

Labor Day message: fight war, austerity

The following is a Labor Day message released by Mel Mason, the 1984 Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate, on the eve of his campaign tour in Toledo, Ohio.

Working people fought hard to win Labor Day as a national holiday. It's a day of working-class solidarity:

With our brothers and sisters fighting the employers' intensifying war in Central America and the Caribbean.

With those battling the bosses' attacks on our wages, working conditions, standard of living, and democratic rights.

With those workers like the members of United Auto Workers Local 14 at the AP Parts plant in Toledo who are locked in a battle against their bosses' union-busting drive.

With the trade union militants like the New York City hospital workers in District 1199 who successfully beat back an attempt to break their union.

With striking British coal miners whose militant struggle against their government and the National Coal Board is a shining example for all workers.

And with the striking copper miners in Arizona on picket lines now for more than a year.

Toledo auto workers set an example for the entire labor movement last May 21 when they organized a mass demonstration to support the AP Parts strike. The cops brutally attacked that action, and, later, a grand jury indicted 37 workers on frameup charges stemming from that militant protest. The first of those brothers to go to trial was just convicted. They all need the solidarity of the entire labor movement.

That's why I'm beginning my final campaign swing through the United States here in Toledo. In the true spirit of Labor Day I salute the embattled AP Parts strikers, their supporters, and other working-class fighters — Blacks and Latinos demanding affirmative action and full equality; women defending the right to safe, legal abortion and control of their bodies; undocumented workers fighting for the right to have a job; and family farmers fighting for a living income and against foreclosure on their farms.

But I pledge to do more than salute these fighters. I will use my campaign to champion these struggles and win solidarity for them.

U.S. working people are under sharp attack, which is intertwined with the employers' escalating war in Central America and the Caribbean. The U.S. rulers are hellbent on maintaining their domination of that region, squeezing more profits out of the sweat and blood of workers and farmers there.

In 1979 Grenadian and Nicaraguan workers and farmers took a qualitative step forward in the fight against this imperialist domination by seizing political power through popular revolutions. They set out on the course charted 20 years earlier by the Cuban revolution.

The U.S. employers and their kept government in Washington aimed at overthrowing these revolutions from the very beginning. This remains the policy of both the Democrats and Republicans — big-business parties controlled by the ruling rich. Washington's war in Central America and the Caribbean is a bipartisan war.

A grievous blow was struck against all working people when Grenada's revolutionary government was toppled last October.

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Mass Philippine protests hit U.S.-backed regime

BY DEB SHNOOKAL

MANILA, Philippines — Despite Pres. Ferdinand Marcos' declaration that August 21 was to be a normal working day, Manila came to a virtual standstill as a crowd estimated from 500,000 to 2 million flocked to the Luneta Park to commemorate the assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino a year ago. Most schools and many offices were closed, and anti-Marcos protesters were showered with confetti as they marched through the city streets.

Yellow ribbons fluttered from the jeepneys (Jeeps converted into busses), private cars, and lampposts, and street vendors wore yellow headbands. Yellow balloons and yellow T-shirts with Aquino's portrait filled the streets. Yellow has become the color of the anti-Marcos movement since Aquino's death.

The protest had an almost festive air. Realizing it was powerless to prevent the rally, the Supreme Court granted permission for the rally to be held, but insisted that the "no permit — no rally" law would be maintained. By denying rally permits, the Marcos administration gives the police the green light to brutally attack demonstrators. An anti-Marcos rally in Manila August 12 was broken up by police with tear gas, truncheons, and fire hoses.

The Manila papers on August 21 gave detailed descriptions of police preparations — tear gas, plastic shields, and fiberglass "itch" bullets — in an effort to deter people from attending the rally. Checkpoints were set up around the city supposedly to prevent "subversives" from joining the march.



Hundreds of thousands of Filipinos demonstrated August 21 to commemorate the assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino. U.S.-backed Marcos regime tried to whitewash murder through government-sponsored inquiry.

About 10,000 Metro Manila police were placed on red alert for the day.

However, at the rally itself, the cops were noticeably absent. Only a single helicopter circled above the massive crowd.

The rally was organized by the August 21 Commemorative Committee and was addressed by a broad range of speakers, including many opposition senators;

Aquino's widow, Corazon; and brother, Agapito ("Butz") Aquino. Among the crowd were some quite well-dressed people. The speeches were interspersed with the singing of nationalist songs and cultural presentations by various national minority groups.

Earlier in the day the archbishop of Manila, Cardinal Jaime Sin, had presented a

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New dock strike closes British ports

BY RICH PALSER

SHEFFIELD, England — Acting in solidarity with striking coal miners, dock workers here have begun a second national dock strike.

The walkout was called by a national meeting of Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) shop stewards on Friday, August 24. It was provoked by the British Steel Corporation's (BSC) docking and unloading of 95,000 tons of imported coal from the Polish ship *Ostia*, at the port of Hunterston in Scotland.

Instead of 75 tugboatmen, who are members of the TGWU, docking the ship, BSC called in a private scab firm. BSC-employed crane drivers then unloaded the vessel without any of the TGWU dockers present. In doing so BSC broke previous agreements under the National Dock Labor Scheme that prevent other workers from doing the jobs of registered dockers.

The coal from the *Ostia* is decisive for keeping BSC's Ravenscraig Steel Works operating at its present 80 percent production levels. The rail unions had stopped coal movement from the Hunterston terminal to Ravenscraig, so BSC used lorry [truck] convoys to break the blockade. The TGWU then imposed a quota of 12,000 tons a week by refusing to unload any more coal at the Hunterston docks.

BSC is now trying to break through this quota. Another ship carrying 90,000 tons of iron ore is scheduled to be unloaded. The port employers have been trying to end the Dock Labor Scheme for some time, but the miners strike has led BSC to force their hand.

BSC's decision to go ahead with berthing the *Ostia* was undoubtedly taken after consultation with the National Coal Board (NCB) and the Cabinet committee set up by Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to defeat the strike. It was taken

in the hope that some docks would continue working despite the national strike call. During the national dock strike called over the same issue in July, ports such as Dover, which are not registered, went back to work after private lorry owners physically threatened the dock workers.

Government minister Tom King has led a propaganda campaign, claiming that this strike is not over the defense of the dockers union and job gains, but simply to give "added muscle to Mr. [Arthur] Scargill [president of the National Union of Mineworkers] and the militants of the miners union."

U.S. soldier kills Grenadian

BY MOHAMMED OLIVER

A U.S. soldier gunned down a 13-year-old Grenadian youth on August 21, a spokesman for the Maurice Bishop and October 19, 1983 Martyrs Foundation told the *Militant* in a phone interview. The teenager, Ernest John, was a student at the Anglican School in Grenville.

The identity of the soldier who killed John hasn't been released, but eyewitnesses report that his name tag read "Peter." There are some 300 U.S. troops — mostly military police — who occupy Grenada. Since the end of the U.S. invasion last October, John is the first Grenadian known to be cut down by a U.S. soldier.

The eyewitnesses said that several youths were near the Grenville Police Station, which is a headquarters for U.S. occupation forces, on the afternoon of August 21. They heard two shots ring out and John came out of the back entrance of the station, ran some 30 feet, and dropped dead. The U.S. soldier then walked out of the

station and holstered his .45 caliber pistol. At stake in the dock dispute is more than just the right of the 24 dockers at Hunterston to guaranteed work. The employers and government, in their attempt to crush the miners' battle to stop pit closures, aim to inflict a decisive defeat on the unions and prove that resistance is impossible. Union rights on the docks will be under attack immediately if the government succeeds in defeating the miners.

In other developments in the five-month-long miners strike, the NCB's carefully orchestrated campaign to mount a back to work movement among striking

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Neither the U.S. authorities nor Grenada's government have taken any action against the soldier, who is white. It is reported that the U.S. embassy in Grenada said John was "accidentally" shot by the soldier, who was cleaning his gun. U.S. officials gave no explanation of how he "accidentally" shot twice.

Meanwhile, repression against Grenadian revolutionaries continues. Grenadian cops searched the home of Kendrick Radix on August 23. Radix, a minister in the revolutionary government headed by slain Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, is the chairman of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement. The cops told Radix they were looking for arms and ammunition.

The search, however, came one day after Radix filed a suit in Grenada's High Court demanding that his wife, Shaiba Radix, be recognized as a Grenadian citizen. Shaiba Radix, born in Guyana, was deported from Grenada on June 22 and is still barred from the country.

BY LEE MARTINDALE

"Every member of the party is not yet involved in a regular weekly plant-gate team," reported Norton Sandler, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party. He spoke at a workshop, held during the recent SWP national convention, that discussed the party's plant gate sales of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Sandler estimated that 50-60 percent of the party membership sells every week at a plant gate. In addition to increasing the number of workers the party can reach each week, involving every member helps broaden the knowledge and experience of the entire party about the issues facing unionists

and their opinions about what to do.

One participant in the meeting who worked as a professional musician for many years described how essential plant-gate sales had been for him in being able to learn and think about questions facing the industrial unions. He was able to discuss these questions with other party members.

Organizing teams to carry out weekly sales, and sharing ideas and experiences among teams, are important for maintaining and developing the plant-gate work. A socialist from Houston described how one plant-gate team at an oil refinery had found a lot of interest

in the *Militant's* coverage on Grenada. The team discussed this and decided to bring copies of a pamphlet containing a speech by Grenadian leader Maurice Bishop to sell at the plant gate. This proved successful, so other plant gate teams tried it and they also ran across workers who wanted to find out more about the Grenada revolution.

Team effort, and being able to discuss experiences on plant-gate sales with other socialists, is also important in responding to harassment at the plant gates from the company or from individual workers with reactionary ideas. The socialists have had experiences in many cities in defending the right

of workers to hear and read ideas the companies don't agree with.

Another challenge for the socialists is making the plant-gate sales a regular weekly part of their political lives when many are working lots of overtime or rotating shifts. A team approach, and being ready to shift and reorganize the teams when work schedules change, are both important in establishing the sales.

Sandler made the point that since the goal of plant-gate sales is establishing an ongoing dialogue with workers in important sections of the industrial work force, the numbers of papers sold on each sale aren't necessarily the best indication of the success of a team

sale. The numbers sold vary from week to week, increasing when struggles break out or events in world politics stir up discussion in the plant and make some workers seek out a socialist point of view. All over the country, for example, socialists sold more papers than usual at plant gates right after the invasion of Grenada.

"A party of socialist workers aims to learn about and champion the struggles of all working people. Plant-gate sales are a permanent part of this effort," Sandler said. Over time, he added, the political dialogue established with workers at these plant gates will help win to the party those who are thinking along socialist lines.

Right to protest denied at Reagan appearance

BY MORRIS STARKSKY

CINCINNATI — When President Reagan spoke at a noon rally in Cincinnati on August 20 there were no protest signs in the crowd. The site of the rally, a public plaza called Fountain Square in the heart of downtown Cincinnati, was closed off by police except for two entrances equipped with metal detectors. As spectators entered the Square, Secret Service agents and uniformed police took away their protest signs.

Many of the signs were carried by young people protesting nuclear weapons and U.S. military involvement in Central America. Some expressed views on unemployment, the environment, and gay rights. Police also confiscated some pro-Reagan signs, but volunteers quickly replaced them with official signs and American flags.

The incident was seen on live television. A news conference called by local activists to discuss the sign ban received extensive media coverage.

There will be a lawsuit, according to attorney Stanley Hirtle. In a telephone interview with the *Militant*, Hirtle explained that

there are plaintiffs and attorneys for a lawsuit. All that remains is for the details to be worked out and the complaint drawn up. ACLU counsel Allen Brown has interviewed several persons whose signs were taken and who want to file a lawsuit against the government for violating their democratic rights.

Protest activities for the Reagan appearance were organized by the Cincinnati Center for Peace Education and Local 1199 Hospital and Health Care Employees Union. Steve Miles, director of the Center for Peace Education, told the *Militant* that there were arrangements made by telephone with the Secret Service and the White House concerning the rally. It was agreed that there would be no counter-demonstration and no disruption, but only individuals carrying protest signs. The Secret Service and the White House liaison assured Miles that the first amendment con-

stitutional rights of protesters would be respected.

One particular concern of the Secret Service was that there be no signs affixed to wooden sticks. None of the confiscated signs had wooden sticks. However, Reagan volunteers were handing out American flags attached to wooden sticks.

Miles says that a meeting with Secret Service agents was scheduled before the rally, but they never showed up. Instead, the Secret Service, Cincinnati police, and Capitol police on loan from Washington confiscated all the signs on orders from the White House staff.

Among those prevented from entering Fountain Square with their signs were Benjamin Kepler Rucker, 14, and his brother Andrew Ryan Rucker, 12. They were carrying signs that said, "Bombs Are Not Funny" and "Ray-Gun Diplomacy Stinks." Their father, Dr. Ronn Rucker, told the

Militant that his sons will almost certainly be plaintiffs in a class-action lawsuit against the government. He added that it will very likely be an ACLU lawsuit.

Mark Rahn, a spokesperson for the Young Socialist Alliance, issued a statement expressing YSA support for "those whose democratic rights were violated." The statement continued, "We say that many more young workers and students should take a stand against nuclear weapons and the war in Central America."

Kathleen Denny, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in Cincinnati, told the *Militant* that the incident on Fountain Square "is part of an escalating attack on democratic rights in this country." She pointed out the hypocrisy of the U.S. government's phony concern for fair elections in Nicaragua, while suppressing free speech in Cincinnati to stage an election media event."

Missouri farmers demand halt to foreclosures

BY MICHELLE FIELDS

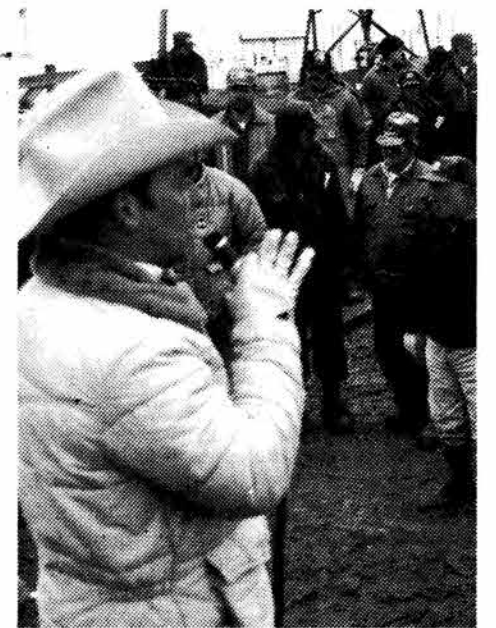
KANSAS CITY, Mo. — On August 19 at the State Fair in Sedalia, Missouri, a march of 40 farmers protesting the Reagan administration's farm policy was held. Farmers gathered at the entrance of the fairgrounds with placards that ranged from "Save the Family Farm" to "No U.S. Intervention in Central America."

Missouri is viewed by both the Republican and Democratic parties as a key state in the November elections. Mondale visited Missouri on August 18 and Reagan on August 19.

State Rep. William Webster, Republican candidate for attorney general, describes Reagan as having a good relationship with farmers. But Roger Allison, a state spokesperson of the American Agriculture Movement and a leader of the North American Farm Alliance, feels differently. He explains that "farmers are in a depression that is every bit as bad as the 1930s."

The demonstrating farmers were distributing a brochure put out by the Missouri state AFL-CIO. It explains that 542 farmers go bankrupt every day in the United States and that Missouri tops all states in farm foreclosures that have federal (FmHA) loans. The brochure also points out that for every dollar a farmer makes in profit, the rest of the economy makes seven dollars. The state AFL-CIO calls for an emergency moratorium on farm foreclosures as more and more small farmers are driven out of business by high interest rates and low wholesale prices on crops. These farms are falling into the hands of a few large agri-corporations.

The demonstration marched toward the site of the Reagan campaign rally held on the same day. Spectators watching the farm demonstration were on the whole curious and interested. Two women clapped as the march passed, saying, "Thank you for being here." One man said to the demonstrators with a smile, "You're my kind of people."



Farm on auction block. U.S. farmers are bankrupted at rate of 542 per day.

NOW files suit

The National Organization for Women filed a \$2 million class-action suit against Mutual of Omaha on August 16 in Washington, D.C. The suit is aimed at stopping discrimination against women who are charged higher rates for health and disability insurance.

The lawsuit charges that Mutual of Omaha offered to sell one of the plaintiffs a medical expense policy, which did not include pregnancy benefits, for \$1,149.18. The same policy would have been sold to a man in similar circumstances for \$691.52. This is one instance of a broad practice of discrimination against women. NOW said this suit is one of many they will file in a campaign against insurance companies.

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MAURICE BISHOP SPEAKS

THE GRENADA REVOLUTION 1979-83



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Editors: CINDY JAQUITH

MALIK MIAH

Business Manager:

LEE MARTINDALE

Editorial Staff: Pat Grogan, Arthur Hughes, Margaret Jayko, Geoff Mirelowitz, Karen Newton, Mohammed Oliver, Harry Ring.

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Workers have right to discuss war

UAW continues fight to defend fired aerospace workers

BY JAN ARAGON
AND MERRILL COHEN

SAN DIEGO — A new round opened August 17 in the fight to win reinstatement of four trade union activists at Teledyne Ryan Aeronautical (TRA) in San Diego.

In an unprecedented reversal of a July 30 decision, American Arbitration Association arbitrator Paul Rothschild informed United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 506 and the four workers — Jan Aragon, Tom Barton, Merrill Cohen, and Gina March — that he was ordering reinstatement of only one of the workers, Merrill Cohen. His initial ruling ordered the company to reinstate all four workers with full back pay.

Local 506 leaders were outraged at the arbitrator's reversal and are planning the next steps to be taken in this ten-month battle.

Aragon, Barton, Cohen, and March were production workers in the plastics department in the UAW-organized aerospace plant. They were laid off between April and June of 1983. In October 1983, the company denied them their recall rights. They were then under special investigation on charges of falsification of employment applications. They were officially fired in February 1984.

While working for TRA, the four had been active union members and were widely known as socialists. They had opposed company-forced concessions in the March 1983 contract, a take-away agreement which slashed wages for new hires. They were also instrumental in inviting a Salvadoran trade union leader, Alejandro Molina-Lara, to speak at a union meeting.

The discussion that took place in the union about the denial of trade union rights in El Salvador angered the TRA management. The company manufactures the

fuselage for the AH 64 army attack helicopter.

Following Molina-Lara's meeting with Local 506, TRA began a campaign of harassment against Aragon, Barton, Cohen and March. This culminated in their firings. By victimizing these activists, the company intervened in the union membership's discussions on the U.S. war in Central America.

While opinion on the U.S. role in Central America was greatly divided among the union membership, many signed a petition demanding the reinstatement of the four trade unionists. The petition stated support for the right of unionists to discuss such questions "free from company and government victimization."

The union vigorously pursued the case through arbitration. It did not object to the fired workers speaking out on what they saw as a key question: the right of trade unionists to discuss the U.S. war in Central America.

Aragon, Barton, Cohen, and March focused their attention on explaining the facts of the case to other trade unionists. They also took their case to civil libertarians, Black and women's rights activists, and to the movement in solidarity with the revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean.

Trade union activists throughout the state understood the issues in the case. They clearly saw that as the U.S. escalates its war against the workers and farmers of Central America, it also steps up its attacks on working people in this country.

Letters of support for the fired workers were received from the largest IAM local in San Diego, Local Lodge 1125; from Service Employees' International Union Local 535, and from the American Federation of Teachers local at the University of San Diego. Many other trade unionists in the



Teledyne Ryan Aeronautical Co. in San Diego makes fuselage for AH 64 army attack helicopter. Company fired union activists for discussing U.S. war in Central America.

area, including coworkers from TRA, expressed their support.

A press conference in late January produced a flurry of publicity for the case. Television, radio, and newspapers reported on the unjust firings. The four took their case to other cities in the state as well.

Sally Goodman, a UAW member and aerospace worker in Denver who is being harassed by the Defense Investigative Service (DIS) for her sexual preference and socialist ideas, came to San Diego to participate in a rally supporting the fired TRA workers. The press conference and rally led up to the arbitration hearing that took

place in June.

At the arbitration hearing, there was no dispute over the fact that three of the four workers had done what millions of workers do every day to get jobs — embellish their previous work record on their employment applications.

Nonetheless, the arbitrator ruled (in his first opinion):

"In the absence of a deliberate falsification of an application for employment which can be shown to represent a continuing threat to the employer's operation or well being, a one year limitation on discharge for falsification of employment applications should be recognized.

"The four grievants, all having completed more than one year service without evidence of deficiency, are entitled to the protection of Article X, Seniority providing they will be recalled from layoff in the order of their seniority."

UAW International Representative Francis Burkhardt explained, "This is a precedent which should be entered into the record and become part of the standard text 'How Arbitration Works.' It will mean that if people have a clean work record after a year on the job, they cannot be fired for lies on their job applications."

As the arbitrator also stated in his second opinion:

"After all, the purpose of the employment application is not to create a sacred document of eternal verity. Rather it is a valid attempt by management to predict performance. After one year of service the Company has in this experience a far more accurate basis to predict performance."

It was on this basis that Rothschild initially ruled that Aragon, Barton, Cohen, and March should be reinstated with full back pay. His August 17 revised ruling granting the award only to Cohen is based on the argument presented by the company in a post-arbitration dissenting opinion that since the victims were on layoff during much of the period in question, they cannot be said to have worked a full year at TRA.

While this was also true for Cohen, her case was clearly separated out since there was no falsification proved on her job application.

Cohen's reinstatement is a victory for the union and against company attempts to curtail union discussions of the big social and political questions facing working people in this country today.

Local 506 leaders are determined to carry the fight forward to win reinstatement of Aragon, Barton, and March.

The union is also pressing for an immediate settlement in the case of a fifth union activist, Judy White. She was laid off from the tooling department and denied a job in a lower labor grade. The company claims that she is not qualified to be a machine parts finisher. But all others laid off from her department were automatically offered the parts finisher position.

Unionist convicted — blow to AP strike

BY MARK FRIEDMAN

TOLEDO — On August 22 Thomas Joseph, a member of Local 85 of the Boilermakers union here, was convicted in Lucas County Common Pleas Court on a charge of "aggravated riot" stemming from his participation in the May 21 demonstration organized by the United Auto Workers (UAW) in solidarity with UAW strikers at the AP Parts Co.

Joseph is also a member of the Toledo Area Solidarity Committee, an organization of rank-and-file unionists active in the local labor movement. He was the first to go to trial of 37 workers indicted by a grand jury for their role in the May 21 action.

The May 21 protest drew over 3,000 workers, most members of the UAW, who came out to protest AP Parts union-busting. The action was brutally attacked by Toledo cops.

The company forced the strike last spring when it imposed a \$5.84 an hour wage cut and gutted union seniority rights. When UAW Local 14 went out on strike, AP Parts hired scabs and has continued to operate.

Joseph pleaded "no contest." The conviction could lead to a jail term of 6 to 18 months but sentencing was delayed pending a presentence investigation.

An obvious danger is that Joseph's con-

viction will set a precedent in the other cases that have yet to go to trial. Rev. Floyd Rose, president of the Toledo NAACP and an active supporter of the AP Parts strike, told the *Militant*, "It is clear that the indictment and conviction of Thomas Joseph is just another weapon to create fear in the hearts of those involved in the struggle to defend the union. His conviction is a bad precedent. If we are concerned about the future security of all workers in America, we must all stand with our brothers and sisters at AP Parts."

Since the 37 indictments were handed down at the beginning of the summer, at least 30 more workers have been arrested on strike-related charges. AP Parts strikers Joe Smiley and Willie Sanders told the *Militant* that more than a dozen members of UAW Local 14 have been arrested and charged with "picket-line misconduct." Smiley and Sanders said another 40 to 50 outstanding warrants have been issued for AP Parts UAW members.

"The police are working closely with Nuchols Inc., AP Parts' private security firm," said Smiley. "Scabs go into work and view pictures of AP UAW members and are told to pick out and accuse any who may have 'harassed' them at the picket line or anywhere in the city."

"These are phony accusations," Smiley declared. "I myself have been harassed by the police and Nuchols on the picket line."

The strike is nearing the end of its fourth month and no negotiations are taking place between the UAW and AP Parts. The union has organized some fund-raising activities for the strikers including plant-gate collections.

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'AP Parts strikers, we're with you'

BY JANICE SAMS

DETROIT — "AP Parts strikers we're with you!" was the enthusiastic chant of an August 18 solidarity rally held to support United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 14. The 400 member local is in the fourth month of a heated battle against AP Parts, a Toledo based auto parts company. Two hundred and fifty people attended the rally, the first such solidarity event held for Local 14 here, at the union hall of UAW Local 600, which represents workers at Ford's giant River Rouge plant. The meeting was chaired by David Sole, a member of UAW Local 15, which initiated the event.

UAW region 2b Director Joe Tomasi explained some of the issues in the bitter strike. Company negotiators seek what they call the "perfect agreement," meaning, "we're gonna write it and you're gonna live with it."

Tomasi explained the company is sticking to its original "proposal," including a \$5.84 an hour pay cut. This is really more like a \$10.00 an hour cut, said Tomasi, when benefit cuts and speedup plans are taken into account. "This is a war," he affirmed.

On display at the rally were a few of the tear gas canisters used by Toledo cops in their attack on a May 21 strike solidarity

demonstration. The May 21 action involved 3,000 UAW members from the Toledo area. Today, 37 union members face indictments for their participation in this action. Several rally speakers called for dropping the charges against these workers immediately.

In a letter to the rally, UAW International President Owen Bieber noted that the principles involved in this strike affect the whole labor movement. He described AP Parts' approach as a "deliberate attempt to foment a strike to break the union." Bieber pledged that the UAW was determined not to let AP Parts bust Local 14.

The August 18 rally showed that many UAW members are inspired by Local 14's fight. "We're going to continue to demonstrate," promised Local 14 President Oscar Bunch. He urged more such solidarity rallies and called for more workers from Detroit to visit the Toledo strikers.

A party afterwards gave everyone a chance to speak informally with the strikers. Over \$1,000 was raised to add to the \$5,000 raised for the strikers through collections in several Detroit auto plants. Joe Wilson, president of UAW Local 15, echoed the message of a resolution adopted by the rally when he called for another rally soon if no progress is made in the strike.

Nicaragua co-op farm shows transformation revolution brought

BY PRISCILLA SCHENK

A group of 20 socialist workers from the United States, Canada, and New Zealand spent two weeks in Nicaragua in July. The group included Mel Mason, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president.

A highlight of that trip was a visit to the Ulysses Rodríguez Rugama cooperative farm just outside the northern town of Estelí. The farm is named after a Sandinista fighter who fell in a battle against dictator Anastasio Somoza's army in 1979. The name and the farm symbolize great changes since the July 1979 revolutionary victory of the Sandinistas, which brought to power a workers and farmers government in this country.

"Before the triumph this land belonged to a Somozaist, a chief political figure from Estelí," explained Roberto Flores Blandón, the director of the cooperative farm. "Now 34 families own this land in common and work it together."

Flores explained that after Somoza was defeated, many of his supporters fled the country. The owner of this land was among them. The new revolutionary government seized the land and turned the title over to the families who lived there and had been working the land.

"We received the land title as part of the government's agrarian reform program," Flores said. "We are now a cooperative group of farmers. The land belongs to those who work it."

Flores explained to the international visitors that the farm is efficiently organized through committees that involve all the members of the cooperative. A production committee oversees all aspects of planting, tending the land, and harvesting. Their crops are beans, potatoes, sugar cane, and corn. They also have cows for milk and beef.

A finance committee discusses all aspects of keeping the farm financially sound. When decisions need to be made, an assembly is called so that every member of the cooperative can participate.

"Before the revolution this farm had a debt of 32,000 córdobas [U.S.\$3,200]. That debt was cancelled by the government after the formation of the cooperative," the farm's finance director said.

Some of the visiting U.S. workers were very interested in finding out how these Nicaraguan farmers maintain their farm financially. In the United States, farmers

confront great financial hardship, many face foreclosure when they can't meet payments on bank loans. "Is that a problem for you?" one of the socialists from California asked.

"That's not a problem we have here," Flores said. "The government banks guarantee that we get loans. We have a very low interest rate — eight percent. If there is a bad harvest, we have guarantees. If we can't pay our loans due to a bad harvest, the interest is put off until our income returns to normal. Payments on principal are also delayed until we can meet them." Additional loans are available to prepare for the next harvest as needed to maintain income.

There are times when the farm needs help beyond what the 34 families living there can provide. "What happens then, do you hire help?" asked a railroad worker from Washington, D.C.

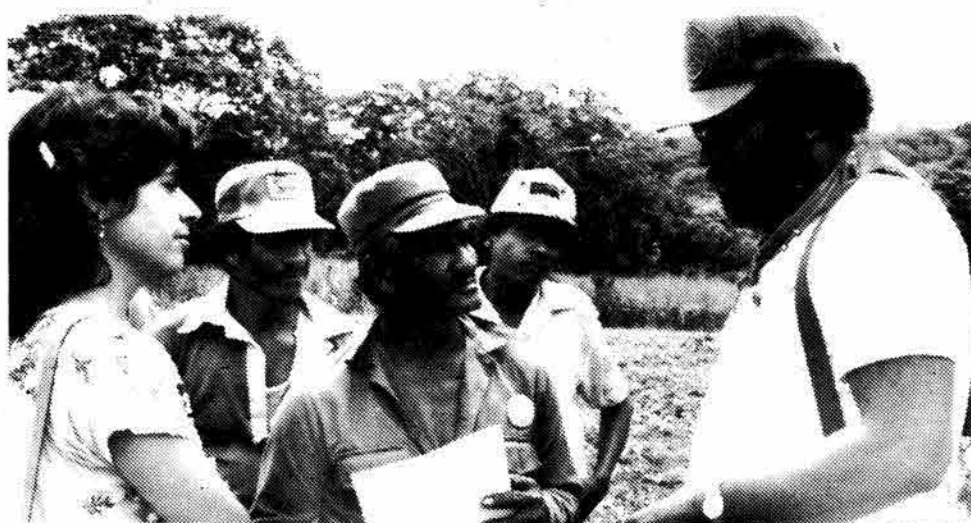
"The government provides us technical help as needed. They are volunteers. They come here for 10-day stays," Flores said. "They receive no payment from the farm but receive room and board here."

A member of AMNLAE, the Nicaraguan Women's Association, lives and works at the farm. The association has set up a women's committee at the farm. "We want to overcome the idea that women's place is in the home cooking and taking care of the children," Flores said. "The women's committee has a goal of involving women in all the work of production on the farm."

Women are full and equal members of the cooperative. Along with the men, they participate in an adult education program on the farm. Next to an equipment shed is a building that serves as a school. The group spoke to the director of the farm's education committee. He was one of 100,000 literacy teachers who joined the government's nationwide literacy campaign in 1980. Now he directs the adult education program for Estelí.

"I am responsible for education for the cooperative and for the city as a whole," he explained. "Here we teach people about cooperative work. We are training mechanics and farm technicians. By 1985 we will be training all our own technicians right here on the cooperative."

Members of the cooperative also participate in other important services for the country. The education director is also a leader of one of the polling groups for the



Socialist candidate Mason (right) pledges to cooperative farmers of Estelí that he will get out truth about gains they and all Nicaraguans have made in revolution.

city of Estelí. They are organizing participation of the people in the city and on the farms in the November 4 elections.

"Do you expect good participation?" a garment worker from Chicago asked.

"Yes," he said, "the polling groups are composed mainly of farmers. Now we have free elections, not like the time of Somoza when we had only two parties and only the rich voted. Now people will decide for themselves the future of the country."

Many of the farmers also participate in the military defense of the country. Estelí is just 40 miles south of the Honduras border. Just a month before, U.S.-directed counterrevolutionary attacks took place at the nearby town of Ocotal.

The farm cooperative's finance committee has estimated that 10 years of work will be lost due to the men being called away from the farm for military service.

But they volunteer anyway "because it is the only way we will have peace" and the only way they can continue to own and run a farm, something that before the revolu-

tion they could never even dream of.

As the international guests reluctantly said goodbye, we exchanged handshakes and addresses, took pictures, and promised to maintain contact with each other.

Roberto Flores and the others reaffirmed their determination to struggle in defense of their country against U.S. attacks. They promised to continue their friendship with the North American people.

Mel Mason gave them a copy of a statement he made in solidarity with the Nicaraguan revolution. Mason and the other socialists pledged to return home with what we learned and tell the truth about Nicaragua to workers and farmers in our countries. We would tell of the great gains of this revolution and win people in our countries to the fight to end the U.S. government's war against the Nicaraguan people, to help make it possible for them to live in peace.

Priscilla Schenk is a garment worker in New Jersey and the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in that state.

Racist S. Africa elections boycotted

BY ERNEST HARSCH

The racist apartheid regime's attempt to impose segregated and undemocratic new "parliaments" on South Africa's Coloured and Indian communities has met with a resounding rejection.

At many polling stations in Cape Town, Durban, and other cities, more police were present for the elections than were voters. The overwhelming majority of the Coloured and Indian electorates boycotted the elections, which were held on August 22 and 28, respectively.

The Coloureds, who are of mixed ancestry, number about 2.8 million, and the Indians, some 800,000. They are part of the country's oppressed Black majority, which also includes some 24 million Africans.

As part of its divide-and-rule strategy, the white minority regime has long sought to keep these different segments of the Black population separate and disunited, to block them from joining in a common struggle against white capitalist rule.

In response to the mass Black rebellions, protest actions, and strikes of recent years, Prime Minister Pieter Botha unveiled a new version of this old strategy: the establishment of a tricameral parliament, with separate chambers to represent whites, Coloureds, and Indians. Whites would remain in overall control, while Africans, who comprise the big majority of the population, would have no representation whatsoever. This scheme was clearly intended to entrench white supremacy, while winning the collaboration of a few misleaders from the Coloured and Indian communities.

Although the apartheid authorities have tried to peddle this new parliamentary system abroad as a major reform away from white supremacy, it has been rejected as a blatant fraud by the most representative political and social organizations within South Africa, including from among all three sectors of the Black population, as well as by whites opposed to the apartheid system.

In August 1983, representatives from some 400 groups met and formed a broad coalition, called the United Democratic Front (UDF), to fight the measures. It held news conferences, organized rallies, and called other actions. It also launched a massive campaign among Coloureds and

Indians to boycott the elections.

The African National Congress (ANC), the leading liberation movement in South Africa, likewise called for a boycott.

In a July 3 radio broadcast beamed into South Africa from Ethiopia, ANC Pres. Oliver Tambo called on Coloureds and Indians "to stand firm with the oppressed majority, to refuse to join the doomed apartheid system on the eve of the triumph of our long and bitter struggle." He declared that "we must crush the August elections by the vigor of our united struggle and through an intense campaign exposing the danger and treachery of the elections and reasserting the people's goal of a united, democratic, and non-racial South Africa."

In response to the boycott campaign, the authorities resorted increasingly to repression. Some 200 leaders and members of the UDF were detained, including Archie Gumede, one of the UDF's three national presidents.

Despite the repression, the boycott was a success. Less than 30 percent of all Coloureds who registered to vote actually did so, a figure that dropped to less than 5 percent in many urban constituencies. But since many Coloureds did not even register, the real percentage of the eligible electorate that voted was just 18 percent.

In addition to those who expressed their rejection by staying away from the polls, more than 600,000 Coloured students boycotted classes across the country to protest the elections.

Early returns for the August 28 elections to the Indian chamber show a low turnout as well, with the vast majority of Indians in Durban and other urban centers staying at home. That same day, police attacked hundreds of demonstrators in Lenasia, an Indian township near Johannesburg, after they poured into the streets to protest the elections.

Though the election turnouts were low, the apartheid authorities intend to install their new parliamentary system anyway. But they cannot credibly claim that it has any significant Black support.

"A spirit of defiance against racist rule is alive in the land," Casim Saloojee, an Indian leader of the UDF told a mass rally in Johannesburg just before the voting. "The tricameral parliament means nothing more or less than oppression three times over."



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Mason greets striking Canadian workers

BY DAN FEIN

VANCOUVER, Canada — "The working class is international. Some of our unions are international. We must work together because we have a common enemy — the rich."

That is how Mel Mason, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, answered why he was in Canada to striking bus drivers. Strikers walking the picket lines were appreciative of a socialist presidential candidate from the United States solidifying with their struggles.

Mason's five day tour to Vancouver, British Columbia, from August 17-21, was a continuation of the campaign's effort to overcome artificial divisions between workers in different countries and build international working-class solidarity. Mason's tour to Vancouver was sponsored by the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL), the sister organization of the SWP in Canada.

The tour began with a news conference by Mason and Katy LeRougetel, an RWL candidate for parliament in Montreal. On September 4 Canada is holding federal elections.

The news conference was covered by the Canadian Broadcasting Company and CBUFT, the French language radio and television station, as well as *The Sun*, the biggest daily newspaper in Vancouver.

LeRougetel denounced the Canadian government's war drive against Central America. She welcomed Mason to Canada and noted Canadian and U.S. workers have a common struggle. "Our campaign," she said, "does not put Canada first, but puts workers first."

Following the news conference, Mason, LeRougetel, and some campaign supporters visited the Retail & Wholesale Union picket line at Slade & Stewart Ltd. The truck drivers at Slade & Stewart are organized by the Retail & Wholesale Union. They had worked for 14 months without a contract until the company broke off negotiations and locked the workers out. The company demanded a three-year contract with no wage increase. The union asked for a two-year contract with a modest wage gain.

The Social Credit (Socred) government in British Columbia joined the dispute on the side of the company. The workers, who usually deliver fruits and vegetables to restaurants, began picketing the restaurants that receive the "hot" items from scab drivers. A government injunction put an end to that effective tactic by placing an injunction on secondary picketing.

That evening Mason attended a New Democratic Party fund raiser where he spoke with several NDP members about their election campaign against the Liberals and Conservatives. (The NDP is Canada's trade-union based Labor Party.) Mason found the NDPers very interested in his trip to Britain and the coal miners strike there.

On August 20, the socialist campaign visited the picket line of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, which is

on strike against Canada Packers, the largest Canadian meatpacking company. Meatpackers at Canada Packers are part of a master contract that also covers meat packers at Burns and Gainer's. The companies are demanding a two-tier wage scale and a two-year wage freeze, among other take-backs. There are 3,700 Canada Packers' workers on strike, which began July 30.

Herbie Bhaloo, Vice-president of the striking local, explained, "the company made a \$26 million profit last year. Scabs are delivering crab legs, lard, and shortening, which the company had stockpiled before the strike. Legislation prohibits us picketing delivery of things produced before the strike began. A wage freeze is really a wage cut because inflation continues to rise. Most of the guys here will vote NDP."

Mason spoke with workers at the Tahsis Co. Ltd., a board manufacturing mill, in Burnaby, just outside Vancouver, during the afternoon shift change. He also toured the plant. He spoke to 12 workers in the lunch room where he explained that U.S. workers face similar attacks from the companies and government as Canadian workers do.

Outside the mill, Mason spoke with workers coming in for swing shift and those getting off day shift. One worker asked Mason about the situation in Ireland after Mason mentioned his trip there.

On the last day of the tour Mason visited locked-out bus drivers in Vancouver. The union, the Independent Canadian Transit Union, has been without a contract for one-and-a-half years.

The Metro Transit Operating Company wants to cut some of the bus routes and introduce many part-time workers. The pickets gave Mason a recent copy of their strike bulletin with a message of solidarity from Fraternité Des Chauffeurs D'Autobus in Montreal. Part of it read, "Given some success by employers in the United States, few were those who gave us good odds in our



Militant/Dan Fein
U.S. socialist presidential candidate extends solidarity to working people in British Columbia, Canada. U.S. and Canadian workers face same enemies, said Mason — wealthy employers and their governments.

strike and, later, in our public hearings against our transit commission. We won, and what is more, we proved that we were right! We therefore congratulate you and urge you, for the benefit of all, not to give up this most important struggle."

The B.C. Socred government has threatened to break this strike by adding the Metro Transit Operating Co. to the list of employers covered by the antilabor Essential Service Disputes Act. Under this act the government can order the bus drivers

back to work for a 90 day cooling-off period.

Strikers listened to Mason speak about the Grenadian revolution and its overthrow. A worker replied, "The U.S. government did the same thing in Chile also."

Just before Mason left a striker told him, "This has been quite informative. While you are here, will you sign this leaflet for me?" Another picketer also asked for an autograph. They told Mason "go visit the other picket lines."

González solidarizes with Quebec workers

BY WILL REISSNER

MONTREAL — A wall of silence surrounds Quebec and its 6.5 million people, most of whom speak French. News from Quebec rarely reaches working people in English Canada or the United States.

But Andrea González, U.S. Socialist Workers Party vice-presidential candidate, went to Quebec August 22-27 to exchange experiences and views with Quebec working-class activists. Her tour was sponsored by the Ligue Ouvrière Révolutionnaire (LOR, which is called the Revolutionary Workers League in English Canada), a sister party of the SWP.

For example, González, herself a former shipyard worker, spoke to Jean-Pierre Péloquin, vice-president of the Union of Shipyard Workers at Marine Industries in Sorel. The 1,050 workers there have been on strike since August 7 for a shorter work-week with no cut in pay.

Péloquin views the 35-hour week as a key element in the fight for jobs. Since 1979, more than 2,000 jobs have been lost at Marine Industries, and in the Sorel area the unemployment rate is over 50 percent.

The shipyard union publishes a daily bulletin and holds weekly meetings to keep strikers informed of developments.

There is a strong tradition of Labor solidarity in the Sorel region and unions in several plants are donating \$1 per member per week to the shipyard strikers.

Affirmative action victory

On August 23, González attended a press conference called by Action: Jobs for Women announcing a historic victory in its five-year fight against discrimination in hiring at Canadian National railways.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission ruled that CN had systematically discriminated against women in the St. Lawrence region. Henceforth at least one out of every four new jobs in nontraditional areas must be filled by women until women make up at least 13 percent of CN's work force in those jobs.

In Canada 13 percent of all such jobs are now held by women. At CN the figure is less than 1 percent.

Katy LeRougetel, a 26-year-old appren-

tice machinist at CN and an LOR candidate for parliament in the September 4 elections, took the floor at the press conference to hail this victory.

Visits labor party office

González went to Ste-Thérèse, north of Montreal, on August 25 to visit the local election office of the New Democratic Party, the labor party in Canada.

She spoke with NDP candidate for parliament Normand Labrie, who is a millwright and former president of United Auto Workers Local 1163 at General Motors' huge Ste-Thérèse plant.

Labrie told González: "In the United States you have only one party with two faces. Here the NDP is based on the unions and represents the workers." He expressed the hope that the NDP's example would spread to the United States.

The Quebec Federation of Labor backs the LOR campaign, and the UAW is actively supporting Labrie's candidacy. Half of the UAW headquarters in a Ste-Thérèse shopping mall has been turned over to the NDP during the election.

Labrie stressed that the NDP must run workers for public office. "We can't make the mistake of building a party of doctors, lawyers, and liars," he told González. "If we are to build a society run by workers, workers have to be involved right from the beginning."

The NDP's support in Quebec — 11 percent in a recent poll — is substantially lower than in English Canada, partly due to the NDP's hostility to the Québécois people's fight for national sovereignty. Québécois are an oppressed nation who suffer discrimination in all aspects of life.

Labrie opposes the NDP's stand against the Québécois people's right to self-determination, but argued that this difference must be subordinated until after the September 4 vote.

Labrie expressed strong opposition to Washington's invasion of Grenada and its war on the peoples of Central America.

The LOR voted August 26 to call for a vote for the NDP in districts where the LOR is not running candidates.

At an August 25 rally opening the

LOR's new Montreal headquarters, attended by more than 50 people, González shared the platform with LOR parliamentary candidate Michel Dugré; two leaders of Haitian taxi drivers fighting discrimination in Montreal; a leader of the Quebec National Students Association; and Revolutionary Workers League candidate Larry Johnston, a 30-year-old steelworker running in Ontario.

González began with extended remarks in French on the importance of defending the French language in Quebec from attacks by Canada's federal government.

"I know from my own experience as a Puerto Rican," she stated, "that the language question is not secondary." Describing the failure of Washington's attempts to impose the use of English in Puerto Rico since its conquest in 1898, González expressed confidence that the Québécois people will prevail over Ottawa's attacks on the French language.

Throughout her stay in Montreal, González had numerous discussions about similarities and differences in the independence struggles in Quebec and Puerto Rico.

LOR candidate Michel Dugré, a 36-year-old garment worker, told the rally that the ruling class says politics means voting every few years. But what workers need, he argued, is "a government that can impose the will of the workers over the bosses." Having recently visited Nicaragua, Dugré pointed to the governments of that country and Cuba as examples for the workers and farmers of Quebec.

The strength of the government in Nicaragua, he reported, "flows from the hundreds of thousands of workers and farmers organized in mass organizations to make sure that the government's decisions are fully applied."

The rally also heard a taped message from Jean-Claude Boucher, one of seven farmers on a hunger strike against farm foreclosures in St-Cyrille de Wendover.

Through their fast, the farmers are calling attention to the disastrous situation of small farmers in Quebec, who are being driven into bankruptcy by the banks and the Quebec Office of Agricultural Credit.

Gay rights fighter in Kansas City, Mo. dies of AIDS

BY MARTY PETTIT

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Seventy-five people attended a memorial service held for Dennis Krell, a long-time leader of the gay community here who died July 16 of AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). Krell's is at least the fifth death from AIDS in Jackson County (which includes Kansas City) since 1982. Many more cases, however, are not reported to health officials, according to local gay activists.

Krell was the public relations director of the Gay Organized Alliance for Liberation (GOAL), director of the Gay Talk Crisis Line, member of Gay Pride Steering Committee, and organizer of K.C. AIDS Support Group. His friend, Will Graham, said Krell had almost done more for the gay community in the last two years, since he had been ill with AIDS, than he had done when he was well. "He wanted to leave a legacy because he knew he couldn't recover."

Mass protests hit regime in Philippines

Continued from front page

memorial mass for Aquino that was attended by most of the leading opposition figures. In his homily, Archbishop Sin called for forgiveness on both sides. "We must be reconciled through an act of forgiveness," he said.

Marchers converged on the Quirino Stadium in Luneta Park from several points in the city. They carried union banners, such as the bank employees', red flags of the KNU (May First Movement), and the banners of women's and student groups. Many of the slogans assailed U.S. support for Marcos and demanded the release of the political prisoners. Yellow T-shirts with Aquino's portrait were everywhere.

One young child wore a yellow T-shirt that read, "I am mortgaged to the IMF," emphasizing the Philippines' huge \$22 billion foreign debt.

Three women students at the rally explained that Aquino, since his assassination, has become a symbol of the anti-Marcos movement. On his grave today is a placard that reads, "One Ninoy died, a million Ninoy's came alive." Ninoy is Aquino's nickname.

"Ninoy has become the rallying point for all Filipinos who have for a long time been dissatisfied with the Marcos regime," explained Nancy, a masters student in comparative literature at the University of the Philippines. "It was the drama of the event [Aquino's murder] that brought the Filipinos together," she said. "People also began to realize that if the government — or whoever is responsible for the murder — could do this to a prominent person, how then will they treat the common people?"

Aquino, a bourgeois opposition leader, was gunned down at Manila International Airport on Aug. 21, 1983, when returning from the United States on what he described as a mission of "unity and reconciliation." Many saw him as an alternative president to Marcos. Aquino was shot while surrounded by security guards, and the alleged assassin was himself immediately shot dead.

The board of inquiry into Aquino's assassination, led by Justice Corazon Agrava, has become a national joke in the Philippines. It is said that the 52 million Filipinos know who is responsible for Aquino's death — the only exceptions are the five members of the Agrava board.

The publication of the board's findings has now been delayed until the end of August in the hope of avoiding further popular protest. The board's sittings have been marked by bizarre incidents such as the one where Marcos' wife, Imelda, appeared to give evidence on Nov. 3, 1983. Justice Agrava insisted that everyone present — board members, lawyers, journalists, and so on — rise and sing "Happy Birthday" to the "First Lady."

IP features debate on socialist strategy in U.S. elections

The September 3 issue of *Intercontinental Press* features a major article on working class strategy in capitalist elections by IP editor, Doug Jenness.

The article was written for *Perspectiva Mundial* and disagrees with the views expressed by Manuel Aguilar Mora, a central leader of the Revolutionary Workers Party (RWP), Mexican section of the Fourth International.

Aguilar argues that the initiatives taken by Democratic party candidate Jesse Jackson — such as his visits to Cuba, Nicaragua, and El Salvador — "go far beyond the limits of the traditional bi-partisan policies of the Republicans and the Democrats."

Jenness explains that the opposite is the case — that the Jackson election campaign was an obstacle to independent working class political action.

The issue also carries major documents on the Sandinista election campaign in Nicaragua. They include a speech by FSLN presidential candidate Daniel Ortega, in which the election platform of the FSLN, the 23 points of the "Plan of Struggle" are outlined. The issue also contains a speech by Commander Tomás Borge, "Unity and the FSLN."

The government's evidence has included such things as a blatantly doctored videotape of the assassination provided by a government-run television station.

José, another student, told this reporter that Aquino's role had been "overpublicized." He said the assassination was simply "part of the overall scheme by Marcos to decapitate the mass movement, like the 'salvaging' of militants by death squads that takes place all the time." This "salvaging" bears remarkable resemblance to the actions of death squads in El Salvador.

One of Nancy's friends, Carmelina, explained, "Salvaging is the mass execution of suspected 'subversives.' It has included teachers and doctors. The killers are never discovered. The doctors are the ones who go to the provinces and work with the people, and so they are immediately suspect as NPA [New People's Army] sympathizers."

Another group of people at the rally had come from Aklan, on the island of Panay. There were many banners that indicated people had come from all over the Philippines to join the protest. Rallies were also held in Cebu, Baguio, Zamboanga, Angeles, and other urban centers. Armando, from Aklan, stressed the importance of the campaign for human rights.

"In every province there are political prisoners," he said, "and the killing of innocent civilians is rampant in the countryside."

He said the economic demands were also vitally important. "There is a real economic crisis in the Philippines," he said. He explained that rising prices of farming materials such as fertilizer have hit the peasants very hard.

The rally ended with the unveiling of two statues of Aquino, and then people peacefully dispersed, causing chaos in Manila's streets. Further protests are planned for September 21, the 12th anniversary of the declaration of martial law in 1972.

The year since Aquino's death has been marked by a rising mass movement and stepped-up repression. Twelve people were killed in protests in August and September last year.

José assured that "the Filipinos have matured with a year of struggle. I want the world to know," he continued, "especially the United States, which is the lifeblood of the Marcos dictatorship, that there is no democracy in the Philippines. The United States must realize," he added, "that their influence is coming to an end."

— From *Intercontinental Press*



Protests have rocked Philippines since assassination of Marcos' opponent, Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, a year ago.

New dock strike closes British ports

Continued from front page

miners has failed. In the areas solidly on strike, where the campaign was aimed, only 160 scabs responded, less than one percent!

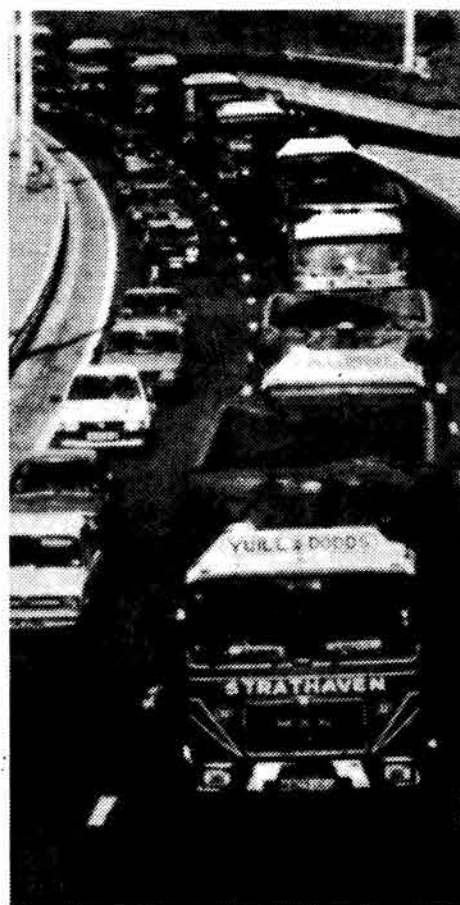
These attempts come in anticipation of the shorter days and colder weather of autumn. It is then that the miners strike will begin to have a greater impact on the British economy.

The few hundred miners who have returned to work nationally since the strike began are in areas where a large number scabbed from the very beginning of the strike, such as Nottinghamshire. The purpose of the new "back-to-work" effort was to make small cracks in the areas most solidly behind the strike — Scotland, South Wales, and particularly Yorkshire. The government aims to demoralize the strikers and force them back into picketing their own mines for the first time in the dispute.

South Wales was tested on August 10 when miner Monty Morgan was challenged by a mass picket from going to work. Morgan is typical of the miners NCB head Ian MacGregor is targeting, the older miners who are most susceptible to MacGregor's bait. At 54 years old, Morgan hopes that by scabbing he will be able to cash in on the large lump sum payment offered by the government to those who accept voluntary redundancy [permanent layoff when the government shuts the mine for good].

"I have accepted the fact that I might have to take redundancy now because no one will work with me again," said Morgan. "But my short-term aim is to start a back to work movement." After serving the Coal Board well, he hoped to be rewarded with early retirement.

The miners' mass picket turned back the bus Morgan was riding on when the driver refused to cross the picket line. Other pickets stood outside Morgan's house, and the



British Steel Corp. used truck convoy to move scab coal.

milkman stopped delivering. Two days later Morgan stopped work.

One strike weapon used by the South Wales NUM has been the withdrawal of safety cover. During the strike some miners are assigned by the NUM to continue to carry out the routine safety work required to avoid mines collapsing, flooding, or catching fire. When Monty Morgan went to work, this safety cover was withdrawn,

making it impossible for him or anyone else to work underground.

The following week this tactic was used to stop the second would-be scab in South Wales. Roy Jones went into Bedwas Colliery only to stop work the next day. "They were going to flood the pit by withdrawal of safety cover," said Jones, "and the whole pit would have gone."

In the same week that South Wales was fighting off their first scab, two miners went to work in the Yorkshire area, at Gascoigne Wood in the Selby Coalfield — where jobs are thought to be more secure. It rapidly became a focus for mass picketing by the Yorkshire miners.

On August 16, 3,000 pickets responded to the baton charges of 1,000 police by throwing stones and clods of earth, delaying the scabs' entry by three hours. Nine police and four pickets were reported injured. A Gascoigne Wood NUM branch committee member responded to press questioning of the pickets' use of stones against the police by explaining that the NUM would be happy to see an end to the violence through a policy of: "No truncheons then no bricks."

At Easington Colliery in County Durham, mass picketing successfully kept out one would-be scab for four days. On the fifth day the police managed to bring the scab in by a back entrance — leading to a confrontation between police and pickets which saw management cars overturned and colliery building windows smashed.

At the Silverwood Colliery near Rotherham, pickets built barricades across the approach road using trees, stones, building equipment and materials, and a car. These were set afire when police attempted to escort the one scab in.

The miner scabbing at Silverwood, Jimmy Massey, is again typical of the 14 to 16 miners who at different times have attempted to go back to work in Yorkshire. He is an underground electrician at the pit, but also has a small plot of land, where he breeds greyhounds and has stables for horses. He knows he will not be able to work for long, as no striker will countenance working alongside him after the strike. Massey hopes to find capital for his other ventures through grabbing redundancy money.

From *Intercontinental Press*

Collins endorsed by Mel Mason

BY KATHY BALL

At an August 14 news conference, ex-Seaside city councilman and Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Mel Mason endorsed Ken Collins for the Seaside City Council elections to be held November 6.

Collins, a 24-year-old sheet-metal worker and member of Millwrights and Erectors Union Local 102, is presenting a platform that defends affirmative action; calls for lowering rents, taxation of the rich and not working people; and for money for jobs, not for war.

Collins represents the only political alternative for working people on a ballot dominated by ex-cops and landlords.

A central issue in the city council race is Seaside's city budget. Collins explained, "Seaside's budget problems are a direct result of national budget money being taken from cities and spent on war. What money the city has should be spent to provide jobs and activities for youth rather than for police officers to bust strikes."

As a former strike captain in an important and successful strike by the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union Local 483 against the Hyatt Hotel in 1982, Collins expressed his support for 850 striking workers against Kaiser Industries on the Monterey Peninsula. The company is attempting to force a continued wage freeze. Some of these workers live in Seaside.

British miners strike

British coal miners have been on strike against mine closures since March 1984. The *Militant* features regular coverage of this important class battle.

Subscribe today!

Postal workers framed up on drug charges

BY ED GARCÍA

MINNEAPOLIS — Eight Minneapolis-area postal workers were arrested and brought up on charges of possessing and distributing illegal drugs on or near postal facilities. The arrests took place in May and were the result of a 10-month-long investigation involving government agents, postal inspectors, and informers within the work force.

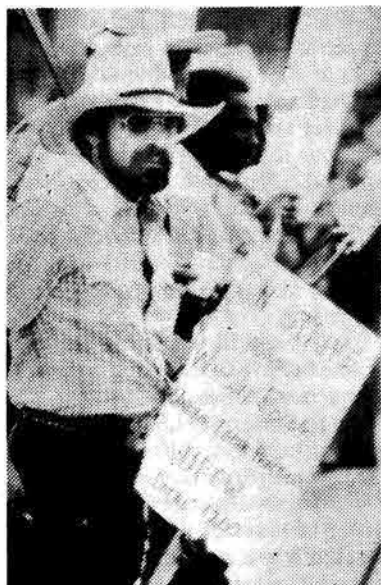
After the eight workers had been arrested, a city police canine unit along with federal agents carried out a "sniff and search" operation in employees' locker rooms and break rooms. This raid, and the use of informers, is designed to create an atmosphere of suspicion and to intimidate and divide workers.

The witchhunt atmosphere was deepened a week later when at least 10 workers were interrogated by postal inspectors. I was one of them and was given an ultimatum. The postal inspector put it to me this way, "Mr. García, we are going to court. It's up to you whether you go as a defendant or as a witness."

I was placed on "administrative leave" — suspended from work with pay because I was under investigation for illegal drug use. My union, Local 323 of the Mailhandlers, filed a grievance against this unjust suspension. A month later, I received a 30-day notice that I would be fired for use of illegal drugs.

As a result of the union's fight, the Postal Service dropped the frame-up drug charges, and reinstated me to my job.

A grand jury investigation was held. Criminal indictments were issued against the eight arrested



UFCW locals across country are fighting food chains' attacks on workers.

workers on May 23. We need strong union defense for the eight union members arrested; for members coerced into resigning; and for members who have been interrogated, harassed, and fired in these frame-ups.

These attacks, taking place at the time of the July contract expiration, have nothing to do with enforcing laws on illegal drugs. The government agents manipulate these laws to serve their interests, to try to intimidate the work force, create a reign of terror, divide workers, weaken the union, and weed out the more outspoken, rebellious fighters.

Shutdown threats force givebacks from food workers

BY ROBERT DEES

CUDAHY, Wis. — "Look at all those sour faces."

This comment captured the mood as the members of United

Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local P-40 voted 429-243 on July 29 to accept a concession contract. Two earlier votes this year rejected the takeback demands of their employer, Patrick Cudahy, Inc., a pork-processing plant. The new contract calls for a \$2 an hour wage cut and less vacation time, sick time, and holidays.

The local agreed to a \$2 an hour wage cut in October 1980, down to \$9.96 an hour. Earlier this year the company demanded an additional \$4.50 cut. The local rejected this demand by a 498-119 vote.

Since then the company has waged a war of nerves, repeatedly threatening to close the plant, arranging its sale to a former owner (who "hired" replacements for the current workers) which "fell through" at the last minute.

Union resistance forced the company to moderate its demands. In mid-July the union voted down an offer of \$8 an hour by a slim margin of 310-309.

"It's not worth working this job for \$8 an hour, the work is too hard," one worker told this reporter. "One guy went to the nurse twice. He was sent back to work, pushing hogs, and dropped dead. The company didn't even stop the line."

After the mid-July vote the company again threatened to close the plant. The final vote, less than a week later, was on a slight modification of the earlier offer. It was accepted by the membership 429-243.

Many felt that this round of concessions wouldn't really solve the problem, and that worse is yet to come. One woman noted, "It was supposed to be the end of it two years ago. They'll be back for more."

But feelings were mixed on what to do. One said the union should buy the plant. "I don't mind making concessions to save

jobs for the union, but not for the rich man." Another believed that "the unions should have pulled all the packing houses out [on strike] a long time ago."

This attack on Local P-40 is part of a trend of employer takeback demands in the meatpacking industry. Unionists have responded with strikes at Iowa Beef Processors in Nebraska and Iowa Pork Industries in Minnesota.

Individual locals are caught in a vicious circle. A concession contract is forced on one local, then other companies demand comparable takebacks in order to stay "competitive," a code word for jacking up profits to the level of the worst union-busters.

But meatpacking workers are learning, like the Chrysler workers before them, that concessions only whet the bosses appetite for more.

UFCW local beats back concessions, two-tier wages

BY SAMUEL FARLEY

DETROIT — "Kroger's got a gun to our heads," worker says, was the lead headline that appeared in the *Detroit Free Press*.

Kroger is a Cincinnati-based food chain that operates 82 stores in Michigan. The company threatened to close all 82 stores if its outrageous takeback demands weren't met by members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union.

Kroger's owners demanded that wages for full-time clerks be reduced from \$11.29 to \$7.50 an hour and meatcutters' pay from \$13.78 to \$7.50 an hour. They also demanded reduction in paid holidays and sick days from 16 to 1 per year, elimination of seniority

rights, and the establishment of a two-tier wage system. Part-time clerks' wages were to be cut to \$5.60 an hour.

On July 17 the clerks and cashiers in union Locals 876 and 539 rejected this package by a vote of 2,204-496. Workers made this decision despite Kroger's blackmail.

John Sinatra, a Kroger worker, said, "In my opinion, they don't want a signed contract. Their demands are ridiculous. . . . I think they want to close and reopen as nonunion stores."

On August 9, clerks and cashiers in Local 876 voted 1,470-614 to accept a second — and somewhat "improved" — concessionary pact.

Under the new contract there will be no two-tier wage system. Part-time and full-time workers will continue to be paid equally. Pay will be reduced to \$9.00 an hour, as opposed to \$7.50 an hour. One-third of workers' sick and personal days off still are in place.

Women may work underground in Australian mines

In a victory for women's rights in Australia, it has been announced that the ban on women working in underground mines will be lifted. Western Australia Minerals and Energy Minister David Parker announced that legislation is planned to permit women to work underground. Parker said, "Women should have the opportunity to do this sort of work if that's what they want and are qualified."

Women have been working in above ground mining operations in Australia for some years.

Near disaster at Chevron oil refinery in Calif.



Recent blaze at Union Oil Co. in Illinois took 17 lives.

RICHMOND, Calif. — Workers at the Chevron Oil Refinery here survived a near disaster when two reactors caught on fire at the North Isomax division. The *Militant* talked with some of the workers who were there.

Halfway through swing shift on August 13, workers spotted a small fire atop a reactor. The reactor was full of highly combustible hydrocarbons and pressurized hydrogen.

Within minutes, there was a loud explosion and the whole top of the reactor burst into flames. The fire quickly engulfed the entire top of the 125-foot reactor with flames bursting through the air.

Working underneath the flaming structure, the operators began closing the valves

to the reactor, cutting out the flow of oil and hydrogen. They also immediately contacted the refinery's fire department.

About a half hour later a second reactor caught on fire — another loud explosion and flames shooting up towards the sky. The fire burned for 3-4 hours before it was brought under control. One week later the reactors were still smoldering.

Workers told the *Militant* that this was the most serious incident yet to occur at the Chevron refinery. Potentially the whole refinery — located in a well populated area in the city of Richmond — could have gone up in flames. Many people could have been killed or seriously injured.

The only injury was one sustained by an operator who was burned on the shoulder from falling pieces of burning metal.

It was the quick thinking and actions of the operators that prevented a more serious disaster from occurring. Most everyone said they were scared, but they stayed calm and brought the fire under control.

The news coverage, based on reports from Chevron's top management, down played the seriousness of this incident. The coverage also claimed that the cause of the fire was not yet known.

Workers at the refinery were not pleased with this coverage. They speculated that the fire would be blamed on "operator error," when in fact it was an equipment failure.

One worker said that if proper attention had been given to preventive maintenance it might have been possible to prevent the fire. But with Chevron's policy of making fewer workers do more work, a lot of the preventive maintenance required for safe operations just cannot be done.

Several workers remarked at the company's lack of appreciation of the role of the operators. One worker cynically commented that they would see their "appreciation" at contract time when the workers would face the choice of taking wage cuts

or being forced out on strike.

A number of the workers told the *Militant* that they had begun looking for other jobs and that some workers had already quit after news of a fire at a Union Oil refinery in Illinois where 17 people died, 12 of them members of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW).

Workers also said they had requested fire retardant coveralls, but the company was still refusing to provide them.

NAACP pickets food chain

Nearly 30 stores operated by Food Lion Inc. in North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee were picketed August 23-25. The three-day protest was organized by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The NAACP is urging shoppers to boycott the stores.

The NAACP called the actions last month after negotiations with the company collapsed. The association has successfully negotiated agreements with 22 companies to improve employment and economic opportunities for Blacks. Those companies include Hardee's Restaurants, Georgia Power, and Safeway stores.

Food Lion, however, refused to come to such an agreement. The NAACP, which said it began negotiations with the company in January 1983, asked the food chain to set hiring goals for Black managerial staff, as well as increase its business with both Black vendors and Black banks.

The company claims that 13 percent of its 11,000 employees are Black — twice the average ratio in the industry. In a further claim, Food Lion's owners said that by keeping their retail prices low they are saving Blacks about \$6 million a year on grocery bills.

Both the NAACP and other food chains have disputed this claim.

Workers in other parts of the refinery were kept in the dark regarding the fire and its seriousness, even though the flames could be seen from miles away.

Meanwhile, the oil workers said work continues — long hours with forced overtime, speedup in the form of crews that are short of personnel, individual workers forced to do jobs that used to be done by two people, and company disregard for safety and adequate on-the-job training.



Picket urges shoppers to boycott Food Lion store in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Will vote for Mondale slow down U.S. war in Central America?

'Guardian' ignores lesson of Vietnam

BY GEOFF MIRELOWITZ

Should socialists, radical-minded workers, and opponents of the U.S. war in Central America and the Caribbean support Democrat Walter Mondale in the November elections in order to get rid of Ronald Reagan? Would this slow the war and austerity drive of the U.S. ruling class?

In an August 8 front-page editorial the *Guardian* newspaper, a nationally circulated radical weekly, answers yes.

"Reagan must go," proclaims the headline. Dumping Reagan "is crucial," argues the *Guardian*, "to prevent consolidation of power by the right. This includes voting against him — and for his Democratic Party opponent Walter Mondale."

This view is widespread throughout the U.S. left, including among many, like the editors of the *Guardian*, who consider themselves Marxists. The *Daily World*, newspaper of the Communist Party, for instance, promotes a "dump Reagan" perspective in page after page of its every issue. The Communist Workers Party, which four years ago campaigned to "crash the Democratic Party convention," seems to have found its way through the front door and today urges support for Mondale.

The *Guardian's* stand, its editors acknowledge, "represents a change from previous positions." It is the first time the weekly has openly urged a vote for a candidate of one of the two big capitalist parties in a presidential election.

Those who have not caved in to the considerable pressure to back the "lesser evil" among the capitalist candidates and who support independent working class political action, including supporters of Socialist Workers presidential and vice-presidential candidates Mel Mason and Andrea González, will find much to disagree with in the *Guardian* editorial. This includes the support it gave to the procapitalist Democratic Party election campaign waged by Jesse Jackson.

Chief argument of 'Guardian'

This article will not attempt to dispute the *Guardian* point by point. Rather it will consider the editorial's chief argument in favor of a vote for former vice-president Mondale — that it is an effective means to slow the U.S. war in Central America. This mistaken view is shared by others beyond the *Guardian*, including many committed antiwar fighters and Central America solidarity activists.

"We should not expect the Democrats to be peaceful," the *Guardian* concedes, "either toward revolutionary peoples around the world or working people and minorities in the U.S." But, it continues, "the worst the Democrats are likely to do is continue what the Republicans are doing."

A Mondale victory however, opens another possibility, *Guardian* editors contend. "The best that could happen," they say, "is that the strangulation of the Nicaraguan revolution might ease up somewhat, some pressure might be put on the fascist South African government, some human rights demands be made on the Salvadoran government and the assault on labor unions, women, and minorities at home might be eased."

At the heart of the *Guardian's* position is the opinion that "A defeat of the reactionaries in November can offer an important breathing space to the left and progressive forces in the U.S. and, perhaps more importantly, to liberation movements and anti-imperialist countries around the world."

Wishful thinking

This is wishful thinking. Organizing to win workers to solidarize with the Central American revolutions and oppose the U.S. war there is a vital responsibility of all socialists today. A vote for Mondale however, will not slow the war drive nor gain breathing room for Nicaraguan and Sal-

vadoran working people fighting U.S. intervention.

It does nothing to help advance the process of building a mass working-class antiwar movement. It is an obstacle to educating working people to rely on their own independent action to fight the war. The *Guardian*, however, has no confidence in independent working-class political action. It looks to a capitalist politician for relief instead.

The *Guardian* admits that "the current war buildup began in the Democratic Carter administration." (A designation the editors evidently find more convenient for their current purposes than the more accurate "Carter-Mondale administration.")

But it also points out that the Reagan administration has been steadily escalating the war over the past four years. It fears that as soon as the elections are over, Reagan, "unrestrained by the considerations of having to face the electorate again," will send U.S. combat troops into the region and a full scale, Vietnam-style war will develop. Thus its call for a vote for Mondale.

The *Guardian* is not wrong to point to the danger of a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua or El Salvador. A sharp escalation of the U.S. war is sure to come — but it does not hinge on a Reagan victory in November.

The employing class cannot tolerate the advance of the socialist revolution — especially in what they arrogantly consider their own backyard. They recognize that the Nicaraguan revolution, like the Cuban revolution, wrenched a section of the Americas out from under their political and economic domination. The Salvadoran revolution threatens to do the same.

The U.S. rulers have decided they must put an end to these powerful examples. That is why they aim to overthrow Nicaragua's workers and farmers government and why they are fiercely resisting Salvadoran working people fighting to overturn imperialist domination. Both capitalist parties in the United States support these goals.

Grenada invasion

That's why the U.S. invasion of Grenada last October won virtually unanimous support from Republicans and Democrats. Today neither Mondale, Ferraro, Jackson, nor other leading Democratic Party figures criticize that invasion or oppose the continuing U.S. military occupation of the island.

What if the Carter-Mondale team had won the 1980 presidential contest? In April 1980 they did not hesitate to launch a U.S. commando raid on Iran. Do the *Guardian's* editors seriously believe that Carter and Mondale, presented with the same opportunity for imperialism offered by the counterrevolutionary overthrow of the Maurice Bishop-led government in Grenada, would not have ordered an invasion? And a Mondale-Ferraro administration? Wouldn't it have done the same? What evidence indicates the contrary?

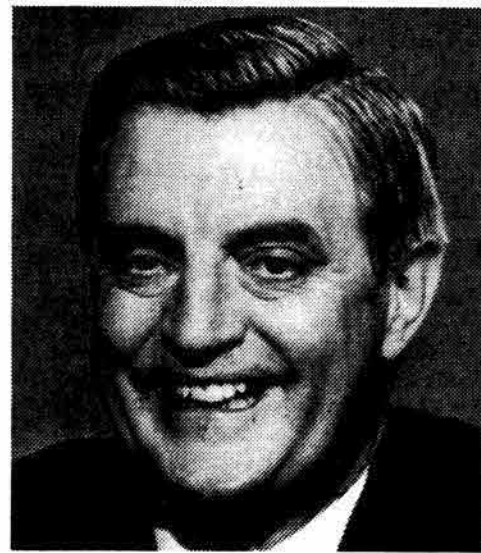
The decision to invade Grenada did not represent the views of just one section, a right wing, of the U.S. ruling class represented by Reagan. The overwhelming support of capitalist politicians for the invasion was further proof of the fundamental agreement on U.S. foreign policy goals that has existed in ruling-class circles for many years.

What differences do exist on U.S. government policy in Central America are tactical. They concern pace, timing, and how to minimize the political price the U.S. government will have to pay for an invasion.

But this does not change the fundamental agreement on the purpose of U.S. intervention. This is spelled out in a recent article titled "Mondale's G.O.P. Latin Policy," authored by Alan Tonelson, associate editor of *Foreign Policy*, a magazine published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a liberal "think tank."



Lyndon Johnson (left) elected in 1964 as "peace candidate" immediately escalated U.S. war in Vietnam. Mondale (who campaigns little on issue of war) will also implement imperialist foreign policy.



"The Democrats'... decision to... accept Ronald Reagan's bottom line in Central America," Tonelson explains, "could make deeper United States military involvement inevitable no matter who wins in November."

"[T]he Democrats," Tonelson observes correctly, "essentially accept Mr. Reagan's estimation of the stakes for the United States in the Central American conflict."

He quotes the Democratic platform which states, "the strategic importance of Central America is not in doubt, nor is the fact that the Soviet Union, Cuba, and Nicaragua have all encouraged instability and supported revolution in the region."

"The result," says Tonelson of the policy Mondale could be expected to implement in Central America, "would be Reaganism without Ronald Reagan."

It is not "Reaganism," however, that is out to stop the Central American revolution, it is imperialism. Reagan is simply the current "commander-in-chief" of U.S. foreign policy. Mondale is campaigning to take over both the title and the job that comes with it, as Tonelson admits.

Lessons of 1964

The *Guardian* acknowledges that this may be the case — but it outlines a political course based on the hope that it is not. A similar error was made by many on the U.S. left in 1964.

In that year's presidential election many argued that Republican candidate Barry Goldwater represented the extreme right-wing in U.S. politics as the *Guardian* says of Reagan. Goldwater, said most radicals then, had to be defeated at all costs, even if that meant voting for the Texas Dixiecrat Lyndon Johnson. The Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) tried to show that it recognized some of Johnson's "weaknesses" — as the *Guardian* claims to recognize Mondale's today — by putting out a button that read, "Part of the way with LBJ."

It was certainly true that Goldwater, like Reagan today, openly voiced many reactionary and right-wing ideas which, while shared by most in the ruling class, are not always publicly advanced. But voting for Johnson proved to be worse than useless as a strategy to either prevent prowar policies from being implemented, or "offer important breathing space" to Vietnamese liberation fighters.

After winning the election by a gigantic landslide, Johnson quickly tossed aside his vote-getting promises, and within weeks of his inauguration, ordered a major escalation of the U.S. war in Vietnam. And he took this course without regard for whether it jeopardized his chances in the 1968 presidential race (as it turned out that it did).

Antiwar forces were left unprepared and disarmed by the "vote LBJ" stand (both the "part of the way" and "all the way" varieties). Many felt betrayed and cried that Johnson was implementing Goldwater's foreign policy. In this they were mistaken. With the campaign rhetoric successfully behind him, Johnson simply set out to do the job the U.S. ruling class selected him to do — implement imperialist foreign policy.

The *Guardian* editors ignore the lessons of 1964 and argue that antiwar forces can pressure Mondale by voting for him. This they suggest, can slow the escalation of the war and thus give the workers and peasants of Central America more time to prepare.

Buying time for the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran revolutions is a worthy goal. Our

difference with the *Guardian* is over how to do this. But behind that difference is a much deeper one over what strategy can effectively oppose imperialist war.

Strategy to fight war

The Socialist Workers campaign puts forward a perspective of educating and organizing the working class to lead the fight to end the U.S. war in Central America and the Caribbean. That is because the working class is the only force in U.S. society with the power to do so — other than the ruling class which is waging the war.

The *Guardian* however is speaking in a completely different tongue. It does not aim to map a strategy of opposition to the war based on the working class. It is not even speaking to workers. Instead it has opted for the most unrealistic course of all — hoping the leader of an imperialist party will slow down an imperialist war.

Supporters of the SWP election campaign begin with telling the truth about what is coming in Central America and the Caribbean. It means following the example set by revolutionary fighters in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Cuba who are working for peace by preparing for war.

This approach was captured by Sandinista Commander Tomás Borge a year ago when he told a group of Canadian unionists visiting Nicaragua, "I am not optimistic in regards to peace. But I am absolutely optimistic in terms of victory."

Like the Sandinista leaders, antiwar forces here, especially those who consider themselves socialists, should tell the truth to working people: an invasion of Central America is being prepared. We cannot predict the timing or the exact circumstances, but U.S. combat troops will be sent. We cannot stop this any more than we could stop the invasion of Vietnam, but we can be confident that sending the GIs will generate widespread opposition and lay the basis for a much bigger struggle against the imperialist warmakers.

Along with the struggle of working people in Central America and the Caribbean, the fight by U.S. workers against Washington's intervention can make imperialism pay a high price for its actions. This can lead, over time, to a defeat for the U.S. government as it did in Vietnam.

The firm determination of the Cuban, Nicaraguan, and Salvadoran fighters in the face of U.S. threats, and the organized mobilization and expression of antiwar sentiment among U.S. working people has already given the rulers pause in their war drive.

But it has not ended it. Nor can it. Imperialism will not give up in Central America without a much bigger fight than it has put up so far. That is why a further escalation of the war is inevitable.

Today opponents of the war should do everything possible to educate U.S. workers about the real situation in Central America and the Caribbean, including the aims and accomplishments of the revolutions there, and the anti-working class goals of the U.S. government's war.

Important opportunities exist to do this, a fact the *Guardian* seems to ignore. Its editorial refers to "the masses of alienated and apathetic citizens." Nowhere is there any mention of the noteworthy accomplishments made by opponents of the war in the unions or the important differences in this respect from the early years of the fight against the Vietnam war.

Today, even before U.S. combat troops

Continued on Page 16

Fall tours will cap SWP election campaign

BY YVONNE HAYES

The election campaigns of Reagan-Bush and Mondale-Ferraro, the capitalist presidential candidates, are a powerful tool for the ruling rich. Through these campaigns the employing class is fueling its war in Central America.

The recent conventions of both capitalist parties were stamped by chauvinism and patriotism used to justify this war. The Democratic Party in its platform pledged a commitment to "the judicious use of American military power" while the Republicans revelled in the invasion and continued occupation of Grenada and renominated Reagan to chants of "USA! USA!"

Both parties are using their campaigns to convince working people that we have a stake in supporting U.S. aggression against the workers and peasants of Nicaragua and El Salvador.

While the Democratic and Republican election campaigns are a weapon in the employers' wars on working people at home and abroad, the socialist campaign of Mel Mason and Andrea González is an important tool in the hands of working-class fighters. Theirs is a campaign against war in Central America and the Caribbean and in defense of the struggles of working people in this country and around the world.

Mason and González, along with socialist candidates for local and federal office in cities and states around the country, will be aggressively campaigning against the proimperialist propaganda of the ruling-class parties. In the next two months they will campaign at the plant gates and mine portals, participate in antiwar activities, and take every opportunity to win a hearing for the socialist program of international working-class solidarity.

The tours of Mason and González to over 40 U.S. cities will be a feature of these activities. The candidates will be discussing the need for working people to carry out a popular revolution and establish a workers and farmers government. Such a government would organize the power of working people to run society in the interest of the majority. It would end imperialist wars like those in Central America and Grenada and use the wealth of this country to join with workers and farmers internationally to fight against exploitation and poverty.

The candidates' tours will begin on Labor Day with a visit by Mel Mason to Toledo — the site of the important battle by auto workers against AP Parts — and by Andrea González to New York City to participate in the annual Labor Day parade and Caribbean Day festival. They will then swing through coal-mining and auto-industry centers as the deadlines for the United Auto Workers and United Mine Workers contracts approach.

The U.S. capitalist class is trying to crush the organizations of U.S. workers — our unions — just as they are trying to crush the organized working people of Nicaragua. The confrontations between the

bosses and the auto workers and miners unions are tied to the battle going on in Central America. A blow against the employers in the coalfields or auto industry would be a blow against their war on our brothers and sisters in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Through their presidential campaigns, the employers are trying to weaken our class by creating divisions between working people internationally. In contrast the Mason-González campaign aims to strengthen our class by forging international working-class solidarity, especially with the working people of Central America and the Caribbean.

While the ruling-class candidates have millions of dollars in their war chests provided by their wealthy supporters, the socialist campaign depends on the more modest, but hard-earned, contributions of working people. In order to cover the costs of the tours of Mason and González, as well as meet the other expenses of the fall socialist campaign, a \$100,000 fund has been established. The campaign is depending on the financial support of everyone who agrees with the need to pose a socialist alternative to the employers' chauvinism and warmongering in the elections.



Socialist Workers Presidential Candidates on Tour

Below is a list of cities on the opening two weeks of the Mason-González fall campaign tour.

| Mel Mason | | Andrea González | |
|-------------|------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Sept. 3-4 | Toledo | Sept. 3 | New York |
| Sept. 6-7 | Cleveland | Sept. 6-7 | Atlanta |
| Sept. 9-10 | Cincinnati | Sept. 9-11 | Detroit |
| Sept. 13-15 | St. Louis | Sept. 14-15 | Indianapolis |

N.Y. hospital union wins new contract

AUGUST 30 — As we go to press, chief hospital negotiator William Abelow has threatened to break the new contract by withholding payment of the raise won by the union "until a complete contract is in place and a number of outstanding issues are resolved." Union President Doris Turner responded that "under no circumstances" would the union lose the pay increase.

BY CAROLINE LUND

NEW YORK — On August 27, Madison Square Garden echoed with the cheers of 20,000 striking health care workers, members of District 1199 of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Workers Union (AFL-CIO). The strikers voted 19,332 to 98 to accept a proposed settlement in the 47-day walkout, the longest and largest hospital strike in this city's history.

The settlement affects 30 private hospitals and 15 nursing homes in New York City and 52,000 members of District 1199.

On balance, the agreement appears to represent a victory for the overwhelmingly Black and Latino union, which conducted a militant six-week fight against hospital management efforts to break their union.

District 1199 won a 5 percent wage increase in each year of the two-year contract — up from initial management proposals that amounted to only 2.3 percent when various givebacks were counted. This is better than many other unions have been able to win in the past year, and could have a favorable impact on current negotiations between New York City and unions representing 250,000 municipal employees.

The union also won the right for every worker to receive alternate weekends off — a key demand.

On the negative side, the new contract includes a freeze on starting wages of newly hired workers.

In addition, the hospital bosses insisted on an escape hatch concerning financing from the state government. The state controls most of the hospitals' income through its regulation of Medicaid and Blue Cross insurance rates. The contract can be voided by management (or the union) if the state does not come across with the necessary funds in case the hospital bosses claim their budgets cannot take the higher labor costs.

Trying to wear the union down, the hospital bosses and state government allowed medical care to deteriorate drastically. Hospital management claimed that the 52,000 workers were not missed and that supervisors and volunteer workers could



Militant ranks of District 1199 staffed picket lines for more than 6 weeks in bitter fight against hospital union busting.

provide for patients' needs. Court rulings cut off the strikers' medical benefits, and slapped the union with a \$45,000-a-day fine. The weekend before the settlement was reached, the hospital bosses declared their intention to hire permanent employees to replace the strikers on August 27.

Even the Roman Catholic Archdiocese

of New York felt compelled to label this threat as "union busting," and to ask Catholic hospitals not to go along with it.

The active mobilization of the union's rank and file on militant picket lines — backed by the solidarity of other working people — is what finally turned back the hospital bosses' union-busting probe.

Labor Day antiwar message

Continued from front page

tober and the subsequent U.S. invasion ensured the revolution's defeat.

The U.S. rulers still aim to turn back the advancing revolution in El Salvador and crush the revolutionary government and people of Nicaragua. They aim to reverse the Cuban revolution.

The U.S. employers spread the lie of "Soviet expansionism" to try to justify their aggression. But Cuba was taken over by Cubans. Nicaraguans took control of Nicaragua, and the Salvadoran people are moving closer toward gaining power in their country. That's the problem the U.S. imperialists face — losing their social, economic, and political grip on Central America and the Caribbean.

The U.S. capitalist class, their government, and their political parties — the Democrats and Republicans — will do whatever is necessary to defend their domination, including committing thousands of ground troops in a massive, regional war.

It's up to U.S. workers to lead the fight against Washington's war — not only out of solidarity with our brothers and sisters abroad, but also because working people

can't afford to die in another counterrevolutionary war like Vietnam. The U.S. war in Central America and the Caribbean is intimately bound up with the bosses' anti-labor offensive here. They seek to drive down our wages, speedup production; undermine our democratic rights, lower our standard of living, and create a general climate of reaction for the same reason they attack working people in Central America and the Caribbean — to increase their profits.

It's the capitalist system that spawns imperialist war. It's the capitalist system — where a tiny handful of super-rich families profit from the oppression and exploitation of the working masses — that is the root of the problems U.S. workers face today.

In July I visited Nicaragua and saw a powerful example of what working people can do when they take political power into their own hands. In our fight against capitalist war and austerity we can learn from their example. Working people must rely on our own strength. We must solidary with our brothers and sisters in battle. Our aim must be wresting political power from the bosses and placing it in the hands of workers and farmers.

Coal operators break off talks

Continued from Page 20

the 12,000 UMWA members in Alabama will stay on the job.

The UMWA leadership is actively seeking similar agreements from other coal operators who do not belong to the BCOA. Arch Mineral, with sizable operations in the Illinois and Pennsylvania coalfields, signed such an agreement in mid-August.

Top UMWA officials are evidently relying on the hope that if other coal companies continue to mine coal while BCOA companies are struck, the BCOA operators will feel greater pressure to reach an agreement with the union. Miners who continue working will also continue paying into the union's new strike fund, which, for the first time, will pay benefits to those miners forced on strike.

In the past, striking miners have attempted to shut down all coal production during a walkout, including at nonunion mines, in order to make the maximum impact on the nation's economy and thus pressure the operators to settle. The no strike agreements put new limits on the UMWA as it squares off against the operators.

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Fight against U.S. war in Central America and Caribbean center of socialist meeting

BY MARGARET JAYKO

OBERLIN, Ohio — An antiwar convention.

That's how Malik Miah, editor of the *Militant* and a national co-chairman of the Socialist Workers Party, described the SWP's 32nd National Convention and Educational and Activists Conference, held here August 4-9.

Miah, speaking on behalf of the convention delegates on the opening night, welcomed the more than 1,000 conference participants, who included fighters for the rights of Blacks, women, and the undocumented; trade unionists; farm activists; and international guests.

The purpose of the convention was to assess the state of the class struggle in the United States and internationally, and in that framework to decide the next steps in building a proletarian Marxist party.

Campaign against U.S. war

Campaigning against the escalating U.S. war in Central America and the Caribbean must be placed at the center of all the party's political work, Miah explained.

Meetings here of members of each of the nine major industrial unions in which the SWP carries out political work discussed how to make this campaign the focus of their political activity in the unions and on the job.

Central to this effort was their decision to help organize tours of coworkers to Nicaragua. Visiting revolutionary Nicaragua, the socialist workers agreed, is the best way for working people in the United States to see for themselves the gains made by their sisters and brothers that the U.S. ruling class is trying to crush through force and violence.

Through participating in these tours and other antiwar and solidarity activities, more working people will become politically convinced of the need to actively oppose U.S. intervention and to tell others the truth about Nicaragua and El Salvador. They will become part of the core of vanguard workers that can help organize a bigger working-class-based antiwar movement when Washington qualitatively escalates the war by direct invasion with U.S. ground troops.

Combined fightback

The U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean, Miah stressed, is the biggest front in the broader battle taking place today between the tiny handful of wealthy families that rule the United States on the one hand, and the exploited and oppressed in the United States and the rest of the world on the other.

This battle will qualitatively escalate as the employing class pushes forward its drive against the revolutions in the region and against the living standards and democratic rights of working people.

The mass fightback that will develop against the war in Central America and the Caribbean by unionists, Blacks, Latinos,

women, working farmers, and youth will be more and more intertwined with the fight against austerity, union-busting, and attacks on democratic rights, Miah said.

The SWP is in a good position to participate in and help lead this process. This is because the party decided in 1978 to get the overwhelming majority of its members into jobs in basic industries organized by the key industrial unions.

The nine unions which the SWP focuses on today are: Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; International Association of Machinists; International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; International Union of Electronic Workers; Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; United Auto Workers; United Mine Workers; United Steelworkers; and United Transportation Union.

Following Miah's report, *Militant* editor Cindy Jaquith gave a talk on "U.S. Imperialism vs. the Workers and Peasants of Central America and the Caribbean: Where the Revolution in Our America Stands Today."

The chairperson for the evening was José G. Pérez, who heads the Managua, Nicaragua, bureau of the *Militant* and its Spanish-language sister publication, *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Advances and setbacks

Jaquith began by describing the advances and setbacks for working people in the Americas in the past year. Pointing first to the advances, Jaquith described how the Sandinistas have further strengthened their revolution and dealt important military and political blows to the U.S.-organized mercenary army that is conducting attacks on their territory.

In El Salvador, despite the unrelenting escalation of the war by the Reagan administration with the bipartisan support of Congress, the rebel forces are forging greater unity and the labor movement is waging important struggles to defend workers' living standards.

In Cuba, the workers and farmers in the last year have registered important new economic progress while significantly expanding their military forces in response to Washington's threats and provocations.

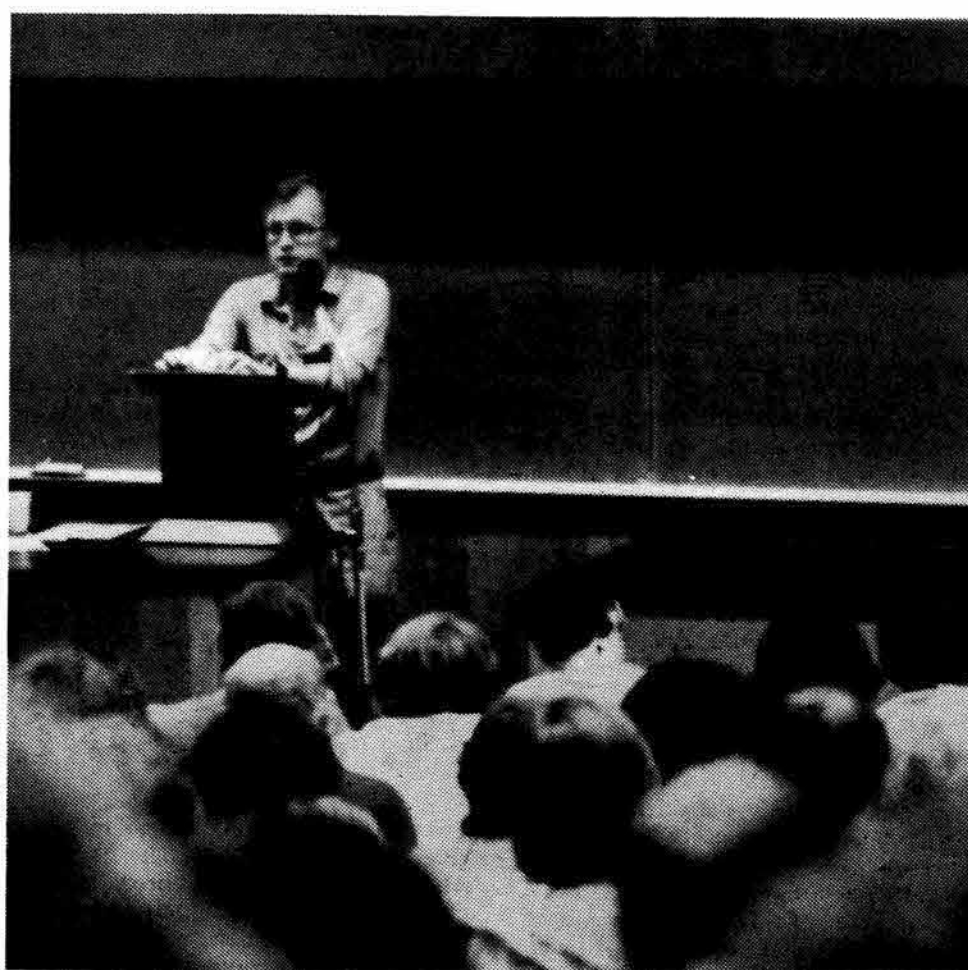
But, Jaquith reminded the audience, working people the world over also suffered a big defeat this year — the counter-revolutionary overthrow of the workers and farmers government in Grenada by a Stalinist faction led by Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard. These betrayers of the revolution then assassinated the central leadership grouped around the former Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and opened the door to the invasion and occupation of that once-free island by thousands of U.S. troops.

Center of world class struggle

Central America and the Caribbean are at the center of the world class struggle, said Jaquith, because that's where the socialist revolution is being extended today. It's to halt these struggles that Washington is waging war in this region. That war is aimed at overturning all these revolutions. A serious attempt to accomplish that goal, emphasized Jaquith, will inevitably mean the use of U.S. ground troops — thousands of them.

The U.S. war in Central America and the Caribbean is often called a "new Vietnam," said Jaquith. Like Vietnam, it will be a regional war, engulfing all of Central America. There will be hundreds of thousands of casualties.

But during the Vietnam War, she said, the antiwar movement grew up outside the organized labor movement. This time it will be different. The industrial working class and its unions will be right at the center of the resistance that will erupt when the U.S. does finally decide to invade. This is because the ruling class offensive against the industrial unions and the emerging resistance to that offensive by the ranks has put the industrial unions at the center of U.S. politics today.



Militant/K.C. Ellis
Barry Sheppard, SWP national cochairperson, gave report from party's Political Committee to workshop on fight against U.S. intervention in Central America and Caribbean. SWP convention launched national campaign against U.S. war.

The fight against the U.S. war, Jaquith stressed, will be totally tied up with the struggle between the workers and the employers here at home. There will be class battles the likes of which most people in this country have never seen before. The SWP bases its strategy of building a party of communist workers today, said Jaquith, on this reality and perspective.

Anti-intervention workshop

Several hundred people jammed into an overflow workshop on the SWP's campaign against U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean. A report was presented from the SWP Political Committee by Barry Sheppard, the New York SWP organizer and a national co-chairman of the SWP.

Sheppard explained that the effort by party members in the unions to get tours organized to Nicaragua will give socialist workers a focus for their discussions with other unionists about the stakes for U.S. working people in the war in Central America and the Caribbean and the example that Nicaragua and Cuba provide for the kind of advances that can be made when working people run society.

Sheppard reported that both the meeting of socialists in the United Auto Workers and in the United Mine Workers discussed how campaigning against war would be an important contribution socialist auto workers and coal miners could make as they vigorously participate in the upcoming contract battles — including possible strikes — in these two industries in the fall.

The workers' tours to Nicaragua will be the center and the axis of the party's activity against war, said Sheppard. But they won't be the only antiwar activity that party members will be involved in.

Another important way to involve the union movement in the fight against war is through U.S. tours of Nicaraguan and Salvadoran unionists and others. For example, Salvadoran labor leader Alejandro Molina Lara was able to speak to many union locals last year, which helped educate thousands of workers about why they should oppose Washington's intervention in El Salvador.

Sales of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* at factory gates, said Sheppard, will be another way to reach workers with the party's views on the coming confrontation in Central America and the Caribbean

and what workers should do about it.

In addition, said Sheppard, there are antiwar and solidarity coalitions and committees in every city where the party has a branch. And there are a wide variety of activities that take place: antiwar conferences, forums, demonstrations, speaking tours, and meetings.

In many cities, antiwar activists are making plans to organize important protests around October 25 to mark the first anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Grenada and to demand an end to the U.S. occupation of the island.

SWP's contribution to antiwar fight

The party has something important to contribute as it participates in these activities and formations, said Sheppard. As a party of communist workers, its members explain why the U.S. government is at war with Nicaragua and Cuba and props up the dictatorship in El Salvador; why it's necessary to include the demand for "U.S. troops out of Grenada" in antiwar activities; why the Pentagon will eventually send troops to Central America; how this is interconnected with the class struggle here at home; and what kind of antiwar movement can and must be built. Socialist workers can inspire other antiwar activists with the conviction that it is possible to actively involve the union movement and rank and file workers today in the fight against war, and that this is a harbinger of the kind of mass-based working class antiwar movement that will develop as the war escalates.

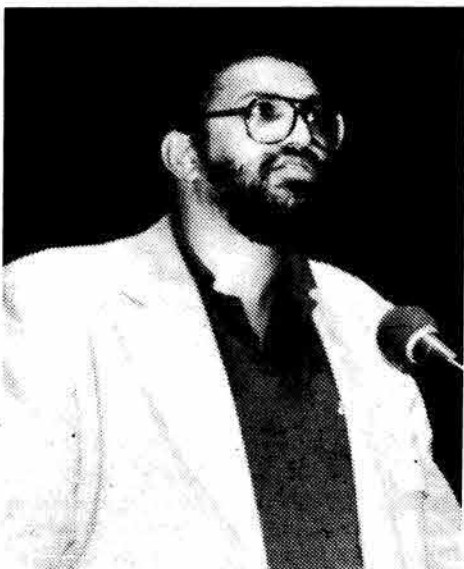
Socialist workers can play an important role in helping to draw workers, the union movement, and the key allies of the working class — Blacks, Latinos, women, and family farmers — into the fight against war.

What can be done on this score today, said Sheppard, is modest but extremely important preparatory work.

In addition, Sheppard said, SWP members are continuing to participate in the work brigades organized to go to Nicaragua; activities in support of Salvadoran refugees; and tours to Nicaragua sponsored by Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Tours, Inc.

SWP members are also active in artists' groups which have been formed against the war and in solidarity with Nicaragua. In these groups, too, said Sheppard, communists raise working-class political

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Militant/Charles Ostrofsky
Malik Miah, *Militant* editor and SWP national cochairperson, called fight against U.S. war axis of all party's activity.

Anticapitalist fighters from around the world highlight of convention

From its founding, the Socialist Workers Party has insisted that the fight for socialism can be effectively advanced only on an international basis. With that conviction, it has always placed a top priority on developing cooperation with anticapitalist fighters in other countries.

A highlight of the party's 1984 convention was the attendance of 83 visitors from 10 countries.

These international guests attended convention sessions open to nondelegates and participated in classes, workshops, and meetings of socialist trade unionists. Several led workshops and classes relating to their own countries.

The following are excerpts from greetings to the convention by official representatives of various organizations, including sections and sympathizing groups of the Fourth International, a revolutionary socialist organization founded in 1938.

In addition there were guests from Australia, Puerto Rico, Sweden, Britain, and Mexico. (Last week's issue reported on a class and remarks given by British socialists on the current mine-workers strike there.)

Greetings presented by a representative of the Revolutionary Workers League, the Canadian section of the Fourth International.

The comrades here from our section — from English Canada and Quebec — feel ourselves a genuine part of this convention. It is a truly internationalist gathering both in composition and in program and perspective.

We are here as revolutionary Marxists — industrial workers facing the same questions, projecting the same campaign, as you are discussing here this week.

The bourgeoisie in Canada have called federal elections for September 4, and we, like you, are running socialist workers as candidates. We too are placing at the center of our program the need to fight for a workers and farmers government. Our candidates are explaining that we won't get such a government by sharpening our pencils and putting a scratch on our ballots, however carefully it is done. It will be workers and their allies who will establish such a government through struggle.

We in the Revolutionary Workers League and you comrades of the SWP have the task of combating together the divisions sown by the ruling class among North American workers.

One of the bosses' favorite tools is protectionism. Not only does it pit North American workers against our brothers and sisters in the underdeveloped countries. But we are also told in English Canada and Quebec that protectionism is a must to stop U.S. steelworkers, garment workers, and auto workers from snatching up our jobs.

Because your party and ours share a common course and a common goal, we have been working together on some joint projects. Both the publication of the new theoretical magazine, *New International*, and the documents of the early years of the Comintern — the Communist International — are joint ventures to which the RWL is proud to have assigned leading members.

We will be organizing public meetings for Mel Mason and Andrea González and our candidates during our election campaign. Together we will get out the truth about Nicaragua and we will explain the need for a government of our class and its allies. We will encourage all those inspired by this perspective to join with us in building our international movement.

Greetings presented by a representative of the Socialist Action League, New Zealand section of the Fourth International.

One of the points at your convention has been defense of the Central American revolutions and, in that context, drawing the

lesson of the overthrow of the Grenada revolution. New Zealand's rulers have also been drawing some lessons from this.

When Reagan's forces invaded Grenada last year, the government of Robert Muldoon supported that invasion. He also said his government's aim in the South Pacific was to prevent the duplication in New Zealand's backyard of any more Grenadas.

His words took on deeper significance with the establishment of a special military strike force, equipped and trained for combat in the Pacific islands. These forces have already carried out a practice invasion on one of New Zealand's offshore islands.

New Zealand's rulers have understood well the example a small island like Grenada was providing the struggles of the Pacific island peoples.

It is an example for the people of New Caledonia and Tahiti struggling against French colonialism. For the West Papuans who are waging a liberation war to overthrow the Indonesian dictatorship. For Vanuatu which has recently freed itself from British and French rule. And for the other island people faced with French, British, Australian, U.S., and New Zealand imperialism.

These vanguard fighters of the Pacific have been increasingly looking to the revolutions of Grenada, Central America, and Cuba.

New Zealand's rulers have long regarded themselves as the cops of the South Pacific. But their imperialist interests have driven them to war far beyond that region — in Vietnam, Malaya, Korea, the Mideast, and the Malvinas.

And when the U.S. invasion of Grenada occurred last year, Muldoon offered to send forces to that country before he was even asked.

There is no doubt they will want to be part of the coming war in Central America.

The Socialist Action League has always fought and campaigned against these wars, from Vietnam to Central America. And right now we are conducting a special campaign to distribute the book *Maurice Bishop Speaks* to independence fighters in the Pacific and vanguard workers in New Zealand.

Already it is being read in New Caledonia, Tonga, Fiji, and the Philippines.

You will be pleased to hear that Muldoon's government was thrown out by the workers of New Zealand when they mobilized to elect a Labor government.

This election took place in the context of an intense ruling-class offensive, especially in the last two years, which have seen wages frozen and antiunion laws introduced.

In the face of this onslaught, the union leadership did nothing but retreat. However, from the start of this year a political fightback began to take shape. A fightback spearheaded mainly by young Maori workers. Maoris are the oppressed indigenous people of New Zealand.

In January, several thousand Maoris participated in a week-long march to demand an end to racist discrimination. These same young Maori workers have been at the forefront of a series of strikes against Muldoon's antiunion laws.

The Socialist Action League was formed 15 years ago by a group of young workers and students who were inspired by the role of the Fourth International in defending the Vietnamese revolution.

As we move into the new war [in Central America] we realize again how important and indispensable the International is.

Once more, vanguard fighters the world over face the overriding responsibility to defend revolutions from imperialism.

Greetings presented by a representative of the Socialist Bloc of the Dominican Republic. The Socialist Bloc was formed as a result of a recent fusion of several left groups in that country.

The Socialist Bloc of the Dominican Re-



June 9, 1984, antiwar protest in New York City. Socialist Workers Party members actively built and participated in this action. Party's internationalism was also seen at convention, which was attended by many international guests.

public is fighting for the establishment of a popular revolutionary government made up of the working class and the peasantry.

This period is characterized by the deepest economic crisis of the bourgeois government in the Dominican Republic. This is a moment where the political and social crisis, together with the development of the workers and popular movements and the developing unity of the forces of revolution, are placing us in a prerevolutionary situation.

The Socialist Bloc and the Dominican Left Front are continuing the glorious road of the victorious Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions, as well as the road of revolutionary armed struggle being taken by the comrades of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The Socialist Bloc's central goal is the establishment of a popular revolutionary government of the workers and peasants.

We are convinced that in the very bowels of imperialism you are building a revolutionary party which will lead the struggle of the workers and farmers toward taking power and building socialism in the United States. Yours is a profoundly internationalist socialist party, as shown by your fraternal solidarity with the Socialist Bloc, the Dominican Left Front, and the entire Dominican people.

The following are excerpts from a message sent to the convention from Abe Weisburd and Chan Bun Han for the Committee in Solidarity with Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos.

We commend the Socialist Workers Party, and its publications, the *Militant* and *Intercontinental Press*, for their selfless and tireless support to the struggles of the people and governments of the three socialist Indochinese countries — Vietnam, Kampuchea, and Laos.

The SWP and its publications have set an example for the rest of the country by their unflinching support for the Indochinese countries against U.S. imperialism, against the misleaders of China, against the right-wing Thai ruling circle, and against the bloody genocidal Pol Pot forces and their counterrevolutionary allies.

We also thank the SWP for its cooperation in the current campaign to "Oust the Pol Pot Coalition and to seat the legitimate government of Kampuchea in the United Nations."

The Solidarity Committee concentrates its efforts on support to the Indochinese peoples' struggle for peace, freedom, and socialism, and also takes part in supporting the peoples' struggles in Central America, the Caribbean, in southern Africa, and in the Mideast, and the struggles at home against racism, sexism, and oppression.

The following telegram was received from Don Rojas. Rojas was press secretary to the late Grenadian revolutionary leader, Maurice Bishop.

Best wishes for a successful conference. Keep up excellent Grenada support. Solidarity.

Greetings presented by a representative of People's Democracy, the Irish affiliate of the Fourth International.

I would like to use this occasion to thank, on behalf of our entire organization, the comrades of the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance for sending your presidential candidate, Mel Mason, to our country. He came in May of this year to take part in meetings and demonstrations that were organized in opposition to Reagan's visit to Ireland and that were in solidarity with the revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean in their mighty and determined battle against U.S. imperialism.

Despite jailings, intimidation, and murder by both the British ruling class and the Irish ruling class, the Irish people remain resolute, determined, and self-confident in their struggle for self-determination and economic justice.

We heartily support and welcome into this fight the British coal miners in their battle with the British ruling class and the Thatcher government.

Workers throughout Ireland are rooting for the coal miners.

The ongoing fight against the British presence in our country is merging today with the struggles of workers in defense of their jobs and living standards. In the last couple of years we have seen quite a number of factory occupations. Under the impact of the economic crisis, factories have been shut down and workers thrown onto the dole [unemployment] heap. The workers have responded to these attacks. They've responded militantly.

This militancy being displayed by workers make us confident that as the struggles continue, as workers draw the lessons of their battles, they begin to see that they as a class are the only class that can lead the fight to free our country from imperialism and build a secure future for our people — a socialist future.

Greetings by a leader of the Militant Socialist Organization of Iceland, a sympathizing group of the Fourth International.

I see the Socialist Workers Party as a leading party in the International. We learned about the turn to the working class from the SWP. The SWP is not retreating from the turn today, but deepening it. Our conception of the character of the [revolutionary] party and its organizational norms are taken from your tradition.

But you are also leading on another level. You have taught us the magnificent significance of the new revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean. The significance of Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada before the defeat, is not just that they were new revolutions. No, the main point about these revolutions is to learn from them, to understand their importance for Marxist theory and program.

The relations between the SWP and the Militant Socialist Organization in Iceland have been warm, friendly, and full of respect. Your leaders have visited our country. This has great importance for us.

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'This is history happening — you should be part of it'

BY PAT GROGAN

OBERLIN, Ohio — "Being in Nicaragua made me realize that this is not just ideas, this is history happening, and you should be a part of it." That's how Jean Armbruster described her decision to join the Young Socialist Alliance. Armbruster was attending her first convention of the Socialist Workers Party held here August 4-9.

Armbruster, a young woman from Santa Fe, New Mexico, described herself as "just out of college and ready to take on the job world." She was active in the Santa Fe Peace Coalition and decided to accompany a group of YSA and SWP members on a tour of Nicaragua. Among the tour participants was Mel Mason, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president.

"Seeing Nicaragua," she told the *Militant*, "is like suffocating and suddenly being able to breathe — to see the possibilities for humanity, knowing it's a reality. And knowing that there is Cuba, 25 years down the road already. It gives you so much optimism. And knowing that it is the U.S. government that is the cause of suffering in the world, you know that you've got to do it here — and that you can."

She said she was impressed by the democratic process she saw at the convention and at the wide variety of classes. "I'm happy to join a party that is so bent on learning, that learns from mistakes, too. That studies, talks things out."

She commented on the internationalist spirit of the convention. "I learned so much about Ireland, Kampuchea, Britain. The whole idea of internationalism, of a world without borders, seeing the world as a whole with all its connections," was the main thing she got out of the convention.

"You can see," she said, "how excited I am about joining a party like this."

Classes, discussion groups

Armbruster was one of close to a hundred people who were attending an SWP convention for the first time. Some were new members of the YSA and SWP, others were coworkers or friends who work with the YSA and SWP politically. Thirteen people decided to join the SWP or the YSA at the convention itself.

Introductory classes on Marxism were organized. Discussion groups were set up following major presentations so that new people would have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the major political decisions of the convention. A reception was held with the SWP's presidential and vice-presidential candidates, Mel Mason and Andrea González.

Signe Martell, a bus driver from Minneapolis, told the *Militant*, "The thing that got me really excited about being here, that made things clear, was going to the class on the 'Communist Manifesto' that was recommended for new people. It helped me see where things fit together, where the ideas come from."

Martell said she first met members of the SWP and YSA when she signed up for a *Militant* tour of Nicaragua. She had been reading the *Militant* and "after I met these people, and saw Nicaragua with them, I knew this is where I fit in; this is what I believe in."

'We are only work hands here'

A Latina garment worker from New York City said, "One of the first things I noticed here is that this is a party that accepts human beings as they are without setting any preconditions or requirements." [This, and the next interview, were conducted in Spanish.]

Coming from Peru to the U.S., she said she was "confronted by a lot of racism, an anti-Latino mentality. We are downgraded, we are considered to be only work-hands."

She was introduced to the SWP by a co-worker in a garment shop. "Working with this party, even though I am from another country and speak a different language — while struggling to learn a new one — I can

be useful, broaden my social vision, and be useful to other people. Also, I can be useful to my own country."

In Peru she was a teacher, but because of language, she had to seek other work here. "In Peru, we were taught to sew, so that's the only thing more or less I knew how to do. But here I had to confront the electric machine. I cut my hands many times."

"I think the capitalists steal even more here than they do in my own country. I've had experiences like being paid one week, but not the next, because they say they don't have the money. I've had other employers whose paychecks bounce. And unfortunately, the union doesn't do much about it."

"One thing that surprised me about the unions here was the lack of democracy. Of course, with people who don't have their papers in order, it's understandable. Because they're intimidated by the INS [Immigration and Naturalization Service] they have to keep quiet. So I think that we should start to fight, so that these institutions become democratic, become representative of the workers."

Carlos, a young Salvadoran who had joined the YSA last year in California, told the *Militant*, "Having lived with the revo-

lutionary process in El Salvador, the first thing I tried to do was see how I could collaborate with revolutionary organizations here."

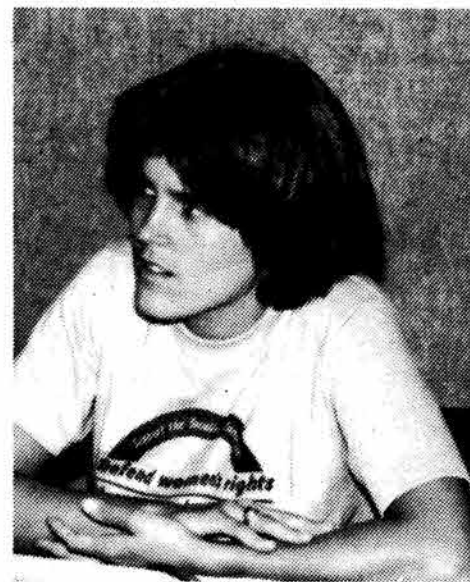
He said he chose to join the YSA because, "The YSA and SWP are training themselves to be real leaders of the working class, the farmers, and the exploited minorities in this country."

"Here at the convention," he said, "I have had the experience of learning from compañeros from all over the world. This internationalism is a reflection of the readiness of every member of the YSA and SWP to build a party that is identified with the interests of the workers and farmers, and the consciousness of every member wanting to build a socialist system to throw capitalism in the garbage."

Fight against racism, war

Two young Black high school students talked about the effect that racism had on their thinking. Christopher Marshall said, "Racism is all around you, all the time, at school, in the neighborhood, on the street. You've got to find a way to fight it."

Eugene Victor Johnson said one of the reasons he joined the YSA was to fight ra-



Militant/Steven Fuchs
Jean Armbruster decided to join Young Socialist Alliance at convention.

cism. "I've witnessed racial discrimination, but when you're the object of it, that's something else." Johnson was harassed by the police, who put handcuffs on him, "just for walking down the street. I don't want a life like that."

"And people shouldn't have to die in wars," he said. "What for? What are they dying for? To protect some oil well? I don't want that."

Johnson summed up the thinking of many at the convention: "We're the future," he said. "We can change things."

Socialists map antiwar campaign

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ideas and perspectives for the fight against war.

During the conference Thiago de Mello and Amazon, a 10-piece jazz group, performed a concert honoring the fifth anniversary of the Sandinista Revolution. De Mello had just returned from leading a delegation of 26 U.S. artists to Nicaragua's July 19 celebration at the invitation of the Nicaraguan government.

Two resolutions

In the months preceding the convention, every branch of the SWP organized several membership discussions on two documents before the party: a draft political resolution submitted by the Political Committee; and a report titled, "For a Workers and Farmers Government in the United States" which had been adopted by the SWP's National Committee in March 1982. Based on these discussions, delegates were elected from every branch.

At the convention, the delegates discussed four reports based on the two documents. In addition, the ideas in the resolutions were discussed by all participants in workshops, classes, and informal discussions which were held throughout the week. Both resolutions were adopted unanimously by the delegates on the last day of the convention.

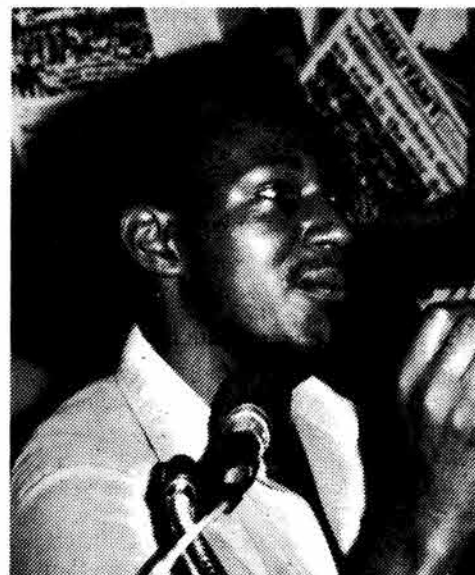
The other task facing the delegates was to elect a new National Committee, which has the responsibility to implement the convention's decisions and organize the party between conventions.

The gathering was an educational conference, as well as a convention, to prepare and strengthen the party and its supporters with the political and theoretical tools necessary to carry out the political work decided on.

A majority of participants were industrial workers. This was true for the 83 international guests as well as for those from the United States. Participants were members of a wide range of organizations including unions, antiwar groups and committees in solidarity with Central America and the Caribbean, the National Black Independent Political Party, National Organization for Women, as well as farm activists and others.

Sixty-one percent of the delegates were industrial workers, with 49 percent in one of the nine industrial unions that the SWP focuses its work in.

There were 230 members of the Young Socialist Alliance present, the revolutionary socialist youth group that's in political



Militant photos by K.C. Ellis
Mac Warren gave report on U.S. political situation. Mary-Alice Waters reported on world discussion of workers and farmers government slogan.

solidarity with the SWP.

Guests attended from Australia, Britain, Canada, the Dominican Republic, Iceland, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, Puerto Rico, and Sweden.

Also present were two striking British coal miners and an activist in the miners' wives support group. Discussion about this massive class battle figured prominently throughout the convention.

The meetings of socialist unionists discussed how they could bring the facts about this strike and its lessons to bear in the U.S. union movement. Following the convention, the three participants in the strike toured several U.S. cities to talk to working people and win solidarity. Spanish and French translation was available for all proceedings and events throughout the week.

Polarization

Mac Warren gave a report for the Political Committee titled, "Polarization, Politicization, Proletarianization," that focused on the U.S. political situation.

Under the impact of the employers' decade-long offensive, said Warren — the "takeback decade" — social and political conflicts are being more and more openly expressed in class terms.

Capitalist politicians, of both the conservative and liberal variety, try to cover up the fundamental class conflict that is at the root of struggles over union-busting, women's rights, Black rights, and war. But a small layer of workers is beginning to reject this cover-up and starting to see the



class roots of the problems they face.

Working people involved in struggles against the employers and the employers' government, like AP Parts auto workers in Toledo, copper miners in Arizona, hospital workers in New York, and Black youth in Miami are becoming more open to radical ideas as they learn more about the class divisions in this society through the course of the struggles they are engaged in. They begin to radicalize under the impact of these events, and begin to look for an alternative, progressive social program to that offered by the capitalist class.

At the other pole of this polarization, said Warren, are many middle-class people, as well as a layer of more privileged workers. In response to the crisis, some of them begin to identify more with the employers and the government, and see Blacks, undocumented workers, women's rights fighters, and the people of Central America and the Caribbean as their enemies.

This polarization, said Warren, means communist workers get a broader, more serious hearing than previously for their explanation of the class nature of society.

Warren also discussed how the takeback decade includes five years of U.S. war in Central America and the Caribbean, a war begun in response to the victorious workers and peasants revolutions in Nicaragua and Grenada in 1979.

The employers are beginning now to use preparations for widening of that war to in-

Continued on next page

Workers must lead fight against war

Continued from preceding page

tensify their attacks on working people at home. More and more, the U.S. war in Central America will be used as a cudgel to bust unions, to restrict democratic rights, and to attack Blacks, women, and the undocumented. This must be done, emphasized Warren, in order to free the ruling class's hands to expand the war abroad.

Politicization

There's a big difference, a "gap," said Warren, between the level of political consciousness of the overwhelming majority of workers today, and the necessary level of political class consciousness that will develop in the future.

As the draft political resolution explained:

"There is today a gap between the current experiences and consciousness of the working class, and the radically transformed conditions and methods of struggle that will emerge as social, economic, and war crises tear apart the current political framework of relative social stability and bourgeois democracy."

"Among the combative vanguard of the working class today, there is no generalized political perspective that bridges the gap between today's conditions and the qualitatively changed situation in which the revolutionary battles will be fought that will culminate in the establishment of a workers' and farmers' government in the United States."

"As vanguard workers go through the experiences of setbacks and advances, victories and defeats in struggle under those radically altered conditions, they will acquire revolutionary combat experience and their consciousness will be transformed. In this process, and under these conditions, the mass revolutionary party that is needed to lead the struggle for political power will be constructed."

Politicization, said Warren, means working people breaking in action with the program of the exploiters. It means adopting a program and a strategy that advances the interests of all the oppressed and exploited — like Malcolm X did.

Only a small number of individual workers are making this leap in consciousness today — some of whom can be recruited to the SWP.

Labor party

It's in this framework, said Warren, that communists should examine how to use the slogan for a labor party based on the trade unions.

In advancing the labor party slogan, Warren explained, the party can sometimes slip into raising it as an organizational slogan, rather than emphasizing the programmatic content of this fight — the labor party as a tool for independent working class political action.

He explained that the party sometimes presented the labor party to other unionists as something they should build in an individual action sense right now. But this telescopes politically where things really are in



Militant/K.C. Ellis

SWP delegates from across country discussed why working-class-based antiwar movement will develop when U.S. government qualitatively escalates its war by direct intervention of U.S. ground troops.

the U.S. class struggle.

The labor party proposal alone, Warren continued, is not the solution to the current lack of politicization in the working class. Referring to the political resolution, he explained, the fact that no labor party exists is the result of the lack of a revolutionary leadership, not the other way around. Raising the labor party slogan is not somehow by itself going to solve the crisis of working-class leadership or spark a politicization of the oppressed and exploited. Things will happen the other way around.

At the same time, Warren added, not raising the labor party in the proper framework today — thinking you can go around the struggle for it — would be ultra left and a giant obstacle to politicization.

The labor party will grow out of class combat, out of a genuine fight to transform the labor movement on the part of a layer of fighters. These workers, Warren continued, will make the labor party part of the fighting program of a class-struggle left wing, and they will seek to build such a party as an instrument to advance the fight for a workers and farmers government.

The idea of a labor party, as well as a mass Black party, remains an essential concept in the educational work that socialists must do today, said Warren, because it addresses the problem of problems — the need for independent political mass action by the working class and its allies.

Electoralism

A central obstacle today, said Warren, to the politicization of masses of working people is *electoralism*.

Politicization, said Warren, is the opposite of what is called "politics" in this country today: voting, registering to vote, and getting a "good person" — or a Black, or a Latino, or a woman, or a unionist — elected.

The stranglehold of the illusion that elections are the way to effect social change is a product of the fact that no significant layer of the working class has yet reached the conclusion that a revolutionary perspective is necessary in the United States.

The problem is not elections per se, but rather the belief that what happens in society is determined by who gets elected rather than by the clash of big social and class forces in the factories, picket lines, streets, and battlefields.

Electoralism counsels working people and the oppressed not to rely on their own power and action to advance their interests, but rather to sit tight and put their hopes in the candidate "of their choice." It inculcates passivity and is *depoliticizing*.

Electoralism also camouflages the class character of all crucial political issues confronting working people. It cuts off and blunts the politicization process of working people.

The opposite of electoralism is the fight

for independent working class political action, which is the perspective put forward by the Socialist Workers Party presidential campaign of Mel Mason and Andrea González.

As the draft political resolution explains, "electoralism will be weakened as millions [of working people] begin to look toward the goal of revolution rather than seeking to reform the capitalist state."

NBIPP

An important part of the SWP's activity in support of a perspective of independent working class political action is its support for the National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP), Warren explained.

The NBIPP represents an important small nucleus organized around a charter that puts forward a program for Black self-determination and against racist oppression, capitalist exploitation, and imperialism.

The existence and activities of the NBIPP help keep this perspective of independent political action by the exploited and oppressed part of the discussion among vanguard fighters in the working class.

The NBIPP, Warren explained, is part of the 20 years of discussions and battles for independent Black political action in the United States, which is a form of independent working class political action.

Warren said independent Black political action has its roots in the real class battles in this country, from the war against slavery to the fight to overthrow the system of Jim Crow segregation in the South and the ghetto rebellions. It's because of the real history of struggle of the Black nationality that the idea of independent Black political action is such a durable one and cannot simply be buried by the liberals and all the union and Black misleaders.

The NBIPP is the result of the beginning of the politicization of a layer of Black fighters who developed a charter which points the way forward for all working people. That's why the SWP circulates NBIPP's charter as widely as possible among all workers, said Warren, using it to explain the vanguard role of Blacks, an *overwhelmingly proletarian oppressed nationality*, and what kind of program the working class must develop to fight for its interests. The meetings of socialist industrial unionists held here all discussed how to build the NBIPP on the job and in the unions.

Jackson campaign

Jesse Jackson's campaign for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination, said Warren, was an obstacle to advancing a perspective of independent Black and working class political action. It depoliticized those who supported his campaign and made it harder to convince Blacks and other workers to act in their

own interests.

The main problem with Jackson was not that he was in the Democratic Party, one of the two parties of the U.S. imperialists. It's not an organizational affiliation problem, said Warren. Rather, it's his pro-capitalist, pro-imperialist, anti-worker, anti-Black program that's the problem. And that program is an obstacle to the fight for fundamental social change, whether Jackson's in the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, a Black party, a labor party, or no party.

Proletarianization

On the Jackson election campaign, as with many other political questions today, Warren said, the SWP is going against the stream of middle-class public opinion and the views of the petty-bourgeois left. These currents have succumbed to the pressures which bear down on them as a result of the ruling class' move to the right.

The only way to maintain a revolutionary program and perspective in times like these is to build a party which is deeply rooted in the working class, the only class which has the potential will and power to effectively challenge the ruling class for power.

Only a party based in the working class, said Warren, can both reach the political clarity necessary to not go off course and at the same time can be flexible enough to be able to respond to new opportunities as they develop.

Workers and farmers government

A central part of the convention and the pre-convention discussion leading up to it was coming to grips with the need for an alliance between the workers and the working farmers to fight for political power, for a workers and farmers government.

The resolution on this question adopted by the delegates explained that a workers and farmers government is "the first form of a government that can be expected to appear as the result of a successful anti-capitalist revolution."

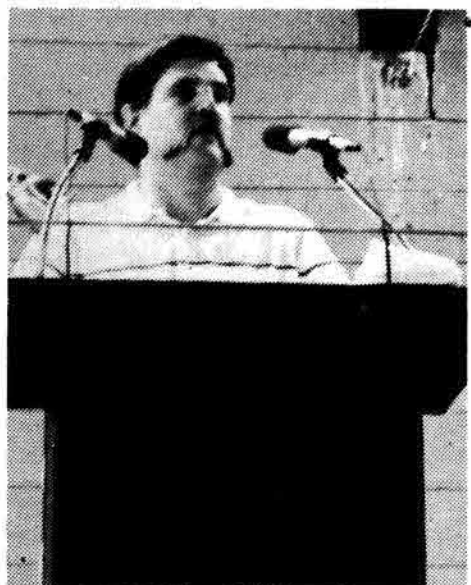
This government is the most powerful tool the toilers have with which to crush the resistance of the exploiters, expropriate the ruling "60 families," establish state property in the central means of production, begin planning the economy, and start building a socialist world.

There were two reports on the fight for a workers and farmers government.

One was given by Mary-Alice Waters, a national co-chairwoman of the SWP. Her report discussed several key political and theoretical questions that have come up both in the SWP and in the Fourth International, the world socialist organization that the SWP has fraternal ties with, about the views contained in the SWP's document on workers and farmers governments.

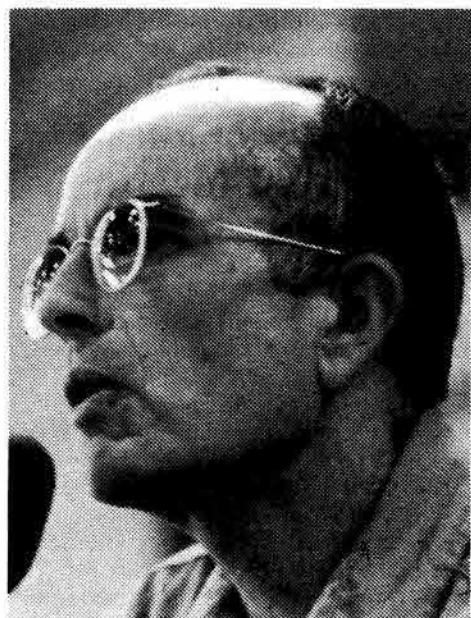
SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes gave a report on the workers and farmers government perspective in the United States. His report focused on discussing the proposal to change the SWP's government

Continued on next page



Militant/Steven Fuchs

Craig Gannon, SWP National Organization Secretary, gave the report, "Political Priorities and Organization of the Party."



Militant/Charles Ostrofsky

Jack Barnes, SWP National Secretary, discussed perspective for workers and farmers government in United States.

Fight against war, austerity, is framework for building revolutionary workers party

Continued from preceding page

tal slogan for the United States from "For a workers' government" to "For a workers' and farmers' government." In addition, delegates voted to include the following sentence in the SWP's constitution:

"The purpose of the party shall be to educate and organize the working class in order to establish a workers' and farmers' government, which will abolish capitalism in the United States and join in the worldwide struggle for socialism."

A revolutionary sentence

In explaining the meaning of this change, Barnes said that the sentence in the constitution is a *revolutionary* sentence. There's no way it could be carried out without making a popular revolution that would eliminate all remains of power held by the capitalists and setting up a new state run by the working people of city and countryside.

The second point, said Barnes, is that the class forces that will carry out such a revolution and on whom such a government will be based are the workers and working farmers.

The basis for this alliance, said Barnes, is the fact that both classes have a common enemy — the wealthy capitalist families that exploit them — and a common future, a future of getting rid of the exploiters and together building a world society of allied producers.

The workers and farmers government perspective, stressed Barnes, is not about something that will happen sometime in the future. It's a guide to action *today*. It's about what road the urban and rural toilers have to march on together in order to get the exploiters off their backs. It's about who the common enemy is and how to fight against that enemy. It points to the need for the working class to develop a "nose for power," that is, the ability to see itself as the class that will lead all the exploited and oppressed against the wealthy families that profit from that exploitation and oppression.

The fight for a workers and farmers government, said Barnes, has no meaning except as a deeply internationalist perspective. It means putting the weight of the toilers of the United States into the worldwide fight for socialism.

Only a party of workers, said Barnes, with some experience in the working class and among working farmers, could develop and act on this perspective. The SWP's activity in the industrial unions has put it in touch with farmers and farm workers to a degree that would be impossible from outside the working class.

Transforming the unions

A report on "Political Priorities and Organization of the Party" was given by SWP National Organization Secretary Craig Gannon.

Gannon began his report by quoting the draft political resolution: "An essential part of the strategic line of march toward the establishment of a workers' and farmers'



Delegates at recent SWP convention. Majority of delegates were industrial workers. Political resolution states that by being rooted in industry, SWP participates in unfolding class battles and recruits most politically advanced workers.

government in the United States is the fight for the transformation of the industrial unions — the most powerful existing organizations of the working class — into revolutionary instruments of class struggle for the interests of the exploited and oppressed."

Communist workers, said Gannon, seek to be in the industrial unions to advance a revolutionary perspective and to build a revolutionary proletarian party that is linked through its structure and rhythm to the political rhythm of the industrial working class. The goal, he said, is to build a politically centralized party that sets priorities and responds as a national party.

The working class today, said Gannon, is in a preparatory period. Communist workers participate in and learn from the preliminary battles that are going on, while they advance their views on the way forward. They are revolutionary politicians within the industrial unions.

The starting point for communists in the unions, said Gannon, is the world class struggle and its manifestation in this country. In that framework — as workers of the world — party members participate in every struggle, from fights over speed-up and overtime to defense of the rights of Black and women workers.

Gannon reported that today a majority of party members are in industrial unions. The task, he said, is to increase the number who are in one of the nine unions which the SWP has chosen to concentrate its political activity in. The upturn in the economy has helped the party make big strides forward in this process, especially in getting party members into UAW-organized plants.

Central to deepening the party's orientation to the industrial unions is the party's norm that every member participates in sales in front of a worksite every week. This allows every party member to help influence and recruit industrial workers and be part of the life of the working class.

Gannon emphasized the four basic party institutions of each branch through which socialist ideas are disseminated weekly: campaigns for public office; weekly socialist forum series; socialist bookstores; and sales of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. The goal of all these institutions, said Gannon, is to reach out to those individual workers who are beginning to think in class terms and try to win them to the SWP and YSA.

Defending democratic rights

Gannon stressed the importance of party involvement in struggles to defend Black

rights, the rights of Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and other Latinos, women, and other struggles against attacks on democratic rights.

Central to this effort, said Gannon, will be the continuing work the party will do to fight for the right of Héctor Marroquín to remain in this country.

Marroquín is a Mexican-born socialist who is a leader of the SWP and YSA. He has been fighting Washington's attempts to deport him because of his socialist ideas for several years.

Continuing defense of Marroquín, said Gannon, is part of the party's campaign against the rulers' war drive and its restrictions on democratic rights at home.

Central to accomplishing all the tasks that the party has ahead of itself, said Gannon, is the need for a membership that is politically confident and capable of taking the time to discuss what the party should be doing each week and to convincingly explain its ideas to other workers.

This means continuing the weekly branch educationals on the writings of V.I. Lenin, the central leader of the October 1917 Russian Revolution and the Third International.

The political resolution summed up the importance of the SWP's being rooted in industry:

"Only by having fractions in the strategic centers of the industrial working class can the SWP be part of the class battles that are unfolding today, and those that will unfold tomorrow. It is there that forces to build a class-struggle left wing of the labor movement will emerge, through the course of these struggles to come. It is there that proletarian fighters will be found who will build the mass revolutionary party that will be necessary to lead the vanguard through a series of prerevolutionary battles on the road to the revolutionary conquest of power by the workers and farmers.

"And it is there that we can begin right now to find and recruit to the party the most conscious fighters, the individuals who are prepared to make the conscious leap from the lessons and conditions of today to the qualitatively transformed conditions and struggles that the working people will face down the road, and who are prepared now to help build the kind of party that is constantly preparing for and explaining this future perspective, as it participates on the different fronts of class battles today."

International guests highlight of meeting

Continued from Page 11

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MASON FOR PRESIDENT — GONZÁLEZ FOR VICE-PRESIDENT

'Improper Conduct' — an anti-Cuba smear

BY HARRY RING

Improper Conduct. Directed by Nestor Almendros and Orlando Jimenez-Leal. Produced in France. In Spanish and French, with English subtitles.

Improper Conduct is a counterrevolutionary propaganda tract which purports to be a documentary. It is marked by half-truths, gross exaggerations, and bald-faced lies.

Designed to promote the imperialist war drive against Cuba, it's aimed primarily at those who may have some sympathy for the Cuban revolution, but whose sympathy is tenuous enough to be shaken by a good horror story.

The codirectors are Cuban exiles and virulent enemies of the revolution.

So are the two dozen Cuban exiles who offer "testimony" in the film.

The title derives from an assertion that

IN REVIEW

Cubans arrested on the street who could not be classified as either homosexuals or "hippies" were charged with "improper conduct."

To provide a "theoretical" underpinning for the film's anticommunist message, an additional, non-Cuban "witness" is included. This is Susan Sontag, the U.S. literary figure who, a few years ago, turned from left-wing beliefs to militant anticommunism.

The film purports to indict Cuban "totalitarianism," and chooses as its focus the issue of gay rights, apparently assuming it can score more points that way. Trying to make the point, the film lays it on thick.

An exile says he was jailed 17 times in Havana. Why? "Because I wore pants they thought were too tight."

Each time, he says, he drew three to six months. A bit later he says, "Each time we got six months to a year."

The interviewer doesn't notice the discrepancy.

Another scurrilous slander is that prostitution has been reestablished in Cuba. This is flatly contradicted by the observation of innumerable reporters for the capitalist press on the absence of prostitution in Havana, a city once notorious for its traffic in human flesh. Early in the revolution, trade courses were organized for prostitutes so they could have gainful employment.

One particularly gross liar is identified as Felix Hernández, a former Cubatur guide.

Tours, he asserts, are routed through carefully selected scenes and artificially created situations. Each tour is allegedly taken to the same collective farm and the bus always stops at the same building, where the visitors are to walk in.

They are warmly greeted, he continues, by waiting peasant families who enthusiastically describe their new life.

But, he confides, "They're make-believe peasants."

Equally preposterous for the thousands of people who have visited Cuba is his account of how tourists are kept on a tight leash in Havana because if they were permitted to wander 200 yards off course, "They would see what a disaster Havana is!"

But apparently some do wander. He adds that tourists are told that when they leave their hotel they should take a hotel cab. The cab driver, Hernández continues, requests the passenger's hotel card and room number. He then reports where the visitor went.

You could fill a book with affidavits from tourists from the United States and other imperialist countries that they never experienced or heard of such a practice.

(This writer has visited Cuba three times since the revolution, including one three-month stay, and would readily offer such an affidavit.)

And there would be an even thicker book of affidavits confirming that tours invariably include free time when visitors go where they choose and meet whomever they choose. Indeed, that opportunity for direct, informal contact with ordinary Cubans is cherished by many as the best part of their visit.

In sum, the ex-guide's tale is a crock.

Other participants in this "documentary" tell equally ludicrous stories without so much as raising a questioning eyebrow from their interviewer.

Juan Goytisolo, a Spanish writer who visited Cuba in the late 1960s, says he learned that 60,000 gays had been jailed. (Proportionate to population that would be equivalent to 1.5 million in the United States.)

The proof for this astonishing figure? Unasked and unstated.

Exile writer Guillermo Cabrera Infante voices the view that the treatment of homosexuals in Cuba is comparable to the extermination of the Jews at Auschwitz, or the Spanish Inquisition.

The wildness of the charges is matched only by the light-mindedness of the explanations.

One glaring example of this is provided by the testimony of Heberto Padilla, the poet who emigrated here in 1979. In 1971, Cuban authorities detained Padilla briefly and, in this writer's opinion, unjustly.

The Cuban leadership, Padilla blandly says in the film, "cannot tolerate homosexual men. But the lesbians excite them. Nothing excites the primitive Cuban mind like two women in bed."

Film critics seemed particularly taken with one really heavy horror story.

An ex-prisoner tells the story of "Robertico" (no last name), who he says was in an adjoining cell.

"Robertico," he says, was jailed at age 12 for getting into an unlocked car of a security policeman and firing a gun left on the seat.

In prison, the story continues, the 12-year-old is raped by homosexual inmates.

Prison officials then stamp his file, "homosexual."

Each afternoon, the ex-prisoner continues, "Robertico" cried for his mother. The prison guards respond by hurling buckets of water at him and by beating him with a braided rope.

As for the rest of the prisoners, he adds, "we got routine beatings."

This chilling story is told by Armando Valladares, an exile in Paris. In the film he is tersely described as a poet who was jailed for becoming an opponent of the Cuban regime and was freed after international protest.

A rather scant biography.

Until he was released two years ago, Valladares was widely known as the "wheelchair poet."

Reportedly, he had been so brutally treated in Cuban prison that he lost the use of his legs. Pleas from French President François Mitterrand and other notables led to his release.

Surprise

The arrival of Valladares in Paris included a surprise for reporters and friends. The "wheelchair poet" walked off the plane unassisted.

(*Improper Conduct* includes a news clip of him being interviewed, standing, in the airport. Delicately, there's no mention of the wheelchair.)

At the time, Valladares explained to a U.S. reporter that he had regained use of his legs a few months previous but had been held incommunicado and unable to advise his family.

In a second interview, he admitted he had regained use of his legs three years previous.

Valladares' account of his sufferings has grown with each telling.

For seven years, he said, he lived in an unlit cell.

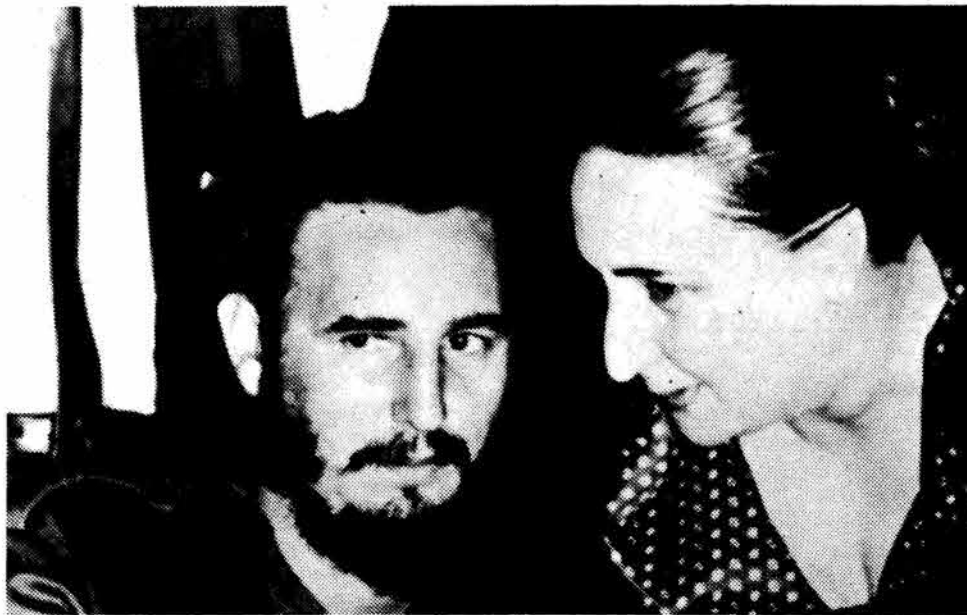
He was up, he added, at 4 a.m. and, in the withering tropical sun, worked on a rockpile 12 to 14 hours a day. (The "routine" twice-a-day beatings were added two years later, for *Improper Conduct*.)

What are the established facts about Valladares?

He did not suffer the loss of his legs as a result of prison abuse. An obsessed anti-communist, he engaged in some 15 hunger strikes and, as a consequence, did lose the use of his legs. Prison hospital care restored his ability to walk.

Valladares was not an opponent of the Batista regime who later turned against the revolution.

He was, in fact, a member of the tyrant Batista's police force.



Improper Conduct includes many preposterous stories. One such is told by Martha Frayde, shown here with Fidel Castro. An ex-delegate to UNESCO, Frayde broke with revolution in its first years. In 1979, she was convicted of trying to leave country illegally. In prison, she says in *Improper Conduct*, she saw "dark-skinned" women return from month in solitary and "their skin was white."

But he was not jailed for being a Batista cop. Nor for his dissident views. In 1960, he and 16 others were charged with planting bombs in public places. In the house where they were arrested, police found explosives and weapons. They were convicted in a widely reported trial and sentenced to 30 years. Later it was reduced to 25.

Valladares' record and his patently absurd and contradictory stories about his prison experiences make him a witness with zero credibility.

The fact that *Improper Conduct* conceals his true identity and joins in trying to palm him off as a legitimate dissident underlines that the makers of the film have no more concern for truth than the "wheelchair poet" does. They simply share his anticommunism.

Sontag's role

This is confirmed by their decision to include Susan Sontag in the film.

During her radical days, Sontag did visit Cuba, but she's never claimed any special expertise on Cuban life.

Her only credential for appearing in the film is her status as an "intellectual" anti-communist.

Sontag asserts that a key feature of Cuban communist ideology is its commitment to militarism.

As she ventures this baseless charge, the film cuts to a news clip of Castro reviewing a military parade.

There is not a solitary mention by Sontag — or anyone else in the film — of the 1961 U.S.-organized invasion of Cuba and the continuing threats of further aggression. Cuba's defenses are a necessary, justified response to that threat and have nothing to do with ideological "commitment."

Developing her thesis, Sontag says that the alleged Cuban hang-up with militarism leads to hostility toward homosexuals. Homosexuals, she continues, are identified with women and, by that token, are seen by the Cuban leaders as "weak." Therefore, according to Sontag's power of reasoning, they see gays as "subversive."

Further, she tells us, this is not a Cuban aberration. "It's a heritage... that's deeply embedded in the morals of the left."

Sontag to the contrary, antigay prejudice is not a heritage of the left any more than is sexism or racism. And it was not introduced into Cuba with the *fidelist* revolution.

It is a heritage of *class society*. It is related to the perpetuation of the patriarchal family and stems from the oppression of women throughout class society including, especially, present-day capitalist society.

Gays in U.S.

In this country, a hard, ongoing battle has won some gains for gay rights. But the discrimination remains deep. There is still the cop brutality and the unabated violence by reactionary hoodlums. Discrimination in employment and housing remains commonplace. AIDS victims are evicted from their homes while officials do nothing.

In Cuba, antigay prejudice is a reactionary legacy of Cuban capitalism and U.S.

imperialist domination. It is the heritage of prerevolutionary Havana, where, for example, those driven into prostitution, male and female alike, were shamefully degraded and exploited.

Antigay prejudice does survive in Cuba. There is remaining discrimination and, principally in the 1960s, there was governmental victimization of homosexuals.

Improper Conduct latches on to this, offering a twisted, grossly exaggerated version of the detentions that did occur in the 1960s.

It also tears the events of the '60s out of chronological context to suggest that what happened then continues today.

The film brushes aside the fact that gay Cuban working people have gained greatly from the revolution, as have all other Cuban workers. For all, life is infinitely better today.

The most hostile of the capitalist press concedes that Cuba no longer suffers the dire poverty that pervades Latin America and the Caribbean.

Studies by United Nations agencies and others confirm the giant strides of Cuba's educational system.

The prestigious *New England Journal of Medicine* recently reported that 25 years after the revolution, the guerrillas who led it have made good on their pledge to build a national health care system equal to any in the world.

The gains registered by Cuban women are equally impressive. The number of women in the work force has increased enormously. Year by year, child-care facilities have been expanded. Maternity leaves are generous. Contraceptives are available to all women and abortion is legal. Women have forged ahead in medicine, engineering, and other professions. The government has led in educating against the legacy of *machismo*, in combating male chauvinism.

Cuba is not a nation of narrow-minded puritans, and gays do not suffer the kind of violence they do in this country.

Cuba's continuing advances in uprooting sexism are quite relevant in terms of gay rights. As prejudice and discrimination against women are reduced it inevitably means a diminishing of prejudice and discrimination directed against gays. Homophobia is inextricably linked with the myth of male superiority and with the oppression of women.

An equally important point. Cuba plays a vanguard role in the world movement for the abolition of capitalism. And the abolition of capitalism is the only road for complete liberation of the oppressed, including gay liberation.

Because Cuba is so deeply committed to revolutionary progress, we can be confident that, along with other reactionary legacies, Cuba will be able to uproot antigay prejudice.

Gay liberation will come as part of the fight for full emancipation for all. And certainly it will not come from those like the producers of *Improper Conduct*, who so cynically manipulate and exploit the issue of gay rights to advance their pro-imperialist, reactionary aims.

How brave can you get? — The U.S. Southern Command decided to withdraw its military training school for Latin American



Harry Ring

officers from its longtime location in Panama. An official explained, "Panama asked for more than we were willing to give up. So we stood up to them."

Progressive paranoia — Health and Human Services Secre-

tary Heckler assures that the administration has no intention of doing in the Medicare program. She adds that a part of the fear among the elderly of rising medical costs is "simply characteristic of the aging process itself."

Our rational society — "Big Wheat Crop Is Bad News for U.S. Farmers" — News headline.

Post-Olympic note — A firm which rents formal attire contributed 250 out-of-style tuxedos to a Los Angeles skid row mission. The donors said they wanted "to dress up L.A." for the Olympics. Besides, they added, "We'd have thrown them away anyway." (Throwing away isn't tax deductible, giving away is.) And, they as-

sured, "This isn't for publicity. It's from the heart." An elderly mission resident was asked if he'd wear one of the tuxes. "Maybe to my own funeral," he responded.

Shop carefully — The IRS has concluded that in the event of nuclear war it will be difficult to collect income taxes. So, in the interest of simplicity, in the postblast period income taxes will be shelved in favor of a flat 30 percent sales tax on all purchases.

Camping tip — New York State wants to sell the camp donated to it by the late Marjorie Merriweather Post (Post Toasties, etc.). Previously the mountain hideaway was a bit difficult to get to. Guests arrived across the lake by private jet, were chauffeured to

the waterfront, ferried across in a yacht, and up the hill by cable car. But the state has built a dirt road right into the camp. Each of Ms. Post's guests had a private cabin, with maid and footman. These may not be included in the sale.

Fashion tip — If it's inconvenient for you to get to Bijan's in Beverly Hills, drop in on his new Manhattan shop. Not cheap, but chic. Tuxedos, \$2,500, silk PJs, the same. Suede jackets, \$2,800. Chinchilla bedspreads, \$120,000. "If you have the money, you're crazy not to buy it," says Bijan, who is just crazy enough to sell it.

People's democracy — To improve its cash flow, Bethlehem Steel is unloading its six country

clubs. The clubs are open to "higher ranking employees," and said employees will be given first crack at buying them.

World view — "At a certain level of income there is no nationality." — A guest at a New York international jet set party commenting on how everyone there dressed and looked alike.

Obviously that's different — We've seen little in the *New York Times* debunking the use of IQ test results to bolster the myth of non-white "inferiority." But a recent article did militantly defend top corporate execs who apparently don't score too well on the tests either.

Behind mass slaying in San Ysidro, California

BY HÉCTOR MARROQUÍN

San Ysidro is a small border town in southern California where Chicanos and Mexicanos represent the overwhelming majority of the population. Just south of San Diego, San Ysidro is one of the busiest border checkpoints for people coming to the United States from Mexico.

It was in San Ysidro where the worst mass slaying in U.S. history took place last month.

On July 18, James Huberty left his apartment carrying a UZI 9 millimeter semiautomatic rifle, a Browning auto

AS I SEE IT

matic pistol, and a pump-action Winchester 12-gauge shotgun. He wore camouflage pants and took a radio with him as if he were going to war.

"Where are you going?" his wife asked.

"I'm going to hunt humans," he replied.

He walked 200 yards and, at about 3:45 p.m., went into the neighborhood McDonald's Restaurant.

He ordered everyone down on the floor. As 45 patrons scrambled to comply he calmly began spraying gunfire at everyone in sight.

David Flores and Omar Hernandez, both 11 years old, were killed instantly as they arrived on their bicycles.

Elsa Borboa, Paulina Aquino, Claudia Perez and Jackie Reyes, all of them young Latinas, were murdered on the spot.

The youngest victim was Carlos Reyes, 8 months old.

Forty persons were shot in all, yet not until 4:15, approximately 75 minutes after the slaughter had begun, did the police finally decide to put a halt to it by gunning

down the racist murderer.

Huberty was white. Had it been me, or a Black, would the police have taken so long to decide what to do?

Throughout the 75 minutes people were left on the ground suffering from their wounds and dying.

At the end, the death toll rose to 21.

It was a racist massacre. Most of those killed were Latinos. According to one paper, neighbors commented that Huberty "hated both children and people of Mexican descent."

In an attempt to cover up the nature of the massacre and the causes which led to it, the news media failed to clearly tell who the victims were, and portrayed Huberty as a "hotheaded loner" and "an obsessive man."

"There are many thousands of people who feel that the strains of modern life are too much for them, others who had been laid-off and quarrel with their families, but James Huberty was specially crazy," said a July 20 *New York Daily News* editorial.

As if it were just an individual case.

However, Huberty's choice of victims indicates that racism was certainly among his deep-going obsessions.

Listening to Huberty's coworkers can shed some light into what eventually drove him to commit an unprecedented racist slaughter.

Huberty had worked as a welder for 13 years at the Babcock & Wilcox Corporation plant in Canton, Ohio. In December of 1982, hit by the recession, the plant closed.

Huberty was particularly bitter about losing his job.

"He felt the country wasn't treating him right, that everything was being done against working people," said one coworker.

Another recalled that during that time Huberty "was al-

ways talking about shooting someone."

After being laid off, Huberty eventually came to live in San Ysidro, California.

Pressures from having been laid off and forced to move away from his Ohio home obviously angered Huberty. But there was an additional and very important element involved.

Huberty was influenced by the tremendous racist and chauvinist pressures caused by the reactionary propaganda and policies of the U.S. ruling class.

Working people are bombarded by the racist lie that immigrant workers, especially those without papers from Latin America, are the cause of unemployment. Scapegoatism is a common divide-and-rule trick of the capitalist rulers. It and chauvinism are also fostered by the rulers to advance their imperialist wars. Today the center of that war drive is in Central America.

An example of such crude racist and chauvinist propaganda was an August 16 *New York Times* editorial. Hardly a month after the San Ysidro massacre, it stated (in reference to immigrants and people like those who lived and died on July 18):

"Where is the social justice in championing the cause of gate-crashers?"

"One investigation after another has shown that the borders are out of control..."

"Because it's now so easy to sneak into the country, many Americans are growing uneasy about the number of illegal aliens..." [My emphasis.]

Perhaps Huberty was "an American growing uneasy," because of his own personal problems.

But his "solution" of murdering more than a dozen Latinos shows how this system of exploitation and oppression can lead to racist killings.

CALENDAR

CALIFORNIA

Oakland

Crisis in the Philippines — the Struggle for Democracy. Speakers: Joe Rocamora, Southeast Asia Resource Center; Miguel Zárate, Young Socialist Alliance. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m. 3808 E 14 St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (415) 261-3014.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

The Truth Behind Waynesboro. Speakers: representatives from National Black Independent Political Party and Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Sept. 1, 7:30 p.m. 504 Flatshoals Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

KENTUCKY

Louisville

The Fight for Women's Rights and the 1984 Election. A panel discussion. Speakers: Peggy Kreiner, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress; Martha Pickering, Pro-ERA Alliance; representative of Jefferson County NOW. Sun., Sept. 9, 7 p.m. 809 E Broadway. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (512) 587-8418.

Socialist Workers Campaign Rally. Speakers: Andrea González, SWP candidate for U.S. vice-president; Dave Welters, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate; Peggy Kreiner, SWP candidate for Congress. Sun., Sept. 16, 7 p.m. 809 E Broadway. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Socialist Workers Campaign. For more information call (512) 587-8418.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Solidarity With British Miners Strike. Speakers: Clare Fraenzl, member Socialist Workers

Party and United Mine Workers of America Local 1197, recently toured Britain in solidarity with striking miners. Translation to Spanish. Sunday, Sept. 9, 7:00 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (301) 235-0014.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Six South African Artists Works on Paper. Through Sept. 16. Wednesday-Sunday, Noon-7:00 p.m. Onyx Art Gallery, 54 Irving Place. Ausp: Art Against Apartheid. For more information call: (212) 505-9001.

Speak-out Against Police Brutality. Sat., Sept. 29, 2-7 p.m. Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, 208 W. 13 St. Ausp: Anti-Police Abuse Coalition. For more information call (212) 807-7269 or 871-3548.

UTAH

Price

How Labor Can Fight Union-busting and More. Speaker: Cecelia Moriarity, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Utah governor, member of United Mine Workers Local 2176. Sat., Sept. 8, 7 p.m. 23 S Carbon Ave., rm. 19. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (801) 637-6294.

Slide Show on Nicaragua. Presentation by Edwin Fruit, unionist recently returned from Nicaragua. Sat., Sept. 15, 7 p.m. 23 S Carbon Ave., rm 19. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (801) 637-6294.

Salt Lake City

How to Fight Imperialism: What Workers in

the U.S. Can Learn from El Salvador. Speakers to be announced. Translation to Spanish. Fri., Sept. 7, 7:30 p.m. 767 S State St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee

Simpson-Mazzoli Bill — A Threat to All Workers. Speakers: Irma Guerra, chairperson, Political Action Committee of Coalition for Political Unity; Father Glenn Gessner, pastor of Cristo Rey parish, Racine; Héctor Marroquín, Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m. Milwaukee Christian Center, 2137 W Greenfield. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (414) 445-2076.

Would Mondale slow war in Central America?

Continued from Page 8

are on the battlefields in large numbers, several U.S. trade unions have taken an anti-war stand. Scores of local unions have heard antiwar presentations by visiting Salvadoran and Nicaraguan unionists and revolutionary leaders. Thousands of U.S. workers have travelled to Nicaragua to see the revolution firsthand.

Supporters of the SWP campaign who are active in the U.S. labor movement seek to build on these accomplishments. These socialist workers are organizing other trips by unionists to Central America and the Caribbean as an aid to the fight against the U.S. war.

At the same time, supporters of the SWP campaign have joined in other efforts to mobilize opposition to the war that origi-

nate outside the labor movement, such as the June 9 demonstration of 5,000 held in New York City. SWP campaign supporters participate in such efforts with the goal of orienting them to the unions and other organizations of U.S. working people and the oppressed nationalities, drawing them into the fight against the war.

Socialist campaign supporters use the SWP campaign as a tool to take the fight against imperialist war into the working class. While SWP candidates educate about the war, they also tell the truth about the elections themselves. Unlike the editors of the *Guardian*, SWP candidates do not tell working people that voting on election day can stop, or slow, the U.S. war.

Instead they explain why workers must

rely on their own independent action to fight the war, as they must rely on independent class action to oppose union-busting and other ruling-class attacks. They point to the necessary task of building a mass working-class party that can fight to overturn the imperialist warmakers once and for all.

The *Guardian* editorial denigrates this modest example of independent working class political action as "symbolic" but "unrealistic."

But what is really unrealistic in advancing the fight against war is urging a course based on the hope that the Democratic Party is not as completely committed to imperialist foreign policy as the Republicans, and on the idea that elections actually decide how that policy is implemented.

—YSA CAMPAIGNS FOR SOCIALISM

BY CHARLIE SMITH

MINNEAPOLIS — High interest rates and increased costs of production, along with decreasing commodity prices, are forcing thousands of working farmers and their families off the land. This process has been going on for decades, but the prolonged farm depression has led to farm foreclosures and forced liquidations occurring at a rate equal to that of the 1930s.

While Walter Mondale and Pres. Ronald Reagan are blasting each other for what they're finally recognizing as a farm crisis, and making phony pledges to turn it all around, many farmers are fighting back now by protesting farm foreclosures and surrounding Farmers Home Administration buildings with trucks and tractors in protest of loan disbursement practices.

Members of the Young Socialist Alliance and other supporters of the Socialist Workers Party campaign of Mel Mason for president

and Andrea González for vice-president are participating in these protests to bring labor solidarity and the ideas of the socialist campaign to the protesting farmers.

Mason and González call for an immediate halt to farm foreclosures and a moratorium on all debts.

In June of this year, I, along with other supporters of the socialist campaign, travelled to Hoxie, Kansas, to attend a protest of the foreclosure of Darrel and Margaret Ringer's farm.

Darrel Ringer is a leader of the Kansas American Agriculture Movement (AAM) and the North American Farm Alliance (NAFA). These are groups that are playing a leading role in fighting against the ruin of working farmers.

We brought a message of support to the Ringers from Mel Mason. We explained that attacks on the producers, both on the land and in the factories and mines, are

part and parcel of the ruling rich's war against the people of Central America and the Caribbean. To end the economic crisis and stop U.S. imperialist war, workers and farmers need to take the government and run this country in our own interests.

Two farmers that we met in Hoxie were especially interested in the Mason and González campaign. They invited us to a discussion group that evening in a small town of north-central Kansas. The group consisted of farmers and religious leaders from the area.

The group gets together regularly to discuss the U.S. war in Central America. They also have organized community forums about Nicaragua, inviting people from the community who have been to Nicaragua to be panelists.

The group was anxious to hear about U.S. socialists' support to Nicaragua's revolutionary workers and farmers government. We

told them how Mason and González use the Sandinista government as an example of the socialist campaign's proposals to extend low-interest credit for machinery, seed, fertilizer and other farming necessities, in addition to guaranteeing farmers an adequate income to meet the costs of production and a decent living.

The participation of the two farmers in the protest against foreclosure of the Ringer farm earlier that day led to a discussion of the effects of the farm crisis on their own town. The effects have been devastating. Rail service has been cut off, resulting in higher transportation costs for farmers to move their products. The local school was closed, making it necessary to bus children to the next town. Grocery stores and other businesses have shut down. Similar instances in rural America were related to us by the near 100 farmers at the Ringer protest.

The Young Socialist Alliance

has been actively participating in the efforts to place Mason and González on the ballot in the Midwestern farm states. The socialist campaign is the only voice in the '84 elections speaking in the interests of working farmers.

While petitioning to put the socialist ticket on the ballot, we have met agricultural implement workers at the John Deere plant in Iowa who are facing unemployment, meatpackers at the Rath plant in Iowa who are fighting union busting, and American Indians fighting for land rights in South Dakota. As we learn from these struggles, we become even more convinced of the need for city and countryside, workers and farmers, to fight together against our common enemy — the U.S. government and the ruling rich it represents.

Charlie Smith is a member of the Twin Cities YSA and a farmer in eastern Minnesota.

Socialist Workers fight for Mich. ballot rights

Continued from Page 20

act must be contrasted to Nicaragua, which the government of your parties is invading claiming it is undemocratic. But no parties have to petition at all to be on the November ballot in Nicaragua."

Meyers pointed out in her testimony to the board that the SWP has been on the Michigan ballot in every presidential election year except 1980, when Public Act 94 kept the socialist candidates off. But with American Civil Liberties Union help, the SWP had the law declared unconstitutional in 1982.

Meyers said, "Now we see the Democrats and Republicans once again trying to preserve their monopoly on the political process, this time with a supposedly scientific 'random sample' which in fact discounts the wishes of 30,715 workers."

Meyers was referring to the "random sample" method used by the board to examine only 600 of the 30,715 signatures collected and filed by the SWP. At the August 24 hearing the board decided to expand its "random sample" by checking 3,900 of the signatures. The Board claimed that of the initial sample of 600, there were not enough "valid" signatures to meet the 19,963 requirement.

Michigan socialists maintain that the so-called random sample is a computerized sleight-of-hand to cover up a political attack on the socialist campaign and the

rights of the tens of thousands of working people who signed to put the SWP ticket on the ballot.

To back up this charge, socialist campaign supporters did their own check of signatures the board had tossed out and found dozens of duly registered voters

among them.

These and other inconsistencies demonstrated by the SWP at the hearing prove that what is invalid is the bipartisan board's claim to objectivity in ruling on the socialist petitions. In fact, the board's chairperson sported a Ferraro button during

the hearing!

By recourse to the random sample fakery the board is attempting a slick maneuver to take the focus off the fact that 30,715 citizens of Michigan have clearly expressed support for the right of the SWP candidates to appear on the November ballot.

D.C. socialists file for Mason-González

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On August 17 over 7,100 signatures were filed here to place Mel Mason, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, and Andrea González, candidate for vice-president, on the District of Columbia ballot. This more than complies with the legal requirement of 4,465 signatures.

In a statement released at a news conference at the time of filing, campaign spokesperson Glenn White explained, "Socialists are running in this election because we think the time has come for working people and farmers to take the control of our lives out of the hands of the minority ruling rich — the ones who have driven us to fight their wars abroad and have declared war on our standard of living at home."

"It's time for the majority in this country — workers and farmers — to come to grips with power and politics. Power is not pulling a lever in the voting booth. And politics in this country is not decided in an election. Real politics is based on struggles, like those of copper miners in Arizona and the United Auto Workers of Toledo, who are fighting to save their unions and win a decent standard of living."

The news conference was attended by

two newspapers and the campaign statement was taped by three radio stations.

During petitioning in this majority Black city, socialist campaigners talked to thousands of people about socialism. Over

400 copies of the newspapers the *Militant*, *Young Socialist*, and *Perspectiva Mundial* were sold and 60 people signed cards expressing further interest in the socialist campaign.



Militant/Charles Ostrofsky

One of over 7,100 who signed for Mason and González during D.C. petition drive.

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Where to find the Socialist Workers Party, Young Socialist Alliance, and socialist books and pamphlets

ALABAMA: Birmingham: SWP, YSA, 205 18th St. S. Zip: 35233. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

ARIZONA: Phoenix: SWP, YSA, 3750 West McDowell Rd. #3. Zip: 85009. Tel: (602) 272-4026.

CALIFORNIA: Bay Area District: 3808 E 14th St., Oakland. Zip: 94601. Tel: (415) 534-1242. Los Angeles: SWP, YSA, 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Zip: 90006. Tel: (213) 380-9460. Oakland: SWP, YSA, 3808 E 14th St. Zip: 94601. Tel: (415) 261-3014. San Diego: SWP, YSA, 1053 15th St. Zip: 92101. Tel: (619) 234-4630. San Francisco: SWP, YSA, 3284 23rd St. Zip: 94110. Tel: (415) 282-6255. San Jose: SWP, YSA, 46 1/2 Race St. Zip: 95126. Tel: (408) 998-4007. Seaside: SWP, YSA, 1184 Broadway. Zip: 93955. Tel: (408) 394-1855.

COLORADO: Denver: SWP, YSA, 126 W. 12th Ave. Zip: 80204. Tel: (303) 534-8954.

FLORIDA: Miami: SWP, YSA, 663 Martin Luther King Blvd. (NW 62nd St.) Zip: 33150. Tel: (305) 756-1020. Tallahassee: YSA, P.O. Box 20715. Zip: 32316.

GEORGIA: Atlanta: SWP, YSA, 504 Flat Shoals Ave. SE. Zip: 30316. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

ILLINOIS: Chicago: SWP, YSA, 3455 S Michigan Ave. Zip: 60616. Tel: (312) 326-5853 or 326-5453.

INDIANA: Bloomington: YSA, Activities Desk, Indiana Memorial Union. Zip: 47405. Indianapolis: SWP, YSA, 4850 N. College. Zip: 46205. Tel: (317) 283-6149.

IOWA: Des Moines: YSA, P.O. Box 1165. Zip: 50311.

KENTUCKY: Louisville: SWP, YSA, 809 E. Broadway. Zip: 40204. Tel: (502) 587-8418.

LOUISIANA: New Orleans: SWP, YSA, 3207 Dublin St. Zip: 70118. Tel: (504) 486-8048.

MARYLAND: Baltimore: SWP, YSA, 2913 Greenmount Ave. Zip: 21218. Tel: (301) 235-0013. Baltimore-Washington District: 2913 Greenmount Ave. Zip: 21218. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston: SWP, YSA, 510 Commonwealth Ave., 4th Floor. Zip: 02215. Tel: (617) 262-4621.

MICHIGAN: Detroit: SWP, YSA, 7146 W. McNichols. Zip: 48221. Tel: (313) 862-7755.

MINNESOTA: Mesabi Iron Range: SWP, YSA, 112 Chestnut St., Virginia, Minn. 55792. Send mail to P.O. Box 1287. Zip: 55792. Tel: (218) 749-6327. Twin Cities: SWP, YSA, 508 N. Snelling Ave., St. Paul. Zip: 55104. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

MISSOURI: Kansas City: SWP, YSA, 4715A Troost. Zip: 64110. Tel: (816) 753-0404. St. Louis: SWP, YSA, 3109 S. Grand, #22. Zip: 63118. Tel: (314) 772-4410.

NEW JERSEY: Newark: SWP, YSA, 141 Halsey. Zip: 07102. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK: Capital District (Albany): SWP, YSA, 352 Central Ave. 2nd floor. Zip: 12206. Tel: (518) 434-3247. New York: SWP, YSA, 79 Leonard. Zip: 10013. Tel: (212) 226-8445 or 925-1668.

NORTH CAROLINA: Piedmont: SWP, YSA, 301 S. Elm St., Suite 522. Greensboro. Zip: 27401. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

OHIO: Cincinnati: SWP, YSA, 4945 Pad-dock Rd. Zip: 45237. Tel: (513) 242-7161. Cleveland: SWP, YSA, 15105 St. Clair Ave. Zip: 44110. Tel: (216) 451-6150. Toledo: SWP, YSA, 2120 Dorr St. Zip: 43607. Tel: (419) 536-0383.

OREGON: Portland: SWP, YSA, 2732 NE Union. Zip: 97212. Tel: (503) 287-7416.

PENNSYLVANIA: Edinboro: YSA, Edinboro State College. Zip: 16444. Tel: (814) 734-4415. Philadelphia: SWP, YSA, 2744 Germantown Ave. Zip: 19133. Tel: (215) 225-0213. Pittsburgh: SWP, YSA, 141 S. Highland Ave. Zip: 15206. Tel: (412) 362-6767. State College: YSA, P.O. Box 464, Bellefonte. Zip: 16823. Tel: (814) 238-3296.

RHODE ISLAND: Providence: YSA, P.O.

Box 261, Annex Station. Zip: 02901.

TEXAS: Austin: YSA, c/o Mike Rose, 7409 Berkman Dr. Zip: 78752. Tel: (512) 452-3923.

Dallas: SWP, YSA, 2817 Live Oak. Zip: 75204. Tel: (214) 826-4711. Houston: SWP, YSA, 4806 Alameda. Zip: 77004. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

UTAH: Price: SWP, YSA, 23 S. Carbon Ave., Suite 19, P.O. Box 758. Zip: 84501. Tel: (801) 637-6294. Salt Lake City: SWP, YSA, 767 S. State. Zip: 84111. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

VIRGINIA: Tidewater Area (Newport News): SWP, YSA, 5412 Jefferson Ave., Zip 23605. Tel: (804) 380-0133.

WASHINGTON, D.C.: SWP, YSA, 3106 Mt. Pleasant St. NW. Zip: 20010. Tel: (202) 797-7699. Baltimore-Washington District: 2913 Greenmount Ave., Baltimore, Md. Zip: 21218. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

WASHINGTON: Seattle: SWP, YSA, 5517 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118. Tel: (206) 723-5330.

WEST VIRGINIA: Charleston: SWP, YSA, 1584 A Washington St. East. Zip: 25311. Tel: (304) 345-3040. Morgantown: SWP, YSA, 957 S. University Ave. Zip: 26505. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

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

The Republican convention

Right-wingers were ecstatic with the Republican convention. Flag-waving, chants of "USA, USA," and other reactionary outbursts of U.S. chauvinism were the order of the day during the entire gathering.

There on the platform were right-wing evangelist Jerry Falwell thumping the bible and ultraconservative Sen. Barry Goldwater raising the banner of jingoism. And UN delegate Jeanne Kirkpatrick, a renegade Democrat, was also on hand with a call for a drive to make the world safe for U.S. imperialism.

And, on the morning of the day he delivered his acceptance speech, Reagan dropped off at a prayer breakfast for a "rousing" talk on religion and politics. He laid out the brazenly reactionary line that politics and religion are inseparable, demagogically branding those who oppose this notion as "intolerant" of religion.

The platform adopted by the convention is an outspoken right-wing document.

Determination to crush the advance of the world revolution in Central America and the Caribbean is reiterated. Only U.S. "firmness," it declares, will prevent Fidel Castro's "brutal dictatorship" from exporting "terrorism and subversion."

The revolutionary workers and farmers government of Nicaragua is charged with threatening the security of El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Guatemala. The U.S. invasion and occupation of Grenada is saluted as "an example to the world."

A pledge is made to overthrow the popular revolution in Nicaragua and prevent the Salvadoran working people from taking power.

At home, the use of busing to combat school segregation is flatly opposed and "civil rights enforcement" is declared as "not [to] be twisted into excessive interference with the education process."

Despite the attempt by some Republican women to get a plank favoring the Equal Rights Amendment for women, this was rejected; and the right to abortion was opposed. Women were "prominently" displayed at the convention as window-dressing in a cynical appeal for votes.

The Republicans obviously have a lot of wind in their sails. But this is not because of any significant growth in their popular base. Claims to that effect are greatly exaggerated. What's permitting the Republicans to set the pace in electoral politics today is the basic shift to the

right in the perspectives of this country's ruling capitalist class.

U.S. imperialism has no choice but to intervene in Central America and the Caribbean where the extension of the socialist revolution is taking place.

Because of the high political stakes involved, imperialism's main political parties are stepping up their "patriotic" and anticommunist propaganda. The chauvinism whipped up around the Olympics was part of this preparation for a bigger U.S. war in Central America.

At the same time, to ensure their profits at home, the employing class must slash away at the living standards of working people. To accomplish that, they have to curb democratic rights and push back the drive of women and oppressed nationalities for their rights. And to create the kind of poisonous atmosphere for achieving these objectives, they promote a right-wing ideology cloaked in the mantle of religion.

It's important to recognize, though, that these reactionary capitalist policies are not simply the property of the Republicans. They are shared by the Democrats. The Republicans, wielding the power of office, are simply setting the pace, while the Democratic donkey trots behind.

The Democrats mainly appeal to the most exploited and oppressed sectors of society — Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, women, and other working people. But they share the Republicans' fundamental outlook.

That's exactly why Mondale is fumbling for a peg to counterpose himself to Reagan. He doesn't challenge Reagan's war policies in Central America and the Caribbean because in fact the Democrats helped initiate that policy and share it today. Similarly, he doesn't challenge Reagan in any meaningful way on the rights of labor, women, and Blacks and other oppressed nationalities.

Indeed, the current Republican platform twists the Democrats by noting that the Democratic 1984 platform includes "rhetorical pilfering" from the Republican platform of 1980.

It is a fact that both parties, not just one of them, have shifted significantly to the right in response to the needs of the capitalist ruling class.

All of this is added good reason to support the only meaningful alternative in the election — the Socialist Workers ticket of Mel Mason and Andrea González.

New blow to right to privacy

A federal appeals court panel has dealt a new blow to the right of privacy. Aimed immediately at homosexuals, the reactionary decision by a federal court of appeals panel in Washington will affect the rights of all working people.

In a ruling issued August 17, the three-judge panel upheld the Navy's discharge of a petty officer who acknowledged engaging in homosexual acts.

The immediate victim of the ruling, James Droneburg, was discharged from the Navy despite an exemplary record. He responded by suing for damages.

In rejecting his claim, the appeals court panel went a good way beyond the issue of Navy policy, which makes discharge of homosexuals mandatory.

The judges declared that the constitutionally guaranteed right to privacy has never been so broadly defined as to "encompass homosexual activity."

They drew attention to a 1976 Supreme Court decision summarily upholding a Virginia court ruling. The court had affirmed a state statute making it a crime to engage in private consensual homosexual activity.

This past May, the Supreme Court refused to review the case of a Dallas businessman ordered deported because he is a homosexual.

In upholding the Navy policy of obligatory discharge of homosexuals, the judges did not limit themselves to

legalistic argument. Instead, they vigorously endorsed the policy.

"The effects of homosexual conduct within a naval or military unit are almost certain to be harmful to morale and discipline," they asserted.

Moreover, the judges argued, homosexual activity is sure "to call into question the even-handedness of superiors' dealings with lower ranks. . . ."

In a blatant appeal to antigay prejudice, they added that such activity would "generate dislike and disapproval among many who find homosexuality morally offensive. . . ."

And the judges pandered to the hoariest of homophobic fables.

"Given the powers of military superiors over inferiors," they declared, scrapping the Navy's policy would "enhance the possibility of homosexual seduction."

This kind of bigotry is designed to perpetuate and deepen the victimization of homosexuals. And not just in the Navy. The reactionary rationale for Navy policy offered by the federal judges could just as easily be applied to civilian government agencies — and private employers as well.

The ruling promotes the general ruling-class drive against the democratic rights of workers and farmers. It should be strongly opposed.

British aimed to nuke Argentina

It has been revealed that the imperialist rulers of Britain were prepared to use nuclear weapons during their 1982 war against Argentina. The British aggression had been triggered by Argentine efforts to reclaim its possession, the Malvinas Islands.

A British magazine, the *New Statesman*, reported confidential government documents that a submarine had been dispatched to the South Atlantic carrying Polaris missiles, ready to attack Argentina if a major British ship was destroyed in naval battle. The likely target, the documents indicated, was the city of Córdoba, one of Argentina's major industrial centers.

The documents also confirmed that the Conservative government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was lying through its teeth at the time with its account of how

and why it had sunk the Argentine cruiser, the *General Belgrano*. The ship was torpedoed May 2, 1982, with a loss of 368 crew members.

The British government had acknowledged at the time that the ship was outside a blockade zone it had established around the Malvinas. But they asserted that the sinking was necessary because the ship posed a "significant threat" to British vessels enforcing the blockade.

Now it's revealed that the ship had reversed course before it was attacked and was headed toward Argentina.

The ominous preparations of the British to use nuclear weapons against Argentina underlines where the real nuclear danger lies: from the aggressive actions of imperialist powers seeking to maintain their domination of colonial and semi-colonial countries.

How SWP opposed 1964 election 'lesser-evil' scam

In some respects the current presidential campaign has a good deal in common with the one in 1964. Then, as now, the Democrats were running a candidate who projected a liberal image, while the Republicans had nominated an outspoken right-winger.

While there was little popular enthusiasm for the Democratic nominee, Lyndon Johnson, many people mistakenly believed they had to vote for him to prevent the right-winger, Barry Goldwater, from assuming the presidency.

Some radical groups already committed to the Democrats exploited the fear of Goldwater as justification for supporting a capitalist party. Then, as now, the Communist Party was a prime example of this.

The Socialist Workers Party firmly opposed the lesser-

OUR REVOLUTIONARY HERITAGE

evilism of those who pointed to Goldwater to justify supporting Johnson.

The party's ticket — Clifton DeBerry for president and Edward Shaw for vice-president — campaigned against both capitalist parties.

In September 1964, Shaw participated in a New York Militant Forum election symposium in which he argued against other radical figures who favored a lesser-evil vote for the Democratic ticket. The following is an abridged version of Shaw's remarks.

* * *

We should not support Goldwater because he has the same basic interests and goals as does Johnson. The aims of both parties can be summed up, perhaps, in one phrase — we must have law and order.

We have to have law and order in the streets of Harlem, in the cotton fields of Mississippi, in the industrial plants of Detroit, in the coal fields of Kentucky, and also in the cane fields of Cuba or the copper mines of Chile, the rubber plantations or the rice plantations of the Far East . . .

Law and order in Mississippi is the law and order of the semifeudal gentry. Law and order in Harlem is the law and order of the tenement landlords. Law and order in Kentucky is the law and order of the coal barons. In Detroit it's the law and order of the manufacturing corporations.

And abroad, in Latin America, Europe, Africa, Asia, the law and order they speak of is the law and order of that almighty that has its finger in every other pie — the law and order of finance capital of the imperialist United States.

The great and overwhelming unity of the two major parties in this election campaign in the service of that master overcomes all small differences of tactics or personality.

These two parties compete in the electoral field. They compete for the right to run the store for the ruling class. They compete for the right to put into practice a program already clearly mapped out.

They needn't make any new programs on this score. Defeat the colonial revolution is first on the agenda right now. Save Asia. Keep it from going further out of the capitalist orbit. Africa must be made safe.

At home, there's not much trouble right now. But the program is, and has been, as we can see through the past Democratic and Republican administrations, more and more repressive laws aimed at the labor movement. Keep the union power down is part of the program. Prevent the rise of any independent formation and above all, right now, keep the Negro struggle in its place.

But there are superficial differences. Goldwater has proposed even harsher measures both at home and abroad to carry out this bipartisan program. He proposed a measure and Johnson moved in that direction.

We at first were presented with, it seemed, a slight difference in approach over the war in Vietnam. The question was going to be asked of us, Do you want a continuation of this costly, inhuman stalemate in the war in Vietnam, or do you want to extend it?

Before we even had a chance to vote in that referendum, Johnson removed the difference and attacked North Vietnam. He removed that point from the agenda.

The lesser-evil policy, regardless of what you call it, in the name of social progress has resulted only in social regression.

Truman was worse than FDR. Eisenhower was worse than Truman. Kennedy was worse than Eisenhower. Johnson was worse than Kennedy. And now, however, Johnson is better than Goldwater.

I propose, my party proposes, that a vote against the war in Vietnam will weigh against it. But a vote for it will not. And we do not see how you can vote for either one of the two parties without voting for war. I propose a vote for socialism.

U.S. exports attacks on women's right to abortion

"Not the Church, Not the State, Women Must Decide Our Fate!" I was reminded of this chant, one of the most popular rallying cries of the abortion rights movement in the 1970s, when I read this headline: "U.S. AND VATICAN VICTORY — U.N. PARLEY URGES FAMILY PLANNING NOT USE ABORTION."

The headline referred to the adoption of a resolution by the United Nations International Conference on Population held in Mexico City that abortion should "in no way be promoted" as a family planning method.

This was a concession to the U.S. government and the Vatican, who were pushing for a resolution that would



WOMEN IN REVOLT

Pat Grogan

have completely outlawed abortion. Of the 149 countries, only Costa Rica and Chile supported the U.S.-Vatican proposal.

The U.S. delegation was headed by James Buckley, former right-wing Senator from New York who now heads the CIA's *Radio Free Europe*.

Buckley is a leading proponent of the anti-abortion views of the "right-to-life" movement and a supporter of anti-abortion legislation such as the Hyde Amendment, which cuts off federal funding for abortion and is pushing

poor women back into the back alley butcher shops.

"The United States," said Buckley, "does not consider abortion an acceptable element of family planning programs."

Buckley announced the new Reagan administration policy of cutting off all funding to organizations that promote or support abortion. Since 1974 Congress has outlawed foreign aid specifically earmarked for abortions. But the government didn't withhold all money from groups that support abortion by using other funds.

Buckley said that funding for the United Nations Fund for Population activities would be cut off unless it can show that it doesn't support abortion.

The new guidelines would also affect organizations like the International Planned Parenthood Federation, which now receives about \$11 million from the U.S. The Federation uses no U.S. funds for abortion, but in countries where abortion is legal, uses other funds for abortion programs. To keep their funding, the Federation would have to shut down all abortion programs.

Governmental agencies receiving U.S. aid would have to provide proof that none of the money was being used for abortions.

Buckley, of course, had nothing to say about the millions of dollars U.S. corporations make by dumping ineffective, unsafe, sometimes deadly contraceptive devices on women in the colonial and neo-colonial countries. Not to mention defective baby formula. Or the millions of back alley abortions performed every year in these countries. Or the fact that illegal, botched abortion is a leading cause of women's death in many Latin American countries.

Buckley never questioned the fundamentally wrong

premise of the Mexico City conference — that too many babies, not imperialist exploitation, is the cause of poverty and misery for much of the world. This position was put forward most starkly by Oscar Rodríguez of the Salvadoran Demographic Association. In El Salvador, he said, population growth "has led directly to a vicious cycle of poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment."

Buckley just proposes different methods of population control: capitalist free enterprise and rhythm!

The U.S. pushed a resolution "that the entrepreneurial spirit [be allowed to] flourish without governmental interference." This, Buckley claimed, would ensure faster economic growth and lower birth rates.

Funds for population control will be given to groups that promote "natural" birth control methods, such as the rhythm method. The rhythm method, pushed by the Catholic church, is not a method of birth control. It proposes abstinence during those times of the month when conception is possible — which you just have to guess at. To be really effective, scientific aids such as holy water and prayer are recommended by the Vatican.

Meanwhile, a Massachusetts court has ruled that a fetus is a person and a driver who causes its death can be prosecuted for murder.

The attack on abortion rights at the Mexico City conference is just the latest in the deepening drive by the U.S. government, joined by reactionary forces like the Catholic Church, to take back the measure of reproductive freedom we won in struggle. Day-by-day, through legislation and court decisions, arson attacks and threats, our rights are being eroded. The women's liberation and labor movements must take the lead to defend this most fundamental right of women to control our own bodies.

LETTERS

Black-Jewish alliance

"Behind the myth of the Black-Jewish alliance," Mohammed Oliver's August 10 "By any means necessary" column, has the effect of isolating Jews from the allies they will need to defend their democratic rights, which Oliver predicts will come under attack.

Oliver's main point is that because of the economic differences between Blacks and Jews it is a "myth that Blacks and Jews have 'shared blood and shared sacrifices,'" as Jackson claimed in his speech [at the Democratic Convention]. Oliver states that: "It's false that we have a lot in common with B'nai B'rith or the American Jewish Congress."

Why emphasize the difference between these two historically victimized minorities in the United States — even if at this particular time in history Jews are doing considerably better economically — since they are both still the objects of widespread bigotry? Recent German history as well as current political realities argue instead for finding the basis for cooperation between the targets of prejudice.

No one would deny that the polarization of American politics has moved some Jews to the right. But many Jewish people continue to prove in action they understand the need to struggle for the demands of those most victimized by participating in every type of progressive organization — including, and especially, socialist groups — in numbers way out of proportion to their percentage of the population. A group's political behavior is determined by more than today's economic situation.

More U.S. Jews are moving towards the Peace Now Movement with its objectively anti-Zionist dynamic. More American Blacks are identifying with the cause of the Palestinians. Socialists should position themselves politically to encourage the cross-pollination of these two developments.

Establishing a humane society in the United States will require unity among a great majority of the population, including many middle-class people. Jews, more than any other layer of the middle class, are likely to side with Black people in that rebuilding.

Susan Lazaroff
George Washington University
Progressive Student Union

Farrakhan

I am amazed. When it comes to reading about Minister Louis Farrakhan or listening to something being said about him, the American people have lost all powers of understanding the English language, written or spoken.

I saw three NBC-TV network reporters — who are making a living speaking and writing English — lose all powers of comprehension regarding English words, simple English words at that. On live TV from San Francisco the Sunday before the Democratic Party convention these reporters were unable to understand the perfectly clear answers Minister Farrakhan gave to their questions.

I have also talked with the editors and writers of a Springfield, Missouri, paper about his statements in print. They read the same English words that I read but the cognition process fails one of us. This paper is owned by Gannett of *USA Today*. They surely aren't so different in education, background, etc., from me.

Then, I'm reading your paper. I read what you write and understand it. But a reader writes in saying Farrakhan is an "admirer of Hitler," when the truth is that Farrakhan referred to Hitler as a "bloody murderer."

Another reader wrote in saying Farrakhan called Judaism a "gutter" religion. I heard and read that Farrakhan said, "if you... use the Great God Jehova to justify military aggression and racism you have a gutter religion, not the religion of Abraham and Moses." Now, I have paraphrased, but I feel the content is true. But I'm not certain it will make any difference.

Jack Bresée
Springfield, Missouri

Skoglund

The *Militant* article, "Carl Skoglund: example for communist workers," is extremely inspiring. It is a clear illustration of what working people can accomplish when organized to fight in their own interest.

It was very appropriate that this article appeared in the same issue as the article on the Democratic Party's wooing of the working class. What a contrast there is between Jesse Jackson, the National Organization for Women leadership, and the union bureaucrats'

dead-end wheeling and dealing, and Skoglund's lifetime of participation in the worker's struggles that took place in the streets and factories of this country.

Skoglund's example proves that our unions and any rights we may have are not gifts bestowed upon workers by the bosses, but weapons won through the sacrifices, courage, sweat, and blood of millions of working-class fighters like him. The lessons from their victories and defeats point the way forward.

Jackie Floyd
New York, New York

Brigadistas like coverage

Thank you for the excellent coverage of Nicaragua in the *Militant*. As members of last year's harvest brigades, we have appreciated the fine ongoing reports from Jane Harris and Michael Baumann. After slogging through the mass media, it's sure refreshing to have a good source of trustworthy, objective information on the current state of emergency in Nicaragua.

John Keith
Santa Cruz, California

Unionize lifeguards

One group of people who should be unionized is lifeguards.

In order to become a lifeguard, one must obtain an advanced lifesaving and water safety card. I had to pay \$27 for the course and go through 27 hours of training.

I've been at two private pools. In one, I was paid only \$3.50 an hour. I not only had to watch the pool, but also had to do maintenance work. This meant that while I was doing maintenance work, sometimes nobody was watching the pool.

The job of the lifeguard should be to save lives and make certain that nobody does anything dangerous. Additional people should be hired for maintenance. Lifeguards should be paid better.

C.W.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Sweet Dreams

In case you missed it, I am enclosing this little news item from the *Detroit Free Press* on our beloved president. Actually, I think it is very much in his favor. After



all, the more he sleeps, the better off we all are.

"President Reagan has a tendency to sometimes doze off during Cabinet meetings, admitted Michael Deaver, deputy White House chief of staff, in an interview with NBC's Chris Wallace. 'I've seen him having difficulty staying awake, but he wasn't the only one in the room that does,' said Deaver Monday. 'These matters are sometimes boring, and I doze off, too.'"

Seth Wigderson
Dearborn, Michigan

Political Asylum

I thought the readers of the *Militant* would find this article interesting. Excerpts here are taken from the *Vacaville Star*, a prisoners' publication at the California Medical Facility:

"Former California Medical Facility prisoner Alfredo Cunanan, a Filipino opponent of dictator-president of the Philippines, Ferdinand Marcos, has applied for political asylum in the United States.

"Cunanan was originally arrested in Manila in 1971 and charged with 'subversion' for making a speech at a student protest rally in which he expressed his opposition to the martial law decrees which had just been imposed by Marcos. Cunanan claims that he was never taken before any court on these charges and that he was tortured.

"Cunanan's charges of torture are supported by Amnesty International, which supports his efforts to avoid deportation.

"After a few years in the military prisons of Marcos, Cunanan escaped and came to the United States. He bases his request for political asylum on his contention that if he is returned to the Philip-

pinas he will be tortured and executed."

Libby Moser
Brooklyn, New York

Antinuke activist jailed

I have spent the last five months in a slimy South Carolina jail. On Feb. 17, 1984, I was arrested in Miami, Florida, after returning from Nicaragua where I spent six months investigating atrocities committed upon Nicaraguan people by the CIA and the American government.

After being charged with federal bond-jumping charges stemming from a nonviolent 1982 demonstration at the Savannah River Plant near Aiken, South Carolina, I was brought back by federal marshals to South Carolina.

On July 25, 1984, Federal Judge Simons sentenced me to ten months in federal prison and fined me \$2,000. This I don't care about. A little time in federal prison won't kill me. (I hope.)

What I do care about is the fact that sometime in September 1984 the Savannah River Plant is going to open a new reactor to produce even more plutonium for nuclear war. At my sentencing I called for emergency demonstrations to protest this.

For many years a dedicated group of activists has been organizing resistance to the Savannah River Plant. It is The Natural Guard, 18 Bluff Rd., Columbia, S.C. 29201

A prisoner
Columbia, South Carolina

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 rebellion in Georgia town

Protest death of Black man at the hands of cops

BY WILLIAM SHELLBY

WAYNESBORO, Ga. — "We got a brand new courthouse but no justice," a young Black man remarked. He was part of a crowd of 200 Blacks who took to the streets here August 20 to protest the death of Larry Gardner, 32, while in police custody.

Waynesboro, a town of 6,000, is located in Burke County, 30 miles south of Augusta and 150 miles from Atlanta. The county is 60 percent Black.

Gardner died August 17 after being chased two blocks and arrested by four Burke County deputies led by Lt. Chris Murray. According to the cops Gardner died of "heat exhaustion."

However, the victim's family, skeptical of the initial autopsy, demanded a second one.

"They tried to tell us he died of heat exhaustion," said Leroy Gardner, Larry's younger brother. "I find that hard to believe. He was in good health. We are not content that he died of heat exhaustion. He worked in the sun laying bricks and blocks. Witnesses say he was handled rough."

The victim's mother, Ruby Gardner, was shaken. "I just want to know what really happened. I want justice. They ran him down just like an animal. We want them punished for what they did. They could just run anybody down. They said for shoplifting and drugs they ran him down," she said. But, "Larry said there were some things they [police] wanted him to do and he wouldn't do it."

One young man who said he witnessed the beating of Gardner said of Waynesboro cops, "They will beat you," adding, "Whatever Larry did, he never hurt no one."

Gardner's death prompted a two nights' rebellion of rock throwing and fire bombing. Two angry street demonstrations were held Saturday afternoon August 18 by a couple hundred people, mostly young Blacks.

At least eight fires in various parts of town were reported. Windows were knocked out and several storefronts needed to be boarded up.

Burke County Sheriff Greg Coursey and deputies rigorously enforced an 8 p.m. curfew. An 11 p.m. curfew was previously in effect, allegedly to prevent young Blacks from loitering.

One hundred cops from throughout the state descended on the town. At least 20 people, all Blacks, were thrown in jail Saturday night and charged with violation of curfew and carrying concealed weapons. A white woman with a child explained that police were stopping motorists and shining lights into their cars. "They're harassing everybody," she said.

Although the streets appeared calm after the uprising, there was a seething frustration among the people.

On August 21, 400 Blacks and whites attended a town meeting held to "give correct and reliable facts" on Gardner's death and "bring the community back together." Earlier the same day the results of the second autopsy (the first had claimed Gardner suffered no bruises or wounds) were printed on a leaflet distributed by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI). This "preliminary" finding stated there were "no signs of strangulation, no head injuries, no brain damage," and again reported "heat exhaustion" as "high on the list" as the cause of death.

The meeting's presenting panel included Sheriff Coursey; Mayor George Deloach; Commissioner Herman Lodge; Rev. J.W. Bell, president of the local NAACP; and other community figures. The sheriff read the results of the second autopsy and the GBI leaflet was passed out.



Family of Larry Gardner. "I want justice," said Ruby Gardner (third from right), mother of the slain man.

During the discussion one Black woman, a nurse, asked, "if he [Gardner] died of heat exhaustion why did he have enough energy to resist four men?"

Clumsily avoiding these critical questions Mayor Deloach blurted out "Wasn't the pathologist Black? One of the two experts was recommended by Jesse Jackson's organization, Operation PUSH."

People began demanding answers and also began to get to the root cause of the rebellion.

One Black man stated, "This is about police brutality. I'm a victim of police brutality. I've been called 'nigger.' The GBI called me a troublemaker."

"I want to explain why things are the way they are. If you can't face the issues

now you can't face them later. There are other major causes besides a man being beaten."

One of the official panelists then yelled out, "We can't cure unemployment overnight. We can't cure prejudice overnight. How are you gonna get a job if all the stores are burned down?"

By then the audience was getting very perturbed. People started asking about Lt. Chris Murray, whom many believe is responsible for Gardner's death. However the sheriff couldn't answer any questions about Murray nor provide anymore clues about Gardner's death. They kept emphasizing that the autopsies were "preliminary findings."

Someone then asked, "If every question

we ask pertaining to Larry is tabled, why don't we table this whole meeting? In order to solve the problem we must get valid answers. Larry's death was not the beginning. It was just the straw that broke the camel's back."

Toward the end of the meeting a young Black woman remarked, "Why are so many Blacks being killed? My brother was gunned down, shot once and pleaded 'no more' and was shot again." Another woman said, "The jury always says 'involuntary manslaughter' when a Black is involved. At least eight Blacks that I know of have been killed and it's 'involuntary manslaughter.' Anger is building up because so many Blacks are killed."

Community residents are planning a mass funeral for Gardner.

Coal operators break off contract talks

BY GEOFF MIRELOWITZ

The Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA), bargaining arm for the nation's largest coal producers, broke off contract negotiations with the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) on August 21. The national soft coal contract expires on September 30.

A BCOA statement announced, "it is apparent at this time that no basis exists for productive discussions to continue." UMWA officials issued no statement concerning the break off of the contract talks. The union's December 1983 convention unanimously approved a "no concessions" stand to guide UMWA contract negotiations. The union leadership, headed by President Rich Trumka, has decided not to discuss any details of the union's negotiating position in public or to discuss the substance of the negotiations themselves.

The *Wall Street Journal*, commenting on the breakdown in negotiations, noted that the operators "are bent on reducing labor costs." Information concerning what demands the BCOA is making on the union to achieve this "is closely guarded," said the *Journal*, "but it is believed that the operators are looking at changes in work practices and possibly in benefits."

For months, miners have expected that the union would be forced on strike to resist these employer demands, as it was in 1977-78 and again in 1981. The UMWA convention also approved a proposal made by the Trumka leadership, to authorize the use of a "selective strike" tactic, rather than

the union's traditional "no contract, no work," approach if a walkout became necessary.

UMWA officials have stressed that the convention approved the selective strike (in which the UMWA leadership would target one or more companies for a strike, rather than all coal producers) as only one possible option. However, an agreement reached between the union and coal operators in Alabama in early August now means that the UMWA leadership is locked into using the selective strike if a walkout is called.

Most Alabama coal operators are not

members of the BCOA. The UMWA proposed that these coal producers sign a "letter of intent" binding them to agree to whatever contract terms are finally settled upon by the union and the BCOA.

In response the Alabama operators agreed to extend the terms of the 1981 contract past September 30 if no new agreement is reached by that time, and to apply the terms of a new UMWA-BCOA contract retroactively to October 1. But the employers exacted a high price. In return UMWA officials agreed to a "no strike" pledge.

The result is that if a coal strike is called,

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SWP fights for Mich. ballot rights

BY ANDREW PULLEY

DETROIT — The state of Michigan decided on August 24 to continue its blatantly undemocratic attempt to deny a spot on the November ballot to the candidates of the Socialist Workers Party.

The authorities ruled that their "random sample" check of a few names from the more than 30,000 signatures of Michigan residents submitted on SWP petitions showed the socialists did not meet the 19,963 signatures required by law.

Mel Mason, SWP presidential candidate, joined Helen Meyers, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Michigan, and myself, the socialist candidate for U.S. Congress from Detroit, at a hearing of the State Board of Canvassers August 24.

The Board of Canvassers (two Democrats and two Republicans) refused to certify the SWP ticket. Instead they decided to "check" a larger selection of the 30,715 signatures collected by Mason-González supporters in Michigan last spring.

A nationwide campaign protesting the state's denial of the SWP's democratic rights prior to the hearing prevented the board from outright ballot decertification of the socialist ticket.

During the hearing Mason blasted the bipartisan board: "Your threat to deny us ballot status is aimed at stifling the one clearly antiwar, prolabor campaign in the 1984 race."

Mason continued, "Your undemocratic

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