

Reagan 'recovery': no peace or prosperity for working people

Socialist presidential nominee answers 'State of Union' talk

On January 26 Mel Mason, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president of the United States, released a statement answering President Reagan's "State of the Union" address. Mason's statement follows:

President Reagan's speech was far more interesting in what he left out than in what he said. Reagan never once mentioned Blacks in his address. Not once. Nor did he ever refer to Latinos. It wasn't simply because Reagan is a racist, but because the miserable conditions of Black and Latino America belie the myth of the U.S. ruling class' economic "miracle."

The economic recovery, Reagan told us, brought jobs for 4 million people last year. Yet, unemployment among Blacks has increased to 17.8 percent. Black workers haven't yet recovered from the 1973-1975 recession, let alone the most recent one. Our attempt to break out of the cycle of being the "last hired, first fired" is being attacked through the Reagan administration's moves to scuttle affirmative action.

Unemployment in the working class as a whole is also still widespread. More than 9 million U.S. workers are without jobs. U.S. Steel recently threw over 15,000 more onto the streets. To the millions of jobless U.S. workers, all Reagan offered was the words, "You are not forgotten."

For those of us lucky enough to have a job, things are getting worse, too. There are fewer of us, doing more work for longer hours, and at a faster clip. Our bosses are demanding wage cuts and other big concessions in our contracts, forcing long strike battles like the one the Arizona copper miners are waging today against Phelps Dodge Corp.

Meanwhile, our wages are buying less and less. Reagan hails as a victory the fact that the inflation rate has slowed down. But prices rising 3.2 percent annually while our wages are being driven down means a steadily declining standard of living for U.S. workers.

Neither have farmers — who Reagan also failed to mention — experienced the joys of the "renewed energy and optimism throughout the land." Foreclosures and forced sales of farms continue as farmers are caught in the squeeze between skyrocketing costs and low prices for their products.

Reagan's address, which didn't have much to do with describing the actual state of the country, was primarily tailored to winning votes in the upcoming election.

Along this line he did make some specific proposals.

In the face of massive unemployment, inflation, and pressing social problems, Reagan proposes that the federal government spend billions of dollars to build a space station. For what?! Such a project is designed only to increase the profits of big business and the military capabilities of the U.S. government's war machine.

At the same time the president said his administration plans even more massive budget cuts in badly needed social services such as education, health care, and food programs.

Reagan asked Congress to aid the administration in making further cuts. He's certain he can get its support because it was with the bipartisan backing of congressional Democrats and Republicans that the previous slashing of social services was

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Militant/Larry Lukehart

Mel Mason, Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate: "Reagan talks about economic recovery. Yet, millions remain without jobs. Among Blacks unemployment has increased to 17.8 per cent."



Oil workers condemn killing of striker

BY SUSAN JAMES

RODEO, Calif. — The killing of striker Greg Goobic on a picket line here has made striking workers at the Union Oil refinery more determined than ever to take on this powerful oil giant.

The union on strike, Local 1-326 of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW), called a memorial march for Goobic January 25. Memorials were also to take place at other Union Oil operations around the country, including the company's refinery at Wilmington, California, which is also being struck.

Goobic was killed while picketing at the Union Oil refinery's main gate the evening of January 19. He was 20 years old.

An 18-wheel truck driven by a nonunion driver ran a red light and failed to stop or even slow down as it approached the main gate. Eyewitnesses report that the truck actually sped up, knocking down Goobic and running over him.

"I wouldn't be surprised if this was premeditated," one oil operator angrily told the *Militant*. The strikers are wearing black armbands in protest of the killing. Just hours before the death, strikers had been given assurances by the company that all trucks would stop at the gate.

A number of oil companies have reached agreement with OCAW on new contracts to replace those that expired January 7 at many refineries. The new agreements must be ratified by the union's membership.

Sixty oil companies have yet to agree on new OCAW contracts. Among them are Texaco, Shell, Sohio, Amoco, Chevron, and Sun. So far, of the major oil corporations, only Gulf, Marathon, Getty, and one Exxon refinery in Montana have settled. The new contracts contain modest wage increases.

Union Oil has not agreed to settlements at all its refineries. The 340 members of Local 1-326 struck the Rodeo refinery January 17. Several workers proudly told the

Militant that this was their third or fourth strike. But they said this strike was different. This time Union Oil was really out to break the unions, just as happened with the air traffic controllers and as was attempted with the Greyhound workers.

"This strike is not so much about wages," John Billecci, Local 1-326's recording secretary, told the *Militant*. "It's about what we're here for, about our right to have a union."

While Union Oil workers won settle-

ments at the company's other refineries in Illinois and Texas, Union Oil is trying to get workers at its California refineries to accept a different settlement. In addition to retrogressive wage offers, it is trying to impose drastic wage cuts on new hires, who would start at wages that in some categories would be 40 percent lower than what veteran workers doing the same job would be making.

Billecci explained that this attack on new
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NLRB gives bosses green light for stepped-up union-busting

BY GEOFF MIRELOWITZ

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has struck another blow against the labor movement, handing the owners of big and small businesses alike another union-busting tool.

On January 24 the NLRB reversed a previous decision and upheld the "right" of a factory owner to pick up his business and move it to another location simply to avoid paying union wages or abiding by union working conditions. This will encourage the spread of "runaway shops" — already a growing problem facing electrical, garment, and other unions.

AFL-CIO attorney Charles McDonald said the NLRB decision "means that an employer can say, if a union doesn't do what I want it to do I will take my business elsewhere."

The action reversed a 1982 NLRB decision that barred the Milwaukee Spring Division of the Illinois Coil Spring Co. from moving its assembly operations from Milwaukee to a nonunion plant in McHenry, Illinois, without the permission of the union representing the Milwaukee work-

ers, the United Auto Workers.

When the company challenged the original ruling in federal court the NLRB offered to give "further consideration" to the case. The new result is that any company may move wherever and whenever it pleases — even if it is in the middle of the term of a union contract — unless that contract specifically forbids such a move.

Like the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, the composition of the NLRB has recently undergone a change due to new appointments by the Reagan administration. Just as the primary qualification for membership on the civil rights panel is now opposition to genuine civil rights progress, qualification for membership on the NLRB appears to be open hostility to organized labor.

"Under our decision," the new NLRB majority proclaimed, "an employer does not risk giving a union veto power over its decision regarding relocation." This, it asserted, would "encourage realistic and meaningful collective bargaining." Industry lawyers echoed the claim that this

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—SELLING OUR PRESS AT THE PLANT GATE—

BY LEE MARTINDALE

Members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) in plants and mines across the United States and Canada are involved in important discussions about what strategy to follow to defend their union and their jobs. USWA copper miners in Arizona are in the seventh month of a bitter strike against the Phelps Dodge Corp. At the end of December, U.S. Steel announced plant closings and layoffs which will permanently eliminate over 15,000 jobs.

On March 29, a special election will be held for USWA international president. Union meetings to nominate candidates for this election have begun. One of the candidates, Ron Weisen, is challenging some of the policies of the union's current leadership, which has failed to conduct a fight against the escalating employer attacks.

Steelworkers who will vote in the upcoming election are grappling with the big questions facing the entire labor movement today: what will it take to turn back the bosses' attacks on the union? Where do we look for allies in this fight? Is stopping imports the answer? Can there be a "national industrial policy" which will serve the interests of both the giant steel corporations and steelworkers? What kind of leadership do we need to fight back, and how will we get it?

The *Militant* has reported on and contributed to this discussion. Socialist USWA members and other unionists in cities across the country are discussing how to reach steelworkers with the *Militant's* coverage and proposals, and

participate in the discussion going on.

In Baltimore and Washington, D.C., members of the Socialist Workers Party began in December mapping out a special campaign to reach steelworkers with the *Militant* and the Pathfinder Press pamphlet, *Steelworkers Under Attack: How to Fight Back and Defend Jobs*. They decided to begin the new year with a special week of sales at plant gates, union meetings, and unemployment offices. With a copy of the *Militant* they offered the pamphlet for 25 cents.

As part of preparing for this special sales effort, they organized a discussion of the *Militant's* editorial calling for nationalization of U.S. Steel in response to its massive plant closings. This discussion helped to prepare them to discuss the crisis in the steel industry with workers they met at the plant gates.

Twenty-six sales teams were planned as part of this week-long effort. In spite of the bitter cold snap that descended on the area that week, they decided to go ahead. The cold and a blizzard forced the cancellation of six of the teams, but the rest came off as planned.

The results indicate the interest in this discussion within the union, and in the *Militant's* point of view. The teams sold 53 copies of the *Militant* and 21 copies of the *Steelworkers Under Attack* pamphlet to steelworkers.

The teams were planned to reach out to steelworkers in the entire area around Baltimore and Washington. Four teams were sent to the huge Sparrows Point mill, and 20 papers and 4 pamphlets



Militant/Stu Singer

Plant closings, layoffs, and union elections have generated big discussion among steelworkers. Sales of *Militant* are one way to push this discussion forward.

were sold. Other teams sold at plants not covered by the basic steel agreement, like Kennecott Copper and a Glidden chemical plant organized by the USWA.

A team to an unemployment office near Sparrows Point sold eight *Militants* and four pamphlets to laid-off steelworkers. Several pamphlets and a paper were sold at one of the union meetings held to nominate candidates for the union election.

Joe Kleidon, a *Militant* supporter and USWA member, reports a similar interest in the *Militant's* ideas in the mill where he works. Articles have been posted on the bulletin board, and coworkers of his have bought the paper at the plant gate. He reports that as a result of the steel coverage in the

paper, "the *Militant* is seen more as a union paper as well as an anti-war paper."

A *Militant* Forum in Baltimore was organized during the sales campaign. The topic was "The Crisis Facing Steelworkers," featuring *Militant* staffwriter Geoff Mirelowitz. Sales teams invited the steelworkers they met at the plant gates to come and participate in the discussion. Several steelworkers came, as well as workers from other industries. The presentation by Mirelowitz and the discussion focused on how the crisis facing steelworkers is part of the broader class war on the labor movement by the employers and their government.

The socialists in Baltimore and Washington plan to continue this campaign in the remaining weeks

leading up to the union election. In addition to going back to many of the plants they visited this week, they plan to go door to door in neighborhoods where steelworkers live, to introduce the *Militant* to them and to have more time to talk about the crisis in the industry, the union election, and the different points of view put forward within the union on how to fight back.

Other areas are planning similar campaigns. The current issue of the Spanish-language socialist magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* includes coverage of the steel union elections, and the proposal for nationalizing U.S. Steel. This makes it possible to reach Spanish-speaking USWA members and other workers interested in this discussion.

Grenadian leader's interview gets int'l attention

BY SANDI SHERMAN

On December 26, *Intercontinental Press* published an exclusive interview with Don Rojas, former press secretary to Maurice Bishop and former editor of Grenada's *Free West Indian* newspaper. In this interview, Rojas explained what was behind the events that led to the overthrow of the Grenada workers and farmers government headed by Prime Minister Bishop.

There has been a significant response to this issue of *IP*, indicating widespread interest in the lessons of the Grenada events.

Dozens of people have responded to paid advertisements in the *Militant* and *Guardian* newspapers by writing to the *IP* business office requesting single copies and subscriptions. Two bookstores, one in Houston, Texas, and one in New York City, requested bundles to sell. These requests are continuing to come into the business office.

Several members of the Congressional

Black Caucus, which helped sponsor the U.S. tour of Maurice Bishop last June, have responded to a mailing of complimentary copies of the issue. California Rep. Mervyn Dymally, for example, requested a subscription to *IP* and added, "his interview was the most insightful bit of evidence about the tragedy in Grenada."

The *California Voice*, a Berkeley-based Black newspaper, reprinted the news story that accompanied the interview and several of its readers subsequently called the business office to request information on how to get the issue.

News of the availability of this important document went well beyond U.S. borders. *IP* received the following letter from the All Africa Conference of Churches in Nairobi, Kenya:

"We have attempted to follow the recent tragedy in Grenada with keenness. But we are too far for the Western Press to give us a minimum of an honest account. Yet we

want to know the truth. Now, we gather from friends that you have published an exclusive interview with Don Rojas as a backgrounder. Please send us at least one copy which we can circulate among democratic forces here who cannot afford a subscription."

From Kari Levitt of the Center for Developing-Area Studies at McGill University in Montreal, *IP* received the following comment: "Thank you for sending me the issue of *Intercontinental Press* with the excellent interview with Don Rojas. You have performed a very useful service in providing your readers with this excellent and comprehensive interview."

Plans are under way there to include the interview in a set of documents of the Grenada crisis to be made available to the public. Several other requests to reprint all or part of the interview have been received.

The interview is getting around to activ-

ists in the Caribbean, including Grenada. Several progressive and revolutionary organizations that heard about the interview have ordered bundles.

These are just a few examples of the reception to *IP's* publication of this interview. A similar response is anticipated to the publication of a Spanish-language translation of the Rojas interview in the February 8 issue of *Perspectiva Mundial*, which is now available.

In a future article, we will report some of the experiences of branches of the Socialist Workers Party and chapters of the Young Socialist Alliance in their campaign to circulate this interview in English and Spanish among coworkers and solidarity activists.

Copies of *Intercontinental Press* with the Rojas interview are still available and can be obtained by sending \$1.50 to *Intercontinental Press*, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014.

Read the truth—every week Subscribe to the Militant

With a new subscription you will receive a copy of *Maurice Bishop Speaks to U.S. Workers: Why the U.S. Invaded Grenada*, a recently published pamphlet that contains two speeches by Maurice Bishop.

For the past four years we have carried extensive coverage of the revolution in Grenada, including eyewitness reports of speeches and interviews with Maurice Bishop and other revolutionary leaders, and documents of the New Jewel Movement. We will continue to carry reports and analyses of the devastating blow that has been dealt to the revolution there.

Don't miss an issue. Subscribe today.

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Why the U.S. invaded Grenada

Maurice Bishop Speaks to U.S. Workers



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N.J. grocery chain workers go on strike

BY PHIL NORRIS

NEWARK — Seven thousand members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 464A are on strike against four large grocery chains in New Jersey and southern New York state.

The companies — Shop Rite, Pathmark, Grand Union, and Foodtown — have resorted to lying about the union's demands in numerous full-page ads, and have advertised on the radio for scabs to replace the strikers.

Local 464A organizes meatcutters, as well as seafood and delicatessen workers, at 334 stores operated by the four chains.

Many of the 17,000 other UFCW members who work for the chains but who are members of another local are honoring the picket lines in the face of company threats to replace them.

The struck firms are seeking major concessions, including no overtime pay for weekends, cuts in vacations and health benefits, and less restrictive work rules for new hires.

The union is seeking contracts comparable to those already reached with other stores in the New Jersey-New York metropolitan area.

But *Militant* salespeople visiting the picket lines found the striking meatcutters feel the issue is deeper. Several strikers the *Militant* spoke with in Elizabeth, New Jersey, feel the company is out to break the unions. One picket, asked what he thought about the recent Greyhound strike, responded by pointing to the air controllers' strike of 1981. He said the employers are on a union-busting campaign that was started by President Reagan. He pointed to all the antiunion propaganda that has been in the papers and on television.

The antiunion campaign is very apparent in this strike. The companies have been taking out one- and two-page ads almost daily in the big-business press in this area. The ads claim butchers average over \$39,000 per year in wages and benefits.

The press has also been violence-baiting the strikers, accusing them of slashing tires, harassing customers, and starting a fire.

The pickets the *Militant* spoke with refuted these lies. Striking deli workers make as little as \$4 to \$5 an hour, while the best-paid meatcutters, working six and seven days a week, make well under \$30,000 per year. The unionists say that reports of violence are fabricated by the companies.

Pickets point out that business at the stores is way down. Two of the stores visited were open 24 hours daily before the strike. Now, they are open only 12 hours weekdays and 6 to 8 hours on weekends.

Morale is generally good among the strikers, with all but a few of them walking the picket lines, in spite of temperatures well below freezing.

The UFCW is calling for a boycott of the struck stores, but pickets at one of the stores felt this would be an undue hardship

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Militant/Phil Norris

Members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 464A on strike in Elizabeth, New Jersey

Socialist answers Reagan's speech

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done. The president proposed that the White House and Congress could immediately cut \$100 billion out of the budget for the next three-year period.

Hailing the "bedrock values of faith, family, work," and so on, Reagan proposed measures that would lessen the government's social responsibilities in favor of "privatization." He called for tuition tax credits, which would decrease funding for public education; scrapping of government health and safety regulations; reinstituting school prayer, and moving ahead on establishing "enterprise zones," where untaxed employers could freely exploit workers, particularly Blacks and Latinos.

The only time Reagan mentioned a spe-

cific women's right was in his reactionary attack on abortion rights. The president called for a bipartisan effort to make it illegal for women to choose abortion.

The last "great" goal Reagan spoke of was achieving a "lasting and meaningful peace." And then, with a straight face, he announced that "We have never been aggressors. . . . We have no territorial ambitions. We occupy no countries."

What a lie!

The U.S. government still colonizes and occupies Puerto Rico. It maintains a naval base in Guantanamo, Cuba, against the wishes of that country. Forty thousand U.S. troops occupy South Korea, and U.S. armed forces occupy the Philippines.

Today, the U.S. government occupies

the Black nation of Grenada, which Washington, invaded last October to crush the last vestiges of a revolution that had placed Grenadian working people in political power. What a disgusting display it was to watch as Congress rose to its feet — Democrats and Republicans — to applaud one of the Army Rangers who participated in the invasion.

Reagan pledged to "reinforce our peacemaking efforts in the Middle East, Central America, and southern Africa."

More funds for the bloody dictatorship in El Salvador, more money and guns for the counterrevolutionary forces trying to topple the Nicaraguan government, and continued U.S. intervention in Lebanon's civil war — these are Reagan's proposals. The White House has bipartisan support for its war aims, as can be seen in the Kissinger Commission's report, which was backed by both capitalist parties.

The U.S. capitalist class' attack on workers and farmers around the world must be fought. Working people in this country should take the lead in demanding:

Not one penny for U.S. wars in Central America and the Middle East!

Stop the U.S. war against Nicaragua!

Immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Lebanon!

Use the trillions of dollars now used for military purposes to launch a massive public works program to build much-needed housing, hospitals, mass transit, and schools. If, along with such a public works program, the workweek was reduced to 30 hours with no reduction in pay, millions of jobs would be created.

These are some of the measures that working people need to protect ourselves from the ravages of our profit-hungry rulers.

But we will never be free of oppression, exploitation, and the slaughter of war until we've taken political power into our hands. We need a government of workers and farmers that will use its power to build a society where human needs come before profits — a socialist society.

Oil workers condemn killing

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hires would especially affect women and minorities, who are being hired in greater numbers than before.

Bob, a 20-year veteran at Union Oil, explained that if the company gets its way on new-hire rates, within a few years the company would try to force the older workers to work for the same lower wages, and that would be the end of the union.

"They thought we wouldn't be concerned about this issue because it didn't affect us directly," he said. "But it does. It affects all of us."

Everyone the *Militant* talked to ex-

pressed their determination to fight this union-busting attempt. Scabs have been flown in from other parts of the country. The strikers feel the situation inside the refinery is dangerous, as the scabs cannot adequately respond to an emergency. The union is considering seeking a court injunction to close the refinery.

Strikers also explained how Union Oil was making some of its highest profits ever while trying to make the workers take pay cuts.

At a January 20 union meeting, Local 1-326 members voted for the January 25 march to protest the killing of Goobic and asked other unionists to attend.

Gerald Archuleta, a spokesperson for OCAW at its Denver headquarters, said that besides Rodeo and Wilmington, memorials would be held at Union Oil's other operations in Santa Maria, California; Lemont, Illinois; and Nederland, Texas.

Billecci pointed to the stakes in the Rodeo strike: "If they can get away with this attack on some of the highest-paid workers, lord help the rest of the people in this country." He added, "This is why this attack on our union is an attack on everyone."

Mel Mason, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president of the United States, denounced the killing of oil striker Greg Goobic and called for full prosecution of those responsible. He urged solidarity with oil workers on strike against Union Oil in California.

"Union Oil's refusal to settle with the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers and its decision to keep its California refineries operating show how the company puts profits before human needs," the socialist candidate said.

"My supporters in California are walking the picket lines at Union Oil, and I urge the broadest possible solidarity with the OCAW's fight against wage cuts. A united response by other unions can beat back this attack."

NLRB gives union-busting green light

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union-busting action would improve labor-management relations.

This is of course true — if you happen to own a factory. Those who do, believe "labor-management relations" are best served when workers have no union. If a union exists, factory owners believe such relations are "improved" if the union has no power.

The lone dissenting NLRB member, Don Zimmerman, observed that the company admitted that it moved "solely to avoid contractual wage rates." In other words it did not like the rules of the game, as they had been agreed to in a binding union contract. So it decided to take its ball and go home.

Gerard Smetana, who represents the mis-named "Council on Labor Law Equality," argued for Milwaukee Spring before the NLRB. He explained that sometimes an employer needs to move in the middle of a contract "because it is the best way an employer can stay in business and employees can retain their jobs." This doubletalk is an ill-disguised effort to misrepresent open union-busting as somehow being in the interests of workers. It is unconvincing.

However Smetana and other corporate mouthpieces are not really concerned about "convincing" anyone on the NLRB. They are confident that the NLRB is now acting even as they think it should — to defend the interests of the employers. This belief was reinforced less than two weeks before this decision when the NLRB ruled against a worker who refused to drive an unsafe truck.

In 1979 Kenneth Prill was fired for this by Meyers Industries. He appealed to the NLRB as an individual. A 1975 NLRB decision said certain individual protests were protected under Federal labor law because by implication they involved the interests of other employees. Obviously this applied in Prill's case as other employees could be forced to drive the same unsafe truck. But on January 11, 1984, the NLRB answered no.

Both of these cases and the entire use of the NLRB drive home a point. Victories at the bargaining table, or strike action to win such victories, are more and more the target of government intervention — on the side of the employers. To counter this organized labor must begin to act politically and independently in its own interests.

Israel's War Against the Palestinian People

By David Frankel and Will Reissner. The articles in this pamphlet explain the nature of Israel as a colonial-settler state, the character and history of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination, and the Marxist attitude toward the Palestine Liberation Organization. 46 pages, \$1.25.

Order from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Please include 75 cents for postage and handling.

Marroquin starting nat'l tour to fight deportation threat

BY CARLA RIEHLE

A rally in Washington, D.C., on February 4 will kick off the spring tour of Héctor Marroquín, Mexican-born socialist whose fight for political asylum in the United States is at its final, crucial stage.

A U.S. Supreme Court decision on his case is expected in a matter of weeks.

Sponsored by a broad array of groups, the D.C. rally will feature Marroquín, Iván Escobar, the only surviving member of the El Salvador Human Rights Commission; Margie O'Rourke, wife of jailed Irish activist Michael O'Rourke; as well as other fighters for civil liberties. The rally will take place Saturday, February 4, at 8 p.m. at Calvary United Methodist Church, 1459 Columbia Rd. NW.

On February 1, Marroquín and a delegation of his supporters will visit the offices of Alan Nelson, commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), in Washington. There they will present over 3,000 signatures on petitions demanding that the INS stop Marroquín's deportation.

The Political Rights Defense Fund (PRDF), which is sponsoring the Marroquín case, is launching the spring tour to gain new support for the case, which has already attracted a wide range of supporters.

Marroquín has also filed an application for permanent residence based on his marriage to a U.S. citizen. Although Marroquín is clearly entitled to a green card, the INS has stalled for over six months on the application.

On the tour, Marroquín will be meeting with and asking support from labor leaders, women's groups, and Black and Latino or-

ganizations. He will also be attending the Coalition of Labor Union Women conference in Chicago March 22-25 with his wife, Priscilla Schenk, who is a delegate to the convention.

Support for the case continues to build, with recent endorsements coming into the PRDF office from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and a number of prominent labor officials in Canada, including Dick Barry, president, United Electrical Workers; Cliff Pilkey, president, Ontario Federation of Labor; Dave Patterson, Director, District 6, United Steelworkers of America, and Sean O'Flynn, President, Ontario Public Service Employees Union.

PRDF is asking Marroquín's supporters to step up efforts to get messages sent demanding that the INS grant him permanent residence and stop attempting to deport him. Telephone calls, letters, and telegrams should be directed to Alan Nelson, Commissioner, INS, Washington, DC 20536, (202) 633-2000.

An initial schedule of the spring tour follows:

Indianapolis	Feb. 11-14
Charleston, W. Va.	15-17
Louisville	18-21
Greensboro, N.C.	25-28
Newport News, Va.	Feb. 29-March 3
N. California	March 6-18



Militant/Lou Howort

Héctor Marroquín

Woman oil worker fights Utah firing

BY GLEN SWANSON

SALT LAKE CITY — In October 1983 Kari Reddington was fired from her job as a yardman at the Phillips Petroleum refinery in Woods Cross, Utah. The company technically terms her dismissal as a "layoff," but the evidence clearly shows that Reddington's firing was the result of sex discrimination.

In an interview with the *Militant* Reddington explained that there are only 4 women working at Phillips out of a bargaining unit of 83.

On the day of her termination notice Reddington requested that her supervisor give her a reason for the "layoff." "He said I didn't work as well as the men," she said. When pressed for a specific example he re-

fused. "He told me I'm just not physically as strong as the men," she continued, "and this job is man's work and I'm not capable of doing man's work."

Before working at Phillips, 26-year-old Reddington worked in a coal mine for 14 months. "I shovelled coal, put up nine-foot timbers, worked on the track laying rails and pounding spikes. I carried 50-pound bags of rock dust," Reddington said proudly, "and some things that were even harder. No one can tell me that I'm incapable of doing the routine maintenance work at an oil refinery."

Reddington worked at the Phillips plant for six months. Phillips Petroleum is organized by Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) Local 2-578. The local has filed a grievance charging that Reddington's dismissal violates the contract clause prohibiting sexual discrimination.

Reddington said that most of her co-workers were surprised and angered at her termination. "They said they considered me a hard worker and assumed I would be given the permanent opening that followed another worker's retirement." Many were angered at Phillips use of the temporary position to get rid of her.

Reddington explained that Phillips has an unusual hiring practice. While there is a provision in the contract for a four-month probation with full benefits during this period, Phillips often hires new employees into six-month temporary positions. This provision was originally intended to allow the company to hire workers to fill a temporary job opening, due to a shutdown or a temporary construction project. But Phillips uses this provision to extend the four-month provision to six months. Temporary workers do not receive any health or medical benefits. Women, in particular, Reddington noted, suffer from this discriminatory hiring practice. She explained that all the women currently working in the bargaining unit were hired first as temporary workers.

Eight men were hired in the period between Reddington's hiring and the hiring date of the woman before her. Seven of them were hired as permanent employees with the four-month probation. Only one was hired as a temporary employee with the six-month probation. All the men were retained at the end of their probationary periods.

Reddington explained that when Phillips interviews for the temporary position, they explain that they are looking for people who want to stay on as permanent employees.

Phillips also tried to fire the woman hired before Reddington. Phillips management told Reddington that they only kept the woman because of a "technicality." Phillips failed to give this woman job evaluations. Management said that if they had evaluated her, they would have fired her.

Reddington told the *Militant* that Phillips is blatant in its discrimination against women. During her six months on the job she said her immediate supervisor complained about "only having a girl to do a man's job."

Two of the four women working in the bargaining unit have filed complaints against Phillips. One of these is a pump

mechanic helper who was off work several weeks with a broken wrist. When she returned from sick leave Phillips tried to disqualify her from her job, requiring her to lift a 75 pound valve over her head, a test no other employee in the same situation has been required to perform. Reddington said that even after the woman completed this task, the supervisor said she didn't do it just exactly right. This woman is the only one in a craft maintenance position.

Reddington explained that supervisors discriminate against women in the yard gang. Women are given different kinds of work assignments than the men. Women have to hose the road, sweep the shop, and wash the Alky clothes (protective clothing worn in the acid unit) more often than the men. Men are more often assigned to the mechanical work.

Phillips justifies Reddington's termination on evaluations by her immediate supervisor. "At no time," she said, "did my supervisor tell me I was doing a job too slowly or incorrectly. At my second evaluation meeting he said that while I didn't work as well as the men, I was average as compared to other women."

"He said," she continued, "that if they fired me, they'd just have to hire another woman. And that, while he didn't make the decision, he would just as soon keep me as have to train another woman."

Phillips' policies against women have helped Reddington win support from women's rights organizations in the Salt Lake City area. The January meeting of the National Organization for Women featured a program on fighting sex discrimination on the job. Women at the meeting sent a letter to Phillips protesting Reddington's dismissal and demanding that she be reinstated with full back pay. A committee was initiated to continue work against sexual discrimination and Reddington was appointed as interim chair.

Reddington explained that companies have been emboldened by recent government attacks on women's rights. The oil industry, in particular, is on a campaign against OCAW to impose take-back contracts and to keep women out of its work force. "This is why my case is important," she said. "They first attack women and minorities, or new employees through lower wages. They attack what they consider to be the weaker sections of the work force first, trying to divide the union in order to weaken it."

Kari Reddington is determined to win her job back. "It will make the union as a whole stronger," she says. "The union is the best way to fight back against discrimination. That's why I filed the grievance, and I'm working with my international representative to file an EEOC [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission] case."

Glen Swanson is a member of OCAW Local 2-578.

Cuba prepared for U.S. assault, Maceo Brigade leader declares

BY STEPHEN BRIDE

NEW YORK — Cuba's government and people are convinced this U.S. administration is "capable of the worst," says a Cuban just back from the island, and they believe that in the wake of the Grenada invasion "anything can happen."

"Cubans were saddened and worried by what happened in Grenada," Andrés Gómez told an audience here January 20. "At the same time, it reminded us of the choices, for Cubans and for all the oppressed."

"There was a determination you could see in everybody's face, in their behavior. That they were not willing or able to compromise on their solidarity with other peoples, no matter what the consequences. Because if they did there would be no more revolution, in Cuba or anywhere."

Gómez, 36, is a founding member of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a group of young Cubans living in this country and in Puerto Rico who, beginning in 1974, sought to "initiate a process of reconciliation with the revolution."

Brigade members have since made several trips to the island, most recently in December to help celebrate the 25th anniversary of the revolution. During their stay they also visited Cubans hospitalized as a result of the Grenada invasion.

Gómez is a frequent contributor to the magazine, *Areíto*, put out by the Circle of Cuban Culture. His talk here was sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum.

Turning to the matter of Cuban foreign policy, Gómez told the forum crowd it is based on struggle against U.S. imperialism. This struggle has gone on since the day U.S. Marines landed in 1898. The 1959 revolution, however, put Cubans in the position of "facing the enemy from a position of unity and force."

Since then, he continued, it has been "hard to find another example of such a small country doing so much against such a powerful foe."

"Its entire economic structure was dependent on U.S. markets. By 1962, most of its professional and technical sectors had left. All markets were closed to it. The U.S. blockade stopped all supplies of food,

medicine, spare parts for sugar mills. Somehow, they made those sugar mills run anyway.

"Based on that, Cuba established its foreign policy. It is nothing other than the reflection of that revolutionary struggle in the world arena."

Particularly annoying to Washington in this regard, Gómez added, have been "Cuba's support to national liberation movements in Latin America and all over the world and its relationship with the socialist community of nations, especially the Soviet Union."

The victory of the Vietnamese people over imperialism forced the U.S. government to temporarily adopt a less openly hostile attitude toward Cuba, Gómez said. It also helped make possible further advances in the world arena. Repulsing imperialist assaults on Angola and Ethiopia — both of which were achieved with Cuban aid — and the Grenada and Nicaraguan revolutions of 1979 were among the examples he noted.

By the last year of the Carter administration, Gómez concluded, Washington had once again become forthright about its aim of ridding the world of the Cuban revolution. And the war drums are now being beaten even louder by Reagan.

Fielding questions from the audience, Gómez spoke at length on Cuban statements exposing, explaining, and denouncing the coup by Bernard Coard against the government of Maurice Bishop in Grenada.

The Cuban government issued statements "where you didn't have to figure out the truth by reading between the lines," said Gómez. "The truth was in the lines themselves — for the whole world to read."

"The Cuban government has always shared and explained its actions to the Cuban people. But this time it knew it was not just speaking to the Cuban people. It was conscious of the role it was playing in the future of all revolutionary processes. The only way to do that is to say the truth."

"Once the Grenadian government had been overthrown and Maurice Bishop murdered, that was all there was left: to gain lessons for the future."

Democrats' debate: no answer for working people

BY GEOFF MIRELOWITZ

John Glenn shouted at Walter Mondale. Mondale said Glenn was full of baloney. Jesse Jackson admonished both of them to conduct themselves more seriously. These were among the "highlights" of the January 15 nationally televised debate in New Hampshire among eight candidates for the Democratic Party presidential nomination.

The news media reported the event as the kickoff of 1984 campaigning. It was the first time that all eight candidates faced off against each other. By the time it was over, all had amply demonstrated that none offers a program that will begin to solve the problems facing working people.

All the candidates accepted, and in fact promoted, the U.S. government's role as world cop. None proposed an end to Washington's wars in Central America and Lebanon or its threats against the Soviet Union. All agreed that the government had to help U.S. big business become more competitive and profitable. No one had much of anything specific to say about helping U.S. workers and farmers who are suffering from employer attempts to do just that.

Weapons and war

There is a growing revulsion among working people about the billions of dollars spent by the Pentagon for new nuclear weapons — especially as U.S. war in Lebanon and Central America escalates. The candidates attempted to cash in on this while they also made clear they wouldn't stop it.

California Sen. Alan Cranston restated his support for a "bilateral, negotiated, verifiable freeze," of nuclear weapons by the United States and the Soviet Union.

In response, George McGovern pointed out that while he appreciated "the fight [Cranston's] made on the nuclear war issue," Cranston is a firm supporter of construction of yet another new weapons system, the B-1 bomber.

"That makes my point," replied Cranston. "I am not for a unilateral freeze." Resorting to his own version of Orwellian doublespeak, Cranston affirmed that "The B-1 is better ... from an arms control point of view."

South Carolina Sen. Ernest Hollings insisted, "I'm just as committed as the rest, but I'm not going to give away the store."

John Glenn too took pains to assure that he favored more military spending. "The amount we spend on conventional weaponry," said Glenn, "is going to have to be increased."

Colorado Sen. Gary Hart, like Cranston and McGovern a reputed "peace" candidate, offered his own doubletalk on weapons spending: "It's not whether less is better or more is better, it's better is better." He called for "a strategy that addresses the battlefield of the future."

McGovern also rushed in to defend the need to prepare for future wars. "I can't imagine anybody here that isn't for an adequate national defense." This, of course, is the same reasoning Reagan offers for the unprecedented build-up in the war budget and for its use in actual wars.

Hire Iacocca?

McGovern followed up with a specific suggestion that must have seemed less than attractive to U.S. workers — auto workers in particular. He suggested he would name Lee Iacocca as secretary of defense. McGovern said he would tell the Chrysler Corp. chairman to "do the same thing for the Pentagon that he did for Chrysler ... get rid of the fat, the boondoggling, the surplus."

(This was reminiscent of a similar move made by Republican Pres. Dwight Eisenhower. In 1953 Eisenhower appointed General Motors chief Charles Wilson to be his secretary of defense. It was during his Senate confirmation hearing that Wilson explained his qualifications with the famous comment, "For years I thought what was good for our country was good for General Motors — and vice versa.")

Many workers are rightly outraged at the daily rip-offs committed by the owners of corporations that profit from Pentagon spending. However, few share McGovern's view that what Iacocca cut at Chrysler was the "fat." Rather it was the jobs, the standard of living, the health and safety, and the well-being of tens of thousands of Chrysler workers and their families.

Jesse Jackson had his own contribution to make to this friendly discussion about how to run the U.S. war machine more efficiently and effectively. "We make progress in foreign policy through presidential initiative ..." he claimed. As successful examples of U.S. foreign policy he offered, "Eisenhower going to Korea ... Kennedy going to Geneva. Nixon going to China. Carter convening Camp David."

Mondale was quick to point out that he had "sat through and participated in the Camp David accords ... and I was pleased to be a part of it."

No doubt he was. This may have given some listeners cause to stop and think about who the "we" is that Jackson asserted had made "progress" from such initiatives.

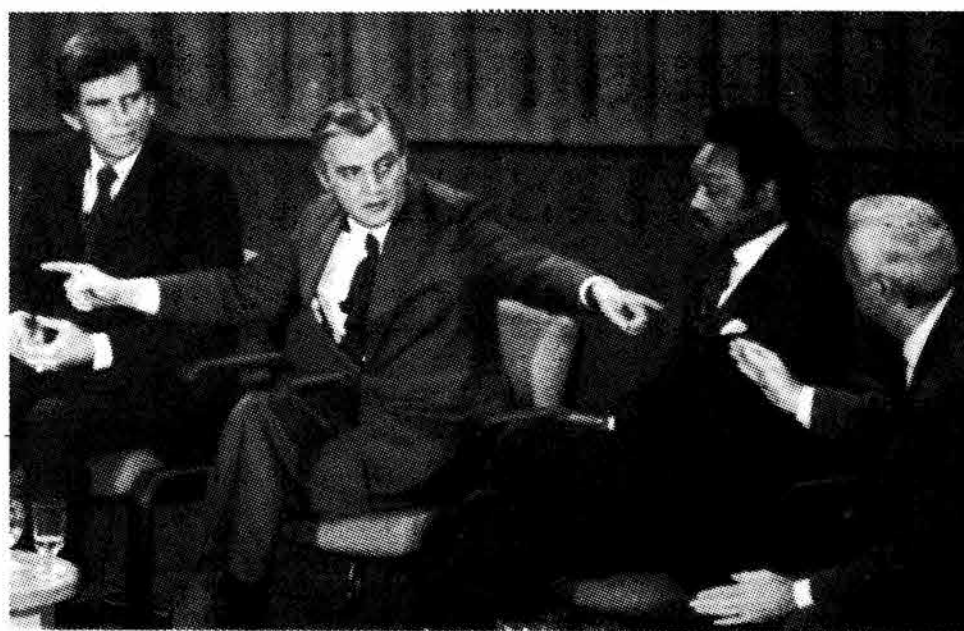
Eisenhower, for instance, went to Korea in 1953 to assure U.S. domination of half that country after almost 4 million Koreans had been killed as a result of U.S. aggression, and to help prop up the South Korean dictatorship, one of the most repressive in the world.

John Kennedy's diplomatic initiatives were not aimed at peace, either. Foreign policy under his administration included the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba and a big escalation of the U.S. war in Vietnam.

fort to get this speech known in the United States by having it published as a two-page paid advertisement in the Sunday November 20 *New York Times*.

It was also reprinted in full in the November 25 *Militant*.

Many other publications reprinted this document, including *Perspectiva Mundial*, a Spanish-language, socialist biweekly published in New York; *Intercontinental Press*, a biweekly international news magazine published in New York; *Cuba Update*, a publication of the Center for Cuban Studies in New York; and *Bandera Socialista*, weekly newspaper of the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (Revolutionary Workers Party), Mexican section of the Fourth International. *Claridad*, weekly newspaper of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party ran major excerpts from the speech as part of its extensive and ongoing analysis of the Grenada events.



Democrats at New Hampshire debate. From left: Gary Hart, Walter Mondale, Jesse Jackson, Reuben Askew.

Nixon, who offered toasts in China in 1972, also ordered thousands of tons of bombs rained down on the people of Vietnam. Carter convened Camp David in 1978 in order to deal a major blow to the Palestinian people's fight to retain their homeland.

In concluding his remarks on foreign policy, Jackson avoided taking a stand against U.S. war moves. Instead he pointed to the need for "vision" and remarked, "if you deal with the text out of context you have a pretext."

Like much of what Jackson had to say, this had a somewhat eloquent ring to it. However this comment, like other rhetorical flashes, actually had little or no meaning. It was offered as a substitute for a clear-cut antiwar position.

For his part, front-runner Mondale echoed the racist "white man's burden" theme of U.S. foreign policy when he affirmed his support for the Reagan administration's decision to withdraw from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Referring to UNESCO, in which Asian, African, and Latin American nations play a prominent role, Mondale said it needed to "straighten out" and "be sobered up a little bit."

Jobs and the economy

As the debate turned to the subject of the economy, the level of doubletalk and abstraction was brought to a new high. What was not said was of as much importance to workers as what was.

This was the occasion for the great Mondale-Glenn shouting match. What was the shouting all about? Very little.

The issue was assessing responsibility for the massive government budget deficits and how to bring them down. This question itself is of less concern to most workers than how to solve their own budget deficits.

Glenn asserted Reagan had inherited the big government debts from former President Carter and the policies he and his vice-president (Mondale) had followed. Mondale answered that Glenn bore responsibility "because you voted for Reaganomics."

Glenn retorted that "four out of five of the Democrats in the Senate voted the same way I did."

Candidate Reuben Askew observed that "They're both right in what they say about each other."

When the smoke had cleared, several things could be noted. Many of the candidates professed concern about the problem of unemployment and other aspects of the social crisis facing many working-class communities. But all had the same answer. The government should take steps to help U.S. business and the owners of the corporations become more competitive, that is, more profitable. Clearly this includes encouraging more "cutting of fat," as Iacocca has done at Chrysler.

A similar step had been taken by the owners of U.S. Steel Corp. just two weeks before the debate. They cut the "fat" to the tune of 15,000 jobs and more suffering in working-class communities already hard hit by corporate attacks and government cutbacks.

No candidate commented on this move, which had been front-page news across the country. None offered any programs that would help the workers who were affected or the millions of other unemployed workers in the same boat.

Jackson did offer a plan to help share the misery — among working people in other countries. Observing that Europe and Japan now "can compete with us economically," he proposed that these countries do more to share the burden for policing the world.

"They now can supply troops of their own," he said. "They must put a significant percentage of their budget on it. Japan, 1 percent. Europe 3.7 percent. America, 7 percent. That is not right," he insisted. He justified this approach as somehow "in the name of self-determination."

It is of course true that U.S. workers pay a big price for Washington's war spending. Proposing to shift this burden onto workers in Japan and Europe is a demagogic alternative to demanding an end to U.S. war policy. But Jackson took this approach because he accepts the need for a world cop — he simply wants the Europeans and Japanese to do more of their share.

Abortion rights

The issue of women's rights, like other genuine concerns of working people, came in for little comment during the three-hour affair. The debate opened with a discussion of whether or not "the time had come" for a woman vice-president. The answers had little or nothing to do with the pressing need to advance women's rights.

However, the subject reared its head later when host Phil Donahue asked the candidates whether they supported a woman's right to choose abortion. Donahue framed the question to make it sound like an unacceptable choice by referring to it as "a last resort and perhaps not something that you would opt for ..."

To this question as posed by Donahue the candidates responded yes — although, unlike on most other matters, no one wanted to say very much about it.

The one exception was Jackson who also did his best to reinforce the idea that abortion is an immoral choice. "We must never encourage abortion," he stressed. He counterposed to it more sex education "on the day before," so that "we will not be reacting on the day after."

Women's rights fighters, however, are not trying to encourage abortion. They are engaged in an important battle to hold onto the right to abortion and the necessary government funds to insure that this right has some meaning for working class and poor women. Jackson's comments only served to undercut this fight.

The entire debate was something less than momentous. Nevertheless it allowed workers to hear some of the views of the various candidates — although one had to listen carefully to detect them amid the election-year posturing.

Some might question the term "debate" to describe this particular event, as the word tends to imply a sharp conflict of views. Despite the verbal acrobatics, there was more agreement than disagreement (although occasionally some light was shed by the jabs of one candidate against another — as when Mondale pressed Glenn to admit that congressional Democrats shared responsibility for Reagan's economic policies).

What disagreement was evident among the candidates was all well within the framework of mutual support for the capitalist austerity campaign and war drive. From the point of view of the interests of working people, the January 15 affair provided little to cheer about.

Castro speech reprinted widely

The January 1984 issue of *Monthly Review*, an independent socialist magazine published in New York, reprinted Cuban Pres. Fidel Castro's November 14 speech evaluating the events in Grenada, and refuting the Reagan administration's lies about the Cuban role in them.

An editor's note to the speech indicated that "We believe that its widest possible dissemination is important. It is the only well informed account we have seen of the deplorable debacle which overtook the Grenadian revolution and provided the much-needed pretext for the U.S. invasion. But beyond that it is a significant document in its own right. It is an example of what is indeed a rare event, a government telling the truth about an historic episode in which it was itself involved. We congratulate Fidel on an exemplary performance and commend it to all our readers."

The Cuban government made a big ef-

Major Black weekly joins Washington's anti-Grenada drive

An answer to 'Jet' magazine

BY MOHAMMED OLIVER

Jet, the leading Black news magazine in the United States, carried a scurrilous attack on the Grenada revolution in its January 16 issue. The article, written by Siemeon Booker, the magazine's Washington Bureau Chief, deserves to be answered. Not simply for the sake of the truth, but as part of the fight against the U.S. rulers' plans to broaden their assault on the Grenadian workers and farmers.

The U.S. ruling class and its government in Washington know that their moves in Grenada will be opposed by some U.S. working people — especially Blacks. When the U.S. government invaded Grenada last October, there were a significant number of protests. Many were in the Black community, where support for the revolution on the small, Black Caribbean island was the greatest. Most of the Black press opposed the U.S. invasion and looked favorably on the four-and-a-half years of the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) of Grenada led by murdered Prime Minister Maurice Bishop.

With the invasion and occupation of Grenada, the U.S. capitalist class hopes to crush every vestige of the March 13, 1979, revolution. They haven't finished this job yet. To do so they must also try to beat back support among U.S. working people for the Grenada revolution and its accomplishments.

Black workers are a special target of this campaign, and *Jet*, with a circulation of more than 800,000, is an important weapon to use against them.

Attacks CBC

Booker's *Jet* article is part of Washington's effort to get U.S. Blacks to accept the U.S. imperialist invasion, occupation, and domination of Grenada. So far, this support has been lacking. One reflection of this sentiment in the Black community was the unanimous opposition by members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) to the invasion.

Booker attacks the CBC for this stand. He interviews a Jamaican reporter who griped about the CBC's stance. "Damn," the reporter said, "our brothers and sisters in the [United States] just discovered the Caribbean was Black because of the Grenada incident, and then they stab us in the back."

The *Jet* article is full of lies, slanders, innuendos, and factual inaccuracies. We are told, for example, that one of the few casualties of the 1979 revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Eric Gairy was Rupert Bishop, father of Maurice Bishop.

In fact, Rupert Bishop was murdered by Gairy's police on Jan. 21, 1974, during a popular revolt against the dictatorship.

When Booker isn't getting the facts wrong, he's making them up. Railing against the PRG's "losing effort to force socialism on rugged, freedom-loving Blacks," Booker fabricates horror stories about life under the revolutionary government. "There is a beehive cave," Booker claims, "where handcuffed nude prisoners were thrust to be stung by killer bees in a torture process."

Booker's lies, however, aren't always so ludicrous. The *Jet* reporter takes actual objective problems that confronted the revolution and blames them on Bishop and the PRG.

Agricultural gains

Grenada's "depressed agriculture," writes Booker, "exists as a grim indicator of the failure of the [Bishop] government to excite and inspire rural farmers."

The truth is that Grenada's agriculture registered impressive achievements under the PRG.

Grenada, like many countries that have suffered from hundreds of years of colonial and imperialist domination, was forced into being an exporter of low-priced agricultural crops for markets in the advanced capitalist countries. Bananas, cocoa, and nutmeg make up 97 percent of Grenada's export earnings.

As a result of the imperialist economic crisis, world market prices for these commodities dropped by 22 percent between 1979 and 1980. In addition, half of Grenada's 1981 banana crop was destroyed by violent storms, including two hurricanes. Losses from these disasters have totaled some U.S.\$30 million. But instead of helping, Washington sabotaged aid to the Grenadian people.

Despite these obstacles, the PRG made substantial economic gains. In 1982 its Gross National Product grew by 5.5 percent, for a total increase of nearly 14 percent since the 1979 revolution. This happened while most countries in the Western Hemisphere, including other Eastern Caribbean islands, were stagnating or declining.

The main goal of the PRG's agricultural policy was to make Grenada self-sufficient in food. This was a big challenge. In 1982, for example, 70 percent of the calories in the Grenadian national diet came from imported food.

To turn this situation around required massive improvements in the country's agricultural sector. The PRG set about doing this from the very beginning of the revolu-



Two young Grenadian farm workers working on livestock cooperative. *Jet* magazine lies about achievements in agriculture of Grenada revolution.

Wayne Carter

tion. It established the Grenada Development Bank (GDB), which lent money at favorable terms to owners of small and medium-sized farms and businesses for development projects.

In addition, the PRG set up the National Commercial Bank, which lent half its money to development projects and the other half to the established commercial sector.

PRG led economic development

The PRG led economic development in other ways, too. In 1981, the PRG put forward an [East Caribbean] EC\$4.6 million (about U.S.\$1.7 million) assistance package to provide credit, purchase seeds and tools, and repair roads to farmers' plots.

By contrast, the Gairy dictatorship only allocated a measly EC\$230,000 (about U.S.\$85,000) in its 1977 budget for agricultural development.

In 1981 a land tenure law was adopted that allowed the revolutionary government to take out a compulsory 10-year lease on any underused land above 100 acres. It was then put into production on a cooperative or state-owned basis.

The PRG launched the Marketing and National Importing Board to find new export outlets and help guarantee markets for the country's farmers. A state-run tractor pool of 45 machines was set up, and four agricultural training schools established.

By far, the most ambitious development project of the revolutionary government was the construction of an international airport. This was being built to promote tourism and expedite export and import trade.

These projects not only raised the income of farmers and agricultural workers, but also provided thousands of jobs for Grenadian working people. Unemployment in Grenada fell from about 50 percent to 12 percent during the first four years of the revolution.

Booker's charges regarding the "depressed" Grenadian agriculture and the PRG's failure to provide "economic security" are groundless. More interesting, however, is Booker's failure to note any of the gains made by Grenadian workers.

This failure is understandable. The intention of Booker's article is to try to keep Black workers in the United States as blissfully ignorant as he is of the accomplishments of the Grenada revolution.

Education a right

Secondary school education became a right for all Grenadians under the PRG. Under Gairy, tuition was required, making

education a privilege of the rich.

The PRG had also made strides toward fighting illiteracy through an adult education program. The aim was to wipe out illiteracy by 1985.

The PRG was a government that represented and defended the interests of Grenadian workers and farmers. Under its leadership, Grenadian working people made many gains:

- Medical and dental care became free. Clinics were built throughout the island, and the number of doctors and dentists more than doubled.

- Nearly 75 percent of families received interest-free loans and low-cost materials to repair their homes.

- About 30 percent of workers were exempted from taxation, and government revenue was raised through new taxes and fees imposed on local businesses, import-export merchants, and the profits of foreign-owned companies not reinvested in Grenada.

- Special attention was paid to improving the conditions and opportunities of women. Sexual harassment of working women was outlawed. Women workers were guaranteed equal pay for equal work. A maternity leave law was adopted that forced employers to give time off, most of it at full pay, to women both before and after childbirth.

A truly democratic country

While the PRG was in power, Grenada was the only Black country in the world where workers and farmers ruled. Anti-labor laws imposed under Gairy were repealed. A Trade Union Recognition Act was adopted ensuring the right of workers to join a union without fear of victimization. Unions grew quickly, encompassing 90 percent of Grenada's workforce.

Other mass organizations were set up to give the people a say in the country's decision-making process. These included the National Women's Organization and the National Youth Organization. These mass organizations were represented on the boards of government bodies. The principal leaders of these groups became full members of the PRG.

In each parish, or district, monthly meetings were held to discuss local and national issues. The people had the right to call government ministers and officials before these bodies to respond to particular concerns. These councils discussed important questions such as the 1982 national budget and the PRG's economic development program.

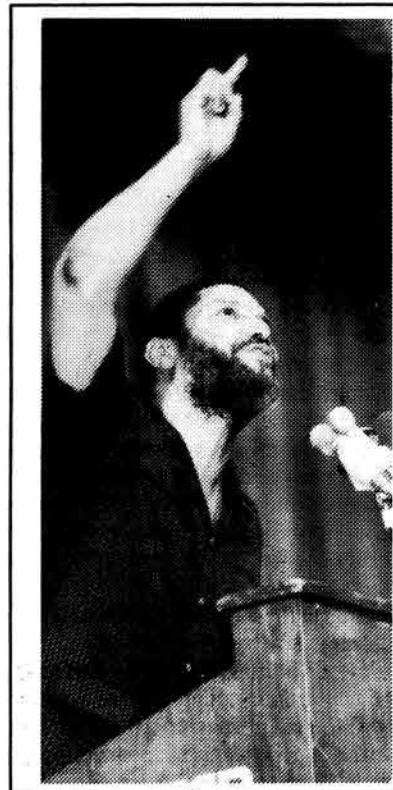
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Maurice Bishop Speaks

A collection of more than 20 major interviews with and speeches by the slain leader of the Grenada revolution and New Jewel Movement, including his June 1983 speech in New York City.

Contents also include a major new introduction covering the U.S. invasion of Grenada and the devastating blow dealt to the Grenada revolution by the murder of Prime Minister Bishop and other outstanding leaders of the New Jewel Movement; the October 20 statement by the Cuban government on the killing of Bishop and the other leaders; and the October 25-26 statement by Cuban President Fidel Castro on the U.S. invasion and Cuba's role in Grenada.

400 pp., \$6.95, published by Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Please include 75 cents for shipping.



Japanese-American rights battle continues

BY MIYO YAMAMOTO

Ernest Iiyama was fired in 1942 from his job with Alameda County in California. He was not fired because of incompetence or absenteeism. He was fired solely because of his Japanese ancestry. He is one of seven Japanese-Americans who were fired from their jobs with Alameda County when they were carted off to concentration camps at the beginning of World War II.

In September 1983, after months of negotiations, the Alameda County supervisors agreed to pay each of the seven \$5,000 as reparation "in the service of fairness and equity." In addition, the county established a memorial recognizing the injustices suffered by Japanese-Americans during World War II and compiling an oral history from the seven former county employees.

Iiyama testified at the Alameda County Board of Supervisors meeting that it "wasn't enough for the government to say it was sorry."

"Of course it isn't the money," he explained. "Five thousand dollars is minimal. How can that repay us for what we went through? But we feel that we should receive some kind of compensation as a token gesture."

Iiyama and 120,000 other Japanese-Americans living on the West Coast became innocent victims of the U.S. government's internment order. On Feb. 19, 1942, Pres. Franklin Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, evacuating all persons of Japanese descent living on the West Coast and relocating them in concentration camps in remote deserts and swamps.

'Security risk'

The rationale given was that all persons of Japanese descent were a "security risk." They were supposedly loyal to a "foreign nation" that most of them had never seen. As Lt. Gen. John DeWitt, head of Washington's Western Defense Command, stated at the time, "A Jap is a Jap. . . . You can't change him by giving him a piece of paper."

It didn't matter that the U.S. government offered no evidence for its charge of sabotage or spying by Japanese-Americans. It didn't matter that 120,000 people — 70,000 citizens of the United States and the rest not allowed by law to become U.S. citizens until 1954 — were forcibly moved into camps without charges, without trials, without any due process whatsoever.

Racist hysteria against anyone of Japanese descent was whipped up by capitalist politicians, the mass media, and businessmen who stood to profit from their ouster. It got so bad that Chinese wore big buttons proclaiming, "I am Chinese-American" to avoid being beaten up.

Ernest Iiyama, then 28 years old, had been working only five months as a clerk with the Alameda County Elections Office in 1942 when he was ordered to report to Tanforan (the former San Bruno race-track). He could bring with him only what he could carry. The rest he left behind, locked in a small shack behind a friend's house. (When he returned after the war, the shack had been ransacked and there was nothing left.)

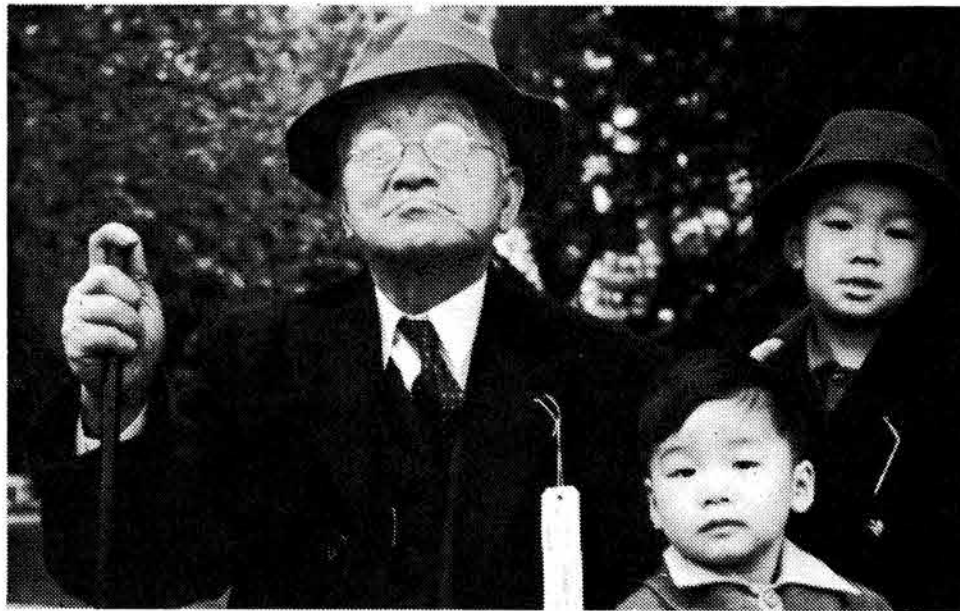
At Tanforan he was imprisoned in a horse stall with three other men for five months and then was moved to Topaz, Utah, one of the 10 concentration camps quickly established in the interior of the country.

"We were all considered enemy agents, but were actually California residents who were taken from our homes and placed in these camps," he said.

Banned from West Coast

Although he was able to leave Topaz after an eight-month stay by volunteering to join the Army, Iiyama could not return to the West Coast where he was still considered to be "a security risk." He was ultimately rejected by the Army because of a bout with pneumonia and worked in Salt Lake City, Chicago, and New York until the war ended. He and his family did not return to the Bay Area until 1955.

Except for a few apologies, Iiyama received nothing for the humiliation and anxiety he suffered or for the loss of almost everything he owned until the compensation ordinance was passed by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors.



Japanese-American internees at Hayward, California, during 1942 racist roundup. Dorothea Lange

Alameda County is the most recent local government to partially compensate former employees of Japanese descent who lost their jobs due to evacuation. Similar measures were adopted by the counties of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Joaquin, by the city of Gardena, and by the states of California and Washington.

The unanimous decision in Alameda was greeted with warm applause by the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations (NCRR), which spearheaded the effort. The atmosphere was in marked contrast to the April 19, 1983, public meeting where the NCRR first proposed a redress ordinance. Then, only two of the five members on the board supported the measure.

One supervisor was against the motion because he thought the whole internment was "voluntary." Later he defended the internment as "essential" to the U.S. government's war effort and the price Japanese-Americans had to pay for the perpetuation of freedom.

Others argued that they could not legally grant compensation for damages resulting from a federal order, even though it was

pointed out that before Executive Order 9066 was issued, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors had unanimously passed a resolution calling for "the evacuation and concentration of all Japanese and their descendants to a concentration camp under supervision of the federal government."

Some agreed with a retired military officer who stated that the statute of limitations had expired long ago. He went on to make the crude racist stereotype of Japanese and Japanese-Americans: "Like PG & E [Pacific Gas and Electric Co.], the Japanese have an insatiable appetite for money from every level of government."

'A civil rights problem'

Iiyama was shocked by some of the supervisors' comments. "They showed how ignorant they are about the camps. That's why we [internees] keep pressing for measures like this. We want to get out to the public because, like the supervisors, many people don't know about the internment."

Unionists describe Nicaragua work brigade

At the end of December, Milwaukee unionists Dennis Kelln and Judith Singer spent two weeks in Nicaragua as part of an international work brigade. Kelln works at the Briggs and Stratton engine plant in Milwaukee and is a member of the Allied Industrial Workers Union. Singer, a garment worker, belongs to the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Both are also in the Socialist Workers Party, and Kelln is a candidate for 4th Congressional District in Wisconsin. The following interview was done by Militant correspondent Kathy Owen upon their return.

Question. What is the purpose of the international brigades being organized at this time?

Kelln. The people of Nicaragua are currently mobilized for defense. Since the U.S. invasion of Grenada, the Nicaraguans have involved the entire country in preparations for defense against a similar invasion of Nicaragua. As a result, the Nicaraguan government has called on supporters

of the revolution around the world to help with production — to help in the harvest of coffee and cotton, and to work on technical projects.

Singer. Over 600 people participated in this international brigade, which was called the "Maurice Bishop Brigade." This included people from a number of European countries, including a group from Germany who brought with them a contribution of \$100,000 donated by German auto workers, as well as 70 tons of medical supplies. A group of students from Costa Rica came. There were also participants from Bolivia, and a group of 60 from the United States.

We were the first group of U.S. citizens who have gone to Nicaragua as part of a work brigade. This group included union members, students, members of unemployed committees, and activists in antiwar organizations.

After an initial orientation session in Managua, we were broken down into groups of 10 as we were sent to different areas to begin to work. Our group, the

"A wrong was done to us. Our civil rights were abrogated and a lot of people still don't know that this happened. This is not just a Japanese-American problem, but a civil rights problem for everyone."

Thanks to a vigorous campaign launched by the NCRR, the redress effort in Alameda gathered significant support. The National Japanese American Citizens League, American Civil Liberties Union, Earl Warren Chapter of Oakland, and Chinese for Affirmative Action backed it. Some elected officials and churches also did.

The Alameda County Central Labor Council, International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, and United Auto Workers Local 1364 supported the campaign as well.

Pressured from all these quarters, the supervisors passed the redress measure. The checks will be presented at a memorial ceremony at an Alameda County Board of Supervisors meeting around February 19, the 42nd anniversary of the issuing of the internment order.

Bill of Rights

Iiyama says, "We want to stress the importance of guaranteeing civil rights under the Constitution and the Bill of Rights to all Americans. In this case, it was the Japanese-Americans who had their civil rights taken away. We have to let the public know that you can't have civil rights for one group and not another. It is important to have civil rights for all."

"The Supreme Court ruled that internment was based on military necessity, so it was legal, even though we were never charged with anything or tried. This ruling is still on the books. It means that the government can forcibly remove any group it doesn't like or disagrees with and put them in camps. That's why reparations mean so much for everyone, not just Japanese-Americans."

"We can never be fully compensated for our loss, but at least what happened to us is now recognized as an injustice that can never be allowed to happen again."

"Rosa Parks Brigade," participated in the coffee harvest on a state farm near Matagalpa.

Question. Can you describe how the attacks by U.S.-backed counterrevolutionaries (contras) have affected production?

Kelln. A large part of the coffee crop of Nicaragua is grown in the northern area of the country, so it's a target for attacks by contras. The day before we left Nicaragua, a soap factory was sabotaged and burned to the ground. There has also been sabotage of the oil fields — fuel storage tanks have been blown up, which has made transportation around the country much more difficult.

Two weeks before we arrived, a ship coming from Mexico with medical supplies was fired on off Nicaragua's coast and forced to return home without making its delivery. These are just a few of the acts of aggression against Nicaragua lately that have made the Nicaraguan people's lives more difficult.

Singer. I had to spend a few days in a hospital in Matagalpa as a result of an accident. There were young people in the hospital who had their fingers blown off by grenades. Other people were brought in who had been injured while defending the country from contra attacks on the northern border of the country.

The shortage of medical supplies, as a result of this kind of economic aggression, was obvious. Cuban doctors I spoke with in the hospital explained that they often had to operate without anesthetics. In one 40-bed hospital, there was only one wheelchair. In spite of the problems facing the hospitals, I received excellent, free medical care.

Kelly. After witnessing the situation facing Nicaragua first-hand, there were a lot of discussions among participants in the brigades about how to organize in opposition to a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua upon returning to the United States.



"Maurice Bishop" coffee brigade, in which Milwaukee unionists participated. Militant/Michael Baumann

Nicaragua discusses 1985 election plans

Rightists don't want soldiers to vote

BY JANE HARRIS

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Election day is more than a year down the road, but already the right-wing opposition parties are doing everything humanly possible to worm their way out of the race.

To cover the poor showing they expect to get in the vote, they charge that the 1985 elections will not be democratic.

The proposals now under discussion in Nicaragua's parliament — the Council of State — for election procedures include:

- A president, vice-president, and a 90-member national assembly, whose delegates will be elected on a regional basis — all to be elected by secret ballot for six-year terms.

- In the first two years, the assembly will draft a new constitution.

- Nicaraguan citizens 18 years of age and older will be eligible to vote.

- The government will allocate 0.5 percent of the national budget (nearly \$100 million) to finance contending parties, in addition to funds raised by the parties' memberships. No funds may be accepted from abroad.

- The general philosophy behind some 200 articles contained in the draft law will be to outlaw corrupt campaign practices that existed under ex-dictator Anastasio Somoza's rule, setting a basis for genuinely democratic elections. A law on mass media access is part of the discussion. The aim of the laws as a whole will be to disseminate all the candidates' political platforms and biographies as broadly as possible.

Knowing full well they can't win the elections they have demanded for so long, rightists are trying to mask their opposition to this exercise in democracy through phony arguments.

For example the reactionary daily *La Prensa*, in a January 19 editorial, posed the

following question: "How can free and democratic elections be spoken of when there exists an armed party that controls the army, the police, and other armed forces of the country; the only television system; and all other state resources, which, moreover, are used to finance a bunch of para-state-party bodies [the mass organizations] that act like pressure bodies of the ruling party on ordinary citizens?"

In other words, the right wing asks, how can we have free elections with the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) and mass organizations in power? To ensure "democratic" elections, the power won by workers and farmers in the July 1979 revolution must be crushed.

A step toward this goal is the reactionaries' demand that all military personnel be denied the right to vote or hold office. With this proposal, not only 100,000 workers and peasants serving as soldiers, reservists, and militia members, but also the nine commanders of the revolution — the FSLN National Directorate — would be excluded from the electoral process.

That is, those who made, led, and defend the revolution are ineligible to continue to do so through elections, because they have an "unfair advantage."

Here the oppositionists even find themselves in disagreement with their mentor, the United States, where citizens in uniform have the legal right to participate in elections.

However, their bond with the U.S. administration is quite tight in agreeing that elections won't be democratic if Aldofo Calero, Alfonso Robelo, and Edén Pastora, among other counterrevolutionary chiefs armed by the United States, aren't allowed to vote. This view was expressed in *La Prensa's* January 17 editorial.

Summing up their position, Nicaraguans militarily defending their revolution should



Militant/Fred Murphy

Right of soldiers, reservists, and militia to vote in Nicaraguan election is opposed by reactionaries.

be excluded from the elections while those armed to the teeth by the United States to destroy it should participate.

Rightists are also pushing for the Organization of American States (OAS) to oversee the elections.

Responding to this provocation, Council of State President Carlos Núñez told journalists, "Nicaragua doesn't need this type of election. We're a country whose political positions enjoy great international cre-

dibility and prestige." Nicaragua didn't need to invite the OAS in "when it undertook big social projects such as the agrarian reform and the literacy crusade," and it doesn't need them now.

However, among those especially invited as observers in the election process will be representatives from the Contadora group, which is made up of Colombia, Venezuela, Panama, and Mexico; the UN; the Nonaligned nations; and prestigious political figures and organizations.

Nicaragua's 10 political parties are now busy not only discussing the electoral law, but also whether to run in slates or as individual parties.

Should the proposal for a national assembly with regionally elected deputies be approved, it will differ in form from the current Council of State.

Delegates to the latter body are determined by the number of seats their political party, union, mass organization, or religious organization was allotted in 1980.

Given the support the revolution enjoys internally, it can be assumed that popular representation will not be lost, but will instead be reaffirmed on the basis of the vote in each region.

Salvador rebels warn of U.S. invasion

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — The next stage of U.S. military maneuvers in Honduras — called Big Pine III — includes plans for an invasion of El Salvador, warned the General Command of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN).

The Salvadoran liberation front's communiqué was reported here on the front page of the Sandinista daily *Barricada* January 21. The FMLN said that Washington is currently weighing two different variants for an invasion of El Salvador. The first is to begin military maneuvers August 5, the date currently scheduled, and to mobilize U.S., Honduran, and Guatemalan troops just south of the Salvadoran province of Chalatenango. Chalatenango has been for some time one of the strongholds of the FMLN forces.

According to information received by the FMLN, the second variant calls for moving the maneuvers up to February and mobilizing U.S. and Honduran troops near Morazán Province, another FMLN stronghold.

Whichever of the two plans is put into

effect, the FMLN warns, "we will take them for what they are — invasion and aggression — and they will be answered as they must be, militarily."

The danger of an invasion has greatly increased since the Kissinger commission report on Central America, the FMLN said. This report called for escalating the U.S. war in El Salvador and rubber stamped the White House claim that Cuban and Soviet aid are alone responsible for major FMLN advances.

The facts show this is nonsense, the FMLN said. "The dictatorship's army is being defeated despite the fact that it has more soldiers and officers, more and better weapons, the support of the state apparatus, and, above all, the military support of the U.S. government — economically and militarily the strongest power in the West and located just a few hours by air from our country."

Speaking directly to the people of the United States, the FMLN pointed out that a U.S. invasion would mean "a long and dirty war" in which many "U.S. soldiers and officers would die uselessly, bringing

grief to thousands of ordinary working-class families in the United States."

In the end, "the revolution will win, no matter what," the FMLN said. Salvadoran revolutionaries would prefer to negotiate, but "the decision is in the hands of Washington."

"The Reagan administration should give the people of the United States a chance to speak out on this decision," the communiqué concluded, "before sending their sons to murder pregnant women, children, and old people, and to die without glory for an unjust cause."

Chemical magazine demolishes Reagan's 'yellow rain' charges

BY WILL REISSNER

The Reagan administration's charge that the Soviet Union and its allies have used biochemical weapons ("yellow rain") in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia has come under sharp attack from the official publication of the 126,000-member American Chemical Society.

In its January 9 issue, *Chemical & Engineering News* devotes 28 pages to an exhaustive examination of the administration's charges and to an editorial attacking the "contempt for good science shown by some within the State Department."

After thoroughly analyzing every aspect of the administration's claims of evidence of Soviet chemical warfare, Lois R. Ember concludes that rather than seeking the truth, "science instead appears to have become captive to Administration policy."

Ember points out that "the grand total of physical evidence gathered by the U.S. is slight" and that the testing for toxins is highly suspect.

The article reveals that all the cases where toxins were supposedly found on samples "have been analyzed by one private laboratory and have not been confirmed independently."

Ember adds that "the Army laboratory analyzing environmental samples has

never detected toxins in the numerous specimens from Southeast Asia it has tested — never." And the star piece of evidence, the sample supposedly containing the highest concentration of toxins, "was reanalyzed by this Army laboratory and found to contain no toxin!"

Furthermore, "the U.S. has no physical evidence that trichothecenes [toxins] have been used in a weapons system. Not one piece of military hardware — not a shell, grenade, rocket, canister, or weapon fragment — has tested positive for toxins."

The author adds that "if the physical evidence is insubstantial and questionable, the refugee reports are even more inadequate." The Reagan administration has based many of its charges on reports it gathered from Laotians and Kampuchians in camps in Thailand.

Some scientists told Ember they believe that the yellow rain charges were made to win support for the Reagan administration's own plans to resume production of binary chemical weapons.

"Others have called yellow rain the 1980s' 'Gulf of Tonkin' incident. This," she notes, "is an allusion to an event that was reported to have occurred, really didn't, but served as the prod that escalated U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War."



U.S. troops landing in Honduras in Big Pine II exercises. Next stage, Salvadoran revolutionaries say, includes plans for invasion of El Salvador.

Nicaraguan elections pose quandary for right-wing parties

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Campaigning for the elections, scheduled to be held in 1985, is already under way here.

For the Conservative, Social Christian, Social Democratic, and other right-wing parties, the prospect of competing with the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in genuinely democratic elections presents quite a quandary.

The more the right-wing parties explain what they really want — an end to agrarian reform, return of confiscated properties to the rich, and dismantling of the mass organizations — the more they isolate themselves from the hundreds of thousands in this country who have benefited precisely from such measures and institutions.

The FSLN, on the other hand, as the main organizer of the victorious 1979 insurrection and the revolutionary government, has a vastly more attractive message.

"There will be many during the election campaign who will promise you heaven and earth," Sandinista Agrarian Reform Minister Jaime Wheelock reminded a gathering of peasants January 9.

"The FSLN promises you only the latter, and you already have it."

Wheelock was speaking at a land-title ceremony in southern Nicaragua where more than 75,000 acres of land were given to 800 families. In the last two years more than 25,000 farm families have benefited from such land grants, in keeping with the Sandinistas' pledge that "no peasant will be left without land."

This is just one example of why the right-wing parties — a year before the actual elections — have already begun to explain why they are going to lose. Not because the voters don't want them. This they could never admit. Instead, they are trying to make a case in advance that the elections will be "undemocratic."

In a statement published in the reactionary daily *La Prensa* Dec. 26, 1983, Nicaragua's publicly organized right-wing

forces — big business, agribusiness, the rightist parties, and the two rightist union federations — joined together to make additional demands on the government. (Virtually the only group missing from the signers was the Catholic Church hierarchy, which maintains a public stance of being "above politics.")

The statement amounts to an open program of the domestic counterrevolution.

It begins by introducing a list of some 50 demands and preconditions with the claim that if so much as "a single one of them is lacking, the [electoral] process will be corrupt, unjust, and fraudulent — that is, phony."

The thrust of the first major group of demands is for absolute separation of state and party. That is, although the FSLN organized and led the 20-year struggle to overthrow the dictatorship, and is recog-



Militant/Michael Baumann

Banner of a Sandinista Defense Committee at October 1983 protest against U.S. aggression. CDSs are largest popular organization in Nicaragua.

nized by hundreds of thousands as the vanguard of the revolutionary process, it has no right to a commensurate role in the government, army, police, agrarian reform, and so forth.

The second major point is to demand a complete separation between the state and the mass organizations. In other words, the right wing seeks to roll back precisely the process of popular participation in decision-making that makes Nicaragua democratic — the active role of the mass organizations in the affairs of state and everyday

life.

Their third major demand is for repeal of all the laws they don't like — naturally quite a few. Among the decrees they mention by name as the most abhorrent are those that ordered the confiscation of businessmen caught in economic sabotage, confiscation of idle lands, and confiscation of properties of absentee owners.

To top things off they oppose military conscription (but not the U.S. war that makes it necessary) as a "violation of human rights."

Participation in Sandinista revolution grows

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — One reason reactionaries are so pessimistic, and the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) so confident, about their chances in genuinely democratic elections, Commander Jaime Wheelock joked recently, is because "the FSLN has 600,000 activists."

The Sandinista agrarian reform minister was referring to the mass organizations in Nicaragua, perhaps one of the best indicators of the organized strength of the revolutionary process.

The Rural Workers Association (ATC) has a membership of 40,000 permanent year-round farm workers. It actually began during the revolutionary war against the Somoza regime, and originally included peasants as well as agricultural laborers. Following the revolution, the peasants formed their own organization, the Na-

tional Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG). UNAG has 70,000 members.

ATC membership rises to 50,000 during the three-month peak of the harvest season, when virtually all coffee, cotton, and sugar workers are covered under national contracts for work on these crops.

There are other union federations in Nicaragua, but among blue-collar workers the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST), with a membership of 90,000, is by far the largest. The two union federations the White House likes to hold up as examples of "trade-union democracy" — the rightist Council of Trade Union Unification (CUS) and Nicaraguan Workers Federation (CTN) — together organize fewer than 6,000 workers.

In the last year, the Nicaraguan Women's Association — Luisa Amanda

Espinoza (AMNLAE) has been perhaps the fastest growing of all Nicaragua's mass organizations. Founded in struggle against the Somoza dictatorship, it has spread today to even some of the most remote areas of the Pacific half of the country. Chapters in factories and on state farms focus on the special problems of women workers. Its monthly publication *Somos* is one of the country's most important sources of sex education and information on birth control. Seventy thousand women now belong to AMNLAE.

The Sandinista Youth-July 19 (JS-19), with 30,000 members, is the revolutionary youth organization that prepares, educates, and tests the cadre who will become future members of the FSLN. Primarily organized in the high schools and universities, it has also put special emphasis on organizing chapters in the factories and state farms.

JS-19 members and supporters make up the bulk of the Student Production Brigades (BEP). These are volunteer brigades — with 12,000 members — that head to the coffee and cotton farms during the harvest season to help make up for the chronic shortage of labor at harvest time.

Many regular harvest workers have been mobilized in the militias. Others have received land or now have permanent jobs thanks to the revolution. The BEPs are crucial in filling this gap. School work, examinations, and class schedules are juggled to make participation in them possible.

The Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS), by far the biggest of the mass organizations, are the basic building block of the revolution. Half a million people are in the CDS units. Organized on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis, they are known as the "eyes and ears of the revolution." CDS units organize nightly vigilance to protect against counterrevolutionary activity, theft, and street crime. They also help apply pressure on price-gouging merchants; organize the distribution of guarantee cards for rice, sugar, cooking oil, and laundry soap; and train volunteers for civil defense.

Tens of thousands of members of these mass organizations also participate in active military defense of the country. Eighty thousand are in the Sandinista People's Militias (MPS) and 12-15,000 are in the Infantry Reserve Battalions (BIR). Both the MPS and BIR are completely voluntary. The Sandinista People's Army (EPS) has 20-25,000 soldiers. It was a volunteer army until conscription was introduced last year.

The membership figures for the mass organizations were reported in the FSLN daily *Barricada* in December 1983. As for the size of right-wing organizations and institutions, we shall have to wait until they make public comparable information. It may be a long wait.

Nicaragua's supermarkets: why long lines?

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — A recent visit to one of this city's six state-owned supermarkets, 10 minutes after the door opened, revealed one aspect of life here that is remarkably well-covered in the U.S. media. Usually it's along the theme: "Long lines prove revolution doesn't work."

The fact is 68 people were already in line at the meat counter. And a line nearly that long snaked along the vegetable and fruit bins, waiting for purchases to be weighed.

Rice, beans, cooking oil, and laundry soap — four of the main rationed items — were in plentiful supply. But there was no milk, eggs, chicken, sugar, or toilet paper.

Were this a 90-second segment on national TV news in the United States, the story would end right there. But it's really just the beginning.

Consider, for example, the lines that would develop if a few stores in each city in the United States were selling milk, ground beef, flour, rice, and other staples at half the price being charged anywhere else.

That's what happens at the state-owned supermarkets in Nicaragua.

Supermarkets here are understaffed to handle the volume of customers, and resources do not exist to increase the number of clerks. There are scarcities of some items. Nobody likes the situation, but to understand it, you have to look at the alternatives.

The supermarket is an example of what is called a "secure channel" — a distribution outlet controlled by the state.

Milk, beef, and many other items are trucked in directly from state-owned production facilities.

In other instances, state purchasing agencies buy from private or cooperative

producers, provide the necessary processing and packaging, and then distribute the goods in wholesale quantities to state-owned outlets.

Most basic food items, by the time they reach the consumer through these outlets, are heavily subsidized. Take the case of beans, one of the main sources of protein in the Nicaraguan diet.

The state pays the producer 39 cents a pound for beans. It absorbs all costs of transportation, storage, and processing — and then sells the same beans to "secure channels" at a price of 26 cents a pound.

After a small markup to cover retail distribution costs, the beans are sold to consumers at a final price of 28.5 cents a pound.

The real cost of that same pound of beans, government economists calculate, is 48.5 cents a pound.

To assure an adequate diet regardless of income, the state subsidizes 41 percent of the cost of beans. Similar subsidies lower the prices of corn, rice, milk, and sugar. Total cost of the subsidies is close to \$100 million a year, making it one of the largest items in the state budget after education, defense, and medical care.

Hence the long lines at the government-owned supermarket.

All the items the shoppers were looking for, plus many others they couldn't find, are available, without waiting in line, at nearby private markets. But at prices 30 percent to 300 percent higher. That same pound of beans, for example, after passing through the hands of countless middlemen, carries a price tag of 80 cents in a private market.

Instead of nationalizing the enormously complex network of wholesale and retail distribution, the government has chosen to

compete with it on selected, absolutely essential items.

Beginning by purchasing from the former private owners a controlling share of the country's 11 supermarkets, the state has gradually established a country-wide network of secure channels of production, purchase, and distribution.

State distribution outlets now include, according to the most recent data from the Ministry of Internal Commerce:

- 1,726 *Expendios Populares*. These "People's Distribution Centers" are for the most part regular corner grocery stores that agree to sell state-supplied basic products at the official subsidized price. In return they receive a small markup, usually a few cents a pound, on each item they sell — plus an enormous amount of traffic resulting in sales of other items.

- 93 *Tiendas Populares*. These are "People's Stores," small government-managed outlets that sell the basic items at controlled prices, but not much else. They are like small-scale, streamlined "7-11" stores, but with supermarket prices.

- 520 *Comisariatos*. These "Commissaries" are located in major factories and work centers. Workers can buy basic food items at subsidized prices. If workers are short of cash, the cost can be deducted from their next paycheck.

Finally, 305 government-run wholesale and retail outlets have been established in the countryside.

The long lines at the supermarket, and shorter ones at the smaller outlets, are far from proving the revolution "doesn't work." What they do reflect is the steps the Nicaraguan government is taking to tackle a problem not a single capitalist government has ever tried to solve — how to deliver cheap, nutritional food to every family in the country.

A working-class alternative to U.S. employers' foreign policy

Speech by SWP vice-presidential candidate Andrea Gonzalez

The following is the speech given by Andrea González, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. vice-president, at the SWP campaign kick-off rally. The rally was held in St. Louis on December 30 during the national convention of the Young Socialist Alliance. This speech and the one given by Mel Mason, her running mate for president, are available on tape for \$6 (see advertisement on page 11).

The foreign policy of the U.S. government for more than 80 years has been, and continues to be, one of warring against the workers and farmers of the world. The latest battlegrounds are in Central America and Lebanon; but just since World War II U.S. troops have been sent to Korea, Vietnam, the Dominican Republic, and Grenada, not to mention the military threats and provocations against Cuba, the Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe.

The purpose of U.S. military aggression is to prevent workers and farmers from taking back the wealth that they produce and using it for their own good. It is also aimed at reversing gains working people have made in overturning capitalist rule in many countries.

This is graphically demonstrated in the U.S. government's war against Nicaragua. This war began because the Nicaraguan workers and farmers, under the leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, overturned the U.S.-made and U.S.-backed dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza. Having fought and having sacrificed 50,000 people, the workers and farmers refused to negotiate with the United States over installing a government to its liking. They refused to give up the power to a small minority who owned a section of the businesses and large farms. Having won the war the workers and farmers decided to keep the power and establish a government of their own — a workers and farmers government.

Using governmental power the workers and farmers of Nicaragua have made great



Militant/Harry Ring

Andrea González

gains. They have reduced illiteracy from over 50 percent to 14 percent. Unemployment continues to drop. Unionization of the workers, which is supported by the power of the government, continues to increase. Health care is a top priority. Measles, polio, and malaria — which had devastating effects before the revolutionary victory — have been nearly wiped out. All children are assured milk and other basic nutritional requirements. Culture — poetry, theater, art, and dance — is blooming today in Nicaragua. And it is not the property and product of a small elite group but of all the people.

Women in Nicaragua

Women in Nicaragua, along with their Cuban sisters, have all but left their other sisters in this hemisphere in the dust. They are equal before the law. Legislation mandates equal pay. The government encour-

ages women to enter the work force and uses its power to protect them from harassment. Government officials give support and encouragement to women organizing to advance their struggle for equality. All advertising that projects women as sex objects is outlawed. Child-care is a government priority.

To the U.S. ruling class the Nicaraguan workers and farmers in power is, to use Ronald Reagan's word, an "evil" force in the world. The U.S. rulers try to convince us that Nicaraguans, because they defend themselves and their revolution against U.S. attack, are "terrorists." The selflessness of the Cubans in sharing their limited material resources with the fighting oppressed people around the world is "international terrorism."

Big business and its kept media wants us to believe that any workers and farmers who stand up and fight for their rights against the rich minority — be it in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Northern Ireland, Puerto Rico, the Middle East, or the copper towns of Arizona — are terrorists.

All terrorism, of course, is not equal in their eyes. The pope, a strong supporter of capitalism, demonstrated that clearly when, after visiting Nicaragua to denounce the Sandinistas, he later spent Christmas Eve with a fascist terrorist in an Italian jail.

But no one can look at the U.S. firing guns from warships off the Lebanese coast at defenseless villages; the 6,000 U.S. troops, complete with navy battle groups and helicopter gunships attacking 110,000 unarmed and leaderless people in Grenada; the 45,000 people murdered by the U.S.-backed and paid for Salvadoran regime; or the destruction reaped by the U.S.-created counterrevolutionaries in Nicaragua and not know that the *real* terrorists, the *principal* international terrorist organization in the world, is headquartered in Washington, D.C.

The U.S. ruling class has shown that it will spare no expense, it will offer for slaughter any number of you in this room — and your sons, brothers, husbands, and friends — to stop the forward march of the world working class. When we realize that the U.S. imperialists have within their reach the means to destroy humanity we see that they are totally unfit to rule society. The U.S. ruling class — that small minority calling all the shots — can not be trusted with so much as a butter knife from the White House silverware.

Puerto Rico

The U.S. ruling class, and its mouth pieces — the Democrats and Republicans — try to convince us that these wars are necessary to bring freedom and democracy to the world. The U.S. ruling class' notion of democracy and freedom for the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean is especially clear in Puerto Rico.

Democracy on this island colony is the right to elect a government which can't pass a law that the U.S. rulers don't like. Democracy Puerto Rican style is the right to be forced before a U.S. grand jury — without charges or attorney — for advocating Puerto Rican independence, and to be jailed 9 months, 18 months, or 10 years for refusing to give this grand jury the names of other supporters of independence.

Puerto Rican democracy is the right to be drafted, fight, and die in U.S. wars all over the world. Democracy Puerto Rican style is "made in USA" so it includes the right of the police to blow away advocates of independence.

Power in Puerto Rico is the U.S. military bases that occupy one-third of the arable land. It's the U.S. naval base on Vieques, which uses the island as a target and its beaches for amphibious landing prac-

tice. Puerto Rico has been used by Washington as a springboard to invade the Dominican Republic, to practice invading Grenada, and prepare the invasion of Nicaragua.

Freedom in Puerto Rico is the freedom of the U.S. corporations to exploit the workers and extract superprofits, to exploit the natural resources of the island — destroying the ecology without returning one red cent. It's the freedom to create 25 percent unemployment, and underemployment so massive that 75 percent of the population survives only with food stamps. It's the freedom to be forced to migrate to the United States and there face racist discrimination in employment, education, and housing, as well as racist police violence.

Freedom in Puerto Rico is the right of U.S. corporations to use Puerto Rican women as guinea pigs to test every new contraception idea that pops into their heads. It's the right to sterilize against their will one-third of the women of child-bearing age. It's the right of the corporations and their friends in the mafia to build a playground for the rich — forcing women into prostitution.

Tasted freedom

This type of democracy, freedom, and power — and much worse — is what the U.S. government wants to maintain in El Salvador and reimpose on Nicaragua. But having tasted freedom, progress, equality, and sovereignty, the Nicaraguans will not passively be reenslaved. Having seen what has been achieved in Nicaragua since the workers and farmers took power, the Salvadorans will not peacefully give in. To regain control Washington must go to war against the Nicaraguans and Salvadorans. It must commit hundreds of thousands of troops.

This is the policy being resolutely carried out by Reagan — a policy that was begun by Carter and Mondale.

This is the policy of the Democratic and Republican parties because these parties are organized to represent a minority class in the United States that profits from controlling these countries. They represent a class for which the question of profits is paramount and if it takes war to safeguard these profits, then it's war with thousands dead and massive destruction.

They make these decisions as cold-bloodedly as you or I would decide to get a



Nicaraguan militia members. "Big business any workers and farmers who stand up for plains."

If you like this speech...

BY DON DAVIS

If you liked Andrea González's hard-hitting defense of workers here and abroad in the speech printed on this page, you're going to like the Socialist Workers presidential campaign.

Between now and November 6, González and her running mate, Mel Mason, are going to be taking this kind of message all across the country, focusing especially on areas where working people are being forced to grapple with big political questions.

Mason will start his campaign among the Arizona copper miners who have been on strike for months against Phelps Dodge.

González, a former steelworker, will be touring steel centers where U.S. Steel's plant shutdowns are throwing thousands out of work.

They and their supporters will be taking part in many political events. Already this month, González has attended the Martin Luther King, Jr., birthday celebrations in Atlanta, and the national lesbian rights conference in Milwaukee sponsored by the National Organization for Women.

Teams of socialist campaigners are being organized to travel through the South, Midwestern farm states, the Eastern coal belt, and the Rio Grande Valley on the U.S.-Mexican border.

Meanwhile, a staff is being assembled to help produce literature giving the socialist position on key questions, and to plan a

drive to put socialist candidates on the ballot in more than half the states.

All this takes a lot of money. An \$84,000 kickoff fund has been launched to get the campaign started, with a goal of reaching that figure by March 15.

A fighting, working-class campaign like this can only rely for its support on working-class fighters like those who read the *Militant*. You may not be able to give a million, but the contributions of people like you will play an important role in getting the socialist campaign underway.

Please take the time today to fill out the coupon below and send in a donation. Checks can be made out to "Mason for President" or "González for Vice-president."

☐ I am contributing \$ _____ to the \$84,000 Socialist Workers presidential campaign fund.

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The U.S. ruling class' notion of democracy and freedom is especially clear in Puerto Rico," says González. Above, Puerto Rican cops pin down protesters in 1982 Villa Sin Miedo struggle over land occupation.

both pulled — of course they never fight these wars and, in fact, while you are burying your sons they are marking up dividends from their war. But we — workers, women, Blacks, Latinos — who do fight and pay for these wars and who do not mark up dividends, are not so willing to go to war.

This is not because we are by nature pacifists — we believe in fighting, we have demonstrated this in our struggles at home — but because we, even with the lies in the press about terror and democracy, doubt that the government's war could do anyone good.

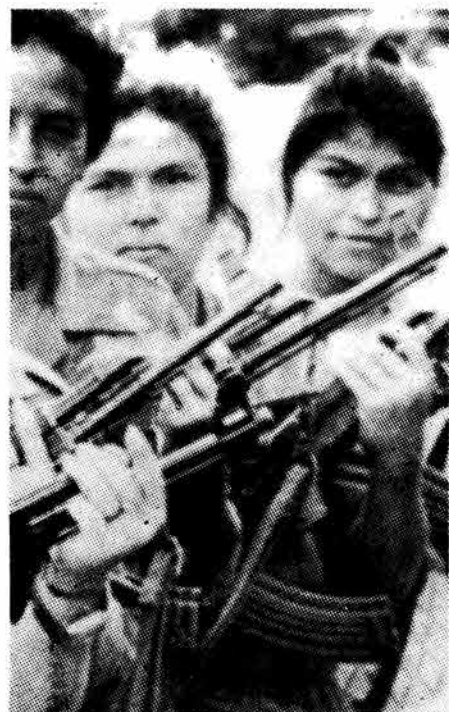
The U.S. ruling class must break our resistance to these wars and disarm us in the fight against them. So it has launched an offensive against us, trying to bust our unions, like the copper unions, attacking Black rights and the rights of undocumented workers, chipping away at democratic and political rights, and trying to take back women's rights.

Below 1982 Socialist Workers Party

Assault on women's rights

There is much that could be said about all of these attacks, but I want to concentrate on the attacks on women's rights. In the last four and a half years as our sisters in Nicaragua have moved forward, we in the United States have been pushed back.

Women in the United States have fewer rights than women in Nicaragua. We remain unequal before the law, we must fight to get a decent-paying job and we must fight to keep it. Reproductive rights — access to abortion and freedom from sterilization abuse, that is, the most basic right to control our bodies — are constantly undermined. Today, for millions of working, poor, and young women, safe and legal abortion is beyond reach. Child care facilities are totally inadequate. This assault on our rights began under Carter but it really took off under Reagan.



and its kept media want us to believe that their rights are terrorists," González ex-

Reagan's administration launched a full-scale assault on us, including a major ideological campaign about the inferiority of women.

But most people believe women are equal and women's rights are popular so Reagan was forced to reel himself in. But his views come through via the right-wing gang around him. Remember how they responded to Barbara Honegger's resignation over Reagan's complete and absolute default on women's rights? Remember the high-level political answers to her charges, the seriousness in which they treated a commitment to women's rights? They said such things as her resignation and charges were unimportant because she was a low-level munchkin and that the only thing she did, and obviously the only thing any woman could do at any pay, was to dress up as a bunny on Easter.

While Reagan and his gang have carried out their attacks on women with more ideological fervor, the Democrats have also backed the specific measures against women's rights. These parties represent a class that profits from the oppression of women, just like they profit from the oppression of the world working class.

There is only one class that has the power and the material interest to stop the ruling-class war abroad and against us at home — the working class. The ruling class knows this and so they try to convince us that we are just working stiff, just ordinary people and that we should leave decisions like war and peace to others who are supposedly more important and more powerful than us. It's true that each of us separately is just an ordinary person, but together as a class we are the most powerful force on earth.

We — the working class and our Black, Latino, women, and farmer allies — make society run. We mine the coal, make the steel, run the trains, grow the food, then process and package it. And all of our labor we do for society as a whole. We don't pick up a car at the end of the assembly line and go home. We don't bring the coal we mined home. We produce for society and there is nothing that doesn't depend on us. When we stop, society stops — no trains run, no coal is mined, no cars are built.

This tiny minority of ruling rich — which sends us to war and oppresses women — produces nothing. If they stop, who would notice? If Reagan struck tomorrow, would anyone notice? If Congress went out on strike all that would happen is the quality of the evening news would be improved.

Working-class power

We have the potential power. We have organizations — the unions, civil rights groups, and women's groups. We saw that these organizations have the capacity to mobilize us to get out in the streets as we did last August 27 in the march on Washington for jobs, peace, and freedom, and on Solidarity Day, September 19, 1981. But the union leadership only takes these steps begrudgingly. They act as if they gave us the unions and we work for them. But we fought long and hard for our unions.

Today in Arizona workers are still fighting long and hard against the bosses to keep their unions. We have to fight now to take control of them again and run them to fight for our real interests. These go beyond the job and include all social questions — the fight against war, for women's rights, and for Black rights. They include extending solidarity to other embattled workers at home and internationally.

We have to take the decision-making power into our own hands — from voting on contracts to deciding on war. But to do that we need more than fighting unions. We need a political party — a labor party. Without a political voice of our very own whose program we totally determine — not one we wheel and deal for to get a few crumbs — we are disarmed in the fight against the ruling minority.

And this party, based on the unions that we have transformed to fight for our interests, wouldn't just come around every election but would fight for us every day, organizing all kinds and forms of struggle — from Black-rights demonstrations, to women's rights pickets, to strike solidarity, to antiwar actions.

Program being forged

The program of this party is being forged today in struggle. It will be an antiwar party because today the war is being debated in our unions from the mines to the war industry itself. It is being debated among workers in uniform — the soldiers, sailors, and marines. Today workers are part of antiwar actions. And the pressure of this debate on the shop floor and the union halls is seen in the highest bodies of the AFL-CIO. They have been forced to debate foreign policy.

Because the labor party's program is being forged today we can be sure that it will be a pro-women's rights party. Women have entered the work force, come into the unions, and have won support for their rights from their coworkers and officially from their unions. The very exist-

tence of the Coalition of Labor Union Women and women's committees in the unions reflects that the labor party will be committed to the fight for women's rights.

My running mate Mel Mason and I will be campaigning in favor of establishing this party — a labor party, a party of our class, which will stand up to and fight against the two parties of their class. We will be campaigning for this party as a fighting organization that will advance all the oppressed by giving them a tool with which to fight in the political arena.

We will also advocate that Blacks establish their own independent Black party based on mobilizing the Black community. The formation of a Black party would be an inspiring example for the labor movement and could help lay the basis for forming a labor party.

Working-class internationalism

We will be campaigning for a new foreign policy — a workers' foreign policy. We favor an internationalist policy that is based on the world reality that there are two classes — us and the rich minority — and that the rich minority rules across borders and we, the working majority around the world, must stand together against them.

We call for the nuclear disarmament of the terrorists in Washington and for an end to U.S. intervention in Grenada, Lebanon, Central America, and Cuba — everywhere in the world. We call for the independence of Puerto Rico.

Our foreign policy, the foreign policy of our class, the foreign policy of the workers and farmers government that the labor party would fight for in the United States, will be for more than ending intervention, it will be for international solidarity. It will be for taking part of our great wealth and extending material solidarity to our brothers and sisters in Nicaragua, Cuba, El Salvador, Vietnam, Puerto Rico and throughout the world. U.S. workers and their allies will not step foot on the road to progress while other workers are in rags.

The war in Central America, in Nicaragua, and El Salvador is on the ruling class agenda. But in fighting against this war the U.S. working class and its allies will learn that they have more in common with the workers and farmers of El Salvador than with the bosses in the United States. The U.S. working class is learning that they can depend on no one but themselves. They will learn to organize themselves politically to defeat the real enemy — the class enemy at home.

Mason & Gonzalez Speeches on Tape

Hear the socialist candidates. Speeches from the December 30, 1983, kick-off rally of the 1984 Socialist Workers Party campaign. Mel Mason, SWP candidate for president, discusses a class-struggle perspective for working people. Andrea González, SWP candidate for vice-president, speaks out against U.S. foreign policy. González's speech is also available in Spanish. Tapes include brief introduction.

☐ Please send me ___ copies of Mason & González: Speeches (Side One: Mason on Working-Class Solutions to the Capitalist Crisis, 30 min.; Side Two: González Speaks Out Against

U.S. Foreign Policy, 30 min.)

☐ Please send me ___ copies of Andrea González Speaks Out Against U.S. Foreign Policy (Side One in Spanish, 30 min.; Side Two in English, 30 min.)

Enclosed is \$ ___ (\$6 per tape including postage and handling). Pre-paid orders only.

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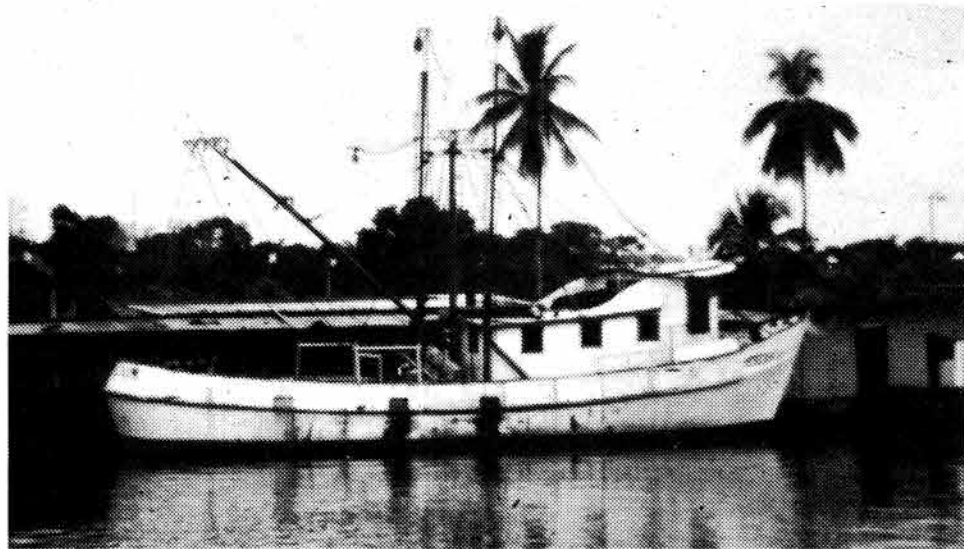
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How Nicaraguan revolution has benefited workers in Bluefields fishing industry



Fishing boats docked for repair outside Bluefields. Canadian cannery worker who interviewed Bluefields unionists found concern for workers safety much greater in Nicaragua than in North America.

The following article is by Cheryl Pruitt, a member of the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union in Vancouver, Canada, and also a member of the Revolutionary Workers League. Pruitt was one of the Canadian unionists who joined U.S. union members and solidarity activists on a tour of Nicaragua late last year sponsored by Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Tours, Inc.

BY CHERYL PRUITT

On a recent tour of Nicaragua, I visited the town of Bluefields on the Atlantic Coast. We were able to meet with Alevino González and Delvin Joseph, two leaders of the union movement there.

This was something I'd been looking forward to, since I knew the main industry in this area is fishing and fish processing. For the past two years, I have worked seasonally in British Columbia, Canada, in canneries and fresh-fish processing plants.

The fishing industry in North America has a well-deserved reputation for long hours, hard working conditions, poor health and safety record, and lack of job security. Open racism and sex segregation are the norm. Many workers are still not protected by a union. We learned that conditions for fishing-industry workers in Nicaragua are much better in many ways than in North America.

Sandinista union

In Bluefields, the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) is the only union federation and has been built up since the revolution to its present size of 4,000 workers.

The CST headquarters in Bluefields was very bare. The union has little in the way of office or technical equipment. There were posters, wall paintings, and a large tribute to one of the union members who died in the revolution.

I found the most striking thing about the entire country was the continuing improvements in the lives of working people, the increasing rate of union organization, and the extension of social benefits like medical care and education. All of this is despite the fact that Nicaragua is still a very poor country and is overcoming a legacy of colonial underdevelopment.

What's more, Nicaragua is fighting a war. There are continual violations of its borders by counterrevolutionaries based in neighboring Honduras and Costa Rica, and these *contras* (as they're called) are operating with the full support of the U.S. government. Much of Nicaragua's production and energy has had to be diverted to the defense effort.

Bluefields is an important part of the defense effort. It is in a "Special Zone" — an area of high military danger. The *contras* have made a particular effort to take advantage of the region's isolation from the rest of the country. (A trip to Bluefields involves a four-hour drive, and then a five-hour boat trip.)

Alevino González introduced us to the work of the CST in Bluefields.

"The CST was formed here in 1979, just after the victory of the revolution. All of us

who founded it and who are now CST leaders were workers in the fishing industry. Once we got set up, the executive of the CST began organizing the different factories. Our main job is to fight for the interests of the working class, that is, responding to economic problems and health and organizational problems [because there was no union here before the revolution].

"Our first job was to build a union here. "In four years there have been tremendous advances. Our biggest were to guarantee a cafeteria in the workplaces, access to medical care, and improvements in working conditions, including the use of safety equipment. Now we have established a mutual dialogue between the worker and boss. Before the revolution, if there was any kind of problem, you were just fired."

U.S. boycott

The economy of Nicaragua is still very much subject to the profit drive of the international market. González explained what this has meant to the fishing industry. "Most of our shrimp and lobster is exported to the United States. The export prices have been extremely low lately, as part of the economic boycott against our revolution. Part of the problem has also affected our fishing boats, which originally came from the United States. We now have a lot of trouble getting repair parts, so sometimes we can't fulfill the demands of the processing plants. In the past season, we weren't able to develop the industry because of this problem."

I was curious to find out both how the workers in the fishing industry are organized in Nicaragua, and how small fishermen have fared under the revolution. In North America, small fishermen are facing a desperate situation due to rising fuel and equipment costs, poor catches, and low fish prices. Almost all are in deep debt to the banks, and many face bankruptcy and repossession of their boats.

Last summer, a major British Columbia cannery went into receivership — after processing tons of salmon, but before the fishermen were paid for their catch. The bank that now holds the assets of Cassiar Fishing Co. has said that the fishermen are not entitled to compensation for their loss, as they are legally defined as "co-adventurers" and, as such, must absorb the loss from their own pockets. Most of these fishermen have lost thousands of dollars, the entire earnings for the 1983 salmon season.

Delvin Joseph was visibly shocked by this story and explained that the situation is totally different for Nicaraguan fishermen.

"The fishermen here own their own boats. They fish in an organized fashion through cooperatives. As they earn money, they make small payments into a fund so that if there's a poor season, they can still pay for repairs and parts. Their own personal and business finances are protected as much as possible. And to ensure that there will be enough fish products, we now have restrictions on taking shrimp when they're too small, for a two-month period.

"Another gain of the revolution has been that workers get a 100 percent guaranteed

wage during the two-month off-season. At first it was 50 percent, but we've been able to raise it. During the regular season, if the fishermen don't catch anything for a period, and there's no work in the processing plants, the workers there also get the 100 percent guaranteed wage."

Fishing-industry workers in Nicaragua have won all kinds of gains we don't have in North America. None of the six plants I've worked in has had a cafeteria. At best we've had a lunchroom—change room with bare tables and benches. And until you've worked for 400 hours in a unionized plant, there is no right of recall for the next season. Even with 400 hours, you have to fight to be recalled, especially if you supported the union. And, of course, there are no guarantees of *anything* in a nonunion plant.

The idea of a guaranteed wage during layoff would seem like an impossible dream to a British Columbia worker. We're lucky if we can build up enough weeks to qualify for unemployment benefits.

Another major problem facing fishing industry workers in North America is the total lack of regard for our physical safety. We work for long hours (sometimes up to 16-hour shifts) with our hands immersed in cold water. Cleaning salmon or extracting herring roe is repetitive work and involves a lot of muscle and tendon strain as you struggle to maintain a grip on the slippery, icy fish. And of course, we're working with razor-sharp knives.

Almost every shoreworker I've known has had some industrial disease: carpal tunnel syndrome, bursitis, tendonitis. The companies push us to work faster and faster, and some are now trying to introduce a piece-rate system. At the same time, they provide the absolute minimum of safety and protective equipment.

When I explained what it's like to work in the British Columbia fishing industry, I could see the concern and dismay on the faces of these two Nicaraguan unionists. Delvin Joseph said that it's very useful for them to have this information, as it reminds them of how much they've already accomplished.

State-owned industries

Another member of the tour asked if the main industries are owned by the state or private companies and how the workers control their conditions of work. We were told that the fish processing industry is fully state-owned and run, while the fishermen own their own boats. The new industries being built in the area — a deep-water port and a cooking-oil plant — will also be state-owned.

Alevino González explained: "Some unions have organized privately owned plants too. But there were some unions that did not represent the workers well. There have been cases in which an employer is helping the counterrevolution, so the workers go to the government and demand that the plant be confiscated and run in the interests of the revolution."

Aid from North American unions

Many individuals and unions have given important help to the Nicaraguan revolution by sending aid donations. My union,

the United Fishermen and Allied Workers, has sent a lot of fishing equipment to Nicaragua since the revolution.

Delvin Joseph said, "What we've gotten here has been extremely useful. In the shipbuilding industry, we received personal safety equipment [welding goggles and hoods]. In the fishing industry, we've had problems supplying all the workers with boots and uniforms, although this has been solved for the time being. We've gotten boats from Cuba and technical aid and advice, including marine biologists who can accompany fishing boat captains on their trips, to help them."

We asked about the response in Bluefields to the U.S. invasion of Grenada. Delvin Joseph answered, "We organized demonstrations to support the people of Grenada, with a central rally to denounce the U.S. government for attacking the revolutionary people of Grenada. Each union supported the actions, so they encouraged the workers to go out during the workday and take part."

"There are hundreds of workers here in the defense effort, through their different organizations. We have also made big steps forward ideologically. I'm certain that when the aggression comes — even though we would prefer it not happen — well, they'll see who the organized workers are. . . ."

As the meeting drew to a close, Alevino González said he wanted to add something more about women. We had earlier asked how many women are working, and were told that 45 percent of the fishing-industry workers are women. The new projects under construction will provide more jobs for women. There is a women's cooperative sewing factory, which produces affordable clothing. Up until recently, clothing in Bluefields has been very expensive as entrepreneurs speculate by bringing stocks of clothing in by boat and then reselling them at a profit.

Alevino González said, "Now, there is respect for the work done by women, and we take social responsibility for children. We fight for the children who are growing up now, so that they will have a just upbringing."

This was a final confirmation for me of why North American workers have an interest in the Nicaraguan revolution. The vast majority of British Columbia shoreworkers are women — and we haven't even won equal pay, integrated seniority lists, or the right to get the higher-paid (and less seasonal) jobs that are presently reserved for men!

These gains were all made possible by the 1979 revolution, which brought into power a government of the workers and peasants, led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front. The largest union federation, the CST, is supported by the government, as we saw. When workers are in a struggle with their employer, they can turn to the union and the government, confident that their interests will be upheld. In addition, the CST is guaranteed representation on the Council of State, the main governing body in the country (where legislation is discussed and adopted). This, above all, is what makes life in Nicaragua so different — the existence of a government that *defends* working people, rather than attacking them.

Visit Nicaragua for May Day!

April 29–May 6
or extended tour to May 13

8-day tour: \$650 from Miami
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Write to: Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Tours, Inc., 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Telephone (212) 929-3486.





Militant/Dean Peoples

Aug. 10, 1983, solidarity rally in British Columbia against attacks on unions and oppressed.

BY MARGARET JAYKO

MONTREAL — The big problems facing working people in the United States — war, layoffs, cutbacks, increased government and employer attacks on the rights of oppressed nationalities and women, union-busting — also confront working people in Canada.

The national convention of the Revolutionary Workers League/Ligue Ouvrière Révolutionnaire (RWL/LOR)*, held here December 27-31, discussed some important battles fought over the past year by the labor movement and its allies in Canada. The convention focused particularly on the big struggles against government-ordered layoffs and cutbacks in the Pacific coast province of British Columbia (B.C.) starting last summer, and in the oppressed French-speaking nation of Quebec last winter.

There were also reports on Grenada, the world political situation, deepening the RWL's turn to industry, finances, and the Fourth International.

The RWL, Canadian section of the Fourth International, is a revolutionary socialist organization active in both English Canada and in Quebec. A majority of its members are industrial workers who belong to the United Steelworkers of America, International Woodworkers of America, United Auto Workers, and other unions.

U.S. workers, many of whom belong to the same unions as their northern brothers and sisters, can learn a lot from the experiences of workers in Canada.

Against Canadian imperialism

The report on the world political situation by Gary Kettner pointed to the impact on the labor movement of the escalating war in Central America and the Caribbean. The deep antiwar sentiment among workers in English Canada and especially Quebec has led the Canadian Labor Congress, the equivalent in Canada of the AFL-CIO, to take a stand against U.S. attacks on the Nicaraguan government. There are other openings, as well, to build solidarity with the peoples of Central America and the Caribbean in the union movement.

Kettner's report underscored Canada's role as an imperialist power in its own right, which can be seen, above all, in its complicity with Washington's counterrevolutionary drive in Latin America. This backing for Washington's wars underlines the phony nature of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's current "peace crusade."

The Canadian ruling class participates in plundering the semicolonial world, Kettner said, and Canada is a member of the imperialist military alliance, NATO. The government in Ottawa, Canada's capital, has agreed to allow Washington to test cruise missiles in Canada.

Kettner explained the danger of bending to Canadian nationalism or lending support to Canadian imperialism as some kind of "lesser evil" to U.S. imperialism. This leads to binding the Canadian working class to its mortal enemy — the Canadian ruling class — and pits labor against its al-

lies — the Québécois and the workers of the world.

A report on the domestic political situation was given by Steve Penner. He focused on the increasing resistance by working people in Canada and Quebec to the relentless ruling-class offensive.

Broadest strike movement since '40s

Starting at the end of 1982, Penner said, Canadian and Québécois workers launched the broadest pan-Canadian strike movement since the 1940s.

This wave of struggles included the November 1982 strike by 10,000 Chrysler workers against a concession contract; the January-February 1983 strikes organized by the Quebec Common Front unions against an attack on Quebec public sector workers; and the gigantic struggle in British Columbia against sweeping attacks by the provincial government on the living standards and democratic rights of all working people.

British Columbia struggle

Much of the report and discussion centered on the struggle in British Columbia.

On July 7, the Social Credit (Socred) government in power there presented a drastic austerity budget accompanied by a legislative package which attacked many social gains of workers and the oppressed.

The major target was the unions, but the rulers' net was cast very wide, hitting almost everybody — except the employers.

The heart of the attack was Bill 3, which allowed the government to fire whatever government workers it wanted to without reason and regardless of seniority, and Bill 2, which gave the government the right to determine conditions of work for its employees without negotiations with the union.

The government also raised the sales tax; cut medical fees and legal aid; abolished the B.C. Human Rights Commission, the rental board, and rent controls; and repealed legislation protecting women and oppressed minorities.

This provoked the most massive class struggle in English Canada since the 1930s. B.C. workers have the highest rate of union organization — 40 percent of the work force — in North America. And they have a labor party based on the unions, the New Democratic Party (NDP), which exists throughout English Canada. The NDP regularly wins more than 40 percent of the vote in B.C. provincial elections. The existence of the NDP meant that B.C. workers had an immediate political alternative they could counterpose to the continuation of the reactionary Socred government.

Preparations for general strike

A united front of virtually the entire B.C. labor movement, called Operation Solidarity, was organized. It worked very closely with the Solidarity Coalition which brought together unionists, women, immigrants, units of the NDP, unemployed workers, welfare recipients, students, gays, tenants, and the disabled.

Massive protest demonstrations were organized all over the province, including one in Vancouver on October 15 that drew 60,000 people, half of whom were industrial workers.

A major escalation of the struggle came in the first week of November when 40,000 members of the British Columbia Government Employees Union (BCGEU) — a majority of whom are women — went out on strike in response to government threats to implement the new legislation by firing 1,600 BCGEU members. One week later 44,000 teachers and school support staff joined them.

The walkouts were planned to gradually escalate, leading to an all-out general strike. By November 18, all of B.C.'s 250,000 public sector workers would have been on the picket lines.

Industrial workers, including the 48,000 members of the powerful International Woodworkers union who were involved in contract negotiations at the time, were ready to walk out if the government introduced strike-breaking legislation or jailed a single unionist.

The unions and their allies won the first round on November 13. After almost two weeks on strike, the BCGEU was able to negotiate a contract with the government that exempted it from most union-busting provisions of the legislation. The government also extended this agreement to the entire public sector.

On many of the other important issues, however — such as education funding and human rights — the government has only agreed to what it calls "meaningful consultations" with Operation Solidarity.

In addition, the government is now threatening punitive action against the teachers and school staff. The recent B.C. Federation of Labor (BCFL) convention called for job actions if teachers were victimized, and prepared for round two of the fight with the Socreds.

Discussion on NDP

Penner also stressed the role of the NDP and the discussions on political action which are taking place in light of the B.C. experience.

Everyone knows that the Socreds haven't given up. Acknowledging this, a resolution was passed at the recent BCFL convention declaring the necessity of replacing the Socred government with an NDP government.

NDP activists in British Columbia played an important role in helping to educate and mobilize people against the Socred's moves. But more importantly, the fact that an alternative to the capitalist political parties exists points to the need for the labor movement to seriously discuss how to replace this capitalist government with one that will represent the interests of workers, farmers, and all the oppressed.

Quebec: an oppressed nation

Penner also discussed the big labor battles that have taken place in Quebec.

Quebec is the center of the French-speaking Québécois nationality. The Québécois are economically, socially, and politically oppressed and exploited at the hands of the imperialist, English-speaking Canadian ruling class. In addition to suppression of their language, Québécois suffer the highest unemployment, the worst living and working conditions, and discrimination in all aspects of life.

As with Blacks in the United States, the Québécois have fought mighty battles

against their second-class status, and Québécois workers are among the most militant.

Support for Quebec's independence is a crucial question for the unions and the NDP. The NDP's reactionary stand against the Québécois national struggle is the reason that the NDP has no base among workers in Quebec and is therefore unable to take power on the federal level.

The RWL has taken important steps in establishing a presence in the Quebec industrial work force, including inside the United Steelworkers and other unions. The biweekly French-language socialist newspaper, *Lutte Ouvrière*, is regularly distributed by RWL members at industrial work-sites and in working-class communities in Quebec.

Many anglophone (English-speaking) RWL members have studied French in order to be able to participate in discussions among Québécois workers. Several convention reports were given in French and there was French and English translation of the entire convention.

Common Front struggle

The Parti Québécois (PQ) has been in power in Quebec since 1976. Its popularity was based on its support for Quebec's national rights and its role in the national struggle. However, the PQ is a capitalist party that subordinates the fight for the rights of the Québécois to maintenance of the capitalist system.

Confronted with the sharpest crisis since the Great Depression and an all-out offensive by the ruling class of English Canada, the PQ has chosen to administer the crisis at the expense of working people. Thus in 1982, the PQ government decreed sweeping attacks on the rights and living standards of public sector workers with an eye toward busting their unions. In response, Quebec's three major union federations united into a single Common Front.

This struggle, which included militant strikes and mass mobilizations, was de-

Continued on Page 19

Socialist Voice

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* The Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) is based in both English-speaking Canada and in French-speaking Quebec. In French, the organization is called the Ligue Ouvrière Révolutionnaire (LOR).

Farm activists, unionists share views at socialist convention

BY GEORGE JOHNSON

ST. LOUIS — An important part of the recent Young Socialist Alliance convention here was the discussion of establishing an alliance between labor and working farmers.

This reflected the participation by industrial workers who are members of the YSA and the Socialist Workers Party in actions and discussions involving workers and farmers in many states.

Several farmers, members of the North American Farm Alliance (NAFA) and the American Agriculture Movement (AAM) of Missouri, attended the convention. They set up literature tables, held numerous discussions with unionists and others, and took part in workshops.

The Missouri AAM members came to meet workers who could help arrange for them to speak before union locals. When the convention ended, the farmers were pleased; they had a long list of names and phone numbers. They also had sold all the hats and pamphlets they'd brought.

One workshop titled "Capitalism versus U.S. farmers: labor's allies in the countryside," began with a presentation by Kathy Wheeler, a YSA leader and laid-off member of the United Steelworkers from

the Iron Range in Minnesota.

Wheeler pointed to the need for a strategic alliance between workers and farmers to wrest political power from their common exploiter and oppressor, the capitalist class.

She focused on how working farmers are exploited, and detailed their response in fighting farm foreclosures. Growing participation in these struggles by trade unionists, she said, was helping to lay the basis for a farmer-labor alliance.

Wheeler pointed to the positive examples of Cuba and Nicaragua, where working farmers are protected by governments that fight for all the toilers.

Labor-farmer program

Wheeler listed proposals that the 1984 Socialist Workers election campaign is making to the labor movement "as the basis for forging an alliance with working farmers against big business and the banks." These were summarized in the YSA draft political resolution, adopted by the convention:

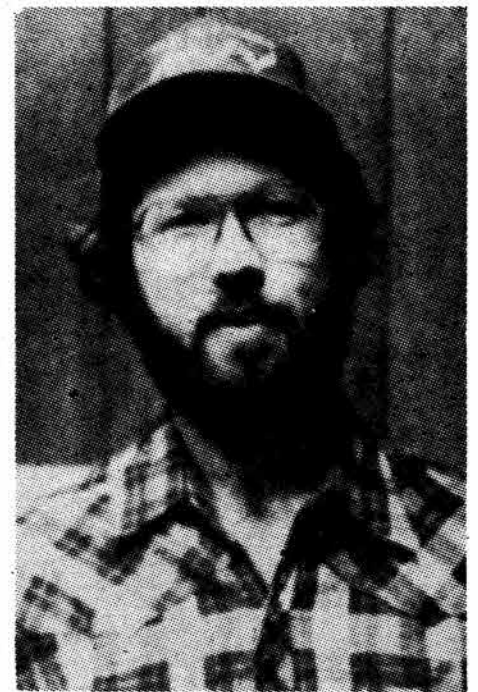
- the unionization of the 3 million unorganized agricultural workers in the U.S.;
- the formation of price committees to

counteract attempts by the capitalists to divide the farmers from the workers by blaming wages for high prices. These committees made up of workers, farmers, and consumers would demand that the capitalists open the books and that these committees control the fixing of prices;

• a moratorium on all debts and mortgages;

• elimination of the entire rents and mortgages system based on private ownership of the land. This could be accomplished by such measures as elimination of the buying and selling of land as a commodity thus ending land speculation; ending rent payments to private landlords; eliminating the use of land for loan collateral; and providing low-interest government loans and insurance to protect farmers from the disasters of crop failure and loss of livestock. Farmers who work the land should be able to do so without the threat and fear of foreclosure or eviction."

The resolution indicates that the Socialist Workers 1984 presidential campaign "calls for an alliance of the workers, farmers, and the oppressed that would break with the capitalist parties and form an independent party — a labor party based on a fighting union movement. Such a



U.S. Farm News

George Naylor, organizer for U.S. Farm Association, was one of farmers at Young Socialist Alliance national convention.

party would fight for the formation of a workers' and farmers' government that would implement these measures."

Discussion of experiences

In the discussion, socialist workers from Georgia and Minnesota related their experiences in farmer-labor actions.

One of the three Missouri AAM members pointed to the urgency of solving the problems facing working farmers, and described direct actions farmers have taken against foreclosures and other problems.

Later, the AAM members showed a film on farm problems, putting forth the view that government policies to guarantee farm prices higher than production costs would lead to full employment. "If we get our price, we can buy your [manufactured] products," one said.

A panel discussion was also held, titled "The developing alliance between workers and farmers."

It began with remarks by George Naylor, a member of the U.S. Farm Association and a leader of NAFA from Iowa, on the farm crisis worldwide and on how he'd become a farmer.

His father left the farm in 1962, he said, after eight years of declining income and no prospect for improvement. The family moved to California, where his father got a job in an aerospace plant organized by the United Auto Workers.

In 1975, he said, after a brief rise of farm prices, his family decided George could make a go of the farm, which had been in the family since 1919.

But corn, which was \$3.50 a bushel in 1975, dropped. He sold his first crop at \$1.74. His second brought \$1.50. He was selling corn for less than it cost to produce it, like many farmers.

But the big corporate farms, he said, are doing well: those with gross incomes of more than \$500,000 earned 50 percent of net farm income in 1982.

Farmers and workers are natural allies, he said, pointing out that many farmers must work "to support their farming habit," and that many have parents or children who are industrial workers.

"We're looking for opportunities to work together," he said.

Another panelist was Joe Swanson, an SWP member and a rail worker from Nebraska. He noted the support given by farmers to workers in the Minneapolis strikes in the 1930s, and more recently to miners and independent truckers during their strikes.

In Nebraska, he said, farmers and rail workers had jointly fought the closing of rail branch lines. Because of the risks of accidents, he said, they had joined in opposition to hauling nuclear waste and to the elimination of cabooses on trains.

A NAFA member spoke at a meeting of Swanson's United Transportation Union local about the family farmers' fight against takeovers of family farms by giant corporations. NAFA members had also supported meatpacking workers on picket lines last summer, he said.

Minnesota workers, farmers

The third panelist, David Salner, related how he woke up November 1 to find 3,000 pounds of potatoes, pinto beans, and

Continued on next page

Why 3 high schoolers joined the YSA

BY HARRY RING

The numbers are still modest, but the Young Socialist Alliance is recruiting members from high schools in various cities. Some of them attended the YSA's national convention in St. Louis this past New Years.

Three were from Detroit. Naomi Craine, a junior high school student, 13, had joined the YSA last spring. John Sims, 15, a student at Renaissance High, joined a few months ago. Dawn Martin, 17, from the same school, was not yet a member at the convention, but had decided there to join when she got home.

The three gave an interview to the *Militant* to talk about what drew them to the YSA.

Martin said she had pretty much made up her mind to join before she came to the convention. "But my friends would say, 'Just about everything they tell you, be sure to question it.' And John suggested I come to the convention and find out more before I joined."

Martin was introduced to the YSA last fall, soon after the invasion of Grenada. Jacob Sayraf of the Detroit YSA had been invited to give a talk on socialism at one of her classes. What really made her think, she recalled, was when Sayraf described how the U.S. government was supporting dictatorships in Central America and, in fact, around the world. "That grabbed my attention," she said. "It made me think about how much democracy we really have here."

"You tend not to question what you're taught in school," Martin added. "So when Jacob talked about what they're doing in Grenada, and what they're doing in other countries — running people's lives, that was kind of confusing for me. I had to ask

him four or five times if that was what he really meant."

Martin said she had a friend who "believes in communism, but we never really talked about it very much."

She explained why. "Most of what you hear on television, what the government tells us, I found that depressing. I was mostly against what they were doing. But everybody else seemed for it. So I figured I was the only one. I keep a journal, and I'd write about it in my journal."

What were the things she was against?

"All the invasions. Putting our troops in other countries. Putting our military men in places like Grenada and Lebanon over something we had no business in."

"My brother's in the service," Martin added, "and that really gives you something to think about."

Dawn felt she didn't get as much as she might have from several of the convention reports because a lot of it was new to her. But she learned a great deal from the reports and discussion on Black liberation and women's liberation.

As a young Black woman, she obviously was not unaware of racism. But, she explained, she had never really read very much about Black liberation. "A lot of people seemed to use it as a crutch," she said. "They say, 'I can't get this job because I'm Black. They're holding me back.'"

"I sort of felt the same way about women's rights," she added. "But not as much."

The convention reports, she said, put these questions in a different light for her. "It made more sense to me," she said. "Now I want to read more about it."

Craine said that for her the decision to join the YSA was a more gradual process.



Militant/Harry Ring

Detroit high-school YSAers (from left): Naomi Craine, John Sims, Dawn Martin.

Farmers' convention meets in Nashville: 'no recovery for us'

Continued from back page

ers." For much of the year, Cryts had been touring the country speaking to farmers, bankers, implement dealers, and chambers of commerce.

He said he was proud to have stood on the same platform with Ava and Bernard Bates, two Black farmers fighting foreclosure in Nicodemus, Kansas.

"This year I've seen banks back off," said Cryts. "I've seen debts rescheduled. I've seen them save family farmers."

Cryts said politicians won't even talk to us until we give them money. "They have the financial resources, not us," he said. Through PAC, "we can open doors that were once closed."

In a reference to direct action, Cryts said, "30,000 farmers marching on Washington can't open doors for us. We have to change the system by working through it. We should criticize people doing nothing, not the politicians."

"We haven't given enough to PAC. We have to stop bickering among ourselves and put agriculture back on its feet. This year we have opened doors. We need to help get politicians elected."

"Nineteen hundred eighty-three was the year of listening. In 1984, with PAC, we will turn the economy around."

After the rally the floor was opened for discussion. Many farmers expressed concern with the dwindling membership. Others asked about concrete proposals for revitalizing the movement in their home states.

NAFA's perspective

One farm leader who spoke from the floor was Merle Hansen, national chairman of North American Farm Alliance (NAFA), a coalition of over 50 farm, labor, and community organizations from the United States and Canada. Hansen is also a member of Nebraska AAM.

"We're involved in a long and bitter struggle," said Hansen. "I admire what AAM has been able to accomplish."

"We are in the middle of a deep farm crisis," he continued. "The worst of the century. At 56 percent, parity is at a record low."

"The best proof of the seriousness of the agricultural crisis is the fact that 1982 was the first year on record that the total sale of farm products was exceeded by the total operating cost."

"In other words, small farmers work for nothing. How could it get worse? This is an unprecedented crisis. We are facing extinction."

Farmers at socialist convention

Continued from preceding page

squash on his porch — a donation to laid-off steelworkers in Minnesota, like himself, from NAFA members who had initiated solidarity actions in that state as part of the November Farm Revolt.

Farmers, Salner said, spoke to 400 members of the United Steelworkers of America at five union meetings on the Iron Range. The joint November protests, he said, were also the first by USWA members on the Range against their high unemployment.

Naylor pointed out that NAFA wants to work with women's groups too. He mentioned the Red Bandannas, a NAFA caucus, as an example of the growing militancy of women farmers.

One of the Missouri AAMers said they were attending the convention "to make some inroads among rank-and-file working people," and offered to speak to unions in the St. Louis area in January and February.

One of the participants in the farm struggles of the 1930s, John Enestvedt, a long-time farmer and member of the SWP, also took part in the discussion. "Watch out for the big corporations," he warned; "they'll do for us in food what they've done to us in oil."

Enestvedt also spoke at the SWP presi-

"To confront this crisis, NAFA has been building alliances with victims of corporate America... with Blacks, women, unions, community organizations, and farmers."

"The farm crisis is an international crisis. This is what we learned in Ottawa, Canada, last summer," said Hansen. NAFA helped organize an International Farm Crisis Summit in Ottawa, July 7-10, 1983. Farmers from Western Europe, Japan, Canada, the United States, and the Philippines were present.

"Hearing these farmers, you'd swear it was our crisis they were talking about," said Hansen.

Protectionist measures could lead to a trade war, Hansen said. "We have to forget about a possible trade war. It would only hurt all farmers."

Hansen was optimistic that farmers and labor can forge an alliance against "corporate America." He pointed to the successful Nov. 1, 1983, Farmer-Labor Solidarity rallies in Waterloo, Iowa, and Virginia, Minnesota.

Hansen noted the important protest against the foreclosure of Ava and Bernard Bates' farm by the labor movement, Black organizations, and farmer groups.

According to Hansen, the August 27 march on Washington for jobs, peace, and freedom was a key action and helped push the growing alliance forward. Through building the August 27 march, NAFA met Rev. Jesse Jackson, who in turn helped organize a meeting between NAFA and the National Conference of Black Mayors, which has since adopted an important resolution supporting the working farmer.

Evaluation differs

A different evaluation of the achievements of the past year was presented by David Senter, AAM, Inc. national officer in Washington, D.C. He told the convention that 1983 was "the greatest success story" so far in the movement's history. "We started as a protest movement. In our short history, we have become a major recognized farm organization. Even the president of the United States invites us to meetings now."

Senter said in his report before the convention that he didn't want to talk about the "problems" of farmers, but about "our successes in 1983."

One of these "successes," according to Senter, was the Payment-in-Kind (PIK) program launched last year by the Reagan administration. At the opening news conference, Willis said, "PIK was a good program." Not only did AAM, Inc. support

dential campaign rally held during the YSA convention. There he scored the Democratic and Republican parties whose farm policies, he said, "have always been feeding the rich at the expense of the poor."

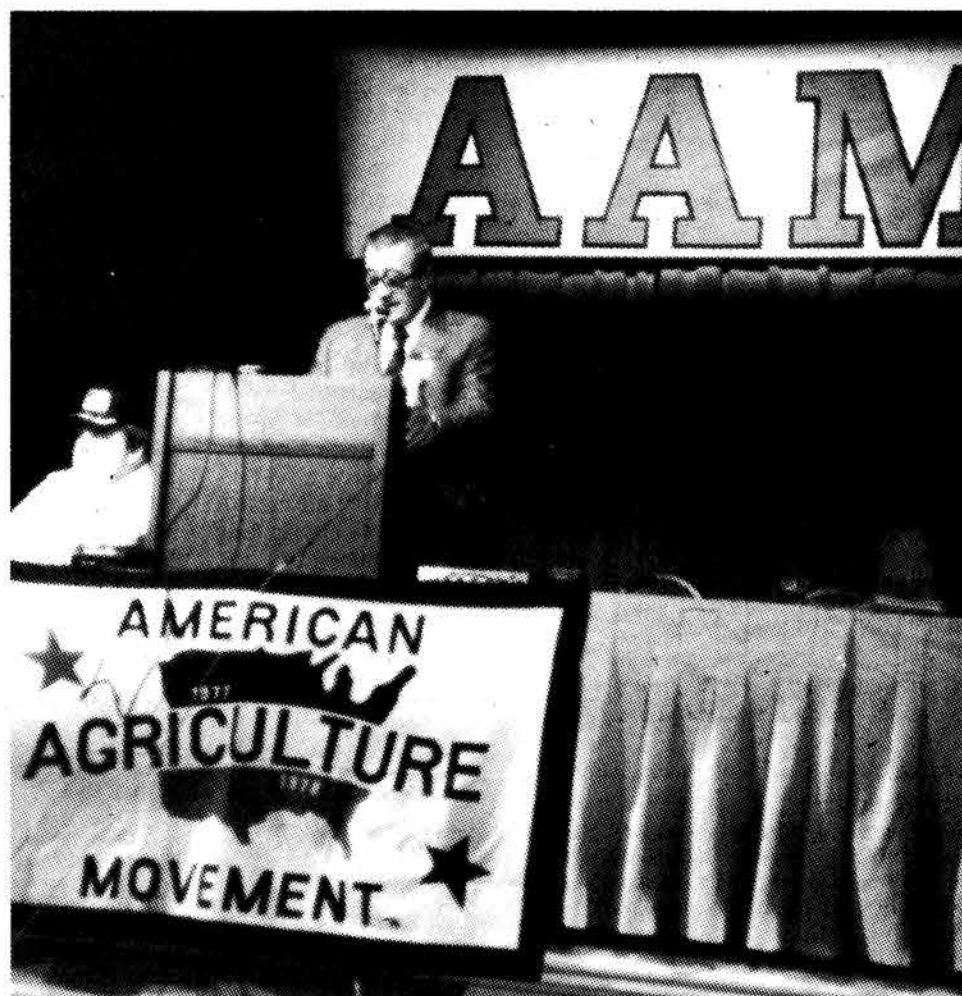
Clearly, the YSA convention had a big impact on the farmers who were there, and vice versa. Naylor described it to a participant as "fabulous."

This was the first time that the AAM members had been to a gathering of this sort and many of the views raised at the convention were new to them. In addition some of the proposals presented by them about the farm struggle raised questions among the YSA participants. This led to a lively and fruitful exchange of views at the workshops and informally.

The AAM members urged socialists to talk with other farmers as part of the discussion aimed at solving their critical problems.

The severity of the family-farm crisis has caused them to seek allies, particularly among industrial workers.

Through this search for allies, they are rethinking many things. As one of them told a convention participant, "A year ago I'd have been uncomfortable in a room with even one communist. Here I am, having a great time with hundreds of them."



Tommy Willis, chairman of American Agriculture Movement, Inc., addressing Nashville convention. To his right is Marvin Meek, AAM lobbyist and past president.

Militant/Jon Bixby

the PIK program, it had also helped "instigate" it.

In discussions with farmers, the *Militant* learned that many farmers did benefit from the PIK program. Some farmers, however, did not benefit at all, while others were unquestionably burnt by it.

Some, not all, viewed it as a giant subsidy for large corporate farmers. Roger Allison, a farmer from Columbia, Missouri, said that it was like "a bandaid or like giving a starving man a piece of pie."

Another farmer told the *Militant* that most small farmers need money or a moratorium on their debts, in place of getting surplus farm products that they may not be able to sell on the market at a decent price.

Senter also reported that AAM, Inc. had exposed "buying up of U.S. land by foreign corporations." This led to an investigation by Congress, which resulted in a required registration procedure for "foreign companies."

To focus on "foreign corporations" and not "corporate America" as the enemy, however, disorients U.S. farmers, who are losing their farms, machinery, and land through foreclosures and "voluntary" liquidations, primarily to U.S. banks, U.S. corporations, U.S. insurance companies, and the U.S. government.

Unilingual resolution rejected

A resolution put forward by the Oklahoma AAM, Inc. chapter called on all "segments of the foreign community in the U.S., to learn the English language and to speak English in the U.S. Public Schools, and as required by their employers." This attack on bilingual rights was rejected by the convention.

Willis, in a "State of the Movement" address, stressed the importance of coalition building. He indicated that through PAC and working with other farm organizations such as the National Farm Organization and commodity groups like the Cotton Exchange and the National Association of

Wheat Growers support could be given to Democratic and Republican "friends of farmers."

In the 1984 presidential elections, Willis proposed that AAM, Inc. not endorse any presidential candidate. "We have good friends in both parties," he said. "We should see what their farm policies are."

Democratic farm plank

The best received talk at the convention was given by Jim Hightower, Texas agricultural commissioner and chairman of the Democratic Agricultural Council. According to the Nov. 1, 1983, issue of *American Agricultural News*, "Hightower plans to hold a series of forums across the nation, mold the farmers' input into a Democratic farm plank, then take to the campaign trail with the plank."

"The chance of Jim Hightower becoming the next secretary of agriculture if a Democrat gets elected president is openly being discussed."

AAM, Inc. says it will "continue to provide support and assistance in any way possible through locally organized foreclosure action committees."

However, its principal orientation remains lobbying. AAM, Inc. leader Marvin Meek summed up this approach best. "We need to rent politicians, not buy them. PAC means we stay in business. It is the only road forward. It is the only way to put farmers back in Cadillacs."

"The farmers from the grassroots who aren't here, left us," he said.

On January 21, AAM, Inc. will participate in the Democratic Presidential Farm Forum in Ames, Iowa.

In the coming year, AAM, Inc. plans to go on a membership drive. To date, they have 150,000 members, most of them inactive.

The year 1984 will be an important one for AAM, Inc. because it will test in practice their view that AAM-PAC can turn around the deepening crisis facing working farmers.

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There goes the neighborhood — Richard ("I'm no crook") Nixon has made tentative purchase of a \$1.8 million, 12-room co-op on New York's Park Ave. One



Harry Ring

cooperator, however, went to court and obtained a temporary restraining order.

The American Way — In the old Horatio Alger stories, deliv-

ering papers was often the first step up the ladder to fame and fortune. Could be the ladder's been turned upside down. In one Pittsburgh neighborhood, posters announcing an available paper route for the *Post-Gazette* were addressed to "BOY • GIRL • ADULT."

Oh man! — "Women only recently have been admitted to the ranks of those getting fired. In the past, companies weren't firing us because they weren't hiring us. . . . It's fantastic! It means that they [women] are finally getting into the decision-making process. With the power to make decisions comes the chance to make mis-

takes and, therefore, get fired." — Genevieve Bazelmans, operator of an executive employment agency.

The better to lighten your purse — Major whiskey dealers want a federal OK to dilute the alcoholic content of their products and peddle it as "light" or "mild." Smaller operators, who would be hurt, note you can add your own water at less expense. Currently, beverages with a subminimal alcoholic content are simply labeled, "diluted."

Shoot the messenger — The Scripps-Howard News Service reported that enough uranium is missing from a government nuke plant

in Oak Ridge to build 85 bombs. The feds responded quickly, warning Scripps-Howard it could be prosecuted for publishing classified info.

Guess we'll have to do without — During the recent economic difficulties, Rolls Royce offered discounts of up to \$8,000 on its various models. But now demand, and prices, are moving back to normal. (The Corniche convertible is now \$156,000.) And, a dealer warns, "There is a chronic shortage of Rolls Royce cars in the U.S. now."

The comforts of home — We received our catalog from Ham-

macher Schlemmer, the New York gadget folk. Two items were particularly intriguing. One's an indoor electronic running machine. Controlled by a microprocessor, you can jog, run, or walk and monitor your speed, exercise time, and distance covered. Then collapse into the Osaka recliner, featuring a massage unit and built-in stereo. The running device, \$2,895. The chair, \$1,345.

Just chase ambulances — The New Jersey supreme court ruled lawyers there may now peddle their services on radio and TV. However, no music or cartoons are allowed, nor bad-mouthing of other members of the profession.

CALENDAR

ALABAMA

Birmingham

Nicaragua: A Dangerous Example? Film and discussion. Sat., Jan. 28, 7:30 p.m. 205 18th St. S. Donation requested. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Cuban Revolution Today. Speaker: Matilde Zimmermann, Socialist Workers Party National Committee member recently returned from visit to Cuba. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Jan. 28, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Bookstore/Libreria Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (213) 380-9640.

The Fight for Women's Rights. Speakers: representative from Feminist Women's Health Center; member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; and others. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 4, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Bookstore/Libreria Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (213) 380-9640.

Oakland

Eyewitness Report: Celebration in Havana of the 25th Anniversary of the Cuban Revolution. Speaker: Matilde Zimmermann, Socialist Workers Party National Committee member recently returned from visit to Cuba. Fri., Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m. 2864 Telegraph Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (415) 839-5316.

What's U.S. Imperialism's Real Role in Lebanon? Speakers: George Mahdi, Palestinian; Thabo Ntweng, Socialist Workers Party National Committee. Fri., Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m. 2864 Telegraph Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (415) 839-5316.

Seaside

Mel Mason Send-off Rally: Fight for Workers To Be on the Ballot. Speakers: Mel Mason, Socialist Workers candidate for president; Ernest Scott, executive director, Monterey County chapter of National Client Council; Alonzo Gonzalez, trustee of Salinas League of United Latin American Citizens; Julie Brown, chief steward, Service Employees International Union Local 535; Barbara Johnson, member of California Teachers Association; Ken Collins, member, Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 483, Young Socialist Alliance National Committee. Translation to Spanish. Sun., Jan. 29. Reception, 3:30 p.m.; rally, 4 p.m. Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School, 1713 Broadway. Ausp: Socialist Workers Presidential Campaign Committee. For more information call (408) 394-1855, (415) 824-1992, (408) 998-4007, (415) 839-5316.

INDIANA

Indianapolis

Hear Héctor Marroquín: "My Fight For Political Asylum." Other speakers: Reja-e Busailah, Palestinian poet and activist; Bill Scanlon, trustee, Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 7-706; J. Paul O'Brien, S.J., Committee for Peace in El Salvador. Sat., Feb. 11, 7:30 p.m. St. Thomas Aquinas Church, 46th and Illinois. Admission free. Ausp: Political Rights Defense Fund, Committee for Peace in El Salvador. For more information call (317) 283-6149.

LOUISIANA

New Orleans

Grenada: the Revolution's Achievements and Its Overthrow. Film: *Grenada: The Future Coming Toward Us*. Speakers: Lloyd Richards, member of executive council, United Teachers of New Orleans; Ron Chisom, community organizer just returned from Nicaragua; Derrick Morrison, correspondent for the *Militant*. Fri., Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m. Xavier University, Pharmacy Auditorium. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Committee in Solidarity With the People

of El Salvador, Socialist Workers Party. For more information call (504) 486-8048.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Women In Cuba: 25 Years of Revolutionary Gains. Speakers: Jane Roland and Ellen Levine, visited Cuba. Sun., Feb. 5, 7:30 p.m. 510 Commonwealth Ave., 4th floor (Kenmore T). Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (617) 262-4621.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

The Marxist View of Pornography: Where It Comes From, How It Can Be Abolished. Speaker: Andrea Morell, National Committee of Socialist Workers Party member, long-time activist in feminist movement. Sun., Jan. 29, 3 p.m., dinner to follow. 508 N Snelling. Donation: forum and dinner, \$5; forum only, \$3. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

Virginia

The Fight for Women's Rights and the 1984 Elections. Speaker: Andrea Morell, Socialist Workers Presidential Campaign coordinator. Sat., Jan. 28, 7 p.m. 112 Chesnut St. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (218) 749-6327.

MISSOURI

Kansas City

Organized Labor and Black Workers. Speakers: Bill Caruthers, president of Concerned Black Employees Against Discrimination and member of bargaining board of United Steelworkers at Procter and Gamble; Wells Todd, laid-off United Auto Workers member and member of Socialist Workers Party. Sun., Jan. 29, 7 p.m. 4715-A Troost. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (816) 753-0404.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Abortion Rights Under Attack: Defending a Woman's Right to Choose. Speakers: representatives from New Jersey National Organization for Women, Socialist Workers Party, others. Translation to Spanish. Fri., Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey (corner of Raymond, one block from Broad St.). Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

Defend the Striking Meatcutters. Speakers: representatives from United Food and Commercial Workers and Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Fri., Feb. 3; dinner, 6:30 p.m., forum, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey (corner of Raymond). Donation: \$2, \$3 for dinner. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Casa Nicaragua Benefit Dance Party. Music by Antonio de Colombia and his Latin group "Sabor y Ritmo." Nicaraguan food. Sat., Feb. 4, 9:30 p.m. 19 W 21 St, 2nd floor. Donation: \$8. Ausp: Casa Nicaragua. For more information call (212) 243-2678.

Film: Letter From Morazán. Film on the revolutionary struggle in El Salvador produced by Radio Venceremos and shot in provinces of Morazán and San Miguel. Sat., Feb. 11, 7 p.m. Casa de las Americas, 104 W 14 St. Donation: \$3.

¡Sandino Vive! Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Assassination of Sandino. A Central American film festival with *Alsino and the Condor*, *Letter From Morazán*, others. Sat., Feb. 25, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Casa Nicaragua, 19 W 21, 2nd floor. Ausp: Casa Nicaragua, Casa El Salvador, Casa El Salvador — Comité Farabundo Martí, Committee in Solidarity With the People of Guatemala, others. For more information call (212) 243-2678.

OHIO

Cincinnati

AIFLD, U.S. Labor and Latin America. Speakers: Betty Jean Carroll, senior vice-president, American Federation of Government Employees Local 1138; Ove Aspoy, member, International Association of Machinists Lodge 912, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., Feb. 5, 7:30 p.m. 4945 Paddock Rd. (in Bond Hill). Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (513) 242-7161.

Toledo

Workers Educational Conference. 1) Film: *With Babies and Banners* with presentation on the fighting traditions of the United Auto Workers. Speaker: Alan Epstein, UAW Local 12. Fri., Jan. 27, 7 p.m. 2) "Unions in the Fight for Black and Women's Rights." Speaker: Toby Emmerich, UAW Local 12. Sat., Jan. 28, noon. 3) "Making Our Union Stronger: How to Fight and Win." Speaker: Elizabeth Lariscy, UAW Local 12. Sat., Jan. 28, 3 p.m. 4) "Labor and the Struggle Against War." Speakers: Ignacio Meneses, UAW Local 408; slide show on Nicaragua presented by Tommy Wiese, Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 7-912; Andrew Pulley, Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate in 1980. Sat., Jan. 28, 7 p.m. 2120 Dorr St. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (419) 536-0383.

UTAH

Logan

Socialists Speak Out Against U.S. Wars. Taped speeches by Mel Mason, Socialist Work-

ers Party candidate for U.S. president, and Andrea Gonzalez, SWP candidate for vice-president. Thur., Feb. 2, 7 p.m. Utah State University. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

Salt Lake City

The U.S. War in Lebanon: The Next Vietnam? Speakers to be announced. Fri., Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m. 677 S 7th E. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Lebanon: What Next? U.S. War Drags on as Jackson Brings Flyer Home. Speakers: Chris Horner, Socialist Workers Party; others. Sat., Jan. 28, 7:30 p.m. 5517 Rainier Ave. S. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (206) 723-5330.

Who Killed Karen Silkwood? Speakers to be announced. Sat., Feb. 4, 7:30 p.m. 5517 Rainier Ave. S. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (206) 723-5330.

WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston

Film: Labor's Turning Point. Documentary on the 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters organizing drive. Sun., Feb. 5; dinner, 6:30 p.m., film, 8 p.m. 1584-A Washington St. E. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 345-3040.

N. Jersey supermarket strike

Continued from Page 3

because many of the people who shop at that store are senior citizens or people with no transportation. So they are asking shoppers to buy only essentials and to not buy meat.

As one shopper left this store, she told the pickets she didn't buy meat and that she supported the strike.

One picket at the store thought the union should put out literature in Spanish and Portuguese so that people in the neighborhood would know what is going on.

Labor solidarity is very important in this strike since the 17,000 "front-of-the-store" clerks who staff registers and stock shelves are organized by UFCW Local 1262, and because Teamsters deliver most of the supplies to the stores. Teamsters Joint Council 73 has decided to honor the picket lines.

Local 1262 invoked a provision in its contract that allows its members to honor the picket lines. The effectiveness of this solidarity strike varied from store to store. At one store, 95 percent of the clerks are out, while at another store very few are.

One reason strikers point to for this is that the company is harassing clerks. Part-time clerks' hours are being cut and clerks are being told they could be replaced permanently by scabs.

Several pickets pointed out that this harassment is illegal and they felt the union wasn't doing enough to counter it. One pronoun clerk said his hours were cut to eight a week. Another picket said he thought many of the clerks who are crossing the line are high-school and college students with little union consciousness. Local 1262's contract with these stores expires this April.

The situation with deliveries also varies from store to store. At one, pickets said no Teamsters were crossing the line, although

five nonunion trailers did cross the line with a police escort.

At another store, the *Militant* was told that some drivers just drive away when they see a picket line. But other drivers park their rigs across the street and let nonunion drivers pull them into the store. Or, company personnel cross the street to unload the truck.

The New Jersey Industrial Union Council voted to boycott the struck stores. Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 8-406 has endorsed the strike and is asking its members to help on the picket lines or bring coffee and donuts.

Reagan's War on Women's Rights



by Margaret Jayko

38 pp., \$95
Order from Pathfinder Press,
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Please include \$.75 for postage
and handling.

Artists mobilize to aid Central America

BY MIMI PICHEY

"If we can witness the destruction of another culture, without protest, we are sacrificing our own right to make culture." — From the general statement of the Artists Call Against U.S. Intervention in Central America.

In January and February artists across the United States and Canada are organizing to express opposition to the U.S. war drive in Central America and the Caribbean.

Artists Call defines itself as "the united voice of thousands of artists, poets, writers, performers, and cultural institutions in 23 cities." It was initiated in May 1983 by INALSE (Institute for the Arts and Letters of El Salvador in Exile) with Nicaraguan and North American colleagues in New York to raise consciousness, change public opinion, and raise money to support culture and self-determination in Central America, as well as to promote international solidarity among artists. While Artists Call sees itself as an organizing committee rather than an organization, it is projecting activities beyond this month-long series of events.

In New York, 1,100 artists are participating in over 30 exhibitions, in addition to more than two dozen performance, video, film, and poetry festivals. Events are taking place from Burlington, Vermont, to Atlanta, Georgia; Seattle, Washington, to Cleveland, Ohio.

Philadelphia artists have mounted a mobile show of photographs of El Salvador, which will be displayed at public places in the city. In Los Angeles the Artists Call group, which in November put together an evening, "Artists Respond to the Invasion" of Grenada, is working with a local radio station to produce a six-hour live broadcast against U.S. intervention in Central America.

Antiwar demands

Artists Call has made a major push to publicize its antiwar message through the media. The Sunday, January 22, *New York Times* ran an almost full-page ad listing events and outlining the group's demands to Congress and the administration:

- Withdraw all U.S. forces from Central America.
- End U.S. support for "contras" [counterrevolutionaries] warring against Nicaragua.
- Stop all aid to any government tolerating "death squads."
- Stop obstructing political negotiations among the peoples of Central America and respect self-determination.

The January 24 *Village Voice* featured a two-page spread with the calendar and an article by Lucy Lippard, a well-known art critic and central activist in Artists Call.

Over 25 art magazines are featuring covers and/or coverage on Artists Call and other issues related to Central America.

The entire January issue of *Art & Artists* is devoted to articles on the region, including an interview with Salvadoran representatives of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front—Revolutionary Democratic Front (FMLN-FDR), excerpts from a speech by Maurice Bishop on the role of culture and the responsibility of cultural workers in building a new society, and a review of Nicaraguan Minister of Culture Ernesto Cardenal's recent poetry reading in New York. Portions of speeches by Nicaraguan leaders Sergio Ramírez, Miguel D'Escoto, and Rosario Murillo to American artists invited to tour Nicaragua by the Sandinista Cultural Workers Association (ASTC) also appear.

In the discussion, organizing committee member Jon Hendricks says, "[I]t's imperative that artists, poets, writers, and musicians speak out very strongly against the inhuman, illegal, barbaric action of the United States government against Nicaragua. . . . We alone aren't going to stop the U.S. government, but we can be a small part in stopping it."

Benefit exhibits

Many Artists Call activities involve fundraising. Spokespeople have stated that proceeds "will support culture and workers, from the circus to the fine arts, from education to labor — which together comprise the endangered culture of Central America: the ASTC of Nicaragua, the closed-down University of El Salvador, operating ad-hoc to continue to educate some 16,000 students, and to CUS [Committee of Trade Union Unity], the unified labor committee of El Salvador."

Hundreds of artists have donated their works for sale. They include such well-known artists as Louise Bourgeois, Mark DiSuvero, Sol LeWitt, Leon Golub, and Claes Oldenburg (who designed Artists Call's poster), as well as many young artists and students. An important component has been the participation of many Latin American artists.

A large range of work is assembled at the Judson Memorial Church in New York (January 21–February 4). Pieces include posters, photographs, paintings, drawings, collages, and sculpture. Many make a clear antiwar statement, such as Betty Beaumont's "OUT," the letters "OUT" in pink neon lights, superimposed over a huge map of Central America and draped with a U.S. flag.

Others rely on wit to make their points: Christopher Chevin's "Comidas Norteamericanas" is a mixed-media wall sculpture connecting two images of exact shape and size — a steak and a map of



Drawing by Bob Englehart. ©1983 The Hartford Courant/Copley News Service. From "The Fine Line in Central America" exhibition in New York City in conjunction with Artists Call Against U.S. Intervention in Central America.

South America. Yet others evoke the horror of Latin American life under brutal U.S.-supported regimes.

In "I pledge allegiance" by Keith Christensen and Anthony Buczek, a hand suspended on strings holds a knife poised across a peasant's throat.

A particularly interesting section of the Judson show is a room of small-scale works sent through the mail by 115 artists living in Latin America. They caustically depict U.S. business interests and the military regimes and portray the contradictions of U.S. intervention by using the symbols of U.S. democracy. One recurring theme is seen in a series of faces, screaming with the agony of torture and invasion.

"The Fine Line in Central America" is the largest exhibition ever held of published political cartoons opposing U.S. policies in Central America. (Gallery 345, 345 Lafayette St., New York, January 17–February 4.)

Encompassing 150 drawings by 44 artists from 8 countries, it includes well-known American visual humorists such as Nicole Hollander, David Levine, Tony Auth, Pat Oliphant, and Mike Peters. Another participant is the foremost cartoonist of Nicaragua — Róger Sánchez, many of whose works are being shown for the first time in exhibition in the United States.

"The cartoon is a quintessentially condensed form of visual communication. Cartoonists and comic artists rise to each generation's cutting-edge issues: they use their pens and minds to question, to expose, to satirize, to mock, to attempt to

change public opinion," state curators Ron Wolin, Avis Lang, and Daniel del Solar.

A major focus of the show is satirizing Reagan's Central American policies — from the Grenada invasion to his support of "human rights" in El Salvador. In one cartoon, artist Dennis Renault shows Reagan outlining his plans for the redevelopment of Central America, with a model of the region as a giant landing strip. The devastating words and images of this exhibition make a strong antiwar statement.

"La Verdadera Avenida de las Americas" (The True Avenue of the Americas) was a street action carried out by 30 New York artists on January 21. They filled a city block with art work in a show of solidarity with the struggles of people in Latin America. The street was hung with banners and murals depicting such revolutionary heroes and martyrs as José Martí, Antonio Maceo, Augusto César Sandino, Lolita Lebrón, Ernesto Che Guevara, Maurice Bishop, the four U.S. nuns killed in El Salvador, Farabundo Martí, and Simón Bolívar.

In addition, street theater and leafleting reminded passersby that "people are fighting and dying for the right to live, to work, to make art, and to stroll down their own streets in their own towns on a Saturday afternoon."

In New York events range from a show of drawings by refugee children from Guatemala and El Salvador, to documentary films, to Sandinista TV footage.

For more information about New York events, call (212) 242-3900. For national information call (212) 966-2994.

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WISCONSIN: Milwaukee: SWP, YSA, 4707 W. Lisbon Ave. Zip: 53208. Tel: (414) 445-2076.

Women's right to equal pay

Following up on last week's attack on affirmative action and quotas for Blacks, Reagan administration officials are considering a new blow to equality. They are urging the Justice Department to challenge a federal judge's order that the State of Washington must give an estimated \$838 million in raises and back pay to women workers found to have been paid less than men for jobs of comparable worth.

The Washington Federation of State Employees, a unit of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, filed a lawsuit on behalf of some 15,000 women workers. Federal District Judge Jack Tanner based his December 1 ruling on a study made by the state itself, which established that women in predominantly female jobs were paid 20 to 30 percent less than men in jobs of equal worth.

The union proposes that the money awarded go to workers in job categories where 70 percent or more of the jobs are held by women.

The issue here is one of simple justice — the right of women to equal pay with men. The White House, however, tries to muddy up the issue.

The first White House objection is getting to be standard fare — it was the same objection Reagan officials raised last week against affirmative action for Blacks. That is, discrimination is not the reason that women have lower-paying jobs. The administration's chief spokesperson for bigotry, William Bradford Reynolds, who is assistant attorney general for civil rights, explained it this way:

"If the women with low-paying jobs had an equal opportunity to work at the jobs with higher salaries but never took advantage of that opportunity, if they never sought the higher-paying jobs, where's the discrimination?"

But women with lower-paying jobs do not have an equal opportunity to work at jobs with higher salaries — otherwise they would!

Another objection is that it's not possible to assess the value of different jobs in order to determine which should have comparable pay scales. But not only is it possible,

it's been done — in Washington state; in San Jose, California; and by other governments and employers.

The Federal government's real objection, however, is that it would cost too much to upgrade women's pay scales.

That's a back-handed admission that women are discriminated against in their paychecks to the tune of billions of dollars.

The most insidious argument against comparable pay was raised by administration spokesperson Michael Horowitz. He claims that comparable worth would help middle-class white women at the expense of Blacks. According to Horowitz, "There is nothing the Reagan administration has done that holds as much long-term threat to the Black community as comparable worth. The maintenance man will be paid less so the librarian can be paid more."

Horowitz's remarks are a demagogic ploy to get the oppressed fighting among themselves.

First of all, this discussion is not about the middle class, its about workers.

Secondly, Black women benefit the most from comparable pay victories because they are forced into the worst jobs.

And thirdly, male workers also benefit from every advance made by their female counterparts. And this is doubly true for Black male workers, who are also super-exploited.

Reynolds claims that the issue of pay equity poses the question, "Do we bump everybody up or do we lower everybody down?"

But that's a fake question. In fighting for comparable pay, the women's rights movement and the unions have always demanded that pay equity be achieved by a rise in wages and benefits of *entire job categories*, not by lowering anybody's.

But this is more than simply an economic question. It's also a burning political question. Blacks and women cannot allow themselves to be divided in the face of the enemy. The demands of both must be championed by the union movement.

U.S. bars Canadian union leader

On January 16 the U.S. government struck a blow against the democratic rights of every member of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), and all working people in the United States and Canada. The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) denied USWA District 6 Director Dave Patterson the right to enter the United States. INS officials barred Patterson from boarding a plane in Toronto that would have taken him to Pittsburgh, headquarters of the USWA.

Patterson is an elected union official who represents tens of thousands of Canadian steelworkers. As a district director he is a member of the USWA International Executive Board. His union responsibilities frequently cause him to travel to the United States. He has never been denied entry before.

The pretext for this move is Patterson's "criminal record." In 1982 Patterson was arrested after cops broke up a picket line at the Irwin Toy Co. in Toronto. Patterson was on the scene to help a largely female work force win its first USWA contract. In other words, he was arrested for doing his job — representing his membership and standing up to an anti-union attack.

The INS bar on Patterson, which went largely unreported in the U.S. media, must be challenged. If allowed to stand, this decision will only encourage further government intervention into the affairs of organized labor.

The dangers are obvious. Much of the U.S. labor

movement — particularly the industrial unions — is composed of international unions that include tens of thousands of members in Canada and Quebec.

Socialist Voice, the newspaper reflecting the views of the Canadian Revolutionary Workers League, attacked the move against Patterson and pointed to the complicity of Canadian cop agencies. The Canadian government claimed it could do nothing to help Patterson. "This pious evasion is so much baloney," answered *Socialist Voice*. "Canadian and U.S. government and police agencies work closely together in compiling each others' blacklists and deciding who should be allowed to cross the border."

Patterson believes the move is a direct attempt to influence the upcoming March 29 special election for USWA international president. Patterson is a supporter of Frank McKee, who is one of the challengers to acting USWA Pres. Lynn Williams, himself a Canadian. "Now I'm frozen out during an important time in the politics of the union," said Patterson.

Whatever factors motivated the INS to bar Patterson at this time, it is a clear reminder that the union movement should oppose the undemocratic cop actions of the INS and other government agencies. Whether they are barring Canadian union leaders for walking a picket line, or deporting Salvadoran, Haitian, or Mexican workers seeking jobs or political asylum, the INS serves only the interests of the employers.

'Village Voice' axes columnist

The editors of the *Village Voice*, a liberal New York weekly, just fired their star columnist.

Alexander Cockburn wrote a column, "Press Clips," which focused on the crooked reporting of the commercial media. Along with James Ridgeway, he also wrote a column of political commentary.

Cockburn opposed U.S. aggression abroad, principally in Central America. He recently visited Nicaragua, wrote favorably on developments there, and reported the views of Sandinista leaders.

He has also been a longtime critic of Israeli aggression against the Arab peoples. After the Israeli-organized massacre of Palestinian refugees in Beirut, Cockburn wrote harshly of the U.S. media's twisted reporting of that crime.

Now the *Voice* editors have announced that he's been "indefinitely suspended without pay."

Why? Assertedly because he accepted a \$10,000 grant from the Institute of Arab Studies, in Belmont, Massachusetts, to help him write a book on the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

David Schneiderman, editor in chief of the *Voice*, said he suspended Cockburn because of the "appearance of

conflict" and because, he said, Cockburn hadn't told him of the grant. Certainly, the grant was not a secret one. It was listed in the Institute's *Activities Report, 1980-82*.

The grant, of course, really had nothing to do with Cockburn's suspension. It was an excuse to cover up the fact that the *Voice* management didn't like what Cockburn was writing. As Cockburn himself put it, "It has been solemnly suggested to me that the issues of Israel, Palestinians, the Middle East and my views on that area are irrelevant to this case. . . . I violated, that is, some law of 'appearances' transcending the Middle East and the passions attached thereto."

"But can anyone seriously suggest that I would be parting ways with the *Voice* if I had applied for and received a grant from an anti-Communist foundation to research suppression of a free press behind the Iron Curtain and had omitted to mention this grant to the editor?"

The *Voice*'s decision to boot Cockburn came after the fact of his receiving the grant was "exposed" in the Boston *Phoenix*. A product of the 1960s, the *Phoenix* projects itself as a surviving "alternate" publication.

Meanwhile, we're sure, the *Voice* will continue to de-claim on the need for a "free press."

Farrell Dobbs on steel union history — Part II

In this week's column we are continuing excerpts from a *Militant* article titled: "Steel Union: Case History of Bureaucratism — The Fight for Union Democracy." This was one in a series written by Farrell Dobbs in the mid-1960s. The series was later printed as a pamphlet titled *Recent Trends in the Labor Movement*. Dobbs had long experience as an organizer and leader of the Teamsters union in the 1930s in Minneapolis and the Midwest, when it fought for workers interests with class-struggle methods. At the time he wrote these articles Dobbs was national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. He died last year.

The entire pamphlet referred to above has been reprinted as *Selected Articles on the Labor Movement*. It is available for \$1.50 from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Please add 75 cents for postage and handling.

A few weeks after the [1966 United Steelworkers Union] convention [I.W.] Abel addressed a meeting of the Economic Club of New York City. There he called for a "summit conference of congressional leaders, top industrialists, representatives of organized labor and other influential Americans." Such a gathering, he said "... might consider adopting a program for a Great Society through which we could actually obtain ... an equal

OUR REVOLUTIONARY HERITAGE

sharing in our prosperity. It might establish a fresh list of national priorities ... (with) the same kind of unhesitating commitment that we give to appropriations for national defense, space exploration and the building of supersonic planes."

The same night Roger M. Blough, chairman of United States Steel, spoke at New York University. He deplored what he termed "the fact that when Presidential authority is successfully defied, as it has been so consistently on the wage side ... (it) can hardly fail to have an effect upon the moral fiber of the nation and to undermine respect for government generally." The double-talking Blough, whose profiteering outfit recently decreed a whopping price increase on steel produce, seemed little moved by Abel's "statesmanship."

Once the whole picture is brought to light, the record shows that [Abel] has not at all been capable of getting things done in a meaningful way. Like his predecessors in office, he has no stomach for a standup fight with the corporations. He has kept the union in the rut where Murray and McDonald put it.

Abel's tactics show that democracy has to mean more than the right to talk; it must also mean the right of workers to act in defense of their class interests. Achievement of full union democracy requires a fight to overturn bureaucratic rule and establish rank-and-file control. The program for that fight should include points of the following nature:

No restriction on the right to strike. Abolish all no-strike pledges and all no-strike clauses in union contracts. Restore the full power of the local unions to take strike action through a democratic decision of the membership.

Full voice for the membership in determining contract demands. Rank-and-file control over negotiations with employers. No collective bargaining agreements to be signed until ratified by the workers involved.

Membership control over the handling of grievances, and freedom of action to enforce union conditions on the job.

No discrimination because of age, sex, race, national origin or political beliefs. Abolish all contract provisions and all clauses in union constitutions and by-laws that are discriminatory in any of these respects.

No impairment of the autonomous rights of local unions. Regular membership meetings of local unions at reasonably frequent intervals. Rank-and-file review and final decision in all proceedings involving disciplinary action against a union member.

Annual union conventions with all delegates to be democratically elected by the membership and all convention committees democratically elected by the delegates.

Yearly elections on a democratic basis of union functionaries in all categories from grievancemen to top officials. All functionaries to be subject to recall if they default on their duties at any time during their term of office.

No union functionary to receive a salary higher than the top wage scale in the given industry. Expense accounts to be limited to reasonable needs for legitimate union activities. Full financial reports to the membership at regular intervals.

Freedom of expression for all views in opposition to the politics of incumbent union officials, including access to the union press.

LETTERS

Miners feel steel cuts

Your editorial, "Nationalize U.S. Steel; fight to stop concessions" (*Militant*, Jan. 20, 1984) was right on target. But you left out a vital component of the U.S. Steel work force affected by the plant shutdowns: the miners of coal and iron ore.

Until September 1982, I worked for a U.S. Steel-owned coal mine in southern West Virginia. Like thousands of other metallurgical coal miners in West Virginia and Alabama, I have been thrown out of work for more than a year. At our January United Mine Workers local meeting, the leadership of my local explained that in a company-union meeting recently U.S. Steel officials explained that they have *no intention* of returning our mine (along with others in the state they have partially or fully shut down) to full capacity in the near future.

As you stated, no one can measure the toll in human suffering U.S. Steel's profit drive has exacted. West Virginia still has the highest unemployment in the United States. Some of the men from my local have 20 or more years with the company and are too young to retire. No one else will hire these gray-haired men with black lung.

Life is not much better for the few still on the job. Plagued by short workweeks, increased productivity demands, cuts in safety, and the constant threat that the mine will be completely shut down, the daily job becomes a "war of nerves."

Furthermore, in our local of 1,200 workers, there were only five women miners. Today, there are no women working in the complex. Some of us joked at the local meeting about how this was one way the company could rid them-

selves of us — but it is no laughing matter.

To your editorial, I would add "No one knows how to run a coal mine better than miners themselves. And what is true for the steel mills and coal mines applies with equal validity to all of industry."

Louise Armstrong
Charleston, W. Va.

Likes Stryffeler example

I recently came across an article in your publication explaining the extraordinary ordeal of ex-marine sergeant Jim Stryffeler. As a college senior and a cadet in ROTC and the U.S. Army Reserves, I was greatly inspired by his valor and dedication to the socialist cause. I, like Mr. Stryffeler, proclaim to be a socialist, and when pushed to extreme circumstances, a Marxist revolutionary.

However, as I near graduation, and my subsequent commission as an officer in the U.S. Army, I feel compelled to state that I deeply regret my military adventure. In other words, I yearn to receive an honorable discharge from the army as did Mr. Stryffeler.

As a progressive, I sincerely deplore U.S. military intervention, capitalism, and the right-wing rhetoric of the "Raygun" administration.

Thank you for your time and understanding. Keep up the struggle for humanity.

Produce and resist
A reader
Athens, Ohio

Capital punishment

Your article in the Dec. 30, 1983, issue of the *Militant*, "Chair, noose or needle," was a

very outstanding piece of material. I hope to see more material based on abolishing capital punishment.

My co-defendant is one of the 25 Latinos over on San Quentin prison's death row. I myself am serving a life sentence in Folsom prison. I'm 23 years old and Chicano and looking for people out there to correspond with.

A prisoner
California

New Jersey CLUW

At our January program meeting of the Northern New Jersey chapter of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), members were given the opportunity to hear presentations on two important issues of concern to working women.

Berna Romero of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) approached our chapter to ask for support for their boycott against Campbell's Corp. Romero spoke on the low wages, poor housing, terrible working conditions, and discrimination which farm workers face. She focused her discussion on the significant role that Campbell's plays as a major purchaser of farm products. FLOC initiated their nation-wide boycott in 1979 after past efforts to negotiate with the canneries and growers failed because the canneries refused to sit down with the farm workers. FLOC is appealing to women, labor, and religious organizations for their support.

The second speaker, Mary Roche-Eidsvik, an oil refinery worker and member of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, gave a slide show and talk on her recent trip to Nicaragua. Eidsvik met with a number of groups on her visit in-



cluding AMNLAE, the Nicaraguan women's organization; the Sandinista neighborhood defense committees; farm workers; and youth. Through her talk we all learned more about the great advances that the people of Nicaragua are making in the areas of health care, education, women's rights, and other areas.

Further, Eidsvik passed on the message which so many of the people she met with had asked her to tell to the people of the United States; that they want peace but will fight to the death to defend their revolution.

M.Z.
Jersey City, NJ

'Foreign policy'

We live in Corpus Christi, Texas, home of the Naval Air Station Training Center and Army Helicopter Depot. "Huey" helicopters are assembled here.

From our apartment we can see all aircraft landing and taking off from the airfield. A few minutes ago I watched a heavy transport

plane land, which prompted this letter.

You see, most *all* air traffic on this field has been small. The planes are trainers. The largest are usually two-engine planes. This transport plane was something different. It is larger than a commercial 747. Such transports are used to carry Hueys — sometimes called Reagan's Army Mules — to spots where the army needs them.

Previously such large transport planes landed here once every month or two. Now they land often, maybe once a week. We see their comings and goings as a barometer of Reagan's foreign policy. I know why it's called "foreign policy." It is *foreign* to most U.S. citizens!

Jack Bresée
Corpus Christi, Texas

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

Black magazine tries to smear Grenada revolution

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Booker says the purpose of the U.S. invasion was "to return law and order to the island."

Whose law, and what order?

The U.S. rulers want to reenact the laws that protected the employers. They want to reestablish an order in which the profit needs of foreign capitalists and their local flunkies come before the human needs of Grenada's working people. With the invasion and occupation of Grenada, the U.S. imperialists hope to crush underfoot the unions and other organizations that might offer resistance to this "law-and-order" campaign.

Grenada: an armed camp?

One of the supposed justifications for the U.S. invasion is that Grenada was being turned into a launching pad for communist "subversion" of the region.

"It was discovery of the huge stockpile of sophisticated military equipment," writes Booker, "that broke open the barrel, and for the first time, revealed a communist scheme to establish a major base in the tranquil Caribbean islands."

The "sophisticated" military equipment was actually antiquated small arms to be used by the Grenadian people to protect themselves from imperialist attack. The U.S. government had been threatening the Grenada revolution since 1979, including with military maneuvers and practice invasions.

And the U.S. government did invade. Revolutionary-minded Grenadians fought the U.S. troops. Outnumbered and outgunned, many now feel the same as John Peter, a Grenadian, who told the *New York Times* recently, "I wish we had MIG's and missiles, then the Americans wouldn't have come in the first place."

PRG's overthrow

In addition to hailing the U.S. invasion, Booker claims that Bishop's bloody overthrow by a clique led by Deputy Prime

Minister Bernard Coard was the inevitable result of "the brutal way of life that Bishop used to gain and keep the upperhand. No political or press freedom. Just rule by tyranny."

Under the PRG, claims Booker, "Bishop didn't allow reporters anywhere near his island stronghold."

This reporter was in Grenada in 1982 and noted the presence of journalists from around the world. We were allowed to travel freely about the island and ask whatever questions we wished of whomever we pleased, which is far better treatment than was given the news media by the Pentagon following the U.S. invasion.

A testament to the freedom of press that actually existed in Grenada under the PRG is the many articles, books, films, and other works produced about the revolution.

So, why does Booker write such a bald-faced lie?

The aim is to smear Bishop with the treachery of Bernard Coard and his followers. Coard is falsely portrayed as a "longtime Marxist" who, with "hundreds of indoctrinated youth," brought down the PRG in a "Black Holocaust."

Booker's message to working people is to stay away from Marxism — it can only lead to violence and bloodshed. In this vein, Booker quotes a Caribbean journalist's conclusion that "The kindest thing one can say of Maurice Bishop is that he suffered the historic fate of every misguided demagogue who chooses to ride a tiger and then decides — too late — to dismount."

What are the facts?

On Oct. 12, 1983, Prime Minister Bishop, the founding leader of the New Jewel Movement (NJM), was placed under house arrest at the order of a clique of military, government, and party officials led by Coard.

On October 19, Bishop and five other central leaders of the PRG and the NJM were murdered — again at the order of Coard's clique.

Grenada's revolutionary government had been overthrown by renegades within the NJM. Their bloody betrayal of the revolution, which paved the way for the October 25 U.S. invasion of the country, had nothing to do with Marxism.

Bishop's legacy

Bishop and the central leadership of the NJM charted a course for national liberation and self-determination. Bishop, a revolutionary Marxist, pointed out that such a struggle could only be won along the road of building and advancing socialism in Grenada and on a world scale.

Most important, Bishop, and the revolutionaries around him, embarked upon this course. The accomplishments of the Grenada revolution are deeply etched in the minds of the Grenadian masses. As the U.S. ruling class moves against these

gains, there will be a layer of youth, workers, women, and farmers who will resist.

They are ready to fight, but they need a program and a strategy to win. Bishop had such a program. That's why there's a campaign to bury the memory of Bishop beneath a barrage of lies and slander. This campaign is also aimed at U.S. working people, which is why *Jet* carried Booker's diatribe against the revolution.

The truth about the Grenada revolution — its achievements and its overthrow — must be told. Lying tracts like Booker's article should be answered. An important way to do this is to sell and distribute the new book *Maurice Bishop Speaks* published by Pathfinder Press.

In this way supporters of the Grenada revolution can contribute to keeping the legacy of Bishop alive, and making his dream of a free Grenada in a socialist world a reality.

Lessons of struggles in Canada

Continued from Page 13

feated, dealing a blow to workers across Canada. A key factor in this defeat, Penner said, was the divisions between the three labor federations and the failure to involve the industrial unions. This was largely because the labor officialdom supports the PQ. The Québécois workers have no mass party of their own to challenge the PQ. The Common Front struggle raised a big discussion in Quebec on the need for an alternative party.

Both the B.C. and Common Front struggles, Penner said, reaffirm the need for a joint struggle by Quebec and English Canadian workers for a workers and farmers government in Ottawa, which would grant the demand of the Québécois for immediate and unconditional independence.

An organizational report by Margaret Manwaring focused on the opportunities to increase the number of party members who

are in industrial unions.

Manwaring also discussed the success of the RWL's youth committees in bringing young workers and students around the RWL. One evening during the convention was set aside for a meeting of youth committee members.

Roger Annis reported on a major fund-raising effort to finance an upgrading of the RWL's Montreal headquarters, which also serves as the organization's national office.

Several members of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party attended the convention. The importance of increased collaboration between SWP and RWL members who are in the same unions was discussed at the convention. The leadership of both organizations are also jointly editing a new magazine of Marxist politics and theory called *New International* and are collaborating on a project to publish the documents of the early years of the Third (Communist) International.

Steel union presidential candidate visits Arizona copper strikers

BY JOSEFINA OTERO

CLIFTON-MORENCI, Ariz. — On January 19 Ron Weisen took his campaign for president of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) to striking copper miners. Copper workers have been locked in a bitter confrontation with the Phelps Dodge Corp. since July 1, 1983.

Weisen, president of USWA Local 1397 at U.S. Steel's Homestead, Pennsylvania, works, came here to express his solidarity with the strikers, and to explain what he would do to help win the strike if elected international union president. Weisen is fighting to get on the ballot for the special March 29 election. His opponents are two top international officers, Secretary Lynn Williams, and Treasurer Frank McKee.

While the copper strikers belong to 13 different unions, the large majority are USWA members. McKee is the international officer with direct responsibility for the strike.

While in Clifton, Weisen walked the picket lines with 150 strikers and their supporters. He also spoke at a meeting sponsored by the Morenci Miners Women's Auxiliary. In an open letter distributed to the strikers, Weisen offered his views on what it will take to win the strike.

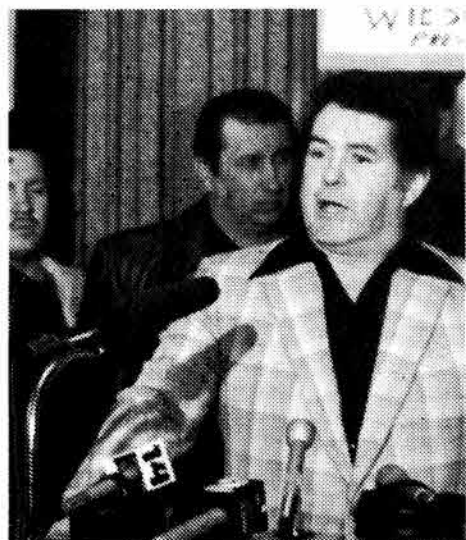
"The heroic strike in which you are engaged," said Weisen's letter, "proves not only the willingness of the corporations to use violence, intimidation, and starvation to gain profits, but it shows the complete failure of the proconcessions policy pursued in the past, and still today by the international leadership of the United Steelworkers."

"It is a shame and a betrayal," the letter continued, "that while our international leadership talks a lot about 'solidarity,' they have done very little to mobilize the ranks of the USWA to directly support the Phelps Dodge strike."

He spelled out what he would do differently if elected. "Every single resource of our union," he pledged, "financial, political, publicity, and the transport of thousands of USWA members to stop the strikebreakers and support you at the gates, would have taken place a long time ago. As international president I would place a moratorium on any further concessions and instead gear the union up for the kind of fight Phelps Dodge and the other companies have asked for!"

In his speech Weisen came back to this idea. The strikers applauded Weisen's proposal to establish an international union headquarters in Clifton for the duration of the strike. All of these steps are among those that many strikers have long felt are necessary to win this battle.

Weisen stressed that across the country,



Militant/Jon Hillson
Ron Weisen told copper strikers USWA must put end to concession bargaining strategy and begin to fight bosses' attacks.



Copper miners, on strike more than six months, urgently need labor solidarity. USWA candidate Ron Weisen walked picket line and pledged if elected to use power of international union to help win.

the USWA had to change course and begin a militant fightback against the brutal attacks of the owners of the corporations. "We need fighters in this union," he said. "We need to do what we did in the 1930s. We have to get out in the streets, take our gloves off, and start fighting."

He denounced the concession contract that top USWA officials helped the companies to impose on workers in the basic steel industry in March 1983. This, he said, opened the door to more takeback demands. He blasted the union leadership for doing nothing in response to U.S. Steel Corp.'s latest moves to shut down plants and permanently lay off over 15,000 steelworkers.

Weisen was joined on the platform and welcomed to Clifton by several respected community and strike leaders. These included Dr. Jorge O'Leary; Ed Márquez, former president of USWA Local 616 and

currently a Clifton town council member; Fina Roman, president of the Morenci Miners Women's Auxiliary; and Billy Jacks, a USWA Local 616 strike leader. Also speaking with Weisen was Tony Prince, his campaign manager and a member of USWA Local 65 at U.S. Steel's South Works in South Chicago.

During the discussion period one person explained to Weisen how the government shares responsibility with the company for trying to break the strike. In August hundreds of National Guardsmen were mobilized by Democratic Gov. Bruce Babbitt to open the mines and bring in scabs. From the beginning of the strike, state troopers and other cops have harassed and victimized union members. A cop assault on the picket lines occurred shortly before Weisen's visit.

In light of this the questioner asked, "How would you take on a governor and a

company? It's the government that's hurting us too."

"We give 20 percent to the candidates," Weisen replied, "and the corporations give 80 percent. Who do you think they'll work for?" he asked. Weisen suggested that workers should keep a careful record of the Democrats and Republicans. If elected USWA president, Weisen offered, "I would show them that our jobs are more important than their greed."

Weisen expressed his preference for a U.S. presidential ticket of Sen. Edward Kennedy and Jesse Jackson. He criticized the United Mine Workers union for endorsing Walter Mondale, in view of the fact that Mondale was vice-president when the government used the Taft-Hartley act to try to break the 1978 coal strike. Nevertheless, Weisen emphasized that Mondale "is the only game in town."

Returning to the USWA election, Weisen said he has been making progress in winning the 111 nominations necessary to appear on the March 29 ballot. Despite limited resources and obstacles thrown up by the USWA top officialdom, he reported he had been nominated by 75 locals.

In other copper-strike-related developments, the Clifton town council voted January 17 to reject a state police proposal to impose a curfew on the city. This was aimed, in part, at limiting picketing, especially at night. The county board of supervisors had earlier imposed a curfew for areas outside the Clifton town limits.

Some 100 strikers and supporters showed up at the town council meeting to oppose the cops' demand. A former USWA local president who is on the council and the mayor, who is also a striker, spoke against the curfew.

On January 23 negotiations between the company and the unions resumed after a two-month lapse. Picket lines of late have been noticeably larger and strikers, whose spirits seem up, have been more vocal.

Farmers convention meets in Nashville: 'recovery hasn't reached the farm'

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Farmers from 30 states met at the Opryland Hotel January 4-8 for the 5th annual national convention of the American Agriculture Movement (AAM), Inc.

The convention met at a time when the crisis for working farmers continues to deepen. At the opening news conference, outgoing national chairman Tommy Willis, who was reelected for another term, pointed out, "We continue to read where the economy is getting better. We also know, firsthand, if there is any recovery, it hasn't reached the farm."

"Foreclosures continue to increase, and farmers are forced to seek jobs elsewhere just to feed their families and to subsidize the consumer. We refuse to sit idle and permit this continued erosion of the family farm."

Much of the discussion at the gathering reflected the squeeze on farmers and what can be done to alleviate it.

The central perspective put forward by the leadership was lobbying through the AAM Political Action Committee. All reports revolved around this orientation. With the 1984 elections coming up, Willis proposed that AAM, Inc. intensify its lobbying efforts in Washington, D.C., to achieve 100 percent parity on all farm com-

modities. (Parity is a way of measuring the relationship between costs and prices for farmers. Farmers want the government to support prices at a sufficient level to meet production costs and have enough to live on.)

Reflected split

The convention also reflected a split that has occurred in AAM since its last convention a year ago. At that gathering a debate took place between farm activists who emphasized direct action of mobilized farmers and their allies and those who stressed lobbying and other forms of electoral work as the most effective means for advancing farmers' interests.

Leaders of the direct action approach, such as Alvin Jenkins, a founding leader of AAM from Colorado, argued that the "whole system of PACs is corrupt." He urged the 1983 convention to rededicate AAM to its original slogan: "Do whatever you can, and we will do whatever it takes to win."

Jenkins felt that to focus primarily on PAC had weakened grassroots organizing and resulted in loss of membership. At that convention he announced the opening of an AAM office in Campo, Colorado, as a center for grassroots activities.

There were many farmers at the 1983

convention who favored some combination of these approaches. As a result, a compromise unity resolution, which included elements of both approaches, was adopted unanimously at the convention.

But in real life, no compromise was reached. In 1983, AAM split into two organizations: AAM, Inc., representing the lobbying approach, and AAM Grassroots, representing direct action.

This year's convention was attended by 600 members, a significant drop from the 1,350 farmers who attended last year. In one sense, this year's convention was the first national gathering of AAM, Inc. However, those in attendance included farmers who favor both direct action and the activities of the Political Action Committee.

Wayne Cryts spoke

Most prominent among these was Wayne Cryts, who was featured at the opening rally. Cryts became well known nationally when his soybeans were repossessed from a bankrupt elevator in Missouri.

In June 1983, Cryts won a not guilty verdict, a very important victory for U.S. farmers.

He told the convention that in 1983 "people started listening to American farm-

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