasio Somoza's dictatorship and established their own government, Nicaragua still suffers from unemployment (20%), inflation (30%), an acute housing shortage (250,000 units), a lack of trained medical and scientific personnel, and a host of other ills.

These are not failures of the revolution. They are successes of the imperialist sabotage against it. And they have been fought every step of the way.

Let us first look at the concrete circumstances, and then at what the Nicaraguan revolution has accomplished within this framework.

All of Central America has been plunged into deep economic crisis.

For every dollar imperialist corporations invest here it is estimated they remove \$2.40 in profit *each year* — a rate of return of 140 percent.

As is well known, this has been going on for some time — at a staggering human cost to the countries generously afforded the opportunity of this type of "development."

At a recent meeting here in Managua of the region's economic officials and central bankers, Nicaragua's foreign trade minister declared, "These are perhaps the most difficult moments in the history of Central America." No one dissented.

- Buying power of the region's exports has plummeted. Check the figures in the accompanying box for a graphic example.

- Interest rates jumped from 7 percent to 8 percent in 1976 to 19 percent to 20 percent in 1981.

- Payments on foreign debt cost the region 9.7 percent of its total export income in 1977; this more than doubled to 21 percent in 1981.

- Oil, which none of these countries produce, takes another 13 percent of their export income.

- And if you take the value of everything the region produces, adjust for inflation, and divide by the total population, you find the dollars and cents representation of the tragedy every working family in Central America is today experiencing. This figure — what economists call "real per capita Gross Domestic Product" — has dropped steadily since 1978.

Today it is all the way back to the level of 1971.

This is the price you pay for being poor and powerless. If you organize yourself to fight back, as Nicaragua has, an additional pound of flesh is extracted.

Already tightly zipped into the imperial-

ist economic straitjacket, Nicaragua must now contend with a U.S. economic blockade as well.

Nicaragua's double burden

U.S. loans, both government and private, were cut off shortly after the revolution. And since U.S. banks control much of the world's commercial lending, either directly or indirectly, when they say no it is very hard to raise a dime, let alone millions.

U.S. assault on the Nicaraguan economy doesn't stop there. Constant military pressure, amounting to an undeclared war, is applied through U.S. backing to a counter-revolutionary army, made up of thousands of members of ex-dictator Somoza's National Guard and based just across the northern border in Honduras.

Defense of the revolution against these attacks is necessarily a number-one priority. Major resources in funds and personnel have to be mobilized, through the army and militia, to deter them.

Blaming the Nicaraguan revolution for displaying visible signs of suffering from this combination of dollar drought and extra licks from the Yankee blackjack is more than a lie. It amounts to repeating the old slavemaster's line: "If you'd stop rebelling, I wouldn't have to beat you so hard."

Dangerous example: cheap food

Nicaragua is the only country in Central America that has taken effective steps to protect the standard of living of workers and farmers.

These include a crash public-works program to provide jobs for laid-off industrial workers, subsidies and fixed prices on all basic food items, free and universal education, free or low-cost medical care, and cheap loans to working farmers.

One result: the most abundant supply of food and the lowest cost of living in Central America. Food expenses, calculated on the basis of meeting the minimum monthly needs of a family of six, are for Nicaraguans roughly half of what they are elsewhere in the region.

Counted in this "market basket" are the 21 most common products of basic consumption, including rice, beans, meat, milk, and vegetables. Here are the figures for September 1982, converted to U.S. dollars:

Honduras	\$204.20
El Salvador	190.60
Guatemala	187.80
Costa Rica	183.60
Nicaragua	102.60

Dictatorships can keep some secrets, even in an area as small as Central America. But there are not many working people between Mexico and Panama who do not know that Nicaraguans pay a lot less for food.

'Growing disillusionment'?

Are there those in Nicaragua who don't like the revolution? Yes, a great many. But who are they?

First there are the Somozaists — the associates and relatives of the former dictator, who had their holdings nationalized 100 percent.

Then there are the rest of the capitalists. There are a lot of things they don't like, starting with their removal from political power. They also don't like the fact that trade union membership has quadrupled to over 100,000, that financial controls are exercised through the state-owned banking system and efficient tax collection, and that



Militant/Michael Baumann

Housing constructed by 1,500 homeless people in Nueva Libya. Aid from Spain and Libya helped to provide running water, sanitary facilities, and roads.

they can't lay off anyone without the agreement of the union and the ministry of labor.

The big growers and landowners don't like the farm workers' unions, either. And they also don't like the fact that the government is now the sole purchaser of their crops. They can no longer deal directly and secretly with the imperialist markets. They have no direct access to foreign currency, and thus find it much harder to smuggle assets out of the country. If they try to stop producing, on the other hand, their farms will simply be expropriated and turned over to the workers to operate.

Then there are the would-be capitalists — small entrepreneurs ranging from taxi owner-drivers to shopkeepers and wholesalers. Government regulations, enforced by neighborhood committees, fines, and jail sentences, limit the merchants' ability to gouge the public. Everyone knows what the official price of an item is, and except in cases of scarcity, it is difficult to deviate by much from that price.

In short, steps the revolution has taken to protect the overwhelming majority from the economic crisis have *eliminated many of the privileges of the rich* and of those who aspire to gain riches at the expense of working people.

Their opposition to this is not "disillusionment." It is *class polarization*: the inevitable consequence of measures taken to protect one class, the workers, against the other class, the exploiters, in a situation where both classes still exist and are in fact coming into increasing conflict.

The war on the border and in remote areas inside the country is the initial military aspect of this conflict. It could deepen considerably in coming months. This is clearly the intent of the Democratic and Republican warmakers in Washington.

Battle for workers' minds

An intense ideological conflict is taking place as well.

The revolution, through its leadership, news media, and mass organizations, is explaining the facts of the economic crisis, defending the steps that will have to be taken in the future.

In this arena too the capitalists are fighting tooth and nail. And they still marshal considerable resources.

The capitalists have their own daily newspaper, *La Prensa*, which, although subject to wartime censorship, still presents a line politically opposed to the revolution.

The capitalists have the total backing of the Catholic church hierarchy, and through these church officials control the bulk of primary and secondary education in this overwhelmingly Catholic country.

They control most of the country's radio stations, supplemented by ultrareactionary, clandestine stations in Honduras and Costa Rica.

And most important they still control the majority of industry and much of agriculture.

Public expression of this ideological conflict — in the form of rumors, complaints, and at times heated debates — can be heard on virtually every streetcorner, bus, or marketplace.

It is evident from such discussions that not every worker or farmer either fully understands the context of war, economic crisis, and imperialist financial blockade, or fully agrees with the way priorities are being set within this context.

Key areas around which there is confusion are naturally enough those which the imperialists have deliberately exacerbated — unemployment, inflation, and increasing scarcity of imported goods, which in a country as small as Nicaragua means everything from toilet paper to automobile tires.

But despite the hardships, the poorer the neighborhood or village, the more visible the signs of support to the revolution — flags, banners, posters, wall murals, painted slogans, participation in the voluntary militias or in night-time vigilance.

Atlantic coast

Except for the capitalists, landlords, and many merchants, most Nicaraguans would look at you as if you were crazy if you asked them "were you better off under Somoza?"

Most, but not all. An important exception is to be found in the sparsely populated eastern part of Nicaragua, known here as the Atlantic coast.

The two Atlantic provinces make up more than half of Nicaragua's territory, but have less than a tenth of the population — 200,000 out of 2.8 million.

Geographically isolated (construction on the first road connecting these two halves of the country was not started until after the revolution), they were ruled for centuries as an independent foreign enclave.

British imperialists, later displaced by U.S. companies, concentrated on extracting the maximum amount of gold, timber, and fish at minimum expense. The result is that the area today has virtually no roads or means of communication apart from the rivers, practically no social services that predate the revolution, and a decrepit collection of prewar (in some cases pre-World War I) mining equipment, sawmills, and fishing vessels.

The imperialists ceased any real investment in the 1930s. After the July 1979 insurrection, they simply pulled out — smuggling out or destroying whatever they could in the process.

The net result has been economic stagnation, high unemployment, and little prospect for immediate improvement.

On a per capita basis, the revolution has invested far more resources in attempting to revive economic life on the Atlantic coast than on the Pacific. But in view of the overall scope of the economic sabotage, this has hardly made a dent.

In these circumstances counterrevolutionary propaganda on the Atlantic coast is deadly simple: under Somoza at least you had jobs. Under the Sandinistas you don't. Somoza was better.

Only a lengthy process of education and economic development can change this reality — a process the imperialists hope to cut short by stepping up the war. The Atlantic coast is one of the main targets of the counterrevolution and serves as its biggest geographical base inside the country today. Defense of the revolution there is a race against time.

Some figures on the economic crisis

To import one tractor, Central American countries had to export:

	1972	1981
Coffee	16 tons	23 tons
Cotton	12.5 tons	15 tons

To import 1,000 barrels of oil, Central American countries had to export:

	1977	1981
Coffee	3.9 tons	15.6 tons
Cotton	12.5 tons	25 tons

Is what's good for U.S. Steel good for steelworkers?

BY GEOFF MIRELOWITZ
(Second in a series)

BALTIMORE — The United Steelworkers of America (USWA) is facing its biggest challenge since the union was founded more than 40 years ago. At the union's convention in September, President Lloyd McBride told the delegates, "... not since the last century when state militias were extensions of the coal and iron police, when the Supreme Court gave legitimacy to yellow dog contracts have unions been so imperiled by the partnership of big business and government."

McBride's assessment is absolutely accurate. As explained in last week's article the employers are deadly serious in their effort to make the steel industry profitable at the expense of steelworkers.

Where union militants disagree with McBride is over what he proposes to do about it. As last week's article concluded, steelworkers are faced with a choice. One road is to accept the employers' approach that what's good for the company is good for the union. The other is to recognize that there is an ongoing struggle between workers and employers and that unions exist in order to defend workers' interests in that struggle.

The McBride leadership in the USWA follows the first road. Its policy is one of class collaboration. These union leaders identify the interests of steelworkers with the interests of the steel companies. As a result they subordinate workers' needs to the profit needs of the employers.

This was explained quite clearly by USWA Vice-president Joe Odorich when the last basic steel agreement was signed in 1980. The union had moderated its demands because, "to have a union you have to have a company and that company has to make bucks."

This approach transforms the union from an organization that can fight to defend the interests of workers into one that is primarily concerned with the well-being of the employers. The employers, of course, have plenty of weight they can bring to bear to defend their own well-being — including the government which they control. The result of this strategy is to offer no serious resistance to the attacks on workers. Moreover it actually leads to helping the employers carry out their offensive. This is confirmed by McBride's and the International Executive Board's recent giveback contract proposal rejected overwhelmingly November 19 by the local presidents in the Basic Steel Industry Conference. Despite this re-

jection, McBride still says the steelworkers must make big concessions to the steel employers.

What's behind McBride strategy

Why do McBride and other USWA officials advocate this strategy, and how did this strategy develop in the union?

In an article entitled, "Steel Union: Case History of Bureaucratism" printed in the January 2, 1967 issue of the *Militant*, Farrell Dobbs, Socialist Workers Party National Secretary and a leader of the Teamsters union when it fought for workers interests in the 1930s, explained how this bureaucratic layer sits on top of the USWA.

"The present steel union had its origins in the Steel Workers Organizing Committee created in 1937 by the CIO [Congress of Industrial Organizations]," Dobbs explained.

"SWOC was put under the command of Philip Murray, who was then a trusted aide of John L. Lewis, founding leader of the CIO. From the outset Murray ran things in dictatorial fashion, acting along class-collaborationist policy lines. Contract demands were shaped, not to meet the workers' basic needs, but according to what the corporations might give without a serious struggle. If there had to be a strike, the line was to end it as quickly as possible, forcing acceptance of whatever face-saving settlement the employers granted. The union was tied firmly to the Democratic Party and a policy of reliance on the capitalist government substituted for use of the workers' power.

"As the union gained substance the Murray bureaucracy raided the treasury for handsome salaries and expense accounts. In an environment poles apart from the grind in the plants, the bureaucrats developed a calm, dispassionate view of the workers' problems. They gave 'statesman-like' attention to the corporation's side in disputes and acted more as policemen against the workers. Membership rights were subordinated to bureaucratic special interests."

Not just individuals

Union leaders like Murray or McBride are not simply individuals with some wrong ideas about how to defend workers' rights. Nor do they just exist in the USWA. McBride and those like him are part of a breed in the labor movement. Together, these officials make up an entire bureaucratic group or layer.

To begin with, officials such as AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, United Auto Workers President Douglas Fraser, and Lloyd McBride, are not workers. While some of them may have started out tending a furnace or working on the assembly line, it has been years since they put in a day's work on the shop floor.

Because they are not workers they do not think like workers. They view themselves as labor "statesmen" who can take a more "objective" view of workers' grievances and problems. Their salaries are far above the wages of the average worker they represent. They do not face the threat of layoffs and the uncertainty of unemployment.

When insurgent candidate Ed Sadlowski ran for USWA president in 1977, he explained that these officials were *business unionists*. Sadlowski said, "Steelworkers have paid and paid dearly for union executives who think like businessmen, act like businessmen, and feel more at home with big businessmen than with workers.

"Our union's leaders are sitting on productivity committees to help management find more ways to do away with our jobs; and they are sitting with corporate executives in plush clubs, sipping martinis, and toasting to the companies' continued prosperity.

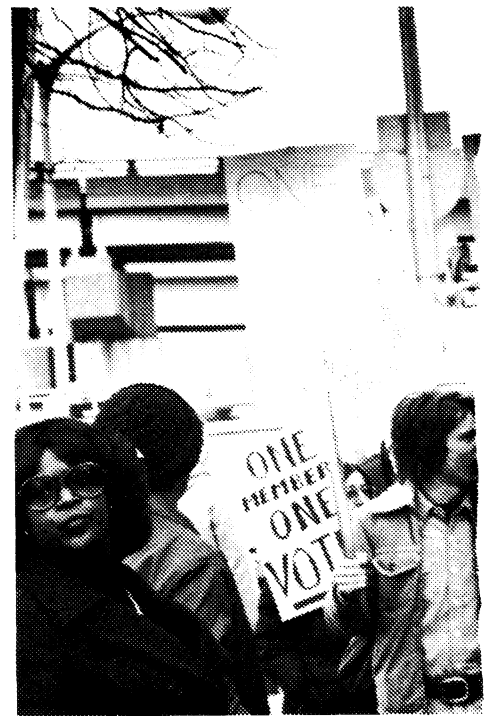
"If the companies protected their profits as poorly as our union has protected its members' jobs they'd be out of business," Sadlowski concluded. He went on to explain that what the ranks of the union need to do with the bureaucratic officials is, "retire them from *business unionism*, so that we can return to aggressive, effective *labor unionism*." (Sادلowski's emphasis).

Five years later this rings truer than ever. Sadlowski's explanation points to the real role of the bureaucracy in the labor movement. It is to represent the interests of the employers, the capitalists, and while doing so to appear to be representing the workers.

USWA convention

The recent USWA convention was a good example of how this works. There is a growing sense among steelworkers that the union must act to deal with the deepening economic crisis and fight back against the employers' attacks.

However, this view is not shared by the top officials of the steelworkers union. They don't have any trouble recognizing the problem. They can not help but be aware of the way in which layoffs have rocked the union, particularly in the basic



Steelworkers have no right to vote on mas 1977 steelworkers demonstration in Pittsl

steel industry — the heart of the USWA.

They are also aware of the seriousness of the employers' attacks. When concessions were rejected last July by the local union presidents, company representatives threatened to force the union out on strike in August 1983 when the basic steel contract is due to expire. At the time Vice-president Odorich warned, "Now I'm convinced that the steel companies think this is a good time to take us on and try to break the union."

Local presidents obviously were not frightened by Odorich's warning because they voted down the employers' new concession proposals November 19. The proposals had been agreed to by the union's executive board.

But how do the top officials propose to deal with this danger? Do they try to explain where the danger comes from? Do they propose to begin to mobilize the membership to prepare for a showdown with the employers and a possible strike? The answer is no.

The convention itself, as the *New York Times* observed with unfortunate accuracy, was, "a remarkably placid affair, operating at times almost as if the problems of the industry and the union did not exist."

The convention's main decisions included: Authorizing McBride to reopen concession negotiations in basic steel; continuing to support the corporations' anti-imports campaign; and calling on workers to support "friends of labor" Democrats over "Reaganite" Republicans.

Misidentifying real problems

Behind this program is the bureaucracy's conscious strategy to give false explanations of the problems facing steelworkers by misidentifying what the real problems are.

They do not want workers to identify the capitalist economic system as the problem. The bureaucrats themselves are supporters of capitalism and are quite satisfied with the benefits it has brought them.

Instead they blame the problems on a few capitalists — those who support Reagan; on fellow workers, such as those in Japan; and on U.S. steelworkers themselves, because according to McBride, "Part of the problem is our earlier success," in winning higher wages.

The main conclusions they draw are that workers should sacrifice in order to solve the problems we allegedly share in common with the steelmakers.

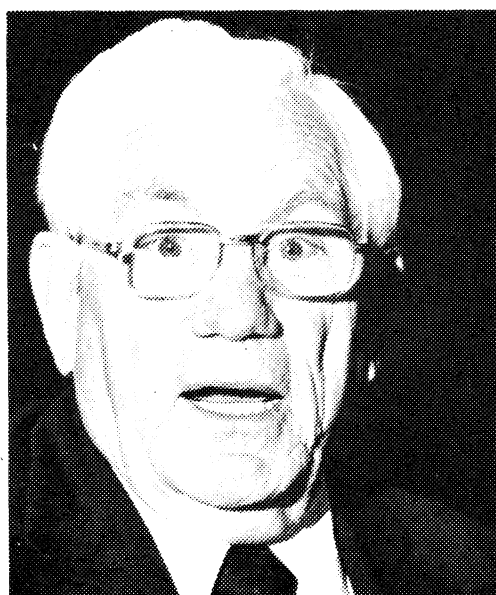
Any steelworker who carefully studies the history of the union will discover that this is not a new policy. McBride and his predecessors in the union leadership, have been making political and economic concessions to the employers since the union was founded in 1942.

Past concessions

Many examples can be pointed to. The basic grievance procedure itself was a concession in which the union agreed to stop using workers' power to halt production until an injustice was corrected. Instead a five-step procedure was agreed to that every worker today knows is stacked against the union from beginning to end.



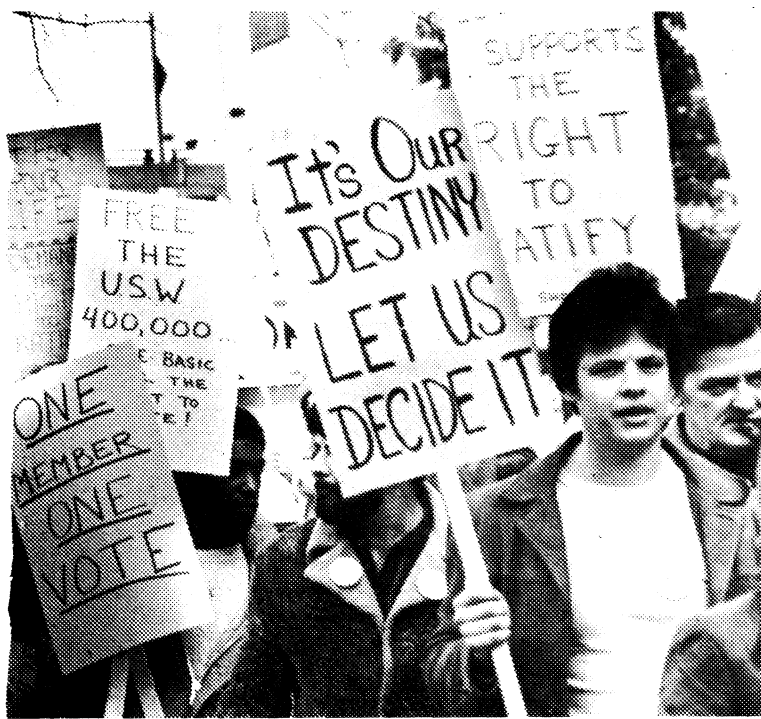
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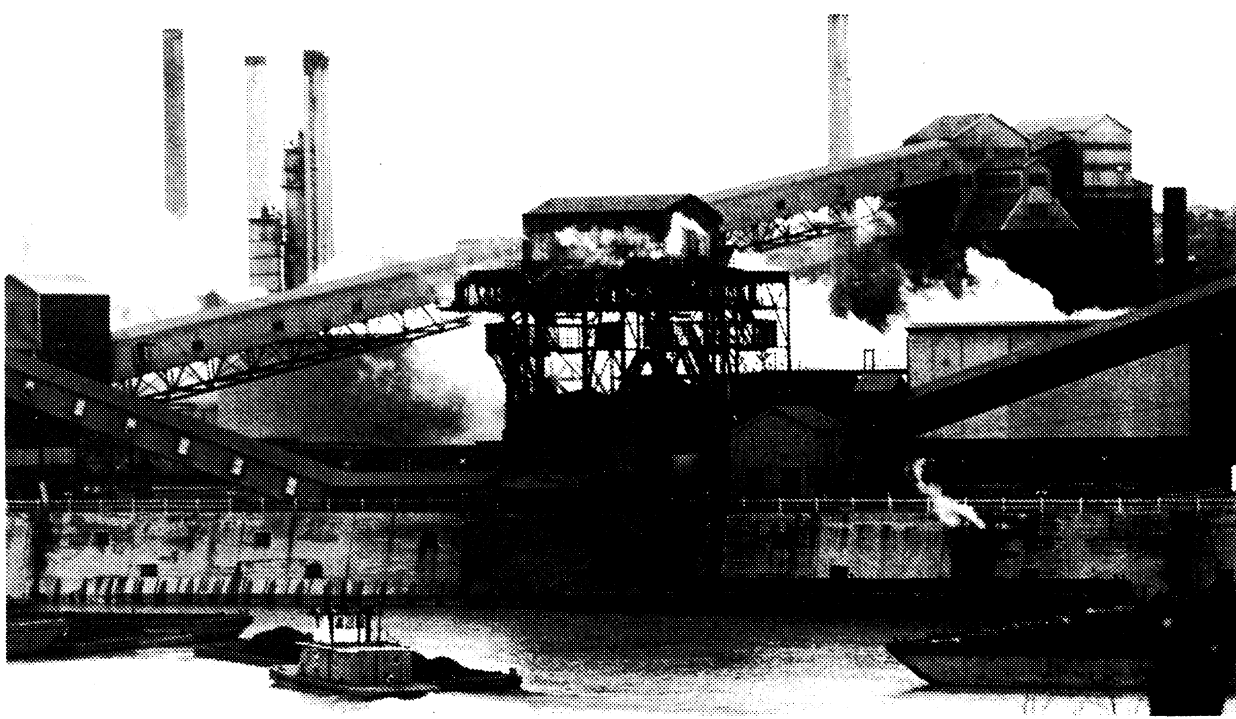
Militant/Harry Ring



Labor "statesmen" of Steelworkers. McBride (left), current president thinks union exists to help employers chase after profits. I.W. Abel (center), gave away right to strike in 1973. And Philip Murray (right), union's first president, called for statesman-like consideration to bosses' needs.



U.S. Steel concessions union bureaucrats are trying to give companies. Here Militant/Stu Singer demands right to vote on contracts.



U.S. Steel not only pits U.S. steelworkers against fellow workers in Japan; it plays off workers at Clairton mill (above) against workers in U.S. Steel's other mills in Monongahela Valley. Militant/Howard Petrick

Another concession was the incentive system that tied workers' wages to production quotas. In this way workers are pressured to speed up the job and ignore safety and health regulations so that a "bonus" can be made. The bonus for workers is a few dollars compared to the bonus for the employers which amounts to millions.

Yet another concession was agreeing to three-year contracts which were intended to limit how often the union can demand improved wages and working conditions.

The same can be said of the notorious 90-day probation period for new hires that helps the companies weed out "troublemakers" and effectively exempts an entire section of the workforce from union protection.

One of the most important concessions — actually a complete default since the unions' formation — was the union leadership's refusal to defend Black, Latino, and women workers from the steelmakers' discrimination in the areas of hiring, job assignment, and promotion. The only reason that advances have been made, to the limited degree that they have, is due to the independent battle that Blacks, Latinos, and women have waged against the steel companies. At times, they have also had to fight the policies of the union leadership as well.

Two further blows to steelworkers — the affect of which many see more clearly today — were giving up the right to strike and the bureaucracy's moves to deprive workers of the right to vote on contracts. This last concession was not made in the direct course of contract negotiations. Nevertheless, it was a direct concession to the employers, who prefer that the agreements they arrange with the bureaucrats not be subject to rank-and-file approval.

Chicken comes home to roost

This is one chicken that is definitely coming home to roost for steelworkers today. Whatever new deal McBride comes up with in rewriting the basic steel contract, it will not be subject to direct membership approval.

The right to strike was given up when I.W. Abel, McBride's immediate predecessor, signed the Experimental Negotiating Agreement with the steel industry in 1973. This deal was put forward as the way for steelworkers to avoid the "boom or bust" cycle in the steel industry. In the last nine years steelworkers have suffered through three "busts" in the business cycle. Now the industry has torn up the ENA because they are no longer willing to come through with the paltry wage gains that were guaranteed workers in exchange for yielding the right to strike.

These concessions in the area of wages, working conditions and union rights were completely connected to a political policy that was dead wrong.

At the heart of this was a strategy of supporting "pro-labor" Democrats over "pro-business" Republicans. The bureaucrats slavishly stuck to this policy despite a wave of antiunion measures that had bipartisan support.

These included the Taft-Hartley Act passed in 1947 and the Landrum-Griffin Act passed in 1958. The first sought to im-

pose direct continuous government regulation over the unions in the selection of their officers, in their economic and organizational struggles, and in their political activity. It imposed a ban on the closed shop. And it includes the notorious section 14B that allows states to pass "right to work" laws making the union shop illegal. The second allowed for increased government interference in union affairs.

All of these concessions and wrong policies weakened the union and brought us to where we are today. Now the steel barons want to take back the one thing steelworkers received in exchange for this long list: the half-way decent wages and benefits that steelworkers have enjoyed relative to most other workers since World War II.

This was the trade-off the bureaucrats won from the employers. U.S. Steel, Bethlehem, Republic, and the other big steelmakers, like the rest of the capitalist class, would prefer to have no unions at all. They would prefer not to negotiate wages and working conditions with anyone, even conservative union officials.

However, given the powerful industrial union movement that developed in the 1930s and led to the formation of the CIO, that perspective was not a practical one for the employers — at least not yet. Therefore, if they had to accept unions they preferred unions that didn't fight much. Because of their uncontested number one position in the world economy after World War II, and the superprofits they raked in as a result, the U.S. capitalist class was able to spread a few crumbs around to insure "labor peace."

Were crumbs worth the price?

Bureaucrats, like those in the steel union for instance, pointed to these crumbs and paraded themselves as effective leaders who won improvements for the rank and file. Today steelworkers can judge whether what we got was worth the price we paid.

This strategy continues to disarm steelworkers today.

Now let's look at how this strategy weakens the union.

At the September convention McBride told the *New York Times* reporter, William Serrin, that he "understood" why U.S. Steel spent \$6 billion to buy Marathon Oil rather than invest in steel production. "They will chase that buck wherever they can find it," said McBride sagely.

This is certainly accurate. However, McBride's strategy not withstanding, unions do not exist to help the capitalists chase after higher profits. To the contrary, steelworkers fought and died in the fight to organize the USWA because they believed a union was needed to protect workers from the effects of this neverending drive for profits.

Those who struggled to build a powerful union movement did so with the understanding that the employers, despite their differences, stand together as a class against workers and that workers must do the same in defense of our common class interests. It was not accidental that the anthem of the union movement for years was "Solidarity Forever".

But McBride's support for the bosses' anti-imports campaign leads toward more

divisions among working people, and away from the greater class solidarity that is needed.

Union support for the anti-imports campaign only aids the employers in shifting the blame for unemployment off themselves and their outmoded economic system and onto our fellow workers in Japan, Europe, and elsewhere. It is part of a broader campaign to make foreign workers scapegoats for the problems facing working people in the United States.

So long as U.S. workers worry about Japanese steelworkers who "take away" jobs abroad; Mexican, Haitian, and other immigrants who "take away" jobs at home; and Arabs who are supposedly responsible for high oil prices, we are diverted from the real problem and the real enemy — capitalism, the employers, and their government.

Why stop at demanding limits on imports? Why shouldn't Bethlehem steelworkers demand that no company buy steel from U.S. steel or Armco? Perhaps each union local should get out and make sales calls to try to get more work for "their" plant.

Of course, we would all agree that this is absurd. Our problem is how to organize a fight against the anti-working-class policies of the U.S. steel employers — not how to drum up business for them.

Few of us look at ourselves as "Bethlehem steelworkers" or "Armco steelworkers." We see ourselves as steelworkers, members of the USWA, who happen to work for one or another company. But the companies would like to change this.

Plant-to-plant competition

A recent article in *Business Week* describes how U.S. Steel is teaming up its five Monongahela Valley plants and centralizing production decisions. "All five plants will be headed by a single general manager. Rolling and finishing will be done at whichever plant can operate its mills at least cost. Facilities will compete among themselves for orders. Says one plant foreman: 'We all work for the same corporation, but now we're fighting each other for our own jobs.'"

Such competition obviously benefits the companies, but it weakens workers whether it is encouraged against fellow workers at home or abroad.

McBride's proposal to continue turning out the vote for Democrats also undercuts union power. This strategy was justified at the convention with the argument that Reagan's economic plan is not working. This was not exactly a revelation to the steelworkers there.

But behind this idea is the implication that, once elected, the "friends of labor" Democrats will put a better plan into effect, one that will solve the problems facing workers.

This is false. As *Times* reporter Serrin observed, "the basic problems confronting the [steel] industry predate [Reagan's] administration."

Unemployment was not invented by Reagan and the Republicans. At the time of the 1980 elections tens of thousands of steelworkers were also laid off as a result of the "plan" of that year's "friend of labor" — James Carter.

Only plan is profits

Neither Democrats nor Republicans have any economic plan to improve conditions for workers. There is no economic plan of any kind under capitalism — other than the corporations' plan, supported by both capitalist parties, to raise their profits by any means necessary.

Behind the bureaucrats' entire strategy is the idea that workers should not organize a fight for our own interests. This will only inflame the employers. Instead we should be "reasonable" and try to see the employers' problems. We should hope some liberal Democrat on a white horse will come to the rescue.

McBride and others like him face one big problem in implementing this strategy: *Workers want a change!* More and more workers recognize that a strategy of concessions does not work. While every worker knows that deciding to stand and fight does not guarantee victory — giving up without a struggle does guarantee defeat.

The main problem that steelworkers, like other workers, are grappling with is how to develop a leadership that can organize an effective fight.

In our next article we'll take up what kind of program and strategy can help develop such a fighting, class-struggle leadership.

(To be continued)



McBride attempts to chain union to fate of Democrats. Here former Vice-president Walter Mondale gives flag-waving protectionist speech at September Steelworkers' convention. Militant/George Johnson

Black party leadership meets in Phila.

North Carolina NBIPP chapters to seek ballot status

BY MALIK MIAH

PHILADELPHIA — The National Black Independent Political Party's Central Committee meeting here November 20-21 made a number of important decisions that can begin to rebuild and strengthen the two-year-old party.

Two weeks ago we reported that NBIPP was having a crisis of perspective and leadership. Last week we reported that at a public rally NBIPP leaders Ron Daniels and Thad Mathis acknowledged the problems the party was having by pointing to the difficulty in building a Black party or any social movement when the country was in a deep economic crisis. They both reported this would be discussed at the Central Committee meeting.

The CC, the highest decision-making body of NBIPP between the yearly national party congresses, consists of elected representatives from party chapters and official observers from local organizing committees (LOC). There were 27 voting CC members and a handful of official observers at the meeting.

The most important decision reached concerned NBIPP and electoral politics. The CC voted to allow the North Carolina

chapters to petition to get the party on the ballot for the 1984 elections.

After a lengthy debate the CC, however, did not vote to overturn a decision made last summer at the Raleigh congress. This decision specified that the chapters and the November CC could only open a discussion on electoral politics and NBIPP's program for jobs. The February CC is mandated to actually adopt a position for the 1983-84 elections. Many delegates opposed this decision. They were glad, however, that the CC supported the North Carolina chapters' decision to get on the ballot. This is the first time NBIPP anywhere in the country has begun the process to get the party's name on the ballot.

Mel Mason, Far West regional representative, praised this decision after the meeting. He told the *Militant* that this would help put the party's name on the political map.

Mason recently ran as an independent candidate for governor of California. As a leader of Seaside California's Black community he was able to help build the NBIPP and get out its program through his election campaign.

At the CC the Seaside chapter proposed that NBIPP run its own candidates, including Ben Chavis for president in 1984 as a way to propagandize the party's perspectives among Blacks and other workers.

Other discussions at the CC included reports by chapters and LOCs on NBIPP's program for jobs and income and the need for NBIPP to be more involved in local struggles against racism.

At an educational session on "repression and the rise of fascism," which preceded the actual CC meeting, a lively discussion occurred on the recent history of the Black movement. There were disagreements expressed on the significance of the civil rights movement and what it accomplished. A member from New York explained that the death of Jim Crow segregation in the South represented the greatest victory for Blacks and other workers since the end of slavery. He said it laid the basis for the struggle today. It led to support by more and more white workers for Black equality and to the recognition that they face a common enemy — the ruling rich — with Black workers.

Others argued that the civil rights move-

ment grew up then because capitalism was in a period of economic expansion. Today, as one member from Philadelphia explained, it is much more difficult to organize a social movement.

The CC meeting also voted to take some steps to raise funds. It was reported that the party was in a financial crisis and that national functioning would have to be curtailed.

It was then decided to allow local chapters to send materials and newsletters to other chapters since the national office couldn't do it.

The CC also passed a motion on the issue of "divided loyalties" clarifying a resolution adopted at the Raleigh congress. According to the congress resolution all NBIPP leaders who are also leaders of other political parties must resign their leadership posts in NBIPP. The CC voted to clarify this by saying only NBIPP leaders who are also *officers* of other political parties should resign their leadership posts in NBIPP.

Although this new motion is still incorrect, it is an improvement over the original Raleigh decision. The motion does preclude undemocratically forcing anyone out of leadership of the party. This represents a step forward for the NBIPP since membership and leadership in NBIPP can only be based on support to the charter and actively building the party.

There would be an issue of divided loyalties in a political sense for those NBIPP members who opposed the charter and the work of the party. Even then, political discussion and debate would be necessary to resolve differences and reach decisions. The membership must have the right to select its own leaders to build a viable organization, including the right of recall as the charter outlines.

Finally, the CC voted to hold its next meeting in Cleveland, February 18-20, the anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X. At this meeting the dates and site of the third national party congress will be decided.

Two weeks ago we indicated that the big challenge facing NBIPP was to come to grips with its decline in membership. This means recognizing that a viable Black party can only be built based on its participation in the battles taking place in the Black community, especially among Black workers, and taking a clear public stand against all Democrats and Republicans no matter what their skin color.

The CC did not project a series of national activities, as one NBIPP leader suggested. Nor did it urge all its chapters to utilize the attacks on us by the capitalist parties to educate our people about what's wrong with these parties. But the decisions to allow North Carolina to petition and to put the issue of divided loyalties aside is progress. It means the stage is set for NBIPP to move forward and outward as chapters begin to take the party's programmatic charter to masses of Black workers. By doing that NBIPP can grow and eventually win Black workers to its leadership bodies. That remains the central challenge facing NBIPP.



Cleveland Black party activists at November 27 anti-Klan action in Washington.

Militant/Steven Fuchs

Toledo labor supports city workers

BY KURT LANDEFELD

TOLEDO, Ohio — One hundred and fifty people crowded into the International Association of Machinists union hall here November 22 to protest a union-busting effort by the city administration. Called by the Toledo AFL-CIO, the rally reflected widespread support for American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 7 and Teamsters Local 20. They are fighting an attempt by the city to force a takeback contract on them.

These unions have worked without a contract since June. Teamsters Local 20 President Harold Leu, in a letter printed in the November 21 *Toledo Blade*, reviewed the year-long negotiations. He wrote that last spring AFSCME and Teamster locals rejected a city proposal for a 15 percent wage increase over a 30-month period. This was rejected because the city had settled separately with the firemen and police for a 20 percent increase over the same period.

Later the city withdrew this offer and demanded a wage freeze and substantial changes in the contract that would weaken the union.

One such change would permit subcontracting of city work without prior notification of the affected unions. This would permit, for example, private contracting for garbage collection thus eliminating these city workers.

The unions refused to capitulate despite tremendous pressure. The city now wants to break these unions by legislative fiat. City Manager David Boston and Mayor Douglas DeGood have recommended that the city council adopt two resolutions forcing the contract on city workers.

The rally was chaired by Mike Ferner, a

steward for AFSCME Local 544. Among the speakers were Bob Burlage, directing business agent for Machinists District 57; Harry Morell, president of the Toledo area AFL-CIO; and Bill White, president of Acklin unit, United Auto workers Local 12.

Shouts of "PATCO! PATCO! PATCO!" filled the hall when local Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) president Mike Spychala rose to offer his support for the city workers. He was applauded for saying that "public employees are of fantastic value for this city. They clean our sewers and pick up our garbage — work I'm glad I don't have to do. And I'm sick and tired of public employees being used as scapegoats."

Peggy McKenzie, president of Graphic Arts Local 572, best captured the crowd's sentiment when she declared, "We must stop being the goat and start being the lion. We must stop being the hunted and start being the hunter!"

George Tucker, president of AFSCME Local 7, closed the rally by promising, "There will not be another PATCO."

Workers who went to the city council meeting the following day hoping to add labor's voice to the debate on the antilabor proposals were disappointed. At the council's request, Mayor DeGood agreed to appoint a five-member committee with a two-week deadline to reach a negotiated settlement with the unions.

Atlanta NBIPP hosts meeting for candidates

BY JENNIFER MILTON

ATLANTA — On November 15, at a meeting sponsored by the Atlanta chapter of the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP), the public was given an opportunity to hear the four candidates competing for a seat in the newly formed 5th Congressional District. The meeting was cosponsored by the Atlanta chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 1644; Citywide Advisory Council on Public Housing; and Leamon Hood, Area Director of AFSCME.

The special election in this majority Black district will be held November 30. It follows a successful year-long battle in the state legislature to create a majority Black congressional district.

Today, Georgia has no Black members

in Congress, even though the state is nearly 40 percent Black, and Atlanta is 66 percent Black.

NBIPP, as the sponsor of the forum, felt that even though it does not yet endorse or run candidates it would be important to provide a vehicle enabling the public to pose questions to those running for the post.

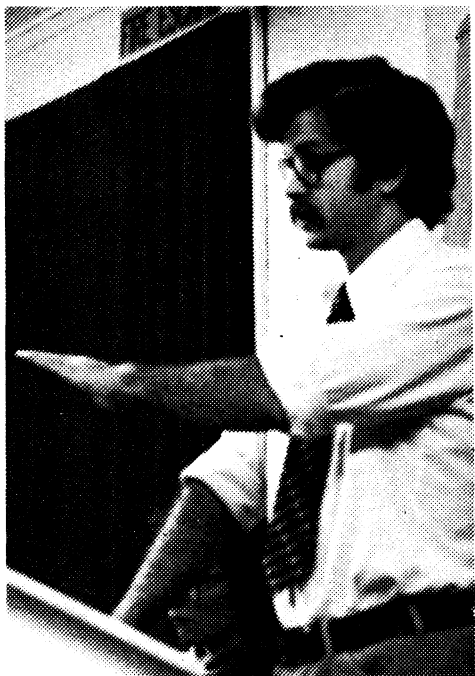
NBIPP, however, does recognize that there is no qualitative difference between the Democratic and Republican parties, in that neither has ever been sensitive or responsive to the needs of Black or poor people in any kind of a substantive way.

All of the candidates running in the 5th Congressional District race were present. The only white candidate was the incumbent, Democrat Wyche Fowler, who was first elected to the position in 1977. The

others present were J.E. "Billy" McKinney, a Democratic state representative running as an independent; Paul Jones, a Republican businessman; and Maceo Dixon, candidate of the Socialist Workers Party.

During the course of the forum, neither McKinney nor Jones were able to offer a compelling reason for the voters to select either one of them instead of Fowler. However, McKinney's primary reason for feeling he should be elected seemed to be the fact that he was Black. Neither McKinney nor Jones attacked the incumbent's voting record on any specific issues or cited instances where Fowler had voted against the interests of Blacks or poor people.

Maceo Dixon attacked all three of the other candidates as being representatives "of the rich" and stated that he was the only candidate for the workers and for the poor.



Jeff Rogers (left) and Michael Pennock were fired from Oxford Chemicals for their defense of workers' rights.

Teamsters fired for union activity

BY CHRIS HOEPPNER

ATLANTA — Oxford Chemicals here has raised the ante in its fight against Teamsters Local 528. Union activists Michael Pennock and Jeff Rogers were fired by the company on November 15. Oxford claimed they had falsified their employment applications. Pennock and Rogers, however, say that the real reason is their labor activities.

Teamsters Local 528 is filing grievances on behalf of the two fired workers.

Pennock and Rogers are two of the 15 plaintiffs in a \$3.4 million lawsuit against Lockheed-Georgia Co. The two workers were among 15 members of the International Association of Machinists fired by Lockheed in January 1981 after an intensive government-company spy operation.

This included electronic surveillance, the use of company spies in the union, and spying on workers at home and at union and civil rights activities.

The day the two were fired from Oxford they were discussing with co-workers a story on the lawsuit in the *Atlanta Constitution*.

Neither Pennock nor Rogers put their Lockheed experience on their applications at Oxford. Oxford says this is why they were fired. Rogers and Pennock point out that they would not have been hired if they had, but that this wasn't the reason for the firings.

Both workers were well into their second year at Oxford. In that time they helped to build support in Atlanta for the AFL-CIO-sponsored Solidarity Day action on Sept. 19, 1981. Half a million unionists and supporters marched in Washington, D.C., that day against Reagan's cutbacks in social services and inaction in providing jobs. At the first union meeting following the action, Roger showed slides of the demonstration.

Both workers also were active in the fight for safer working conditions at Oxford. After a near-disastrous chlorine leak, pressure from the workers forced the company to hold monthly safety meetings. In those meetings, Pennock and Rogers were among those who criticized the company's view that every accident in the plant is the workers' fault.

In another development, Pennock and Rogers were among those who argued against management's proposal to institute a four-day workweek or to lay off 20 percent of the workers.

The company was dumbfounded when the workers rejected both alternatives. A quarter of the workforce showed up at the next union meeting to discuss the situation.

Pennock and Rogers, along with other Teamsters, were active in demanding government action to stop the wave of murders of Black youth in Atlanta. Teamster Local 528 helped pay for bus seats to a demonstration on this issue in Washington, D.C.

The latest fight involved whether or not part-time employees should be covered by the union contract.

Part-timers, mostly high school and college students, are used on an evening second shift. During most of the summer, the shift worked a full 40-hour week. They got no benefits and no union protection. They suffered speed-up, job combinations, unsafe working conditions, and arbitrary disciplinary action. These precedents were used to go after the union during the day shift. The use of part-timers is a union-busting practice, which Teamsters Local 528 is fighting to reverse.

The issue heated up in mid-October when three part-timers were fired. The plant production manager had mislabeled a liquid tank. As a result the product was put into the wrong bottles and boxes. But it was the part-timers who were fired.

Pennock and Rogers were among those who encouraged them to file a grievance. This had never been done before. The union agreed to do it. The company refused to accept it. It is now being discussed between the union and the company.

The discussions in the plant were important in getting the unionized day shift to see the importance of bringing the nonunion night shift in.

Oxford workers have seen that a fighting union can bring results. Maceo Dixon, union activist and Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in the 5th District of Georgia, was fired earlier this year from the plant. He won his job back in August after a fight that won broad support from unionists both in the plant and in the city. Rogers and Pennock actively campaigned for Dixon for Congress in the special election held November 30.

Dixon's campaign manager, Garrett Brown, was also fired. He won an arbitration case on November 22. But then, Oxford turned around and fired him again — this time on the same pretext used to fire Rogers and Pennock. Brown, also one of the plaintiffs in the suit against Lockheed, filed a grievance against Oxford on November 29.

Socialist fund and a Liberty City rebel

BY HARRY RING

Jackie Floyd, 24 and mother of two children, grew up in Miami's Liberty City, the impoverished Black community that exploded in 1980 when a gang of white cops were acquitted after murdering a Black man.

Jackie is a new member of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance. She's also testimony to the fact that money contributed to our Socialist Publications Fund is money well invested.

In a telephone interview, Jackie discussed how her experience as a welfare mother, and the impact of the Liberty City rebellion, made her a natural candidate for the socialist movement.

She began reading the *Militant* and various socialist books and pamphlets a few months ago after a friend, who felt she would be interested, told her about the Pathfinder bookstore in Miami.

Jackie was particularly interested in the material about Grenada and Cuba.

Grenada, because it was the first successful revolution in a Black, English-speaking country.

And Cuba?

"I was always curious about Cuba. Anything that could agitate this government as much as Cuba attracted my attention. But it wasn't until I began reading the *Militant* and other literature, and talking to party people, that I began filling the gaps in my information."

Similarly with Malcolm X. Some years before she had read *The Last Year of Malcolm X: The Evolution of a Revolutionary*, the Pathfinder book by George Breitman. Now she has a good deal more she's reading.

She finds the *Militant* a refreshing alternative to such capitalist dailies as the *Miami Herald*.

The story of Eddie Carthan, the Black Mississippi mayor they tried to frame up for murder is a case in point. "In a case like that," Jackie said, "you can see what the other papers leave out and how the *Militant* reports it."

"You'd be surprised," she said, "at the response we're getting to the *Militant* in Liberty City. People realize they're not going to get any of the truth about their struggles reading the *Miami Herald* and so it's important to have a paper that speaks for them."

Jackie gave a vivid account of the Liberty City uprising and its impact.

"There were people outside the Black community, and even some Blacks, who would say, you people are crazy. You're not hurting anyone but yourselves. You're burning down your own community."

"My response to them was, What damn community? The people here are nothing but boarders. The places they live in they don't control. The stores they buy from they don't control. They don't even control the people who are supposed to politically represent them."

"Yes," she emphasized, "it was a time of jubilation. It was a time when Blacks, no matter how poor, felt that for once they were actually paying attention to us. And they saw us in a position of strength. The greatest thing was the attitude of police of-

ficers. Before the riot you were nothing. All of a sudden they began treating you like you were as fragile as eggs. They respected you as a human being."

But, Jackie continued, there was a frustrating side too. "The problem was we weren't really organized and weren't able to capitalize on it."

"I went through a lot of frustrating experiences trying to bring people together to talk, but it didn't turn out very fruitfully."

"But it was a start. And I see now, working with the party, that it's going to be a process to get people aware and bring them to the same conclusions that I and others in the party have come to."

"It's not going to be anything overnight. But when you think about it, there's only two choices — you either conform or you fight. There's no middle road."

"This is the first time," Jackie added, "that I've really been in a position to fight, and I intend to put every ounce of my energy into it."

Others are doing the same. And, a gratifying number are putting their money in as well — money that's so urgently needed to meet our inflation-induced publishing deficit.

Last week we reported our fund was ahead of schedule and that we were hoping to attain our goal by December 23 rather than the official closing date of December 31. Now, we're aiming to actually surpass our \$250,000 goal by New Year's Eve.

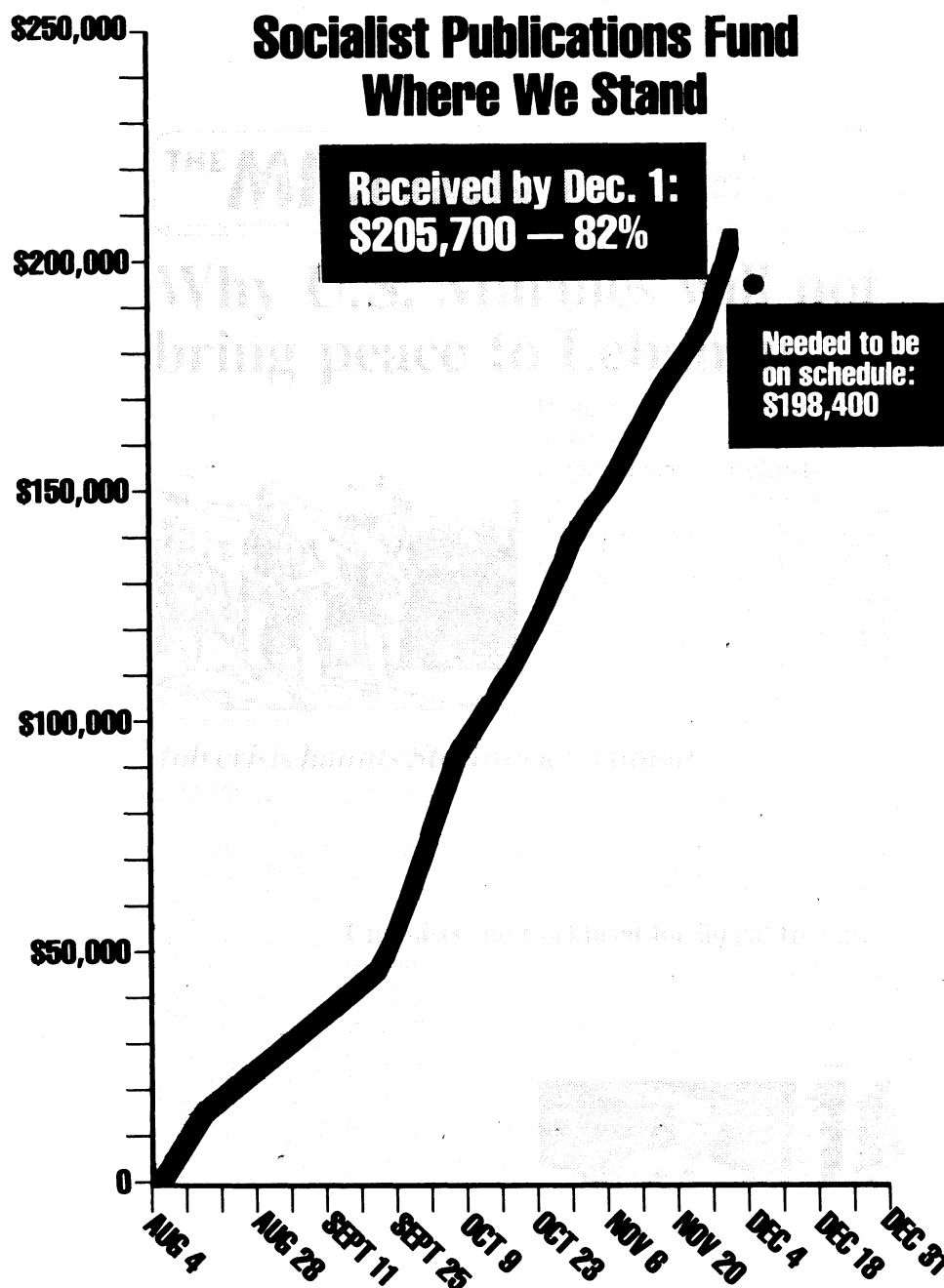
As the current scoreboard indicates, we have good prospects for success.

Jackie Floyd is one of those rooting for victory.



Jackie Floyd

Militant/Alice Sanpere



—THE GREAT SOCIETY—

Theology dept — Taking a dim view of his fellow bishops' stated concern about nuclear war, the



Harry Ring

archbishop of Mobile advised: "We seem to assign the human species itself the right to eternity. . . . The worst evil that can befall us is not the loss of our life,

or even of all human life. It is sin . . ."

How generous can they get? — Under new rules, the aged, blind, and disabled can qualify for Supplemental Social Security without disposing of their burial plots.

Saps the bodily juices — In a drive against jazz, rock, and disco, the Chinese government issued a booklet, *How to Distinguish Decadent Music*. It advises that dancing to jazz is "like having a nervous spasm." Rock "pours out a sort of perplexity, vagueness, numbness and impetuosity," while disco incites "rapid and con-

tinuous leaping and twisting" and provides "disheartened youth a way to escape reality."

Federal brains at work — Nearly one-third the U.S. productive capacity, double the "normal" amount, is now idle. A Federal Reserve economist told reporters, "I worry about it because it shows the industrial part of the economy is very weak."

Proper English — Environmental Protection Agency employees are banned from using, "acid rain." It's "poorly buffered precipitation."

Fringe benefits — FBI agent H. Edward Tickel Jr. faces charges of transporting stolen jewelry, theft of government property, tax evasion, and assorted perjury charges. An FBI black-bag artist, Mr. Tickel was regarded as a specialist in break-ins for the purpose of installing listening devices. The purpose, of course, being to preserve "our way of life."

No justice — Defying the laws of built-in obsolescence, half the cars built in 1970 are still on the road. "People are literally driving their old clunkers into the ground," grumbled Chrysler Vice-

chairman Gerard Greenwald. And, he added, "We didn't build them that good."

A tonic — A *Wall Street Journal* item was headlined, "Poll finds alcohol abuse is seen as a major problem." The same page featured an ad: "There's one investment bulls and bears agree on — Johnnie Walker Black Label Scotch."

Thought for the week — "Don't expect any overnight cures." — An appraisal of the unemployment situation by Martin Feldstein, Reagan's chief economic adviser.

—CALENDAR—

Appalachian Educational Conference

WEST VIRGINIA

Morgantown

The Fight Against Imperialist War and the U.S. War-makers; The Marxist Approach.

1. Nicaragua: Workers and Farmers Taking All the Steps to Defend Their Revolution From U.S. Imperialism. Speaker: Jane Harris, Nicaragua correspondent for *Militant*. Fri., Dec. 10, 7:30 p.m. Monogalia County Courthouse (corner High St. and Walnut).

2. What Is Imperialism? Lenin's View. Speaker: Fred Feldman, Socialist Workers Party National Committee. Sat., Dec. 11, 10:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

3. Slide Show on Nicaragua. Sat., Dec. 11, 1:30–2:30 p.m.

4. Lenin on the National Question and Self-determination. Speaker: John Hawkins, SWP National Committee.

5. Imperialist Powers Versus the Struggle for National Liberation Today. Speakers: South African student; representative of the Revolutionary Democratic Front of El Salvador; representative of the Palestinian Student Organization. Sat., Dec. 11, 7 p.m.—9 p.m. Party to follow. All Sat. sessions will be held in Collegiate Room of Mountainlair, W. Va. Univ., 1st floor. Donation: weekend, \$5; per session, \$2. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance, Pathfinder Bookstore. For more information call (304) 296-0055

205 18th St. S. Donation: weekend, \$5; each class, \$1; forum, \$2. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance and SWP. For more information call (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Struggle for Liberation in Ireland. Speakers: Elizabeth Platt, Irish Republican Youth Movement naFinna Eireann, Executive Committee of S.F. H-Block/Armagh Committee; Peter Urban, Irish Republican Socialist Party; Ken Davies, Young Socialist Alliance. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 11, 7 p.m. 3284 23rd St. Ausp: S.F. H-Block/Armagh Committee and YSA. For more information call (415) 824-1992.

COLORADO

Denver

Soviet Union After Brezhnev. Speaker: Floyd Fowler, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Dec. 10, 7:30 p.m. 126 W 12th Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Denver Socialist Forum. For more information call (303) 534-8954.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Washington's War on Nicaragua: An Eyewitness Report. Speaker: Jane Harris, Managua correspondent for *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. 555 W Adams. Donation: \$2.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (312) 559-9046.

INDIANA

Gary

What Next for Steelworkers? Speaker: Marie Head, Socialist Workers Party, United Steelworkers Local 1014. Sat., Dec. 4, 3 p.m. 3883 Broadway. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (219) 884-9509.

LOUISIANA

New Orleans

How to Fight Against Nuclear War. Speakers to be announced. Fri., Dec. 10, 8 p.m. 3207 Dublin St. Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (504) 486-8048.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

What Are the Polish Workers Fighting For? Speaker: Ernest Harsch, staff writer for *Intercontinental Press*, recently returned from fact-finding tour of Poland. Sun., Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m. 510 Commonwealth Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (617) 262-4621.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

On Our Land. A Film About Palestinians in Israel. Sun., Dec. 12, 7 p.m. 6404 Woodward. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (313) 875-5322.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

The Fight for Black Liberation Today and Grenada: An Eyewitness Account — Black Workers' Revolution in the Caribbean. Two classes by Melvin Chappell, Young Socialist Alliance leader. Sat., Dec. 11, 11 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

For An End to War, Racism, and Unemployment: The Fight for Socialism. Speaker: Melvin Chappell. Sun., Dec. 12, 4 p.m. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

MISSOURI

Kansas City

Socialist Publications Fund Rally. Speakers: Doug Jenness, editor, *Militant*; Dennis Goodden, National Lawyers Guild; others. Translation into Spanish provided. Sat., Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. Dixon Inn, 12th St. and Baltimore. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance, Socialist Workers Party. For more information call (816) 753-0404.

Labor's Allies on the Land: A Marxist Analysis of the Farm Question. Two classes. Speaker: Doug Jenness. Translation into Spanish provided. Sun., Dec. 12, 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. 4715A Troost. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance, Socialist Workers Party. For more information call (816) 753-0404.

NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY

Manhattan

Capitalism in Crisis: Socialist Solutions. An educational conference, Sat., Dec. 11. Registration, 12 noon. 1. Presentation: Capitalism in Crisis, Socialist Solutions, 1 p.m.—2 p.m. 2. Classes 2 p.m.—4 p.m.: a. Communist Manifesto, b. Manifesto Comunista (en Español), c. Origin of Women's Oppression, d. Where Does Unemployment Come From? A Marxist Explanation. 3. Classes 4 p.m.—6 p.m.: a. The Changing Consciousness of the U.S. Working Class, b. La concientización de la clase obrera en EE.UU. (en Español) c. Racism — How It Began, When It Will End, d. The Fight Against Imperialist War and the Draft. 4. Dinner, 6 p.m.—8 p.m. 5. Eyewitness Report from Nicaragua, 8 p.m. followed by a party. Translation into Spanish for all classes and talks. Presentation and classes (noon to 6 p.m.) at N.Y.U. Loeb Student Center (La Guardia Pl. and W 4th St.). Dinner and Eyewitness Report (6 p.m. on) at 79 Leonard St. (5 blocks south of Canal). Donation: Classes only, \$2; Dinner, \$3; Eyewitness Report, \$2; All events, \$5. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (212) 226-8445 or (201) 643-3341.

OHIO

Cincinnati

Defend Affirmative Action in Hiring and Layoffs. Speakers: Art Slater, Executive Director of Cincinnati NAACP; Charles Hummons, Vice-president of Cincinnati Black Firefighters Assoc.; Sarah Gardner, President of Cincinnati Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. Sun., Dec. 19, 7:30 p.m. 4945 Paddock Rd. Donation \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (513) 242-7161.

OREGON

Portland

"Cambodia Year Zero" a BBC Videotape Documentary. Sun., Dec. 5, 7:30 p.m. and Sun., Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m. 711 NW Everett. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Bookstore Forum. For more information call (503) 222-7225.

TEXAS

San Antonio

Hiroshima and Nagasaki: A Documentary Film. Fri., Dec. 10, 8 p.m. 337 W Josephine. Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (512) 736-9218.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

November 27 Anti-Klan Protest. What Really Happened and Why. Speakers to be announced. Translation into Spanish. Fri., Dec. 10, 8 p.m. 3106 Mt. Pleasant St. NW. For more information call (202) 797-7699.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

No More Vietnams. Chairperson, Cody Bryan U.S. Air Force vet, SE Asia 1972–74; Speakers: Steve Clements, member, Committee Against Registration and the Draft, U.S. Army draftee, Vietnam 1969–70; Pat Engrissei, Veterans for Non-intervention in Central America, U.S. Army vet 1961–62. Fri., Dec. 10, 7:30 p.m. 4868 Rainier Ave. S. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (206) 723-5330.

Come to YSA convention

For more information on the YSA and its convention, clip and mail this coupon to: YSA, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____
Phone _____
Organization/School _____

- ☐ I want more information on the YSA convention.
☐ I want to join the YSA.
☐ Enclosed is \$1 for a six-month subscription to the *Young Socialist*.
☐ Enclosed is \$1.50 for the YSA political resolution, *The deepening proletarianization of U.S. politics*.

ALABAMA

Birmingham

The Marxist View of Economic Crisis: An Educational Weekend.

Three classes: Wage-Labor and Capital. Speaker: Tom Moriarty, member Socialist Workers Party National Committee. Sat., Dec. 11, 11 a.m.; Value, Price, and Profit. Speaker, Tom Moriarty. Sat., Dec. 11, 2:30 p.m.; The Economics of Imperialism Today. Speaker: Andy Rose, SWP National Committee. Sun., Dec. 12, 11 a.m.

Militant Forum: Washington's War Against Working People at Home and Abroad. Speaker: Maceo Dixon, SWP candidate for 5th Congressional District in Atlanta. Sat., Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m.

Northwest Socialist Educational Conference: Revolutionary Cuba Today

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Cuba's Internationalist Foreign Policy. Class by Mary-Alice Waters, National chairperson Socialist Workers Party, visited Cuba last spring. Sat., Dec. 18, 2 p.m.
Film: The Moncada Program. Sat.,

Dec. 18, 8 p.m. Social to follow.

Building a Socialist Society in Cuba. Sun., Dec. 19, 11 a.m. Class by Mary-Alice Waters. Classes translated to Spanish 4868 Rainier Ave. S. Donation: Classes, \$1.50 each; Film, \$2. For more information call: Seattle, (206) 723-5330; Portland, (503) 222-7225; Vancouver, B.C. (604) 879-3413.

Nicaraguan war victims sue U.S.

Continued from front page

"We must be grateful to the Nicaraguans who have the perseverance, in the face of excruciating pain and suffering, to bring these complaints here, in the federal courts of this country. I am honored to be part of this historical legal challenge to the criminal behavior of the Reagan administration."

The formal legal complaint may be the most detailed document yet spelling out the scope of Washington's secret war in Nicaragua. It details the existence of 20 camps in Honduras on the Nicaraguan border. It lists where counterrevolutionaries are trained in Florida, California, Texas, Georgia, Virginia, and New Jersey. It documents dozens of accounts of the af-

fects of terrorist activities.

Sarah Wunsch of the CCR, who spoke at the news conference, was in Nicaragua last month interviewing plaintiffs in the suit. Her findings, incorporated into the official complaint, are a devastating account of the human costs of Washington's counter-revolutionary war.

Doctor Myrna Cunningham, a resident of the city of Bluefields in Nicaragua and a plaintiff in the case, was also scheduled to appear at the news conference. However, she was unable to make it due to airplane delays. Plans are being discussed to have her and other Nicaraguan plaintiffs speak at public meetings in this country.

Mel Mason: The making of a revolutionary socialist

Mel Mason: The making of a revolutionary by Mel Mason. 40 pages, \$.50 paperback. Available from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Include \$.75 for postage and handling.

BY PAT WRIGHT

This pamphlet was published by Pathfinder Press in September 1982. Mel Mason, is a city councilman in Seaside, California. He ran as an independent candidate for governor of California in the recent election. In Janice Lynn's introduction she explains that Mason, a national leader of the Socialist Workers Party, wrote this story of his life in "hopes that others will come to the same political conclusions he has about the need to become part of a movement that is working for socialism and to join the Socialist Workers Party or the Young Socialist Alliance."

Mason's gubernatorial campaign is over. His story, however, is one that many working people, Blacks in particular, will find interesting and will want to read.

That's because Mason tells the experiences of a Black man, searching for a way to fight against racist oppres-

sion, who concludes that it will take a revolution to transform this class-divided society and becomes Marxist. His search was not along a straight and easy road. He hopes that by reading about his experiences, others might find it a little easier to reach those same conclusions.

PAMPHLET REVIEW

sion, who concludes that it will take a revolution to transform this class-divided society and becomes Marxist. His search was not along a straight and easy road. He hopes that by reading about his experiences, others might find it a little easier to reach those same conclusions.

Mason grew up in the segregated town of Providence, Kentucky. Hoping for a better life, his family moved to Seaside, California in 1956. Mason describes his experiences in the racist educational system, where no one cared whether he could read or write but pushed his athletic ability instead. With no prospects for a job, Mason, like many Black youth, enlisted in the military. He chose the air force.

It didn't take long for him to learn he was not military material. The second-class treatment of Blacks, disciplinary punishments, constant fights with racist whites, his

staunch opposition to going to Vietnam — a war he did not support — all finally got him a bad conduct discharge in 1965.

That was the year Malcolm X was assassinated and the Watts rebellion in Los Angeles ignited a brush fire of Black protest against racist injustice in America. One of Mason's first political activities was being part of a Seaside rebellion.

Mason eventually got a job with Western Electric in San Jose, California. It was here that he had first-hand experience with the oppression and exploitation of Black workers. Blacks at Western Electric hadn't had a raise or promotion in years.

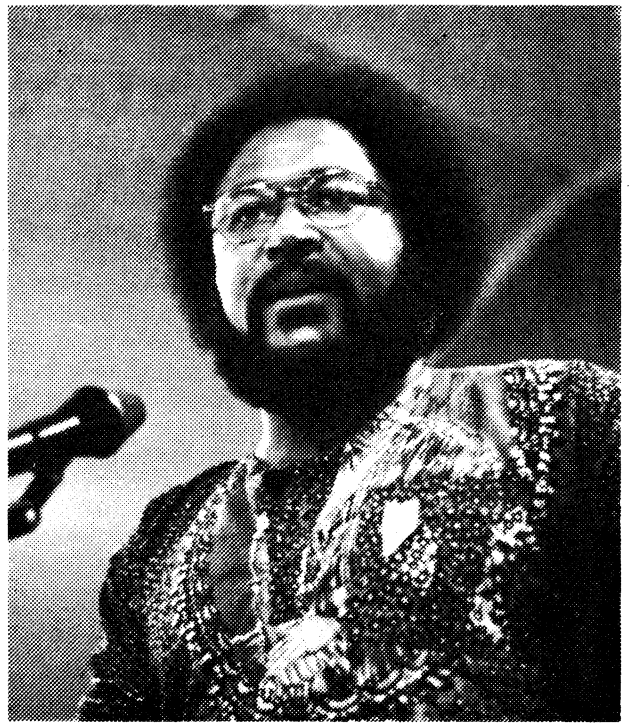
Many Black workers joined Mason, his cousin Joe, and his friend Seth in forming the Black Workers Unity Caucus to combat this racist treatment. The Caucus was successful in winning some promotions for Blacks and it defended the rights of Black women against physical and verbal harassment by racist supervisors. That cost Mel, Seth, and Joe their jobs, though their popularity in the plant forced the company to rehire them.

This experience boosted Mason's political consciousness, and he began to see that racism was not just whites hating Blacks but a necessary part of the capitalist system. Mason then went through many experiences in the Black struggle, including membership in the Black Panther Party and the Nation of Islam. He learned about the revolutionary nationalism of Malcolm X, and began a serious study of socialist ideas.

Mason started reading the newspaper of the Socialist Workers Party — the *Militant* — after remembering the favorable things that Malcolm X had to say about the publication. Mason was searching for a national organization to belong to, but he wanted one that was revolutionary and socialist.

Mason went on to become a leader of the Black community in Seaside. He decided to get involved in electoral politics to raise the revolutionary ideas that he and other brothers and sisters were thinking about. He lost the schoolboard election in 1977 by only 100 votes. He ran a write-in campaign for city council in 1978, and was elected to the council in 1979.

Mason has used his office to champion the struggles of



Mel Mason
Militant/Arnold Weissberg

Mel Mason

Black and working people and to show what can be accomplished when workers fight for themselves independent of the Democrats and Republicans.

Mason also became a founding member and leader of the National Black Independent Political Party.

In the fall of 1981, Mason, in collaboration with people in Seaside, decided that the time was ripe to get his class-struggle ideas circulated throughout the state by running an independent socialist campaign for governor of California: An appendix to the pamphlet, titled "Why I'm Running for Governor" explains what Mel hoped to accomplish with his campaign. As a resident of Oakland, California, and an active campaign supporter, I'd say he accomplished a lot.

PLO meeting rejects Reagan Middle East plan

Continued from front page

dependent Palestinian state under the leadership of the PLO."

In answer to the imperialist attempts to split the PLO, the National Council "reaffirmed the necessity of Palestinian national unity. All members of the Council stressed that this factor serves as a strong shield for the struggle through which we wrought the legend of steadfastness in Lebanon. The council stressed the importance of consolidating unity in order to achieve the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people."

Referring to the attempts to have King Hussein replace the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people in any negotiations, the National Council rejected "the attempts to manipulate the representative status of the PLO." It pointed out that both Arab summit conferences and "the will of the Palestinian people" have confirmed the

PLO as "the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied territories."

The PLO's refusal to capitulate to Reagan's demands and give up its struggle for Palestinian self-determination brought an angry reply from the *New York Times*. In a November 28 editorial, the *Times* argues that "the scattered four million Palestinians . . . have never been democratically consulted about such a leadership."

The *Times* editors fail to mention that King Hussein, who they support, does not allow elections in Jordan.

Nor do these champions of democracy report that it is a criminal offense to have PLO literature inside Israel, and that not only the PLO, but any Palestinian nationalist parties are effectively banned from running in Israeli elections.

And the *Times* editors were hardly un-

aware of the fact that elected mayors on the West Bank, who the Israeli regime accused of being PLO supporters, were removed from office by Israeli occupation authorities.

Dropping its mask of concern for the rights of the Palestinian people, the *Times* turned to threats. "If defeat in Lebanon, the futility of Soviet and Arab support and the dispersal of its guerrilla forces cannot rouse the P.L.O. from its fantasies and shake its commitment to violence, there is, sad to say, only one remaining source of pressure: the relentless absorption by Israel of the West Bank and Gaza, where 1.3 million Palestinians can still make a plausible territorial claim."

Revealing the true hypocrisy behind the Reagan plan, which merely attempts to use the plight of the Palestinians in the occupied territory as a club to force them to concede their national rights, the *Times*

warned that "even this territory will soon be out of reach."

Such threats, however, do nothing to solve the basic problem that the imperialist rulers now face. As a result of its heroic defense of West Beirut, the PLO came out of the war in Lebanon with its standing among the Arab masses greatly enhanced. The prestige of the Arab regimes, on the other hand, took big blows because of their inaction in the face of the Israeli aggression. King Hussein and the Saudi royal family are afraid of the reaction among working people at home if they break with the PLO and knuckle under to Washington's demands.

PLO chairman Yassir Arafat, addressing the National Council, reaffirmed, according to Wafa, "the pledge to the Palestinian people and martyrs of Sabra and Shatila to continue the strenuous march to achieve Palestinian national goals."

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Taxing unemployment benefits

The White House chose Thanksgiving Day to float a new trial balloon on "solving" the jobs crisis: tax more unemployment benefits and lower the minimum wage for teenage workers.

White House spokesman Larry Speakes told reporters that if the benefits were taxed, "a lot of people would get off unemployment and seek jobs." The benefits, it was claimed, make it "lucrative" to avoid getting a job.

The angry reaction against the proposal came so swiftly that Reagan himself had to denounce the scheme and claim it was never under serious consideration.

But even after the proposal was whisked under the rug, White House Chief of Staff Edwin Meese argued, "We do know that generally when unemployment benefits end, most people find jobs very quickly after that point."

Meese didn't explain why it is that benefits *have* ended for 55 percent of the unemployed today and they still can't find work.

Of the 45 percent jobless receiving benefits, 63 percent of these have annual total incomes of less than \$10,000. Hardly a "lucrative" existence.

The Democrats were of course quick to condemn the proposal as callous and portray themselves as the true friends of the unemployed. But the fact is that taxation of unemployment benefits began under the Democratic administration of James Carter. Reagan was simply trying to extend that heinous practice.

Unemployment benefits currently average \$115 a week and are as low as \$84 in some states. Before 1978 these benefits were exempt from taxation. But under Carter the Internal Revenue Service succeeded in slapping a tax on some benefits. Couples whose total income exceeded \$25,000 and individuals with a total income over \$20,000 had to pay taxes on unemployment benefits.

This year, in a bipartisan move, Congress lowered those ceilings so that unemployment benefits are taxed for families earning more than \$18,000 and individuals earning more than \$12,000. The White House hoped to go after workers making even less. There was even the suggestion that benefits should be taxed no matter how low one's income.

White House spokespeople also put forward the lame argument that revenues from such taxes could be used to create job training programs. They asserted that the reason so many are out of work is that they lack the necessary skills.

The entire proposal was a transparent attempt to blame working people themselves for the unemployment caused by capitalism and to force them to shoulder even more of the burden for the economic crisis. It fit into the pattern of attacking Social Security, health care, pensions, food stamps, welfare, and other programs fought for and won by the working class as protection against the ravages of the profit system.

The proposal to lower the minimum wage for teen-

agers was presented as a way to induce business to hire them. But it too has nothing to do with providing jobs. It is part of the employers' drive to cut back workers' wages in order to jack up the rate of profit. Attacking the minimum wage for youth is aimed at further dragging down wages in general and lowering the expectations of the working class.

Even though Reagan has retreated from these two outrageous proposals — for now — he is pressing ahead with other attacks on our standard of living. The same day he withdrew the idea of taxing more unemployment benefits, he declared he would press full steam ahead to raise taxes on gasoline from four cents a gallon to nine cents.

The Democrats have given this measure their full support, going along with the argument that the tax revenues will provide funds for jobs in highway construction and repair. Once again, it is workers who will foot the bill.

Meanwhile, the Democrats are pushing another "jobs program," which would allocate \$5 billion to create public works jobs.

The two programs together, if passed, would provide less than a million jobs, a small dent in the 11.6 million unemployment figure.

Neither the Democrats nor the Republicans really have any intention of solving the jobs crisis because it's not in the interests of the employers to do so. They intend to continue laying off workers wherever they cannot make sufficient profits and to use the massive unemployment rate to beat down the demands and expectations of working people.

A genuine program to combat unemployment would start by dismantling the war budget and forcing the corporations to pay taxes on their mammoth profits.

Those two sources would provide plenty of funds for a real public-works program to build hospitals, schools, new housing, mass transit, and other vitally needed things. Millions could be put to work at union-scale wages.

Instead of imposing a tax on the measly unemployment benefits currently handed out, an emergency program to increase those benefits to union scale, and extend them to every worker as long as he or she is unemployed, ought to be enacted.

There should be an immediate public health care program, especially for the jobless millions who have lost their medical coverage. Other social programs, like food stamps, should be greatly expanded.

The workweek should be shortened with no cut in pay to further spread the available jobs.

The fact that no one in Congress is putting forward this kind of program points to the urgent need for the labor movement to have its own political party that would champion the interests of all working people, employed and unemployed.

The MX 'Peacekeeper'

It must have been a presidential speech writer with an Orwellian sense of humor who decided to call the new MX missile the "Peacekeeper."

Introduction of this grim, new nuclear weapons system will spark a further escalation of Washington's arms buildup. Construction will mean an enormous added cost for already heavily overburdened taxpayers.

According to President Reagan the projected cost of the "dense pack" system will be \$26 billion, in 1982 dollars. But "supplementary" costs will push these minimal estimates closer to \$45 billion — plus another estimated \$20 billion for a new antiballistic missile system to protect the MX system.

To press for so staggering an expenditure for weapons of death is particularly cruel at a time when 11.6 million workers are jobless in this country and Republican and Democratic lawmakers stand united in refusing to take meaningful action on their behalf.

The MX system will include 100 missiles — each bearing 10 or more nuclear warheads — based in silos contained in an area 14 miles long and 1.5 miles wide. The missiles will have a range of 7,000 miles, a bit more than the distance from Wyoming to Moscow.

The proposed Wyoming site was chosen after stubborn public opposition forced Washington to drop its initial plan to base the system in Nevada.

Nevada residents, and their Utah neighbors, have suffered enough in radiation deaths from the above-ground atomic tests conducted there in the 1950s. The people in Nevada and Utah learned that the government was ready to callously disregard their safety and then lie shamelessly to conceal what it had done. Opposition to the MX was so deep that even the Mormon church hierarchy finally came out against it.

Residents of Wyoming have been living with nuclear-tipped weapons since the 1950s. There are currently a reported 200 Minuteman missiles deployed there in underground silos.

Ed Herschler, Democratic governor of Wyoming, says

he'll welcome the MX, and this sentiment is echoed by the Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce.

But Wyoming ranchers are already planning a strategy meeting to map a campaign to keep the "Peacekeeper" out. They recognize the obvious negative impact it will have on the area's environment, not to speak of the dangers inherent in such a nuclear presence.

Nor are they likely to be assured by hypocritical governmental promises of safety.

A small but tragic illustration of what's involved occurred in Tennessee, November 28. Four technicians were killed when a searing flash fire erupted in a 250-foot deep MX test silo at a military installation near Nashville. The explosion occurred while the four were trying to remove debris from a previous blast. So far they haven't even been able to find the remains of the four victims.

According to press accounts, congressional Democrats are skeptical about the new MX proposal, with some suggesting the money could be better spent in other areas of the arms buildup. But it remains to be seen what their initial declared opposition to the MX amounts to. Like their Republican counterparts, they are totally committed to the U.S. war drive and the massive arms escalation involved.

They are fully complicit with the Reagan administration in pressing the aggression currently being waged against the people of Central America, as well as the policy of rapid military intervention to stave off and roll back revolutionary movements around the globe. Committed to such a policy, the Democrats are not likely candidates for leading serious opposition to this ominous new nuclear project.

It is important that there be genuine opposition to the MX plan in Wyoming, and throughout the country. To be really effective, such opposition should be part of a broader movement to stop the war drive and to scrap the entire U.S. armament stockpile. That's the road to a peaceful, safe future.

Jim Crow's defeat: gigantic advance for Black rights

BY MALIK MIAH

There is growing interest among activists in the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP) and other Black organizations about the impact of the civil rights movement on U.S. society.

This discussion is an important one for Blacks and all working people. The changes brought about in the North, as well as the South, are among the most far reaching in U.S. history since the period of Radical Reconstruction when the Confederacy was crushed after the second American revolution, also known as the Civil War.

Nelson Blackstock, an activist in the civil rights movement in the 1960s and former staff member for the Stu-

OUR REVOLUTIONARY HERITAGE

dent Non-violent Coordinating Committee, reviewed the changes in the South since the death of the Jim Crow-segregation system in a 1979 pamphlet, *Workers in the Changing South*.

Blackstock explains the origins of Jim Crow, how it was finally defeated, and the significance of this victory for U.S. workers today:

"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."

Blackstock explains that Reconstruction was stopped short because the industrial and manufacturing rulers in the North decided that the freed slaves should be reduced to peonage with no democratic rights. Why? The capitalists needed supercheap agricultural labor.

"By 1910," Blackstock explains, "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."

What was the impact of legal segregation on the rest of the country? "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."

How was Jim Crow killed?

Blackstock points to several factors: "One was the rise of the revolution against colonialism in Asia and Africa. . . . 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.'" Secondly, "with the industrialization of southern agriculture . . . there was less need for a huge source of superexploited agricultural labor."

Lastly, Blackstock points to a factor that is rarely mentioned — the role of labor. "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."

Blackstock points out that the main organizer of the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott, which marked the beginning of the civil rights movement, was a Black union militant, E.D. Nixon, a member of the Sleeping Car Porters and NAACP.

Blackstock explains that the bus boycott, the big sit-in wave in the 1960s, and finally the wave of struggles between 1963 through 1965 led to the passage of the famous legislation for voting and civil rights, and the death of Jim Crow.

"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."

Although racism can't be obliterated until capitalism is destroyed, it would take a virtual counterrevolution to restore Jim Crow.

Workers in the Changing South can be ordered from Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014 for \$.95. Please include \$.75 for postage.

The 'crimes' that they put women in prison for

I recently ran across some statistics that help show what the capitalist politicians' "war on crime" is really all about.

The *Christian Science Monitor* ran an article about a class-action suit brought against the Kentucky Department of Corrections by inmates at the Kentucky Correctional Institute for Women. The suit was filed in an attempt to rectify the discriminatory treatment that vic-



WOMEN IN REVOLT Margaret Jayko

timizes women prisoners. These range from less educational opportunities and pay than male prisoners, to a dramatic disparity in so-called privileges received by male and female inmates.

The thing that really struck me in the article, however, was the statistics about who the women in prison are. I'd like to quote two paragraphs from the *Monitor* article:

"According to statistics compiled by the National

Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD), the following profile of women in prison emerges: Eighty percent are black; between 80 and 90 percent are drug addicted; between 70 and 80 percent come from impoverished backgrounds; 50 percent are between the ages of 22 and 30; 24 percent are married; and between 60 and 70 percent have children.

"The high percentage of inmates who are single mothers is particularly significant, since studies have shown that most women are in prison for crimes related to their inability to provide for their families. 'They have committed economic crimes, such as forgery, counterfeiting, stolen property, gambling, and prostitution,' says the NCCD's Marge Woods."

More statistics emerged from a recent article on women prisoners in *McCall's* magazine. One-half of these women have less than a tenth grade education, and they generally have been unemployed or on welfare some part of their lives.

Why are these women in prison? Because they broke the law.

That speaks volumes about what law is in this society. United States law is the codification of the rules and regulations that reflect the domination over society by a tiny ruling class, and the exploitation and oppression of women, Blacks, Latinos, and all working people by that class.

Thus, in capitalist America, it is against the law, a "crime", to steal clothes from Macy's — clothes made by low-paid garment workers — so that your children have something to wear, a crime punishable by imprisonment. Yet, it's no crime at all, in fact it's perfectly legal, for Congress to cut off Medicaid funds for abortions for poor women, thus assuring an increase in the number of women who will die from back-alley abortions.

Women who are forced into prostitution are "criminals," while the butchers of Vietnam in the White House and the Pentagon are "national leaders."

Black women who are victims of this racist, sexist, class-divided society are put in jail while the biggest thieves in the world run loose on Wall Street.

The so-called war on crime is really a class war of the ruling rich against the oppressed and exploited. The rulers use the prisons and the threat of imprisonment to intimidate workers and to punish us for rebelling, for just trying to take back a little bit of the wealth that we produced to begin with.

Fighters for women's rights must champion the demands raised by our sisters in prison. And building a fighting, massive women's liberation movement is an important part of our side's war against the real criminal element in this society — the capitalist ruling class that profits from and upholds our oppression.

LETTERS

Bilateral freeze

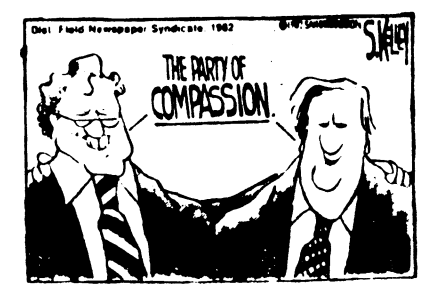
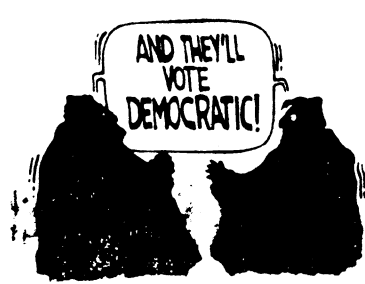
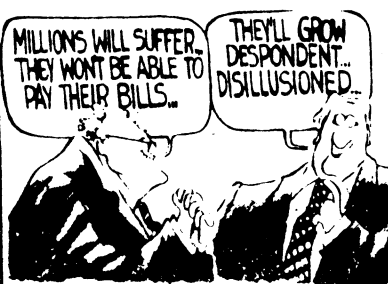
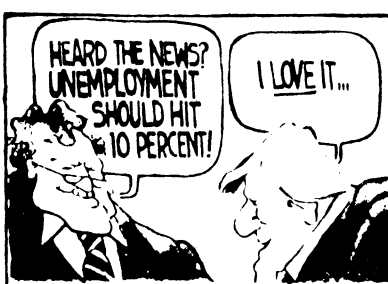
I read your recent *Militant* article, "Why bilateral nuclear freeze will not bring world peace any closer" (Oct. 29, 1982), but remain in disagreement.

Your slogan for unilateral U.S. nuclear disarmament correctly makes the point that the United States, not the Soviet Union, is responsible for the nuclear danger. But this is at best a hollow moralism if you raise it in the context of opposition to a proposal which is of critical importance to the very survival of the Soviet Union as well as most of the rest of the world. You effectively abandon the defense of the Soviet Union when you oppose the bilateral nuclear freeze.

Your opposition to the freeze can only help make the U.S. nuclear arsenal more murderous. Your call for unilateral nuclear disarmament will not be heeded immediately. In the meantime you should critically support the freeze. The bilateral freeze and your call are not mutually exclusive, nor even incompatible. Both would limit the nuclear capability of imperialism.

You argue that the freeze presents the Democratic Party as the party of peace and thus obscures the need for an independent political movement of working and oppressed people and thus insures the continued rule of the bourgeoisie. The freeze movement is not the creature of the Democratic Party. The Democrats look to exploit it, and many in the movement are eager to help them. But a good portion of the people in the antinuclear movement are not mobilized around the Democratic Party's war plan, don't like either capitalist party, and think of themselves as sympathetic to socialist ideals. Your absence from the freeze movement can only facilitate its capture by the Democrats and the realization of all that entails (continuation of capitalist rule, barbarism, and probable extinction).

You conclude your article identifying two questions on which the bilateral nuclear freeze should be judged: "Does it mark even the smallest step in mobilizing and organizing against Washington's war policies? Does it advance the fight for working-class political independence?" The answer to the first is an unequivocal "yes." The second question ignores the influence that revolutionary socialists might have on events. The fight for working-class political independence can only succeed to the degree that revolutionary socialists wage it.



You should be waging the fight for political independence in this large and very important political movement.

The bilateral freeze movement is the front line in the mobilization against Washington's most murderous war policies and in the fight for working-class independence from the capitalist parties.

Herbert Ashley
Brooklyn, New York

Freeze fraud

Ball State University participated in the nationwide November 11 convocation entitled, "Solutions to the Nuclear Arms Race," at which approximately 300 people attended. In contrast to the "freeze fraud" (that is, the line that a bilateral freeze resolution offers a solution to the so-called arms race without even mentioning the aggressive counterrevolutionary role of the United States in semi-colonial countries), our Muncie Committee for Democracy in Latin America put forth a more concrete proposal. [Below are excerpts.]

"Our view regarding solutions to the nuclear arms race begins with the need to take immediate action to defuse the explosive situation currently existing in Central America."

"Thus Washington's push toward war in Central America is at this moment a present and immediate danger to all of humanity. The war moves of the current administration are like a child playing with matches in a gun powder factory."

"We call on all who are fearful of an impending nuclear war to take immediate action and join us in demanding: 'U.S. out of Central America' and 'No aid to the military dictatorships in Honduras, El Salvador, or Guatemala.'"

Jerry Ulman
Muncie, Indiana

The best

I'm a student from Japan. My major is law and political science. In my opinion, the *Militant* is the best political party's newspaper. I believe the Socialist Workers

Party is the best party in the United States. I'm reading *The Nation*, *In These Times*, and *New Republic*. But these are not perfect. Therefore, I decided to subscribe to your newspaper.

I will stay here until May 10. So until then I want to read the *Militant* every week.

I think Trotsky, Castro, and Malcolm X are great people. Now I'm reading James P. Cannon's *The Struggle for Socialism in the American Century*. It's very exciting. Although my English is poor, I'm really looking forward to reading your newspaper.

K.S.
Kirksville, Missouri

As a reporter

It is difficult to find your newspaper in my country. As a reporter, and as a socialist, it is very important for me to receive the *Militant*.

Please let me know if it is possible. I am not used to writing in English, but if you need any kind of information let me know.

Ché Paraitici
San Juan, Puerto Rico

[In reply. The most dependable way to ensure that you can read the *Militant* every week is to subscribe. The *Militant* has a number of subscribers in Puerto Rico, as well as around the world. See page 2 for subscription rates.]

Common enemy

I have seen very little information in the press on the nature and amount of direct U.S. investment in El Salvador. I think that the *Militant* should run such an article.

Today at work the Kodak photocopier that I operate broke down. While the service technician was replacing the printed circuit board, I noticed that it contained integrated circuits (chips) manufactured by Texas Instruments in the USA, Singapore, and El Salvador. When I pointed this out to the repairperson he said that this made them "revolutionary chips."

Last summer my union (Teamsters) reopened the contract and made concessions. Instead of

this course of action I think that we should unite with the Salvadoran workers in a common struggle against our common oppressor: capitalism.

Ron Richards
Portland, Oregon

Election returns

Here is some information concerning the November 2 elections. I hope the facts are not too confusing, and are useful to you and *Militant* readers.

Pennsylvania Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate, Kipp Dawson, and candidates for governor and lieutenant governor, Mark Zola and Wilson Osteen (stand-in candidate for Katherine Sojourner), all placed third in Erie County, Pennsylvania, voting. Republican and Democratic candidates won the offices, but the SWP candidates received more votes than the Consumer and Libertarian candidates. Dawson received 797 votes, while Zola and Osteen received 649 votes.

In the 93 districts that comprise the voting wards of the city of Erie and Millcreek township, the candidates for all three offices averaged 5 votes per district.

In the 36 boroughs and townships in the county (excluding Millcreek), there was at least 1 vote for Dawson in each of 33 boroughs and townships. The average vote was 7.

In the small, eastern county city of Corry, Dawson received 16 votes in 4 wards.

In the 36 boroughs and townships, Zola and Osteen averaged 4 votes for governor and lieutenant governor. The city of Corry voters cast 10 votes for the SWP candidates.

James Smith
Erie, Pennsylvania

Weinberger

Casper Weinberger's remarks while laying a wreath on 'Veteran's Day': "We should never again ask our men and women to serve in a war that we do not intend to win" is yet another revelation of the perfidy imposed upon the public by the leaders of both

government parties, Democrat and Republican. Without some factual evidence to the contrary, Weinberger's statement can only be interpreted as a sour-grapes rationalization that he puts out now, after a sore capitalist defeat in Vietnam, to try to build confidence that the current U.S. war program will win.

There is a more credible explanation for the U.S. Vietnam pull-out after eight years and hundreds of thousands killed and wounded than that "we did not intend to win." It is that the United States started and continued its Vietnam adventure much the same way that capitalist entrepreneurs open up any high-risk business. There were big stakes in the offing; attractive, profitable export markets, offshore oil exploration, and the chance to abort the revolutionary determination of the workers and farmers of Southeast Asia. Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon all intended to win, there can be no question about that. But the investment in capital, both monetary and political, were used up before they could count on any prospects for profit.

If Weinberger's remark means anything today, it is that "this time there will be no restraint." Now they are fearful that they "must win" or, not just one business episode, but the whole capitalist system, may go down. That goes toward understanding why they feel so desperate about accepting any cuts in their stockpiling of war materials, both nuclear and conventional. It explains also their refusal to accept reports (even from their own ambassadors) of human rights violations and genocidal assassinations by U.S.-supported surrogates in Central America and Lebanon.

Howard Mayhew
Schenectady, New York

The 'Militant' special prisoner fund makes it possible to send reduced-rate subscriptions to prisoners who can't pay for them. To help out, send your contribution to: Militant Prisoner Subscription Fund, 14 Charles Lane, New York, New York 10014.

L.A. meeting backs Salvador actions

Activists hear proposals presented at U.S.-Mexico solidarity conference

BY FRANCISCO SÁNCHEZ

LOS ANGELES — On November 5, 130 people — a majority Salvadorans — participated in a forum sponsored by the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* entitled, "El Salvador: new Advances for the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front" (FMLN).

The major purpose of the gathering was to hear reports about the recent Mexico-U.S. Border Conference in Solidarity With the Salvadoran People, which took place in Tijuana, Mexico, on October 30-31.

This included reports about the recent political and military advances of the FMLN. The information was presented by representatives of the Revolutionary Democratic Front-FMLN.

The conference in Tijuana was called by the Mexican Committee of Solidarity with the Salvadoran People in an attempt to link up with forces in the United States who want to build a broad-based anti-intervention movement.

Hundreds of activists came together from a number of cities in northern Mexico, and from California, Arizona, and Colorado. In addition to representatives from the Mexican solidarity committee, delegates came from Mexican unions and campuses as well.

From the U.S. side many representatives came from local solidarity groups that had been carrying out activities independent of any nationwide coordination. In addition several representatives from the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) were represented.

The new coalition that was established is known as the Mexico-U.S. Border Conference in Solidarity With the Salvadoran People. It is formally affiliated to the World Front in Solidarity with the Salvadoran People, which was established in March 1982 at an international conference in Mexico City.

Conference decisions included holding marches and car caravans along the U.S.-Mexico border on January 22. Concerts and other fundraising activities are to be held on March 2-8, the anniversary of the founding of the World Front.

One of the more important decisions was to launch a campaign to fight for the rights of Salvadoran refugees in Mexico and the United States. Conference participants also agreed to reconvene the Mexico-U.S. Border Conference at the end of next May.

The November 5 forum in Los Angeles was the first opportunity for solidarity activists to discuss the proposals put forth by the Tijuana conference.

The speakers panel included Hugh Byrne, a representative of the Los Angeles (CISPES); Jerry Freiworth, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party; and Dina Hernández, a Salvadoran and member of the Young Socialist Alliance.

Explaining U.S. imperialism's rationale for intervening in El Salvador, Byrne said that "this is based upon the supposition that the Salvadoran revolution originated as a result of outside subversion and not in the historical inequality and oppression in the country."

He also pointed to the ever present danger of a regional war developing in Central America and denounced the attempt to isolate and destabilize the Nicaraguan revolution.

He linked the interventionist attitude of the Reagan administration with its domestic policies and pointed out that working people must struggle on two fronts. "The struggle against the domestic policies of the Reagan administration with its cutbacks in social programs such as education cannot be separated from the struggle against intervention," he concluded.

Jerry Freiworth focused on the events at the Tijuana conference.

"The conference emphasized the fact that now more than ever before a firm and unified organization in solidarity with the people of El Salvador is needed," Freiworth reported, "and all forces must be united in this effort."

Freiworth explained that "reaching out to new allies in Mexico and the United States — progressive groups, religious groups, and especially to working people and their unions — should be the focus of this solidarity activity."

Freiworth also announced the decision of the Tijuana conference to target January 22 as a day of coordinated solidarity activities where marching caravans from different cities in the Southwest and Northern Mexico would be organized. One caravan would converge in San Diego and then march to Tijuana. Another will converge in Ciudad Juárez. Rallies will be held in both cities in solidarity with the Salvadoran people.

Dina Hernández concluded the forum by pointing out that "the struggle of the Salvadoran people is not only just for El Salvador, but rather it's for all the people of Central America."



Banner at Tijuana conference says: "1st Mexico-U.S. border conference in solidarity with the Salvadoran people. Against imperialist intervention. International solidarity of the peoples."

Teachers greet Salvadoran unionist

BY BILL KALMAN

PITTSBURGH — "Our job here in the United States is to bring to your awareness the struggle that is going on between the oligarchy of El Salvador and the people of El Salvador, and the role being played by Yankee imperialism."

That message was given to audiences in West Virginia and Pennsylvania this past week by Alejandro Molina Lara, a leader of the Salvadoran labor movement. His five-week tour of Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio is being sponsored by the Pittsburgh Central America Mobilization Coalition.

In the first weeks of the tour, Molina Lara has spoken before coal miners and steelworkers. He has participated in several campus meetings as well as meetings in a number of working class communities.

On November 14 Molina Lara addressed 200 electrical workers during the business meeting of United Electrical Workers Local 506 in Erie, Pennsylvania.

In addition to receiving wide media coverage, the tour has received close to \$1,000 in honoraria and donations. Part of the money will be used to defray expenses. The rest will go toward supporting the fight against repression in El Salvador.

Molina Lara, secretary-general of the Fishing Industry Union (SIP) and a leader of the National Confederation of Salvadoran Workers (FENASTRAS), completed the second week of his tour by continuing to explain why the American people should support the fight of the Salvadoran people.

"I'm here to convince you of what we are fighting for and to ask for your solidarity. Let me explain that we are not guerrillas, we are people who have taken up arms to defend our lives," Molina Lara said.

He described the political situation in his homeland during interviews with the *Charleston Gazette* and WCAW, a Charleston, West Virginia, radio station. He also met with Democrat Bob Wise, U.S. Congressman-elect from West Virginia's 3rd Congressional District.

Molina Lara spoke at the West Virginia Technical University in Montgomery and to a public meeting in Raleigh, cosponsored by the president of the Raleigh Federation of Teachers. Seventy-five dollars in donations were collected at the teachers' meeting.

In a question-and-answer period, one of

the teachers asked Molina Lara, "When the Revolutionary Democratic Front of El Salvador takes power what role in the new government do you want?" Molina answered, "This was the first thing they [the national guardsmen] asked me when they captured me." Because of his activities in SIP and FENASTRAS organizing the labor movement against the junta's murderous policies, Molina Lara was captured and arrested four times. He was most recently arrested in January 1981. He was tortured, held incommunicado for 60 days, and imprisoned for a total of four months.

Drawing on these experiences and the tenacity of the Salvadoran liberation fighters, Molina Lara indicated that the Salvadoran oligarchy, "couldn't understand that we fight out of conviction and for the love of others." He made it clear that the rebel

fighters are not interested in securing comfortable government posts.

"As for myself," he continued, "I'm a worker not a politician."

One measure of the tour's initial success is the 250 signatures collected by Molina Lara on a petition be sent to President Ronald Reagan and the U.S. Congress.

The petition, which is being sent by FENASTRAS, demands the immediate release of Salvadoran labor leaders jailed since 1980. These include the entire leadership of El Salvador's most combative union, the Electrical Workers Union.

The signers include labor officials and activists from 12 different international unions. In addition activists from the Ohio-based Labor Organizing Committee and the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization have signed.

Salvadoran soldiers kill U.S. youth

BY NELSON GONZÁLEZ

Michael Kline, a 21-year-old U.S. citizen, was murdered on October 13 after Salvadoran soldiers removed him for questioning from a bus in Morazan Province.

According to reports that appeared in the November 19 *Washington Post* and the November 30 *New York Times*, Kline was detained by army Sgt. José Desposorio Lopez after being pulled off a bus traveling between San Miguel and San Francisco Goters. According to Sergeant Lopez, Kline was found to be suspicious because of his "long hair, dirty clothes, and rubber sandals."

Word first came of Kline's murder when the head of El Salvador's Armed Forces Press Committee announced at a news conference on October 15 that a "gringo mercenary" had been killed by government troops in Morazan Province. It was reported to the media that Kline had allegedly grabbed one of the soldiers guns and fired at them before they killed him. In addition, it was reported that Kline was suspected of being a guerrilla because he carried a knapsack, an air mattress, insect repellent, Alka Seltzer, and lubricating oil.

The news conference account was contradicted by the report given by Sergeant Lopez who, with two other soldiers, had arrested Kline. They flagged down a truck and were taking Kline in for questioning

when he allegedly lunged for one of the soldier's guns but failed. Then Kline leaped out of the truck and began running away. It was at this point that he was killed by three shots at a distance of 30 feet.

However, this account was also contradicted by U.S. embassy officials. They cited the medical report the day after the killing that showed there had been a bullet wound from the front of the head to the back. This bullet had been fired at a much closer distance than the other shots. "It could be he did try to escape and maybe they dropped him and then came up close to finish him off," said one diplomat. Powder burns were also found on the body.

With regard to the possible effect Kline's death may have on President Reagan's certification of the Salvadoran junta scheduled in late January, one worried U.S. diplomat, authorized to speak about the case, described the circumstances surrounding Kline's murder to the *Washington Post* as being "sensitive." So "sensitive" that consulate officials in Hamburg, Germany, told Kline's mother who lives there, that she would not be able to see her son's body.

Kline's sister, Julie, who lives in Spring Valley, California, told the *San Diego Union* on November 21, "I want to find out what actually happened. Obviously there is some kind of cover-up in Washington."