

Nicaraguan rightists stage provocation

BY JOSÉ G. PÉREZ

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Preaching servility and surrender at the embattled and heroic people of Nicaragua, Cardinal Obando y Bravo returned here June 14 after the pope had designated the former archbishop a cardinal in the Roman Catholic church.

Obando arrived here from Miami where he had given his blessing to thousands of Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries, including top leaders of the CIA mercenary forces that have killed and wounded thousands of Nicaraguans.

Obando is a prominent spokesperson — here and abroad — for the proimperialist opponents of the Nicaraguan revolution. As soon as his appointment as cardinal became known last April, foes of Nicaragua's workers' and farmers' government went on an all-out campaign to use the papal designation to advance their counterrevolutionary purposes.

La Prensa, the reactionary capitalist daily here, ran front-page stories almost every day for more than a month about Obando becoming a cardinal.

Radio 15 de Septiembre, official voice of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force, the main armed CIA band waging war against Nicaragua, hailed Obando's promotion, calling it "a new opportunity . . . to show we are not defeated by the communist enemy."

The businessmen's group, COSEP, as well as all the right-wing capitalist parties of the so-called Democratic Coordinating

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U.S. government threatens target Lebanese people

BY FRED FELDMAN

June 26 — The U.S. and Israeli governments continue to block the peaceful and speedy release of 39 U.S. citizens held in Lebanon since the hijacking of TWA Flight 847 by a group of Lebanese Muslims.

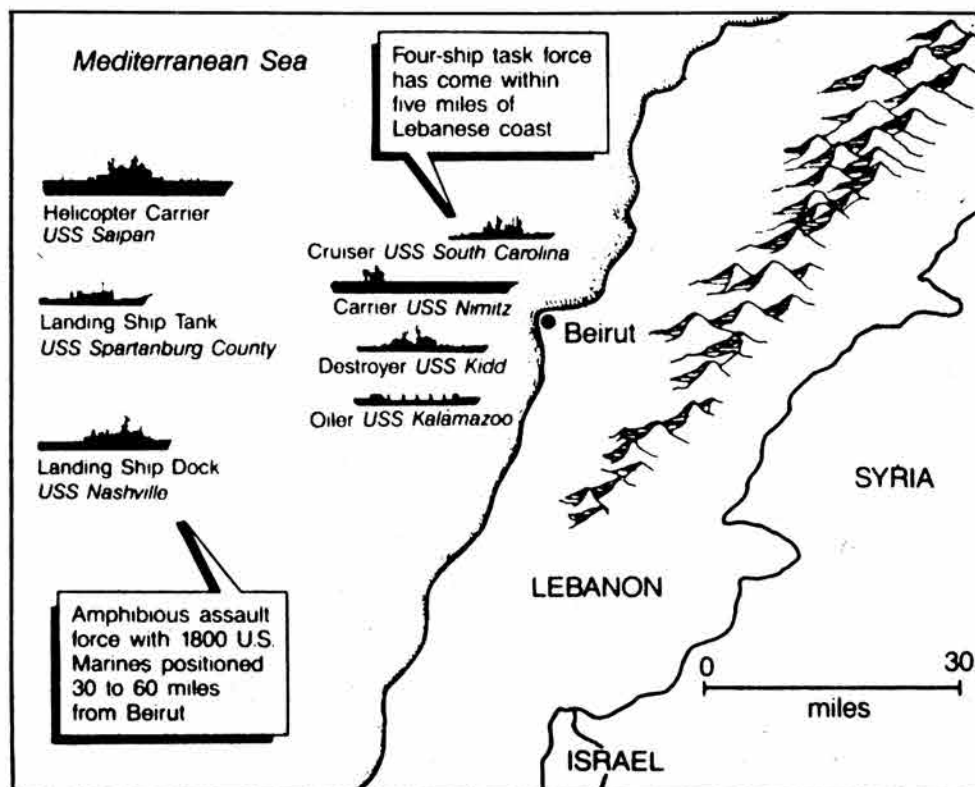
[As we go to press, Nabih Berri, head of the Amal militia, proposed that the U.S. hostages be placed in the custody of a third party — the Swiss or French embassy in Beirut or, if they refuse, sent to Damascus, Syria — until the Israeli government frees the 735 Lebanese being held at the Atlit prison camp in Israel.]

Washington and Tel Aviv have refused to agree to the release of 735 Lebanese and Palestinians who were kidnapped by Israeli occupation forces in Lebanon and spirited away to a prison camp in Israel. "The transfer was in violation of international law, as Israeli officials concede," reported the June 18 *Washington Post*. "The Shiites are not prisoners of war but civilian detainees, and the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits the transfer of civilians to the territory of an occupying power."

The release of these kidnap victims by Israel is the key demand of the Lebanese who hold the airline passengers. Granting this just demand would break the current deadlock.

Instead, Washington and its imperialist allies are using the seizure of the hostages as a pretext for stepping up military threats and preparations for military action against the people of Lebanon.

A four-ship task force, including an aircraft carrier and a cruiser, have come within five miles of the Lebanese coast. An assault force of 1,800 marines is positioned off Beirut. U.S. officials are openly discussing a military blockade of this city of



Map shows U.S. naval forces off Lebanese coast. The U.S. government is threatening to take economic and military actions against Lebanon.

700,000 people. White House spokesman Larry Speakes conceded that this would be an act of war.

He said that action might also be taken against Syria, Iran, and Libya.

The British and Italian imperialists have thrown their backing behind Washington's war moves against Lebanon. The British and Italian ambassadors to Lebanon met June 25 with Nabih Berri, the head of the

Amal militia which is based among Lebanon's Shiite Muslims. Berri has been seeking a negotiated solution.

"The attitude [of the two ambassadors] was closer to military action than to compromise," Berri said of their stand.

The Israeli rulers, who still occupy a strip of southern Lebanon, offered to join in military action against Lebanon. "Israel will positively consider cooperation with Washington on any move connected with a blockade of Beirut airport," stated Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

Prime Minister Shimon Peres promised that the Israeli government would "cooperate in anything related to the hijacked plane."

One aspect of that cooperation is Tel Aviv's refusal to release the Lebanese prisoners it illegally holds, thus allowing Washington to use the hostage issue as a cover for military threats against Lebanon.

The demand that the Israeli government release the kidnapped Lebanese has worldwide support. Following Tel Aviv's attempt to mollify this sentiment by releasing 31 prisoners, United Nations Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar called for "release of the remaining prisoners."

Even Vice-President George Bush con-

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Women miners hold nat'l conference

BY CHARLENE ADAMSON AND CECILIA MORIARITY

PRICE, Utah — From June 21 to 23 women miners held one of their largest national conferences since they began meeting seven years ago. The event, held here at the College of Eastern Utah, was sponsored by the Coal Employment Project (CEP) and the Coal Mining Women's Support Teams.

Registered at the conference were 192 people, and 250 in all attended at least some part of it. The gathering was open to women miners, organized and unorganized, and their supporters.

Women miners from Utah, West Virginia, Virginia, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Arizona, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Montana, North Dakota, Missouri, Colorado, and Canada came. There were also women from Georgia, California, New York, and Texas. A sizable number of male workers of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), including retirees, also came.

The majority of the miners were coal miners and members of the UMWA. While most were underground miners, a larger number of strip miners attended this year. In addition, there were copper miners and molybdenum miners.

The CEP is an organization that helps women get and keep mining jobs. Out of its annual national conferences women miners' support teams have been formed on a local level. One of these support teams, the Lady Miners of Utah, hosted this year's conference, the first ever to be held in the West.

For several years the UMWA has been an endorser of these conferences. This year

UMWA Secretary-treasurer John Banovic gave a keynote speech to the conference. He said, "You can be proud that you have stood up against sexual harassment in the mines, and by doing so have helped fight all forms of discrimination against all miners." Banovic pointed out that "all mine workers have benefited from your effort to make the mines safer."

Betty Jean Hall, director of the CEP, spoke on the accomplishments of women miners in the last year. Also speaking were Frances Farley, former Utah state senator; Mike Dalpiaz, president of District 22 of the UMWA; and Virginia Kelton of the

Phoenix Institute.

Later the conference received greetings from Gordon Otley, head of the Utah AFL-CIO, and Jane Cowan of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) in Salt Lake City. A sizable number of UMWA members at the conference decided to join CLUW.

Joy Huitt, president of the Lady Miners of Utah and member of UMWA Local 1803, chaired the conference. At the first session she read messages from some of the widows of the Wilberg mine fire last December, which killed 27 people some 40

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San Jose free-speech meeting wins support

BY KEVIN KELLOGG

SAN JOSE, Calif. — As the *Militant* goes to press, support continues to build for the June 28 Speak-out for Democratic Rights here. The speak-out, sponsored by the Emergency Committee for Democratic Rights, is protesting the series of attacks on the San Jose Socialist Bookstore by a group of right-wing Vietnamese.

A broad range of groups and individuals representing labor and community and church groups has endorsed the speak-out. New endorsers include the San Jose chapters of the Rainbow Coalition and the All African People's Revolutionary Party (AAPRP), as well as the Mid-peninsula Peace Council of Northern California.

The defense of the right to hold the speak-out free of violence, threats, and intimidation is also important. The Human

Relations Commission of Santa Clara County issued a statement defending the right of free speech and assembly and is sending a letter to the mayor, city council, and police chief expressing the concern of the commission that the meeting be held without disruption.

The executive committee of the San Jose Newspaper Guild unanimously approved a statement calling on the City of San Jose to protect the constitutional rights of free speech and assembly.

The Comité Permanente por Defensa de los Derechos Humanos (Permanent Committee for the Defense of Human Rights) from Cartagena, Colombia, sent a message that reads in part, "The Socialist Bookstore in San Jose has the legal right to remain open to the public, and the municipal authorities have the responsibility to provide

protection and to bring to justice any person or group that tries to impede its operation."

Other support messages came from Maryann Mahaffey, city council member from Detroit; Marcia Cogg, Wisconsin state assemblyperson; Carol King, director of the Great Lakes Region National Organization for Women; and a prisoner from San Quentin.

There have been serious provocations from the right-wing Vietnamese in the past weeks.

On June 1, the Committee for Justice for Professor Edward Cooperman in Los Angeles received a death threat. A note, postmarked from Los Angeles on May 31 said, "Dear Sirs, Minh Van Lam did not kill Cooperman. I did and I am going after

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—SELLING OUR PRESS AT THE PLANT GATE—

BY MARY SELVAS

NEW YORK — Every time we go to sell at the General Motors Assembly plant in North Tarrytown, New York, we take 15, 20, or 25 papers with us, leaflets, and sometimes pamphlets and buttons. Sometimes we sell only two or three papers, but we always keep a positive attitude about the sale and talk to the workers as they go into the plant.

It's great when you bring 25 papers to a sale and sell 23 of them, which is what happened with last week's issue of the *Militant* featuring the TWA hijacking.

We went to a new parking lot this time, one we had never tried before. It looked smaller, and like

there would be fewer workers there. But this is where some of the people with the hardest jobs park their cars — the ones who have the worst jobs in the plant, in the body shop.

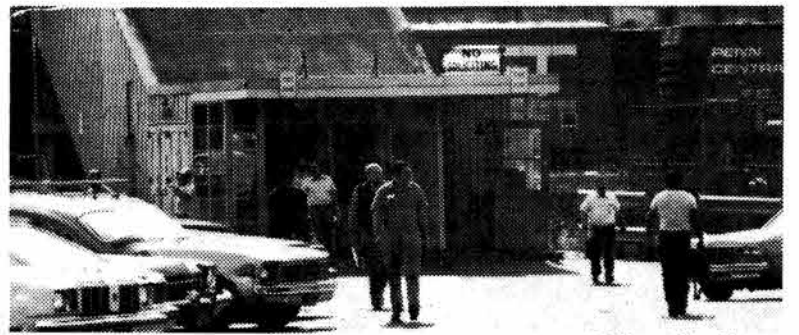
We clearly had hit the right place at the right time, because the response was better than at any previous sale.

Our impression was that workers who bought the paper responded positively to the *Militant* in general, and not just to the coverage on the real terrorists in Washington. In discussing the sale afterward, we realized how little impact — at least here at this plant — the government's "antiterrorist" campaign has had so far.

Not one of us received a single hostile comment.

My approach was to talk about the hotel workers strike going on now in New York, and to give each person a leaflet explaining why the strikers need our solidarity. Then I would talk about what was in the *Militant* and the Spanish-language biweekly *Perspectiva Mundial*. Other sales team members simply explained they were there to introduce the socialist paper, the *Militant*.

One older Black man gave me a dollar for the *Militant*. After I explained to him that the *Militant* had stories about people around the world struggling for their rights, he said he'd buy the paper



Workers leaving GM plant in North Tarrytown, New York.

Militant/Stu Singer

because he knew what it was like to struggle.

This plant-gate sale is one of the most difficult New York City teams to organize. The Tarrytown

team leaves at 4:15 a.m., and it's an hour's drive each way, to and from the plant, for a little bit less than half an hour to sell. But it sure is worth it!

Cleveland Black woman slain in racist firebombing

BY TINA JOHNSON

CLEVELAND — Racists burned down the home of Charles Gant, killing his mother and rendering his family homeless, on June 2 here. Charles and Mary Gant's family were the only Blacks living in a white neighborhood on E. 50th Street off Fleet Avenue.

The Gants had been victims of racist harassment from the moment they moved in two and a half years ago. Charles told the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, "We would get letters, no name or anything on it. It would say: 'Nigger, move back where you came from.' Stuff like that." The Gants, along with their two daughters and Charles' mother, Mabel Gant, refused to be intimidated by these crude racist threats.

The Gants faced hostility from elements of the all-white neighborhood even before they moved in. Cleveland's weekly Black newspaper, the *Call and Post*, reports that some local residents met with the owner of the house to encourage her not to rent to the Gants because they were Black. One year ago, the Gants' garage was attacked by an arsonist, creating \$100 worth of damage. Immediately prior to the Gants' move to E. 50th Street, a house one block over was burned when a Black family tried to move in.

Neighbors attest to the fact that the family was constantly harassed. Many have come out in solidarity with the Gants, defending their right to live where they choose and offering to find them another house in the same community.

A fund has been set up by local residents in memory of Mabel Gant, to raise money for the homeless family and a reward for information leading to the arrest and indictment of those responsible for the arson-murder.

'You're next'

Two days after the incident, Dennis Pickering, 18, and two juveniles, 17 and 14, were arrested and charged with aggravated murder in the arson death of Mabel Gant. Police said residents reported the three had been bragging of burning the

home and killing the woman.

One day after the Gant firebombing, another Black family in the neighboring white suburb of Newburgh Heights received a threatening letter. The letter consisted of the *Plain Dealer*'s article on the Gant arson-murder with "you're next" scrawled across it. This is just the latest in a series of intimidating and harassing incidents by local racists.

Two days after Willie and Crystal Toeran moved into their home in January, they received a letter that had the handwritten message: "You're going to be a dead nigger. Fire burns," signed, the "KKK."

During this same week, Lena Redding began moving into her new home on W. 12th Street in Cleveland, when she found a sign tied to her back porch that read: "We don't need niggers in this home to devalue our property. Go back home where you belong and save yourself a lot of trouble." Accompanied by a drawing of a cross, the poster was signed: "Someone who cares, and you should also."

Fair-housing fight

The Cleveland area has a long history of racist housing practices. Five years ago, U.S. District Judge Frank J. Battisti issued a 96-page document citing Parma (Cleveland's largest suburb) for deliberately keeping out Blacks. Battisti's order called for drastic reforms, including an educational program for the suburb's officials, construction of 133 units per year of low-to moderate-income housing, and advertisement of the area as an open and fair housing community.

Battisti's opinion states, "Parma's actions were motivated by racial bigotry." Council President Kenneth Kuczma revealed the validity of Battisti's conclusions when he admitted he had said, "I do not want Negroes in the city of Parma."

Parma's lack of compliance with Battisti's decision, and its snail-like pace when it does comply, serves to embolden the violent racist forces like those that have attacked the Gants, Toerans, and Lena Redding.

George Voinovich, mayor of Cleveland, says the city will respond with a "hard line" approach to the violence. By this, Voinovich primarily means increasing the number of police on patrol in the area where violence has occurred.

The solution of more cops does not hold as much water here as it may have in the past. The Black and Puerto Rican communities have recently gotten a brutal lesson in what "police protection" means.

Marcos Luciano, Jr., a 23-year-old Puerto Rican worker, was shot and killed April 10 by Cleveland police detective Joseph Paskvan. Paskvan, who was supposedly investigating an auto theft, claimed that Luciano aimed a sawed-off shotgun at him. The "shotgun" turned out to be a pellet gun, and at least one witness said he did not see Luciano raise any weapon.

Paskvan has a history of racist brutality. In his 12 years as a cop, he has been involved in nine shootings, three of which have resulted in the death of his victims.

Socialist condemns racist attacks

The Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Cleveland, Henry Scheer, has called for the immediate prosecution of cop Paskvan for murder, and justice for the victims' families.

Scheer also demands that the city defend the right of Blacks to live anywhere they choose.

"Voinovich and his city administration do nothing to get killer cops like Paskvan off the streets. In fact, they condone murdering young Blacks and Puerto Ricans by excusing cold-blooded murder in the name of self-defense. When racist elements see a cop blow away three people and get off scot-free, they figure one Mabel Gant is okay to kill.

"In Philadelphia, Democratic Mayor Wilson Goode recently ordered the bombing of MOVE members, creating a fire that killed 11 and destroyed 61 homes in that Black community. When racists see the government bomb a house, killing 11 people with no one prosecuted, they figure



The Toeran family

bombing Charles and Mary Gant out of their house is okay.

"It is these types of actions by the government that embolden opponents of fair housing and Black rights.

"My campaign will continue to speak out against racist attacks, whether carried out by the government or individuals. The other mayoral candidates call for more cops, more prisons, and more restrictions on democratic rights. When the capitalists and their politicians call for more 'law and order,' what they mean is more laws directed against us in order to keep us in our place."

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Workers, farmers respond to sales drive

BY TOM LEONARD

The 10-week national circulation drive to win new readers for the *Militant* and the Spanish-language biweekly *Perspectiva Mundial* ended on May 25. Members of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance, plus an impressive number of active supporters and friends of both organizations, sold 30,000 single copies of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. There were also hundreds of copies of the *Young Socialist* sold during the same period. In addition, 2,162 subscriptions were sold — 1,963 to the *Militant* and 199 to *Perspectiva Mundial*.

There were 29,892 single copies sold by organized units of the SWP and YSA, and regular sales by at-large members and active supporters helped make the 30,000 total.

Big gains were made in all parts of the country in how to effectively use the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* to reach workers and their allies who are under attack by the employers and their government and looking for ways to fight back.

The subscriptions sold helped expand the number of readers who regularly receive the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, but fell 338 subscriptions below the projected goal of 2,500. Circulation-drive organizers and participants around the country indicate that one of the problems may have been setting the last five weeks of the drive to concentrate on subscrip-



Farmers and union members protesting sale of Langman farm in Minnesota last March. Ten-week sales drive registered big increase in *Militant* sales to farmers around country.

tions. In practice it turned out to take more time and patient discussion to win subscribers than was anticipated at the start of the drive.

The projections on where and who to sell to, however, were borne out throughout the campaign. In launching the 10-week circulation drive, for example, the March 15 *Militant* reported, "Socialists will acceler-

ate their present sales to coworkers, at plant gates, at union and political meetings, and in the Black, Latino, and other working class communities." The article also pointed out further opportunities to expand the readership of the revolutionary press among the increasing number of anti-apartheid fighters and farmers organizing to protest farm foreclosures. It explained

the importance of *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* sales in helping to build support for the antiwar demonstrations on April 20 for Peace, Jobs and Justice.

The highly successful sales at demonstrations around the country on April 20 bore out these projections, and sales teams sold some 4,000 *Militants* and *Perspectiva Mundials*. In addition, sales of revolutionary books and pamphlets totaled \$7,500. This included selling out all available copies of the new book *Nicaragua: The Sandinista People's Revolution*.

Throughout the sales campaign, demonstrations by workers and their allies against cutbacks, racism, and sexism also provided for good sales. Utilizing the *Militant's*, and *Perspectiva Mundial's* coverage of these struggles and organizing to sell to layers of workers and allies directly involved or active in them was an approach effectively used in all parts of the country.

One of the results was reaching hundreds of working farmers with the *Militant* for the first time. The same was true of students at anti-apartheid demonstrations, workers in Black communities following the Philadelphia bombing, and among Latinos suffering attacks of police brutality. Utilizing the *Militant's* coverage of attacks on unions also resulted in sharp increases in sales at plant gates, especially to workers directly under attack.

One of the main goals of the circulation drive — to raise and maintain effective sales — and the lessons of the drive will be an important part of the discussion at the August Socialist Workers Party convention and educational conference on how to more widely spread the SWP's and YSA's ideas among working people.

N.Y. meeting to celebrate life of Wayne Hieber



Militant/Bruce Marcus
Wayne Hieber at antiwar protest in Washington, D.C., last April 20.

NEW YORK — A public meeting to celebrate the life of Socialist Workers Party member Wayne Hieber, and to honor his contributions to the socialist movement, will be held here on Friday, July 5.

Hieber died on June 21 from AIDS — acquired immune deficiency syndrome. He was 34 years old.

Hieber had been an active member of the socialist movement since 1971. He joined the Young Socialist Alliance in Gainesville, Florida, and then moved to Atlanta, where he became a member of the Socialist Workers Party.

Before his illness forced him to quit working last fall, Hieber was an electrical assembler at Edison Products in New Jersey and a member of the International Union of Electronic Workers.

The July 5 meeting will be held at the Socialist Bookstore at 79 Leonard Street in Manhattan at 8 p.m. For more information about the meeting, call (212) 925-1668.

Reagan's tax plan benefits wealthy

BY HARRY RING

"I think there'll be increasing numbers of ... corporate supporters for this tax bill. When corporate finance people ... put pencil to paper, an enormous number of firms are going to find they benefit very substantially." — Jack Albertine, head of a coalition of business forces supporting Reagan's new tax plan.

Quite a few companies have already done their homework and figured out that despite Reagan's "fairness" rhetoric, the new tax plan will benefit the rich even more than the old one.

Corporate supporters of the tax bill include, among others, General Motors, IBM, and General Foods.

And rightly so. Since the 461-page White House plan came out (461 pages to present a "simplified" tax plan), tax experts have pored through the pages of fine print. As a result, there are additional facts confirming that despite all the claims of fairness the plan perpetuates, and tilts even further, a tax structure carefully rigged to benefit the employing class.

Contrary to initial claims about big savings for all, it is now estimated that for families with incomes between \$20,000 and \$50,000, the savings would be, on the average, \$160 a year.

Elderly people, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, would save maybe half the average.

That's because the plan proposes to scrap the extra personal exemption now granted those 65 and over.

But, not surprisingly, the wealthy do better than average. If you happen to be in the \$200,000 plus bracket, you would pocket a savings of \$10,000.

The most widely touted feature of the plan has been the proposal to increase the individual personal exemption to \$2,000, nearly double the present exemption.

But, from the start, that's being chipped away at, mainly by limiting deductions and expanding the definition of taxable income.

One proposition which has already drawn protest is to begin taxing — at a limit of \$300 for openers — the value of such job fringe benefits as company paid health insurance. (Classifying this as income means you will not only pay income tax on it, but also the 7 percent Social Security tax.)

It's calculated that for a men's clothing worker making \$6.61 an hour this single item would mean added taxes of \$66 a year.

Another proposal that has sparked controversy is to eliminate the deductibility of state and local taxes. For those who live in a high-tax state, own their own home, and itemize their federal return, this would mean a significantly higher federal tax.

But, while state and local taxes would no longer be deductible, transnational corporations would be allowed tax credits for the taxes they pay to other governments.

And that's just one of the goodies being offered to the corporations.

Another corporate gimmick involves what's called the Accelerated Cost Recovery System. This allows companies to write off the cost of new equipment and buildings faster than they wear out.

The experts say this is one of the mile-wide loopholes through which the largest corporations dodge the tax collector.

Apparently the Accelerated Cost Recovery System is such a naked ripoff that the Treasury Department, which drafted a new tax plan prior to Reagan's, proposed to scrap it.

The White House plan continues the write-off for plants and machinery, assertedly in a modified form, at least for the first years of the write-off.

But, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, the plan "would allow corporations to take increasingly larger write-offs of plants and equipment in the later years of such assets' lives."

How? By allowing companies "to adjust their write-offs upwards for inflation."

In other words, for tax purposes, as the building gets older, it's worth more, not less. Neat.

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Nicaraguan reactionaries stage provocation

Continued from front page

Committee, mobilized forces and resources for Obando's homecoming.

For cover, the local Catholic church hierarchy issued a brief communiqué about the "nonpolitical" and "strictly religious" character of the homecoming.

Nicaragua's President, Daniel Ortega, congratulated Obando as soon as his designation as Cardinal became public. Government ministries offered to help with logistics for Obando's return to Nicaragua.

In keeping with the church hierarchy's stated wish that the events be "nonpolitical," top government leaders abstained from receiving Obando at the airport or attending his mass the following day.

The airport reception, however, far from being "nonpolitical" turned out to be a violent provocation organized by the right-wing forces.

Pursuant to an agreement with the hierarchy, substantial numbers of Sandinista Police were on hand at the airport to serve as unarmed monitors. They were charged with keeping everyone but the official church delegation and reporters out of the airport. Other well-wishers were to line the route Obando would travel to his house in a luxurious neighborhood on the outskirts of town.

But the right-wing forces had other plans. Shouting, "Long live Reagan!" a well-organized gang of provocateurs attacked the unarmed police, injuring more than a dozen and breaking into the airport. These provocateurs also attacked foreign correspondents — especially women — stealing passports, cameras, and, most of all, dollars.

A few of the provocateurs were arrested. The majority served as Obando's escorts on the long drive back to his residence.

Obando's first mass as a cardinal on Nicaraguan soil was a thinly veiled call for Nicaragua's workers and farmers to surrender to the armed bands that Washington is fielding against them.

The main Bible reading featured a "red monster" whose "days are numbered" and who was defeated by the Archangel Michael — Obando's namesake.

The church service was designed to idolize Obando. From altar microphones, the congregation was led in chants of "Long live Cardinal Obando!"

The central political point of the mass was contained in Obando's homily on how to achieve "peace."

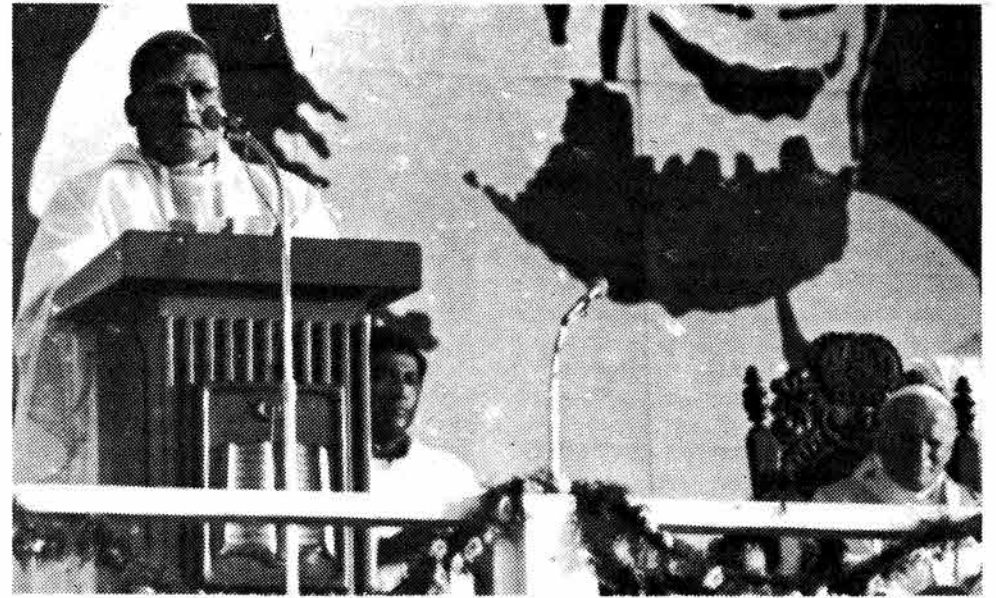
"Jesus is a god that made himself a serf, a slave. . . ." said Obando.

"Jesus does not stretch out his hand from above to snatch us from slavery, but becomes a slave with us. . . ."

"God's compassion is a compassion that manifests itself in servitude. . . ."

"Jesus lived his humiliation to the full. . . ." and so on.

Despite church officials' predictions that as many as a quarter million people would turn out for Obando's performance, the crowd was closer to 25,000.



Miguel Obando y Bravo addresses rally during visit to Nicaragua by pope (lower right) in 1983.

La. activists confirm right to march

BY ELIZABETH ZIERS

NEW ORLEANS — Louisiana housing-rights marchers celebrated a victory June 1 as they rallied in front of the Destrehan Plantation big house west of here. The march of 200 majority Black Louisiana and Mississippi activists had confirmed the right of protesters to march on Louisiana's public highways and bridges without getting arrested, as the rights marchers had been a month ago. The June 1 march launched a fight to get the charges against the earlier marchers dropped.

The protest, organized by the Gulf Coast Tenants Alliance, demanded "Housing, jobs, and peace." They demanded repairs and better living conditions in the federally funded housing projects of rural St.

Charles Parish, as well as a refund of rent overcharges. The tenant alliance also seeks a project director who will live in the project. The previous director, Jonah Peychaud, didn't live in the project and had resigned three days earlier.

Tenants from nearby Marrero had won similar gains last November after a protest march across the Mississippi River into New Orleans.

The June 1 march participants came from three St. Charles Parish communities. They were joined by a busload of protesters from a housing project in Gulfport, Mississippi, and by marchers from New Orleans, including antiwar and anti-apartheid activists. Charges brought against Tenants Alliance coordinator Pat Bryant, which came after a police attack on an anti-apartheid picket line in December, were dropped in

court only the day before the march.

Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth and State Rep. Avery Alexander spoke at the kickoff rally. "When I can't walk on the highway, pretty soon they won't let me walk on the street, and then I can't walk on the sidewalk. When they can tell me where I can walk, then they can tell me what I can think," said Alexander.

The marchers covered six miles in 95° heat, including crossing the Hale Boggs Bridge over the Mississippi River. State officials had backed down on their earlier denial of the protesters' right to include the bridge in the march route.

Michelle Smith, a 20-year-old Marrero tenant, told the *Militant*, "I like to be out here at things like this because it lets them know we won't be fooled with. We want justice."

March, rally hit killing by cop

BY RUTH NEBBIA

NEW YORK — Over 500 people gathered at Harlem's Memorial Baptist Church to protest the racist cop killing of Edmund E. Perry, a 17-year-old honor student. The meeting condemned the growing number of such racist murders in the city.

The crowd was predominantly Black with a number of Latinos. A group of white students who participated in the anti-apartheid sit-in at Columbia University this past spring also participated. Speakers included community and church leaders, as well as city and union officials.

Clinton Haywood, a Harlem youth who received an award for achievement during the rally, asked the crowd if being young and Black would automatically make him a victim of the cops.

Roger Green, Democratic assemblyman from Brooklyn, linked this murder with other cop killings such as those of Michael Stewart, a young Black man beaten to death last year by transit police, and Eleanor Bumpurs, an elderly Black woman who was shot to death last year when cops were evicting her from her apartment in the Bronx.

C. Vernon Mason, the attorney for the Perry family and a Democratic Party candidate for Manhattan district attorney, told the crowd that Blacks had shed more blood at the hands of racists in the United States

than in the U.S. wars in Korea and Vietnam. He read two racist letters received by the Perry family in the wake of the murder that hailed the cop action as "justified" and "commendable."

Zoilo Torres, from the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights, also spoke. He pledged the support of the Puerto Rican community in the fight against cop killings. He received a warm reception for his expression of solidarity.

Other speakers included Denny Farrell, candidate for the Democratic Party nomination in the New York mayoral race; a representative of Rev. Daughtry of the Black United Front; David Dinkins, Democratic Party candidate for Manhattan Borough president; Jim Butler, from the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; and others. The meeting also heard greetings from Andrea González, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York. González pledged to use her campaign to speak out against racist murders and police brutality.

After the rally protesters marched through Harlem to the 26th police precinct, where the cop who shot Perry is assigned. Demonstrators carried candles and chanted, "Stop killing us" and "What do we want? Justice." The march grew to 1,200 people on its way to the precinct.

New attacks on grand jury victims

In an act that can only be described as vindictive, the U.S. Justice Department has been attempting to block the parole of seven supporters of Puerto Rican independence.

The seven were convicted of the "crime" of refusing to testify before a Brooklyn, New York, grand jury "investigating" the Puerto Rican independence movement. They had all been sentenced to serve from two to three years in U.S. prisons for criminal contempt of court. The seven are currently eligible for parole.

In May, the seven activists filed a petition in federal court requesting to be released. Federal Judge Barrington Park or-

dered the U.S. Justice Department to show cause to deny the activists their freedom. In response, the Justice Department petitioned to have the activists' petition divided into seven separate cases to be heard in seven different courts — in this way dragging out the proceedings and keeping the activists imprisoned.

On Tuesday, June 14, Judge Barrington rejected the Justice Department's petition and ruled that the federal district court had jurisdiction over the case. The next hearing is set for the end of June.

The seven activists are Federico Cintrón Fiallo, Julio and Andrés Rosado, María Cueto, Esteban Guerra, and Michelle Miller.

Nicaraguan embassy attacked

BY IKE NAHEM

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Terrorists broke into the Nicaraguan embassy here on June 21, causing extensive damage. The arsonists set four fires, according to federal and local police officials, leaving some \$50,000 worth of damage. Three embassy staff people who were inside the building discovered the fires. There were no injuries.

A press release issued by the embassy noted, "The swift and decisive action of the personnel on duty at the time, who immediately notified the appropriate authorities, avoided more tragic consequences."

"The embassy of Nicaragua is concerned that the baseless and hostile rhetoric against our government could have stimulated this criminal act and hopes that steps will be taken to promote conditions which will avoid similar actions in the future."

The terrorists entered the embassy's circular reception room after smashing the glass door at the front entrance. In the reception room and two adjoining rooms fires were set, apparently by igniting towels and a chair. Phone lines were destroyed; several walls were gutted. The fire and smoke destroyed several large mounted photographs given to the embassy by North Americans who visited Nicaragua.

William Vigil, an embassy counselor, told reporters that the embassy constantly receives violent threats over the telephone. Six such calls were received the day before the attack. He said, "This act is not separate from the waves of Reagan's rhetoric directed against us, which is part of the war and violence directed against our country by the Reagan administration."

Another embassy official told the *Militant*, "A policy that promotes violence and aggression in my country is difficult to contain. The U.S. people here are beginning to witness in your own country Reagan's war in Central America."

The National Network in Solidarity with

the Nicaraguan People is asking that expressions of sympathy and support be sent to the embassy personnel. The address is Embassy of Nicaragua, 1627 New Hampshire Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20009.

Protest telegrams condemning the attack and demanding U.S. authorities find and prosecute those responsible should be sent to the White House and State Department.

Young Socialist Alliance protests attack on Nicaraguan embassy

The following letter was sent to the U.S. State Department from Ellen Haywood, national chairperson of the Young Socialist Alliance, on June 23.

We strongly protest the arson attack on the Nicaraguan embassy in Washington, D.C., on Thursday, June 20, and hold the U.S. government fully responsible. Washington's slander campaign against the Nicaraguan government and people, designed to justify the U.S.-organized mercenary war, trade embargo, and threat of direct U.S. military intervention, is a green light for such illegal and violent attacks on Nicaraguan government employees and offices in the U.S.

U.S. aggression against Nicaragua is not supported by the majority of the U.S. population. Tens of thousands of people protested the U.S. government's war in Central America on April 20, 1985, in Washington and other major cities. More nationally coordinated protests against the war are planned for this fall. We join with many others in demanding that those responsible for the attacks on the Nicaraguan embassy be found and fully prosecuted, that the \$50,000 be paid for the damages to the Nicaraguan embassy and, further, that the lies and acts of war against Nicaragua be stopped immediately.

Nicaraguan gov't meets peasants' demands for land

BY JOSÉ G. PÉREZ

MASAYA, Nicaragua — A powerful peasant movement has dealt a big blow to exploitive capitalist landed property in this province.

After years of unrest and a month of uninterrupted peasant mobilizations — meetings, rallies, and land seizures — on June 14, Commander of the Revolution Jaime Wheelock announced that most of the province had been declared a "zone of agricultural development and agrarian reform."

Speaking to nearly 10,000 poor farmers and their supporters in this provincial capital, Wheelock explained that "the Masaya of the insurrection against [U.S.-backed dictator] Somoza, of the heroes and martyrs, wants land, and that is why the revolution has come to Masaya, to tell her she will receive the land she needs."

The main objective of the measure, Wheelock explained, "is to benefit, with massive grants of land, the poor peasants, who historically have been pushed aside and exploited."

Under terms of the decree, all property in the zone larger than 50 manzanas — about 85 acres — is subject to redistribution.

The government is negotiating with the affected owners, who can either sell their farms or exchange them for land elsewhere. Those who refuse to negotiate, Wheelock warned, will be summarily expropriated.

Bolaños refuses

Most publicly-owned farms in the zone — about 3,000 acres — are being immediately turned over to the peasants. Twenty-three private farms have also been declared "affected" by the agrarian reform, totaling about 10,000 acres. With one exception, all the private owners have entered into negotiations with the government. The exception is Enrique "Churruco" Bolaños.

As head of the Supreme Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP) — the main organization of the Nicaraguan capitalist class — Bolaños has made himself a symbol of opposition to the workers' and peasants' revolution. In fact, "We want 'Churruco' Bolaños' land" has been one of the main battle cries of the Masaya movement.

Instead of negotiating, Bolaños claimed that the issue had been invented by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) "to take his land and usurp his rights," Wheelock explained.

"Since there is no possibility of negotiating with him," Wheelock continued, "we have decided to expropriate...."

The rest of Wheelock's statement was drowned out by a mighty roar. Waving

placards and machetes, thousands of demonstrators cried out, "People's power! People's power! Long live the agrarian reform! Long live the revolution!"

Wheelock called on the peasants to immediately take and begin working the land involved in the agrarian reform without waiting for the legal formalities, and thereby take advantage of the beginning of the rainy season.

He also made an initial distribution of agrarian-reform land titles to 200 families.

To underscore that the government wasn't carrying out a political vendetta, Wheelock revealed that it had offered to compensate Bolaños by giving him double the amount of the expropriated land in another part of the Pacific Coast zone of Nicaragua.

The irony here is that Bolaños, in refusing to negotiate the sale or exchange of his land, had urged the government to instead force needy peasants to move to areas where land is available.

"So we tell Mr. Bolaños that it is much easier for him to move than for thousands of families to move," Wheelock explained to the delight of the crowd. Many broke out into chants of "*Que se vaya* [He should go]."

Thousands to get land

All told, nearly 15,000 acres will go to some 2,000 families in the first stage of the new Masaya agrarian reform. These will be small plots even by Nicaraguan peasants' standards, albeit the richness of the land will help compensate somewhat.

In addition to further land distribution in Masaya, the government also plans to make land available in nearby provinces and encourage families to move to those zones.

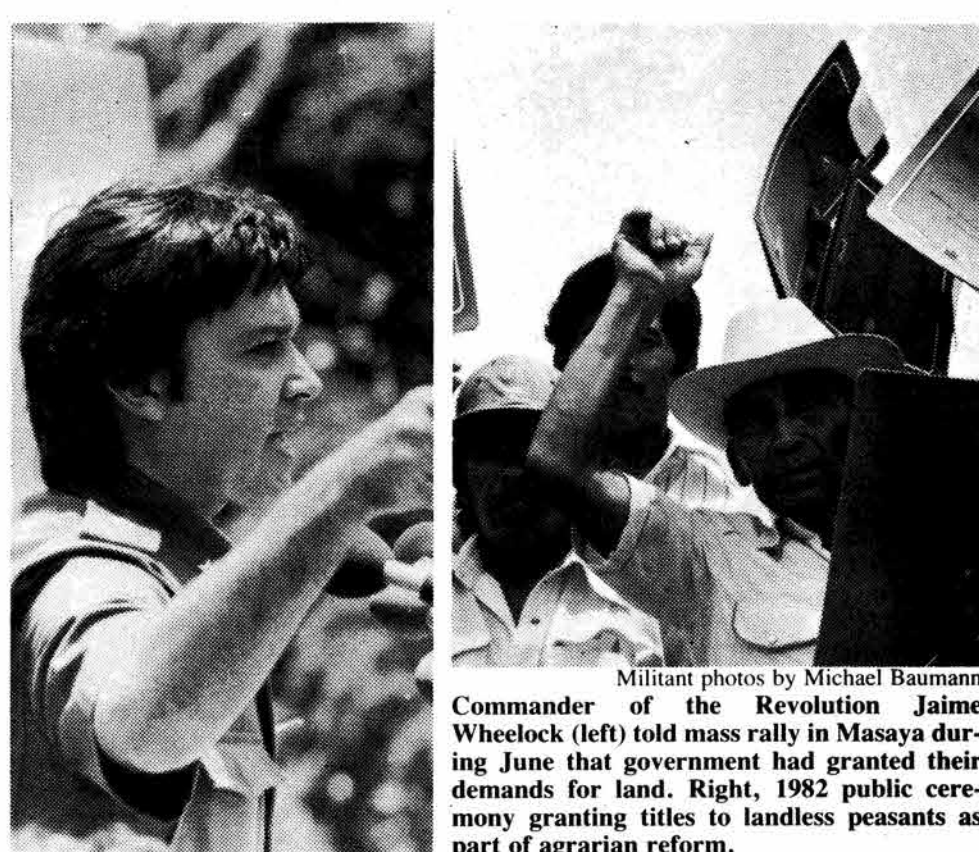
The unjust distribution of land has long been a simmering issue in this province. Of the 13,000 peasant families here, the big majority — more than 8,000 — have had virtually or absolutely no land.

Following the July 1979 overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship, there were extensive land seizures in Masaya.

"At that time," Commander Wheelock recalled, "we asked the peasant community to leave those lands because we had established a political regime of national unity that respected private property in land."

The Sandinista Front, which led the workers and peasants in overthrowing the capitalist dictatorship, had initially hoped that by confiscating the ill-gotten holdings of Somoza and his cronies, the government could make available enough land to poor peasants.

But until now, only 1,400 of the 10,000 families in Masaya that needed land had re-



Militant photos by Michael Baumann
Commander of the Revolution Jaime Wheelock (left) told mass rally in Masaya during June that government had granted their demands for land. Right, 1982 public ceremony granting titles to landless peasants as part of agrarian reform.

ceived it. Masaya is the most densely populated province in the entire country, with the largest proportion of landless peasants.

"We tried to make the land problem better without fully solving it," Wheelock said, "and we have to recognize that the measures we took were unsatisfactory."

"Last year, we already felt growing pressure for land," he continued. "And, of course, as the [U.S.-sponsored mercenary] aggression intensified — note this well: *as the aggression intensified* — the peasants felt the growing shortages and inflation and therefore a greater need for land."

Peasants began organizing

The renewed land movement began in May in a district known as Palenque, to the south of the provincial capital.

The rainy season begins at the end of May, and as the days began to get cloudy and the time for planting approached, many landless farmers were desperate. The money they had earned harvesting cotton, and what they could make doing odd jobs or engaging in informal commerce, was rapidly being eaten up by a war-induced inflation. But when the peasants tried to rent land — often offering to pay much more than the legal maximum, or even submit to sharecropping arrangements — most landlords refused.

The peasants began organizing. In a few weeks, they held more than 200 meetings, electing representatives from each and every hamlet and district. These in turn were grouped together in a council called the *Comité Comarcal* (Committee of the District).

They drew up petitions naming the properties they wanted turned over to them, and began making plans to take the land themselves if the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Agrarian Reform was not in a position to immediately deliver the farms.

Both government officials and land movement activists insist this movement was created by the peasants themselves, without official prompting. Nevertheless, once it started the Sandinista Front gave the peasants its full support.

"Our first response was a political response," explained Wheelock. "We said it was a just movement, with deep historical roots, not an artificial movement."

On June 6, the peasants escalated their protest. Brandishing machetes and shouting, "We want land! Long live the agrarian reform," several hundred marched on the government house in Masaya. They formally presented their petitions, demanding an immediate response.

'Land to those who work it'

The peasants went into the building shouting slogans like, "Who has the land? The bourgeoisie! Who wants the land? The people!" and "No more land in the hands of the capitalists, land to those who work it."

The group met with Frederico López, FSLN political secretary in Region IV, which includes this and three other neighboring provinces.

The peasants had timed their protest to coincide with the sixth anniversary of the final insurrection against the Somoza dictatorship in Masaya. FSLN leader López began his remarks by referring to those heroic days. "I believe that what you are doing is the greatest homage we can pay to our martyrs," he said.

López explained that the unjust distribution of land is not a situation created by the Sandinista People's Revolution. This is the legacy the people have inherited from Somozaism.

"The revolutionary government, you can be sure, is going to give you a positive response. These requests are going to be studied by the revolutionary government and Jaime Wheelock is going to come to give a precise, correct, concrete answer."

"The most important thing," López proceeded, "is that you are united, and in unity there is strength."

"Long live the Masaya peasant movement!"

I asked Pablo Martínez Borge, one of the peasants who was proposing to take the land, if they weren't afraid of reprisals.

"Before, we lived under the boot of the landowners," he responded. "Now we are no longer going to live under anyone's boot."

In his speech at the June 14 rally, Wheelock explained that the revolutionary government had long been worried "by the 8,000 peasant families in a precarious situation, victims of a *latifundismo* [landlordism] that excluded them."

"And for that reason, because of the deep needs of the people, Masaya has refused to continue living alongside *latifundismo*. The Masaya of the poor, the Masaya of the landless peasants, couldn't continue living alongside of the *latifundists*...."

"We, as representatives of this people, are obligated to give you the land," Wheelock continued.

"Here is the government," Wheelock said, gesturing to the thousands of peasants. "It is the people that govern, it is the people that lead."

Community protests cop's killing of Black

BY WILLIAM GOTTLIEB

SAN JOSE, Calif. — On June 8 about 30 community activists met in a San Jose church to launch a campaign for an independent investigation into the killing of Melvin Truss, a 17-year-old Black youth, by San Jose police officer Paul Ewing. On the evening of May 5, Ewing, who was in plainclothes and an unmarked car, picked up Truss. He drove Truss to the parking lot of the Olinder School, a deserted area at that time of the day, and proceeded to pump five .375 Magnum rounds into him.

Ewing claims that Truss, who was a slightly built five feet, nine inches and weighed only 115 pounds, solicited him for a sexual act and then attacked him with a steak knife, demanding money. If the police are to be believed, the six feet, one inch, 200-pound Ewing had no alternative but to kill Truss in "self-defense." The cops have gone on a campaign of unbridled gay baiting, claiming that Truss was a transvestite and homosexual. Apparently Truss was dressed in the style made popu-

lar by rock singers Michael Jackson and Prince when he was killed by the police. This gay baiting reached its peak when Deputy Police Chief Stanley Horton declared at a city council meeting June 4 that it was Truss's "life style" that had gotten him into "trouble."

In spite of the obvious absurdity of Ewing's story of having to kill Truss in self-defense, a grand jury refused to indict Ewing, and he was promptly reinstated by the San Jose Police Department. On June 4 angry residents demanded at a public meeting of the city council that the council launch an independent committee to investigate the police killing of Truss. The meeting was also attended by more than 15 cops in full uniform and their supporters who wildly cheered those who spoke against an independent investigation. In spite of testimony by numerous individuals exposing Ewing's "killing in self-defense" story and the moving statements of fellow students of Truss at James Lick High School that he was incapable of hurting anybody, "espe-

cially someone older than him and a lot bigger than him," not a single council member supported the demand for an independent investigation.

Supporters of Truss's family are demanding that the attorney general of California and the U.S. Department of Justice enter the case since the San Jose and Santa Clara county authorities have made clear that they intend to do nothing.

The Truss case is part of a larger pattern of police violence and killings in San Jose. In the last five years, 12 people have been shot and killed by the San Jose Police Department. San Jose Police Chief Joseph McNamara indicates that more of the same can be expected. "It's possible," McNamara observed, that "we'll see an increase [in police killings] because our people will defend themselves." McNamara made it clear that the men in blue will have his support when, in the "line of duty," they take human life. "I'm going to defend them if they're in the right," the police chief told the *San Jose Mercury News*.

Spanish women fight for underground coal-mining jobs

'If I were a man — no problem'

BY ANDREA GONZÁLEZ

Women are about to enter the coal mines of Asturias in Spain. These women will be the first women underground coal miners in Western Europe since the turn of the century.

Like their sisters in the United States who have gone into the mines, these women are fighting for mining jobs because they need a job.

They are from the Asturias mining district. They are the daughters of coal miners. In some cases their fathers were killed or permanently injured in mining accidents.

The Hunosa mining company was forced to hire women for jobs underground when the Women's Institute began to investigate a complaint by one woman who had been rejected by the company. The institute's director, Carlota Bustelo, told the Spanish magazine *La Mujer Feminista* that the institute took the case since the Spanish constitution prohibits discrimination on account of sex. Some opponents are challenging its legality. They cite Spain's ratification of the European Social Charter, which prohibits women going underground, as the basis for their challenge.

The hiring of women as underground coal miners has opened up a discussion throughout Spain. In an interview with *La*

Mujer Feminista Ana Isabel López, one of the women fighting to be a coal miner, explained that she had been the target of individual gossip and harassment by the press.

"If I don't accept the job," she said, "those who criticize me are not going to come and give me another home. They say I am taking a job from the father of a family, but I have a 12-year-old daughter to provide for too."

Another of the women, Clara López, whose father was killed at the Hunosa mine, had previously been turned down by the company for a job. She told *La Mujer Feminista*, "If I were a man I would have been hired without any problem since it is the practice to hire the children of miners who were killed in mining accidents." López, 19, has not had a job since she finished school. She explained that she had not applied for a job underground, but since the company only offered an underground job, she was going to take it.

Getting and keeping a job in the mines is not easy. According to Medecia Tino, a leader of the General Workers Union (UGT), which organizes the majority of workers at Hunosa mine, 30 percent of those who apply for underground-mine jobs are rejected because they cannot pass the physical. Even after passing the physical, Tino said, "I have seen many men not last 15 days [in the mine]."



One of many Spanish women hoping to become underground coal miners, pictured here outside a mine with her daughter.

The unions have not publicly opposed women in the mines. And they agree that physically women can do the job. But they argue that current labor laws have been designed only to protect women in traditional jobs. They do not have provisions to protect women in mining. Therefore, they argue, the laws must be changed before women can enter the mines. Tino explained, "it is not that we are against allowing women access to any kind of job, but we all know that they are not going to be able to work in the mines. The current laws are useless; first they must change the laws. The Parliament must discuss this."

Until the beginning of the century, however, women worked underground. In

1909, for example, there were some 1,114 women miners. Even after a law was passed prohibiting women and minors underground, women still worked shifting and washing coal. Today some 641 women work as laborers above ground in mining.

In an article in support of women's right to be underground miners, Pilar López Díez, the editor of *La Mujer Feminista* explained that to argue that mining is too hard for women is to ignore the fact that women are working jobs in agriculture and industry that are just as hard as the work women in the mines will be doing. The daughters of coal miners, she explained, should have the right to follow in their fathers' footsteps and work in the mines.



Spanish woman miner at turn of century

Hormel workers vote to continue fight

BY JIM ALTENBERG

ST. PAUL, Minn. — In the face of stepped up company attacks, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local P-9 in Austin, Minnesota, is pressing its struggle against concessions. Last October, workers in Hormel plants had their wages unilaterally slashed 23 percent by Hormel, from \$10.69 per hour to \$8.25. Following an arbitrator's ruling, wages in Austin today stand at \$8.75, but benefits have again been cut back. The 1,700 unionists in the Austin pork-processing plant have refused to accept the cuts, and are waging a determined fight to restore the old rates.

On June 2, the local overwhelmingly defeated a petition signed by some 500 P-9 members calling on the executive board to negotiate a wage and benefit package similar to the one the UFCW agreed to for other

Hormel plants: \$9.00 per hour with a \$1.00 raise in September. At a meeting of over 900 union members, workers voted the proposal down by 80 percent and reaffirmed their demand for \$10.69 per hour.

The vote followed an announcement by Hormel two days before that the union contract would be terminated when it expired in August, allowing for further attacks on the union. In previous years, contracts remained in force while negotiations took place. Hormel has also threatened Austin workers with massive layoffs if the union continued to fight the cuts. However, as Jim Guyette, president of the local, told a meeting of Twin Cities unionists June 15, this would be difficult for Hormel to do, since 45 percent of Hormel's production comes from the Austin plant.

Hormel workers also voted to assess themselves \$3.00 a week to finance their

corporate campaign against First Bank Systems, one of Hormel's largest creditors and stockholders. This was the second time such a vote had been taken. Last January, a similar election was declared void by UFCW international officials, who have opposed Local P-9's anticoncessions fight since it began. Austin newspapers used the international's actions to slander the union and its leadership. But union members repudiated these charges, voting in near record numbers June 13 and adopting the assessment by a 2-1 margin.

Clark Delher, a Hormel worker for 18 years, told the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* why he voted for the campaign. "I'm fighting back. I'm going to feel good about myself even if I do lose my job. They can't take away my self-respect. That's something you can only give away. And we're not going to do that."

At a June 12 anti-apartheid rally at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, P-9 business agent Peter Winkles shared the speakers' platform with David Ndaba of the African National Congress and university divestment activists. Winkles pointed out that while First Bank claims to have no holdings in South Africa, they loan large sums of money to other corporations doing business in that country and with the racist regime itself. These same banks and corporations who profit from apartheid and union-busting are also responsible for farm-foreclosures in Minnesota and the economic ruin of communities like Duluth and Austin, he explained.

Workers throughout the region continue to look to Local P-9's struggle as an important example for those wanting to fight back against union-busting and plant shut-downs. P-9 activists are continuing to explain the need to resist concessions and are winning solidarity everywhere.

After a series of often lengthy meetings, UFCW workers at Hormel plants in Beloit, Wisconsin, and Ottumwa, Iowa, gave their support to Local P-9. The union also gained the support of UFCW workers at Farmstead, a meatpacking plant in nearby Albert Lea, Minnesota.

A solidarity rally and picnic is planned for June 29 at Todd Park in Austin at noon. For more information, call UFCW Local P-9 at (507) 433-9320.

Report on New Caledonia congress in 'IP'

While the French government was building up its military might on its South Pacific colony of New Caledonia, the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS) was holding its third congress to map out strategy for the independence struggle.

The July 8 *Intercontinental Press* carries several eyewitness reports on this important FLNKS congress. They are by Neil Jarden, a leader of the Socialist Action League of New Zealand, who was among the congress's international guests.

The main topic on the agenda was a discussion of the French government's latest proposals, which fall far short of the Kanaks' demand for full independence. The FLNKS rejected the French plan, which includes strengthening Paris's military presence on the island, as "neocolonialist." The FLNKS did decide to participate in regional elections, however, changing an earlier position of boycotting all colonial institutions.

This *IP* also includes an article by

editor Doug Jenness reviewing the major political themes of recent speeches and interviews of Cuban leader Fidel Castro. Written as an introduction to a new book of Castro speeches, it focuses on Castro's proposals for a united front of Latin American countries to confront their debt burden and to oppose the U.S.-organized war against Nicaragua.

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FLNKS Congress Rejects French Neocolonial Plan**

Algeria
Twenty Years Since Overthrow of
Workers' and Peasants' Government

Introduction to
New Book of
Castro Speeches

Appeal for labor solidarity

Sandinista union leader asks for international support

BY PACO SÁNCHEZ

"Try to talk to the greatest number of our people so that when you go back to the United States, you can bring the most complete vision of our revolution."

Sebastián Castro, the director of international relations for North America of the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST), told us this when we met with him during our stay in Nicaragua. His words capture the cordial welcome that the Sandinista people's revolution extends to everyone who wants to know the reality of a people facing a mercenary war organized by the most powerful government in the world.

Our tour, from April 28 to May 5, was made up of trade unionists and organized by Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Tours, Inc. We witnessed the aggression by the government of the United States against Nicaragua and the response of the Nicaraguan people to the embargo imposed by Washington on May 1. Visits like this, "to forge closer links between the North American people and our people," said Castro, are exactly what the ruling class of the United States is trying to avoid by including in the embargo a ban on airline flights between the two countries by the Nicaraguan airline.

The legacy of decades of oppression and plunder under imperialist domination is still evident in the economic development of Nicaragua, as with the rest of the countries of Central America. The imperialists "assigned us the role of producers of raw materials," said Castro, "like coffee, cotton, meat, and bananas. Almost all of Central America has the same products, and the market is the United States."

But in talking with the people of this new Nicaragua, you can see a deep change compared with the situation of their neighbors in Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, or Costa Rica, which still suffer under Washington's domination. The children here talk of going to school, the women of their participation in the revolution, the workers of producing more to benefit the people and defending the country against aggression. And everyone talks about the literacy campaign, in which more than 100,000 volunteers taught more than 400,000 people to read and write in a country of nearly 3 million inhabitants; about the vaccination campaign that has dramatically reduced the incidence of malaria, polio, and other illnesses; of the medical services and free medicines; and of the "free education in spite of all the poverty," as Castro told us.

The victory of July 19

With the victory of the revolution on July 19, 1979, hundreds of workers, peasants, young people, and women began to join mass organizations, which were no longer underground.

"On July 26 the CST, the Sandinista Workers Federation, was born," explained Castro, "in order to consolidate a revolutionary process, to practice a new kind of unionism," not as a workers organization purely for putting forward demands, but as an organization integrated into the revolutionary process, promoting the participation of the workers in it, "defending the people's democracy," and conscious that for working people, "being in power is what is most important, and the task is to consolidate it."

Before the revolution, explained the CST leader, "all the political parties were playing the Somoza dictatorship's game ... collaborating with it in one form or another. For this people to win its freedom, it took the birth of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) as the guiding force," leading the seizure of power and the establishment of a workers' and farm-

ers' government.

With respect to the evolution of the unions, the Sandinista leader told us that before the victory of the revolution, they "only existed in the least economically important sectors of production ... mainly among construction workers, shoemakers, typographers.... Until 1976, only 6.5 percent of the workers were unionized," and in the last months of the dictatorship, when the repression was strongest, "it fell to 2 percent. But they didn't destroy us completely," he pointed out, because the FSLN was organizing workers in the factories for the final insurrection and the seizure of power.

Now, nearly 280,000 workers are in unions, the overwhelming majority belonging to the CST or the Rural Workers Association (ATC). These two union organizations are led by the FSLN.

The other 15 percent of the unionists are divided among the General Labor Union (Independent), linked to the Nicaraguan Socialist Party; the Union of Action and Trade Union Unity, linked to the Nicaraguan Communist Party; the Nicaraguan Workers Union, part of the Social Christian tendency; the Workers Front, linked to the People's Action Movement; and the Trade Union Unity Federation, subsidized by the American Institute for Free Labor Development.

Castro also called our attention to the different working conditions and standard of living we observed in Nicaragua. "The wages of workers in the United States are those of a developed country," he said, "while our standard of living is not comparable. On the other hand, you can compare how this small and poor country has more freedom than the United States ... we are more advanced in terms of political rights."

Production and defense

But, "of every 100 pair of shoes, shirts, pants, anything we produce, 40 have to be dedicated to defense," Castro told us.

As this fact shows, the U.S.-imposed and financed mercenary war dominates the life of the country.

The CST is currently promoting "the education of the workers, teaching them that they should redouble their efforts to defend the country" by joining the Patriotic Military Service, the Sandinista People's

Militias, or the reserve infantry battalions — depending on their ages. The CST also promotes vigilance in the factories by the workers themselves to defend against counterrevolutionary attacks.

Education and solidarity

It's the workers and peasants in the front lines of production at their workplaces who have the difficult tasks of increasing production and taking on the work of coworkers who have had to be mobilized to the battle fronts; of training and integrating women into these production tasks; and of stamping out the legacy of decades of imperialist exploitation that still weighs heavy on the working people of Nicaragua.

The "political commitment of the government to Nicaraguan working people," continued Castro, is what has kept the situation of scarcity, aggravated by the U.S.-backed counterrevolutionary war, from creating bigger problems in the country.

In order to slow down the U.S.-sponsored aggression and show the workers of the entire world the gains achieved by Nicaraguan workers and peasants, the CST has proposed to unions all over the world a "week of solidarity with the Nicaraguan people" campaign, on the sixth anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution, July 15 to July 21.

Part of this campaign of international solidarity promoted by the CST is the call to the world workers movement to donate a day's wages to their brothers and sisters in Nicaragua, which will help to counteract the destruction caused by the war and to buy basic things that we take for granted in our workplaces and homes — medicines, work gloves, sewing supplies for the clothing factories, welding masks for the metal shops, and tools of all kinds.

The resources sent to the battle fronts, combined with the lack of hard currency, the high prices of imports, and the unbearable foreign debt that weighs on all of Latin America, give an idea of the critical situation facing Nicaragua. And now with the economic embargo imposed by Washington, "many factories may close for lack of raw materials and spare parts," Castro explained. Referring to the funds that the U.S. government proposes sending to the Somozaist mercenaries, he said that "Reagan is asking for money for death, while we are asking for money for life."



Militant/Lynn Allen
Sebastián Castro, Nicaraguan union leader.

It's important that the solidarity of working people in the United States be publicly demonstrated, said the Nicaraguan union leader. "We have just seen the several demonstrations of North American citizens who came into the streets in the last days of April to protest U.S. funding of the counterrevolutionaries," he said, referring to the antiwar marches on April 20 that mobilized more than 100,000 people in Washington, D.C., and other U.S. cities.

These protests are part of the fight "so that U.S. Marines don't invade Nicaragua, and so that many of them don't come to die here," Castro ended by explaining, "because the soldiers that will come here will be the sons of the Chicanos, the Blacks, the poor whites, the Indians, but not of the bankers and big businessmen."

"With this political solidarity, we are saving the lives of workers in the United States and in Nicaragua."

"Tell the North American people that this people of Nicaragua will have to be wiped off the map before we surrender. We have already tasted freedom and we're not going to give it up easily. We are determined to have a free homeland, whatever the cost." —From *Perspectiva Mundial*

'Barricada' reviews new Nicaragua book

The following is a review of the new Pathfinder Press book *Nicaragua: The Sandinista People's Revolution* that appeared in the June 6 issue of *Barricada Internacional*, the English-language weekly newspaper of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) published in Managua.

Nicaragua: The Sandinista People's Revolution can be ordered from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Price is \$6.95 plus \$.75 for postage and handling.

The period of 1982-1984 was a crucial one for the development of the Sandinista Revolution. During those years the U.S. initiated its war of aggression against Nicaragua on the military, economic, and ideological planes. Efforts to defend the Revolution and attain peace became dominant factors in Nicaraguan politics. Those efforts are the subject of the majority of the documents in *Nicaragua: The Sandinista People's Revolution*, recently released by Pathfinder Press.

The book is a collection of 40 speeches and documents by Sandinista leaders given between 1982 and 1984, many of which appear here for the first time in English. The topics addressed are those which have sparked the greatest controversy and interest internationally: the situation of the Miskitos, autonomy on the Atlantic Coast, international solidarity, the role of private producers and trade unionism in the economy, the military situation, education, and women.

And those who speak are in a position to fully and frankly address the issues: President Daniel Ortega, Vice President Sergio Ramírez, members of the FSLN National Directorate, and leaders of mass organizations.

Most of the documents are speeches given during rallies and national events. Also included, however, are more formal presentations such as Daniel Ortega's speech in the United Nations in 1983 and the revolutionary government's amnesty and peace proposals. Others are more in-

formal conversations, such as one between National Assembly delegate Ray Hooker and a group of U.S. citizens visiting the Atlantic Coast, and interviews with leading political figures, such as Daniel Núñez of the National Union of Farmers and Cattle Raisers.

Nicaragua: The Sandinista People's Revolution is a valuable up-to-date source of primary material not otherwise readily available for those interested in hearing the words of those directing the Revolution itself.

Bike campaign aids health, education

In a dozen cities across the country, bicyclists, environmentalists, teachers, health-care professionals, churches, and labor organizations are collecting bikes to send to Nicaragua.

This material aid campaign in solidarity with Nicaragua is called Bikes Not Bombs. It has already sent 90 bikes, spare parts, and tools to Nicaragua. The bikes are delivered to the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST), which distributes them to CST affiliates, the Health Workers' Union (FETSALUD), and the National Association of Nicaraguan Teachers (ANDEN). The bikes help the Nicaraguan revolution attain two of its top priorities — medical care and education for all.

The bikes will enable medical professionals and teachers to get their work done despite the shortages of buses and fuel. These shortages have been made worse by the U.S.-backed *contra* (counterrevolu-

tionary) war and the U.S. embargo against Nicaragua. In addition to the sabotage of fuel depots, the *contras* have killed some 100 teachers and 22 doctors, and have kidnapped some 70 health workers.

The National Advisory Board of the Bikes Not Bombs campaign includes Douglas LaFollette, Wisconsin secretary of state; Robert Rodale, publisher; Ellen Fletcher, Palo Alto city councilwoman; Barbara Bramble, National Wildlife lobbyist; Tina Hobson, director of Solar Lobby; Bob Alpern, Washington director of the Unitarian Universalist Association; and Dick Erstad, director of Latin American Affairs for the American Friends Service Committee.

For more information about the Bikes Not Bombs campaign write to: Bikes Not Bombs, P.O. Box 5595, Friendship Station, Washington, D.C. 20016.

Revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean

Don't go looking in the big-business press for the truth about Cuba and Nicaragua. It isn't there. It is, however, in the Militant. See the ad on page 2 for subscription details.

Japanese Americans confront injustice

BY PATTI HIYAMA

On June 18, 1985, Gordon Hirabayashi was back in the same federal courthouse where he was sentenced in 1942 for defying U.S. government orders to report to a concentration camp in Idaho during World War II. He is seeking the overturn of his conviction on the grounds of government misconduct.

In the summer of 1942, with the authorization of President Franklin Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066, 112,000 people of Japanese descent were evacuated from the West Coast and incarcerated behind barbed wire in concentration camps. Many of them had been given only 72 hours to dispose of their property and to pack all their belongings into two bags per person.

Two-thirds of the evacuees held illegally without trial were citizens of the United States. Their sole crime was their Japanese ancestry.

Refused to go

Gordon Hirabayashi was a 23-year-old math major at the University of Washington when the U.S. government imposed an 8 p.m.-6 a.m. curfew on all Japanese Americans after the Japanese military attacked Pearl Harbor. Japanese Americans were then excluded from California, Oregon, and Washington. Active in a Quaker group, he challenged the military orders, believing them to be unconstitutional since they were based solely upon his ancestry and race. He refused to obey the curfew, to register for evacuation to a concentration camp, and to register for the draft because of his pacifist views.

Hirabayashi never went to camp. He spent nearly two years in county jails and federal prisons for his refusal to go along with the U.S. government's treatment of Japanese Americans.

He was one of three young Japanese American men who resisted the military-imposed curfew and/or evacuation. Fred Korematsu, a draftsman in San Francisco, was jailed, convicted, and sentenced to five years' probation for failure to report to a San Francisco center for relocation. Minoru Yasui, a lawyer in Portland, was arrested, convicted, and served nine months

in solitary confinement for violating the curfew. All three had their convictions upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1943 and 1944.

The vast majority of Japanese Americans, however, felt that they had no choice but to acquiesce. They were isolated, both physically in segregated ghettos and politically with only a few individuals and organizations, like the American Friends Service Committee, defending their rights.

Faced widespread discrimination

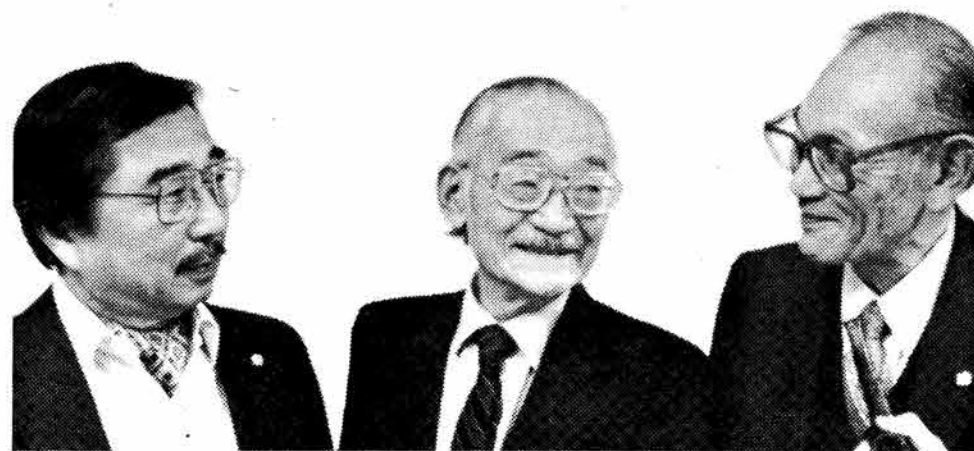
Japanese in the United States had faced widespread discrimination before World War II. For instance, they could not become U.S. citizens, buy land, or marry whites, and they were barred from entering the United States after 1924. Racist agitation against them was fanned by wartime jingoism after the Japanese military attack on Pearl Harbor.

A major reason given for the mass internment was that it was impossible to distinguish loyal from disloyal Japanese because they all look alike. Gen. John L. DeWitt, who was in charge of the Western Defense Command of the U.S. Army, charged:

"A Jap's a Jap. They are a dangerous element. . . . There is no way to determine their loyalty. . . . It makes no difference whether he is an American citizen; theoretically he is still Japanese and you can't change him by giving him a piece of paper. . . ."

This racism was then carried to its logical conclusion in the most common justification for internment: military necessity. According to this view, there was a danger of sabotage and espionage by the Japanese, and therefore it was necessary to remove this potential fifth column from the "war zone" on the West Coast. No cases of sabotage or espionage were ever proven among the people of Japanese descent living in the United States.

In spite of this, military necessity was the argument invoked by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1943 to justify the government's actions against the Japanese Americans. The Supreme Court upheld Gordon Hirabayashi's conviction on charges of



Gordon Hirabayashi (left), Minoru Yasui, and Fred Korematsu were convicted for defying U.S. government orders internment Japanese Americans in World War II. Each of them has filed a petition in federal court seeking to overturn their unjust convictions. In 1942, under authorization of then-President Franklin Roosevelt, 112,000 people of Japanese descent were put in concentration camps.

violating curfew orders and failing to register for evacuation to an internment center.

Twenty years later, Peter Irons uncovered important new evidence that the U.S. government withheld vital information at Hirabayashi's trial. While writing a book, Irons stumbled upon previously unknown documents labeled "top secret" in a Freedom of Information Act request. These documents show that in Hirabayashi's Supreme Court appeal, government officials withheld, suppressed, and altered evidence indicating that there was no military necessity to incarcerate the Japanese Americans.

Government suppressed evidence

The discovery of these documents is the legal basis for the current hearings on whether Hirabayashi received a fair trial. Hirabayashi is requesting that the court review these documents, vacate his conviction, and find that the basis for overturning his conviction is government misconduct. These findings would then limit the legality of the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II that was upheld earlier by the Supreme Court. The trial is expected to last until June 28, with the judge issuing his final decision in July.

In addition to the documents and testimony by both Hirabayashi and Irons, a key witness is expected to be Edward Ennis, who was director of the Alien Enemy Control Unit of the U.S. Department of Justice in 1942. He was also responsible for preparing the U.S. government's side of the Hirabayashi case before

the Supreme Court.

He is expected to testify that the government suppressed all evidence favorable to the Japanese Americans in the case and emphasized only the potential military threat that was never proven.

This case takes on added importance in view of what has happened to the two other Japanese Americans convicted of similar violations who filed similar petitions. In November 1983, Korematsu's conviction was overturned on the basis that relevant evidence pertaining to military necessity was withheld from the courts in prior proceedings. While Yasui's conviction was vacated in January 1984, the judge did not address the question of government misconduct in suppressing evidence. Minoru Yasui is therefore appealing the decision. Neither was able to obtain a full evidentiary hearing (or trial as it is referred to, although there is no jury) where they could call witnesses and present their case in full.

The Committee to Reverse the Japanese American Wartime Cases, a community support group, feels that if the court acknowledges government misconduct in suppressing evidence, then the factual basis for the Supreme Court's decision in 1943 will be undermined. That would then effectively limit the precedents set by that decision upholding the mass incarceration of a people based only on their race.

'Get the record straight'

"We want to get the record straight on the past and let people know what really happened then, because most Americans don't even know that 112,000 Japanese were put into [concentration] camps," Diane Narasaki, cochair of the committee, told the *Militant*. "This case is comparable to Watergate because of the high level of government officials involved in deceiving the Supreme Court."

"But we also want to look to the future to try to ensure that this [mass incarceration] could not happen again with another unpopular group of citizens."

She pointed out that government officials still see internment in concentration camps as an option for unpopular minorities ranging from Iranians in the United States to Cubans in Florida.

"So this reinforces our fear that this could happen again. Granting Hirabayashi's petition will make it more difficult to do."

"However, we should remember that there were laws on the books to protect him then [during World War II] and the Constitution did exist, but there wasn't enough citizen vigilance to ensure that the laws were upheld. That's why we want to use this case as a means of educating people about what happened then, so they won't let it happen again."

Public support for the case has been broad. Endorsers include the American Friends Service Committee (Pacific Northwest Region), the American Civil Liberties Union of Washington, the Church Council of Greater Seattle, Seattle Urban League, Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and American Jewish Committee (Greater Seattle Chapter).

A court decision finding U.S. government misconduct in Hirabayashi's case could also strengthen the fight for reparation legislation currently before both houses of Congress. The reparation bill calls for \$20,000 compensation for each of the 56,000 incarcerated Japanese Americans who are still living.

Racist ruling hits Blacks and unions

BY CHUCK PETRIN

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — In a stunningly racist decision made public June 7, the Kentucky Workers' Compensation Board has ruled that a white former city sanitation department supervisor should be given a job "in an all white setting" because he can't stand working around Black people.

The board granted Gary B. Pearl, 39, a "100 percent permanent occupational disability," upholding Pearl's claim that "job stress due to racial pressures" had triggered a nervous breakdown he suffered in March 1983.

"We find," wrote the board in a unanimous opinion dated April 29, "that the plaintiff did indeed have a difficult time dealing with Black people." It concluded that although Pearl had long ago been diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic, this was a "dormant" condition until he took a job as boss of an all-Black street cleaning crew.

"He had specific and strong feelings about working in a situation where he was the only white person in a great minority," the board said, adding that Pearl "felt that the blacks were definitely organizing against him and giving him a hard time and threatening him, etc."

The board directed that "exhaustive efforts be made to return [Pearl] to gainful employment, in an all white setting, if necessary for his employability." It also awarded Pearl the maximum financial benefit allowed by law — back pay amounting to about \$30,000, plus full compensation for medical expenses.

Black and labor officials here have reacted to the Pearl case with astonishment.

John Johnson, president of the Kentucky branch of the NAACP, said the board's decision was "outrageous" in its racist impli-

cations, and "totally at odds" with existing state and federal civil rights laws. Added Louisville NAACP President Geoffrey Ellis, "It's a dark day when a white person can say that working in a minority environment causes him harm."

Terry Turner, public relations director for the Kentucky State AFL-CIO, told the *Militant* that in his opinion the Pearl case sets a dangerous precedent. By making Black workers the scapegoat, he said, it "opens the door" to a broadside attack on labor.

This point is hardly lost on Danny Norris, who organizes the city sanitation workers unit of Teamsters Local 783. While the union has yet to adopt an official position on the Pearl case, Norris says he is well aware that his brothers on the sanitation crews are "caught right in the middle of a storm."

At this point, however, the fight to overturn the Pearl decision has been left in the hands of the Democratic Party, which runs both the city and state government. The city of Louisville, which is on the hook for Pearl's back-pay bonanza, has appealed the state board's ruling. So has the State Labor Cabinet, whose Special Fund would be tapped to cover Pearl's medical expenses. Both have vowed to fight the case "all the way to the Supreme Court."

Maybe so. But if the legal maneuvering to date is any indication, working people will have little to cheer about along the way.

According to a brief filed by the State Labor Cabinet (Special Fund) on June 3, the racist, antilabor premise of the Pearl decision is not even up for discussion. The only dispute apparently is whether Pearl merits a total or partial disability, and which government agency should pay how

much in compensation.

Furthermore, in a June 11 "clarification," the acting director of the Kentucky Workers' Compensation Board seemed to strike a deal with the city of Louisville on the board's directive to reinstitute legal segregation. Deputy Labor Secretary Suzanne Shively stated that the board's own staff, not the city, would have responsibility for placing Pearl in an all-white job.

Most of those who have spoken out against the Pearl decision here, including representatives of the NAACP and AFL-CIO, express a common conviction that "reason" will ultimately prevail, and that the state board's "crazy" decision will almost certainly be scrapped. This theme was echoed by the Louisville *Courier-Journal* in a June 11 editorial entitled "All-white ruling is all-wet."

The editorial dismisses the Pearl decision as a "nutty ruling" of little consequence, concluding, "In any event, the courts surely won't need long to decide that the city can't be forced to reinstitute segregation in hopes of relieving someone's irrational fears."

This seemingly clever argument for overturning the Pearl decision is in fact one of the principal obstacles now for accomplishing that. If workers are lulled into thinking the case is "nutty," if they can be persuaded to simply kick back and "let the courts handle it," then clearly the government will have its own way. In this situation, there is no reason whatsoever to think that what seems so blatantly ridiculous could not become real.

The aim of the Pearl decision is to drive a wedge between Black and white workers, thereby undermining class solidarity and weakening our ability to fight back against the bosses and their government.

International Socialist Review

Supplement to the Militant July 1985

Trade union officialdom offers no road forward for labor

Meaning of AFL-CIO report

The following article contains excerpts from a report on the state of trade unions today which was adopted by the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party in May 1985. It includes only those sections of the SWP report that deal with the response of the top AFL-CIO union officialdom to the employer and government antilabor offensive. The officialdom's position is set forth in a published report called "The Changing Situation of Workers and Their Unions." This report was unanimously adopted by the AFL-CIO's Executive Council in February 1985, and sections of it have been widely reprinted in trade union publications.

The SWP political resolution referred to in the article below appears in the Spring 1985 issue of *New Internationalist*. (See ad on ISR page 2.) It will be up for discussion at the 33rd national convention of the Socialist Workers Party to be held August 10-15 in Oberlin, Ohio. Those interested in attending this convention can send their name and address to the SWP, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014. Or contact the office of the party nearest you (refer to directory on page 24).

The party's political resolution, "The Revolutionary Perspective and Leninist Continuity in the United States," explains that the period of prolonged capitalist economic expansion that began toward the end of the 1940s "was marked by the institutionalization of the class-collaborationist methods of the union bureaucracy, and a political retreat of the labor movement. The result was a terrible weakening of the unions."

"But this fact was hidden," the resolution continues, "since workers were able to continue wresting gains from the employers despite the obstacle of the class-collaborationist policies followed by the union misleaders." (*New Internationalist*, Spring 1985, p. 9).

As the capitalist offensive has unfolded since 1974-75, however, the working class has found out just how weak the unions have become. This has become even more marked since the acceleration of the offensive following the onset of the 1981-82 recession.

We've seen the payoff for the bureaucracy's decades-long class-collaborationist course in recent labor battles such as the Pan Am strike this spring, which ended with workers seeing no alternative but to accept a two-tier wage agreement. We saw it in the Arizona copper strike, where top AFL-CIO and United Steelworkers (USWA) officials let a courageous and combative group of Phelps Dodge workers go down to defeat and decertification of their unions, rather than organize the kind of solidarity they needed. And many other examples have been reported in the pages of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* over the past year or so.

In the face of the employers' determination to push back the wages and job conditions of the working class, and given the institutionalization of labor's class-collaborationist misleadership, workers are thinking once, twice, and more before simply deciding to go out on strike these days. There is no easy answer to the question of how miners, or auto workers, or garment workers can defend their unions.

The number of major strikes in the United States has been declining from year to year since the beginning of the 1980s. Last year, 1984, had the lowest number of major strikes in some four decades. There were 62 strikes involving 1,000 or more workers, compared to 81 in 1983. And 1982 was the first year since World War II that the number of major strikes dropped below 100.

Average wage increases in new contracts in 1984 were the lowest in 17 years — 2.4 percent for the first year, and 2.3 percent over the length of the contract.

AFL-CIO officialdom's response

What has been the response of the AFL-CIO officialdom to the intensifying capitalist offensive against working people?

"The labor officialdom has tried to move the U.S. union movement toward still deeper identification with the bosses and their government," the SWP political resolution explains. "It argues that the unions should cooperate with management in raising profit rates by improv-

labor battles that built a social movement and forged the industrial unions in the 1930s — "trade unionists of that era developed approaches attuned to their situation," the document says. The authors preach that "confrontation and conflict are wasteful and that a cooperative approach to solving shared present and future problems is desirable."

The bureaucracy's 100 percent confidence in the capitalist system and its profit "needs" is also emphasized right at the start of the report. The profits allegedly necessary if labor's goals are to be met, the AFL-CIO report explains, "can only be created in a well-managed enterprise, where both capital and labor contribute to the results."

The report acknowledges the declining level of union membership in this country. Less than 19 percent of the workforce is in the unions today, down from 24 percent in 1979 and 35 percent in 1954.

"American workers — especially nonunion workers — are ambivalent in their attitudes toward unions," the AFL-CIO document states. It presents the results of a poll of workers done especially for the report.

On the one hand, more than 75 percent of all workers polled (including nonunion workers) stated their opinion that unions do improve the wages and working conditions of workers.

On the other hand, the AFL-CIO report cites the following finding by the pollsters: "Nonunion workers do not perceive unions as pursuing an agenda drawn from the needs and desires of their members." Half of all workers, organized and unorganized, "believe that most union leaders no longer represent the workers in their unions."

Findings such as these, the report states, "provide grounds for the most serious concerns." Nonetheless, the AFL-CIO officialdom assures us, "a period of resurgence — of sustained growth — is within our grasp. The recommendations that follow are designed to spur such a resurgence."

The union as a business

Before looking at some of the report's specific recommendations, some general comments about its overall class-collaborationist political framework are in order.

Nothing remotely related to a class-struggle perspective is proposed by this report. Concrete steps that would advance class solidarity, union democracy, and independent political action — at home or abroad — are nonexistent.

The report turns its back on the perspective of a union movement based on the fighting ranks — the young workers, Blacks, other oppressed nationalities, working women. For the bureaucracy, the ranks of labor — the focus of our revolutionary strategy to transform the union movement — are the objects, not the makers, of union policy.

Nor is there any perspective in the AFL-CIO report for winning workers to the unions by putting labor's power behind the fight against the imperialist-stoked war in Central America, for jobs, against farm foreclosures, for the rights of the undocumented, Black rights, or women's rights. It offers no perspective for organizing the unemployed.

There's not a word in the report about the need for the unions to launch an independent labor party to present a working-class political alternative to the program and policies of the two bosses' parties, the Democrats and Republicans.

The concept that the union movement should be taking the lead in social and political struggles such as these is the furthest thing from the bureaucrats' minds.

The report by the AFL-CIO officialdom registers the steps it has taken over the past decade toward consolidating a perspective of out-and-out business unionism. The bureaucrats more and more run the unions as a business — as profit-making enterprises to line their own pockets. Dues, strike funds, pension funds — these are the sources of capital that they invest to expand the business. They view the membership mainly as a steady source of revenue.

It is only the conditions of a shrinking layer of relative-
Continued on next page



Top union officials let courageous and combative workers — such as these striking Arizona copper miners, above — go down to defeat rather than organize kind of solidarity needed to win. This is payoff for labor bureaucracy's decades-long class-collaborationist course.

ing 'labor productivity.' It accepts the bosses' insistence that workers must today live with a trade off between declining wages and deteriorating working conditions in return for will-o'-the-wisp promises of job security."

"Within the trade union bureaucracy, there is no motion by any wing or layer of officials away from their class-collaborationist course that has been institutionalized over the past 45 years," the political resolution states. "Their policy assumes the permanency of the profit system in the United States." (*NI*, pp. 62-3).

To illustrate the disastrous road along which this officialdom is steering the unions today, let's take a look at the widely publicized report released in February by the AFL-CIO Executive Council. Titled "The Changing Situation of Workers and Their Unions."

The first thing to notice about the report is its mealy-mouthed language. Take, for example, the following delicate reference to the mighty sit-down strikes and other

Continued from previous page

ly better-off workers that the officialdom seeks to protect in even a half-serious way, since these workers form the social bulwark for the class-collaborationist policies that guarantee the bureaucracy its comfortable berth.

So, when these union bureaucrats speak about a "resurgent" labor movement, they have their eyes on one and only one thing — increasing their own bloated salaries, expense accounts, and secure pensions. How? By finding additional sources of capital and new fields of investment for the "union business." To do that, they must convince the employing class more than ever that they are responsible labor "statesmen" who won't rock the boat.

Comparison with 1955

It's useful to contrast the language and content of this 1985 AFL-CIO document to the bureaucracy's official pronouncements at the time of the merger convention of the AFL and CIO 30 years ago in 1955.

The public stance of the top union officialdom at that time was quite different. The merger convention projected a massive drive to organize the open-shop South — "Operation Dixie."

The stated goal was to double the membership of the AFL-CIO. Achieving this would have meant bringing the level of union membership to some 70 percent of the work force! Carrying out "Operation Dixie" would have led to taking on Jim Crow segregation throughout the South. And it would have meant coming into conflict with both the Democratic and Republican parties, posing the need for independent labor political action.

As we know, the AFL-CIO's organizing drive never really got off the ground. For the top officialdom, it had only been talk from the outset. But it was still significant that the bureaucracy in 1955 felt it had to announce as its goal the organization of what would have been millions of Black and white workers into the labor movement.

What a contrast with what the AFL-CIO officialdom is even willing to put down on paper today!

At the same time, we should underline the essential continuity between the class-collaborationist policies and actions of the union bureaucracy in 1955 and today. The new AFL-CIO document is a codification of the bureaucracy's practice since the beginning of the capitalists' "takeback decade" in 1974-75, which in turn was built on what the officialdom had been doing for the previous quarter century. Today we're simply experiencing the payoff for the decades of class collaboration that were being put in place from the end of the 1930s on.

Why union membership shrinks

The AFL-CIO report holds up the fact of shrinking union membership as a warning to the ranks that they will have to get along with less from now on. The document argues that a "scientific, technological, and economic revolution every bit as significant as the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century" is taking place, and that this is leading to a profound change in the structure of the working class. It is this, the report claims, that is primarily responsible for the decline in unionization. The bureaucrats boost the employer propaganda that if you're lucky enough to have an industrial job and want to hold onto it, you'd better be ready to make some concessions to the employers.

These are fake arguments.

First, although the industrial working class is a smaller percentage of the workforce today than ten or twenty years ago, it remains the section of our class with the greatest social power. What's more, it is not disappearing.

Second, the argument by the officialdom is self-serv-

ing and entirely circular. "The growth of the workforce," the AFL-CIO report says, "has occurred, and will continue to occur, principally in those sectors of the economy that have not traditionally been highly organized." It begs the question of *why* these workers "have not traditionally been highly organized." The old AFL craft union bureaucrats said the same thing about steel, auto, and rubber at the beginning of the 1930s. And what about the growing numbers of nonunion workers today in one industry after another that *have* "traditionally been highly organized"?

The report itself acknowledges that the percentage of the population composed of wage workers is higher today than at any time in this century. Growing numbers of women have taken jobs, including in basic industry.

Moreover, the divisions within the working class are narrowing not widening, as ever greater numbers of workers — in factories and offices alike — are stripped of skills and tied to simple operations on a machine. A smaller and smaller percentage of the work force are "craft conscious" or see themselves as "professionals" who don't need unions.

The big majority of all these wage workers are unorganized victims of capitalist exploitation. There are more workers today than ever before who could be organized on an industrial-union basis.

Why are the unions shrinking today? Because the officialdom has consciously blocked, and is still blocking, the implementation of the kind of social and political strategy that could attract millions of workers to the labor movement and spur unionizing drives from one end of the country to the other.

What the report proposes

Having laid out its "explanation" for a shrinking union membership, the AFL-CIO report lists a number of proposals they say are designed to meet this situation. Let's look at several of them.

- Negotiating "minimum guarantees that will serve as a floor for individual bargaining" (emphasis added).

This proposal aims at tying up workers on the shop floor even more in the tangle of red tape that has become institutionalized since World War II. It is not the *collective power* of the union that is called on to enforce the contract for each and every member. That and only that gives substance to real collective bargaining in a militantly led union. Instead, the contract and grievance machinery are simply to provide "minimum guarantees," so that an individual worker can slug it out with the employers, one-on-one if need be.

- Providing "direct services and benefits to workers outside of a collective bargaining structure . . . on a cost-effective basis," such as medical insurance.

This is the further logical outcome of the bureaucracy's course since the end of the 1940s of negotiating "fringe benefits" for organized workers on a company-by-company or industry-by-industry basis, instead of placing the unions at the head of a powerful social and political fight for national health insurance. This class-collaborationist course has already left millions of nonunion workers in the lurch. In addition, more and more unionized workers in recent years have seen their health plans gutted or bankrupted.

Now the bureaucracy proposes in this AFL-CIO report to go into the health insurance business itself. It's out to make a profit — that's what "on a cost-effective basis" means. This is even a step away from the officialdom's previous practice of negotiating contract provisions from the employers to finance medical plans, but that's where the fringe-benefit road has been headed from the start. Nobody in the officialdom is proposing a serious, union-led movement for national health insurance to benefit the entire working class and other working people in this country.

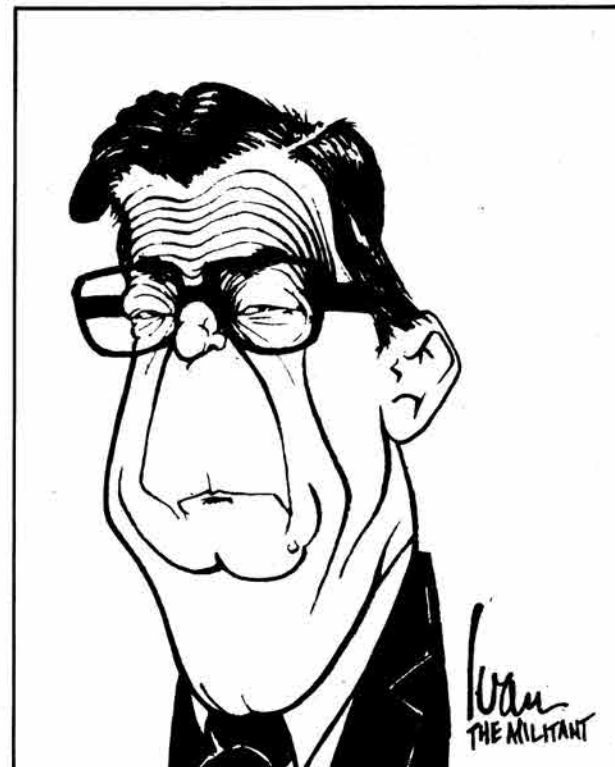
- "Establishing new categories of membership for workers not employed in an organized bargaining unit." These are to be "associate" union members, according to the report.

What the officialdom has in mind becomes clearer if we remember the previous point about "direct services." The bureaucracy is talking about signing up customers for its new businesses. This proposal, the AFL-CIO report says, will be "especially" applicable "to the extent unions offered services or benefits outside the collective bargaining context."

- Using "corporate campaigns and the pressure of public opinion to secure the neutrality of employers."

We got a taste for what this means from the USWA and AFL-CIO officialdom's betrayal of the striking Arizona copper miners. It is a *substitute* for mobilizing union power and labor solidarity.

In what they admitted was a "symbolic" action, officials of the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department continue to organize a "corporate campaign" against the Phelps Dodge copper mining corporation. Having already let the copper strikers go down to defeat, some officials went to the stockholders meeting of Manufacturers Hanover bank and challenged the seating of the Phelps Dodge chairman on the bank's board, accusing him of "financial mismanagement."



AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland. Union bureaucracy is trying to move labor movement to still deeper identification with bosses and bosses' government.

If employed by militant workers as *one subordinate part* of a fight to defend their interests, corporate campaigns to expose a company's profits, corruption, and antilabor attacks can be a useful tactic for increasing public support and solidarity. For example, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local P-9 in Austin, Minnesota, is trying to fight back against wage cuts, using among other weapons a corporate campaign to expose the millionaire families who own the Hormel company.

But the UFCW officialdom has opposed *this* corporate campaign! It has publicly attacked the local. Why? The head of the national packinghouse division of the UFCW recently spoke for more than four hours to about 1,000 Local P-9 members. He told them they were going "against the essential concept" of unity and solidarity by opposing wage cuts demanded by Hormel from \$10.69 to \$8.25 an hour. (The union officials had gone along with wage cuts at other Hormel plants.)

At a meeting in Denver a few days earlier, UFCW misleaders had discussed what to do about other meat companies' demands that wages be lowered. The answer? A corporate campaign directed at nonunion Armour, which set a \$6.00 an hour standard. The idea of this corporate campaign, however, is to get banks to pressure the company to do business in a "more humane" way. You got it, the *Hormel* way.

- Finding "additional opportunities for members to participate in union affairs in ways quite different from traditional attendance at union meetings." This goes along with the report's call "to improve the quality of work life, create workplace democracy, and participate in joint employer-employee decision-making."

Rather than finding ways to involve the ranks more and more in *making decisions*, so that union power can be unleashed to defend their interests, the bureaucrats want to decrease what little control workers still have over the unions. And they are cooperating with the bosses in chopping down workers' rights on the job, too — all in the name of workplace democracy.

This is what United Auto Workers (UAW) officials are pushing today in collaboration with the owners of General Motors, for example. GM is establishing the new Saturn car division, which will not come under the basic auto contract. The plans call for sharply reducing job classifications and paying workers weekly or monthly salaries — instead of hourly wages — based on their "productivity" and, of course, company profits.

The GM bosses and UAW bureaucrats assure us, however, that the Saturn workers will have a voice in "almost" every aspect of decision-making in the plant. UAW members will get to express their opinions on how to produce more cars with fewer workers, at lower wages, and with worse working conditions! UAW vice-president Donald Ephlin says the Saturn experience has the "potential of making a quantum leap forward in labor relations and a dramatic change with the past."

The UAW officials have also cooperated with the owners of Toyota and GM in imposing this kind of fake "quality of work life" method of intensifying exploitation of workers at the NUMMI plant in Fremont, California, and at other auto plants.

- Providing "assistance to affiliates in effecting successful mergers."

The AFL-CIO's merger policy is not aimed at reversing the decline in unionized workers by organizing the

Continued on ISR/11

Get the 'New International'

Two Socialist Workers Party resolutions — "The Workers' and Farmers' Alliance in the U.S." and "Revolutionary Perspective and Leninist Continuity in the U.S." — that appear in the Spring 1985 issue of *New International* provide the framework for discussion at the upcoming SWP national convention and educational conference in Oberlin, Ohio, August 10-15.

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Will capitalists or the exploited rule the state?

Marxists, reformists debate at time of Comintern's founding

Introduction

BY MALIK MIAH

The Communist International (also known as the Third International or the Comintern) was founded in March 1919. The goal of the Comintern was to help build and politically train Marxist parties capable of leading the workers and exploited farmers in the overturn of capitalist rule in their countries. That is, to advance the worldwide revolution against imperialist oppression and for a new, socialist order.

The main political organizers of the Comintern were leaders of the Soviet Communist Party. This party, often known as the Bolsheviks, had led the working masses of Russia in consolidating their victory over tsarist autocracy, eliminating landlordism, and overturning capitalist rule. This was achieved through a successful insurrection in October 1917 that established a workers' and peasants' government in Russia.

A team of Bolshevik leaders, organized and politically led by V.I. Lenin, guided the work of the Comintern's first four congresses between 1919 and 1923. Those congresses discussed and adopted resolutions and reports on many of the same questions of political program and strategy that working people face today: the fight against imperialist war; the weight of the colonial revolution, national liberation struggles, and immigrant workers; revolutionary work in the unions; the struggle for united action with workers who still adhered to mass, reformist-led workers' parties; the worker-farmer alliance; and so on.

Most of the record of the Comintern's early revolutionary years is not available in English. To fill this gap in the political arsenal of revolutionists today, Monad Press is publishing a series of volumes that will include the documentary record of the Comintern in Lenin's time. Much of the material will be in English for the first time. Pathfinder Press is distributing the series.

The first volume, *Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International, Documents: 1907-1916, The Preparatory Years*, is already available. The second volume on the events and discussion leading to the 1919 founding congress and proceedings of the congress itself will be published this fall.

This issue of the *International Socialist Review* includes selections from that forthcoming volume. They are: an article by Friedrich Stampfer, a right-wing leader of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD); an article by Rosa Luxemburg, leader of the SPD's revolutionary left wing, and, in 1918, founding leader of the German Communist Party; and the Comintern's "Theses and report on bourgeois democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat," drafted and presented by Lenin at the founding congress.

These documents address the most fundamental political question of our time, a question placed on the historical agenda by the October 1917 revolution in Russia: will state power remain in the hands of the landlords and capitalists — a small, exploiting minority — or will it be conquered by the exploited producers — the working class and small farmers?



Workers take to Berlin's streets, late 1918. Revolution swept Germany, bringing down kaiser but leaving capitalists and landlords in power. Workers discussed whether to consolidate capitalist "democracy" or move forward to a government of workers and farmers.

lutionary International that they had been advocating and preparing for since the outbreak of World War I. The new volume features excerpts of the debate between the class-collaborationist and revolutionary wings of the German workers' movement from the press and meetings of the workers' movement — of which the articles below by Stampfer and Luxemburg are an example.

In the debate over the fundamental class question, dealt with in the documents reprinted in this issue of the *ISR*, all revolutionists came down on the side of Luxemburg and Lenin — for the conquest of state power by the workers and exploited farmers. Among the revolutionists, however, there were important differences over the program, strategy, and class alliances needed to achieve that goal. The articles, speeches, reports, and other documents in the forthcoming volume taken from the German revolutionary movement reveal its political strengths and weaknesses, which were to figure prominently in the debates at the Comintern's first four congresses.

The arguments presented by right-wing SPD leader Stampfer may sound familiar to many *ISR* readers, since the arguments are fundamentally the same as those hurled against the Sandinista-led workers' and peasants' government today by capitalist politicians, the big business press, and by most sectors of the top AFL-CIO officialdom. They claim that the Nicaraguan government is "undemocratic," "unrepresentative," "repressive." They say that it has betrayed the "original goals" of the revolution, and that it should "share power" with the political forces that are organizing the counterrevolutionary bands along the Honduran and Costa Rican borders.

Today's exploiters and labor misleaders spread this lying propaganda because the Sandinistas have done the same thing that the Bolsheviks accomplished in October 1917, and that German revolutionists fought and died for but failed to do in 1918-19 — they have taken state power out of the hands of the capitalists and landlords and replaced it with a new state power, a workers' and farmers' government.

By running these excerpts, the *ISR* hopes to whet the political appetite of our readers, as an enticement to read and study this forthcoming volume in Monad's Comintern series, and other volumes as they appear in the years ahead.

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The reich government and the workers' and soldiers' councils

BY FRIEDRICH STAMPFER

Like a snowman in the spring sun, the old monarchical-militaristic police state of Prussian Germany¹ has melted away. This has created the need for the entire Social Democracy, as constituted before the war, to assume political power. It has achieved unity, if not organizationally, then in action. But our joy at this fact must not blind us to the shadows that darken the path.

Social Democrats of both tendencies had just [before November 9] approved a change in the Reich constitution stipulating that no government could remain in office that did not have the confidence of the people, and that the military authorities were to be subordinate to democratically organized civil authorities.² These provisions were directed against the now-fallen monarchical system. But that now raises the question of whether they should apply universally. To this, Social Democracy says "yes"; it has to, in accord with the Erfurt program, which both tendencies have in common.³

The members of the new government call themselves "People's Representatives," a much more distinguished title than that of a minister, who is addressed as "your excellency." But first they must earn this title, because they have not yet received any sort of regular mandate from the people.

Who are "the people"? They are the entirety of the adult male and female citizenry. How can the people confer appropriate mandates? Only through orderly majority rule, through general elections or referenda, which must

Continued on ISR/6

1. Prussia, an independent kingdom until 1871, became the nucleus around which Germany was formed, becoming its largest state. The Prussian royal family, the Hohenzollern, became rulers of the new German state from 1871 to 1918. (Footnotes 2 and 3 are on ISR/6.)

Nkrumah: his legacy for Ghana's struggle against imperialism

BY ERNEST HARSCH

The following article, by the managing editor of the revolutionary socialist biweekly *Intercontinental Press*, was written after a week-long visit to Ghana in early March as part of a delegation of 18 North American political activists in solidarity with Ghana's anti-imperialist struggle.

Alongside one of the main roads in Accra, the Ghanaian capital, stands a statue of Kwame Nkrumah, the leader of Ghana's independence struggle and its first president. Pulled off its pedestal nearly two decades ago, during a CIA-backed coup against the Nkrumah government in 1966, the statue has now been restored, though one arm is still missing.

Until just a few years ago, such statues of Nkrumah were officially banned in that West African country, as were his writings and speeches. They were deemed "subversive" by the various reactionary and proimperialist regimes that succeeded him.

Yet today, the same kind of anti-imperialist views that Nkrumah expressed can once again be openly heard in Ghana. They are given forceful voice in poor Accra neighborhoods like Nima and Madina, at mass workers rallies in the industrial town of Tema, and in popular assemblies of peasants and other rural poor in some of the smallest and most remote villages.

Revolutionary upsurge

This is a result of the massive revolutionary upsurge that has been sweeping Ghana for more than three years now, ever since a group of anti-imperialist and left-wing junior officers and civilian political activists seized power from a corrupt neocolonial regime on Dec. 31, 1981.

Workers, farmers, students, small tradespeople, women, the unemployed, and other sectors are mobilizing on a scale unprecedented in Ghana's history to advance the national struggle against imperialist domination, to improve the people's living standards, and to combat social inequities.

They have repeatedly turned out for mass demonstrations, rallies, and marches from one end of the country to the other and are forging popular organizations, in particular the mass-based Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs).

They are also facing concerted resistance to their struggles from Ghana's entrenched and wealthy *ebitiyies*—literally, "the well-positioned." There have been a number of right-wing coup attempts and attacks by armed counter-revolutionaries.

The U.S., British, and other imperialist powers have backed such actions, while also using Ghana's extreme economic difficulties and dependence on the world capitalist economy to try to undermine the struggle as a whole.

'A source of inspiration'

Given today's events, political activists are showing renewed interest in earlier chapters of Ghana's fight against colonialism and imperialism. They look back in particular to the struggle led by Nkrumah, which has left a lasting imprint on Ghana's political life.

There are many signs of this. Memorials are being built to Nkrumah. T-shirts with his portrait are common. His speeches and articles are often quoted.

Speaking just a few months after taking power, Flight Lt. Jerry Rawlings, the chairman of the governing Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), pointed to the Nkrumah period as a "symbol of hope and a source of inspiration to oppressed people the world over." With Nkrumah's overthrow, he said that hope and inspiration had evaporated.

Rawlings affirmed that the "December 31 revolution" aims to "restore that promise to make good those dreams of independence."

Kojo Tsikata, who worked with Nkrumah and is today the PNDC's "special adviser," told a visiting delegation of 18 North American activists (myself among them) that the PNDC's objectives "are based on the principles which guided our first leader, Nkrumah, objectives of consolidating our independence, of creating a national economy, and, of course, of taking an anti-imperialist position in our external relations."

"We here in the government, in the PNDC," Tsikata said, "are doing our modest best to emulate his example."

Besides looking to Nkrumah as a symbol of the anti-imperialist struggle, the most conscious activists are also studying what political lessons those experiences might hold for the revolutionary process today. They are ex-



Kwame Nkrumah, leader of Ghana's struggle against imperialist domination from 1957 until his overthrow in February 1966.

mining not only the strengths of the struggle led by Nkrumah, but also the weaknesses that facilitated its defeat.

According to Tsikata, "We have to be guided very much by those experiences, otherwise we can commit the same errors as well."

Independence struggle

The movement led by Nkrumah had its roots in the anticolonial struggle. And that struggle was itself based on a long history of resistance by the peoples of Ghana (then called the Gold Coast), from the arrival of the first Portuguese traders in 1471 through the British conquest that began in 1821 and was completed by 1897.

Following more than a century of British plunder and exploitation, the modern anticolonial struggle emerged in the years after World War II. It had a more massive character in Ghana than in many other colonies in West Africa, and was spurred by Ghana's young working class, the peasantry, ex-soldiers, and sections of the urban petty-bourgeoisie.

In 1948, Accra, Kumasi, and other towns were swept by street demonstrations and workers' strikes. British reinforcements had to be called in to contain the unrest.

It was around that time that Nkrumah returned to Ghana from Britain, where he had studied for several years and had been active in the early pan-Africanist movement. At first Nkrumah joined the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), the main party in Ghana at the time, which represented the capitalist cocoa farmers, big merchants, professionals, and traditional chiefs, many of whom benefited in one way or another from ties

to the British administration and British corporations.

Because the UGCC failed to wage a real struggle against colonial rule, the most radical activists within it broke away in 1949 and launched the Convention People's Party (CPP), with Nkrumah as its central leader.

A broad national party, the CPP attracted urban workers, small businesspeople, farmers, and other social layers. Initially it fought for self-government, and later for independence. Under the slogan, "Forward ever, backward never," it participated in mass campaigns to achieve those demands.

In 1950, the Trades Union Congress (TUC), backed by the CPP, initiated a general strike. Nkrumah and the rest of the CPP and union leadership were jailed.

Under this mass pressure, the colonial authorities were forced to grant a degree of local self-government and to allow the CPP and other parties to run for office. In the first general elections in 1951, the CPP won an overwhelming victory. This compelled the British to release Nkrumah and bring his party into the government.

For the next six years, the CPP participated in the colonial administration. It considerably moderated its forms of struggle in this period. Its large membership was mobilized mostly for electoral purposes, while the leadership relied mainly on discussions with the British authorities to gradually achieve independence.

Activists who urged more militant action or who raised concrete demands to improve the working people's material conditions were expelled from the CPP and the TUC. Nkrumah argued that it was necessary "to subordinate the understandable desire of the people for better living conditions to the achievement of the primary aim of the abolition of colonial rule."

Nevertheless, the CPP used its position in government to press for complete independence. In this, it faced opposition from sections of the colonial administration and from reactionary parties backed by groups of tribal chiefs and traders. But the CPP overcame this resistance.

On March 6, 1957, Ghana finally gained its independence. It was the first European colony in sub-Saharan Africa to do so, and this victory provided an inspiration to all those on the continent who still suffered from colonial rule.

Pan-Africanist stance

Unlike many of the neocolonial regimes that later came to power in Africa, Nkrumah's government made some real efforts to break free from continued imperialist economic domination and political influence.

From the beginning, Nkrumah took a militantly pan-Africanist stance. In his independence day speech, he insisted that "our independence is meaningless unless it is linked up with the total liberation of the African continent."

His government provided sanctuary and material assistance to political activists and freedom fighters from many other African countries, including South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Niger, and Ivory Coast. Guerrilla training facilities were set up to aid those engaged in armed struggle (Kojo Tsikata was one of those military instructors).

Nkrumah also maintained that "political independence was incomplete without economic independence." He was particularly vociferous in his denunciations of neocolonialism—the system whereby formally independent states are kept tied to and subservient to the world capitalist economy and the policies of imperialist powers.

For Nkrumah, what "economic independence" meant was a major drive to build up an industrial base, which could help lessen Ghana's dependence on the sale of cocoa, its main export crop.

Considerable foreign financing was sought for this industrialization drive, however. Some came from workers states, but most was obtained from imperialist countries. "Economic independence" remained a distant prospect.

At the same time, the Nkrumah government restricted the activities of the small Ghanaian capitalist class. The state sector took on an increasingly important role.

Industry and social programs

The railways were improved and a modern network of roads built. An artificial deep-water port at Tema was constructed. The giant Akosombo hydroelectric dam went up across the Volta River.

Numerous industries were set up: a steelworks, cocoa processing plants, sugar refineries, textile plants, a radio assembly plant, a glass factory, and other enterprises. A national shipping line and airline were established. By 1965, there were 63 state enterprises, employing more than a third of the entire work force. The size of the working-class grew considerably.

In addition, all education was made free, from primary to university level, and school attendance was greatly expanded. A literacy campaign brought Ghana one of the highest literacy rates on the continent at the time. A beginning was made in establishing free health care, and the first steps were taken toward a social insurance program, including employment benefits and pensions. At the time, such programs were unprecedented for Africa.

Steps were also taken to mobilize and organize the masses of Ghanaians. In addition to the trade unions, which were already a key force before the CPP came to power, farmers, women's, youth, and students' organizations were established. They began to draw ordinary Ghanaians more actively into the political life of the country.

Like some other African leaders at the time, Nkrumah called his policies "socialist"; at times he used Marxist terminology. Yet maintaining that "the passage to socialism lies in reform," Nkrumah denied the existence of a class struggle within Ghana throughout the period when he was in power (though after his overthrow he recognized that there was a class conflict in Ghana).

Regardless of what he chose to call them, Nkrumah's policies were essentially anti-imperialist. And on that basis they found a wide response from the Ghanaian population.

Some of the achievements under his government marked important conquests in Ghana's struggle to overcome imperialism's legacy of underdevelopment.

Difficulties and limitations

The struggle that Nkrumah led was undermined by some serious limitations. Some were objective, others reflected political shortcomings of the leadership.

Despite the growth of industry, Ghana's economy remained largely agrarian, with cocoa and cocoa products accounting for two-thirds of all export earnings. This left it vulnerable to the drop in the world price for cocoa.

The weight of direct imperialist exploitation also remained great. Foreign companies continued to dominate key sectors of trade, banking, and industry. Given Ghana's lack of capital and trained personnel, these enterprises could not be easily taken over, and the Nkrumah government did not attempt to. Financial aid from the Soviet Union, China, and other workers states played an important role in Ghana's development plans, but could not make up for loans, markets, and investments from the imperialist countries.

This imperialist pressure was felt within the state apparatus itself, which was largely inherited from the British administration. The civil service, judiciary, schools, economic agencies, and other bodies were staffed mainly by personnel who had been trained under British colonial rule and did not necessarily understand or support the anti-imperialist struggle.

More seriously, some British officers continued to hold key posts in the army, while many Ghanaian officers were still being trained in Britain. Their political loyalties often lay more with the former colonial power than with Nkrumah's government. No moves were taken



Nkrumah waving to supporters. He insisted Ghana's independence "is meaningless unless it is linked up with total liberation of African continent."

to fundamentally reorganize the army or to arm and organize the masses.

The exploiting layers of Ghanaian society — the businessmen, merchants, capitalist cocoa farmers, and tribal chiefs — were bitterly opposed to many of the government's progressive and anti-imperialist measures. In resisting them, they found support among like-minded people holding positions in the party and state apparatus.

At the same time, the exploited classes — those with the greatest stake in the fight against imperialist domination — were still politically weak and poorly organized. The urban working class, though it was growing, remained a small minority of the laboring population.

Surviving aspects of traditional tribal society continued to influence the way peasants, farm laborers, and even urban workers thought and acted. Many in the countryside continued to look to their village chiefs for direction. They tended to identify primarily with their own family, tribal, or language group, which slowed the development of class solidarity.

'Myths' about the CPP

In addition, the CPP was an inadequate instrument for leading the masses in ongoing struggle against imperialism. Though it was a mass nationalist party with a formal membership of 2 million, its leadership bodies did not represent the interests of the most exploited and oppressed and did not seek to mobilize the ranks to deepen the anti-imperialist struggle.

In government, the CPP leadership functioned in an administrative and bureaucratic manner. As a result, local party organizations stagnated. The leadership bodies became more divorced from the ranks.

Among the leaders of the current struggle, there is a discussion about the CPP; some are highlighting the problems in the party. A leading activist at the National Secretariat of the CDRs commented to the visiting North American delegation, "Some of the affairs of the Nkrumah era must be seen as myths that had slowed our progress. A false image was created that everybody, down to the village level, was a member of that mighty party structure. But in reality we had party functionaries and district commissioners who were alienated from the mass of the people."

Tsikata noted "the internal decomposition of this organization, leading eventually to the weaknesses that enabled the CIA and all kinds of counterrevolutionaries to make their play in February 1966."

At the same time that this process was taking place within the CPP, the various "auxiliary" mass organizations came under more direct control from the party hierarchy and were blocked from taking independent initiatives.

When workers in Kumasi, Sekondi-Takoradi, and Accra launched a general strike against high taxes and a compulsory savings scheme in 1961, the government declared a state of emergency and arrested the strike leaders, charging them with "counterrevolutionary" activity.

As mass participation declined, much of the CPP leadership was captured by careerists, businessmen, and officials on the take. One example was Krobo Edusei, a wealthy and corrupt cabinet minister whose wife imported a solid-gold bed from Britain. Other officials were less blatant, but engaged in similar practices.

Nkrumah repeatedly condemned such behavior and chastized party leaders who acquired too much wealth. But corruption continued nevertheless.

CIA-backed coup

From the beginning, the imperialists were opposed to the Nkrumah government, which dared to take an inde-

pendent course. They feared the example that Ghana set for other peoples in Africa.

Their efforts to topple Nkrumah were facilitated by the imperialist stranglehold over Ghana's economy, the growth of openly procapitalist currents within the CPP leadership, and a slackening of popular support for the Nkrumah government.

In 1964, U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk warned Nkrumah against steering Ghana "down a road that is hostile to the United States or American interests there." The U.S. rulers were particularly annoyed by Nkrumah's denunciations of Washington's growing war in Vietnam. The "problem of Nkrumah" was discussed in the highest NATO bodies.

Following the publication of Nkrumah's book *Neocolonialism — The Last Stage of Imperialism* in 1965, Washington issued a formal protest and canceled a loan it had previously made to Ghana. U.S. companies and banks imposed an investment and credit boycott, while the International Monetary Fund demanded the dismantling of Ghana's state-run enterprises. The British authorities likewise threatened to cut off commercial credits.

In late 1965, the world price of cocoa plummeted to half of what it had been a year before, devastating Ghana's development plans.

Meanwhile, sectors of the British-trained Ghanaian officer corps were becoming increasingly alarmed by some of Nkrumah's policies, in particular his growing military and economic ties with the Soviet Union and his decision in December 1965 to begin forming a People's Militia.

The U.S. and British intelligence agencies established contact with these disgruntled officers and encouraged them to overthrow Nkrumah.

This they did on Feb. 24, 1966, while Nkrumah was in Peking, en route to Hanoi for discussions with Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh.

Though the Ghanaian masses did not support the coup (as the imperialist press tried to claim), neither were they in a position to actively oppose it.

An eight-man military junta, styling itself the "National Liberation Committee," took over. It disbanded the CPP and most of the organizations affiliated to it. It expelled many foreign technicians and sold off the most profitable state enterprises. It kicked out the African freedom fighters and political refugees who had been living in Ghana.

This and subsequent regimes opened up the country even further to imperialist domination. They abandoned Nkrumah's pan-Africanist stance and adopted a proimperialist foreign policy.

Nkrumah himself lived in exile in Guinea, where he was named honorary head of state of that West African country. He continued to write and to denounce imperialist policies in Africa.

Despite the ban on his works within Ghana, Nkrumah maintained considerable support there. When he died in April 1972, his body was returned to Ghana, where 20,000 people turned out for the funeral.

Since then, various political currents within Ghana have sought to pick up the threads of "Nkrumahism."

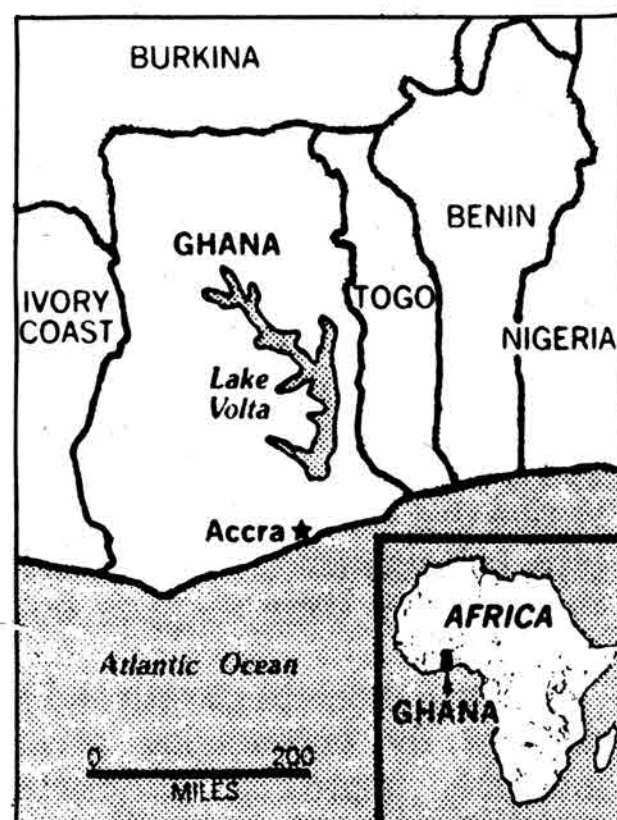
Some capitalist politicians, who bitterly opposed Nkrumah when he was in power, now claimed him as a national hero, while downplaying his anti-imperialist views.

The corrupt "old guard" of the CPP resurfaced in the late 1970s as the People's National Party (PNP). It was elected to office in 1979 on the basis of its identification with Nkrumah. The PNP proved to be one of the most corrupt in Ghana's history, and presided over an unparalleled economic decline.

Others, of a revolutionary inclination, put forward their own interpretation of Nkrumah's political legacy, stressing the more militantly anti-imperialist aspects of it. They argue for a greater reliance on mass mobilizations of the most exploited and oppressed. It is some of these revolutionaries who took part in the overthrow of the PNP regime and who are in the current government and the leadership of the CDRs and other mass organizations. They are taking advantage of the popular identification with Nkrumah's anti-imperialist positions to further the revolutionary struggle today.

At a ground-breaking ceremony for a memorial to Nkrumah in June 1984, Kojo Tsikata declared that the revolution must defend "the interests of the masses, workers, peasants, and of all patriots as Nkrumah did."

Tsikata stated that the best memorial to Nkrumah was not a stone, metal, or concrete construction, "but a living and profound revolutionary process geared towards a just society not only for Ghanaians but for Africa and for the poor and oppressed throughout the world."



Continued from ISR/3

be safeguarded against any fraud or improper influence. The new government can receive its mandate only from the whole people.

Since the government still lacks such mandates, in my opinion it must consider its position provisional, yet to be confirmed by the people. It may preempt the people's final decision only in so far as their immediate interests dictate. Before it acts, the government must ask itself whether it is prepared to accept responsibility for its actions before the entire people, so that on the day of reckoning it can render accounts with a clear conscience.

Consequently, the government cannot be bound by mandates that are not clearly from the entire people. Furthermore, it must work to shorten the transition period: just as soon as humanly possible, it must provide for parliamentary representation, for election of a national constituent assembly to whom the government can return its power, retaking it only by decision of that assembly.

The new national leadership called for such an assembly with commendable clarity in its recently published program. In addition, all of south Germany — Austria, Bavaria, Baden, Württemberg, and Hesse — has declared for the constituent assembly.

Opposed to this conception is another, which in its sharpest form could well be summarized as follows:

The People's Representatives should not represent the entire people, but only the workers and soldiers, whose organs are the workers' and soldiers' councils. The latter constitute the real power, and all must bow unquestioningly to their orders, including the people's representatives, the new national leadership.

This is supposed to be not a transitional, but rather a permanent arrangement. It means the "dictatorship of the proletariat," that is, the realization of socialism through a ruthless power struggle against all obstacles, whether arising out of class interests or even out of differences of opinion among Socialists.

So these are the opposing positions, more or less: democracy through the national constituent assembly, or dictatorship through the workers' and soldiers' councils. Their common goal is to achieve socialism. But one side would achieve it carefully through the general will of the people, while the other would do it through the commanding will of their party. They would smash through, without regard for the suffering that might be caused by erroneous measures, especially to the workers, as has in fact happened in Russia.

These questions, and thereby the whole future of our people, must be decided by those workers and soldiers who have taken an active part in the revolution. Their victory will shine with that much more glowing brilliance, the more clearly it is explained that this is a victory not of force, but of general democratic rights of the people, which the workers and soldiers have won for the people as a whole.

So let the workers and soldiers be conscious of the enormous responsibility that they now bear. Let them take care that the movement that has begun so magnificently not end in confusion and unbearable suffering. I believe they must be told as clearly as possible that the Social Democratic Party, which sent Ebert, Scheidemann, and Landsberg to the government, will under no circumstances let itself be swept along on a course that leads not to a socialist order, but to the Russian chaos.

The government of socialist unity can remain in power only if the workers and soldiers recognize and support it as the real, authoritative central power. The government

should examine all its measures to ensure that they are tailored to ease the terrible suffering that now weighs upon the working population. The government must be shielded from all unnecessary interference so that it can act, and it must understand that the people expect from it not only words, but resolute actions. Finally, the government must always be prepared to account for its actions before those appointed by the whole people and it must not arbitrarily postpone that reckoning, but hasten it as much as possible.

It is essential that we forswear renewed fratricidal strife among the workers and soldiers, avoid quarreling, infighting, and chaos. Do not think that there exists a panacea that can quickly bring the people happiness and well-being. Our population now resembles someone who has been wounded who must first learn to walk with crutches before he can run and dance again.

Above all we must conclude peace. Only the new government can do that. Therefore, it must strive to obtain a just, lasting peace through the League of Nations, a peace that will allow us to live, breathe, and work. The government must provide for feeding the people — a frightfully difficult task, as anyone knows who is familiar with the armistice conditions. It must return the soldiers to their families and to gainful employment. An outstanding, smoothly functioning organization is necessary to accomplish this. Otherwise there will be a general catastrophe.

This government has not yet received the mandate of the entire people, but we must do everything to ensure that it does. Right now it is only our government, the workers' and soldiers' government, the government of the Socialists, who came together in the hour of need for common action. We are completely dependent on its viability and success. We and the government must go forward with a clear conscience toward that day — which is certain to come — when the whole people will call us to account through its national constituent assembly.

The Beginning

BY ROSA LUXEMBURG

The revolution has begun. What we need now is not rejoicing over its accomplishments, not celebrations of victory over the prostrate foe, but rigorous self-criticism and strict marshaling of our strength so the work now begun can go forward. For little has been attained and the enemy is not defeated.

What has been accomplished? The monarchy has been swept away. Supreme governmental power has been handed over to the workers' and soldiers' representatives. But the monarchy was never the real enemy. It was only the cover, the figurehead for imperialism. It was not the Hohenzollern who ignited the World War, spread fire to the four corners of the earth, and brought Germany to the brink of the abyss. Like all bourgeois governments, the monarchy was only an administrator for the ruling classes. The criminals who must be held responsible for the genocide are the imperialist bourgeoisie, the capitalist ruling class.

Abolition of capital's domination and achievement of a socialist order: that and nothing less is the historic theme of the current revolution. A massive task, this cannot be dispatched in a twinkling by a few decrees from on high, but can only be set in motion through the conscious action of the urban and rural working people. It can only be carried through all tempests and brought safely to port by

the highest intellectual maturity and unflagging idealism of the popular masses.

The revolution's goal clearly points out its course, and its tasks indicate the needed methods. *All power to the toiling masses, and to the workers' and soldiers' councils; safeguard the revolution's accomplishments from cunning enemies.* These are the guidelines for all measures of the revolutionary government.

Every step, every action of the government must point like a compass in this direction.

Expand and reelect local workers' and soldiers' councils to replace the chaotic and impulsive character of their initial actions through a conscious process of understanding the revolution's goals, tasks, and course.

Maintain representative bodies of the masses in permanent session. Real political power should be transferred from the small Berlin executive committee to the broader basis of the workers' and soldiers' councils.

Immediately convoke the national parliament of the workers and soldiers in order to organize all of Germany's proletariat as a class, a solid political power, the bulwark and driving force of the revolution.

Immediately organize not the "peasants," but the farm workers and small peasants, a layer that has not participated in the revolution up to now.

Build a proletarian Red Guard for ongoing defense of the revolution and train a workers' militia in order to organize the entire proletariat to be on guard at all times.

Expel the surviving organs of the absolutist militaristic police state from the administration, judiciary, and army.

Immediately confiscate dynastic fortunes and property and large landed estates as an initial, preliminary measure to secure the people's food supply, since hunger is the most dangerous ally of counterrevolution.

Immediately convene in Germany a world congress of workers to loudly and clearly proclaim the socialist and international character of the revolution, because in the International and in the world proletarian revolution is anchored the future of the German revolution.

We have listed only the first, most necessary steps. What is the present revolutionary government doing?

It simply leaves the state, from top to bottom, as an administrative organism in the hands of yesterday's supporters of Hohenzollern absolutism and tomorrow's tools of the counterrevolution.

It convenes the national constituent assembly, thereby creating a bourgeois counterweight to the workers' and soldiers' power, shunting the revolution onto the rails of a bourgeois revolution, and conjuring away the socialist goals of the revolution.

It does nothing to demolish the continuing power of capitalist class rule.

It does everything to reassure the bourgeoisie, to preach the sacredness of private property, and to ensure the inviolability of capitalist property relations.

It retreats before the constantly advancing counterrevolution without appealing to the masses, without sharply warning the people.

Law and order! Law and order! These words reverberate from all sides: at all government rallies, and jubilantly echoed from all bourgeois camps. The clamor against the specter of "anarchy" and "putschism," the familiar infernal whine of the capitalist worried about his safes, property, and profits is the overriding theme song today, and the revolutionary workers' and soldiers' government silently tolerates the sounding of the rallying cry for the assault on socialism. Worse — it participates in word and deed.

The upshot of the revolution's first week is that in the

2. The German constitution of 1871 set up a Federal Council and a Reichstag, roughly comparable to a parliament, but concentrated all real power in the hands of the Hohenzollern Imperial Kaiser. The chancellor and government ministers answered to the kaiser, not to the Reichstag.

This concentration of power in the hands of the representative of the landed aristocracy not only disenfranchised the working class, but created no small amount of tension with the bourgeoisie as well. World War I of course aggravated all these tensions, especially after September 1918, when the German High Command realized that the war was lost.

In an attempt to defuse the situation on the verge of collapse, constitutional reform took effect on Oct. 28, 1918, making the chancellor and ministers responsible to the Reichstag and Federal Council rather than the kaiser, thereby adopting a constitutional monarchy similar to Britain's.

The revolution of Nov. 9, 1918, while eliminating the monarchy, basically retained this set-up. The Council of People's Representatives expressly retained the Federal Council by decree and immediately called for a National Assembly, which was the Reichstag in a slightly different form.

3. The program adopted by the Social Democratic Party of Germany at its 1891 congress at Erfurt was a major step by the party toward Marxism and served before 1914 as the model for the programs of most parties of the Second International. Under the pressure of the war, an opposition current arose within the SPD. This current held a conference on Jan. 7, 1917, deciding only to maintain contact and to extend their influence within the party. Steps were taken to avoid any appearance of wanting to split with the party. However, the SPD executive committee decided 10 days later that the mere fact of having held the conference put the oppositionists outside the party, and proceeded to expel them. After the split, the SPD retained 170,000 members; the opposition, organized as the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany (USPD) numbered 120,000.



Social Democrats rule German government for capitalists and landlords, December 1918. Left to right: Philipp Scheidemann (1865-1937), Otto Landsberg (1869-1957), Friedrich Ebert (1870-1925), Gustav Noske (1868-1946), and Rudolf Wissell (1869-1962). Ebert and Scheidemann served in kaiser's government, then became "People's Representatives" upon monarchy's overthrow. Stampfer says Social Democratic government will take course of "socialist order," not "Russian chaos" — referring to Bolshevik revolution.



Rosa Luxemburg addressing rally in 1907

land of the Hohenzollern, basically nothing has changed. The workers' and soldiers' government functions as a stand-in for the bankrupt imperialist government. All its acts — of commission and omission — are based on a fear of the working masses. Before the revolution could develop power and momentum, its life blood, which is its socialist and proletarian character, was drained.

Everything is as you would expect. The most reactionary country in the civilized world does not become a revolutionary people's republic in twenty-four hours. Soldiers who yesterday killed revolutionary proletarians in Finland, Russia, the Ukraine, and in the Baltics — and workers who quietly allowed this to happen — have not in twenty-four hours become conscious fighters for socialism.

The state of the German revolution reflects the maturity of German political conditions. Scheidemann-Ebert are the government befitting the German revolution in its present stage. And the Independents,⁴ who believe they can build socialism together with Scheidemann-Ebert, and who solemnly certify in *Freiheit* that with them they are forming an "exclusively socialist government," thereby become the authorized corporate partners in this first, provisional stage.

But revolutions do not stand still. It is a fundamental law that they constantly move forward and outgrow themselves. The first stage is already pressing against its internal contradictions. The situation is understandable as a beginning, but untenable in the long run. The masses must be on guard if the counterrevolution is not to win across the board.

We have made a beginning. The rest is not in the hands of the dwarfs who want to block the flow of the revolution and stop the wheel of world history. World history's order of the day calls for achieving the final goals of socialism. The German revolution is on the path of this guiding light. Step by step, through storm and stress, through struggle and anguish, misery and victory, the revolution will triumph.

It must!

Theses and report on bourgeois democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat March 4

BY V. I. LENIN

1. Faced with the growth of the revolutionary workers' movement in every country, the bourgeoisie and their agents in the workers' organisations are making desperate attempts to find ideological and political arguments in defence of the rule of the exploiters. Condemnation of dictatorship and defence of democracy are particularly prominent among these arguments. The falsity and hypocrisy of this argument, repeated in a thousand strains by the capitalist press and at the Berne yellow International Conference⁵ in February 1919, are obvious to all who refuse to betray the fundamental principles of socialism.

2. Firstly, this argument employs the concepts of "democracy in general" and "dictatorship in general," with-

out posing the question of the class concerned. This non-class or above-class presentation, which supposedly is popular, is an outright travesty of the basic tenet of socialism, namely, its theory of class struggle, which socialists who have sided with the bourgeoisie recognise in words but disregard in practice. For in no civilised capitalist country does "democracy in general" exist; all that exists is bourgeois democracy, and it is not a question of "dictatorship in general," but of the dictatorship of the oppressed class, i.e., the proletariat, over its oppressors and exploiters, i.e., the bourgeoisie, in order to overcome the resistance offered by the exploiters in their fight to maintain their domination.

3. History teaches us that no oppressed class ever did, or could, achieve power without going through a period of dictatorship, i.e., the conquest of political power and forcible suppression of the resistance always offered by the exploiters — a resistance that is most desperate, most furious, and that stops at nothing. The bourgeoisie, whose domination is now defended by the socialists who denounce "dictatorship in general" and extol "democracy in general," won power in the advanced countries through a series of insurrections, civil wars, and the forcible suppression of kings, feudal lords, slaveowners and their attempts at restoration. In books, pamphlets, congress resolutions and propaganda speeches socialists everywhere have thousands and millions of times explained to the people the class nature of these bourgeois revolutions and this bourgeois dictatorship. That is why the present defence of bourgeois democracy under cover of talk about "democracy in general" and the present howls and shouts against proletarian dictatorship under cover of shouts about "dictatorship in general" are an outright betrayal of socialism. They are, in fact, desertion to the bourgeoisie, denial of the proletariat's right to its own, proletarian, revolution, and defence of bourgeois reformism at the very historical juncture when bourgeois reformism throughout the world has collapsed and the war has created a revolutionary situation.

4. In explaining the class nature of bourgeois civilisation, bourgeois democracy and the bourgeois parliamentary system, all socialists have expressed the idea formulated with the greatest scientific precision by Marx and Engels, namely, that the most democratic bourgeois republic is no more than a machine for the suppression of the working class by the bourgeoisie, for the suppression of the working people by a handful of capitalists. There is not a single revolutionary, not a single Marxist among those now shouting against dictatorship and for democracy who has not sworn and vowed to the workers that he accepts this basic truth of socialism. But now, when the revolutionary proletariat is in a fighting mood and taking action to destroy this machine of oppression and to establish proletarian dictatorship, these traitors to socialism claim that the bourgeoisie have granted the working people "pure democracy," have abandoned resistance and are prepared to yield to the majority of the working people. They assert that in a democratic republic there is not, and never has been, any such thing as a state machine for the oppression of labour by capital.

5. The Paris Commune⁶ — to which all who parade as socialists pay lip service, for they know that the workers ardently and sincerely sympathise with the Commune — showed very clearly the historically conventional nature and limited value of the bourgeois parliamentary system and bourgeois democracy — institutions which, though highly progressive compared with medieval times, inevitably require a radical alteration in the era of proletarian revolution. It was Marx who best appraised the historical significance of the Commune. In his analysis, he revealed the exploiting nature of bourgeois democracy and the bourgeois parliamentary system under which the oppressed classes enjoy the right to decide once in several years which representative of the propertied classes shall "represent and suppress" (*ver- und zertreten*) the people in parliament. And it is now, when the Soviet movement is embracing the entire world and continuing the work of the Commune for all to see, that the traitors to socialism are forgetting the concrete experience and concrete lessons of the Paris Commune and repeating the old bourgeois rubbish about "democracy in general." The Commune was not a parliamentary institution.

6. The significance of the Commune, furthermore, lies in the fact that it endeavoured to crush, to smash to its very foundations, the bourgeois state apparatus, the bureaucratic, judicial, military and police machine, and to replace it by a self-governing, mass workers' organisation in which there was no division between legislative and executive power. All contemporary bourgeois-democratic republics, including the German republic, which the traitors to socialism, in mockery of the truth, describe

5. The Berne Socialist Conference was one called by the pro-war socialist parties and centrist parties such as the Independent Social Democratic Party. The conference sought to restore the Second International and many of its leaders attacked the Bolshevik revolution.

6. In March 1871, the workers of Paris led an insurrection that established a revolutionary government (the Commune). They held political power in Paris for three months before being crushed by an army of capitalist reaction.

as a proletarian republic, retain this state apparatus. We therefore again get quite clear confirmation of the point that shouting in defence of "democracy in general" is actually defence of the bourgeoisie and their privileges as exploiters.

7. "Freedom of assembly" can be taken as a sample of the requisites of "pure democracy." Every class-conscious worker who has not broken with his class will readily appreciate the absurdity of promising freedom of assembly to the exploiters at a time and in a situation when the exploiters are resisting the overthrow of their rule and are fighting to retain their privileges. When the bourgeoisie were revolutionary, they did not, either in England in 1649 or in France in 1793, grant "freedom of assembly" to the monarchists and nobles, who summoned foreign troops and "assembled" to organise attempts at restoration. If the present-day bourgeoisie, who have long since become reactionary, demand from the proletariat advance guarantees of "freedom of assembly" for the exploiters, whatever the resistance offered by the capitalists to being expropriated, the workers will only laugh at their hypocrisy.

The workers know perfectly well, too, that even in the most democratic bourgeois republic "freedom of assembly" is a hollow phrase, for the rich have the best public and private buildings at their disposal, and enough leisure to assemble at meetings, which are protected by the bourgeois machine of power. The rural and urban workers and the small peasants — the overwhelming majority of the population — are denied all these things. As long as that state of affairs prevails, "equality," i.e., "pure democracy," is a fraud. The first thing to do to win genuine equality and enable the working people to enjoy democracy in practice is to deprive the exploiters of all the public and sumptuous private buildings, to give the working people leisure and to see to it that their freedom of assembly is protected by armed workers, not by scions of the nobility or capitalist officers in command of downtrodden soldiers.

Only when that change is effected can we speak of freedom of assembly and of equality without mocking at the workers, at working people in general, at the poor. And this change can be effected only by the vanguard of the working people, the proletariat, which overthrows the exploiters, the bourgeoisie.

8. "Freedom of the press" is another of the principal slogans of "pure democracy." And here, too, the workers know — and socialists everywhere have admitted it millions of times — that this freedom is a deception while the best printing-presses and the biggest stocks of paper are appropriated by the capitalists, and while capitalist rule over the press remains, a rule that is manifested throughout the world all the more strikingly, sharply and cynically the more democracy and the republican system are developed, as in America for example. The first thing to do to win real equality and genuine democracy for the working people, for the workers and peasants, is to deprive capital of the possibility of hiring writers, buying up publishing houses and bribing newspapers. And to do that the capitalists and exploiters have to be overthrown and their resistance suppressed. The capitalists have always used the term "freedom" to mean freedom for the rich to get richer and for the workers to starve to death. In capitalist usage, freedom of the press means freedom of the rich to bribe the press, freedom to use their wealth to shape and fabricate so-called public opinion. In this respect, too, the defenders of "pure democracy" prove to be defenders of an utterly foul and venal system that gives the rich control over the mass media. They prove to be deceivers of the people, who, with the aid of plausible, fine-sounding, but thoroughly false phrases, divert them from the concrete historical task of liberating the press from capitalist enslavement. Genuine freedom and equality will be embodied in the system which the Communists are building, and in which there will be no opportunity for amassing wealth at the expense of others, no objective opportunities for putting the press under the direct or indirect power of money, and no impediments in the way of any workingman (or groups of workingmen, in any numbers) for enjoying and practising equal rights in the use of public printing-presses and public stocks of paper.

9. The history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries demonstrated, even before the war, what this celebrated "pure democracy" really is under capitalism. Marxists have always maintained that the more developed, the "purer" democracy is, the more naked, acute and merciless the class struggle becomes, and the "purer" the capitalist oppression and bourgeois dictatorship. The Dreyfus case⁷ in republican France, the massacre of strikers by hired bands armed by the capitalists in the free and democratic American republic — these and thousands of similar facts illustrate the truth which the bourgeoisie are vainly seeking to conceal, namely, that actually terror and bourgeois dictatorship prevail in the

Continued on next page

4. Members of the Independent Social Democratic Party, to which the Spartacists were affiliated until they left in 1918, later becoming the Communist Party of Germany.

7. Alfred Dreyfus, an officer in the French General Staff and a Jew, was framed on treason charges in 1894 at the behest of monarchist and other anti-Semitic reactionaries.



V.I. Lenin (standing) with Fritz Platten at founding congress of Comintern.

Continued from previous page

most democratic of republics and are openly displayed every time the exploiters think the power of capital is being shaken.

10. The imperialist war of 1914-18 conclusively revealed even to backward workers the true nature of bourgeois democracy, even in the freest republics, as being a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Tens of millions were killed for the sake of enriching the German or the British group of millionaires and multimillionaires, and bourgeois military dictatorships were established in the freest republics. This military dictatorship continues to exist in the Allied countries even after Germany's defeat. It was mostly the war that opened the eyes of the working people, that stripped bourgeois democracy of its camouflage and showed the people the abyss of speculation and profiteering that existed during and because of the war. It was in the name of "freedom and equality" that the munition manufacturers piled up fabulous fortunes. Nothing that the yellow Berne International does can conceal from the people the now thoroughly exposed exploiting character of bourgeois freedom, bourgeois equality and bourgeois democracy.

11. In Germany, the most developed capitalist country of continental Europe, the very first months of full republican freedom, established as a result of imperialist Germany's defeat, have shown the German workers and the whole world the true class substance of the bourgeois-democratic republic. The murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg is an event of epoch-making significance not only because of the tragic death of these finest people and leaders of the truly proletarian, Communist International, but also because the class nature of an advanced European state — it can be said without exaggeration, of an advanced state on a world-wide scale — has been conclusively exposed. If those arrested, i.e., those placed under state protection, could be assassinated by officers and capitalists with impunity, and this under a government headed by social-patriots, then the democratic republic where such a thing was possible is a bourgeois dictatorship. Those who voice their indignation at the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg but fail to understand this fact are only demonstrating their stupidity, or hypocrisy. "Freedom" in the German republic, one of the freest and advanced republics of the world, is freedom to murder arrested leaders of the proletariat with impunity. Nor can it be otherwise as long as capitalism remains, for the development of democracy sharpens rather than dampens the class struggle which, by virtue of all the results and influences of the war and of its consequences, has been brought to boiling point.

Throughout the civilised world we see Bolsheviks being exiled, persecuted and thrown into prison. This is the case, for example, in Switzerland, one of the freest bourgeois republics, and in America, where there have been anti-Bolshevik pogroms, etc. From the standpoint of "democracy in general," or "pure democracy," it is really ridiculous that advanced, civilised, and democratic countries, which are armed to the teeth, should fear the presence of a few score men from backward, famine-stricken and ruined Russia, which the bourgeois papers, in tens of millions of copies, describe as savage, criminal, etc. Clearly, the social situation that could produce

this crying contradiction is in fact a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

12. In these circumstances, proletarian dictatorship is not only an absolutely legitimate means of overthrowing the exploiters and suppressing their resistance, but also absolutely necessary to the entire mass of working people, being their only defence against the bourgeois dictatorship which led to the war and is preparing new wars.

The main thing that socialists fail to understand and that constitutes their short-sightedness in matters of theory, their subservience to bourgeois prejudices and their political betrayal of the proletariat is that in capitalist society, whenever there is any serious aggravation of the class struggle intrinsic to that society, there can be no alternative but the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat. Dreams of some third way are reactionary, petty-bourgeois lamentations. That is borne out by more than a century of development of bourgeois democracy and the working-class movement in all the advanced countries, and notably by the experience of the past five years. This is also borne out by the whole science of political economy, by the entire content of Marxism, which reveals the economic inevitability, wherever commodity economy prevails, of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie that can only be replaced by the class which the very growth of capitalism develops, multiplies, welds together and strengthens, that is, the proletarian class.

13. Another theoretical and political error of the socialists is their failure to understand that ever since the rudiments of democracy first appeared in antiquity, its forms inevitably changed over the centuries as one ruling class replaced another. Democracy assumed different forms and was applied in different degrees in the ancient republics of Greece, the medieval cities and the advanced capitalist countries. It would be sheer nonsense to think that the most profound revolution in human history, the first case in the world of power being transferred from the exploiting minority to the exploited majority, could take place within the time-worn framework of the old, bourgeois, parliamentary democracy, without drastic changes, without the creation of new forms of democracy, new institutions that embody the new conditions for applying democracy, etc.

14. Proletarian dictatorship is similar to the dictatorship of other classes in that it arises out of the need, as every other dictatorship does, to forcibly suppress the resistance of the class that is losing its political sway. The fundamental distinction between the dictatorship of the proletariat and the dictatorship of other classes — landlord dictatorship in the Middle Ages and bourgeois dictatorship in all the civilised capitalist countries — consists in the fact that the dictatorship of the landowners and bourgeoisie was the forcible suppression of the resistance offered by the vast majority of the population, namely, the working people. In contrast proletarian dictatorship is the forcible suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, i.e., an insignificant minority of the population, the landowners and capitalists.

It follows that proletarian dictatorship must inevitably entail not only a change in democratic forms and institutions, generally speaking, but precisely such a change as provides an unparalleled extension of the actual enjoyment of democracy by those oppressed by capitalism — the toiling classes.

And indeed, the form of proletarian dictatorship that has already taken shape, i.e., Soviet power in Russia, the Räte-System in Germany, the Shop Stewards Committees in Britain and similar Soviet institutions in other countries, all this implies and presents to the toiling classes, i.e., the vast majority of the population, greater practical opportunities for enjoying democratic rights and liberties than ever existed before, even approximately, in the best and the most democratic bourgeois republics.

The substance of Soviet government is that the permanent and only foundation of state power, the entire machinery of state, is the mass-scale organisation of the classes oppressed by capitalism, i.e., the workers and the semi-proletarians (peasants who do not exploit the labour of others and regularly resort to the sale of at least a part of their own labour-power). It is the people, who even in the most democratic bourgeois republics, while possessing equal rights by law, have in fact been debarred by thousands of devices and subterfuges from participation in political life and enjoyment of democratic rights and liberties, that are now drawn into constant and unflinching, moreover, decisive, participation in the democratic administration of the state.

15. The equality of citizens, irrespective of sex, religion, race, or nationality, which bourgeois democracy everywhere has always promised but never effected, and never could effect because of the domination of capital, is given immediate and full effect by the Soviet system, or dictatorship of the proletariat. The fact is that this can only be done by a government of the workers, who are not interested in the means of production being privately owned and in the fight for their division and redivision.

16. The old, i.e., bourgeois, democracy and the parliamentary system were so organised that it was the mass

of working people who were kept farthest away from the machinery of government. Soviet power, i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat, on the other hand, is so organised as to bring the working people close to the machinery of government. That, too, is the purpose of combining the legislative and executive authority under the Soviet organisation of the state and of replacing territorial constituencies by production units — the factory.

17. The army was a machine of oppression not only under the monarchy. It remains as such in all bourgeois republics, even the most democratic ones. Only the Soviets, the permanent organisations of government authority of the classes that were oppressed by capitalism, are in a position to destroy the army's subordination to bourgeois commanders and really merge the proletariat with the army; only the Soviets can effectively arm the proletariat and disarm the bourgeoisie. Unless this is done, the victory of socialism is impossible.

18. The Soviet organisation of the state is suited to the leading role of the proletariat as a class most concentrated and enlightened by capitalism. The experience of all revolutions and all movements of the oppressed classes, the experience of the world socialist movement teaches us that only the proletariat is in a position to unite and lead the scattered and backward sections of the working and exploited population.

19. Only the Soviet organisation of the state can really effect the immediate break-up and total destruction of the old, i.e., bourgeois, bureaucratic and judicial machinery, which has been, and has inevitably had to be, retained under capitalism even in the most democratic republics, and which is, in actual fact, the greatest obstacle to the practical implementation of democracy for the workers and working people generally. The Paris Commune took the first epoch-making step along this path. The Soviet system has taken the second.

20. Destruction of state power is the aim set by all socialists, including Marx above all. Genuine democracy, i.e., liberty and equality, is unrealisable unless this aim is achieved. But its practical achievement is possible only through Soviet, or proletarian, democracy, for by enlisting the mass organisations of the working people in constant and unflinching participation in the administration of the state, it immediately begins to prepare the complete withering away of any state.

21. The complete bankruptcy of the socialists who assembled in Berne, their complete failure to understand the new, i.e., proletarian, democracy is especially apparent from the following. On February 10, 1919, Branting⁸ delivered the concluding speech at the international Conference of the yellow International in Berne. In Berlin, on February 11, 1919, *Die Freiheit*, the paper of the International's affiliates, published an appeal from the Party of "Independents" to the proletariat. The appeal acknowledged the bourgeois character of the Scheidemann government, rebuked it for wanting to abolish the Soviets, which it described as *Träger und Schützer der Revolution* — vehicles and guardians of the revolution — and proposed that the Soviets be legalised, invested with government authority and given the right to suspend the operation of National Assembly decisions pending a popular referendum.

That proposal indicates the complete ideological bankruptcy of the theorists who defended democracy and failed to see its bourgeois character. This ludicrous attempt to combine the Soviet system, i.e., proletarian dictatorship, with the National Assembly, i.e., bourgeois dictatorship, utterly exposes the paucity of thought of the yellow socialists and Social-Democrats, their reactionary petty-bourgeois political outlook, and their cowardly concessions to the irresistibly growing strength of the new, proletarian democracy.

22. From the class standpoint, the Berne yellow International majority, which did not dare to adopt a formal resolution out of fear of the mass of workers, was right in condemning Bolshevism. This majority is in full agreement with the Russian Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, and the Scheidemanns in Germany. In complaining of persecution by the Bolsheviks, the Russian Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries⁹ try to conceal the fact that they are persecuted for participating in the Civil War on the side of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. Similarly, the Scheidemanns and their party have already demonstrated in Germany that they, too, are participating in the civil war on the side of the bourgeoisie against the workers.

It is therefore quite natural that the Berne yellow International majority should be in favour of condemning the Bolsheviks. This was not an expression of the defence of "pure democracy," but of the self-defence of people who know and feel that in the civil war they stand with the

8. Karl Branting (1860-1925), a Swedish social democrat; became chairman of the Second International in 1919.

9. Members of the Socialist Revolutionary (SR) Party in Russia, a petty bourgeois party with broad support among the peasantry before the Bolshevik Revolution. Its right wing joined forces with the capitalists in Russian Civil War of 1918-21; its left wing participated in the Bolshevik-led government until 1918 before majority of Left SR leadership staged an attempted coup.

bourgeoisie against the proletariat.

That is why, from the class point of view, the decision of the yellow International majority must be considered correct. The proletariat must not fear the truth, it must face it squarely and draw all the necessary political conclusions.

Comrades, I would like to add a word or two to the last two points. I think that the comrades who are to report to us on the Berne Conference will deal with it in greater detail.

Not a word was said at the Berne Conference about the significance of Soviet power. We in Russia have been discussing this question for two years now. At our Party Conference in April 1917 we raised the following question, theoretically and politically: "What is Soviet power, what is its substance and what is its historical significance?" We have been discussing it for almost two years. And at our Party Congress we adopted a resolution on it.

On February 11 Berlin *Die Freiheit* published an appeal to the German proletariat signed not only by the leaders of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, but also by all the members of the Independent Social-Democratic group in the Reichstag. In August 1918, Kautsky¹⁰ one of the leading theorists of these Independents, wrote a pamphlet entitled *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, in which he declared that he was a supporter of democracy and of Soviet bodies, but that the Soviets must be bodies merely of an economic character and that they must not by any means be recognised as state organisations. Kautsky says the same thing in *Die Freiheit* of November 11 and January 12. On February 9 an article appeared by Rudolf Hilferding, who is also regarded as one of the leading and authoritative theorists of the Second International, in which he proposed that the Soviet system be united with the National Assembly juridically, by state legislation. That was on February 9. On February 11 this proposal was adopted by the whole of the Independent Party and published in the form of an appeal.

There is vacillation again, despite the fact that the National Assembly already exists, even after "pure democracy" has been embodied in reality, after the leading theorists of the Independent Social-Democratic Party have declared that the Soviet organisations must not be state organisations! This proves that these gentlemen really understand nothing about the new movement and about its conditions of struggle. But it goes to prove something else, namely, that there must be conditions, causes, for this vacillation! When, after all these events, after nearly two years of victorious revolution in Russia, we are offered resolutions like those adopted at the Berne Conference, which say nothing about the Soviets and their significance, about which not a single delegate uttered a single word, we have a perfect right to say that all these gentlemen are dead to us as socialists and theorists.

However, comrades, from the practical side, from the political point of view, the fact that these Independents, who in theory and on principle have been opposed to these state organisations, suddenly make the stupid proposal to "peacefully" unite the National Assembly with the Soviet system, i.e., to unite the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the proletariat, shows that a great change is taking place among the masses. We see that the Independents are all bankrupt in the socialist and theoretical sense and that an enormous change is taking place among the masses. The backward masses among the German workers are coming to us, have come to us! So, the significance of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, the best section of the Berne Conference, is nil from the theoretical and socialist standpoint. Still, it has some significance, which is that these waverers serve as an index to us of the mood of the backward sections of the proletariat. This, in my opinion, is the great historical significance of this Conference. We experienced something of the kind in our own revolution. Our Mensheviks traversed almost exactly the same path as that of the theorists of the Independents in Germany. At first, when they had a majority in the Soviets, they were in favour of the Soviets. All we heard then was: "Long live the Soviets!", "For the Soviets!", "The Soviets are revolutionary democracy!" When, however, we Bolsheviks secured a majority in the Soviets, they changed their tune; they said: the Soviets must not exist side by side with the Constituent Assembly. And various Menshevik theorists made practically the same proposals, like the one to unite the Soviet system with the Constituent Assembly and to incorporate the Soviets in the state structure. Once again it is here revealed that the general course of the proletarian revolution is the same throughout the world. First the spontaneous formation of Soviets, then their spread and development, and then the appearance of the practical problem: Soviets, or National Assembly, or Constituent Assembly, or the bourgeois parliamentary system; utter confusion among the leaders,

and finally — the proletarian revolution. But I think we should not present the problem in this way after nearly two years of revolution; we should rather adopt concrete decisions because for us, and particularly for the majority of the West European countries, spreading of the Soviet system is a most important task.

I would like to quote here just one Menshevik resolution. I asked Comrade Obolensky to translate it into German. He promised to do so but, unfortunately, he is not here. I shall try to render it from memory, as I have not the full text of it with me.

It is very difficult for a foreigner who has not heard anything about Bolshevism to arrive at an independent opinion about our controversial questions. Everything the Bolsheviks assert is challenged by the Mensheviks, and vice versa. Of course, it cannot be otherwise in the middle of a struggle, and that is why it is so important that the last Menshevik Party conference, held in December 1918, adopted the long and detailed resolution published in full in the Menshevik *Gazeta Pechatnikov*. In this resolution the Mensheviks themselves briefly outline the history of the class struggle and of the Civil War. The resolution states that they condemn those groups in their party which are allied with the propertied classes in the Urals, in the South, in the Crimea and in Georgia — all these regions are enumerated. Those groups of the Menshevik Party which, in alliance with the propertied classes, fought against the Soviets are now condemned in the resolution; but the last point of the resolution also condemns those who joined the Communists. It follows that the Mensheviks were compelled to admit that there was no unity in their party, and that its members were either on the side of the bourgeoisie or on the side of the proletariat. The majority of the Mensheviks went over to the bourgeoisie and fought against us during the Civil War. We, of course, persecute Mensheviks, we even shoot them, when they wage war against us, fight against our Red Army and shoot our Red commanders. We responded to the bourgeois war with the proletarian war — there can be no other way. Therefore, from the political point of view, all this is sheer Menshevik hypocrisy. Historically, it is incomprehensible how people who have not been officially certified as mad could talk at the Berne Conference, on the instructions of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, about the Bolsheviks fighting the latter, yet keep silent about their own struggle, in alliance with the bourgeoisie, against the proletariat.

All of them furiously attack us for persecuting them. This is true. But they do not say a word about the part they themselves have taken in the Civil War! I think that I shall have to provide the full text of the resolution to be recorded in the minutes, and I shall ask the foreign comrades to study it because it is a historical document in which the issue is raised correctly and which provides excellent material for appraising the controversy between the "socialist" trends in Russia. In between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie there is another class of people, who incline first this way and then the other. This has always been the case in all revolutions, and it is absolutely impossible in capitalist society, in which the proletariat and the bourgeoisie form two hostile camps, for intermediary sections not to exist between them. The existence of these waverers is historically inevitable, and, unfortunately, these elements, who do not know themselves on whose side they will fight tomorrow, will exist for quite some time.

I want to make the practical proposal that a resolution be adopted in which three points shall be specifically mentioned.

First: One of the most important tasks confronting the West European comrades is to explain to the people the meaning, importance and necessity of the Soviet system. There is a sort of misunderstanding on this question. Although Kautsky and Hilferding are bankrupt as theorists, their recent articles in *Die Freiheit* show that they correctly reflect the mood of the backward sections of the German proletariat. The same thing took place in our country: during the first eight months of the Russian revolution the question of the Soviet organisation was very much discussed, and the workers did not understand what the new system was and whether the Soviets could be transformed into a state machine. In our revolution we advanced along the path of practice, and not of theory. For example, formerly we did not raise the question of the Constituent Assembly from the theoretical side, and we did not say we did not recognise the Constituent Assembly. It was only later, when the Soviet organisations had spread throughout the country and had captured political power, that we decided to dissolve the Constituent Assembly. Now we see that in Hungary and Switzerland the question is much more acute. On the one hand, this is very good: it gives us the firm conviction that in the West European states the revolution is advancing more quickly and will yield great victories. On the other hand, a certain danger is concealed in it, namely, that the struggle will be so precipitous that the minds of the mass of workers will not keep pace with this development. Even now the significance of the Soviet system is not clear to a large mass of the politically educated German workers, because they have been trained in the spirit of the parliamentary system and amid bourgeois prejudices.

Second: About the spread of the Soviet system. When we hear how quickly the idea of Soviets is spreading in Germany, and even in Britain, it is very important evidence that the proletarian revolution will be victorious. Its progress can be only retarded for a short time. It is quite another thing, however, when Comrades Albert and Platten¹¹ tell us that in the rural districts in their countries there are hardly any Soviets among the farm labourers and small peasants. In *Die Rote Fahne* I read an article opposing peasant Soviets, but quite properly supporting Soviets of farm labourers and of poor peasants.¹² Unfortunately, from the reports of Comrades Albert Platten and others, we see that, with the exception of Hungary, very little is being done to spread the Soviet system in the countryside. In this, perhaps, lies the real and quite serious danger threatening the achievement of certain victory by the German proletariat. Victory can only be considered assured when not only the urban workers, but also the rural proletarians are organised, and organised not as before — in trade unions and cooperative societies — but in Soviets. Our victory was made easier by the fact that in October 1917 we marched with the peasants, with all the peasants. In that sense, our revolution at that time was a bourgeois revolution. The first step taken by our proletarian government was to embody in a law promulgated on October 26 (old style), 1917, on the next day after the revolution, the old demands of all the peasants which peasant Soviets and village assemblies had put forward under Kerensky.¹³ That is where our strength lay; that is why we were able to win the overwhelming majority so easily. As far as the countryside was concerned, our revolution continued to be a bourgeois revolution, and only later, after a lapse of six months, were we compelled within the framework of the state organisation to start the class struggle in the countryside, to establish Committees of Poor Peasants, of semi-proletarians, in every village, and to carry on a methodical fight against the rural bourgeoisie. This was inevitable in Russia owing to the backwardness of the country. In Western Europe things will proceed differently, and that is why we must emphasise the absolute necessity of spreading the Soviet system also to the rural population in proper, perhaps new, forms.

Third: We must say that winning a Communist majority in the Soviets is the principal task in all countries in which Soviet government is not yet victorious. Our Resolutions' Commission discussed this question yesterday. Perhaps other comrades will express their opinion on it; but I would like to propose that these three points be adopted as a special resolution. Of course, we are not in a position to prescribe the path of development. It is quite likely that the revolution will come very soon in many West European countries, but we, as the organised section of the working class, as a party, strive and must strive to gain a majority in the Soviets. Then our victory will be assured and no power on earth will be able to do anything against the communist revolution. If we do not, victory will not be secured so easily, and it will not be durable. And so, I would like to propose that these three points be adopted as a special resolution.

11. Hugo Eberlein of Germany and Fritz Platten of Switzerland.

12. Lenin refers here to Luxemburg's article "The Beginning."

13. Alexander Kerensky (1881–1970), leader of Socialist Revolutionary Party and prime minister of Russian Provisional Revolutionary Government, which was overthrown by the October 1917 revolution.

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10. Karl Kautsky (1854–1938), a Marxist theoretician and collaborator of Fredrick Engels; leader of the "Marxist Center" in the SPD before 1914; adopted pacifist stand at beginning of World War I, making apologies for the chauvinist majority; a founding member of the Independent Social Democratic Party, and was a leader of its right wing.

North American 'brigadista' recounts his experience picking coffee in Nicaragua

BY BILL GRETTTER

I was one of 70 North Americans who were part of the Jean Donovan Brigade, which spent three weeks in Nicaragua in December and January, picking coffee in Matagalpa Province.

Some of us were students or college teachers, others were industrial workers; most of us were active in organizing solidarity with Nicaragua in the United States. And all were opponents of the CIA-organized war against Nicaragua.

We worked at the "La Lima" farm, which is about 20 miles north of Matagalpa, near the top of a mountain. The trip takes an hour in a pick-up truck over unbelievably rough, unpaved roads. The view is extensive: there are lush, green mountains one after the other as far as one can see.

The main building on the farm faced out over the hill. It was a simple building with touches of elegance that set it apart from the others: glass in the windows, marble for the balcony railing, and, most important, indoor plumbing. Some of the Nicaraguan permanent residents now live in this building, although most seem to live in very small houses apart from the main compound.

We lived in a barracks-like dormitory. There were 10 rooms, enclosed by slatted walls of rough-sawn wood. Double-deck shelves in the rooms serve as bunks.

Daily life at La Lima

There was not much excitement or variety in daily life at La Lima. We got up at 4:30 in the morning. Breakfast was at 5:15. By that time it was beginning to get light out, although it was often raining lightly.

At 6:00 Leonides, the lead man, blew his horn and we assembled. The vanguard teams and individual pickers from the day before were announced. There was a brief political talk, usually by someone from the ATC or UNAG (the unions of farm workers and small farmers and ranchers.)

Leonides then led us to the place where we were to pick. Each one of us was assigned a *surco*, or row.

A good picker should fill two sacks and carry one out at lunch. Otherwise, it's impossible to carry both out at the end of the day.

Leonides would blow his horn repeatedly at about 3:00 to indicate the work day was over.

The most difficult task of all was carrying the full sacks of beans out of the fields. A very good day's work nearly filled two sacks. I estimated that a full sack weighed 80 pounds. You would put the sack on your shoulders and struggle through the slippery mud, usually uphill. There were very few roads, and no pathways through the fields.

The coffee picked by each person was measured in a large can, or *lata*. The goal was six *latas* a day for each experienced Nicaraguan picker, and four for each *brigadista*.

We arrived back at the main compound about 4:00, when the weather was usually at its best. Even on rainy days there was often a period of sunshine, and enough light to wash clothes or bathe, although the facilities for both were inadequate for 100 people.

Dinner was from about 5:30 to 6:30. By that time it was beginning to get dark. Sometimes we had meetings or presentations in the evenings. If not, there were a couple of hours of free time to talk, or read, or write.

Silence was observed after 9:00 p.m. By that time most people were in bed and trying to sleep.

Picking coffee is not difficult work, although it is quite difficult to do it as fast as the experienced pickers. It's necessary to be very systematic.

Carolina

What are the people of the Nicaraguan countryside like? I would describe them as quiet, polite, friendly, and determined.

We met Carolina at the airport in Miami. She was married to a U.S. citizen, from whom she is now divorced. She was going back to Nicaragua to visit her mother, who is ill.

Carolina's family worries about her because she is not married, but she is perfectly happy in the United States. She has a decent-paying job in the Detroit school system. She likes having money to travel, visit friends, and generally have a good time. She intends to become a U.S. citizen.

Carolina has two brothers in Nicaragua. One of them is what she called a "capitalist," an entrepreneur of some sort in the import business. I imagine that he operates on the fringe of legality. On the plane to Managua I sat next to two men like this. They were quite friendly, and not at all hostile to the tide of North American supporters of the revolution participating in the harvest. But they considered it extremely silly that anyone would volunteer to go up north to pick coffee, which they regarded as some-



Militant
Coffee picker at La Lima farm in Nicaragua carrying his full sack of coffee out of the fields at end of the day.

what dangerous and thoroughly unpleasant. They described in elaborate detail all of the insects: mosquitos, chiggers, ants, etc.

Carolina's brother acknowledges that there is still tremendous inequality in Nicaragua. There are many poor people and a few who are quite well off. This is okay with him, as long as he can be one of the wealthy few. "This is a country for rich people," he says.

The other brother is a supporter of the revolution. Carolina considered him too dogmatic. But the family is very close, and committed to helping each other out. I couldn't help wondering how long this would last.

Reinaldo

Reinaldo was a member of the *Ejército Popular Sandinista*, the regular army. He was in his mid-20s, intelligent, quietly competent, friendly but not outgoing. When there was a problem with one of the young militia members showing off, cleaning his rifle in public in a way that was dangerous, Reinaldo took care of it. I don't know what he said, but it effectively defused the situation.

His cousin was in Cuba for military training. Reinaldo was impressed with what he had heard about the availability of consumer goods in Cuba at prices that people can afford: watches, radios and televisions, clothing and boots.

Boots are very important in Nicaragua, especially strong, waterproof boots with cleated soles. No one expressed interest in fancy U.S. running shoes.

Pablo

Then there was Pablo. Sometimes Pablo played the guitar and sang alone, sometimes with Pablo Antonio.

There were two guitars belonging to two of the North Americans. But many of the Nicaraguan men play, some of them quite well. I don't know how they learned.

Pablo turned out to have quite an interesting history. He was a member of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), having become involved in political activity, unknowingly, at the age of eight. His father sent him

to work at the home of two women in town so that he could learn to read and write. The women had connections to the revolutionary movement. They carried out the bombing of a government building to protest the rigged elections by which former dictator Anastasio Somoza had himself elected president. Pablo placed the bombs, which were concealed in a shoeshine box.

In the late 1960s, at the age of 14, he met up with the FSLN again and became involved in its activity. He said only that he was involved in the guerrilla war and in political work. He met his wife in the mountains in 1978. At the time of the victorious insurrection of July 1979, he was in Río Blanco, in the province of Matagalpa.

In this way Pablo skipped over in four sentences a period of 10 years of his life.

He talked instead about the history of the revolutionary movement: the initial, sporadic actions like the bombing he was a part of; the founding of the FSLN in the early 60s by a handful of seemingly crazy individuals; the early guerrilla activities that proved that the FSLN existed and could continue to exist, despite the efforts of Somoza's National Guard to stamp it out; political work in the cities in the early 1970s; increased awareness throughout the country by the end of the 70s that the FSLN and the National Guard were the two contending forces in the country, one fighting for the interests of the people and the other against; and finally the insurrection of July 1979, where the participation of the people in fighting against the National Guard was much greater than the FSLN had anticipated.

"Since then," said Pablo, "we have had this revolution."

In 1980 he left military service. He wanted to get back to farming, and he didn't really believe that defense was a big problem. He found out how wrong that was when his father-in-law and brother-in-law were kidnapped and killed by the contras. Pablo was mobilized to go to the front, where he was trained as an artillery gunner and was wounded.

'Now we can speak'

The women who worked in the kitchen spoke to our group one afternoon. One was so shy she hardly said anything. The other became quite emotional when she spoke about her son at the front. When asked about the status of women, she spoke of women in the past as having been "marginalized." She was satisfied that things are now different. "Now we can speak," she said.

They expressed satisfaction with the elections for president and national assembly. Neither had voted in the past; the difficulty of getting to Matagalpa to register was prohibitive. This time registering and voting were both easy and were done locally, and information on the parties and their platforms was widely distributed. They were not ardent supporters of the FSLN, but they felt that it represented their interests more than any of the other parties.

The women were reluctant speakers, not accustomed to appearing in public.

Chabelo, the administrator of another farm nearby, was filling in at La Lima while the brigades were there. He was a member of the FSLN, having joined quite recently. He learned to read and write during the literacy campaign.

Chabelo was a very sweet man, who seemed to be completely without vanity or self-interest. He was 44 years old, wore ragged clothes, carried a rifle, and went out to the fields with the brigade. In the morning pep talk he spoke about his appreciation of and love for the *brigadistas*, and was completely believable.

Denis was a soldier who came here the evening before we left. I talked to him briefly waiting for the truck to take us back to Matagalpa.

He felt that people in Nicaragua are much happier now. "Before, we couldn't do anything without being harassed by the National Guard. We were prisoner in our own country."

He was an enthusiastic revolutionary, completely serious about the defense of the country. "Our slogan is '*Patria libre o morir*'— 'Free Homeland or death,'" he told me. "We really mean it. We may die, but our brothers and children will be free."

There were people with guns everywhere. In the countryside, where there was no police force, many of them were militia members.

The war against Nicaragua is mounted and funded from outside the country. But the *contras* can infiltrate the country relatively easily to attack specific targets. I suppose in the border areas the military structure is more tightly organized; certainly the number of soldiers we saw on the roads was quite large. But at La Lima, further from the border, the basic tactic of defense seems to be to scatter the soldiers widely throughout the population.

The result is actually quite comfortable and reassuring. In Nicaragua, there can be no doubt that the guns are in the hands of the people.

Trouble

There was a small store several miles away that brigadistas could go to if they were accompanied by a militia member. Cigarettes, beer, rum, soda, tomatoes, bread, and crackers were the items most often available, although these were never all in stock at one time.

There was nothing but trouble with the store.

First: conspicuous consumption by the brigadistas, who could afford to buy any of these products any time they wanted. Second: militia members were wasting a lot of time walking to the store every time someone wanted to go. Third: people in the area became angry when they found they could not get things at the store because we had bought them all.

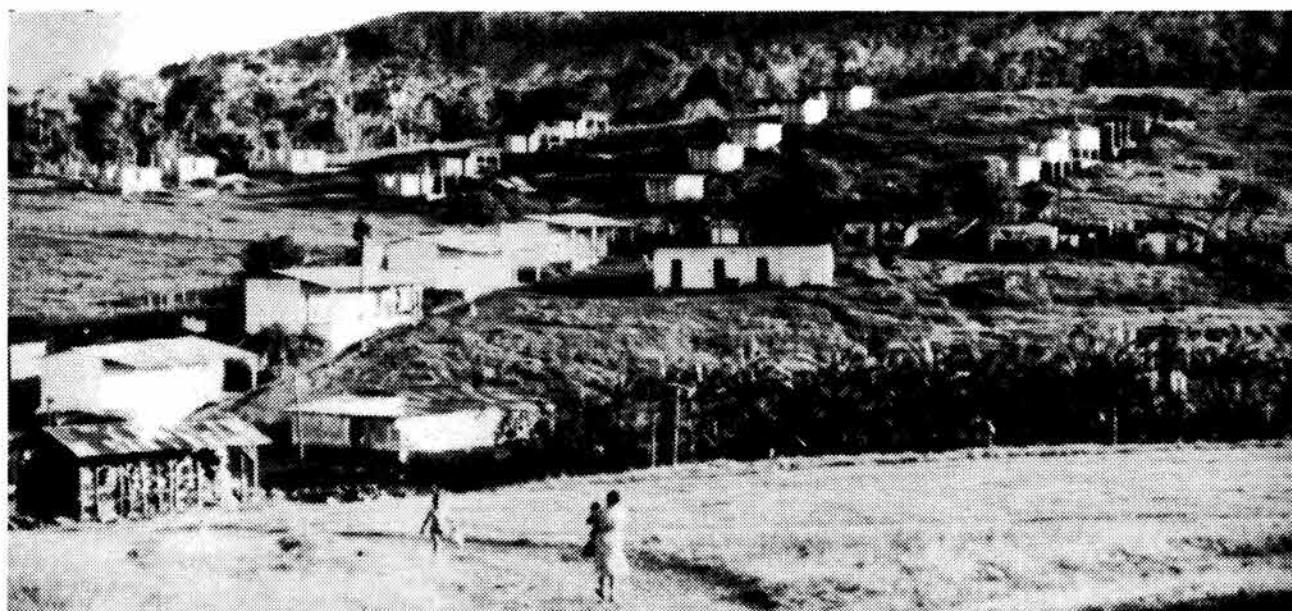
The real problem with the store was revealed completely after several days. It could easily have been foreseen. The woman who ran the store was withholding goods from Nicaraguan customers to sell them at higher prices to North Americans.

Santa Marta

La Lima is a UPE — a state-owned enterprise — as are several of the larger farms in the area. Many of these farms were owned by officials of the Somoza regime and were taken over five years ago.

La Lima, however, became state property just a little over a year ago. The former owner had died and his wife, living in Managua, did nothing to keep the farm going. Ultimately the government bought it.

The biggest change at La Lima seemed to be in the area of job security. The minimum wage now applies year-



View of La Lima farm, about 20 miles north of Matagalpa.

Militant

round. During the harvest there was a bonus paid for each *lata* picked, and the better pickers can make considerably more. There appeared to have been a modest improvement in the standard of living.

The day before we left we walked to Santa Marta, the next UPE up the hill. Santa Marta had been state-owned for five years. Only three miles away, it was completely different from La Lima.

Although it was not that much larger, Santa Marta felt like a modern village, rather than an isolated rural outpost. There was a considerable amount of new housing construction for the families of people killed in the war.

At Santa Marta the coffee processing plant was in operation. There was similar equipment at La Lima, but it was not working because the motor was broken.

Santa Marta, like La Lima, raised cattle as well as coffee. At Santa Marta there were experiments going on

with different breeds of cattle, and there were fields devoted to different types of fodder. Unlike at La Lima, the coffee fields were immaculately maintained; there was absolutely no underbrush and no vines covering the trees.

A simple new building in the center of Santa Marta contained the militia headquarters and a medical clinic. Both were small, but they provided an important administrative focus to the village. The two offices were linked by an actual concrete sidewalk. After several weeks of slogging through the mud at La Lima, this was not such a small thing. Behind that was the child-care center, a new building which had opened only a week before we saw it.

La Lima and Santa Marta represented Nicaragua before and after the revolution. We spent three weeks at La Lima experiencing the past. Santa Marta represented the future.

Trade union officialdom offers no road forward for labor

Continued from ISR/2

unorganized and putting up a fight against the continued spread of nonunion plants in industries such as garment, auto, steel, or meatpacking. The bureaucrats advocate more mergers not in order to strengthen the unions as fighting instruments, but in order to increase their total assets and expand their dues base. It's good business!

In the big majority of cases, these mergers actually dilute the strategic base and focus of the union within the industrial sector of its origin, thus weakening the union's striking power. The USWA officialdom, for example, has recently announced efforts to organize insurance and bank workers, and it plans to merge with the upholsterers union. The USWA bureaucrats aren't motivated by an interest in advancing the organization and power of insurance workers, bank workers, upholsterers, or steelworkers. They are simply looking for more dues income, more assets, more investment capital.

This is the exact opposite of a class-struggle strategy, such as the one followed by Teamsters Local 544 in the 1930s. This local inspired organizing drives among many different kinds of workers in the Twin Cities area, elsewhere in Minnesota, and throughout the central United States. These workers often initially wanted to join the Teamsters, since its leadership in that region had made it a strong, fighting union.

As Farrell Dobbs explained in his four books on the Teamsters struggles, the revolutionary union leaders of Local 544 understood why this would not best serve the interests of these workers, and instead helped them get into the union most appropriate to the character of their industry and workplace. They were advocates of industrial unionism. All the production workers in a particular branch of industry and workplace should be in the same union — regardless of whether they worked the line, were in the tool room, or did maintenance. That cut across craft and other divisions, unifying and strengthening the union against the bosses.

In one sense, Teamster Local 544 had a very "narrow" industrial union base — mostly truck drivers and closely related indoor workers at warehouses and loading docks. On the other hand, it had a very wide social base. It championed union organizing efforts and unemployed struggles, and released experienced organizers to help lead them. It cemented alliances with exploited farmers. It sought to strengthen ties among various unions through local and state labor federations, as well as in other ways. It used the newspaper of the over-the-road organizing drive, the *Northwest Organizer*, to speak out against imperialist war, racism, and anti-Semitism. It campaigned for candidates of the Farmer-Labor Party in Minnesota, and fought for a class-struggle line inside the FLP against the procapitalist misleaders. It put forward the need for a labor party based on the unions on a national level — a

labor party that would fight to advance all labor along the line of march that 544 had been taking.

While the AFL-CIO report lavishes praise on the federation's efforts to improve "the conditions for all in our democratic society through political action and legislative efforts," it does not deal with the officialdom's subordination to the bosses' two-party system, and, in particular, to the Democratic Party.

The bureaucrats do complain that the federal government has been "providing less and less protection to workers who exercise their right to organize" and siding with "virulently antiunion employers." But the AFL-CIO report doesn't trace the current antilabor offensive back to the 1974-75 recession. It doesn't mention the Carter administration's role in this offensive and the bipartisan character of the attacks on working people — for example, the use of the union-busting Taft Hartley Act against striking coal miners in 1978. Everything is laid at the feet of Reagan and the Republicans.

The AFL-CIO bureaucrats today are clinging tighter than ever to the Democratic Party. Lane Kirkland recently toured New England, responding to those politicians who have pleaded with the AFL-CIO officials not to endorse and campaign for a Democratic presidential contender prior to the party's convention next time, because it "taints" the Democrats with the "special interests" brush.

The decision of the AFL-CIO tops to endorse Walter Mondale prior to the Democrats' 1984 convention, and their vow to repeat this procedure in 1988, is in no sense a step toward greater independent labor political action. It's not a distorted form of "getting more political."

To the contrary, the current course of the AFL-CIO officialdom is farther away from class politics, farther away from thinking socially in class terms. The officialdom is demanding that it be more deeply integrated into the structure of one of the twin parties of U.S. imperialism.

No protest from officialdom

No major officials of the AFL-CIO unions have spoken out against this report or offered any sort of alternative to it. Its proposals have been reported favorably by the national union press. Among the most enthusiastic has been the American Federation of Teachers bureaucracy. AFT President Albert Shanker called the document "revolutionary."

The one disagreement on the part of some top bureaucrats may be over whether or not to accept "associate members" into the unions. Officials of the building trades have taken issue with that proposal. Not out of any class-struggle motivations, however. The craft-union bureaucrats traditionally suspect anything that even appears to

depart from their job trust outlook and head in the direction of organizing workers outside the trade.

William Winpisinger, president of the International Association of Machinists, has also expressed reservations about the "associate membership" proposal.

The currents in the labor movement that advocated greater militancy and union democracy in the mid-1970s also lack any alternative to the AFL-CIO "tasks and perspectives" report. This is important to note. The AFL-CIO document, in fact, registers the victory of the top officialdom over reform currents in the unions such as that led by Ed Sadlowski in the USWA in the mid-1970s. These currents do not exist in any functioning form today. Their former leaders have retreated into the same fundamental framework as the rest of the bureaucracy.

Militant young workers were attracted to these reform currents under the impact of the first blows of the capitalist offensive in the mid-1970s. As the bosses intensified their offensive, however, the union "progressives" at the head of these currents offered no effective course toward a fight to halt the erosion of union power, the layoffs and plant shutdowns, the deterioration of job conditions, the attacks on Black and women workers. They were not able to chart a social and political course fundamentally different from the officialdom's class-colaborationist strategy, based on maintenance of the capitalist system and the political monopoly of the employers' parties.

The Communist Party accepts the framework of the AFL-CIO document and offers only mild criticism. The *Daily World* reports that at an April CP conference of unionists, the CP's labor secretary George Meyers "told the gathering...that the recent AFL-CIO analysis of the problems facing the working class and the labor movement had a correct focus." We say the opposite. The bureaucracy *doesn't* have "a correct focus." Our line of march has nothing in common with that of the officialdom.

Given the absence of any alternative class-struggle leadership, it's not surprising that most workers don't challenge many of the nostrums contained in the AFL-CIO document. If you assume that the current organization, framework, and leadership of the labor movement is permanent, or that any change is far off in the future, then it's true that little can be done today to win strikes, organize new unions, or fight for jobs. This is where we can play an important role, as Marxists with a revolutionary perspective for transforming the unions — the perspective laid out in our political resolution. Today there are workers we can and should win to our perspective, workers who want to fight and who are trying to figure out the road forward amid the obstacles thrown before them by the bureaucracy.

Cuba establishes center for Third World art

Leading Cuban art critic Gerardo Mosquera explains goals of new institute

BY MIKE ALEWITZ

Gerardo Mosquera is a former adviser for the Visual Arts Division of the Ministry of Culture in Cuba. Currently an adviser to the Centro Wilfredo Lam in Havana, Mosquera is a leading Cuban art critic. Mike Alewitz is an artist working in Boston. The interview was conducted in April when Mosquera visited Boston and New York in conjunction with an art show of José Bedia, Flavio Garciandía, and Ricardo Rodríguez Brey, three young Cuban artists.

Question. What is the Centro Wilfredo Lam?

Answer. Wilfredo Lam, who died in 1982, was a prominent Cuban artist who took part in the surrealist movement. He was a friend of Picasso and Breton, was known throughout Europe, and has a painting on permanent exhibition in the Museum of Modern Art [in New York City]. He expressed through his painting the Cuban cultural experience.

The center was founded to try to develop the art of the Third World, as well as to circulate information about it. The center sponsors the Havana Biennial, which took place for the first time in 1984. Then only Latin American artists participated. But the next one in 1986 will be for Asia, Africa, and Latin America. This will be a historic show, for it will be the first showing of the contemporary art of these three continents. You will see what is happening in the art of Burundi, for example, or Malaysia, or other countries.

So you will have a chance to see what is happening outside of New York, or London, or Paris, or Berlin, or Milan. The center will also have a computerized center to document Third World art. So if you want to find out about painters in Namibia, you can write and get the information.

This will entail years of work. As you know, Third World art is kept out of the big art magazines and museums; it's kept out of the so-called "international" art, that is, the art from New York or sometimes Italy.

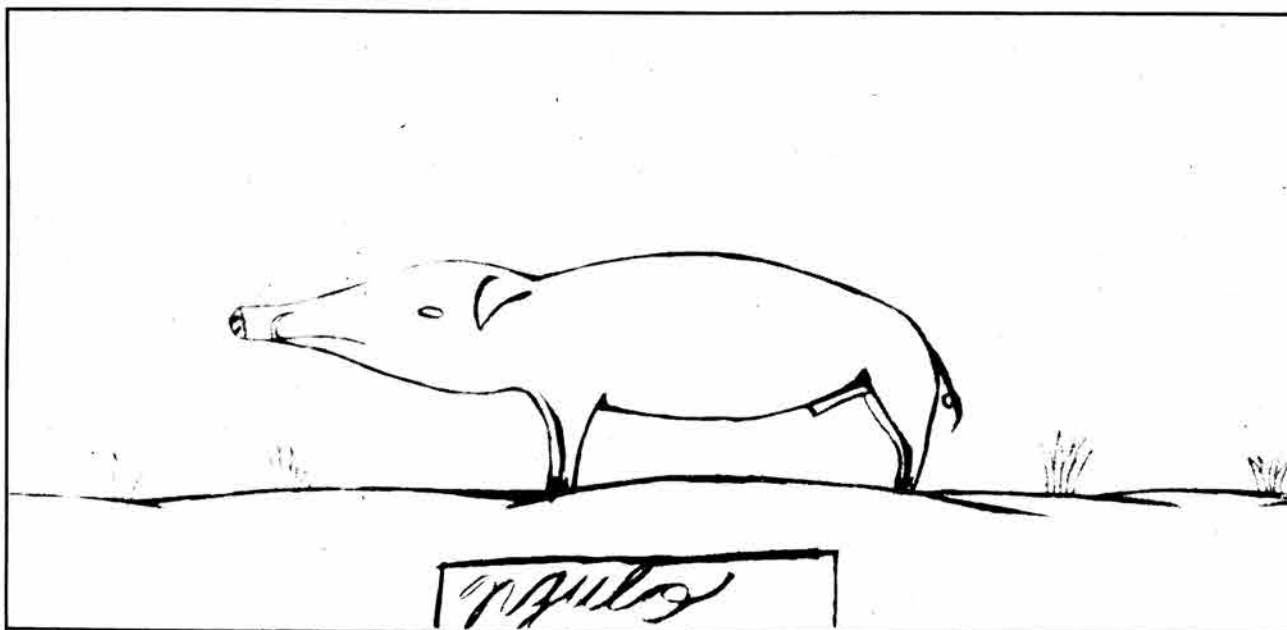
We will sponsor international symposiums on the problems facing Third World art, sponsor other shows, and give scholarships to poor artists. We will also publish a magazine about the problems facing Third World artists.

This will not be a Cuban institution, but an international one. We want all Third World artists to think of the center as theirs, and the Biennial will be organized with the collaboration of the institutions, in some cases the governments, and private persons of all three continents. And the magazine will be open to critics and scholars of all three continents, as well as North Americans and Europeans who research about Third World art and culture.

This will not be a directly political center, but much broader.

Q. Cuban doctors and teachers are known throughout the world for their willingness to go to semicolonial countries to work. Does the establishment of the center indicate a more vigorous approach by Cuban artists to international activity?

A. I think this could be a very important way to help, not only as artists, but as art professors as well, to help



"Pork," crayon-on-paper drawing by Cuban artist José Bedia.

teach. You know, in Grenada there were two Cuban artists, one of them a friend of mine, a sculptor. He's a very shy guy and a fine sculptor. He was arrested by the U.S. Army. When they interrogated him, they asked what he was doing there. "I am here teaching art," he said. "Teaching art? Where?" they asked. "You must be lying. Why should such a little country need an art school? That's ridiculous!"

"That could be ridiculous for you, but not for us," he replied. This was a striking experience for my friend, the idea that art was only a luxury item, not meant for everyone.

There have also been Cuban artists working in Angola, painters and writers, such as Nelson Domínguez and Eduardo Roca. They went to Angola as advisers to the museum, doing exhibitions and teaching the Angolans how to do exhibitions. And they also paint. So they had a big show.

Q. The 1984 Havana Biennial was quite impressive, and was even covered by magazines like Art in America, which normally exclude art from semicolonial countries. What will the next one include? Sculpture? Film? Performance?

A. Yes performance, conceptual art, anything in the field of visual arts in the broad sense of the word.

Q. Who do you consider to be Third World?

A. This is very difficult, so we prefer to point in a geographic way. Maybe later on we will arrive at a better way, but in order not to stop the work, we are proceeding using geography. Anything in Africa, Latin America, or Asia, but not Japan. Japan is a special case because they could help us instead of us helping them. We are also including groups like Chicanos and Puerto Ricans in the U.S.

Q. In addition to organizing the Biennial, which will be in November of 1986, what other projects will the institution work on?

A. We are working on a project to have a meeting of art critics from the Third World to discuss the magazine. And we're thinking about a show at the same time as the Biennial to show the social role of art, a more direct social link. This could be experiences with murals, and working-class people shown through documentation. Also, we're planning a show, not set yet, of popular art in the Third World as the base of professional art. This would be the Indian art of Latin America, the tribal art of Africa, etc. But we are working mainly on the Biennial because there is so much to do. I myself, for example, know very little about contemporary art in Asia. I know a little about Africa, but Asia is a mystery for me; for everybody, no? So we have to work on that. We know more about what happens in New York than what happens in Santo Domingo, which is so close, or in Haiti or Jamaica. You can imagine how little we might know about places like Sri Lanka.

Q. Why have Third World artists been so systematically excluded from the capitalist press?

A. It is obvious. Art is a business that is mastered and ruled by the centers of western capitalism as a business and as a way of exercising ideological control.

Q. What do you think of some of the recent trends in

contemporary art? Are they reflected in Cuban art?

A. What happens in New York can affect the whole world because the media is mastered by the United States and other western cultures. So we cannot close our eyes to what we are bombarded with.

One of the problems facing contemporary Third World art is how to be contemporary and at the same time have a self-identity. Because many times the art is based on pre-capitalist forms, it is hard to relate to contemporary problems that are linked to the problems of capitalism and socialism.

My position is that Third World art must catch what could be useful to it, just as they would catch an industry or a computer, but use it to express their own problems, their own identity.

Q. How has the organization of artistic activity changed in Cuba since the revolution?

A. Before the revolution in Cuba there was nothing except hunger for the arts. After the revolution, a lot of galleries and museums were opened, and the government began to support artists. More importantly, the artist was recognized as a very important social person, and so a whole system of art education was created.

Cuba has a system so that any talented girl or boy can study and get a complete education as a musician, a theater person, or a visual artist. I think Cuba is the only country in the Third World that places so much importance on culture so that anyone who wants to study to be a professional can study, without tuition, from the elemental level through the university.

Q. We see a lot about Cuban dance, filmmaking, and graphic design, which are among the best in the world. What about painting and sculpture?

A. I think we are now having a movement of young artists, not only with painting and sculpture, but with conceptual work and installations. This represents a sort of new wave as represented by the three artists showing in Long Island. We don't yet have the great masterpieces, but it is more interesting as a broad movement.

Q. A lot of highly energized art after the revolution was explicitly political, while a lot of the work today seems more concerned with questions of Cuban identity and the relationship of the artists to such things as indigenous cultures and contemporary trends in world art. How has the art changed?

A. I think during both periods our art was doing what was necessary, but many problems have been resolved in 26 years. Art under socialism has the task of helping to develop the spiritual life of the people. These artists have grown up with the revolution. They didn't know Batista.* They are very interested in the national culture, the African traditions, primitive thinking, and the beauty of life. They express very well a new era of life in Cuba.

They are at the same time concerned with social problems. During the [1983 U.S.] invasion of Grenada, for example, they all went out to the demonstrations and held workshops, made posters.

*Fulgencio Batista (1901-1973) was president of Cuba from 1940-44, and 1954-58. After he seized power by a coup in 1952, the brutality and corruption of his regime provoked rebellion that culminated in the victory of the July 26 revolutionary movement on January 1, 1959. Batista fled to the Dominican Republic and later died in Spain.

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General Dynamics workers reject concessions

BY DAVID FRANKEL
AND HELEN MEYERS

DETROIT — A resounding "No" was the answer given by thousands of workers June 10, when they overwhelmingly voted down a concessions contract proposed by General Dynamics and backed by the United Auto Workers (UAW) international leadership.

General Dynamics, the country's number-one war contractor, had requested early negotiations on a contract due to expire September 14. Affected by the contract are 4,672 hourly workers at four plants involved in the production of tanks for the Pentagon. The plants are the Detroit Arsenal Tank Plant, the Lima [Ohio] Arsenal Tank Plant, and two smaller factories in Scranton, Pennsylvania, and the Detroit suburb of Sterling Heights. Also represented by the UAW in the negotiations are 1,346 engineers and clerical workers.

By requesting early contract negotiations, General Dynamics hoped to get a feel for how far it could push back the workers and to test the level of opposition it could expect. The result was an unpleasant surprise for the company.

Decisive in the rejection of the proposed contract was the company's attempt to impose a scheme of lump-sum payments instead of regular increases in the hourly rate of pay. Over the entire three years of the contract, the company was offering only a 3 percent hourly pay increase, which works out to about 34 cents for the average worker.

The offer of once-a-year lump sums of 2 percent, 4 percent, and 3.5 percent would have robbed workers of substantial amounts in overtime pay, unemployment payments, future earnings, and insurance benefits. Most benefits are based on the hourly rate of pay. The company's proposal would have frozen those benefits by freezing the workers' base rate. In exchange for accepting this deadly plan, workers were offered what amounted to one or two weeks of vacation pay per year.

In addition, the membership had demanded Martin Luther King's birthday as a holiday. The proposed agreement granted a day's pay to be attached to the Easter holiday, but no day off. The membership wanted to honor the civil rights movement, which King had led, with a day off. GM workers had won this right beginning in 1986. The company's proposal also deletes three existing floating holidays that were won during the 1982 negotiations.

Although the proposed contract offered some modest gains in health and safety — a source of particular concern after the death of two workers on the job — it did not include the right to strike on safety issues.

Also, it maintained a two-tier wage system that had been introduced in the previous contract despite vigorous opposition by the union. With one hand the company proposal reduces from 36 months to 30 months the time required to reach full pay. Yet with the other hand, it introduces lump-sum payments based on the previous year's gross earnings. This effectively extends the two-tier system, since the lump sum once a worker reaches full pay is based on his previous year's earnings. In short, it would take until the fifth year to reach parity with other workers.

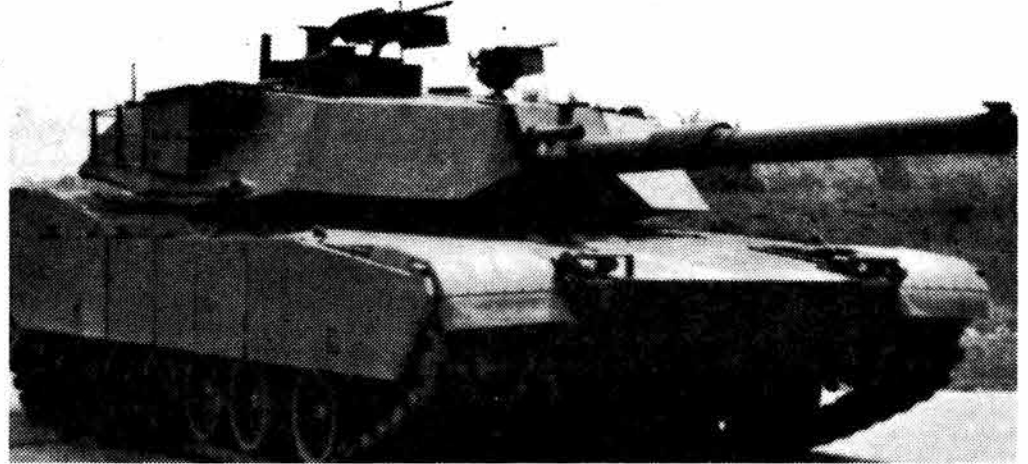
Without giving the workers a chance to even see a summary of the contract, let alone discuss and vote on it, the UAW international leadership went to the big-business press and described the proposal in glowing terms. UAW Vice-president Marc Stepp, who represented the international leadership in the General Dynamics bargaining council, told reporters June 4 that the pact guaranteed "very substantial" wage increases. He compared the pact favorably to those won by Ford and General Motors workers.

A June 4 letter urging ratification of the contract was sent to union members by Stepp and four regional directors of the UAW. It enthused about the "break-throughs achieved by your Union in this innovative round of negotiations." It urged UAW members to take advantage of "a unique and historic opportunity" by voting "yes" on the contract.

However, Stepp's enthusiasm was not shared by most of the local union leaders, whose memberships would have to live with the contract over the next three years.



General Dynamics tank (right). UAW workers at tank plants rejected contract proposal that Marc Stepp (left), union vice-president, hailed as "unique and historic."



While the representatives of the international on the bargaining committee and officials of the Scranton local supported the pact, representatives of the hourly workers at Lima and Detroit were solidly opposed to it.

As news of the proposed contract provisions began leaking out, workers on the job reacted strongly. At the Detroit tank plant signs went up saying "Local 1200 will not be Stepp on," and "GD gives gifts, but not to its workers" (referring to General Dynamics' bribes to Pentagon officials).

In order to inform the membership of the terms of the contract, general membership meetings were called for June 6 by the local leaderships. Responding to the specter of the workers hearing the facts, the UAW international imposed a gag order. Local leaders opposed to the pact were forbidden to reveal the terms of the contract to the press or to their members.

This was done despite the fact that the international had already gone to the press. Moreover, the international union prepared a slick eight-page pamphlet giving a shamelessly slanted summary of the contract. This was mailed to every worker involved.

Despite the attempts of the UAW top officialdom to prevent accurate information from reaching the union ranks, the local leaderships were successful in making the gist of the proposal known. On June 5, UAW Local 1200 President James Coakley put out a letter to workers at the Detroit tank plant informing them of the division over the proposed contract. He urged workers to come to the four union meetings scheduled for the following day.

About 400 workers showed up at the local's June 6 general membership meeting, which included three shift meetings. Motions were passed instructing the leadership to answer all questions regarding the proposed contract. All of the locals held explanation meetings on Sunday, June 9, to hear presentations from representatives of the international and their local negotiators.

In the case of Local 1200, the Sunday meeting went on for more than three hours.

Homer Jolly, assistant director of the UAW General Dynamics Department, led a delegation from Solidarity House — headquarters of the international officialdom — that attempted to sell the contract.

Jolly argued that the setbacks suffered by the labor movement over the past few years, the antilabor character of the Reagan administration, and the hard-nosed stand taken by General Dynamics' management meant that it would be foolhardy for the membership to fight for a better contract.

He insisted that the proposal was the best negotiated by the UAW over the past two years; that workers could not expect any better; that General Dynamics would not allow an example to be set for its other operations; that if this offer was rejected, the company would not put as good an offer back on the table; and that rejection of the proposal was tantamount to an immediate strike vote. In other words, Jolly echoed the arguments of the company.

Workers at the meeting, however, were not convinced. Not a single voice was raised to support the contract proposal out of the 600 workers in attendance. On the contrary, the workers knew that they deserved better and that General Dynamics could do better, and they were prepared to fight for it.

The discussion was helped by informational handouts prepared by the Local 1200 leadership (which were also used by other locals) and by the presentation made by Coakley. Coakley argued that once a concession like lump-sum payments was accepted, it would be extremely difficult to get rid of, as had been proved by the experience with the two-tier pay system and the no-strike clause imposed in the 1982 agreement.

"Your leadership will not recommend an Agreement that addresses the immediate at the expense of your future," Coakley declared in a letter distributed at the meeting.

Sentiment among the membership was especially strong because of the experience that General Dynamics workers have gone through around concessions. The tank plants were previously run by the owners of Chrysler, and the workers there made

the same concessions made by Chrysler auto workers in 1979, even though the tank plants were profitable. In 1982, the owners of General Dynamics took over operation of the tank plants. Since then, General Dynamics workers have watched Chrysler workers gain back much that they had lost, while they remain saddled with the old concessions. What the workers want is parity with Chrysler.

The fight-back mood at the June 9 meeting was confirmed by the big turnout against the contract the following day. The proposal was defeated at the Detroit tank plant by a whopping 94 percent. At Lima, 88 percent voted no, and at Sterling Heights 91 percent were against. The Scranton local voted in favor of the contract, as did the locals representing office workers and engineers. But the overall rejection rate among hourly production workers was 84 percent.

Unfortunately, the UAW international leadership is trying to circumvent the overwhelming vote by the workers. At a July 11 news conference, Stepp told reporters that the vote was "a mystery to us." He suggested that the union ranks were misinformed about the contract, and expressed hopes that "cooler heads will prevail."

Meanwhile, Solidarity House has announced that the rejected contract will be put into effect for office workers and engineers. This violates previous agreements with the locals affected, and serves to dilute the strength of the hourly production workers in the union.

In a June 12 letter to the Local 1200 membership, Coakley informed the union ranks that the leaderships of the Detroit, Sterling Heights, and Lima locals had called for an emergency meeting of the UAW Defense Council.

The vote on the proposed contract was a setback to the company and its concession drive and an important indication of the willingness of workers to fight back against the antilabor offensive being mounted in this country.

David Frankel and Helen Meyers are members of UAW Local 1200.

Minn. farmers rally against farm foreclosure

BY JIM ALTENBERG

REDWOOD FALLS, Minn. — Two hundred fifty farmers marched and rallied here June 10 to protest the forced sale of Arnold and Irene Kaufenberg's farm by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. The action was organized by Groundswell, a Minnesota farm group leading protests against foreclosures, and was supported by the American Agriculture Movement, the Farmers Union, and other farm organizations.

Led by six tractors, demonstrators marched through Redwood Falls. They stopped briefly to enter the lobby of the Norwest Bank branch, carrying signs saying, "One broke farmer helping another," and "Farmers need a moratorium," as well as pictures of a skull-and-crossbones with the words, "Beware Norwest." Norwest is one of the largest Minnesota banks, and has loans out to thousands of Midwestern farmers. Marchers continued on to the Redwood County sheriff's office, where a rally was held while 50 people entered the building to prevent the sale.

As the sheriff emerged from his office,

protesters linked arms, surrounding him at the door while loud chants of "No sale!" went up inside the hall. Though he could not be heard, the sheriff announced that an agreement had been reached between the Kaufenbergs and Metropolitan Life, and that there would be no sale. He then made the announcement to the rally.

The agreement allowed the Kaufenbergs to keep their home and the 15 acres around it. Metropolitan Life, however, would retain title to the remaining 80 acres. The Kaufenbergs would have to make payments for the next two years, after which they would be able to bid on the land before anyone else could do so. As rally speakers pointed out, though this was not a good settlement, it was an important victory. A farm family did not lose their farm.

Bobbi Polzine, cochair of Groundswell, said that while farmers have no control over prices, individual farmers, who are the victims of the crisis, are blamed for it. "You ask for higher prices, you're told to write a resumé and apply for a job. You ask for a moratorium, you're given stress management." Nor could farmers be accused of causing the problem by producing too

much food, as Vicky Hale of the American Agriculture Movement explained. There are over 20,000 people in the United States suffering from malnutrition. The problem, she said, is not the farmer, but a political problem.

Bob Killeen, Sub-Region 10 director for the United Auto Workers, stressed the need for solidarity between workers and farmers. Gary Severson of the Minnesota Education Association also made the point that unions need farmers as allies, as well as the other way around.

"Though it has been difficult for farmers to act politically, today it is a must," said Jim Langman, also of the American Agriculture Movement. "Some neighbors would rather see farmers drunker than hell down at the farm than fighting for their farm." But, he pointed out, it will take a lot of protests, and the unity of all farm organizations. "Groundswell has the ability to make Washington sweat, and they're hoping that you people will disappear," Hale reminded the crowd.

But farmers fighting foreclosure have no intention of disappearing.

U.S.-Israel threats target Lebanon

Continued from front page

ceded that the jailed Lebanese were "people illegally held hostage." But Bush refused to demand release of the prisoners, suggesting that would be "knuckling under" to "terrorists."

Kidnapping hundreds of Lebanese doesn't qualify as "terrorism" in Bush's book. That term is reserved for Arabs and others who try to stand up to violations of human rights by the U.S. and Israeli imperialists and their allies.

Democrats and Republicans in Congress — liberal and conservative alike — have lined up behind Reagan's war moves. Former President James Carter also called for support to Reagan.

A proposal for an additional \$50 million for the CIA to strengthen U.S. "security measures" abroad breezed through the Senate with a voice vote. And Reagan administration officials say they anticipate little difficulty in getting congressional backing for proposals to put more cops on airplanes and in the airports.

Faced with the threat of U.S. military moves against his country, Nabih Berri said that a pullback by the U.S. fleet would be a further condition for release of the remaining airline passengers held in Lebanon.

U.S. War Secretary Caspar Weinberger justified the military buildup. He declared that the U.S. government is involved in "a war and the beginning of a war" in Lebanon. "That's why these various military movements . . . should be treated as military movements in wartime."

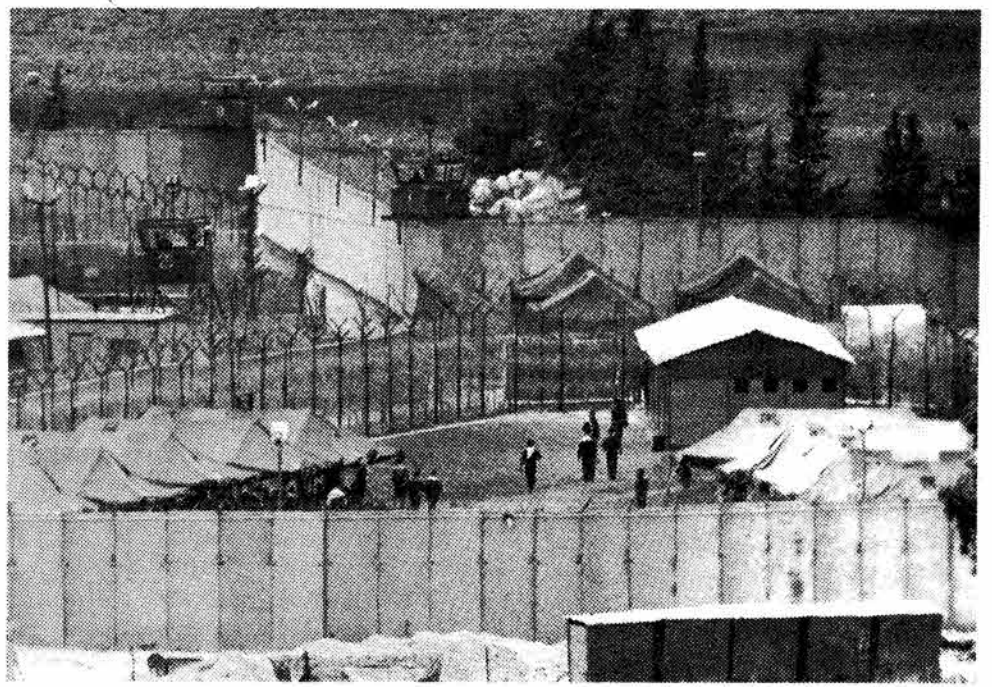
Weinberger had decided to let slip a bit of the truth. Washington is involved in a war in Lebanon — as well as in Central America, Southern Africa, and other parts

of the Third World. Washington's war has nothing to do with saving the lives of the TWA passengers, who are simply being used as pawns in Washington's game.

It has everything to do with protecting the profits of the billionaires who own the oil companies and other big corporations with investments in the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. These billionaires reap vast superprofits from exploiting hundreds of millions of workers and farmers in these countries who are condemned to poverty, hunger, and disease.

To guarantee such exploitation and preserve such conditions, the U.S. imperialists — and other imperialist powers like Israel — need subservient governments that defend the interests of foreign big business against the great majority of the people of their own countries. Increasingly, the people of Asia, Africa, and Latin America have been rising up against such governments and fighting to establish governments that will defend the interests of their countries against the imperialists.

That is why, with Washington's backing, the Israeli regime invaded Lebanon in 1982 — carrying out bombings and massacres that took a minimum of 17,000 Lebanese lives in the first stage of the war alone. A major goal was to impose and stabilize a proimperialist government in Lebanon as well as destroy the Palestine Liberation Organization. That is why Washington and other imperialist powers subsequently sent thousands of troops in 1983 to Lebanon. That is why U.S. warships — led by the battleship *New Jersey* — launched devastating shelling against the people of West Beirut, who had risen up against the terror carried out by ultrarightist militias backed by Washington.



Atlit prison camp near Haifa, Israel, where more than 700 Shiites and others from Lebanon are being held captive.

And that is why Washington is threatening Lebanon today.

Washington is intervening massively in the civil war in El Salvador for similar reasons, and is organizing and bankrolling the mercenary war against Nicaragua where the people have succeeded in establishing a government that represents the workers and farmers rather than U.S. corporations.

In South Africa, Washington stands behind the apartheid regime as it carries out racist oppression of millions of Blacks, and seeks to destabilize Black-ruled African countries like Angola, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe.

Washington's role in the exploitation of hundreds of millions and the brutal suppression of their desire for self-determination has made it a target of hatred around the world. As a spokesperson for the Lebanese who captured the TWA plane put it, "The reason for the world's tribulations is America. Go where you want and ask

what is happening, why there is hunger, why there is war. Everyone will reply: America is the reason."

The propaganda pouring out of Washington and the capitalist media about "terrorism" has the prime purpose of hiding the real issues in these conflicts — including the real issues in incidents like the hijacking of the U.S. airliner — from U.S. working people. The goal is to sucker us into supporting Washington's wars against fellow workers and farmers in countries around the world.

"Terrorist" becomes the label put on anybody who stands up against imperialist domination.

An example is the way the U.S. government used the June 20 killing of four U.S. marines in El Salvador by the liberation forces. It became a pretext to step up U.S. intervention in the Salvadoran civil war. And if Reagan has his way, more U.S. soldiers will lose their lives helping to preserve a hated regime that — with the help of dozens of U.S. military personnel — has slaughtered some tens of thousands of Salvadorans.

The "terrorist" label is also attached to U.S. working people who fight for their rights. When government cops and hired goons help A.T. Massey Coal Co. try to break the United Mine Workers of America, we are told that's just "law and order." But when miners strike to save their union, they are labelled "violent" and "terrorist." The label is used to bury the truth about the workers' fight for their union.

U.S. workers and farmers have an interest in opposing Washington's war moves in the Middle East, and in joining the Lebanese workers and farmers in demanding the release of the Lebanese illegally held in Israel and the withdrawal of the U.S. fleet from the coast of Lebanon.

This is also the surest way to win the safe release of the U.S. hostages.

Who are the Lebanese Shiite Muslims?

BY FRED FELDMAN

"Shiite terrorists." "Shiite fanatics." Phrases like these are drummed into our heads daily by the capitalist media, which uses these racist denunciations to justify U.S. aggression against Lebanon and to hide the legitimacy of demands for the immediate release of the more than 700 mostly Shiite Muslims held prisoner by the government of Israel.

The 1.2 million Shiite Muslims are the largest religious group in Lebanon's population of some 2.6 million.

Yet the political structure imperialism imposed on Lebanon in 1943, when direct French colonial rule ended, left them with token representation and no political power. The imperialists — France, the United States, and later Israel — sought to assure that the Lebanese masses would be under the thumb of the proimperialist leaders of the privileged Maronite Christians.

This undemocratic system helps the imperialists and the largely Maronite Christian capitalist class to exploit and oppress the Lebanese workers and farmers, the great majority of whom are Muslim (Shiite and Sunni) and Druse.

The Shiite Muslims are the poorest and most discriminated against Lebanese, aside from the Palestinians forced into Lebanon by the Israeli occupation of their land.

Inspired by the Palestinian resistance movement, the Shiite masses stepped up organizing to better their conditions in the late 1960s. The Palestinian liberation organizations found a base of support among them, and left-wing groups like the Lebanese Communist Party grew rapidly.

In the mid-1970s a Shiite minister initiated the "movement of the outcast." Amal (hope) was established as the armed wing of the movement. Under the leadership of lawyer and capitalist politician, Nabih Berri, who became head of Amal in 1980, Amal sought to modify the political setup to provide more representation for Shiites.

Under the leadership of Berri, Amal took reactionary stands as well. It launched attacks on Palestinian groups and on the Communist Party. As a capitalist politician, Berri sought to modify but not overthrow the unjust system in Lebanon. Today

he is a minister in the imperialist-imposed government of Amin Gemayel, the leader of the ultrarightist Phalangist militia that is based among Maronite Christians.

Opposition to Berri led to the rise of other currents among the Shiite masses. In 1982 Hussein Musawi, formerly the chief military commander in Amal, split to form Islamic Amal. Later the Party of God emerged. Many of its supporters look to Sheikh Hussein Fadlallah — target of a recent U.S.-organized assassination attempt — as their spokesman. The Communist Party and other left groups also retain support.

When Israel invaded southern Lebanon in 1982 the Palestinians and Shiite Muslims were the targets of Israeli terror bombings, massacres, and kidnappings. Shiite organizations became centers of resistance to the Israeli occupation, and later to the occupation force set up by the United States, France, and other imperialist powers. The Shiite fighters made a big contribution to compelling the U.S.-led "peacekeeping" force to pull out in early 1984 and Israeli troops to begin withdrawing this year. They played a key role in blocking efforts by Tel Aviv and Washington to stabilize an ultrarightist Maronite government in Lebanon.

Berri and the Amal militia could count on massive support from impoverished Shiite Muslims when it confronted imperialism and its agents. But the response was different when Amal actions did the dirty work of Washington and Tel Aviv in Berri's decision in May to consolidate his power base by launching bloody attacks on three Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut.

Despite capitalist media attempts to present these battles as between "the Shiites" and the Palestinians, there was significant opposition among Shiites to Berri's murderous drive.

"As soon as the bloodshed began," reported the June 22 *Economist*, "there were fierce denunciations of Mr. Berri's policy by leading Shia [Shiite] clerics, who tend to support Islamic Amal. . . . Sheikh Fadlallah, spiritual head of the even more militant Hezbollah (the Party of God) said that 'nobody has the legal authority to prevent anybody fighting Israel' and blamed Amal

for 'turning our arms against our brothers.'"

In the face of massive Palestinian resistance, growing opposition in Lebanon, and international condemnation, the Amal was forced to accept a cease-fire agreement June 17 that fell short of its goal of crushing the Palestinian movement in Lebanon.

Berri's decision to support the popular demand that Shiite and other Lebanese captives in Israel be freed in exchange for the U.S. hostages is an attempt in part by Amal to strengthen its support among Shiites as well as win back some credibility among anti-imperialist fighters in the Mideast — credibility that was undermined by Amal's reactionary war against the Palestinians.

Why Washington is striking out at Papandreou gov't of Greece

At his June 18 news conference President Reagan used the takeover of TWA flight 847 as a pretext for an attack on the Greek government of Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou.

The Lebanese Muslims who captured the plane boarded at the airport in Athens, Greece.

"I have directed the Secretary of State to issue an immediate travel advisory for U.S. citizens traveling through the Athens International Airport, warning them of dangers," said Reagan. "I have appealed . . . for all U.S. air carriers to review the wisdom of continuing any flight into Athens until the security situation there improves."

Reagan's move is intended to deal a blow to the Greek economy, particularly to the tourist trade. Greece is a U.S. ally, an imperialist power in its own right, and a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Washington's attack on Greece is intended to pressure Papandreou's capitalist government into lining up more firmly with Washington's foreign policy.

Papandreou has opposed the placing of U.S. cruise missiles in Western Europe, and opposes economic sanctions against

Poland and other workers states. He has retained friendly relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the government of Libya, and other forces in conflict with Washington. This stance gained him a degree of popular support in Greece, reflected in the victory of his party in the recent elections.

In the wake of Reagan's attack, Papandreou told the Greek parliament that "his government is determined to have four U.S. military bases removed from Greece by the end of 1988," reported the June 24 *International Herald Tribune*. He also promised he would keep Greek forces out of NATO military exercises.

At the same time, he has taken no steps toward shattering Greek imperialism's fundamental alliance with U.S. imperialism, and has carried out austerity measures and other procapitalist policies in Greece.

This is not the first time that Washington has moved against a Greek government that the U.S. imperialists judged as not completely reliable. In 1967 the U.S. government helped engineer a coup that imposed a brutal military dictatorship on Greece from 1967 to 1974. — F.F.

Puerto Rican activists debate how to build mov't

At the Third National Convention of the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights (NCPRR) held in Philadelphia May 31-June 2, an important debate on what strategy is needed to advance the fight for equal rights in the United States began.

The discussion occurred within the framework of a debate over a resolution to change the organization's bylaws to permit it to endorse candidates. This resolution



¡BASTA YA!

Andrea González

was supported by a small group of Democratic Party elected officials who are members of the NCPRR, as well as other members.

Although many leaders of the NCPRR have been prominently involved in campaigns for Democratic Party politicians on a national and local level, the National Congress policy has been not to endorse candidates as an organization. This policy stemmed from the goal of the National Congress at its founding: to build a mass-membership activist, civil, and human rights organization.

The policy change was put forward as a means to advance the struggle for Puerto Rican rights and to make the struggle "more political." In reality, it would have been a setback and was correctly rejected by the convention.

Endorsing candidates, as opponents of the resolution

rightly argued, would have divided the NCPRR. Currently, the National Congress is open to everyone who supports the struggle for Puerto Rican rights, even though they may disagree on the best way to carry out this fight. So Angel Ortiz, the Democratic city councilman from Philadelphia, and myself, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York, are both equal members of the National Congress. Obviously a wide variety of political views exists inside the National Congress. This has helped make it a stronger organization, enriching its debates and discussions. The NCPRR is a young organization, and the discussions within it are only beginning, as this discussion itself demonstrated. Endorsing campaigns, any campaign, would have cut off the discussion before it started and divided the organization before it ever developed.

Other opponents of the resolution argued that the NCPRR was formed to help organize and mobilize the Puerto Rican community to defend its rights. To focus our attention, they said, every two years on getting one or two or three people elected would channel the energy and resources of the National Congress away from its real purpose — the fight for equal rights.

These activists got to the heart of another political problem if this change in policy were to occur. Endorsing candidates today would mean throwing the organization's energy into the campaigns of capitalist politicians, much like the politicians who were at the convention. These capitalist politicians claim to support Puerto Rican rights. They, like other capitalist politicians of whatever color, must promise us everything at election time. But as members of the capitalist parties, they are committed

to serving the very rulers who profit from our oppression. This is why even these liberal candidates must tell us that it is not our independent struggles that are the primary road to change, but their election. These capitalist politicians, in fact, tell us our independent struggles are no longer necessary once they are in office.

Capitalist election campaigns do not advance our struggle. They don't make our struggle more political, but serve to demobilize us — making us less political.

Election campaigns can help our struggle, but only if they are a tool to help organize and mobilize working people in the fight for our rights. My mayoral campaign, for example, has helped to mobilize people for the April 20 anti-war demonstration in Washington, D.C., to build solidarity with New York City striking hotel workers, and to win support for Puerto Rican independence. My campaign explains that it is through our own struggles as working people against the bosses — 365 days a year — that progress is made.

My campaign offers an example of how working people can use the electoral arena to advance our struggle. An independent campaign run by Puerto Rican workers, or Blacks, or the unions, on a program that defends all working people here and around the world and mobilizes them to win this program, would represent a political advance for all working people. Such election campaigns would help advance our struggle politically.

The decision by the activists at the convention to maintain the NCPRR's policy of not endorsing candidates as an organization helps to assure that this important discussion will continue in an open atmosphere and within the framework of continuing to build a mass activist organization that struggles for our liberation.

Sanctuary movement: one victory, one setback

BY HARRY RING

In June, the fight for sanctuary for political refugees experienced one setback and registered a victory.

On June 20, Lorry Thomas was sentenced to two years in prison for bringing an undocumented Central American refugee across the Mexican border.

Two days earlier, a federal appeals court threw out the conviction of Stacey Lynn Merkt, who had earlier been sentenced to six months for transporting "illegal aliens."

Lorry Thomas is the former director of Casa Oscar Romero, a church-supported sanctuary for Central American refugees. The Casa is located outside Brownsville, Texas, near the Mexican border.

Thomas was arrested while bringing a refugee across the border in her car.

She pleaded guilty to the charge and refused to accept a lesser charge. She said she understood the law she had defied but also understood her religious belief that "it is wrong to kill and that my government right now is bringing a war, an illegal war, in Nicaragua."

Thomas declared that she had helped many refugees across the border and, free of prison, would do so again.

In the case of Stacey Lynn Merkt, also of the Casa Oscar Romero staff, the appeals court ordered a new trial. It declared that if a jury determined that she had in fact done what she said she had, there was no basis for a conviction.

Merkt was arrested by Border Patrol

cops while driving two Salvadoran refugees from Casa Romero to an immigration office in San Antonio so that they might apply for political asylum.

She had explained to the court that she was going to the San Antonio office rather than a nearby one in the Rio Grande Valley because she felt there was less likelihood of the local office acting favorably on the application.

The court ruled, in effect, that she was not guilty of "transporting" undocumented

aliens, and that nothing in the law barred her from choosing the more distant immigration office.

The National Council of Churches and five other church groups filed friend-of-the-court briefs in support of Merkt.

A third Casa Romero activist, Jack Elder, is now serving a five-month sentence in San Antonio. He was arrested by Immigration agents while driving several refugees from Casa Romero to a nearby bus station.

Federal charges of transporting, or conspiring to transport, undocumented aliens are also pending against 12 church sanctuary workers in Arizona.

In May, nearly 80 church and refugee groups filed suit to bar the government from prosecuting those who offer sanctuary to Central Americans seeking refuge here. Thousands of Salvadorans and Guatemalans have fled U.S.-backed dictatorial regimes in their homelands and face death if returned.

Farmer-Labor Alliance holds St. Louis rally

BY KIM KLEINMAN

ST. LOUIS — "Justice and freedom depend on our willingness to fight for them, not so much for ourselves, but to fight for others," Wayne Cryts told the Farmer-Labor Alliance rally here June 12.

Cryts is the president of the American Agriculture Movement, Inc., in Missouri and a founding member of the Farmer-Labor Alliance formed here March 23.

Cryts came to prominence in February 1981 when he removed from storage 33,385 bushels of his own soybeans from a bankrupt grain elevator. The grain elevator and its creditors were trying to keep Cryts' beans to cover their bankruptcy losses.

The meeting was hosted by Robert Sansone, president of Teamsters Joint Council No. 13 at the Teamsters Local 682 hall.

One hundred fifty unionists attended, including in addition to active Teamsters many retired members of the union, as well as auto workers, letter carriers, and others.

Sansone said the alliance between farmers and labor in Missouri went back to the 1978 fight against a so-called right-to-work referendum that was defeated by the combined efforts of unionists and working farmers.

Cryts described the crisis facing working farmers and the protest he organized to secure his soybeans from the bankrupt grain elevator, emphasizing that the root of the problem was government policy.

Charlie Purl of the Missouri Central Labor Council was introduced as "the right hand man of Wayne Cryts." He spoke briefly, evoking the struggles that built the labor movement, in particular the GM sit-down strikes and the Teamsters over-the-road campaign of the 1930s.

He pointed out that "it's not by accident that today they are busting family farmers while they bust unions."



Wayne Cryts

Militant/Mike Carper

Company fires socialists in Ala.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — On May 31, war contractor Hayes International Corp. fired Mark Curtis and Bob Bruce, members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 1155. The stated reason for their firings was "falsification of employment application." However, the real reason is found in the company's attempt to drive the pair out for their "union activity and political beliefs," as stated in the grievances filed on their behalf by the union.

Both Curtis and Bruce are well known in the plant as active builders of the union, as opponents of race and sex discrimination, as being activists against the U.S.-backed war in Central America, and as socialists.

In 1983 they were active in a six-week strike against Hayes, a strike that demanded a decent contract. Both partici-

pated in the local's delegation to the Aug. 27, 1983, March in Washington, D.C., for jobs, peace, and freedom. They promoted union efforts in support of other striking workers.

In 1984 Curtis was the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in the 6th C.D. The campaign had a prounion, antiwar, pro-Black rights, and pro-women's rights platform. The company's hostility to this campaign and the ideas being expressed is evidenced by two newspaper clippings about the campaign in Curtis's process personnel file, which obviously have nothing to do with his work record at Hayes.

In fact, in the three years Curtis and Bruce worked at Hayes the company's management never raised any complaint about their job performance. Even their discharge slips rate them as "good" in ability, production, and attendance.

The blatantly discriminatory firings are a direct attack on the union. This is recognized by many of Curtis's and Bruce's co-workers, several of whom came to the June 8 local union meeting to show their support.

Antiwar VFW post wins reinstatement

BY KEVIN KELLOGG

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. — The Veterans of Foreign Wars — Bill Motto Post 5888 here has won its fight to keep its charter from being revoked. Because of its opposition to U.S. intervention in Central America, the national VFW had suspended the post. This action came after a Santa Cruz VFW member publicized in Nicaragua a Post 5888 resolution that opposed U.S. intervention there and supported self-determination in Central America.

The post then sued the national VFW to maintain its right to function and speak out against national VFW policy.

On May 22 the post agreed to an out-of-court settlement in which the post's charter was reinstated. The settlement also gives members of the post the right to speak out against U.S. policy and the right to lobby

other posts and the national VFW convention for the position of nonintervention. The national VFW will fly two of the post's delegates to the national convention in Dallas and will give the post one seat on the foreign policy committee and one on the by-laws committee there. However, the post had to agree not to use the post name on any resolutions that are contrary to the national VFW policy.

The post has received support statements from other posts of the VFW in its campaign to fight U.S. interventions. They have also received an award for recruiting new members to the post. It is composed of World War I and II, Korean, and Vietnam War veterans. They have recruited five women, one of whom was elected to the delegation for the state and national conventions. It is the first post to have women members.

New International

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ALABAMA

Birmingham

Panel Discussion to Defend Abortion Rights. Sat., June 29, 7:30 p.m. 205 18 St S. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (205) 323-3079.

KENTUCKY

Louisville

Stop the U.S.-sponsored War in Nicaragua! Speaker: Arlene Rubenstein, Socialist Workers Party, recently returned from tour of Nicaragua. Sun., June 30, 7 p.m. 809 E Broadway. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (502) 587-8418.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Celebrate Socialist Petitioning Victory — Socialist Workers Campaign Rally. Speaker: Kip Hedges, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Boston City Council; others. Translation to Spanish. Sat., June 29, 7 p.m. 510 Commonwealth Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Boston Socialist Workers Campaign Committee. For more information call (617) 262-4621.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

Vietnam: an Eyewitness Report. Speaker: Diane Wang, visited Vietnam in 1984, Coauthor of *Report from Vietnam ad Kampuchea* Sat., June 29, 7 p.m. Northwest Activities Center, 18100 Meyers. Donation: \$3. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (313) 862-7755.

Two classes on Vietnam. "Answers to 10 Lies About Vietnam" and "Women in Vietnam." Speaker: Diane Wang. Sun., June 30 at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. 7146 W McNichols. Donation: \$1 per class. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (313) 862-7755.

Violence On the Black Community. Speakers: Congressman John Conyers; City Councilperson Maryann Mahaffey; Horace Sheffield, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists; Detroit mayoral candidates. Sun., July 14, 3 p.m. St. Rita's Church, 1000 E State Fair. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Detroit National Black Independent Political Party. For more information call (313) 883-0595.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

Socialist Election Campaign Rally — Boycott South Africa, Not Nicaragua! Speakers: August Nimtz, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Minneapolis; Maggie McCraw, SWP candidate for mayor of St. Paul. Sat., June 29; reception, 7 p.m.; rally, 8 p.m. 508 N Snelling. Ausp: Socialist Workers Campaign Committee. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

War In the Middle East: Who Are the Real Terrorists? Speakers to be announced. Sat., June 29, 7:30 p.m. 2219 E Market. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (919) 272-5996.

Klan-Nazi Verdict — Has Justice Been Done? Speakers: Lewis Pitts, Greensboro Civil Rights Fund attorney; representative of Socialist Workers Party. Sat., July 13, 7:30 p.m. 2219 E Market. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (919) 272-5996.

Write for a free catalog of socialist books and pamphlets. Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014.

Winston-Salem

Free Darryl Hunt Rally. Sat., June 29, noon. Emmanuel Baptist Church, Shalimar Drive. Ausp: Darryl Hunt Defense Committee.

OHIO

Cincinnati

Who Is to Blame for Terrorism in the Middle East: the Role of Israel and the United States. Speakers: Michael Italie, Socialist Workers Party candidate for city council, member Young Socialist Alliance and United Auto Workers; representative of Arab Student Organization at UC; Art Stater, cochair, Cincinnati Coalition Against Apartheid. Sun., June 30, 7:30 p.m. 4945 Paddock. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (513) 242-7161.

Cleveland

Hands Off Nicaragua — End the Embargo! Panel discussion on Nicaragua. Sat., June 29, 7:30 p.m. 15105 St. Clair Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (216) 451-6150.

OREGON

Portland

In Defense of Abortion Rights: an Answer to Silent Screams. Speaker: Joan Binniger, education director of Portland Planned Parenthood. Sat., June 29, 7:30 p.m. 2732 NE Union Ave.

Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (503) 287-7416.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Lessons of the West Philadelphia Bombings. Speaker: Malik Miah, editor of the *Militant*. Translation to Spanish. Sat., June 29, 8 p.m. Roundtable discussion Sun., June 30 at noon. 2744 Germantown Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (215) 225-0213.

TEXAS

Houston

The Rising Tide of Black Power in South Africa. Speakers: Ernest Harsch, managing editor of *Intercontinental Press* and author of *South Africa: White Rule, Black Revolt*; Dr. Franklin Jones, Texas Southern University, Department of Political Science. Sat., June 29, time and place to be announced. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

Socialist Educational Weekend. Two classes by Ernest Harsch, *Intercontinental Press* managing editor recently returned from tour of West Africa. 1. "Popular Revolution in Burkina." 10 a.m. 2. "Ghana: Three Years of Mass Uprising." 1 p.m. Sun., June 30, 4806 Alameda. Ausp: Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

Asians in Boston victims of racist attacks

Continued from back page
Kampuchean last year.

Narkum pled guilty — rather than face trial for burning the home of a Kampuchean family — to assault and battery with a dangerous weapon, possession of a Molotov cocktail, and misdemeanor and felony civil rights charges.

Narkum had also attacked a two-year-old Kampuchean child.

And on June 14, nine South Boston racists were handed an injunction forbidding them to be in the area of the Vietnamese home that they'd attacked two weeks earlier.

These sentences are mild compared to the terror inflicted by the assailants on Vietnamese and Kampuchean residents of Boston, and are hardly a deterrent to racist violence against the Asian community.

The depth of outrage against this and other acts of brutality emerged on June 3 in Chinatown, where 250 local residents demanded justice for Long Kuang Huang.

The meeting, in Chinese and English, was a powerful statement against the police and the mayor.

A hush fell over the crowd as Huang's wife, Bao, spoke in Chinese. A small, bent woman, she spoke quietly at first.

She thanked Mayor Flynn for accompanying her victimized husband to the hospital on the night of the beating, and for sending food to her house later.

Then she began sobbing, continuing her remarks in Chinese to a concluding burst of applause. "But why," she asked the Democratic mayor, "was my husband beaten? Why is he still charged? And why is the policeman free? Is it a crime to walk on the street?"

Flynn — who was present and accompanied by police brass — hurriedly thanked the woman for her "kind words," then went

into a speech about getting rid of the Combat Zone, an "adult entertainment" district that borders Chinatown.

He then left the meeting, claiming he had another event to attend. When it was discovered Flynn was chatting to the media, the crowd began chanting, "We want the mayor." Flynn did not return.

Also addressing the meeting was Kip Hedges, Boston Socialist Workers Party candidate for city council.

Hedges, a member of International Union of Electronic Workers Local 201 at the big Lynn General Electric plant, slammed police violence and laid the blame for anti-Asian terror at the doorstep of the mayor's office.

He urged a mass protest campaign to "win justice for Long Kuang Huang" and to mobilize widespread support for this demand in the Black and Latino communities

WASHINGTON

Seattle

What Are the Issues in the TWA Hijacking? Speakers: representative of Palestine Human Rights Campaign; Janet Post, Socialist Workers Party, member International Association of Machinists Local 79. Sat., June 29, 7:30 p.m. 5517 Rainier Ave. S. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (206) 523-5330.

WEST VIRGINIA

Morgantown

The Fight for Women's Rights Today. Speakers to be announced. Sun., July 14, 7 p.m. 221 Pleasant St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 296-0055.

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee

Special Weekend, Open House at the Militant Bookstore. Sat., June 29, 4-10 p.m. Music and refreshments. Two classes by Omari Musa, National Committee member of Socialist Workers Party. 1. "The Fight for Black Rights in the Civil War and During Reconstruction," 1 p.m. 2. "Attempts to Form Independent Black Political Parties." 3 p.m. Sun., June 29, 4707 W Lisbon Ave. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (414) 445-2076.

and the labor movement.

Coming on the heels of continuing protests, nearly 300 defenders of Huang took to the streets June 18 to press their demands for justice.

Marching on City Hall, the mostly Chinese crowd chanted, "Drop the charges against Mr. Huang, put them on Kelly where they belong!"

Huang's lawyers reported the Chinese worker might be disabled for up to six months because of the cop beating, and that court proceedings might jeopardize his legal status in the United States. Huang has lived in the United States for eight months.

Boston Mayor Flynn refused to condemn the beating, despite mounting pressure to do so. Such a rebuke of police brutality, he stated in a media release issued the day of the City Hall protest, would be "inappropriate."

N.Y. conf. to hit U.S. aid to Zaire

Beginning on Sunday, June 30, and continuing on Tuesday, July 2, an international conference will be held in New York City to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Congo's (now called Zaire) independence from Belgium's colonialism and the 60th anniversary of the birth of Patrice Lumumba.

Lumumba, who led the struggle for Congolese independence, became that country's first premier after independence on June 30, 1960. In January 1961, he was assassinated with the aid of the CIA, which installed Colonel Joseph Desire Mobutu (called today Mobutu Sese Seko).

The conference, sponsored by the Patrice Lumumba Coalition in conjunction with the Center for Research on Zaire, is designed to challenge the continuing U.S.

financial aid to Mobutu's corrupt and repressive regime, which serves as an obstacle to the liberation of all southern Africa.

The conference will begin June 30 at 2 p.m. at the Harriet Tubman School at 127 St. and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., Blvd. It will continue on July 2 (the anniversary of Lumumba's birth) at 6:30 p.m. at the Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., State Office Building at 125 St. and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., Blvd.

Speakers at the conference include five leading Congolese professors: Dr. Ilunga Kabongo, Dr. Nzongola Ntalaja, Dr. Makidi Kuntima, Dr. Makolo Philomena, and Dr. Tshiteya Mukuna. Also speaking will be Elombe Brath, chairman of the Patrice Lumumba Coalition; Samori Marksman, director of the African and Caribbean Research Center, and others.

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NEW JERSEY: Newark: SWP, YSA, 141 Halsey. Zip: 07102. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

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

Only the flavor's new — We don't know if it was a call from the Atlanta office, but the Coke bottling plant in Anniston, Ala., beat a hasty retreat on that three-day sus-



Harry Ring

pension of a worker caught sipping a Pepsi with his lunch. He was back after a day, with no pay loss. The manager said the penalty was an "overreaction," but reaf-

firmed that "it is against our policy for employees to drink competitive products on our property."

See that he gets a good toilet seat — Michael Burch is leaving his post as chief media spokesperson for the Pentagon to take on the assignment of PR executive with McDonnell-Douglas, the aircraft folk.

Illustrating the point — Protesting representatives of the poor and elderly were permitted to attend a gov't. confab on Medicare-Medicaid at a plush L.A. hotel for \$50 instead of the \$600 registration fee. In a speech, assistant Health Dept. honcho Charles Baker said the government has to

make health care more like a business and less like a free lunch.

Deliberate speed — Some 10 million pounds of the pesticide captan are used annually on dozens of types of fruits and vegetables. One of every thousand lifetime users may die of cancer from this, says the EPA after a five-year study. The agency intends to ban the stuff — after giving Chevron and other chemical kings two more years to compile data on the problem. The EPA assures the danger is not "immediate."

Free gloves with every bottle — Captan is also found in a variety of consumer products. These will not

be banned. Instead, the EPA favors requiring protective clothing for those who use items which include the stuff. This ranges from users of some oil-based paints to those who wash their pets with captan-treated shampoo.

P.S. — What about the pet? Don't ask us, ask EPA.

The Big Apple — Accompanied by his chief of staff and two city cops, Mayor Ed Koch winged it to Rome to witness the elevation of Archbishop O'Connor to cardinal. The taxpayers tab was \$15,442. But that included first-class the night flight over because, the chief of staff explained, it's easier sleeping first-class. "It's ab-

solutely fabulous," she enthused. "You lie down, you're asleep."

On sea legs at that — "Was I to walk?" responded retired Adm. Hyman Rickover to criticism for having General Dynamics chauffeurs taxi him to its Electric Boat shipyard on submarine inspection trips.

Or look seedy — Carping critics are also badmouthing Admiral Rickover for accepting some \$67,000 in goods and services from General Dynamics, including such everyday needs as electric toothbrushes and plastic shower curtains, plus having his civvies cleaned and pressed.

Women miners hold national conference in Utah

Continued from front page miles from here.

Huitt also pointed out the importance of the many different nationalities who are part of the UMWA and the coal mining community, as she introduced Mark Curley from the Navajo Nation and UMWA Local 1620 in Kayenta, Arizona. Curley gave greetings.

A number of Navajo, Apache, and Cherokee miners came to the conference. Chicano and Black miners also participated actively in the gathering. The first evening a Western barbecue was held featuring Mexican dances. The entertainment, conducted mainly in Spanish, attracted Spanish-speaking families from the surrounding community.

The following day miners attended workshops dealing with sex and race discrimination in the workplace, the fight for parental leave, and how to organize and retain a women miners' support group; as well as workshops on UMWA issues in the 1980s, safety in the mines, and occupational health. Among the special interest events was one where women miners and others reported on their trips to the Soviet Union, India, Britain, South Africa, and Nicaragua.

The final session of the conference adopted several resolutions. There was one in solidarity with the A.T. Massey strikers of southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky, who are members of the UMWA. Another motion called for continuing the fight to get paid leave for male or female parents to tend to newborn or sick children. CEP seeks to have this included in the UMWA contract and passed as federal legislation.

Resolutions were passed in support of the copper miners striking Phelps Dodge in Arizona and in support of the British coal miners.

The session also recommended that the next conference have a workshop on how to best use union bodies to fight sex discrimination on the job.

A conference resolution extended sympathy from women miners to the families of those killed in the Wilberg mine fire and pledged that everyone would work with renewed determination to "defend our right to a safe workplace. . . . Another Wilberg, caused by the greed of the coal barons, must not happen." The women miners unanimously voted to hold next year's conference in Kentucky. Many were enthusiastically planning to attend and bring

even more male and female coworkers with them.

The authors of this article are both active in the Lady Miners of Utah. Charlene Adamson is a sewing-machine operator

and belongs to the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union Local 294. Cecelia Moriarity is a laid-off Wilberg miner and member of UMWA Local 2176. Future issues of the Militant will carry more coverage of the conference.

San Jose free-speech meeting

Continued from front page

you kikes, bastards, who are sending money to communists." Cooperman was chairman of the U.S. Committee for Scientific Cooperation with Vietnam, who was murdered by right-wing Vietnamese on October 13, 1984.

The most recent issue of the San Jose Vietnamese-language weekly *Ba'o Biê'u THÁ'NG MÔ* carried a quarter page ad calling on the right-wing Vietnamese to show up in force at the June 28 speak out, a direct threat against the safety of the meeting given the history of violent attacks. In a rough translation the ad said, "Demonstrate and Oppose Communists. Followers of the Communists will hold another propaganda event — a great, big propaganda event in support of the Vietnam June 28, 1985." It then gave the address and time of the speak-out and said, "The purpose of their propaganda is to divide and degrade the Vietnamese community. We invite the entire community and students from high school and college to come . . . to demonstrate and oppose these bad elements."

On June 26, a delegation from the Emergency Committee for Democratic Rights met with city authorities to demand that they take the necessary steps to protect the meeting. The Emergency Committee delegation consisted of the Rev. Thomas McCoy, pastor at St. Paul's United Methodist Church where the speak-out is scheduled to take place; Gertrude Welch, of the Education and Action Committee of the Santa Clara County Council of Churches; Robert O'Neil, American Civil Liberties Union of Santa Clara Valley; Lynda Joyce, chairperson, San Jose chapter of the Socialist Workers Party; and Sam Manuel, chairperson of the San Francisco SWP, who is organizing monitors for the speak-out.

The delegation met with Barbara Barego, aide to San Jose Mayor Thomas McEnery; police Lieutenant Hawks from field operations, who will be in command at the site of the speak-out; and police Captains Vic Eastman and Tom Shigeman.

The delegation was planned before the most recent provocation of the ad in the Vietnamese-language newspaper. Because of it, the delegation pressed its demands on city officials to ensure the safety of the meeting even more. They also reported the death threat received by the Committee for Justice for Professor Ed Cooperman, and pointed out that Anthony Russo, a spokesperson for this organization, is a featured speaker at the June 28 event.

City officials agreed that they would aim at keeping the right-wing Vietnamese across the street, although they could give "no guarantees." Members of the delegation for the Emergency Committee for Democratic Rights felt, however, that some progress had been made — because

of the broad support that had been organized — in forcing city officials to respond seriously to demands to protect the meeting.

A broad show of support for democratic rights is reflected in the monitors for the speak-out, which will include members from trade unions such as International Association of Machinists locals 562 and 547; Glasiers Local 1621; Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 1-5; Amalgamated Transit Union Local 265; United Farm Workers; International Moulders Union Local 164; Service Employees International Union Local 77; and others. South Bay National Organization for Women (NOW); AAPRP; the Mandela Coalition, an anti-apartheid campus coalition; San Jose chapter of the National Lawyers Guild; Santa Clara Valley American Civil Liberties Union; and Free South Africa are among the many progressive organizations that will be providing monitors for the meeting.

Word is getting out on the meeting. Ten thousand leaflets have been distributed all over the Bay Area. Supporters passed out leaflets at the San Jose Juneteenth celebration, which was attended by 85,000 people, and information on the meeting was available at the Free South Africa table at that event. The San Jose NOW newsletter ran a full-page announcement for the speak-out and announcements were included in many community calendars. Supporters of the speak-out are also leafletting at area plant gates.

Anthony Russo of the Committee for Justice for Professor Ed Cooperman and of the U.S.-Vietnam Friendship Society, who is one of the featured speakers at the speak-out, will be giving media interviews and will appear at a news conference the morning of the June 28 event.

The speak-out will take place at 7:30 p.m., St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 405 S 10th St., San Jose.

Do you know someone who reads Spanish?

'PM' on crisis in Argentina

The current trial against the top figures of Argentina's previous military dictatorship is occurring amid a deep economic crisis dramatized by a \$48 billion foreign debt. Popular protests are demanding that those who unleashed a reign of terror from 1976 to 1983, "disappearing" thousands of trade unionists and other activists, be brought to justice.

Meanwhile, the new civilian president, Raúl Alfonsín, is also faced with growing protests against the brutal austerity measures demanded by the International Monetary Fund. On May 23 some 200,000 workers demonstrated against the IMF-dictated austerity in the biggest trade union action since the Alfonsín government came to office.

The new issue of *Perspectiva Mundial* carries an article on the political situation in Argentina. Also featured is an interview with a leader of the Sandinista Youth about her organization's role in the Nicaraguan revolution. The issues behind the TWA hijacking in Lebanon are explained in an editorial.

Perspectiva Mundial is the Spanish-language socialist magazine that every two weeks brings you the truth about the struggles of working people and the oppressed



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Namibia's puppet administration

The South African government installed a new puppet administration in Namibia (also known as South-West Africa) on June 17, maintaining the colonial status of that country of 1.1 million people in defiance of world opinion in support of Namibian independence.

The proclamation, signed by South Africa's President P.W. Botha, states that the new 8-member cabinet and 62-seat legislature will not be permitted "to make any law altering the international status of the territory." Pretoria will also be responsible for defense and foreign policy.

The last time Pretoria sought to impose a surrogate regime was in 1978. It lasted for five years before collapsing for lack of local and international support. The South African government's main collaborators are among the 70,000 white settlers.

The Black majority immediately protested the installation of the new surrogate administration. A special counterinsurgency unit fired tear gas and wielded batons against 500 demonstrators in a Black township near Windhoek, capital of the colony.

The installation of the puppet administration in Namibia comes on the heels of renewed South African aggression against its neighbors.

On June 14, South African commandos launched an attack on Gaborone, the capital of Botswana, murdering 12 people, including three women and a young child.

On May 21, Angolan security forces intercepted South African commandos in Cabinda, Angola, who were attempting to blow up a Gulf Oil refinery and oil storage facilities in that country.

This attack, like the continued presence of South African troops in southern Angola, is in defiance of a treaty between the South African and Angolan governments.

The Reagan administration calls its policy in the region "constructive engagement." It, like all past U.S. governmental policy, means the continuation and strengthening of U.S. economic, political and military ties with South Africa's rulers.

The policy was defined in a high-level briefing paper in 1981 as seeking to "work to end South Africa's polecat status in the world and . . . to restore its place as a legitimate regional actor with whom we can cooperate pragmatically."

The policy centered on Namibia, a former German colony now under the colonial domination of the South African government. For years the people of Namibia have been fighting for their independence under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). In 1982, when talks were under way at the United Nations for a cease-fire and for elections in which the Namibian people were to choose a new independent government — elections that SWAPO was sure to win — the U.S. government demanded that Namibian independence be tied to the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola.

Cuban troops have been in Angola since 1975, when the South African imperialists invaded that country. The Angolan government requested Cuban military assistance against this invasion. Cuban troops helped to defeat the invasion and have remained in Angola to assist the Angolan people in defending themselves against imperialist aggression.

Under "constructive engagement," the U.S. government is providing political cover for the South African regime's aggression and terrorism in the region.

The South African government blames the violence in southern Africa on the liberation movements and the governments that support them. It accuses SWAPO and the African National Congress (the main freedom organization fighting South African apartheid) of engaging in "Cuban-backed terrorism."

The U.S. government demand for a Cuban withdrawal became a convenient justification for the South African government to maintain its colonial rule of Namibia.

The apartheid regime, in fact, is using Washington's demand for Cuban withdrawal to justify the installation of its puppet administration in Namibia.

The latest actions by the South African regime expose it as the source of violence and aggression in the region and tear the veil off the U.S. government's justification for its "constructive engagement" policy. It demonstrates once again the important and necessary role the Cuban internationalist fighters play in defending Angola from South African imperialist aggression.

It was in this embarrassing context that the U.S. government decided to publicly display its disfavor with the South African government by recalling "for consultation" for the first time its ambassador from that country.

This action by Washington reflects a concern that the current policies of Pretoria are undermining imperialism's long-term interests in the region. The U.S. rulers also face pressure from a growing anti-apartheid campaign in this country — a campaign that involves unionists, civil rights activists, and students — demanding an end to Washington's complicity with the South African government.

Despite Washington's and Pretoria's public differences on how best to defend their domination in the region, the Reagan administration continues to defend "constructive engagement."

Reagan told a June 18 news conference that this policy was "successful in getting some concessions . . . and some changes in [South Africa's] policy of apartheid."

Opponents of the apartheid regime and Washington's complicity, as well as supporters of Namibian independence, need to redouble our solidarity efforts for the people of southern Africa. The October 11 National Anti-apartheid Protest Day called by student organizations from across the country can provide a national focus for such support activities.

Gutting air pollution controls

Each year, factories, trucks, and cars spit 60 million pounds of poisonous waste into the air.

And each year, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, 2,000 people in the country die of cancer as a result.

Yet the EPA does next to nothing about it and, given a free hand, plans to do even less than that.

Meanwhile, Congressional Democrats and the Reagan administration joined hands to bury legislation that would have gone a few modest steps in the right direction.

Under the Clean Air Act of 1970, the EPA was given the authority to control poisonous air emissions. Although known industrial pollutants exist by the hundreds, the EPA has, over a 15-year period, listed a grand total of six as dangerous enough to warrant control.

Last December in Bhopal, India, some 2,000 people suffered horrifying deaths and tens of thousands more were seriously afflicted when poisonous chemicals erupted from the Union Carbide plant there.

In the wake of that disaster, a bill was introduced in Congress mandating the EPA to regulate 85 dangerous chemicals that are regularly spewed into the air in this country, and to monitor a list of additional pollutants.

That modest bill was effectively buried when Rep. John Dingel (D-Mich.), chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, joined with the EPA in opposing the measure on grounds that enforcement would be too costly.

At least 2,000 people die from air pollution every year, but it would be too "costly" to do something about it.

Unspoken, of course, was the real objection — that added pollution controls might mean a modest drop in corporate profits.

The Congressional refusal to strengthen the Clean Air Act is bad enough. Meanwhile the EPA is moving ahead

with a plan that would largely gut the act.

Under this projected new "partnership" strategy, regulation of most toxic pollutants would be entrusted to the states.

This would mean each of the 50 states would be free to set their own air control standards and develop their own enforcement agencies.

Unions, environmentalists, and others concerned with the air we breathe would find themselves fighting 50 do-nothing agencies instead of one.

Major industrial polluters would have an even freer hand than they do now.

And it's not unlikely that states would use the lure of minimal clean air regulations to attract new industries.

As if to put the frosting on this piece of poisoned cake, the EPA has dished up the results of a new piece of research purporting to prove that it's your household cleansers, not dangerous emissions from industries, that are most responsible for pollution.

EPA staffers selected 11 pollutants created in the home by solvents, gasoline, paints, cosmetics, tobacco smoke, etc., and gravely declared that the pollution from these 11 chemicals was greater inside your house than in the air outside the plants that produced the products containing them.

Other, more deadly chemicals that are found in the air outside these plants were not included in the test.

With the results in hand, the EPA announced, with a straight face, that this could alter priorities in combating pollution. Presumably they would have to police the storage area under your sink, not chemical plants and refineries.

All of this adds up to a situation where an already grim air pollution problem is going to get even worse if present policies are not reversed.

Catholic church hierarchy vs. abortion rights

The following is the second part of an abridged version of "Why the Catholic church hierarchy opposes women's right to abortion," by Evelyn Reed, a longtime leader of the Socialist Workers Party who died in 1979. It was written just a few weeks after the historic Jan. 22, 1973, Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion. It first appeared in the Feb. 16, 1973, issue of the *Militant* and was later reprinted as part of the Pathfinder Press pamphlet, *Abortion and the Catholic Church*.

Like all of Reed's writings, it is designed to help educate and arm fighters for women's liberation. The article

OUR REVOLUTIONARY HERITAGE

will soon be available in full in a new Pathfinder Press pamphlet, *Abortion is a Woman's Right*, which will also include more recent articles from the *Militant* on abortion rights.

(second of two parts)

The struggle of women for control over their own bodies began early in this century and has been pressed forward during every decade up to today. In its first stage the struggle was fought for the partial and limited objective of achieving contraceptive control. Such pioneer feminists in this country as Margaret Sanger, Antoinette Konikow, and others defied imprisonment in their efforts to disseminate methods of limiting pregnancies. Eventually some states legalized contraceptive control devices.

This did not affect the Roman Catholic hierarchy. To the present day papal decrees forbid women of that faith to resort to these methods.

The second stage of the struggle for women's control over their bodies was very recently opened up by the women's liberation movement. This went beyond contraception control to the demand for the right to abortion.

Whether through ignorance of contraceptive methods or through accidental failure of a particular device, women are often trapped in unwanted pregnancies. Under these circumstances the one sure method of birth control is abortion. Should an unplanned pregnancy occur, a completely safe abortion can be performed.

Despite this assured way for women to gain full control over their reproductive processes, legislative, juridical, and clerical decrees against it have prevailed up to the 1970s. Then the key state of New York enacted its liberalized law permitting legal abortions in the first 24 weeks. Today, two years later, the U.S. Supreme Court has followed with its ruling covering all 50 states.

Once again the Roman Catholic hierarchy refuses to surrender. It is determined to resist the proabortion movement to the last woman victim of back-alley butchery. The cardinals are fulminating about the millions of unborn who are being denied their "right to life." They hew to the papal doctrine that forbids women any measure of control over their bodies and regards the unborn as "sacred" lives, while the lives of the mothers are expendable.

They are fearful that if women gain control over their bodies, they will forthwith proceed to fight for full control over their minds and lives. In the course of this struggle women would shed many of the superstitions, fears, and prejudices indoctrinated into them over centuries of patriarchal rule to keep them on their knees before earthly and super-earthly lords and masters. Even a limited measure of liberation can lead to incalculable consequences — undermining the centuries-old male supremacy over women. This fear of liberated women can be seen in the dire predictions of the cardinals about the "disastrous implications" of the Supreme Court ruling and the "terrifying" developments the decision sets in motion.

This hostility to women is concealed behind the slogan of the "right to life" of the unborn. Such sanctimonious concern covers every germination in a woman's womb no matter how it was implanted — whether through ignorance or by accident, or even by violence on the part of a rapist. Each germination is called a "fetus," and every fetus is called a "person," and every "person's" life is "sacred."

Except the person of the mother. If a mere germination is elevated into a person, the woman herself must be downgraded into a nonperson — a mere receptacle or womb for producing persons.

The black-robed jurists of the capitalist state have made a significant concession in the realm of abortion. The women's liberation movement has won a signal victory with this recognition of women's right to control their own bodies. But the cardinals remain in irreconcilable opposition to the Supreme Court ruling and are mobilizing sentiment to overturn that decision.

We say to them: Stick to your business of controlling immortal souls. But keep your hands off the bodies of women and our democratic right to control our bodies!

INS raid on a union shop: united response needed

BY SETH GALINSKY

LOS ANGELES — "La migra" — the Immigration and Naturalization Service — someone shouted. We rushed to the windows at Manny Industries to find the plant completely surrounded by INS agents both in plainclothes and in uniform.

Manny Industries makes bedsprings, comforters, and curtains principally for JC Penney, Spiegel, and Sears. For the last four years it has been organized by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) Local 482.

Many workers dashed for hiding places. But in the department where I work, the women quite stoically began preparing for their detention. Money was borrowed from

locate people hidden in boxes or under bedsprings. This "people detector" emits beeps when someone is found.

After rounding up my coworkers, the INS handcuffed a number of them together as a form of intimidation. Nobody had tried to run away after being detained. No one struggled. Even one of our supervisors who is not for full rights for immigrant workers stated, "They don't have to handcuff them. They're not criminals or animals."

Those of us who were not picked up donated our lunches to those that were, but to no avail. The INS agents allowed us to give our friends food, but as soon as they loaded them on the bus that would take them to the downtown detention center, they took all their food and threw it in the garbage.

What was the supposed crime of my coworkers that entitled them to this barbarous treatment? Being brown-skinned, speaking Spanish, and working hard at a job that pays little more than minimum wage, all this to make a better life for themselves and their families.

The INS didn't ask any white workers for papers.

The purpose of these raids, despite all the INS claims to the contrary, is not to open up jobs for workers with "papers." The INS admits that most of those deported will be back within the next week. The purpose is to intimidate, harass, and demoralize immigrant workers so they won't stand up for their rights, organize unions, demand higher wages, or speak out against social injustice.

They seek to divide workers with papers from workers without, because they know that a united working class is stronger and more capable of opposing the bosses' plans.

This attempt failed at Manny's. Black, Latino, and white workers who are "legally" working were horrified at the INS gestapo tactics. Many of these workers expressed their hostility to the INS during the raid.

Representatives from the ILGWU and a union lawyer came down to the plant as soon as they heard about the raid. They did the best they could to defend the rights of the detained workers. Discussion is taking place among workers and in the union as to how to improve the union's ability to respond in these types of cases and to better inform the workers of their alternatives when they face this situation.

One promising sign is that an official from the union will be speaking at a press conference and picket line to protest "Operation Employer," as the raids are called in INS double speak.

A broad, united response to these raids is needed. A fight for the rights of immigrants is a key question for all working people. To organize the unorganized, to fight against the U.S. war in Central America, and to fight against racist attacks, immigrants must be able to work and carry out their lives without fear of government and INS repression.

Seth Galinsky is a member of ILGWU Local 482.

UNION TALK

coworkers with papers. Phone calls were made home to make sure the children would be taken care of. Unfortunately the raid happened so suddenly that not everyone was able to reach their families.

More than 30 INS agents, all of them armed, entered the plant and systematically swept through each floor. First they checked for hiding places. They even had some kind of device originally designed for Vietnam that can

LETTERS

Border protest

On June 9 several hundred demonstrators gathered at San Ysidro park here in San Diego and then marched to the border site where 12-year-old Humberto Carrillo Estrada was shot by Border Patrol agent Edward D. Cole. On the Mexican side of the border, separated only by a tall chain-link fence, several hundred protesters awaited the marchers.

Rally participants could hear speakers from both sides of the border. Sergio Chavez, one of the organizers of the march on the U.S. side, said, "This is the place where a 12-year-old boy was shot in the back by U.S. border agent Edward Cole while he was defending his brother, who was being beaten by 2 border patrol agents. How many more people will be raped and killed? How many more children will be shot? They [people without papers] are not criminals. It is not a criminal act to be looking for work."

On the Mexican side speakers took up the militarization of the border as connected to the militarism of the United States in Central America. Banners in Spanish said "Leave, Yanqui — leave Nicaragua" and people chanted "Viva Nicaragua libre."

The rally was organized by the Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Humberto Carrillo, which represents 80 organizations in San Diego and Tijuana. It was an inspiring example of solidarity across the border.

Mari Hawkes
San Diego, California

'Like partial murder'

Showing what their real priorities are, the Board of Regents at the University of Washington in Seattle recently voted unanimously to retain investment in companies that do business in South Africa.

The newly formed Students Against Apartheid has been organizing a series of actions demanding that the university totally divest and end its exchange program with South Africa.

The day before the regents' vote, about 350 people came out to a rally. The message was clear: "Hey regents, can't you see, your money pays for slavery!" was chanted along with, "Embargo South Africa, not Nicaragua." Omari Tahir, a community activist explained that "not one U.S. corporation is in South Africa to help Black people. They are there to make maximum profits off slave labor."

The night before the vote, about 35 students slept in a mock shantytown built from cardboard boxes to remind the regents what support to apartheid means. But evidently the year-end profit statement is more important to the regents than the lives of South Africa's Black people.

The Students Against Apartheid is going to continue its activities. And we won't settle for partial divestment. As a representative from the University of Berkeley told the rally, "Partial divestiture is like partial murder. It's totally unacceptable."

Brad Downs
Seattle, Washington

Lincoln Brigade

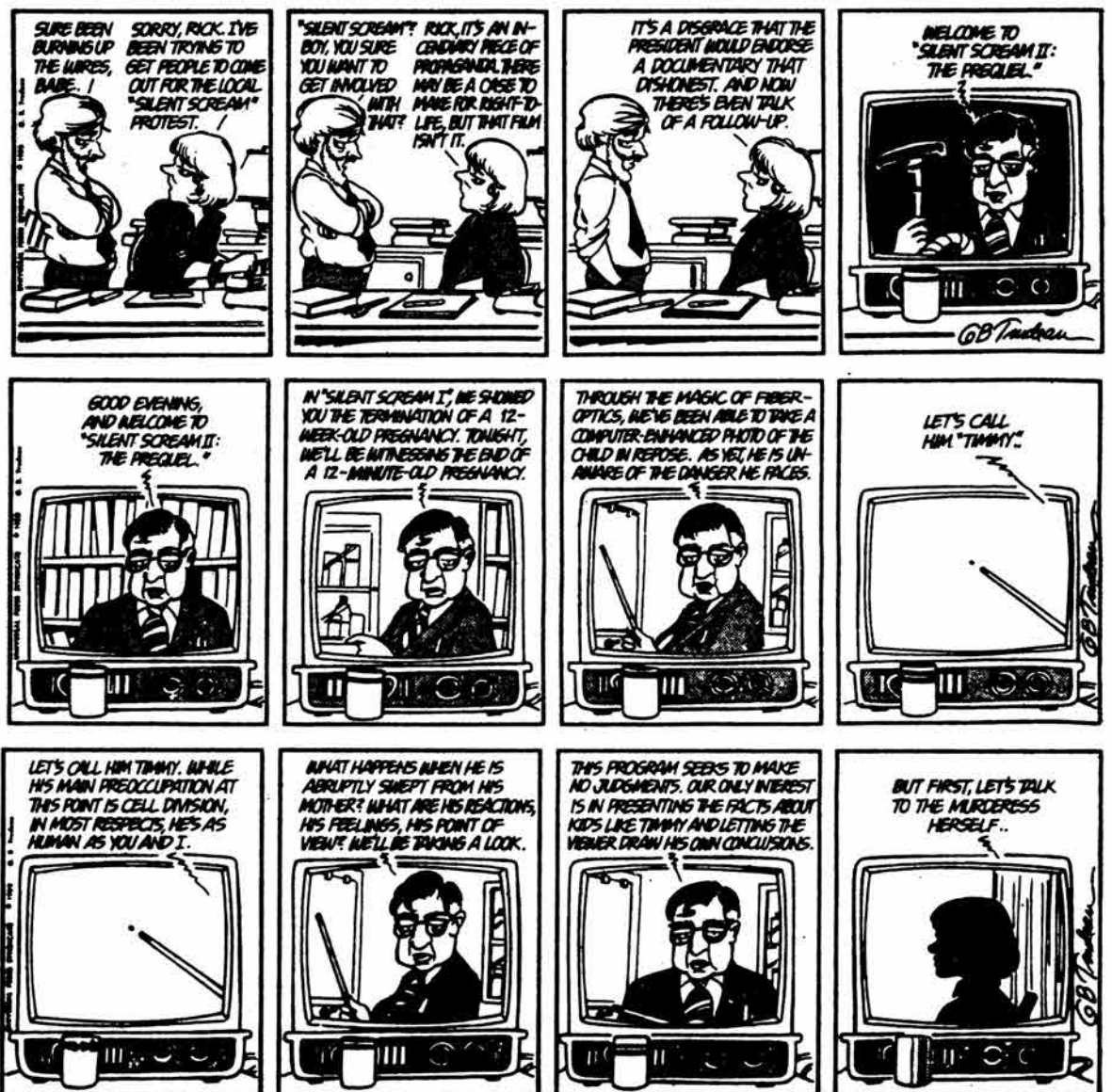
"If Reagan chose to use tax dollars to buy bombs and bullets for death (in Nicaragua) we of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade would use the money collected from ordinary Americans to buy ambulances for life!" declared Bill Susman at a press conference held by the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in Washington on April 18.

The vets, American volunteers who fought against Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco's Falangists in the Spanish Civil War, raised over \$110,000 to buy ambulances for Nicaragua. Susman, chairman of the Vets Ambulance Committee, presented the keys for seven ambulances to the Nicaraguan ambassador, Carlos Tunnermann, at the press conference.

The goal of the vets was to raise enough money for one ambulance. They placed an ad in the *San Francisco Chronicle* and launched the Bay Area campaign, and hundreds of people responded. However, when President Reagan stated last October that Americans joining the *contras* in Nicaragua were part of a "long, honorable tradition," which included Americans volunteering in the Spanish Civil War, albeit they were "on the wrong side," it infuriated the Lincoln Brigade veterans, and they went national in their campaign for ambulances for Nicaragua. They countered with a statement that if Hitler and Mussolini were alive, they would also be supporting the *contras*.

Their ad in the *New York Times* was an overwhelming success and they raised enough money for not one ambulance, but seven — to be sent to the Nicaraguan government whose own ambulances have been destroyed in *contra* attacks.

Ruth Pinkson
Garrett Park, Maryland



These are three of six "Doonesbury" cartoon strips by Gary Trudeau. They were published in the *New Republic* after Trudeau's distributor refused to distribute them.

Dorothy Six

"We are in the midst of a war for the rights of the unemployed." The speaker was the Rev. D. Douglas Roth at the second annual memorial and prayer service for the unemployed in Pittsburgh. It was held at the plaza of U.S. Steel headquarters to protest the planned demolition of the Dorothy Six blast furnace at the Duquesne steel mill. Some of the protesters came from the round-the-clock vigil that unionists hold at the plant gate.

The sponsoring organizations of the 200-strong protest were the Network to Save the Mon/Ohio Valley and the Denominational Ministry Strategy (DMS). Three ministers, members of the DMS, along with union leaders, were previously jailed for their roles in protests outside the headquarters of union-busting corporations and churches attended by corporate executives. One of the ministers, Rev. David Solberg, remains in jail.

Ron Weisen, president of the

Homestead local of the United Steelworkers of America; Darrell Becker, president of the Marine and Shipbuilding Workers Local 61; and Monsignor Charles Owen Rice spoke, asking for support for the jailed ministers.

After the service, Ron Weisen led a delegation of 30 unemployed workers and their families to the Federal Building. Weisen pointed out that "U.S. Steel, Dravo Shipbuilders, and Mellon Bank level our workplaces by demolition with real bombs. They've had a permit to bomb everyone in Youngstown for years." In what was unmistakably a symbolic protest aimed at showing the injustice of allowing corporate executives to destroy productive facilities without regard for the effect on the lives of the workers, Weisen said, "We therefore make application for an explosives permit to blow up the work places of the corporate leaders, as they are blowing up our work places in the valleys. Isn't that fair?"

As you might expect, the big-business media have taken these quotes completely out of context in order to continue their smear campaign against the Network, DMS, and the unions.

Andy Towbin
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Correction

Two errors appeared in the article on the frame-up charges against Black rights activists in Alabama in the June 28 issue of the *Militant*. The Turners and Hogue are from Perry County, Alabama, and the defendant in the case in Greene County is Spiver Gordon.

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 voting rights on trial in Ala.

U.S. Justice Department and FBI organize frame-up of civil rights activists

BY KATY LARKINS

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Fifty supporters of Black rights crowded the steps of the federal courthouse here June 19 to protest the arraignment of five civil rights activists from Greene County. They are being framed on charges of vote fraud.

After the arraignment many traveled to Selma to show their solidarity with three Perry County voting-rights leaders whose trial on similar charges began that same day.

The arraignment and trial form part of a Justice Department witchhunt of Black activists and leaders in Alabama. The Federal government has targeted the Black Belt, a rural area stretching across south-central Alabama that was once a major cotton growing region and has a majority Black population. Further indictments are expected in Sumter, Wilcox, and Lowndes counties.

Wendell Paris, chairperson of the Black Belt Defense Committee, told the crowd, "This is not a legal battle, it is a political battle. In 1968 the FBI was responsible for the death of Martin Luther King, Jr. In 1985 they are trying to kill his dream."

Among the protesters were Rev. Abraham Woods, Birmingham president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and Alabama SCLC President Rev. John Nettles.

The five defendants from Greene County all pleaded not guilty. They were represented by attorney Hank Sanders, the first Black state senator from the Black Belt in the Alabama legislature since the Reconstruction period after the Civil War.

As the Selma trial of Albert Turner, Evelyn Turner, and Spencer Hogue gets under way, even the big-business press has had to admit that testimony for the prosecution has been unclear and contradictory.

Most of the prosecutor's witnesses are elderly Blacks. Some are illiterate. Many of these witnesses cast absentee ballots in the primary election in September 1984. Now the prosecutors are trying to get them to say the Turners and Hogue altered their ballots illegally.

According to the *Birmingham News*, when Eva Lou Smith of Marion was shown in court an absentee ballot that she allegedly cast in a primary election, she said she could not remember if she had voted in that election. "There have been so many elections that I can't remember."

Another prosecution witness, a farm worker named Morgan Harris, told the press he thought Albert Turner was "a nice guy." He added, "I think they've framed him."

The prosecution rounded up these witnesses in a scare campaign conducted by the FBI. Perry County residents report that as many as six FBI agents with police escorts would descend on the isolated rural home of an elderly person to interrogate them about alleged illegal voting. Agents made late night phone calls to elderly women living alone to ask if they had allowed the Turners or Hogue to change their ballot.

Wendell Paris, speaking at the June 22 Militant Labor Forum here on the FBI assault on Black rights, explained that these frame-ups are the latest moves in a long campaign against political activists in the Black Belt. Those now facing charges include leaders who have been active in forming a farm organization, in the struggle for Black control of the school system, and in the fight against toxic waste dumps.

Bill Kendrick, president of the Hale County Civic League, also spoke. Hale County has a majority Black population but



Albert and Evelyn Turner greet supporters as they leave Selma, Ala., courthouse.

no elected officials who are Black.

For years, Kendrick said, Hale County has been the target of vote fraud by white politicians. But when Kendrick approached the FBI and the Justice Department with written proof of fraud, no investigation followed. "There are 10 counties in the Black Belt," Kendrick said, "but only the five with Blacks in office are being investigated. We live in the poorest, the most illiterate part of the country. This

attack on us comes like sledge hammer blows."

Commenting on the FBI's attacks against the Black movement, Paris said, "they are powerful, but they are not invincible."

Further support activities are being planned to defend the Black Belt defendants. For more information contact the Black Belt Defense Committee, P.O. Box 5, Gainesville, Ala. 34564.

Asians in Boston victims of racist attacks

BY JON HILLSON
AND RICHARD THOMAS

BOSTON — A wave of racist, gang terror and police brutality against this city's Asian community has spurred mounting protest demanding a halt to anti-immigrant violence.

Organized action has been led by Boston's Chinese community, in behalf of Long Kuang Huang, a 56-year-old worker brutally beaten by police detective Francis Kelly on May 1.

The cop claims Huang solicited a prostitute and resisted arrest.

A dozen witnesses to the Chinatown incident say Huang, who speaks no English, was assaulted by the cop. Huang, they say, flailed his arms in an attempt to flee — since Kelly did not show his badge until after he jumped the much smaller man — while the alleged prostitute shouted Kelly's name, telling him, "That's the wrong man."

The 36-year-old Kelly is six feet, two inches tall and weighs 220 pounds. Huang is five feet, six inches tall and weighs 120 pounds.

Community protest meetings of up to 300 have been held, sponsored by the broadly backed Committee to Support Long Kuang Huang.

The coalition, which includes a number of unions and Chinese, Black, and Latino organizations, is demanding charges be dropped against Huang — who is awaiting trial for assault — and filed against Kelly, who continues to draw pay on a desk job.

The kid-gloves treatment of Kelly by both the police brass and Boston Mayor Raymond Flynn gave a green light to racist gangs in East Boston and South Boston to wage a mini-war against Vietnamese and

Kampuchean immigrants.

On May 29, in a pre-dawn attack on the home of several Vietnamese in South Boston, a gang of nearly 30 racists hurled bricks, stones, and bottles as a prelude to invading the house and beating several of the residents.

Hung Hua was taken outside his home and threatened: "I stand here and they are in a circle. They yell, 'I kill you. Go back to China. I kill you.'"

Eight of the thirty racists have been ar-

rested on minor charges.

The next evening, two gangs of whites converged on a group of four Kampuchians, one of whom had left his home when the first bunch of racists began menacing his car. When Sophal Thiem, a Kampuchean, confronted the bigots, he was jumped and beaten, and a second gang of racists joined in. Thiem was beaten with a lead pipe, requiring 13 stitches to the head. Other family members were treated for minor injuries.

One attacker was arrested.

Police officials and the mayor's office claim such attacks follow no "pattern."

But Asians for Justice spokesperson Peter Kiang makes a different point. "We've been saying it for three or four years, that violence against Asians is on the rise."

On June 11, a Revere resident, Steven Narkum was sentenced to 11 years in prison for eight assault charges against

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Los Angeles unions protest INS raid

BY PAM BURCHETT

LOS ANGELES — Chanting, "Union sí [yes], Migra [INS] no," more than 150 unionists and community activists picketed the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) courthouse downtown here on June 12. The noontime demonstration attracted hundreds of spectators who were on their lunch break from the many federal and state office buildings nearby.

The emergency picket line was called by a group of local unions to protest a series of INS raids the previous week in which nearly 1,000 workers were arrested. The week-long factory sweep, code-named "Operation Employer," was justified by the INS as a way to free up jobs for U.S. citizens.

Unionists from more than a dozen local unions participated, including the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), United Electrical Workers (UE), and a group of uniformed striking

United Airlines pilots. Unionists from United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 645-Van Nuys carried a large banner demanding "Stop factory raids, stop deportations."

A number of Latino and refugee rights groups also participated, calling attention to a series of recent INS abuses and crimes, including the beating of hunger strikers at the INS jail in El Centro, California, and the shooting of two Mexican nationals at the border, including a 13-year-old boy.

At a well-attended press conference after the picket line, a press statement from the UAW outlined the demands of the demonstration. These included an immediate end to the raids and deportations; immediate release on their own recognizance of those who participated in the El Centro hunger strike; and opposition to all antiworker and antiunion legislation, specifically the 1985 Simpson immigration bill.

Pete Beltran, president of the UAW local, issued a statement protesting the

raids because "they cause fear, chaos, and disorganization in the communities and the workplace, they violate the human and civil rights of members of the minority communities, especially the Latino community, and they help employers against unions in organized shops." Mike Gómez, a local UAW organizer, called the raids unconstitutional and said they were being used to create a racist hysteria for anti-immigrant legislation.

Tony Orea, representing the ILGWU, noted that the INS had targeted one of the largest ILGWU-organized garment shops for a raid. "This is an important issue for our union," he told the *Militant*. "We intend to do whatever is within our reach to defend undocumented workers, including those who are members of our union." Orea praised the joint action of different unions and community groups in united protest. He expressed hope that an ongoing coalition could be formed to protest the factory raids and deportations.