

100,000 in Washington demand abortion rights

BY PAT GROGAN

WASHINGTON, D.C. — More than 100,000 people turned out here March 9 to stand up and fight for a woman's right to choose abortion.

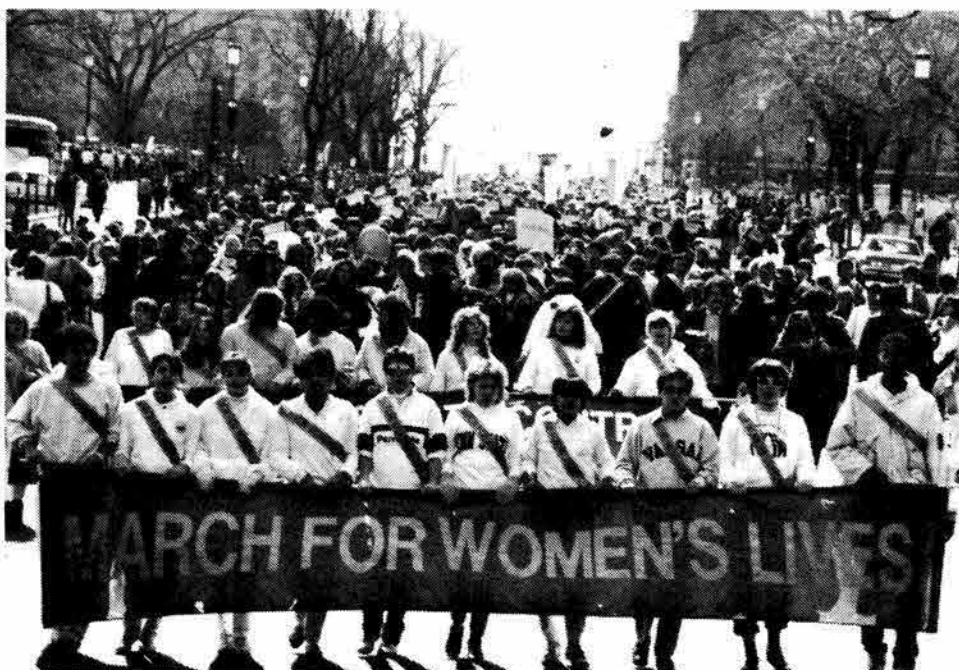
The throngs seemed to arrive all at once. At 9:00 a.m. there didn't seem to be more than a few thousand people at the staging area at the mall. But by 11:00 tens of thousands began arriving.

At 11:30, when the march stepped off, there were three broad columns filling the length of the mall. As the crowds gathered in front of the Capitol for the rally after a three-mile march, thousands were still waiting in the assembly area.

It soon became clear that history was being made. The demonstration was as big as or bigger than the giant July 9, 1978, march on Washington for the Equal Rights Amendment.

When combined with the Los Angeles action on March 16, the "National March for Women's Lives: East Coast/West Coast" is easily the largest women's rights action in U.S. history.

Eleanor Smeal, president of the National Organization for Women (NOW), the organization that called the action to defend safe, legal abortion and birth control, told the crowd, "We knew the time had come for people to stand up and be counted for women's lives. Our message is simple. You cannot play with women's lives any longer." The marchers joined with Smeal in angrily shouting at the top of their lungs, "Stop playing with our lives. Stop playing with our lives!"



Students carry lead banner in "National March for Women's Lives"

Smeal announced that more than 470 organizations — women's rights groups, labor unions, civil rights groups, Black organizations, religious groups, and many others — had joined together to sponsor the action. "And then just people who have said, 'It's about time we go into the streets again. It's about time to show our numbers.'"

At the head of the march, two banners stretched across Pennsylvania Avenue,

proclaiming, "March for Women's Lives," and "Keep abortion and birth control safe and legal."

They were carried by young women and men representing students from more than 400 campuses who turned out in huge numbers and swelled the ranks of the demonstration.

As the march passed the White House, a small group of right-wing antiabortion

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U.S. rulers debate 'contra' aid

BY MARGARET JAYKO

President Reagan's proposed \$100 million aid package to the U.S.-organized *contras* (counterrevolutionaries) who are waging war against Nicaragua has run into trouble. To date, four subcommittees of the House of Representatives have voted against it, with only one approving it. And the bill is being pushed toward a quick vote in both houses of Congress. Leading Democrats and Republicans alike predict it will be rejected.

Capitol Hill has already begun jockeying over various bipartisan "compromises" that would combine aid to the *contras* with calls for "negotiations."

The main stumbling block facing the administration's proposal is that it's become crystal clear that Washington's proxy army — despite the death and destruction it has caused — is not capable of overthrowing the Nicaraguan government or even of tak-

ing over a single population center and holding on to it.

In fact, since Congress approved \$27 million in aid to the mercenary bands last year, the Nicaraguan army has dealt them severe blows, driving most of them out of the country and back into their camps in neighboring Honduras and Costa Rica.

Today, the *contras* are much further from their goals than they were even a year ago.

The reason for the *contras'* rout is not their lack of military hardware, as Reagan claims. It is rather that they are politically isolated. The Nicaraguan people know that the *contras* are led by the murderers and torturers of the former dictator's National Guard. And they haven't changed their stripes — rape, torture, and murder of civilians is the stock-in-trade of the *contra* bands.

Congress is reluctant to give official backing to what appears to be a losing cause.

The *contras'* lagging fortunes have created a real debate within the U.S. ruling class over how to most effectively pursue the aggression against Nicaragua.

The White House has pushed hard for its proposal for \$70 million in military aid and \$30 million in "nonlethal" funds for the *contras*. At the heart of the administration's campaign is a torrent of lies and slanders about Nicaragua, combined with a vicious red-baiting campaign against those who won't go along. The shrill tone and crude tactics employed by the administration are a measure of the weakness of Reagan's case.

'Two, three, many Nicaraguas'

Secretary of State George Shultz has been setting the pace in the fight for the \$100 million. He dramatically declared that the alternative to aid for the *contras* is

"a vision of two, three, many Nicaraguas — a hemisphere of burning churches, suppressed newspapers, and a crushed opposition."

In another talk, Shultz called the Nicaraguan government "a cancer, right here on our land mass." The Nicaraguan government has "tried to spread itself around in a fundamentally evil way." There is "incontrovertible proof," Shultz added, "that the

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Minnesota: 115 arrested in protest against Hormel

BY TOM JAAX
AND MAGGIE McCRAW

AUSTIN, Minn. — On Monday, March 10, Austin police, reinforced by sheriffs from three surrounding counties, arrested 115 people outside the Geo. A. Hormel & Co.'s corporate offices.

The protesters were members and supporters of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local P-9. The 1,500-member local has been on strike against Hormel for seven months.

The militant protest action began at 3:00 in the morning when 250 people gathered outside the main gate of the corporate headquarters. The demonstrators kept the office shut down until 1:30 p.m.

The protesters had locked the main gate and sent the keys to Minnesota Gov. Rudy Perpich. In a letter accompanying the keys, the protesters wrote, "We feel that our civil rights have been denied by you and the Hormel company long enough."

By 5:00 a.m., the cops began to demand that everyone leave the area. When the group refused, the cops called in reinforce-

Filipino masses fight for democracy

BY DEB SHNOOKAL
AND RUSSELL JOHNSON

MANILA, Philippines — "I stood as a human barricade February 22-25, 1986" adorns the front of a T-shirt being sold by Manila street vendors. On the back is emblazoned, "Victory for People's Power."

These slogans refer to the massive popular mobilizations that brought down the hated Marcos dictatorship and installed Corazon Aquino as head of a new govern-

Eyewitness report

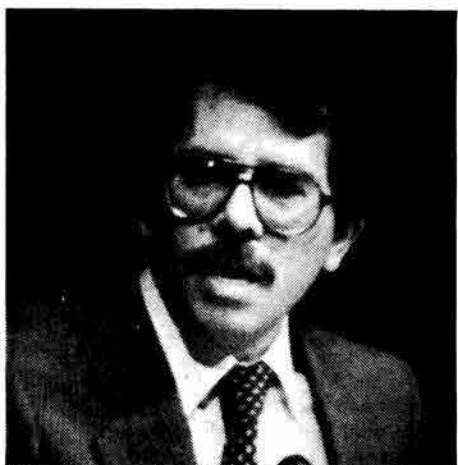
ment. The "people power" revolutionary uprising was the culmination of the mass anti-Marcos movement that emerged in the streets following the Aug. 21, 1983, assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino at Manila airport.

The latest round of mobilizations began in response to Marcos' decision late last year to call presidential elections for February 7. Facing increasing isolation and pressure in the Philippines and abroad, the dictator hoped to strengthen his position to continue repressive rule over the Filipino people.

But the Filipino people saw it differently. They saw the election as an opportunity to deal a blow to the dictator. They mobilized in their millions in support of the candidacy of Corazon Aquino. "Cory" Aquino has become the popular symbol of the antidictatorial struggle since her husband was assassinated. In the days following the election, the mobilizations continued around the need to protect the ballot boxes from Marcos' goons.

Faced with this massive groundswell of support for Aquino, Marcos had to resort to the most blatant stealing of the February 7 election. But this only deepened the popular determination to have done with him. This came to a head when Aquino, at a February 16 "victory rally" in Manila of more than a million supporters, took up the call from the mass organizations backing her for a campaign of civil disobedience

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Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega explained since 1980 there have been over 13,900 deaths because of U.S.-sponsored *contra* war. Equivalent in United States would be 1.1 million.

ments.

Later the demonstrators offered to disperse if Hormel officials would meet with union leaders. Hormel's vice-president of human resources, David Larson, refused, stating that it "would be negotiating with a gun to your head."

At 9:30 a.m. police Capt. Tom Steininger, threatening the protesters, announced that "if we put you under arrest, we'll use any means necessary to get you out of here."

The cops then began to arrest people. Many times, 6 to 10 cops would gang up on one protester.

At least one retiree was hit. Striker Julia Everson said that when she told the cops that she had tendinitis, a painful work-related muscle disorder, they treated her even more harshly.

As the cops roughed up the demonstrators the crowd protested, yelling, "Scabs, get a decent job."

Another striker, Ivan Bartholomew, had

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Coverage of Hormel strike spurs N. Carolina sales

BY ROSE HENRY
AND MIKE NICHOLSON
GREENSBORO, N.C. — The *Militant's* coverage of the strike by United Food and Commercial

Although these workers had never seen the *Militant* before, they snatched the paper out of the hands of salespeople as soon as they heard about the coverage on

High Point, North Carolina, reports increased sales there.

According to team members, workers in the plant "can relate to the struggle by P-9. They see it as clearly linked to their own experiences during a recent contract battle against concessions.

"They see P-9 as important. They want more news, want to get at the heart of this struggle," one salesperson said.

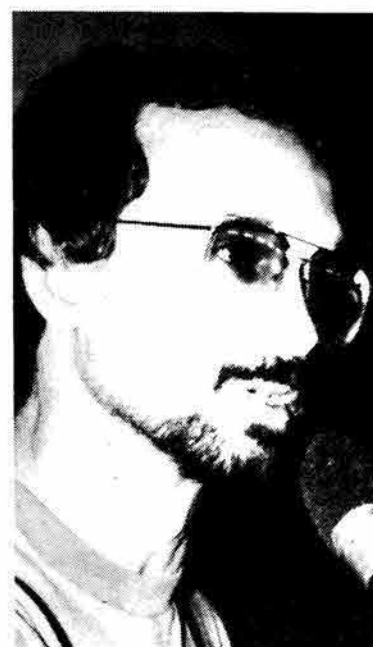
Two or three *Militants* are regularly sold at this plant to workers eager to read the latest news about the meatpackers' strike.

At Highland Yard Mills, another ACTWU-organized plant in High Point, sales of the socialist press are also up because of the *Militant's* coverage of the Hormel strike. Workers there are learning about the struggle of P-9 both through the pages of the *Militant* and from one of their coworkers — the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate, Rich Stuart.

Stuart traveled to Austin, Minnesota, February 15 to participate in a rally in solidarity with the strikers. He returned with photographs and literature, which have made their way around the plant. A number of Stuart's coworkers have also had the chance to read about the strike in the pages of P-9's own newspaper, the *Unionist*.

In addition, supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign have been distributing a statement by Stuart at the gates that points to the importance of this strike for all working people. Many workers on the job have taken time to read through the statement carefully and are discussing the P-9 strike.

A number of workers at Highland Yard Mills, inspired by the ideas of the socialist campaign, have offered to help out. One of Stuart's coworkers contributed to a fund to send Stuart to Austin. Others are organizing a fundraising party for the campaign.



Militant
Rich Stuart, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate, North Carolina.

SELLING OUR PRESS AT THE PLANT GATE

Workers union (UFCW) Local P-9 against Hormel in Austin, Minnesota, has sparked a lot of interest in the paper among workers here.

North Carolina socialists have noted an increase in *Militant* sales at area plant gates over the past weeks.

A special team was organized to get the paper out to meatpackers. During two sales at Equity Meats, a Reidsville, North Carolina, plant organized by the UFCW, 23 copies of the *Militant* were sold.

the Hormel strike. All of them knew about the struggle of their sister local in Minnesota and were eager for news on developments there.

On the return visit, several workers recognized the paper, and one woman reached into her pocket for change as soon as she drove up to the team at the gate.

Another team, which regularly sells the *Militant* at Fiber Dynamics, a plant organized by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) in

Concessions forced on Eastern flight attendants

BY NANCY BROWN
WASHINGTON, D.C. — Flight attendants at Eastern Airlines agreed to a concession contract 12 hours before a March 1 deadline.

The Transport Workers Union (TWU) contract had expired January 20. For more than a month, flight attendants were forced to work under exhausting and harsh company-imposed work rules. When the contract expired, Eastern slashed wages by 20 percent and laid off 1,010 of 7,200 flight attendants — forcing crews to fly short and fly more. One of the harshest changes was that flight attendants were only paid for actual flight time, not scheduled time. One flight attendant told us she was checked in — in uniform — for 10 hours, but only paid for three.

TWU officials decided not to strike on January 20, but to wait until February 26 when a cooling-off period expired for the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA), which had also been negotiating a contract with Eastern.

Eastern's board of directors had demanded that the three unions — the TWU, ALPA, and the International Association of Machinists (IAM), which organizes baggage handlers, cleaners, and mechanics — give back 20 percent in pay and benefits, agree to two-tier contracts with wage reductions for new hires, and accept work rule changes that would jeopardize worker and passenger safety.

ALPA and TWU agreed to concession contracts after it was announced on February 24 that Texas Air had offered to buy Eastern. IAM District 100 President Charles Bryan has said he will not reopen the IAM contract, which expires at the end of 1987.

Robert Callahan, president of the TWU, called the agreement covering flight attendants "the best possible... given the absolute insanity of the last year."

Many flight attendants did not agree. "We should have struck in January," a furloughed flight attendant told me. "I might have a job now. This new contract cuts pay 20 percent and cuts vacation. There is still a two-tier. It doesn't promise to call us back. The only good thing about it is that we get paid for scheduled time, not the barbaric rule of getting paid for just flight time."

"It's time to stand up and stop these at-

tacks and seek support from others," an Atlanta-based flight attendant told the *Militant* after the settlement was announced. "Everyone was prepared and ready to fight. We are in a stronger position now to shut it down."

To prepare for the strike in D.C., the Transport Workers Union held a series of solidarity and strike preparation meetings, which were open to IAM and ALPA members and friends and family of flight attendants. Meetings of more than 100 people were held on February 24 and 27 to organize picket squads for the three area airports. ALPA and IAM representatives pledged their support and told flight atten-

dants their members would honor TWU picket lines.

Flight attendants organized by the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) at United, Piedmont, and USAir came to the February 24 meeting to express support and volunteer.

A D.C. flight attendant told the meeting that she had 20 years with Eastern. She addressed the younger flight attendants: "Our fight is crucial. We cannot continue to work under the conditions we have for the past six weeks. What we do will determine the conditions I work under for the next 20 years. But it will determine the conditions you work under for the next 50."

Rally celebrates Atlanta bookstore relocation

BY JON BIXBY

ATLANTA — The impending move of the *Militant* Labor Bookstore to spacious new headquarters in the heart of the central city was celebrated February 22. Union members, fighters for Black rights, and other fighters for social progress participated.

In its new location the bookstore will be renamed Pathfinder Bookstore. It will continue to offer a range of Pathfinder books and other socialist publications. The move is being made because the new location is accessible to many more working people and youth than the present one.

The Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance will also be located there.

Among those who attended the event, which raised \$160 toward the cost of renovating the new location, was Stephanie

Collins.

A member of United Auto Workers Local 10, Collins said she was inspired by the 1967 speech of Martin Luther King, Jr., in which he spoke out publicly for the first time against the war in Vietnam.

"The enemy is not overseas in some Third World country," she said, "but here in the United States, where corporations demand concession contracts, and where profits are valued more than human life." Collins denounced U.S. aggression in Nicaragua and the invasion and occupation of Grenada.

Mary Cater, a Black woman whose home in a predominantly white neighborhood in nearby Cobb County was hit by shotgun fire in 1983, said she and her family had refused to be chased out by the racist attack. Demonstrations are being organized against Cobb County police, who have refused to investigate the attack.

"As you have always come in the past, we know you will be there," Cater told the group. She has spoken at a number of meetings sponsored by the *Militant* Labor Forum.

Robin Singer, who had just returned from participating with other North Americans in a volunteer work brigade in Nicaragua, described what he saw there. "The people of Nicaragua are determined to crush the U.S.-organized counterrevolution," he said. "All over Nicaragua you see signs saying 'Yankee, go home' and 'No pasaran!' [They shall not pass]."

Kate Daher, a member of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 365, spoke for the Socialist Workers Party. She said the new bookstore "will be a center where fighters like Stephanie Collins and Mary Cater can come and discuss politics."

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S. Africa: huge meeting protests apartheid

BY FRED FELDMAN

On March 7, the apartheid regime ended the state of emergency it imposed on 36 districts last July 20. The government is reportedly preparing legislation to allow police in any locality to proclaim a state of emergency in their area.

The announcement came two days after what the *Washington Post* described as the biggest funeral protest since the current wave of protests began in August 1984. Tens of thousands in the township of Alexandra, near Johannesburg, rallied against apartheid while mourning 17 of its victims.

The regime's cops and troops killed 46 people in Alexandra in an effort to crush recent anti-apartheid protests.

Apartheid is a racist system under which the white minority rulers systematically repress, segregate, and deny any political power to the 80 percent of the population that is Black.

In the March 6 *Washington Post*, Allister Sparks noted "the unusually high white attendance" at the funeral. The hundreds of whites present included members of the all-white Sandton Town Council that governs this part of greater Johannesburg. The council donated \$250 toward the funeral costs "as a gesture of sympathy." Diplomats from seven countries, including the United States, were present.

"In everything but name," wrote Sparks, "the funeral was a mass rally of the underground African National Congress. Three of its black, green, and yellow banners were paraded around the sports stadium where the main ceremony was held, then carried through the township's streets to the cemetery."

"The 17 coffins were draped in ANC colors. Songs and slogans praised the organization's exiled and imprisoned leaders. The crowd broke into wild cheering as Winnie Mandela, wife of imprisoned ANC leader Nelson Mandela, entered the stadium beneath a huge green, black, and yellow floral cross."

Frank Chicane, a leader of the United Democratic Front, a coalition of 600 anti-apartheid organizations with 2 million members, described the apartheid regime

as "a government that has declared war on the people of this country who have no vote."

The regime ordered the expulsion of three CBS reporters after the network broadcast film of this funeral. The order was cancelled after CBS officials said they would abide by censorship regulations.

In announcing the end of the state of emergency, the government released 329 political prisoners. It said that all but 38 of the 8,000 arrested under emergency regulations have now been released. Since the beginning of 1985, however, more than 3,000 foes of apartheid have been arrested under other repressive laws. How many of them remain in prison is not known.

Along with other forms of repression, the massive killing of anti-apartheid protesters continues, with new victims reported virtually daily. On March 11 the regime reported killing seven Blacks in the Lebowa Bantustan. The Bantustans are desolate, overcrowded reservations where 11 million Africans are forced to live.

On March 7, Barclays Bank announced it would not join the late February agreement by several major bankers to reschedule the apartheid regime's foreign debt. The regime owes \$1.2 billion to Barclays, which also barred any new loans to South Africa. The decision by Barclays, which owns nearly 50 percent of South Africa's biggest commercial bank, was reported to have shaken the government of President Pieter Botha.

Black miners, many organized in the National Union of Mineworkers, are continuing to resist the apartheid regime. On March 11, ten thousand Black miners were reported on strike for the fifth day against the giant Anglo-American Corporation.

By law, 97 percent of Black miners are required to be migrant workers who are barred from bringing their families with them. Most are forced to live in single-sex hostels that are virtual prisons on company property.

In addition to other forms of repression, employers in South Africa can fire miners for striking. Fired miners can be forced to return to their assigned reservation or deported from South Africa.



Some of tens of thousands of participants at March 5 funeral rally for 17 anti-apartheid fighters who were murdered by South African cops in Black township of Alexandra last February.

Irish freedom struggle supporter on U.S. tour

BY WILL REISSNER

Martin Collins, a British opponent of London's rule over Northern Ireland, will start a six-city U.S. speaking tour in Albany, New York, March 14. Collins is editor of *Labor and Ireland* and is active in the British Labor Party.

His U.S. tour comes at a time when pro-British forces in Northern Ireland are on a rampage against the Irish nationalist population.

On March 3, the Protestant Loyalists staged a one-day protest, setting up hundreds of roadblocks to prevent people from going to work. Police stood aside as pro-British mobs pulled people from their vehicles and set the cars on fire. In Belfast, Loyalist mobs set fire to a factory filled with nationalist workers who had defied the protest.

The pro-British forces oppose a November accord between the British and Irish governments that gives Dublin a consultative voice in Northern Ireland affairs while insuring London's continued rule there.

Nationalist forces in Northern Ireland oppose the Anglo-Irish Accord from a different angle. They see the agreement as a guarantee of British rule and an obstacle to Ireland's reunification. Martin Collins shares that view.

Ireland was partitioned by the British government in 1921, when London could no longer retain its colonial rule over the whole country. A pro-British population had been settled in the north in the 17th century to control the rebellious native Irish.

Since partition, the Loyalists have practiced fierce discrimination against the enclave's Catholic, nationalist population.

Collins feels it is vital that U.S. working people know why the Anglo-Irish Accord cannot bring peace to Ireland. The Reagan administration has hailed the accord and pledged substantial economic aid to Northern Ireland to bolster the pact.

Collins will meet with figures in the U.S. labor movement to explain that the pact is not in the interests of British or Irish workers and will also deliver this message to public meetings.

In addition, Collins will exchange views and information with Irish-American activists.

In Albany Collins will be the guest at a public reception Friday, March 14, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at 479 State Street, 1st floor, and will speak at the Militant Labor Forum on "Ireland: Britain's Vietnam" at 8:00 p.m. at 352 Central Avenue. A \$2 donation is requested.

Collins will also take part in the Albany St. Patrick's Day Parade, and will be interviewed on WWCN radio at 3:00 p.m. on March 14.

In New York City, he will be interviewed on WKCR radio, Sunday, March

16 at 10:00 a.m. On Monday, March 17, he will be part of a panel discussion of Ireland on WBAI at 10:30 p.m.

On Tuesday, March 18, he will be the featured speaker at a meeting at The Arizona, Arizona Avenue, Long Beach, New York, at 8:00 p.m. He will share the platform with Peter King, who is Nassau County comptroller and was the 1984 Grand Marshal of the New York St. Patrick's Day Parade. The meeting is sponsored by the Committee for Legal Justice in Northern Ireland. A \$5 donation is requested. Call (516) 432-7394 for further information.

Collins will speak at the Militant Labor Forum in New York, Wednesday, March 19 at 7:00 p.m. at 79 Leonard St., Manhattan. The program, preceded by a 6:00 p.m. reception, will also be addressed by George Harrison, long-time activist in the Irish freedom struggle. A \$2 donation is requested. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

Collins will also be in Philadelphia, March 20-22; Boston, March 23-25; St. Louis, March 26-28; Birmingham, Alabama, March 29-30; and will return to New York, March 31-April 2. For information on his meetings in those cities, contact the telephone numbers listed on page 16.

Steel union heads end U.S. can strike

The United Steelworkers of America (USWA) container industry conference voted to ratify a contract with four major can companies, Steelworkers vice-president Leon Lynch announced in Pittsburgh March 5. Lynch said the vote of local union presidents, which ended a 16-day strike by more than 13,000 workers, was 90 to 12.

The three-year agreement covers about 6,000 workers at Continental Can, 4,500 at American Can, 2,500 at National Can, and 600 at Crown Cork and Seal.

According to the *Associated Press*, the three-year contract calls for a wage freeze. Instead of increases in the base wage, workers will receive bonuses of \$400, \$300, and \$300 in successive years of the contract.

New hires will get 80 percent of the base wage paid current employees for their first two years on the job. After that, the press reports indicated, they are supposed to reach parity with other workers.

The cost of living adjustment was preserved and will be added to the base wage for the purpose of calculating other benefits.

Some 1,800 workers at Continental Can of Canada are still on strike.

Court rules for coal miners against Massey, then stays order

BY HENRY SAMS

CHARLESTON, W. Va. — A federal judge here ruled in favor of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) in its suit against A.T. Massey Coal Company. U.S. District Judge Dennis Knapp issued an injunction February 25 that forces the company to arbitrate the dispute over whether all Massey subsidiaries are bound by the 1984 national coal contract. It also orders Massey to abide by certain provisions of the contract until the arbitration is resolved. Those provisions include medical benefits and pension payments.

Detroit socialists open Pathfinder Bookstore

DETROIT — Fifty people attended the grand opening of Pathfinder Books in downtown Detroit February 22.

The opening featured a slide show on Cuba and Nicaragua.

Pathfinder representative Helen Meyers spoke at the reception. She explained that the bookstore would carry on the tradition of the Militant Bookstore — an institution in Detroit since the 1940s.

It would provide hard-to-find information on the revolutions in Cuba and Nicaragua, books on the revolutionary struggle in El Salvador, a wide range of titles on South Africa, and writings by Malcolm X, Castro, Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, and others.

Some of those who came to the grand opening were attending their first socialist activity. The audience included high school students, union activists, and participants in the fight against U.S.-government support to apartheid and against U.S. intervention in Central America.

They purchased nearly \$200 worth of books from the newly opened bookstore.

UMWA spokesperson Joe Corcoran called Knapp's ruling a "crucial victory for the union in progressing toward the ultimate resolution of our differences with the A.T. Massey Coal Co."

But two days later, responding to protests from Massey's lawyers, the judge issued a 15-day stay of his own order. This allows Massey time to appeal to a higher court.

Massey and most of its subsidiaries refused to sign the 1984 agreement between the UMWA and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association. This forced UMWA members out on a hard-fought strike in southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky.

Last December, UMWA President Richard Trumka called the 15-month walk-out to an end when a National Labor Relations Board ruling declared Massey and its 73 subsidiaries a common employer. This had been the central issue in the strike. The miners' union went to court, contending that because two of Massey's subsidiaries signed the 1984 agreement, all of them were bound by it.

UMWA members were instructed by the union to go back to work under the company's conditions, and wait for the matter to be resolved in court.

Not all the miners were called back to work. Citing "strike related misconduct," Massey has fired over 80 miners. This includes several local officials. Jim Reid, president of Local 2248, and Bill Davis, president of Local 1440, were both fired. Reid told the *Williamson Daily News*, "I can't say that this comes as a surprise to me, but I can say that there's a lot of injustice in it. I know that for sure."

The UMWA has tied winning these miners' jobs back with getting a favorable decision in court. Judge Knapp's stay means putting this fight off even longer.

115 arrested in Hormel protest

Continued from front page

a heart attack after the cops dropped him on the pavement. As the cops stood around claiming that Bartholomew was "faking it," the crowd yelled "animals" and "cops will sell their soul to the devil."

Bartholomew was finally taken to a hospital where he is currently in intensive care but in stable condition.

The cops threatened a photographer from Local P-9's newspaper, *The Unionist*.

Maggie McCraw, one of two *Militant* reporters on the scene, was arrested as she attempted to cover the cop attack.

McCraw reports that when she was told to leave the area, she showed a cop her press passes, including the one issued by Police Chief Don Hoffman. The cop told her, "I don't give a damn who you are."

After she moved to the other side of the demonstration, two sheriffs grabbed her coat. They refused to let her arms loose to show her press pass. They shoved her in a cop car and arrested her.

The protesters were taken to the Austin jail, where they were crowded into cells. McCraw explained that she and 16 other women were put into a cell made for six. It was filthy. The women were forced to sit for nine hours on the concrete floor or on bunks without mattresses.

In the evening five women were moved to another cell. The remaining 12 were given mattresses, pillows, and torn blankets. They received no sheets and only six towels. Since there were only six bunks, half the women had to sleep on the floor.

Later it was learned that the sheriff's department had obtained a "variance" from the department of corrections allowing the overcrowded conditions.

On Monday afternoon, P-9 President Jim Guyette, referring to the protest, told a news conference, "I approve of people banding together to confront an unfair corporation."

That evening, the student support group, called P-9, The Future Generation, organized a rally outside the jail in support of their parents. The students demanded the immediate release of all protesters.

The next day, Tuesday, those arrested were arraigned on misdemeanor charges. These charges included illegal assembly and obstructing legal process.

Most of the 115 people arrested were released without bond. People from outside Austin and those with previous strike-related arrests were required to post from \$100 to \$300 bail.

On Tuesday night hundreds of people came to the union hall for the support and strategy meeting. Shortly after the meeting began, the union received two bomb threats.

The hall was quickly evacuated and the strikers and supporters marched to the jail and courthouse complex for a short rally to demand a search.

The cops were called in to check for bombs. But, claiming that union members would be more aware of "anything out of place," they refused to search the hall.

Union members were organized into teams for the search. After they combed the hall the meeting began again. The highlight of the meeting was the speeches by members of the "Austin 115," as those arrested are called.

During the demonstration at Hormel's offices, the union's consultant, Ray Ro-

gers, appeared in Mower County District Court for a hearing on the criminal syndicalism charge against him.

This felony charge stems from a February 6 demonstration at the plant gate. If convicted, Rogers faces up to five years in prison and a \$5,000 fine.

Rogers has characterized the charge as a witch-hunt and red-scare tactic.

The demonstrators at the corporate offices issued a press release condemning this charge against Rogers. The release stated that the strikers and supporters "have been continuously stripped of every civil right that we as Americans are entitled to. Our judicial system is being grossly abused for the sake of Hormel law."

Rogers' attorneys moved to have the charge dropped at the March 10 hearing. They argued that criminal syndicalism is unconstitutional since it suppresses freedom of speech and assembly.

Emily Bass, one of Rogers' attorneys, said that the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled in 1969 that a similar law was unconstitutional.

The Minnesota Civil Liberties Union has filed an amicus brief challenging the constitutionality of the law.

Pretrial hearings in the case will resume on March 31.



Militant/Tom Jaax
Ivan Bartholomew, P-9 striker, had heart attack when cops arrested him at demonstration in front of Hormel headquarters.

St. Louis: Hormel workers win support

BY HILDE EDLER
AND BOB MILLER

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — A delegation of striking Minnesota meatpackers and locked-out meatpackers from Ottumwa, Iowa, won broad support for their struggle against Geo. A. Hormel & Co. during their recent visit to this area.

The strikers, members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local P-9, were joined on tour here by members of UFCW Local 431, who were locked out of Hormel's plant in Ottumwa for honoring P-9's picket lines.

The meatpackers addressed a meeting of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 2250 February 26. The local, which organizes the 6,000 workers at the General Motors Assembly plant in Wentzville, voted to contribute \$500 to the strike.

A collection at the union meeting netted an additional \$1,000 for the strikers and the locked-out workers. The auto workers' local is also planning a plant-gate collection and other contributions in the future.

Besides addressing the union meeting, the eight Hormel workers were given a tour of the plant by the union. Many workers on the assembly line waved and gave the thumbs up sign to the fighting meatpackers.

One touring member of Local P-9 told the *Militant* that he was particularly pleased to see the sign "Protect unionism — boycott Hormel" prominently displayed outside the union office in the plant. All Hormel products have been removed from plant vending machines at the request of the union.

The workers at the Ford Assembly plant in Hazelwood donated \$560 for the Hormel workers during a plant-gate collection February 28. The collection was organized by UAW Local 325. The local also distributed a leaflet announcing a two-week drive to

collect canned goods for the meatpackers.

During their visit the UFCW members attended a meeting of all the unions that organize National Steel in Granite City, Illinois. This was the first time in many years that all five Steelworkers locals and the Chemical Workers local that organizes the mill workers had met together outside of contract negotiation time.

A plant-gate collection before the meeting netted \$2,000, which was sent to P-9's Adopt A P-9 Family program. One local at the mill had voted to send \$100 a month for three months to the program.

A collection at the meeting netted \$150 for the Ottumwa workers who are receiving neither union benefits nor unemployment compensation.

The Hormel workers toured the steel mill with a representative of the Steelworkers' union. They were also interviewed by one of the union newspapers.

After hearing the meatpackers, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) here voted March 2 to support the boycott of Hormel products. The coalition also decided to send out a press release to the local and national media announcing their support for the striking and locked-out workers. The CBTU chapter encouraged all its members to go back to their local unions to get more support.

The meatpackers received a warm welcome from the American Postal Workers Union. The local voted to go on record in support of the Hormel boycott. A collection at the meeting netted \$70 for the Hormel workers.

One member of the delegation had an opportunity to talk personally with the ambassador from Nicaragua, Carlos Tünnermann, who was in St. Louis. Tünnermann sent a message of support to the Hormel workers.

Solidarity grows for strike

PHILADELPHIA — At its February 23 meeting, United Auto Workers Local 731 at GM Fisher Guide plant in Trenton, New Jersey, passed a resolution in support of UFCW Local P-9.

The resolution called for a plant-gate collection for the strikers as well as a \$300 donation to the Adopt A P-9 Family program.

The resolution called for the local to send a letter to Minnesota Gov. Rudy Perpich condemning the use of the National Guard as a strikebreaking force.

The local also voted to organize, either alone or with other unions, an informational picket line at stores that sell Hormel products. The resolution called for the removal of all Hormel products from the vending machines in the plant.

The local voted to buy, either alone or with other unions, an ad in the local press explaining the Hormel boycott and the strike.

Finally, the local voted to print the resolution in its newspaper.

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — The Farm Alliance for Rural Missouri (FARM), a coalition of farm organizations, adopted a resolution February 22 in support of Local P-9's strike. The farm coalition voted to support the boycott of Hormel products.

LOS ANGELES — United Auto Workers Local 148 at McDonnell Douglas voted at its meeting February 27 to donate \$1,000 a month for three months to the Adopt A P-9 Family program.

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. — The Peninsular AFL-CIO Central Labor Council voted at its March 3 meeting to contribute \$100 a month for three months to help the strike.

The International Association of Machinists Lodge 2461 at the Allied Signal Bendix Auto Parts plant voted at its February 18 meeting to send a \$50 contribution to the strikers, take up a plant-gate collection for the strike, and support the Hormel boycott. The lodge also voted to send a letter to the Minnesota governor condemning the use of the National Guard.

OAK RIDGE, Tenn. — Betty Jean Hall, director of the Coal Employment Project (CEP — an organization that helps women get and keep jobs in the mines), sent the following message to Local P-9: "On behalf of women miners throughout the nation's coalfields and the CEP staff, we are proud to support your strike against Hormel. Your fight is important to all workers."

AMES, Iowa — The January 31 issue of the *North American Farmer*, the newspaper of the North American Farm Alliance, featured an article headlined "North American Farm Alliance endorses P-9 strike and Hormel boycott."

The article by George Naylor states that "the Alliance is urging all farmers to unify and stand by P-9 workers by not buying Hormel products, selling hogs to Hormel, or 'scabbing' to replace striking workers."

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Norfolk: 1,500 rally for desegregation

BY CHRISTINE GAUVREAU

NORFOLK, Va. — Fifteen hundred people crammed into the First Baptist Church March 9 to rally against attempts to resegregate Norfolk schools.

Speakers included Dr. William Gibson, national board chairman of the NAACP; Henry Marsh, a Black community lawyer; Joseph Greene, vice-mayor of the city of Norfolk; William Robinson, state delegate; and a broad range of religious and community leaders.

Also speaking was Tara Bragg, president of the Norfolk Education Association, who read a strong protesting resolution passed by the association.

Banners scattered around the spirited crowd read, "It's not the bus, it's us."

The Norfolk School Committee will vote on March 20 whether to implement a "neighborhood school" plan that would eliminate busing to desegregate the city's elementary schools. The plan under consideration would result in 10 of the 35 elementary schools in the city becoming 98-100 percent Black in their enrollment.

Norfolk first began crosstown busing to desegregate the school system in 1970.

The school committee, under pressure from Black community opposition, has voted three times since 1983 to delay implementing the plan. On February 7, however, the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals, in a move that put wind in the school committee's sails, hailed the resegregation plan as "a reasonable attempt . . . to keep as many white students in public education as possible and so achieve a stably integrated school system."

This federal appeals court ruling was greeted with enthusiasm by Assistant U.S. Attorney General William Bradford Reynolds, who testified in the case on behalf of the school committee. Up to 50 other school systems could "comfortably" curtail desegregation plans in light of the ruling, he said. In a press conference he held on February 18, Reynolds gloated that as many as 370 more school systems probably could qualify to be free from court-ordered busing based on this ruling.

Essentially the court ruled that any school system that had been declared "unitary," or desegregated, by the courts could end busing if their "intent" was not to discriminate.

Black community leaders expressed outrage at the ruling. Bishop L.E. Willis, one of the most prominent and influential leaders in Norfolk's Black community, testified at a school committee meeting on February 20. "You're backing us into a corner," he warned. "And there's no place to go back there. We've got to come out."

Responding to a school committee argument that the plan could be carried out in a nondiscriminatory way because there are currently Black school committee members and administrators, Willis said, "I used to think the school committee was racist. I don't think that anymore. I think it's a matter of class." Echoing this theme,

Rev. James Harris, chairman of the protesting Coalition for Quality Public Education, asked, "When will the school committee be responsive to the voices of the people, not just to the people with power and money?"

The school committee and city administration have been trying to overturn the busing plan since its inception. "It took 17 years for Norfolk to implement the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision that declared separate schools are inherently unequal," Rev. Harris pointed out. "And since 1975 the board has devoted its time and the taxpayers' money to circumvent the intent of the court," he said. "The Black community," he continued, "will not comply with unjust plans or policies."

In May 1983, 10,000 people, including Rev. Jesse Jackson, marched to City Hall to protest the proposed end to busing. In addition to the thousands of parents, students, teachers, and others who marched, a contingent of the International Longshoremen carried a banner in the demonstration. This movement came on the heels of the successful drive by the United Steelworkers, in close collaboration with area civil rights leaders, to organize the huge shipyard in nearby Newport News several years earlier.

Black community leaders are urging supporters of desegregated schools to mobilize for the March 20 school committee meeting and have threatened further public protests if the committee votes to implement the plan this fall.



Militant/Chris Davis

Black community and others have mobilized to stop resegregation of schools in Norfolk, Virginia. Above, 10,000 people marched in 1983. Thousands of parents, students, teachers, and others protested proposed end of busing.

Oakland rally backs Minn. strikers

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

OAKLAND, Calif. — A labor rally in support of the Minnesota striking meatpackers took place February 28. Over 70 people packed into a meeting room to hear the strikers, their supporters, and area labor officials.

The meeting was chaired by Tom Csekey from the California State Employees Association-Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 100.

Csekey told the audience that the struggle by United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-9 to win a decent contract from Hormel "is the central labor struggle today. I want to emphasize that it is imperative for the entire labor movement to throw its weight in this battle. Anything else is treachery."

Marck Wodyka, the district organizer of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union for Northern California, explained that "it is time for labor to wake up, we need to take a stand, to put away our differences and stand side by side with these courageous fighters."

Although the Alameda County Central Labor Council had not decided to support the tour of these strikers, Norm Heald, a

member of the executive board of the council and business agent for the Glass, Pottery, Plastics and Allied Workers International Union Local 2, called on all unions to support the strike.

Dan Cassidy, organizer for the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees union Local 28, also spoke.

Kay Eisenhower from Local 616 of the SEIU encouraged all those at the meeting to help build a labor rally for the Hormel strikers on March 12 in San Francisco.

Louise Goodman spoke on behalf of the East Bay Coalition of Labor Union Women, one of the rally sponsors.

A message from Berkeley Mayor Eugene "Gus" Newport was read. After extending his solidarity to the strike, Newport condemned Minnesota Gov. Rudy Perpich's decision to send in the National Guard in the attempt to break the strike. Newport concluded, "Brothers and sisters, your courage and dedication to your families, to your union, to your cause are a tremendous example and inspiration for

working people across the country. A victory for P-9 would be a victory for all fighters for justice."

Among the other speakers at the meeting were Malcolm Kelley of the National Urban League and Wilson Riles, Jr., a member of the Oakland City Council.

John George of the Bay Area Free South Africa Movement, who is an Alameda County supervisor, pledged the support of the anti-apartheid group for the boycott of Hormel products.

The highlight of the evening was a speech by P-9 striker Bud Miller.

Miller explained that the local had accepted concessions for years until finally they were forced out on strike to defend their union.

He called on all unions to support the strike by donating money to the local's emergency fund and Adopt A P-9 Family program.

Miller also pledged the support of the Austin strikers for other labor battles, particularly the strike by cannery workers in Watsonville, California.

Garment workers strike in Calif.

BY SETH GALINSKY

VERNON, Calif. — The workers at the India Ink Co. do not have any medical benefits. They get only four paid holidays a year. When they work more than 40 hours a week, they are not paid time-and-a-half. Despite these conditions, which include outright violations of labor law, these workers — who are overwhelmingly Mexican and Central American — did not complain.

But when the company decided to reduce wages 34 percent in the quilting department, the workers couldn't take it any more. Guadalupe Calderon contacted the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) and then won her co-workers to support unionization of the plant.

The company responded by firing Calderon for her union activity. Sixty-three of the 80 workers then walked out February 3 demanding that Calderon be rehired and the union be recognized.

India Ink produces comforters and bedspreads for stores such as Sears, Broadway, May Co., and Montgomery Ward. These comforters are very expensive. Generally they sell for more than \$400 each. Yet the quilters were paid no more than \$8 for each comforter. With the reduction of the piece rate, they made no more than \$5 for each comforter they produced.

Rafael Reynoso, one of the quilters, explained, "We decided to win or to lose. Even when the piece rate was lowered," he said, "the company still wanted us to buy the comforters if we made a mistake. In other departments," he continued, "after working here two or three years, the people made \$4 an hour. But then the company would fire them and replace them with new workers who would make only minimum wage."

Last year, India Ink's sales came to \$4.8 million. The company anticipates sales of about \$7 million this year.

When the workers went on strike, the company got an injunction limiting to 14 the number of pickets allowed in front of the plant. The order also prohibited the workers from shouting or trying in any way to stop strikebreakers from entering the plant. Since the strike began, the company has hired 60 scabs.

A national boycott of India Ink products has been called by ACTWU. The workers report that the boycott has been successful. They are confident that through the boycott they will force the company to recognize the union and come to the bargaining table.

The workers at India Ink need support. You can send messages of solidarity and contributions for the strike to ACTWU, Attention: Richard Bensinger, 2501 S. Hill, Los Angeles, Calif. 90007.

The Hormel strike at a glance

The 1,500 members of United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) Local P-9 were forced out on strike by the Geo. A. Hormel meatpacking company on Aug. 17, 1985. They are workers at the company's Austin, Minnesota, operation.

Several months earlier, Hormel had unilaterally slashed wages from \$10.69 to \$8.25 an hour. They were later raised to \$9.25. When the union's contract expired August 17, the company refused to return wages to their former level.

Hormel also demanded additional concessions, including gutting the seniority and grievance systems and instituting a two-tier wage system. The company has demanded the right to punish workers injured on the job. The injury rate per year at the Austin plant is 202 injuries for every 100 workers. Hormel is also demanding contractual restrictions on workers' democratic and political rights.

In the course of the strike, Local P-9 has had to face attacks by the company, courts, and governor.

On Dec. 24, 1985, the courts issued

an injunction limiting strike activity at the plant.

On January 21, Minnesota Gov. Rudy Perpich of the Democratic Farmer-Labor Party sent in the National Guard to herd scabs for Hormel. Public outrage forced Perpich to pull the Guard back from the plant on January 29. The strikers were then able to close the plant again.

On February 3 Perpich again assigned the Guard to herd strikebreakers. Although there are about 900 scabs in the plant, production is only at about 10 percent of normal.

The striking local sent out roving pickets to other Hormel plants. On January 28 the company fired over 500 workers at Hormel plants in Ottumwa, Iowa, and Fremont, Nebraska, for refusing to cross P-9's picket lines.

On February 22, P-9 removed their pickets from the Ottumwa plant. The workers, members of UFCW Local 431, an amalgamated local representing 5,000 members statewide, then marched en masse to demand their jobs. The company refused, locking out the workers.

100,000 at 'March for Women's Lives'

Continued from front page

fanatics rushed the head of the march. One of them held what he claimed was a fetus in his bare hands and thrust it in the face of some of the marchers.

A young woman from Wellesley College expressed the rage felt by many when she told the *Militant*, "You know, you see this kind of thing every day at the abortion clinics, and it makes you mad. But somehow, today, it makes me so much more mad. I mean, look at us. We are really the majority. Who do these people think they are? And why do they get away with it? No more," she said. "No way."

This determined spirit to fight for women's rights, as well as the spirit of celebration everyone felt at coming together for a just cause, was shown in the many banners and chants of the marchers.

"What do we want? Free choice! When

do we want it? Always!" the marchers yelled out, expressing their determination to defend their rights for as long as it takes.

"Our bodies, our lives, we will not be terrorized!", "Stop bombing abortion clinics!", "A woman's scream is not silent," and "A woman's life is a human life" were common signs.

Many signs showed wire coat hangers with the slogan, "Never again!" The wire coat hanger is the symbol of the suffering and death faced by thousands of women as a result of botched, illegal abortions.

Other signs said, "No more backstreet butchery," and one campus contingent carried a sign identifying itself as "Back alley busters."

Marchers chanted defiantly, "Not the church, not the state, women alone must decide our fate," and "When the pope gets pregnant, he can decide!", "Get govern-

ment out of the bedroom," and "Antichoice wants women in chains."

"Fund contraception, not contras," was one of the chants heard most often throughout the length of the march.

Feminist folksinger Kristin Lems sang a song remembering Rosie Jimenez, the young Chicana who was the first woman to die of an illegal abortion after the 1977 congressional Hyde Amendment cut off public funding for abortions, making a safe, legal abortion too expensive for her.

Opposition to the Hyde Amendment was a central theme of the demonstration, both from the speakers' platform and among the marchers, many of whom carried signs demanding reinstatement of public funding.

This was one of the greatest strengths of the "March for Women's Lives." It was a march for the rights of all women.

Big student turnout

The student contingents were by far the largest. They came from campuses, big and small, all over the country.

One of the largest contingents was from Barnard/Columbia in New York, which filled nine buses. They wore red T-shirts identifying themselves as "Prochoicers."

I asked five students from Miami University, a small campus in Oxford, Ohio, why they had come to the march. "I grew up with abortion being a safe and legal way to terminate a pregnancy," one young woman answered. "It just seems so unimaginable to have that right taken away. But with the bombings and the president we have, we can see how dramatic the situa-

tion is. Something has got to be done immediately."

"It's my body," a student from State University of New York at Albany told me. "I feel that very strongly, and if someone wants to rule on my body, I think that's illegal. I think that's a crime."

Judy Crowell, one of the student speakers at the rally, said, "This is an issue of women's rights — the right to reach our fullest potential. To control our fertility, we must have that right. We must be able to take our equal place in society."

"We are the activists of the 1980s," Crowell said, calling students across the country a "solidarity movement." "We can make an impact. We did it in the 1960s, and we are going to do it again now."

For many of the students, it was their first demonstration. Many others, including some of the organizers, had been active in the anti-apartheid movement and in antiwar actions in solidarity with the people of Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Whenever I pointed out that March 8 was International Women's Day and asked the students what significance that had for them, their thoughts flew to their sisters in South Africa and in Nicaragua.

"When I watch Winnie Mandela on TV, with all her courage, I am proud to be a woman," one student said.

"Women in Nicaragua are dying because Reagan backs the contras. It's so wrong," a young man pointed out.

There were contingents organized by more than 230 chapters of the National Organization for Women. Two thousand turned out from Florida. A demonstrator from Houston said 500 people made the 1,300-mile trip from Texas. And, she added, some were flying to Los Angeles for the March 16 action.

The contingents gave evidence of the many battles being fought by NOW chapters and other supporters of abortion rights in their own states and cities. They range from defense of abortion clinics, to fighting off attempts to cut off public funding of abortion in those few states that still have it, to protesting attempts by state and local officials to pass laws requiring parental consent for minors seeking abortions.

Feminist organizations, including feminist health centers, battered women's shelters, antipornography groups, rape crisis groups, and women's collectives participated in the action.

Important solidarity and antiwar organizations supported March 9, including the Free South Africa Movement, the National Mobilization for Survival, the Nicaragua Task Force, and MADRE, an organization of solidarity with women in El Salvador and Nicaragua. The Nicaraguan Information Committee carried a banner saying, "No contra aid."

The National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) made a special effort to build the action. Many chapters of Planned



Militant/Janice Prescott

One of most popular slogans at demonstration

Big interest in socialist literature

BY HARRY RING

Up and down the East Coast and as far west as the Mississippi, socialists worked energetically to help build NOW's abortion rights demonstration in Washington. And the day of the march, they sold a good amount of socialist literature, including 1,679 copies of the *Militant*, and 92 introductory subscriptions. There were 386 copies of the *Young Socialist* sold as well.

This was a solid kick-off for our spring circulation drive. Officially launched March 8, the aim is to sell a total of 45,000 single copies of the *Militant* and its Spanish-language sister publication, *Perpectiva Mundial*.

A second goal of the drive, which closes May 16, is to sell 2,000 introductory subscriptions to both publications.

There was also a good sale of books and pamphlets published and distributed by Pathfinder Press. In addition to large display tables at the formation and rally sites, there were a dozen smaller literature tables.

Among the women's liberation literature, the top item was the new Pathfinder Press book, *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*, with nearly 50 copies sold at the two main tables alone.

South Africa was the second greatest area of interest. There, the best-selling book was Winnie Mandela's *Part of My Soul Went with Him*, of which 41 copies were sold at the two main tables.

As the day's program drew to a close, some 250 participants gathered at a nearby hotel for a reception hosted by the Young Socialist Alliance. These included members and friends, old and new, of the YSA and Socialist Workers Party.

The highlight of that jubilant gathering was remarks by Tammy Novak. A high-schooler from Austin, Minnesota, she is a leader of "P-9, The Future Generation," a student group building support for the Hormel strike.

In February the group led a walkout of 350 students protesting school officials' attack on their democratic right to support the strike.

In brief, spirited remarks at the Washington open house, Novak explained that school authorities sparked the conflict by denying students the right to wear prostrike buttons, while other students were permitted to wear "I love Hormel" buttons.

On the eve of the walkout, she said, the administration backed off and said the P-9 buttons could be worn. But the walkout in support of the strike went ahead.

Why do the students support the strike?

"Because the students of today are the workers of tomorrow," Novak told the gathering. If the strikers don't win, she explained, the "future generation" will have to work under the worsened conditions Hormel is now trying to impose.

The reception also heard remarks by YSA leaders Jackie Floyd and Mark Curtis, and by Clare Fraenzl, a coal miner running for governor of Pennsylvania on the Socialist Workers ticket.

The gathering included an encouraging number of recent recruits and new friends of the YSA.

Among the guests were a Black woman coal miner from Birmingham, Alabama, and a Miami student from the African country of Botswana.

From Houston, there was a young woman who is the only female in her workplace. She would always argue for women's equality, she explained, but never really did anything until she heard about the plans for the march and joined NOW to help build it. In NOW she met several YSAers and she says she'll probably soon be a member too. "I have the same

goals," she said.

New YSA members present included three high school women from Cincinnati. They've been hassled by school officials for circulating a petition in support of the P-9 strike.

In response, they're hoping to get an Austin high school strike supporter to come and speak at their school.

In talking with some of those who hawked the *Militant*, one of the things that emerged was that the paper's strongest single selling point, in addition to its support for women's rights, was the paper's extensive Nicaragua coverage.

Salespeople averaged nearly 10 copies apiece. Mark Friedman from Detroit surpassed his usual impressive results. He sold 143 copies of the *Militant*.

Leading the field in sales of subscriptions was a stellar team from Boston, Jon Hillson and Don Gurewitz, a striking G.E. worker.

Between them, they sold 14 subscriptions.

Added up, the sales figures reflected changing political times.

'IP' documents British WRP debate

The March 24 *Intercontinental Press* carries two documents from the *Workers Press*, a newspaper published in London by a wing of the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP). The documents, by WRP leaders Michael Banda and Bill Hunter, are part of a public discussion launched by this wing on the political and organizational degeneration of the WRP, as well as the Fourth International's history and place in the international workers' movement today.

Before it split in October 1985, the WRP was one of the largest groups in Britain claiming adherence to Trotskyism. That month, the WRP wing that Banda and Hunter belong to broke organizationally with Gerry Healy, the party's longtime cult figure.

Then in February this WRP wing took a further step in its break with Healyite policy by publicly repudiating the agent-baiting campaign waged by the WRP and its U.S. followers in the Workers League against the Fourth Interna-

tional and the U.S. Socialist Workers Party. They had charged that leaders of the Fourth International and the SWP are U.S. and Soviet police agents. This repudiation provoked a further split between this WRP wing and the U.S. Workers League.

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KEEP ABORTION SAFE & LEGAL

Reporter's Notebook
Cuban CP Congress

Parenthood participated.

There was an impressive turnout by the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights. Many women carried small placards identifying themselves as part of RCAR and demanding their right to freedom of religion and conscience in supporting a woman's right to choose abortion. RCAR is a coalition of 32 religious denominations that support abortion rights.

A good number were Catholics. A number of signs declared, "Catholics for free choice."

Many of those in the RCAR contingent were Black.

A good number of young Black women and men marched in the student contingent, and many of the rally speakers were Black.

Although the presence of Black organizations was modest, it marked a step forward in the participation of these groups in the fight for abortion rights.

Dozens of Black organizations endorsed the action, including many Black feminist groups.

The National Urban League and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists cosponsored the march.

A "women of color" contingent and a contingent of the National Black Lesbian and Gay Task Force marched. The National Black Independent Political Party carried a banner demanding abortion rights, child care, and equal pay for equal work.

Participation from the unions was modest, but significant.

In addition to the CBTU, the most important official backing for the march came from the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), a coalition of union members that is backed by the AFL-CIO and most international unions.

A Coalition of Labor Union Women contingent participated in the march. A number of unionists from locals of the United Auto Workers, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, and the International Union of Electronic Workers marched in the CLUW contingent. A group of women miners from the United Mine Workers of America also joined in, as did 20 members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 400 who are on strike against intolerable working conditions at Marval Poultry Co.

CLUW President Joyce Miller addressed the rally and said the struggle of women to control their own bodies "is particularly critical to the 48 million women in the work force. To lose this right relegates women to the lowest-paying, lowest-status, dead-end jobs."

Miller, who is also a vice-president of the AFL-CIO, said, "To those who underestimate the power and commitment of women to fight for our right to legal abortion and birth control, to fight to save our own lives, I remind you of the words of the old labor song, 'We shall not be moved!'"

A high point of the march was the participation of 10 members and supporters of Local P-9 of the UFCW, which is carrying on a historic strike against the Hormel meatpacking company in Austin, Minnesota. (See accompanying story.)

The same militant spirit, courage, and determination of the P-9 strikers that is winning them the admiration and support of working people everywhere also won warm support at the march.

Their slogan, "They say give back, we say fightback!", found a responsive chord among the fighters for women's rights at the march, who have vowed, "We will never give in." Many marchers were seen wearing "P-9 proud" and "Boycott Hormel" buttons.

Also present at the march were members of the Flight Attendants Association on strike against TWA.

When NOW leader Molly Yard, who chaired the rally, announced that NOW was launching a boycott of TWA "until you treat your flight attendants like human beings," the crowd shouted and cheered its approval.

NOW President Eleanor Smeal said the fight for justice didn't have to wait for a change in the White House. She pointed out that the most liberal abortion law on the books was signed into law by Ronald



"Women's movement is on the move," NOW President Eleanor Smeal (left) told massive abortion rights rally. Other speakers included Gaye Williams, National Political Congress of Black Women (center), and Barbara Ferraro and Patricia Hussey of the "Vatican 24".



Militant photos by Ernest Harsch

Reagan when he was governor of California.

She told those who think that Reagan could never be made to change his mind to give some thought to what had happened in the Philippines. "You would think Reagan had invented Cory Aquino," she said. "You would think he had never, ever supported Marcos." Smeal predicted the same fate for the apartheid regime in South Africa as had befallen Marcos.

Smeal said that reinforcements were on the way to stand up to the terrorists and to those who assault and harass women at abortion clinics. "The escort services are going to get bigger and bigger until we have sanity back again."

Smeal also urged the marchers to stay in Washington, D.C., to participate in a lobbying effort for passage of the Civil Rights Restoration Act. The act would make sure that federal funds are not used to discriminate against women, Blacks, Latinos and others.

Passage of the bill is being held up because an antiabortion amendment has been attached to it. "As we march, we say we will not trade off one right for another," Smeal declared.

Pointing to the huge gathering, Smeal brought the crowd to its feet when she said, "The women's movement is on the move. We are not yesterday, we are tomorrow!"

The Catholic church hierarchy came under heavy fire for its increasingly strong-armed tactics in opposing abortion rights.

One of the speakers was Mary Ann Sorrentino, an official of Planned Parenthood, whom church officials are trying to excommunicate.

Just days before the March 9 action, it became known that church officials will

also try to excommunicate Smeal, who is Roman Catholic. The administration of Catholic University banned a recent speech by Smeal on that campus, a move that provoked a big student protest.

Barbara Ferraro and Patricia Hussey, two Roman Catholic nuns, received a long standing ovation for their courage in standing up to the Vatican.

Ferraro and Hussey are part of the "Vatican 24," a group of nuns threatened with expulsion from their religious orders for signing an ad in the *New York Times* last year advocating the right to choose.

Since that time, the 24 women have been hounded and threatened by church officials. Some have been yanked from their teaching jobs. Friends and families have been harassed and threatened.

Despite this, they have refused to recant. Another ad, signed by 1,000 Catholics, appeared recently in the *New York Times*.



Faith Evans of Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights and labor leader Joyce Miller also addressed rally.

protesting this harassment. Ferraro and Hussey are among three of the "Vatican 24" who again put their names to the ad.

Patricia Hussey described the Catholic church hierarchy as "eternal fathers wanting to lord it over obedient, silent, and submissive good daughters." She drew loud cheers and applause when she said, "You in Rome, you in the White House, we will not be submissive. We will not be silent. The steps we have taken have been steps toward our liberation."

International solidarity

Gaye Williams, a young woman who heads the National Political Congress of Black Women, was among the best received by the marchers.

She said that on International Women's Day, "my sisters round the world, women of color, and all of us are celebrating the

Continued on Page 9



Militant/Ernest Harsch

Hormel strikers win warm support at March 9

BY ANDREA GONZÁLEZ

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Hundreds of participants at the March for Women's Lives stopped by the Boycott Hormel tables at the demonstration's assembly and rally sites.

Unionists, students, and other women's rights activists picked up boycott literature, bought buttons, T-shirts, and hats, or just stopped by to express their support for the meatpackers fighting Geo. A. Hormel & Co. in Minnesota and Iowa.

A delegation of eight — including strikers from Austin, their supporters, and a leader of the Hormel workers' Support Group in Ottumwa, Iowa — came to the abortion rights action to build solidarity for their struggle.

The Austin workers, members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-9, have been on strike for over six months. The Hormel workers in Ottumwa, members of UFCW Local 431, have been locked out by the company for honoring P-9's picket lines.

One college student who came by the table took boycott literature to give to her friends at school. She explained that her father had been on strike for seven months last year and she knew how hard it was.

A teacher from Austin, Texas, came by the table to tell the strikers that "the people of Austin support the strikers from Austin." She told them of plans that were under way for a tour of the striking meatpackers to her city.

Another young student came by to pick up fact sheets on the strike. The radio sta-

tion on her campus, she explained, had played ads for Hormel products. She wanted more information so she could fight to stop these ads.

The members of UFCW Local 400 on strike against Marval Poultry Co. in Virginia also stopped by the table to express their support for the fighting meatpackers, as did a former member of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO), which was busted by the Federal government in 1981.

Several members of the UFCW national staff also stopped by the table. The top officials of that union have publicly attacked the strike and threatened to put the striking

local into receivership. These staff members said they shouldn't even be at the table. As they were leaving, however, the staff members took Hormel boycott stickers and put them on their coats.

As the march began, the strikers and supporters joined the labor contingent organized by the Coalition of Labor Union Women. As they marched along the route, people who were on the street gave them the thumbs-up sign and called out their support.

About 35 unionists and NOW activists stopped by a reception for the strikers following the rally.



Militant/Holbrook Mahn

A delegation from United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-9 attended abortion rights action to win support for their strike.

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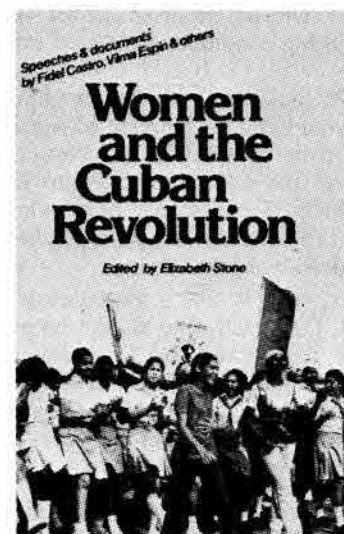
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8,000 G.E. strikers in Mass. press fight

BY RUSSELL DAVIS

LYNN, Mass. — The strike of G.E. workers continued into its third week, with 8,000 members of International Union of Electronic Workers (IUE) Local 201 still out. Production at the G.E. Everett, Medford, and Lynn River Works plants remains shut down. Picket lines are up at the gates around the clock.

The strike began on February 21 in the Lynn aircraft engine division after the suspension of a shop steward and spread to the Everett, Medford, and Lynn turbine division last week after negotiations broke down. The union termed the strike one for "justice and respect" and is attempting to force the company to deal seriously with a huge backlog of grievances.

The union is also attempting to win language preventing the arbitrary discipline and harassment of shop stewards. The company and the union met again on Monday, March 10, but broke off negotiations after the company withdrew its previous offer.

The striking Lynn aircraft engine, Medford, and Everett workers were joined by 2,000 workers in the Lynn turbine division on March 5. Over 1,000 striking Local 201 members rallied at noon at the union headquarters and marched to the plant gate with signs and banners to await the turbine workers. At 12:30 p.m. the first workers came out, followed by 1,000 others, to rousing cheers and applause in a dramatic show of force and unity. One banner, "Aircraft and turbine — together again," reflected the fact that the strike is overcoming divisions in the local that the company had sown for years.

After a meeting for turbine workers to explain the issues in the strike, another rally was held at union headquarters, followed by a secret ballot strike vote.

The company was clearly hoping for a close vote and was dealt a resounding blow when at 7:00 p.m. the president of the union, Kevin Mahar, announced that 80 percent had voted to extend the strike. With over 4,000 Local 201 members voting, the strike vote carried in all divisions, including by 77 percent in the aircraft engine division.

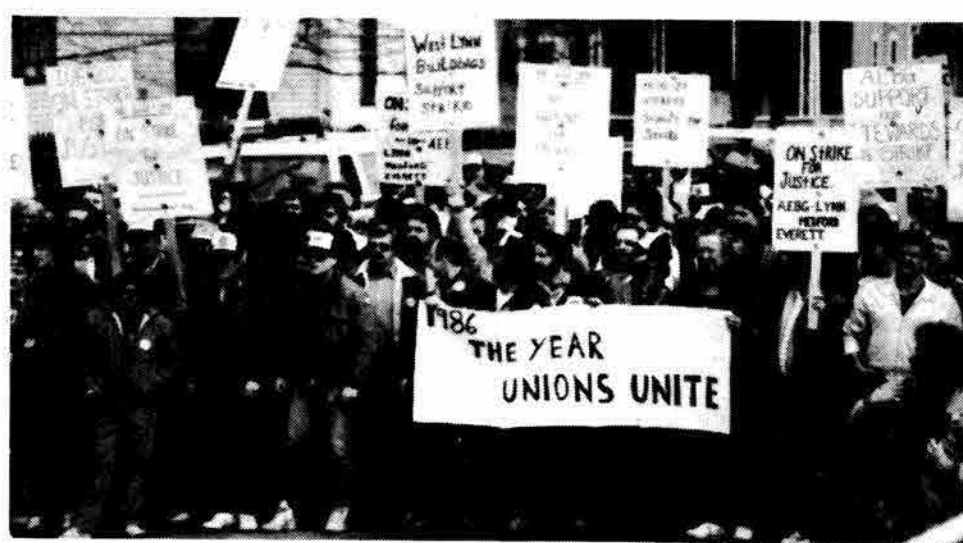
The results were greeted with enthusiasm and comments such as "We've got our union back again" and "We've fi-

nally shown them we know how to fight." One worker with many years of service told me that he had never felt so proud.

That evening, picket lines went up at the gates. On Friday, March 7, Local 201 members in the River Works power plant walked out, blacking out much of the plant and forcing management personnel to scramble in to restore power.

Though management continues to go to work, the River Works appears as though it's under siege, with up to 100 workers picketing each gate. Huge stacks of wood are piled outside for fires for the pickets to keep warm.

State and local police were joined by federal marshals March 10 after G.E. filed National Labor Relations Board charges to have the pickets removed by court order. Morale and participation remain high as IUE Local 201 continues its "strike for justice."



G.E. aircraft engine workers rally at plant gate. They were later joined by 2,000 workers in Lynn turbine division.

100,000 march for abortion rights

Continued from Page 7

collapse of the Marcos and Duvalier dictatorships.

"Today, the name Mandela is whispered and shouted and cried on campuses and political theaters across America. Today we stretch our hands across the water to Africa to join with Winnie Mandela and offer our full support of her people's struggle. Her raised fist is a signal that we will all triumph, all of us together.

"How does Mr. Reagan have the unmitigated nerve to dare ask for \$100 million," she asked, as the applause and cheers began to rise even before she could finish her sentence. "One hundred million, not to feed starving Black children in this country, but to send guns to Nicaragua to kill Nicaraguan children. Is this the 'right-to-life' he wants me to support?" she asked, as the crowd answered with a resounding, "No!"

Williams sounded a theme that was repeated by many others: it is Black women and other victims of racism who suffer the most when abortion is illegal. They are denied their right to choose because the federal Hyde Amendment and laws in most

states have now been passed that cut public funding for abortion.

Repeal Hyde Amendment

Three members of Congress addressed the rally: Don Edwards, Patricia Schroeder, and Bill Green. All three spoke about their sponsorship of the Reproductive Health Equity Act. This act would restore full public funding of abortions under Medicaid and to other federal programs that also deny abortion funding to American Indian women, federal employees and their dependents, Peace Corps volunteers, and military personnel.

NOW said that it would work for the repeal of the Hyde Amendment and for the full reinstatement of public funding. "We are for legal abortion for both the rich and the poor," said NOW President Eleanor Smeal.

Vicki Alexander, a Black physician who heads the Alliance Against Women's Oppression, said, "When you look at what has happened to our abortion rights over the last 10 years, blow by blow, each blow has affected us women of color most of all, starting with the Hyde Amendment." She said the repeal of the Hyde Amendment is

the "bottom line critical issue" for all women.

She called on all to join the fight, "because our sisters, our Black women will not have the right to abortion without funding."

Faith Evans, a Black man recently elected president of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, said the time was now to reach out and win new forces in the Black community to the fight for abortion rights. "The movement is back. It's time to have the NAACP, the Urban League, the SCLC and everyone who marched against Vietnam, who marched for the 1964 civil rights act" come together to ensure that women have the freedom to choose whether or not to bear children.

Kate Michelman, head of the National Abortion Rights Action League, announced the determination of her organization to continue the fight until all funding is restored.

Gloria Barajas, head of the Mexican American Women's National Association, said that for Hispanic women, abortion is not a single issue. Reproductive freedom must also include freedom from forced sterilization. Hispanic women "must have choices, too. They, too, must have options in their lives."

Gloria Steinem, editor of *Ms.* magazine, and Bella Abzug, Women USA, received noisy, warm welcomes from the predominantly young crowd. This was in recognition of the role they played as leaders of the feminist movement of the 1970s.

Cecilia Ham, representing the U.S. Students Association, thanked "the activists of the women's and civil rights movements" for the rights that were won in the past and vowed to continue to fight to defend them. The battle for abortion rights and civil rights, she said, "is an ongoing struggle in which we must all take part."

Songs by feminist Kristin Lems captured the mood of the marchers, who joined in singing, "We will never give in, we will never give up, we will never go back" and "Before I'll be a slave, I'll be buried in my grave, and I fight for the right to be free."

Haiti: junta stalls on demand for election

BY RASHAAD ALI

The National Council of Government, the official name of the ruling junta in Haiti, announced February 25 its plans for a transition to civilian rule.

The junta will name a 19-member consultative council. That council will in turn pick the members of a constituent assembly to write a new constitution for Haiti, states junta member Col. William Regala, the minister of the interior and national defense.

The March 5-11 issue of *Haiti Progrès*, an exile newspaper published in New York, in a front-page article argued that any constituent assembly should be elected by universal, direct suffrage so that its composition reflects the different classes in the country, their weight and specific forms.

It noted that the proposed consultative council would be an "Assembly of Notables" with no representation from the country's workers and peasants.

Gérard Gourgue, the only junta member who was not closely connected to the Duvalier dynasty, recently stated that elections cannot be held for at least 12 to 18 months. "That will be the minimum time we need. There has to be a council that chooses a constituent assembly. We have to write a constitution, organize political parties, write an electoral law," he stated.

Gourgue, the junta's minister of justice, is the only figure providing the regime with credibility among the Haitian masses. Prior to Duvalier's fall, he had contacts with U.S. diplomats and, according to the March 5 *New York Times*, Gourgue's contacts with the U.S. embassy "have intensified."

Noting that the people of Haiti want swift changes, the minister of justice said that "now everyone believes we had a rev-

olution. Every one wants changes immediately."

Gourgue, one of two civilians on the junta, also opposes the elimination of military control of the government, arguing, "We need the armed forces because they are the only people who can guarantee security." This means, he stated, that "we have to reorient people, stop the pillaging, the revenge."

This was the aim of the curfew that was reimposed by the junta — to stop demonstrations demanding more rights; to end the street justice, popularly known as "Operation Uproot"; and to end the sacking of the homes of hated officials and cops from the Duvalier regime.

In Haiti's northern city of Cap-Haïtien, the country's second largest city, representatives from all the towns and municipalities in the area gathered February 21 to form a "Committee of Renewal of the North."

At its founding meeting, held in the Cap-Haïtien City Council building, participants voiced the complaints of their respective municipalities. They discussed establishing structures to allow residents to play a direct role in administering the city.

One of the first orders of business was the establishment of structures to organize the February 25 flag-day celebration in the city. The committee voted to carry out a mass cleanup in honor of the ceremony.

The cleanup was largely organized by the youth, who played a major role in the protests that brought down Duvalier.

The committee also voted to demand that the former Cap-Haïtien headquarters of the Tontons Macoutes, Duvalier's dissolved private army, be turned into the "Regional Directorate of Education."

Speakers called for a thoroughgoing purge of Duvalierists in positions of power.

This purge, they said, must extend beyond individuals to institutions. This was greeted with applause.

Workers have taken a number of direct actions to remove Duvalierists from positions of power. At the state-owned Haiti Electricity and the National Bank of Credit workers have walked off their jobs demanding the removal of corrupt officials.

While the junta drags its feet on recovering the wealth that Duvalier stole from Haiti and bringing him back to face justice, it is preventing anti-Duvalier political exiles from returning to their country. The junta requires an entry visa for all returning Haitian exiles. This is used to screen out exiles considered "undesirable."

Northwest abortion rights action set

BY CHERYL HIDALGO

SEATTLE — The Northwest Coalition for the March for Women's Lives has been formed and is building a Northwest regional demonstration on March 22. Following the initiatives of national NOW, this march is being built to respond to increasing attacks on abortion in the Northwest. A central goal of the coalition has also been building a delegation to the national march in Los Angeles, which will have a send-off news conference on March 14.

Initiated by Seattle NOW, the coalition has attracted broad forces regionwide from unions and religious groups, and Black, Chicano, and feminist organizations. These include the National Abortion Rights Action League, Planned Parenthood, the Rainbow Coalition, Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, Whatcum County Central Labor Council, Interna-

tional Union of Electronic workers Local 1002, as well as individual labor leaders and medical professionals.

Featured speakers on the March 22 platform will include Jim Bender, executive secretary, King County Central Labor Council; Mary Terry, president, Washington State NOW; Lee Minto, chairperson, Taxpayers for Choice; Rev. Samuel McKinney, Mt. Zion Baptist Church; Dee Anderson, Washington State Rainbow Coalition; and Geri Craig, director, Portland Feminist Women's Health Center, which has received a letter bomb.

The Northwest demonstration is expected to draw people from Washington, Oregon, and Canada. Marchers will assemble at 11:00 a.m. at the Federal Courthouse, 5th and Madison in Seattle, march through downtown and rally at 2:00 p.m. at the Seattle Center Flag Pavilion.

A reporter's notebook from Estelí, Nicaragua

North American notes year of progress in northern Nicaraguan town

BY JON HILLSON

ESTELÍ, Nicaragua — This city has changed — changed physically, changed in mood.

The massive cathedral in the center of town is nearly rebuilt, a matter of pride for Estelí's 60,000 inhabitants.

Its twin bell towers were once occupied by Somoza's National Guard snipers during the national liberation war, and it was a center of combat in the city. Now, there's not a trace of the bullet holes that pockmarked the building.

On the right side of the park, the face of the Estelí theater is new, and its long-dormant neon sign now shines in the night. In front of the cinema, kids shoot baskets on a newly set up street court, and nearby, in front of the firehouse, uniformed firefighters, members of the Ministry of the Interior, and local youths play volleyball.

A new group of houses near the hospital — for doctors, war veterans, and working people — is partially occupied. Its sturdy concrete structures and tin and tile roofs occupy the space left vacant by wartime destruction in 1979.

Nearby is the government municipal center, newly organized and newly painted, including the mayor's office.

And across the street, the old furniture store has been turned into a shoe factory, a cooperative employing 50 or so workers.

On and near the main street, there are new shops selling clothes and household items, new restaurants, more stores selling fruits and vegetables, and more corner stalls selling meat.

Sewing cooperatives, which make children's clothes, blouses, and dresses, seem to have mushroomed. On one block in the center of town, there are now five where there were none.

Streets whose concrete blocks were used for barricades seven years ago in the war against Somoza have finally been recobbled, and you can walk down virtually any street and see people building, repairing, and reconstructing.

There is another new structure, too, next to the TELCOR phone center and post office. It is a memorial display of photos and

personal effects of 18 TELCOR employees from Estelí.

The 18 were in a truck, late in 1984, when it was struck by *contra* bazooka fire. Survivors of the initial blast were bayoneted to death.

They were on their way to pick coffee.

The mood in this regional capital, once a center of the war in the north, is more relaxed.

The contras have taken big blows militarily, especially since being beaten nearby in the battle around La Trinidad last August.

Some 10,000 Estilianos turned out to celebrate the victory — four times as many as usually come out for Estelí's liberation day celebration on July 16 each year.

Few of Estelí's conscripted youths have been killed in the war. The first contingents, who began to be drafted two years ago, are now being demobilized.

I see acquaintances with whom I'd worked in 1984 — regional functionaries of government and members of the FSLN, the Ministry of Agrarian Reform, and the Sandinista Defense Committees. To a person, they look different — more relaxed, less tense and tight.

The Sandinista Defense Committees, here and elsewhere, are being revived and reorganized to overcome the impact of the war — shortages of leadership and flagging participation partly due to poor administration, red tape, and favoritism.

The FSLN is growing, with more worker, farmer, and youth members.

Municipal government is being reorganized.

The number of soldiers present has decreased, a reflection of fewer military emergencies.

"This is my palace!" Gloria Castillo tells me, beaming. "What do you think?"

Gloria's old house was made of crumbling mud. Its ceiling leaked on the dirt floor. Gloria, her husband Santiago, and three teenage girls lived in one bedroom off a small family room.

Receiving credit from a local bank, the Castillo family began to rebuild.

Now, there's a tile floor, a solid roof, brick walls, a new outdoor kitchen, a new clay, wood-fueled stove, and a flush toilet and shower.

Gloria, illiterate before the revolution, now reads the paper every day. She used to walk the Panamerican Highway to Honduras selling shoes she carried on her back — shoes her husband made. Now, she is an

elected member of her neighborhood block committee, has spoken in front of foreign delegations, and can clean, assemble, and use automatic weapons.

This Nicaraguan grandmother points to a big, black-and-white oil painting. Her son Wilfredo looks out over the new living room. He was killed in the war with Somoza. The portrait, she says, "was a Christmas present from one of his friends."

While many Estilianos have made home improvements with low-interest loans — Nicaraguan law makes home ownership easy, and mortgage payments are no higher than 10 percent of monthly income — the majority of houses — wooden, shack-like structures — remain unchanged.

Carmen Montenegro's house is one of them.

There are more kids in it and fewer men. Her son is in the penitentiary, after too many drunken bouts. It may be good for him, Carmen tells me, smiling.

Her 22-year-old elder daughter is now a professional soldier. A younger daughter is finishing her third year of study in Cuba. The eldest son, José, was killed in the liberation war, and the neighborhood is named for him.

There is little furniture and little lighting in the house. Carmen keeps the dirt floor neat as she helps raise the next generation.

Christmas, Carmen says, was "very difficult."

Prices, according to the government, rose 300 percent last year, salaries around 150 percent.

It was hard to get money together to buy even a chicken, she says. "And we had trouble getting even little presents," she explains.

Estelí, the city, Carmen says, "is much better. But for me, it was harder this year than last year." And 1986? "It will be hard, too," she says.

Prices go up, salaries go up, then prices again. "Horrible," she says, "the speculators are thieves."

Why the gap? "That," says Carmen, "is how capitalism works." Matter-of-factly, and with a smile, she says, "There will be lots of struggle this year."

"Incredible." Again, the subject is prices and salaries. The government has just announced wage hikes averaging between 58 and 100 percent, along with Operation Iron Fist, which aims to hit speculators and price gougers in retail trade, from food to clothing to restaurants, through the Ministry of Interior Commerce.

"Good! It's about time," my friend Aleda says, while her two-year-old kid wanders around emptying drawers. Her husband is in the army. Her two brothers-in-law have evaded service and are in Honduras.

"Let's say a teacher is making 13,000 córdobas a month," she says. "A chicken costs 500, a little pair of boots, 10,000. So how many chickens is that, how many pairs of shoes? Do you feed or buy clothes for your kids. Really, it is too much," she says. "I hope the government hits them hard."

Midway between Managua, the capital, and Estelí, is Sébaco, onion capital of Nicaragua and rural agricultural distribution center.

On the outskirts of the rural town, a massive new factory, built with Bulgarian cooperation, is going up. It will provide 3,000 year-round jobs and 5,000 at harvest time, in canning vegetables and other foods.

Meanwhile, in Estelí, a smaller such plant, to employ 250, will be built — a joint Bulgarian-Swedish project. The largest factory in Estelí now employs 250 people in cigar manufacturing.

As well, another joint Bulgarian-

Swedish project will be Central America's largest and most modern textile plant. It is planned for construction outside of Estelí and will employ 2,000 workers.

The long sidewalk along the Estelí River, in the sprawling neighborhood of Rosario on the northern edge of town, is finally finished.

There was no sidewalk during the reign of Somoza, whose air force destroyed the first homes there in aerial bombardments in 1979.

The neighborhood rebuilt and expanded with the influx of hundreds of peasant families — many displaced by *contra* attacks. The trek on the road during the rainy season was awful, as workers and students filed home in ankle-deep mud.

Phone service and a health center came to the area in 1984, and the sidewalk was finished last year.

I walk down the new sidewalk to the street where 63-year-old trade unionist Damaso Picado lives in a house built after the victory, which he owns.

He looks tired. His workweek in a shoe cooperative has been reduced, he says, "to three or four hours a day, three or four days a week," because of a shortage of imported materials.

His sister, a cook, is now retired, having contracted diabetes.

The house is unchanged: a fire on the ground in the back for cooking, an out-house, a dirt floor, more children. A nephew and his father, a captain in the army, now live with four other kids and Damaso's niece, seven in all, in the two-bedroom house.

The two littlest, both of whom were skinny a couple of years ago, the baby almost having died of flu, are now lively and healthy.

Damaso became active in the struggle against Somoza in 1944. He has the prized medallion given out by the top leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) last October, the brooch of the Historic Collaborator.

"I have nothing, you see," he says, spreading out his hands as if to display the surroundings. "But I am content, because we do not have Somocismo. We have Nicaragua."

"We are too generous," Luis, a middle-aged worker, says. His wife grins politely, but rolls her eyes. She knows he has been drinking and is about to say something she hopes he won't.

"Too generous to the *contra*. Look, a couple of weeks ago in Dario, two of them killed a young soldier. It wasn't even a fight. They decapitated him and put his testicles in his mouth," Luis says. This type of brutality was common practice by Somoza's National Guard in the 1970s, and more than a few young men in Estelí suspected of having ties to the FSLN ended up like this in front of their homes as an "example."

"We take them to prisons, we give them amnesty, we let them back into society, we let them go in the first place," Luis says. "I think we should eliminate them because all they do is kill us again."

Since the amnesty program began in 1983, nearly 3,000 contras have left the mercenary army and returned to their homes, mostly in rural areas. Few of these were members of the Guard, who today remain the backbone of the contras.

From Jinotega, a three-hour bus ride northwest of Estelí, you hop the once-a-day pickup truck for a slow, bumpy ride into the mountains, another hour.

Then, from there, it's an hour hike into the rain forest, green all year round. On the side of a cleared slope, we hail a woman a quarter of a mile away, and she meets us, leading us back through a glade of palm and banana trees. Barefoot, 63, with a



Farmer kidnapped by *contras* and forced to work for them who escaped and was granted amnesty by Nicaraguan government. Here, he tells his story, urging others to desert *contras*.

Iragua

OWN

baby on her back, she leads us to her house.

We are at Los Potrerillos — The Pastures — the name given to a range of rugged, rolling hills between Jinotega and San Rafael del Norte.

My traveling companion taught the woman who greeted us, Jacinta, and her husband, Genaro, to read during the historic literacy campaign launched by the Sandinista government in 1980.

This is her first time back since 1983, although there's been correspondence in the intervening 27 months.

In that time, there's been almost a revolution in the revolution that's been changing their lives since 1979.

The tiny house in which Genaro and Jacinta lived with six sons and daughters and two grandchildren is gone.

In its place is a bigger house, while four children have moved out, married, and built their own homes on nearby hills.

The family farm had 12 manzanas of land (one manzana equals 1.7 acres). Now, father and sons, along with two brothers, own together more than 30 manzanas.

Each works their own farm, while combining with other local peasants to receive cheap credit from the banks and free services from the government in their Credit and Service Cooperative.

Genaro had a cow and pig a couple of years ago; now, there are three cows, two pigs, and a new horse, used in common with the others for transportation and hauling.

Genaro and Pio, his brother, guide us up and down hills for a day as we visit the new houses and families, see new babies, and talk.

Crops, we hear, have been very good, with the exception of corn due to climate problems.

Fertilizer and insecticide have helped a lot.

Prices, established by the government, everyone says, are excellent.

All these small peasants are members of UNAG (National Union of Farmers and Ranchers), which was born out of the revolutionary process.

In one house, the family waits for the first visit from a son, now living in Managua, who recently returned from studying in the Soviet Union.

In another, Pablo, the best pupil in the family during the literacy crusade — he takes dictation from others to write letters — says his eldest daughter Blanca is now six, "a liberation baby," born almost nine months to the day of the July 19, 1979, Sandinista triumph.

Leopoldo, the richest peasant, jokes irreverently about the Sandinistas, but later we learn the contras stole one of his horses, and UNAG also plays an integral role in helping him and his 300-manzana farm.

Jacinta is irritated about rationing, which ensures distribution of scarce goods, but makes it impossible, she says, to buy more, even when you have money.

The contras, she says, now buy their food from the peasants, just like the Sandinista army. There was a nearby battle a few weeks earlier, with nine contras dead. But for the most part, it is tranquil, Jacinta explains.

The contras, she says, referring to them as the "others," come from "the people."

She still is, it seems, unforgiving about the arrest and brief incarceration of her husband by the government for selling food to the contras. Isolated rural families who refuse supplies to the contras or are found to have rifles issued by the army are easy targets for retaliation.

Genaro was exonerated, but his wife still considers his arrest an indignity committed by the government.

He seems unbothered. The main thing is, he says, good prices, good crops. The work is hard, but the air clean, the view brilliant.

Each peasant house has a small shrine to the Virgin Mary, none have electricity, running water, or outhouses.

Chickens are killed in our honor and



Militant photos by Héctor Carrión and Harvey McArthur
Nicaraguan farmers, workers, students, and others, as well as internationalist volunteers, brought in coffee harvest this year free from attacks by U.S.-sponsored contras. Above, students from a production brigade who picked coffee in El Crucero, south of Managua. Right, internationalist volunteers from U.S. Third World Brigade pick coffee in Matagalpa in north.



Nicaraguan moonshine — cosusa — procured for drinking. Stories about the literacy campaign are recalled. Our hosts shake their heads when we tell them about the plight of U.S. farmers.

Three days later, Juan, Genaro's brother, guides us on a two-hour walk through the mountains to San Rafael. The paths are a foot wide in places, and even the rare mounted passerby has trouble with his horse.

Juan pauses on a rocky incline, staring at a luggage tag. He reads the zip code and phone number aloud. His teacher in the literacy campaign, he remembers, knows he never mastered reading. Now he looks up at her, ticking off the numbers. "I still remember how to count," he says.

In San Rafael, new housing is going up on the outskirts of the city, both concrete and wooden.

On the walls in town, there are posters that explain to the contras their families need and miss them. Return, they say, and be with them. You can have amnesty. Peasant, desert, they say, in big red letters.

* * *

At exactly 11:06 p.m. on January 12, a contra sabotage unit successfully brings down an ungarded relay tower. Electrical power is cut, and with it, pumps in water stations.

Virtually all of Region 1, Las Segovias, from La Trinidad to Jalapa on the Honduran border — even into Honduran border areas where that nation buys power from Nicaragua — are blacked out.

Vigilance is immediately stepped up. The attack, the FSLN states in its daily newspaper *Barricada*, is an attempt to provide cover for the re-entry into Nicaragua of contra bands forced to retreat to Honduras after major military defeats last year.

It will take four days to restore power. During the day, the atmosphere is calm, relaxed, with everybody pitching in. The children of the city seem to be on edge that night. Bonfires are lighted, several to a block, to provide some light for vigilance. But there are no incidents.

The next day, the rivers around Estelí are full of bathers and women doing laundry. Bread is in scarce supply. The restaurants are closed. The beer and soft drinks that are available are warm, and soon even they are gone.

Fire trucks dispense drinking water. But by nightfall the supply is exhausted.

It is dark Tuesday night, and clouds obscure the usually star-bright sky.

Suddenly, every light in Estelí goes on — two days ahead of schedule — and an instant later there is the sound of children cheering.

* * *

High above Limay, 18 miles from Estelí, Anastasio "Tacho" Cruz, fulltime organizer of the local FSLN in this rural zone of 8,000 people, is addressing a group of peasants, soldiers, Sandinista youth, North American volunteer coffee pickers, a

brigade of Nicaraguan pickers, and assorted children, all huddled under the porch roof of a ramshackle dormitory of the Ricardo Ramos production cooperative, as a wicked wind whips everybody with dust.

The farm, La Fraternidad, shares title to the cooperative with nearby El Esparta, where I picked coffee in the 1984 harvest.

There've been changes at both farms. More families, more members, more work in common, better harvests, better pesticides and fewer insects, more building, a truck, a small health center, initial efforts through UNAG and AMNLAE, the women's federation, to organize peasant women.

The area is now "secure," controlled, or *limpia*, clean of contras.

Two years ago, a battle, complete with mortar exchanges, came within a mile of us during the harvest, and ambushes were regular occurrences.

Now, 300 draftees in the Irregular Warfare Battalions (BLIs) surround all the pickers. There will be no trouble.

There have been other changes, too. The peasants listen to Tacho, their arms folded across their chests, as he addresses them and the North American volunteers among them.

"If it were not for this revolution, a peasant like myself could not, would not, be able to speak in front of you," he says.

The lanky Sandinista militant waves a hand at a peasant singing group — especially its two lead vocalists, who are children — and a teenage theater ensemble who earlier entertained the crowd with comic sketches.

"With this revolution, we are convinced that artists like these will be famous, not only nationally, but internationally," he says, and the peasants burst into applause.

"This revolution gives us land, gives us the chance to learn to read, to go to school," Tacho says. "We are poor, and we recognize we have a shortage of middle cadres." These are technically trained, politically developed activists capable of leadership responsibility in state agencies, mass organizations, the unions, or the army. "But," he continues, "we are convinced with this revolution we will have new leaders like those here before you, leaders who will come from the poor and barefoot people of Nicaragua." Before he finishes the sentence, the sound of 200 clapping hands erupts.

"All that you have seen," Tacho says, now directly appealing to the North Americans, "this land, this work, these people, do you think this is bad, this is wrong?"

The Sandinista looks out from under his white cowboy hat. "No!" a U.S. coffee picker shouts out, and the Nicaraguans and North Americans packed under the porch roof laugh and cheer at once.

Tacho has been to the FSLN school outside Estelí, advancing in literacy and studying political theory.

Another FSLN fighter on the coopera-

tive, a wiry, middle-aged peasant, explains there are now four members of the party on the farm. Likewise, on the other side of the cooperative at El Esparta, there are more FSLN members. And the president of the UNAG-organized cooperative is a veteran party militant.

"When you go back to your country," Tacho says, as the band gets ready to play, "all we ask is that you tell the truth. Our message is: Nicaragua wants peace. We have nothing against your people, but we will give our last drop of blood to keep our homeland free and dignified."

There's more applause. Then a young soldier shouts out, "OK!, let's dance!"

* * *

A pesar de . . . in spite of. It's a Spanish phrase one hears a lot in Nicaragua.

In spite of the war, we are building. In spite of the aggression, we are moving forward.

In spite of it all, we will survive.

I hear it from Francie, the single mother of six, a member of the FSLN, a graduate of the party school, who works in the Ministry of Interior clinic in Estelí and whose home is always open at all hours for men and women in uniform shuttling back and forth between Estelí and the mountains to protect the coffee pickers.

What will the coming year be like?

Struggle, says Francie. Against the aggression, against speculation, to extend land reform.

And for her, to strengthen the FSLN.

Daniel Ortega's year-end address, broadcast to the nation from rural Pancasán, pledged to fulfill all these things — to ensure that not a single peasant would go "without land."

That price gougers would be nailed. That major defeats of the contras would be meted out.

"Pancasán is a special thing for us," Francie says, referring to the site of the 1967 massacre of leading FSLN fighters by Somoza's National Guard. "To make these commitments, in front of all our people, at Pancasán is the highest pledge to those who have died, to all our martyrs."

Such a commitment, she says, means continuing "the purifying of the FSLN, begun last October with the launching of a national reorganization of the party to centralize its administration and leadership, draw in new worker, peasant and youth ranks and deepen the dedication and self-sacrifice of its members."

This commitment, she says, will continue, in spite of everything. It is decisive to the revolution.

It is late at night in the neighborhood, but there's a knock on Francie's door.

She opens it. A jeep's outside, and four teenaged soldiers hop out of it. There's three young men and a young woman, all tired, one guy carrying a bandolier of 60 millimeter bullets.

"Hey, compañera," a soldier with a smile says to Francie, "it's peaceful in San Juan. Any coffee?"

Filipinos press fight for democracy

Continued from front page

and a boycott of the businesses of the Marcos cronies to protest the election fraud and bring down Marcos. The Catholic bishops' conference also took up this call.

As pressure mounted, Aquino rejected all overtures toward a compromise under which she would share power with Marcos. Tensions began to emerge within the military hierarchy. Finally, on February 22, two top military officers — Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Deputy Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos — fled to the Camp Crame headquarters of the Philippine Constabulary with a few hundred soldiers, after being warned of a plot by Marcos supporters in the military to murder them. Plans were also apparently under way to round up many figures in the anti-Marcos opposition, including Aquino, who at that time went into hiding.

Human barricade formed

At this point, Enrile and Ramos denounced Marcos' electoral fraud and declared that they recognized the presidency of Aquino. Then the Catholic radio station, Radio Veritas, called on the people of Manila to mobilize and form a human barricade around Camp Crame to prevent military units loyal to Marcos from attacking the camp. Thousands upon thousands from both middle-class suburbs and working-class barrios immediately responded to this call, facing down the tanks Marcos sent to crush the rebels.

As the days passed and more and more soldiers came over to the rebellion, tension outside the camp began to ease. By February 25 as many as 2 million people surrounded Camp Crame. The atmosphere was festive.

Other crowds were gathered outside a radio station seized by the Enrile-Ramos forces and at the Mindiola Bridge outside the Malacanang Palace, where Marcos was holed up. Finally, on the evening of February 25, Marcos fled the palace in a U.S. helicopter. The people's uprising had been victorious.

Malacanang, so long the palatial bunker of a hated dictator, has now opened its iron lace gates to the public, and ordinary Filipinos can wander through the palace gardens, photograph each other in front of Marcos' former presidential library, and purchase any amount of "people power" paraphernalia available from hundreds of street vendors.

President Aquino's statement that she will not live in the palace has received a popular welcome.

The government that has emerged from

this upheaval of "people power" is a coalition between conservative forces associated with the landowning oligarchy and figures connected to the mass anti-Marcos "parliament of the streets." The former group includes many who previously supported the dictatorship — the Enrile-Ramos wing of the military, traditional politicians such as those in Vice-president Salvador Laurel's UNIDO party, and forces linked to the Catholic church hierarchy.

The latter includes a number of prominent human-rights lawyers, such as Joker Arroyo and Jose Diokno, who defended communists and other victims of the Marcos repression.

Different elements within this coalition continue to contend for influence over the course of the government behind the mass personal authority of Aquino.

The first important test of the new relationship of forces arising from the overthrow of Marcos had centered on the restoration of democratic rights.

During her presidential campaign Aquino had promised the full restoration of democratic rights, including the release of all Marcos' political detainees. Enrile, Ramos, and other conservative elements in the new government strongly opposed this, above all the release of the central leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its guerrilla organization the New People's Army (NPA). The CPP and NPA leaders were being held by the military and were initially excluded from the proposed general amnesty.

Aquino addressed this question at a huge open air Mass and rally held in Luneta Park in Manila, March 2, to celebrate the overthrow of Marcos.

Speaking to a crowd estimated at between 2 and 3 million, Aquino announced the restoration of the writ of habeas corpus, including on the island of Mindanao, where the Muslim population has been waging an armed struggle for autonomy alongside the NPA rebel movement. She reiterated her pledge to release all the political prisoners as part of her call for "national reconciliation."

Over the next few days, most of the detained leaders of the CPP, NPA, and the allied National Democratic Front were freed, and all are expected to be released soon.

Aquino also urged the crowd to continue the "people power" that had brought down the dictatorship, claiming that resistance to her government from Marcos supporters continues in some areas. She has come into conflict with the national parliament, which is controlled by Marcos' New Soci-



Filipinos celebrate fall of U.S.-backed dictator Ferdinand Marcos with marches and demonstrations.

ety Movement (KBL), and with Marcos-appointed judges and local politicians.

Subsequently, on March 10, Luis Villasuete, head of the Presidential Commission on Government Reorganization, announced that the Aquino government, as part of a six-month transition to constitutional rule, will formally declare itself a revolutionary government not beholden to the laws of the Marcos period. Marcos' parliament and constitution would be "defunct."

In their place, a constitutional commission would be appointed from various sectors and political groups to draft a new constitution, Villasuete said. The commission, he said, would also have to address the questions of land reform and local autonomy. Villasuete argued that the process of electing a constitutional convention to carry out these tasks would only delay the transitional period to an elected government.

Among the political detainees released was founding chairman of the CPP Jose Maria Sison, held for more than eight years in a military stockade.

Shortly before he was freed, Sison told reporters that he welcomed the Aquino government. However, he said, there were key questions that the government had to address before there could be any national reconciliation: above all, the issue of land reform and the removal of the two huge U.S. military bases in the Philippines.

"The moment Mrs. Aquino proposes to solve the land problem, then that is the time for Mrs. Aquino and the NPA to talk," Sison said. "There would have to be a dialogue before a cease-fire."

Sison added that Aquino "had inherited the whole military instrument that was used by Marcos to exploit the people. There are still problems to solve."

During her election campaign, Aquino had said that Marcos' "land reform," launched in 1972, was not enough. She called for providing technology and marketing assistance to those farmers who al-

ready had land.

She also pledged to extend the land reform beyond rice and corn lands to the sugar and coconut lands that had been exempt from the 1972 reform. But Marcos' land reform was a fake. It greatly accelerated the concentration of the land in the hands of fewer owners, including U.S. monopolies, displacing tens of thousands of peasants. Moreover, the indebtedness of exploited peasants has reached staggering levels under this law.

Aquino has also announced her support for scrapping the sugar and coconut monopolies run by Marcos cronies.

Leaders of the main section of the Moro National Liberation Front — the Muslim group fighting government soldiers on Mindanao — have been reported as supporting Aquino and willing to return from exile to discuss a cease-fire with the government provided real moves are made toward autonomy.

As further steps to what the Aquino government calls its "dismantling" of the Marcos dictatorship, a number of Marcos' aging generals have been ordered to retire. Brig. Gen. Salvador Mison, another of the "reformists" within the armed forces, has been appointed acting chief of staff.

Almost all the Marcos-appointed justices of the Supreme Court and many lower courts, as well as officials of the Commission on Order and Civil Service, submitted courtesy resignations to President Aquino by March 7.

New period in class struggle

With the overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship, a new period has opened in the Philippine class struggle. The masses of Filipino people are beginning to exercise the democratic rights they have conquered through their struggle, as the conflicts continue within the new government and the old oligarchy. As the principal leaders of the left return to public political life after years of incarceration, an important politi-

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Celebration marks release of political prisoners

BY DEB SHNOOKAL

MANILA — Red and yellow confetti, flashing cameras, and journalists' tape recorders greeted some of the most famous political prisoners of the Marcos regime as they arrived at a reception to celebrate their freedom. The Bayan-sponsored reception was held on the evening of March 7 at the house of longtime human-rights campaigner Armando Malay. Spirits were high as guests welcomed the recently released prisoners, and ex-detainees warmly greeted one another.

Among those present were Jose Maria Sison and Bernabe Buscayno, the CPP and NPA leaders; Horacio ("Boy") Morales and Fr. Ed de la Torre of the National Democratic Front; and many other CPP leaders such as Alan Jazmines, Noel Etabag, Jerry Bulatar, and Isagani Serrano.

Only a few days before, it had seemed that the military was planning to block President Aquino's stated intention to release all political prisoners. But Sison, Buscayno, and others were dramatically released on March 5.

Isagani Serrano had been imprisoned twice — first from 1973 to 1976, and then from 1982 to March 5, 1986. He was one of the political prisoners in Camp Crame, where the military rebels, Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos, were holed up against Marcos from February 22 to February 25. He

explained to *IP* what it was like in Camp Crame through those four days.

The main fear, he said, was that of retribution against the rebels by the Marcos loyalist armed forces, who might attempt to bomb the camp. But the political prisoners were not afraid of Enrile and Ramos, he explained. "At that particular moment we had kindred feelings with the leaders of the rebellion. We hoped for their victory. Their downfall would also have been our death. All our lives had somehow come together," Serrano said.

He described what it was like in the prison in the days after Marcos fled. "It was like a catharsis. We were relieved and jubilant and very happy for the new government that had assumed power. And we were thankful to the people, who were a key factor. Without the people we were a goner," he said.

What did he see as the prospects for the new spirit of national reconciliation that was evidenced by the mass popular rallying to defend Camp Crame against Marcos?

"I think the people up there in the hills will react to certain favorable developments, the most important being the release of all political prisoners, especially with Joema [Sison] and Bernabe Buscayno being released," he said. "These releases are a major act of goodwill on the part of the president, along the lines of reconciliation." **From Intercontinental Press**

Filipino peasant leader tours U.S.

BY DAN FEIN
AND TIM MAILHOT

SEATTLE — For the first time in 50 years, a Filipino peasant leader is touring the United States. The tour, which will also cover Canada, began here in February and will last six months.

Jamie Tadeo, chairman of the Peasant Movement of the Philippines (KMP), was scheduled to tour, but was twice denied a visa by Washington because "he has no income." This was in spite of invitations by the sponsors of the tour — the Canada-Saia Working Group, Alliance for Philippine Concerns, and the Philippine Resource Center — promising to pay all expenses.

Felicisimo Patayan, KMP vice-chairman, and Francisco Lara, executive officer of the Philippine Peasant Institute, filled in for Tadeo.

Patayan and Lara described the conditions of Philippine peasants at a news conference. They said 70 percent of the peasants are landless and even many of those who do own some land do not own enough to support their families.

Tadeo explained there are two reasons for the landless conditions of the peasants. One is the rampant land-grabbing of local landlords. The other is the multinational agribusinesses that take the land and use it

for export crops. As examples, Tadeo pointed to Del Monte, which grows pineapples and has 60,000 acres of prime agricultural land, and to Dole, which has 74,000 acres. "The amount of land cultivated for domestic food consumption is not adequate to feed our population," he said.

The condition of the peasants is further aggravated by their indebtedness. During the 1960s and '70s, the Philippines government, backed by U.S. business interests, implemented the "Green Revolution." The aim of this program was to modernize Filipino agricultural techniques and increase productivity.

Credit was made available by rice traders and bankers to the farmers to buy new strains of high-yield rice and modern equipment. But as the peso was devalued, the cost of these new techniques quickly outstripped their increased production, leaving peasants in a vicious spiral of deeper and deeper debt.

"We were encouraged to import fertilizers, insecticide, fungicide and some farmers say suicide," said Patayan.

The highlight of the tour was a meeting held at the Bush-Asia Center in Seattle's Asian community. Seventy-five people, the majority Filipinos, attended the spirited event sponsored by Seattle's Filipino Association for Community Education.

BUILDING ANTI-APARTHEID AND ANTIWAR ACTIONS

Farmer, unionists report on tours to Nicaragua

BY IZABELLA LISTOPAD

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Eighty-five people attended a meeting here to get the truth about the situation in Nicaragua. Speaking at the February event were area labor and farm leaders who have recently returned from Nicaragua.

Denise O'Brien, a dairy farmer and vice-chair of Iowa Farm Unity, had gone to Nicaragua with a delegation of 15 people sent by the North American Farm Alliance.

She explained that land reform in Nicaragua has provided thousands of farmers with land, and farmers in Nicaragua are guaranteed good prices for their products. "Unlike in this country, the number of farmers in Nicaragua is increasing," she said.

She also spoke the night before to 20 or so farmers in Cameron, Missouri, where farmers are fighting foreclosures.

Other speakers included Jeanne Graham of Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers Local 218; Sue Smith, executive board member of United Auto Workers Local 282; and Dave Wathke, business manager, National Education Association Region 5. They were all part of a unionist tour to Nicaragua last fall.

The unionists were impressed with the strength of the unions in Nicaragua and the gains the workers have made since the 1979 revolution.

"Reality is so different from what we hear," said Wathke, "it is important for us to know what is going on in Nicaragua because Nicaragua can be an example for the rest of Central America."

A lively discussion took place after the program and some people expressed interest in going to Nicaragua to see the truth for themselves.

Southern conference against apartheid

BY MARTY BOYERS

ATLANTA — Students from eight states gathered at Atlanta University for the Southern Regional Conference on Apartheid and Racism.

The February 28-March 1 conference urged students to intensify their anti-apartheid activities throughout the South by joining the March 21 local protests against U.S. aid to South African-backed terrorists in Angola and the April 4 National Divestment Protest Day.

The students welcomed John Hegard, a representative of United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-9, and decided to support

the boycott of Hormel products.

The African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa was represented by Fred Dube and David Ndaba.

Georgia Assemblyman Tyrone Brooks presented Dube with a resolution passed by the assembly calling for the release of jailed ANC leader Nelson Mandela.

Janet Brammer from the Houston Free South Africa Movement explained that the upcoming June 14 demonstration in New York City called by the New York Anti-apartheid Coordinating Council was an unprecedented opportunity to link up students and the labor movement.

The meeting also endorsed a boycott of Coca-Cola called by the Georgia Coalition for Divestment in South Africa in protest of Coke's holdings in South Africa.

200 at conference on Central America

BY SETH GALINSKY

LOS ANGELES — More than 200 students, professors, and sanctuary activists from a dozen area campuses attended a conference called "The United States and Central America: A Five-year Assessment."

The February 22 meeting was organized by the Faculty Committee for Human Rights in El Salvador/Central America and by

Policy Alternatives for the Caribbean and Central America.

A warm greeting was given to Xavier Gorostiaga, coordinator of the Regional Center For Social and Economic Research in Nicaragua.

Gorostiaga pointed out that he did not "see any willingness to negotiate in this country at the official level."

He explained that 60 percent of the people live below the poverty level in Central America. "Change is the meaning of peace in Central America. The people are demanding bread, housing, land, and dignity. That is the road to peace."

Other speakers at the conference included Adolfo Aguilar Zinser from the National University of Mexico and Charles Clements, author of *Witness to War*.

Protest against use of Nat'l Guard in Central America

BY MAREA HIMELGRIN

ST. LOUIS — "It's obvious. All you have to do is look at a map. What they're doing is building the infrastructure for a powerful war machine," said Peggy Moore, a leader of the St. Louis Pledge of Resistance.

Moore was referring to the roads that the Missouri National Guard has been sent to build in

Honduras. National Guardsmen have been used in exercises in Central America for one year.

The St. Louis Pledge of Resistance is on a campaign against the use of the National Guard in Honduras. A demonstration of 125 people was held on December 14. According to Moore, the campaign has "snowballed" since then.

Over 5,000 National Guardsmen from Arizona, Alabama, Missouri, and North Dakota will be involved in the new road construction project, code-named "Terencio Sierra '86."

The Missouri National Guard will be putting in a 12-mile stretch between Yoro and Jocon. "They build the roads in small pieces," said Moore, "so that they look harmless and their construction does not require any congressional authorization."

"It's ironic," she continued, the U.S. government says the "road construction project is a goodwill mission to help out the people of Honduras. They say peasants will be able to use them to get their goods to market. But 1,200 peasants are being kicked off their land in San José del Potrero with no reimbursement. The airstrip goes right through the middle of their village."

For more information on protesting the use of the Guard contact the St. Louis Pledge of Resistance, 438 N. Skinker, St. Louis, Missouri 63130. Telephone (314) 725-2393.

Central America, S. Africa focus of Detroit teach-in

BY JOANNE MURPHY

DETROIT — Representatives from liberation struggles in Central America and southern Africa were featured at a recent rally at Wayne State University. The rally closed a two-day teach-in sponsored by the university's student council.

On February 5 a news conference was held to greet the South African and Namibian liberation fighters who were to participate in the teach-in. Detroit Metro AFL-CIO President Tom Turner, Detroit NAACP President Joe Madison, and others spoke.

The February 8 rally heard a panel of speakers including Francisco Campbell, representing the Nicaraguan embassy in Washington, D.C.

Campbell warned: "The policy of the U.S. administration is leading toward the involvement of U.S. combat troops in Central America. When that happens... innocent Latin Americans, innocent Central Americans, and innocent North Americans will suffer the consequences."

Victor Mashabela represented the mission to the United Nations of the African National Congress, the liberation group that has won massive popular support in South Africa.

He denounced U.S. assistance to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, a terrorist group backed by the South African government. "UNITA is a

direct extension of the South African and U.S. governments' schemes to ensure that people in the region do not have any breathing space."

Nmonde Ngubo, a member of the National Union of Mineworkers of South Africa, who helps organize the anti-apartheid activities of the United Mine Workers of America, said, "The apartheid structure should be dismantled, not reformed. That is one reason why U.S. companies should leave. There is blood on the money these multinationals are making." She supported the current boycott of Shell Oil, which protests that corporation's investments in apartheid.

Hinyangerwa Asheeke, speaking for the

South West Africa People's Organization of Namibia, protested U.S. support to the UNITA bandits in Angola. This support is also aimed at weakening the struggle against South African occupation of Namibia, which borders on Angola.

He hailed the "Cuban internationalist fighters" who enabled Angola to hold off a 1975 invasion by South African forces.

Abdeen Jabara, president of the Detroit chapter of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, also spoke. He denounced the government's creation of a "new bogeyman — the terrorist" as an effort to whip up the people of the United States to support "more Grenadas, more downing of civilian airliners, more inter-

vention."

He referred to the television movie "Under Siege," which invented an Arab terrorist group headquartered in the Detroit suburb of Dearborn's Arab-American community, as an attempt "to paint Arabs, Middle Eastern people, or Arab-Americans as a suspect, terrorist community."

Speaking for the Democratic Revolutionary Front and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front of El Salvador, Victor Rubio paid "special tribute to the people of both the Philippines and Haiti."

He warned against the U.S. campaign to portray the Salvadoran revolution as "a losing cause" and described recent gains by the liberation fighters.

Philippines: masses press fight for democracy

Continued from Page 12

cal discussion is developing within the progressive movements over how to assess the Aquino government and the process that thrust the new president into power. A central question is how to utilize the new situation to push forward the struggle of the workers and peasants in face of an overwhelming economic crisis.

The depth of the mobilizations during and after the elections, which eventually

swept Marcos from power, and the speed with which they developed, caught all the left-wing organizations by surprise.

What was the "people power revolution"? Was it a genuine popular revolution? Or was it in essence a military coup scripted in Washington?

Should revolutionaries take up Aquino's call to maintain "people power" to strive to advance the organization of the workers and peasants? Should they seek representation in the government? Or would this subordinate the working people to a bourgeois government?

Should revolutionaries fight to widen the democratic opening and win legalization of the left parties? Or is the democratic opening necessarily short-lived and the task of the revolutionaries to remain in the underground and in the hills to prepare for the return of conditions like those under Marcos?

Should there be "critical collaboration" with or "principled opposition" to the Aquino government?

Questions like these are being hotly debated in the universities and union offices, among the former political prisoners, and in the countryside.

This discussion has been stimulated by the virtual abstention of the CPP and the mass organizations it influences from the mass antidictatorial movement that arose around the Aquino candidacy through their decision to boycott the election. This effectively put the CPP outside the events that unfolded, preventing it from assuming a

leadership role in the massive outpouring of February 22-25.

In fact, many individuals and groups within the CPP-led mass organizations broke away to participate in the popular movements around the electoral challenge to Marcos' rule. These break-aways included some chapters of Bayan and even the NPA in some areas like southern Luzon.

Some much smaller revolutionary organizations participated in the mass campaign around Aquino, although they were not strong enough to help shape the unfolding events to the extent the CPP might have.

Among the Filipino masses there is a strong sense of relief that they were able to rid the country of Marcos with so little bloodshed. They have acquired a new national pride and consciousness of their power through their role in ousting the dictator.

This is summed up in the popular slogan "Mabuhay ang Pilipino" (Long live the Filipino). They are in a stronger position today to wage new struggles to defend and extend the rights they conquered through "people power."

Russell Johnson is a leader of the Socialist Action League, New Zealand section of the Fourth International, an international Marxist organization, and Deb Shnoorkal is a Fourth Internationalist from Australia. From Intercontinental Press

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U.S. rulers debate funding for 'contras'

Continued from front page

Nicaraguan government is involved in drug trafficking."

While none of this "proof" has ever been brought to light, there is hard evidence that the contras deal dope. A recent report by two Associated Press reporters showed that the contras are heavily involved in trafficking cocaine from Colombia into the United States.

Nicaragua and the Philippines

A central theme of the Reagan campaign is the comparison of Nicaragua with the Philippines. "We stood for democracy in the Philippines; we have to stand for democracy in Nicaragua and throughout Central America and in our hemisphere," claimed Reagan.

Liberal opponents of the White House contra aid package here dissected his comparison.

"This 'parallel' denigrates the remarkable achievement of the Philippine people in their spontaneous uprising against Ferdinand Marcos," pointed out Tom Wicker in a column in the March 4 *New York Times*. In the Philippines, he wrote, "a real tyrant, through corruption, brutality, and murder, brought the population to the boiling point; whatever charges may be made against the Sandinistas, that cannot be said of them. By massive fraud and violence, the tyrant ignored and reversed the clear will of the people expressed in a national election; whatever deficiencies may be laid to the Nicaraguan election of 1984, nothing in it remotely approached the outrage perpetrated by Mr. Marcos."

"Filipinos who rose in their wrath to rid their country of the tyrant were not organized and financed by the Central Intelligence Agency or 'covert' funds from Washington, as were the Nicaraguan 'contras.' And when Filipinos had had enough, they swept all before them, disclosing in a matter of days the rotten underpinnings of the tyrant's regime; but after five years of effort and millions of U.S. dollars, the contras have yet to take and hold a single town in Nicaragua, or to set off the smallest ripple of popular uprising anywhere in that unhappy country."

Latin America opposes aid

The threat of Nicaraguan "subversion" overtaking the hemisphere has been another chord repeatedly struck in the contra-aid debate. If the \$100 million isn't given to the contras, Shultz warned on March 2, the hemisphere might be "taken hostage by totalitarians."

And Reagan told a March 5 gathering of presidents of major Jewish groups that "if we don't want to see the map of Central America covered in a sea of red, eventually lapping at our own borders, we must act now."

The amount of punch this particular charge packs has been undercut by the fact that not one government in Latin America is willing to openly call for aid to the contras.

In fact, several Latin American governments have come out publicly against the aid. The most recent was Colombia's President Belisario Betancur.

In a March 9 interview with the *Washington Post*, Betancur declared, "All of Latin America doesn't like the Reagan proposal."

McAliskey on Loyalist threat

Continued from back page

fairs in Northern Ireland, which the British do not have to accept. In return the Irish government accepts continued partition of Ireland.

"The fact that the Loyalists are so annoyed by the agreement," McAliskey explained, "convinced many people that there must be something good in the accord."

But she disputed this view. "To Loyalists, being British means standing over the Irish," she stated, and they oppose anything that even hints they may not have a free hand to deal with the nationalists as they choose.

Noting that Britain's Secretary of State for Northern Ireland says the agreement "copper-fastens partition," McAliskey de-

The White House continues to try to pretty up the contras. Reagan called them "the moral descendants of the men at ... Valley Forge."

Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams responded, in answer to a question from Senator Richard Lugar, "You asked about the allegation that the Nicaragua resistance consists of, or is led by, supporters of the late dictator Anastasio Somoza. We have reviewed the facts carefully and conclude that this charge is incorrect and misleading."

This denial was answered by none other than ... Arturo Cruz, one of several contra leaders that Reagan brought to Washington recently to help argue for aid. In an interview in the March 9 *Washington Post*, Cruz admitted that Col. Enrique Bermúdez, the central military commander of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force, the largest contra outfit, "is a former member of the National Guard, and so are several others, including the largest number in the inner staff."

Contra leader Adolfo Calero, who Reagan wined and dined this month, told the *New York Times* last August that it is "a delicate thing" to persuade the contras to "respect the lives of prisoners and pro-Sandinista civilians without demoralizing the fighters." So "delicate," apparently, that they decided not to even try.

Rep. David Bonior (D.-Mich.), chair of the House Democratic task force on Nicaragua, pointed to the series of documented reports of contra attacks on civilians, saying, "With this campaign of terror, is it any wonder that the contras have not sparked a popular, democratic movement inside Nicaragua?"

Tailoring the slanders to what he thought would appeal to his audience, Reagan told the meeting of leaders of Jewish organizations: "What is the official Sandinista position on the persecution of the Jewish community? The Jews, they say, have a 'bourgeois mentality' that prevented them from adjusting to communism. I'll buy that 'bourgeois mentality' anytime."

He followed that up with the warning that "if the Sandinistas are allowed to consolidate their hold on Nicaragua, we'll have a permanent staging ground for terrorism, a home away from home for Qaddafi, Arafat, and the Ayatollah, just three hours by air from the United States border."

U.S. troops

The contra-aid debate has included a discussion on the possibilities of a direct use of U.S. troops to invade Nicaragua.

Reagan, Shultz, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, and White House communications director Patrick Buchanan all claim that giving the contras the \$100 million will make it less likely that the Pentagon will invade.

"American troops have not been asked for and are not needed," said Reagan. "We must make sure they are never needed. We send money and material now so we'll never have to send our own American boys."

Buchanan, on "CBS Morning News," warned, "If we don't get that assistance to the contras, they'll be defeated. The communists ... will roll up Nicaragua and then we'll be left with two options: basically the

scribed the present government in Dublin, which signed the pact, as "a bunch of gangsters whose time is up."

The Irish government claims the agreement will give nationalists a voice in the British colony.

"Times right now are rough for the nationalist community and they'll get rougher," McAliskey warned. The growing attacks on the nationalist community, she said, must be answered by heightened unity among supporters of Irish reunification.

Noting that she is well-known as a socialist in Ireland, McAliskey called for "the broadest unity of nationalist forces from left to center to right" against the Loyalist attacks,



Militant/Michael Baumann

Funeral of one of the victims of U.S.-backed contra war in Nicaragua

United States can then step aside and watch the Warsaw Pact roll up Central America, or we send in the marines."

Congresspeople who are opposed to the \$100 million have pointed out that precisely the opposite is true: backing the contras increases the danger of direct U.S. military involvement.

Rep. David Obey (D.-Wis.) said aid to the contras might be the start on "a slippery slope to involvement."

"I doubt very much," he said, "that a complete overthrow of the Sandinistas is likely to happen without massive intervention by us, or without much more massive resources than you are talking about providing to the contras."

Mel Levine (D.-Calif.), chair of the Democratic Caucus Task Force on Central America, told a March 5 news conference, "The president's policy leads to increasing military activity and its logical result will be direct American military involvement in Nicaragua."

House Speaker Thomas O'Neill and other leading liberal Democrats have expressed similar views.

The "stick" aspect of what the White House has taken to calling its "carrot and

stick" approach to the contra aid fight consists of unbridled red-baiting of all who criticize the \$100 million proposal.

The crudest piece was a column in the March 5 *Washington Post* by Patrick Buchanan:

"Whether Central America follows Southeast Asia, Afghanistan, and Angola as the next appendage of Soviet Empire is a question to which the Democratic Party in Congress now holds the answer," began Buchanan.

"About the character of the Sandinista regime, doubt no longer remains. Even the 'useful idiots' of Lenin's depiction — the liberated nuns and Marxist Maryknolls, the journalistic camp followers and tenured professors anxious to wow the coeds with how they picked coffee beans for the revolution — seem defensive."

Getting warmed up, Buchanan continued, "Desertion of the democratic resistance by Congress would lead, as night follows day, to loss of Central America. A Congress that will not send Redeye missiles to save Nicaragua will not send American boys to save Guatemala. ... As Cuba is base for reconnaissance bombers patrol-

Continued on Page 17

Do you know someone who reads Spanish? 'PM' on victory in Philippines

After the overthrow of hated Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos, both Reagan's Republican administration and Democrats in Congress are trying to parade themselves as the ones responsible for his downfall. But this is a lie. The Filipino people owe their victory to no one but themselves.

The current issue of *Perspectiva Mundial* describes the powerful mobilizations of hundreds of thousands of people in the streets of Manila that won the day. The masses fraternized with the troops. It was their irrepressible determination to win freedom that pushed the Catholic hierarchy into open opposition to the regime. Finally, Washington was unable to pull off any deal that could save the despot.

PM points to the challenges now facing the Filipino people as they continue to press for freedom, land reform, relief from poverty and unemployment.

This issue also analyzes the Reagan administration's campaign for another \$100 million to fund the mercenary army waging war on the Nicaraguan people.

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Nicaraguan gov't signs cease-fire with leaders of Miskito groups

BY CINDY JAQUITH

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — A stepped-up drive by Washington to reignite full-scale war on Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast is being rebuffed by Miskito Indian communities.

On February 27 in the city of Puerto Cabezas, the main population center in Northern Zelaya Province, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) announced that it had signed a joint military pact with two leaders of the organization KISAN. KISAN is made up of various Miskito groups that have been engaged in armed attacks on Nicaragua.

Guerrilla and Brigade Commander Francisco Rivera of the FSLN made the announcement at a celebration of the sixth anniversary of the founding of the Sandinista People's Militias. Rivera reported that an Act for Unity and Distribution of Areas of Protection had been signed by the FSLN and KISAN leaders Juan Salgado and Larry Wilson. The accord calls for "uniting our forces," said Rivera, to defend Northern Zelaya "from those who do not want peace."

Present at the celebration were a battalion of Sandinista militia members from the area, a group of young draftees being demobilized from the Sandinista army, and local youth who were entering the army for the first time.

The joint accord between the FSLN and the two KISAN leaders represents further progress in establishing peace and stability on the Atlantic Coast and isolating those U.S.-financed and organized mercenary groups who continue to carry out military attacks on civilians and government personnel in the area.

The progress on the military front is a product of the political advances the revolution is making on the Coast, particularly the project to establish regional government autonomy there. Last fall, thousands of *costeños* (residents of the Coast) participated in assemblies to discuss a proposal drafted by a national autonomy commission made up of the various racial groups on the Coast — Miskito, Sumo, and Rama Indians; Creoles and Garifonas, both descendants of African slaves; and mestizos, who speak Spanish.

The autonomy proposal is aimed at overcoming the legacy of racial discrimination, isolation, and backwardness imposed on the Coast by British and U.S. imperialism and the dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza. It is also designed to deepen the participation of *costeños* in the Sandinista revolution, cementing a firm alliance between the working people of the Atlantic and the Pacific coasts.

The project envisions establishing two regional governments — one in Northern Zelaya and one in Southern Zelaya — with representation of the area's six racial groups. The governments will have special powers to implement national policies of Nicaragua's workers' and farmers' government in accordance with the historical

needs and problems of the Coast. They will carry out projects to develop the region's economy and social services and to promote the cultures, languages, and traditions of *costeños*, which were suppressed under Somoza.

The strong pressure by Miskitos and other *costeños* for autonomy and an end to the U.S.-sponsored war is reflected not only in the eased military situation but also in a recent decision of the Moravian Church, which has significant influence among Miskitos. At its Seventh Triennial Synod, held in February, the Nicaraguan Moravian Church came out for autonomy and against the mercenary war.

The war, said a statement released by the synod, "serves only to destroy, not to build. We demand that all external forces immediately cease their support to violence and use their influence to promote peace."

It called on "our people and all Nicaraguan citizens of the Coast to actively participate" in the autonomy discussion, in order to "achieve a real autonomy in the spirit of unity of the Nicaraguan nation."

Background to current situation

Since May 1985, Sandinista authorities have established de facto cease-fires with most of the armed Miskito groups inside Nicaragua that had been part of Washington's mercenary war. These include many armed units of both MISURA and MISURASATA.

MISURA was originally led by Steadman Fagoth, a proven agent of Somoza. It functions under the command of the Honduran-based mercenary army called the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN). The FDN is headed by ex-officers of Somoza's National Guard and is the largest CIA-organized mercenary group.

MISURASATA was originally led by Brooklyn Rivera and associated with the Costa Rican-based mercenary group called the Revolutionary Democratic Alliance headed by Edén Pastora.

Over the past two years, MISURA and MISURASATA have both fractured into various factions under the pressure of the growing demands of the majority of Miskitos for an end to the fighting on the Atlantic Coast. The experience of the *contra* groups destroying schools, clinics, and housing, as well as massacring Indians, combined with the project to establish regional government autonomy, has increasingly alienated Miskitos from the *contra* war and its CIA sponsors.

Last summer, in a U.S. government effort to reunite the area's MISURA and MISURASATA factions and continue the war, KISAN was formed in Honduras. Some KISAN groups have continued carrying out terrorist actions, rejecting the Nicaraguan government's offer of dialogue and cease-fire. Some MISURA and MISURASATA units independent of KISAN have also tried to keep the fighting going. But the majority of armed Miskito groups inside Nicaragua, both in Northern and Southern Zelaya, are observing the cease-fire.

Those Miskitos taking part in the cease-fire have not laid down their arms, but many have returned to their communities on the Coast and begun to participate in society. In some cases, they have engaged in combat against the CIA-run mercenary groups. Some have also begun to participate in public meetings held to discuss the autonomy project.

An example of the process taking place was a "Face the People" meeting held between Sandinista representatives and Miskito residents of the Northern Zelaya community of Sutkapín in early February. Several leaders of Miskito armed groups taking part in the cease-fire participated.

The residents of Sutkapín, a village of



Nicaraguan government has established cease-fires with most armed Miskito groups inside Nicaragua that had been part of U.S. government's mercenary war. Here, Reynaldo Reyes, leader of a MISURA group observing cease-fire, explains that *contras'* goal is to sabotage project to establish regional government autonomy on Atlantic Coast.

100 families, called on the government to help repair roads, build a school, and fix up the local church. It was agreed that the government would send a medical brigade to Sutkapín once a month and that three local youth would be sent to Puerto Cabezas for training as teachers. Government representatives agreed to discuss the possibility of sending heavy equipment to repair the roads in the near future.

Several speakers, including some MISURA leaders, pointed out that the lack of resources in Sutkapín was exacerbated by the destruction caused by mercenary attacks on the town. Achieving total peace in the area, it was pointed out, would allow development projects to proceed and permit Miskitos to complete the autonomy project.

Reynaldo Reyes, leader of a MISURA group observing the cease-fire, said, "It's the counterrevolutionary bands that want the autonomy process to fail. They're the ones who are attacking us."

"They're the ones we have to struggle against," agreed Martin Hodgson, also from a group observing the cease-fire. The mercenaries backed by the U.S. government want to return Miskitos to the past of exploitation, he said.

Washington trying to regain initiative

Faced with the disintegration of its war on the Coast, Washington is desperately trying to blow up the dialogue between armed Miskito groups and the Sandinistas. The U.S. goal is to engulf the region in fighting once again, preventing the consolidation of autonomy and the recuperation of the region's economy.

In early February, José González, delegate of the Ministry of the Interior in Northern Zelaya, warned of an escalation of U.S.-sponsored terror in the region. He reported that Washington had sent several hundred FDN mercenaries into the province and armed them heavily.

González, who has since become coordinator of the FSLN in Northern Zelaya, said the mercenaries would try to assassinate Miskito leaders who had deserted the CIA and are involved in peace talks with the Sandinistas. Another goal is to block the continued return of Miskitos from Honduras, where many had been forcibly moved by the *contras*. González also reported that mercenaries had recently attacked a boat carrying food to the Río Coco. The Miskitos used to live along the river and are now returning home.

Those Miskitos who have returned to the Río Coco have been a constant target of the mercenaries, who have consistently worked to block the transport of desperately needed food and other supplies to the river communities being rebuilt. The communities are operating with extremely primitive living conditions and severe shortages.

Washington's most publicized war move was to help MISURASATA leader Brooklyn Rivera infiltrate Northern Zelaya, accompanied by 200 other mercenaries, including Russell Means, a former figure in the American Indian Movement of the United States, and Canadian Clem Charrier, president of the World Council of Indian Peoples.

The counterrevolutionaries reached the Miskito community of Layasiksa, south of Puerto Cabezas. Many of the town's resi-

dents fled. By early February, troops of the Sandinista army, Ministry of the Interior, and air force had driven the terrorists out of Layasiksa.

Responding to slanders in the U.S. big-business media that the Sandinistas had indiscriminately bombed Miskito villages searching for Rivera and his U.S. allies, the Nicaraguan government invited a fact-finding commission to visit Layasiksa and interview the Miskitos who lived there. The commission included representatives of the Red Cross, various churches, and the government.

Many of the residents told the commission they had fled the town out of fear of the military conflict they knew was coming once Rivera entered the village. Most had returned to their homes at the time of the fact-finding visit. They were receiving medical treatment from the Ministry of the Interior and army, as well as food provisions.

One member of the commission, Bishop Hedley Wilson of the Moravian Church, said he had expected to find the village wiped off the map. "We're pleased to find that everything's okay," he told the FSLN daily *Barricada*.

Rivera's political line

The goal of Rivera's ill-fated entry into Nicaragua was to provoke a bloody international incident that could be used to bolster the CIA slander that the Sandinistas repress Indians. The participation of Means and other Indians from North America was aimed at influencing U.S. and Canadian public opinion in particular.

Ideologically, Rivera is trying to counterpose to the popular autonomy proposal a separatist schema that pits Miskitos against all the other working people in Nicaragua and against the Sandinista revolution.

Churning out the political arguments for Rivera are the World Council of Indigenous Peoples and the Indian Law Resource Center, which is based in Washington, D.C. According to the Resource Center, Indians are members of a "Fourth World." Their struggle for liberation has nothing to do with that of other peoples in nations oppressed by imperialism or with the class struggle of workers and peasants in general.

The purpose of this political line, as *Barricada* recently explained, "is to drive Indian groups away from the rural and urban movements of peoples who identify with progressive ideas. In other words, its ideological axis is to convince Indians that they have nothing in common with other sectors, such as farm workers, peasants, artisans, or industrial workers."

More and more Miskitos, however, are beginning to reject Rivera's line and are beginning — within the framework of autonomy — to overcome the racism, exploitation, and backwardness they have suffered historically. This, in turn, is pushing those Miskitos still in arms toward cease-fire and reincorporation into Nicaraguan society.

In mid-February, two leaders of MISURA units granted an interview to Sandinista television, which broadcast it nationally. The MISURA leaders announced that they wanted to be added to Nicaragua's autonomy commission. Said one, "Some people say if we do this we're surrendering. We don't consider it surrender."

Speech by Nicaraguan Commander Tomás Borge Women and the Nicaraguan Revolution

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—THE GREAT SOCIETY—

The answer man — Reagan had a ready answer for how his good buddy Marcos piled up those billions. Marcos, the prez under-



Harry Ring

stands, was already a millionaire when he took office and may have increased his pile by legitimate investments. Sure, chief. Like the 22 crates of freshly minted pesos

he departed with.

And a room at the White House — A crony in Hawaii said Marcos may try to dodge consequences of his crimes in the Philippines by quickly becoming a U.S. citizen, which is possible for Filipinos who participated in the U.S. war against Japan. Earlier this year, long-suppressed U.S. Army files confirmed Marcos' much vaunted "war hero" record was a "fraud."

Traveler's Aid — U.S. authorities permitted the Marcos gang to run up tabs of \$39,101.76 at air force PXs in Guam and Hawaii. The State Dept. said the question of how the bills would be

paid "is still being studied." The PXs are self-supporting and profits are supposed to go for GI recreation.

Souvenir hunter — During a 1978 visit to the Big Apple, Imelda Marcos dropped in at Bulgari's jewelry shop in the Hotel Pierre and picked up \$1.43 million worth of jeweled trinkets.

Just what they need — "I can see her as governor of Hawaii." — Joe Lazo, an Imelda Marcos fan in Honolulu.

Do it right — Paul Lugar, head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said Washington should offer to drop its aid to the

Nicaraguan *contras* if the Sandinistas hold free elections, "like in the Philippines." A good deal. Unleash the goons, take a fast count of the ballots, and qualify as a Free World Ally.

And small incomes? — Contract Freighters of Joplin, Mo., is looking to hire 500 unemployed farmers as truck drivers, figuring they are used to heavy equipment and irregular hours.

Funniest story of the week — "WASHINGTON — Two members of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence said today that they would insist that the man nominated to be the new deputy director of the Central Intelligence

Agency tell the panel when it has been misled by any agency official, including the director." — News item.

The march of civilization — A patent was issued for an audio device that is activated when someone monkeys with a door or window. The sound of a ferocious dog barking is activated, in stereo.

Thought for the week — "Demystification of the law is all very well, but the power of the law over the minds of men will surely collapse if the process goes too far, and the public comes to see the law as a purely man-made instrument." — Patrick Atiyah, a British legal scholar.

—CALENDAR—

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The Fight for Women's Rights Around the World. Film showing of *Women in Nicaragua, the Second Revolution* and a presentation by a representative of the African National Congress of South Africa. Translation to Spanish. Sat., March 22, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

Oakland

Socialist Campaign Kick-Off Rally. Speaker: Miesa Patterson, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress, 8th C.D. Translation to Spanish. Sun., April 6. Dinner, 5 p.m.; rally 7 p.m. 3808 E 14th St. Donation: \$5. Ausp: Socialist Workers Campaign. For more information call (415) 261-3014.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

Grenada: the Future Coming Towards Us. A film documentary. Speaker: Tim Craine, Socialist Workers Party candidate for lieutenant governor of Michigan. Translation to Spanish. Sat., March 15, 8 p.m. 2135 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (313) 961-0395.

Boycott South Africa, Not Nicaragua! A Socialist Workers campaign rally. Speaker: Kate Kaku, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Michigan. Translation to Spanish. Sat., March 22, 8 p.m. 2135 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Michigan Socialist Workers Campaign. For more information call (313) 961-0395.

See Nicaragua with delegation of performers, artists, writers

Join Ventana group as guests of the Sandinista Association of Cultural Workers in Nicaragua, April 10-20, 1986. Tour includes contact with Nicaraguan cultural workers, attendance at performances, and day trips outside of Managua. Cost — including airfare from Mexico City and back, room and board, and travel within Nicaragua — approximately \$1,000. Contact Ventana, 250 W 54th St., room 800, New York, N.Y. 10019. Telephone (212) 586-3700.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

Socialist Campaign Rally: Solidarity With the Austin Strikers, Stop Farm Foreclosures, End U.S. War in Central America! Speaker: Geoff Mirelowitz, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor. Sun., April 6. Reception, 4 p.m.; rally, 5 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Ausp: Minnesota Socialist Workers Campaign. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Behind the Rebellion in Haiti. Film showing of *Bitter Cane*, a documentary on life under Duvalier dictatorship. Speaker: representative of the Committee Against Repression in Haiti. Translation to Spanish and French. Fri., March 21, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St. Donation: \$3. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Albany

From Sharpeville, South Africa, to Albany, USA. A cultural program in commemoration of the Sharpeville massacre. Featuring the Sechaba Singers. Fri., March 21, 7:30 p.m. Mount Calvary Baptist Church, 58 Alexander St. Ausp: Capital District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism. For more information call (518) 436-0562.

Manhattan

The Hope for Peace in Central America. New York Area Central America Week, March 15-24. Ten days of events and activities including: "Central American and Caribbean Women," a series of workshops, speakers, films, and cultural events sponsored by Casa Nicaragua and AMNLAE Filial "Arlene Siu." Sat., March 15, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. New School for Social Research, 65 5th Ave.

Demonstration Against U.S. Intervention in Central America and Southern Africa. No Aid to the Contras, No Aid to UNITA! Fri., March 21, 4-6:30 p.m. Federal Building (between Worth and Duane streets). For more information call (212) 962-1210.

For more information on week's activities call (212) 304-0489 or 870-2162.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

Haiti and Philippines: Masses Topple U.S. Puppets. Speakers: Joan Drake, works with Haitian refugees and has lived in Haiti; a repre-

sentative of Friends of the Filipino People; representative of Socialist Workers Party. Sun., March 16, 5 p.m. 2219 E Market St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (919) 272-5996.

Hornel Strikers - Fighting for All Working People. Eyewitness report from Austin, Minnesota. Speaker: Rich Stuart, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate, member of textile workers' union; other speakers to be announced. Sun., March 23, 5 p.m. 2219 E Market St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (919) 272-5996.

OHIO

Cincinnati

The Debate on Abortion Rights in Nicaragua. Speaker: Barbara Sack, member Cincinnati National Organization for Women and Socialist Workers Party. Sun., March 16, 7:30 p.m. 4945 Paddock Rd. Donation: \$2.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (513) 242-7161.

Solidarity with the Hornel Workers. An eyewitness report. Speaker: Mark Rahn, chairperson, Cincinnati Young Socialist Alliance, just returned from Austin, Minnesota. Sun., March 23, 7:30 p.m. 4945 Paddock Rd. Donation: \$2.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (513) 242-7161.

OREGON

Portland

No U.S. Aid to Nicaragua Contras! Speakers: Markie Wilson, member Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 127 and representative of the Socialist Workers Party; Jaime Partridge, member National Association of Letter Carriers, executive secretary of Portland Labor Committee on Central America and the Caribbean. Slide show and discussion. Sat., March 22, 7:30 p.m. Preforum dinner 6 p.m. 2732 NE Union. Donation: forum, \$2; dinner, \$3. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (503) 287-7416.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

No Aid to the Contras! Demonstration, Sat., March 22, 12 noon. Federal Building, 125 S State St. Ausp: Central America Solidarity Coalition. For more information call (801) 973-9919 or 364-2274.

VIRGINIA

Newport News

Women in Nicaragua. Slideshow presentation

and discussion. Sun., March 16, 7:30 p.m. 5412 Jefferson Ave. Donation: \$3. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (804) 380-0133.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Rebellion in Haiti. Speaker: Fritz Longchamp, program coordinator, Washington Office on Haiti. Translation to Spanish and Creole. Sat., March 15, 7 p.m. 3106 Mt. Pleasant St. NW. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (202) 797-7699.

The Roots of Women's Oppression. A panel discussion. Translation to Spanish. Sat., March 22, 7 p.m. 3106 Mt. Pleasant St. NW. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (202) 797-7699.

WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston

The Philippine Freedom Struggle and the Fall of Marcos. Speaker: Jim Gates, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., March 16, 7 p.m. 611-A Tennessee Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 345-3040.

Morgantown

The Fight for Women's Rights Today. A panel discussion with members of the National Organization for Women, Coalition of Labor Union Women, and the Socialist Workers Party. Sat., March 15, 7:30 p.m. 221 Pleasant St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 296-0055.

What Socialists Stand For. A class series conducted by the Young Socialist Alliance.

1. "What Is Apartheid?" Wed., March 19, 6 p.m.

2. "The Strike by Meatpackers Against Hornel" Wed., March 26, 6 p.m.

221 Pleasant St. Ausp: YSA. For more information call (304) 296-0055.

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee

Basta Ya! A slideshow on women in Central America. Sat., March 15, 7:30 p.m. 4707 W Lisbon Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (414) 445-2076.

The Socialist Alternative in '86. Speaker: Margo Storsteen, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate. Sat., March 22. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; rally, 7:30 p.m. 4707 W Lisbon. Ausp: Storsteen for Senate Committee. For more information call (414) 445-2076.

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CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles: SWP, YSA, 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Zip: 90006. Tel: (213) 380-9460. **Oakland:** SWP, YSA, 3808 E 14th St. Zip: 94601. Tel: (415) 261-3014. **San Diego:** SWP, YSA, 1053 15th St. Zip: 92101. Tel: (619) 234-4630. **San Francisco:** SWP, YSA, 3284 23rd St. Zip: 94110. Tel: (415) 282-6255. **San Jose:** SWP, YSA, 46½ Race St. Zip: 95126. Tel: (408) 998-4007.

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GEORGIA: Atlanta: SWP, YSA, 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd Floor. Zip: 30301. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

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Build on successful abortion rights marches

The following is a guest column by Helen Grieco and Diana Cantú. Grieco is president of the San Francisco chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and a member of Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union Local 2. Cantú is a member of San Francisco NOW and the Socialist Workers Party.

The prochoice movement must build on the tremendous momentum of the "National March for Women's

WOMEN IN REVOLT

Lives: East Coast/West Coast." We need to step up our resistance to the attempts to roll back our reproductive rights.

The antichoice minority won't stop their attacks. They won't be satisfied until abortion and birth control are illegal.

The offensive against reproductive rights is being waged on many fronts: legally by the White House, the Congress, state and local legislatures, and the courts; and illegally, through terrorist attacks, firebombing, and arson.

Low-income women continue to die in the back alleys because federal and most state funding for safe, legal abortions has been cut off.

Women are struggling to win equality in every aspect of society. At the very heart of that equality is our right to absolute control over our reproductive lives. This means that women's rights supporters must fight for safe, legal abortion and for safe, legal birth control and against forced sterilization.

And it means fighting for the rights of *all* women.

In recent months we have seen the movement to defend our rights re-forming and gaining strength. We in California are part of this, and we have some important challenges ahead of us, as well as some important victories to report.

In a big victory for all women and workers, antichoice forces were unable to collect enough signatures to get two antiabortion initiatives on the California ballot. Both initiatives aimed at cutting off public funding for abortion.

California is one of only 13 states and the District of Columbia where Medicaid programs still cover abortions. Federal funding was cut off by Congress in 1977 with the passage of the Hyde Amendment. These laws discriminate against working-class and poor women. They strike hardest at Blacks, Chicanas, and other victims of racism.

On December 19 antichoice forces announced that they had failed to get enough signatures to put the so-called "Children's Fund" on the ballot. The initiative called for a constitutional amendment prohibiting the use of public funds for abortions except in cases necessary to save the woman's life.

The funds that would be saved by eliminating payment for most abortions were to be transferred to care programs for the "unborn," prematurely born, and handicapped and disabled children. For three years only, that is.

Their cynical strategy backfired. Many disabled people expressed resentment at being used as a political football by these groups.

The setback of the antichoice forces made clear that most Californians continue to support a woman's right to choose abortion.

This again came through loud and clear recently when

a second antiabortion initiative also failed to win enough support to get on the ballot.

This initiative was drawn up by antichoice forces who thought the "Children's Fund" was too liberal because it allowed an exception to the ban on public funding of abortion in cases of "imminent death" of the woman. Incredibly, this second initiative, which showed a complete disregard for women's lives, was dubbed the "Choose Life" initiative by its backers!

The "Choose Life" amendment stated, "No public monies shall be spent for the termination of innocent human life from the time of fertilization until natural death."

The words "innocent human life" and "natural death" were carefully chosen. The "right-to-lifers" wanted to make sure public funds would still be used to carry out executions under the death penalty!

The defeat of these two initiatives is a big victory.

By beating back these attempts to deny low-income, working-class women their right to choose abortion, the women's rights movement helps give new meaning to the old slogan, "An injury to one is an injury to all."

We should celebrate these two victories and the success of the National March for Women's Lives by determining to keep resisting the attacks on abortion rights.

People who want to fight for women's rights should get involved in NOW and keep organizing on the campuses and in our unions and community organizations.

It is a woman's fundamental human right to control her own body and thus, her life. We, and not the government, must be the judges of when and if to have a child.

All supporters of women's rights must continue to take to the streets, as on March 9 and March 16, and to make our loud, militant, prochoice statement: "Keep abortion safe and legal. Save women's lives!"

Ohio farm workers set campaign for Heinz contract

BY LYNN EDMISTON

TOLEDO — Following up on its victory in winning a landmark agreement with the Campbell's Soup Co., the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) is now setting its sights on winning a similar agreement with the H.J. Heinz Company.

At the time the Campbell's agreement was signed, Heinz indicated it was willing to talk with the union, but so far there has been no motion by the company.

The Campbell's agreement was described by union President Baldemar Velasquez as historically unique. No other labor pact has been signed with both the growers and the processors that contract for their crops.

In its drive to organize workers on tomato and cucumber farms that supply Campbell's, FLOC has always insisted that an agreement with Campbell's is key since the rate it pays the farmers is an important factor in what they pay their workers.

The initial pact covers about 400 cucumber workers and about 150 tomato pickers and sorters and 30 truck drivers. In 1987 an additional 170 planting and hoeing workers will come under the agreement. The agreement calls for an agency shop with dues checkoff and two paid union representatives.

Further organization of farm workers will be through representation elections held in the fields.

This first FLOC contract comes after years of dogged effort by the union, which was established in 1967.

Its efforts have included several organizing drives and a 1978 strike marked by police violence against the workers.

This was followed by the initiation of the Campbell's boycott.

At the press conference that announced the agreement, Velasquez said, "The real reason we're here today is because there are enough people who care about farm workers — including the church people, lay people, and trade unionists who answered our call for the Campbell's boycott."

FLOC has always reciprocated in extending solidarity. Red-shirted FLOC supporters have been a common sight for years at Toledo area solidarity rallies, including those for the Greyhound, AP Parts, and Sun Oil strikers. FLOC has also participated in Nicaragua solidarity activities and in a conference organized by the Nicaraguan farm workers union.

The new tripartite agreement with Campbell's and the tomato growers will run for three years and boost the basic wage to \$4.60 an hour and also provide for medical and hospital insurance. All subcontracting is covered by the agreement,

which is signed by Campbell's and the newly organized Campbell Tomato Growers' Association.

Study committees are created under the pact to deal with the problems of pesticides, other health and safety issues, and housing and day care.

The cucumber agreement, which runs for four years, also includes developing alternatives to the sharecropping "independent contractors" system. This is used by the growers to dodge paying a regular hourly wage and involves so-called profit-sharing. The workers have no right to re-

view the figures by which profits are determined.

The settlement also includes payments of up to \$2,000 compensation for each family involved in the 1978 strike.

Campbell's has now conceded that the boycott was beginning to hurt, and they apparently feared it was going to hurt more.

Religious organizations are credited with playing an important role in promoting the boycott. Pressure on the company was added when the influential National Council of Churches announced last November that if an agreement was not reached with FLOC by February 21, it

would endorse the boycott of Campbell's products. The contract was announced that date.

In addition to Heinz, FLOC is now also looking to win agreements with the Beatrice Grocery Group (formerly Hunt-Wesson), Stokely USA, and others.

FLOC vice-president Ray Santiago urged union supporters to write to Heinz calling on it to sign an agreement as Campbell's did. Letters should be addressed to Anthony J.S. O'Reilly, H.J. Heinz Co., 600 Grant St., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15219.

U.S. rulers debate aid to Nicaraguan 'contras'

Continued from Page 14

ling off Norfolk and Charleston, so Nicaragua would soon play host to Bear bombers patrolling off San Diego and Seattle."

Buchanan ended with a bang: "By cutting arms shipments to Nicaragua's freedom fighters... the national Democratic Party has now become, with Moscow, co-guarantor of the Brezhnev doctrine in Central America."

"Whose side are you on?... With the vote on contra aid, the Democratic Party will reveal whether it stands with Ronald Reagan and the resistance — or [Nicaraguan President] Daniel Ortega and the communists."

This followed on the heels of the CIA making public a report on an alleged "disinformation" campaign by the Sandinistas to influence the congressional vote.

What did this "disinformation" campaign consist of?

The fact that the Nicaraguan government has hired a U.S. public relations firm to help answer Washington's lies about Nicaragua and convince people in the United States to oppose aid to the contras.

Sen. David Durenberger (R.-Minn.), who supports "humanitarian" aid to the contras, called the "disinformation" maneuver an "outrageous" attempt "to portray every senator and congressman who votes against lethal aid as a stooge of communism."

Rep. Michael Barnes (D.-Md.) called the accusation that the administration's opponents are "communist dupes" the "moral equivalent of McCarthyism."

One White House official admitted to the *Washington Post* that with the red-baiting campaign, "We managed to shift the focus from the importance of aiding the freedom fighters to the rather dubious tactics we were using to convince Congress."

The White House says it is now emphasizing the carrot part of its carrot-and-stick approach. Central to this was appointing diplomat Philip Habib as Washington's envoy to Central America. Habib's most recent assignment was as Reagan's representative in the Philippines. Habib is on a trip to talk to the governments in the region.

Reagan made it quite clear that Habib's junket was a complement — not an alternative — to the contra war. "Ambassador Habib's efforts to achieve a diplomatic solution must be accompanied by an increasing level of pressure on the Nicaraguan communists," Reagan said.

The Habib trip is linked to the bipartisan "compromise" proposals — all of which would give some aid to the contras — which the White House is trying to cook up as the chances for its original package fade.

One possible deal would be to allocate the money and make its release contingent on White House efforts to negotiate with Nicaragua.

But Washington routinely claims that the Sandinistas refuse to negotiate. Meanwhile, it's the Nicaraguans who have a long-standing proposal on the table to renew the bilateral talks that Washington broke off last year.

By adding the call for negotiations to a bill giving money to the contras, it allows Congress to simultaneously escalate the war and look like it's supporting peace.

'Humanitarian' aid scam

Other legislators say they will "only" vote for so-called humanitarian aid.

Carlos Tünnermann, Nicaragua's ambassador to the United States, made a telling point about this approach in a letter which appeared in the January 23 *New York Times*: "To Nicaraguans who have

been killed, raped, and mutilated by the contras, the appellation 'humanitarian' aid rings brutally hollow....

"Foreign aid designed to improve the poor military performance of the contras does not, under any reasonable definition, constitute humanitarian assistance."

Even those congresspeople who claim to oppose any aid to the contras agree with the administration on two fundamental things — something must be done about the Nicaraguan government, and the U.S. government has the right to do it. Being part of the slander campaign against Nicaragua, and refusing to defend the unconditional right of the Nicaraguan people to self-determination, weakens the fight against contra aid.

The blows being dealt the contras mean that the stakes in the battle over contra aid have been raised. The war against Nicaragua continues to grind on, while the U.S. rulers continue to thrash around looking for the most effective means to get rid of the Nicaraguan government.

The war has already claimed a huge number of lives.

According to a February 21 speech by President Daniel Ortega, the number of war victims from January 1980 to January 1986 was 12,332. Of these 3,999 were killed; 4,542 wounded; and 3,791 captured.

In the total, Ortega reported, were 911 children and 2,194 young people. If you include the contras who have been killed, the total of dead is 13,930. This would be the equivalent of some 1,100,000 dead in a country with the population of the United States.

It's important for antiwar fighters to intervene in this debate with the call for an end to *all* aid to the contras and an end to U.S. intervention in Central America.

Why labor should defend quotas

The Reagan administration is asking the U.S. Supreme Court to deal a massive blow to affirmative action programs that counter job discrimination against Blacks, women, and others. In three cases, the Justice Department wants the court to outlaw numerical hiring goals and quotas.

The labor movement has a vital stake in standing with Blacks, women, and other victims of discrimination against this government attack on their basic right to equal employment opportunity. The attack on affirmative action is also an attack on the unions' capacity to unite working people to defend their rights and living standards against the employers and their government.

One of the three cases involves Local 28 of the Sheet Metal Workers' International Association (AFL-CIO), based in New York. Local officials are challenging a court order requiring the local to increase the percentage of Black, Puerto Rican, and other nonwhite local members from about 3 percent as of 1974 to 29.2 percent by 1987.

(The other two cases challenge affirmative action programs in the Cleveland fire department and the Jackson, Michigan, school system.)

By challenging the quota, Local 28 bureaucrats are scabbing on Black, Puerto Rican, and other workers who are fighting for equal job opportunity and the right to full participation in the union movement.

In their fight to preserve the privileges of a racist white job trust, Local 28 officials have now won the support of New York Mayor Edward Koch, as well as the Reagan administration.

The record of Local 28 officials shows why quotas are vitally necessary to overcome racist hiring practices.

As Herbert Hill, a former NAACP official, pointed out in the February 18 *New York Times*, "For 38 years, Local 28... has repeatedly defied municipal, state, and Federal orders to cease discriminatory practices that have been documented many times over."

The Sheet Metal Workers' officials have demonstrated that without the requirement to accept a minimum quota of Blacks, Puerto Ricans, and other oppressed workers, they will dodge any guideline aimed at ending racist discrimination. And so will almost all the employers, universities, government bodies, and other institutions that have acted as enforcers of the institutionalized racism built into the U.S. capitalist system.

According to the arguments presented to the U.S. Supreme Court by the U.S. Justice Department, Local 28 can be required to admit only those Blacks who can prove that they were individually refused membership in the craft on racial grounds. They claim that requiring the admission of a minimum quota of nonwhites, in order to end the pattern of discrimination that made Local 28 a white job trust, would constitute discrimination against whites.

As Herbert Hill pointed out, "Black workers were not denied jobs and membership by Local 28 as individuals but as a class."

The decision sought by the Reagan administration would mean that employers and other institutions could no longer be required to actively seek out to employ Blacks, women, and other victims of discrimination. It would reverse many of the concrete gains won by affirmative action.

How many Blacks or Puerto Ricans, for instance, would spontaneously apply for positions in Local 28, or jobs in other areas where racist exclusion is long established?

For example, the pharmaceutical company Merck & Co. was forced to begin recruiting in predominantly Black areas to meet affirmative action goals set by the government. "Fifteen years ago, no one in Newark [New

Jersey] even knew of a Merck & Co.," noted Gary Mickle, a Black who is a biologist for the corporation.

Local 28 officials are not fighting discrimination against whites. They are aiding the employing class that profits from keeping Black, Puerto Rican, Chicano, women, and other oppressed workers at the bottom of the wage scale.

The Sheet Metal Workers' bureaucrats count on the backing of a layer in the union that has maintained a privileged position through the racist exclusion of Blacks and others from the trade.

The racist practices of Local 28 and other white job trusts harm and divide the union movement. These practices should be opposed and outlawed in the AFL-CIO, Teamsters, and other unions.

When the AFL-CIO held its founding convention in 1955, the metal trades and building trades craft unions successfully prevented the adoption of a constitutional clause guaranteeing equal membership rights to Blacks. Segregated locals and other discriminatory practices were allowed to continue.

Nor did the AFL-CIO join the fight against the system of legally enforced racist segregation in the South. The ramifications of this system included segregation and discrimination in the union movement — particularly in the crafts.

These policies contributed to the failure of the campaign to organize the workers of the South into unions, a program proclaimed at the founding convention.

The massive civil rights movement, which toppled the system of legal segregation, began to change that. Affirmative action programs in hiring, education, and elsewhere were among the historic conquests of this movement.

This was a gain for all working people. The employers had to increasingly integrate Blacks, Latinos, and women into industry. The most oppressed sections of the working class became somewhat less vulnerable to attack as the last hired, first fired. The racist and sexist divisions imposed on the working class began to be undermined.

Blacks, Latinos, and women became an increasingly active part of the union movement and increased its fighting potential.

This change was reflected in 1979 when a training program at a Kaiser Aluminum plant, won by the United Steelworkers of America, was challenged in court by Brian Weber. Weber claimed it discriminated against him by setting aside half the positions for Blacks and women.

The AFL-CIO and most major unions joined the Steelworkers union in defending the program, which was upheld in July 1979 by the U.S. Supreme Court. The rulings sought now by the Reagan administration would reverse the decision in the Weber case.

One of the goals of the ruling-class offensive against affirmative action is to weaken the unions by pushing back some of the changes that have taken place in the labor movement. They want to reinforce the racist and sexist stratification of the working class.

The diehard defense of white privilege by the Sheet Metal Workers' International Association Local 28 is being used by these union-busters to portray racist policies as prounion.

The unions should not let them get away with this cynical lie. They need to reject the claim that affirmative action quotas are racism in reverse and to demand that the Supreme Court uphold the affirmative action programs in all three cases before it.

The union movement should fight to extend affirmative action and to remove any obstacle — including white male job trust practices — to the full participation of Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, women, and other oppressed people in the U.S. labor movement.

'The cause of labor is the cause of Ireland'

On Easter Monday, April 24, 1916, Padraig Pearse and James Connolly led an armed group to occupy the General Post Office in Dublin, in British-ruled Ireland. From the steps of the General Post Office they read out a proclamation of Ireland's independence.

"We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies," the proclamation stated.

It added, "In every generation the Irish people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty; six times during the past 300 years they have asserted it in arms. Standing on that fundamental right and again asserting it in arms in the face of the world, we hereby proclaim the Irish Republic as a Sovereign Independent

OUR REVOLUTIONARY HERITAGE

State."

Europe was then in the throes of World War I. Connolly and Pearse saw Britain's involvement in the war as an opportunity for Irish nationalists to strike a blow for freedom.

About 1,600 members of Connolly's Irish Citizen Army and Pearse's Irish Volunteers took part in the "Easter Rising."

The Irish rebels resisted British attacks for a week. In the end, the rising was crushed, with some 1,300 men killed or wounded.

Those leaders captured by the British were executed for treason. Padraig Pearse was shot by a British firing squad almost immediately after his capture.

James Connolly, however, had been gravely wounded in the fighting. His leg was shattered by a dum-dum bullet on April 27, and he developed gangrene. His trial was therefore postponed to May 9 and took place in a prison hospital.

Connolly, too, was sentenced to death. On May 12, 1916, he was taken by stretcher to meet his firing squad. Too weak to stand, Connolly was strapped into a chair and shot.

James Connolly embodied both the Irish struggle for independence and the struggle of working people for socialism.

In 1896 he had founded the Irish Socialist Republican Party. While living in the United States from 1903 to 1910, Connolly was active in the socialist movement and the Industrial Workers of the World.

Upon returning to Ireland, Connolly worked with James Larkin to found the Irish Labor Party, and both were organizers of the trade union movement.

Dublin industrialists organized a lockout of union members in 1913. Police and employer brutality led the union to organize its own defense force, the Irish Citizen Army, whose members later took part in the Easter Rising.

Connolly was a prolific writer and popularizer of working-class and socialist ideas. He spent considerable time explaining the Irish national struggle to those socialists in other countries who saw no difference between the nationalism of oppressor countries and the revolutionary nationalism of an oppressed people.

In 1913, Connolly wrote that he had "spent a great portion of [my] life alternating between interpreting Socialism to the Irish, and interpreting the Irish to the Socialists." He added, "While I am convinced that the former has been attended with a considerable degree of success, the latter has not."

The following excerpt is from "The Irish Flag," published in the April 8, 1916, *Workers' Republic*, when preparations for the rising were almost complete.

* * *

We are out for Ireland for the Irish. But who are the Irish? Not the rack-renting, slum-owning landlord; not the sweating, profit-grinding capitalist; not the sleek and oily lawyer; not the prostitute pressman — the hired liars of the enemy.

Not these are the Irish upon whom the future depends. Not these, but the Irish working class, the only secure foundation upon which a free nation can be reared.

The cause of labor is the cause of Ireland, the cause of Ireland is the cause of labor. They cannot be severed. Ireland seeks freedom. Labor seeks that an Ireland free should be the sole mistress of her own destiny, supreme owner of all material things within and upon her soil.

Labor seeks to make the free Irish nation the guardian of the interests of the people of Ireland, and to secure that end would vest in that free Irish nation all property rights as against the claims of the individual, with the end in view that the individual may be enriched by the nation, and not by the spoiling of his fellows.

Protest apartheid, 'contra' aid

The AFL-CIO executive council's call for a "Day of Solidarity with the Victims of Apartheid" March 22 offers an opportunity for unionists and anti-apartheid fighters to advance the fight to break all U.S. ties with the racist apartheid regime in South Africa.

The council has endorsed the nationwide consumer boycott of products of Shell Oil Co. as one of the ways that U.S. trade unionists can "send a powerful message of encouragement to our South African brothers and sisters and an equally powerful message of protest to the government that oppresses them."

The purpose of the March 22 rallies, said the *AFL-CIO News*, is "to keep public attention focused on the anti-labor attitudes of the government of Pretoria."

Rallies will be held in Detroit, Houston, St. Louis, New York, Washington, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. They will mark the 26th anniversary of the 1960 massacre in Sharpeville, where South African police fired on peaceful demonstrators, killing 89 and wounding more than 300.

Since August of 1984 there has been a sustained upsurge in South Africa against the apartheid state. The rul-

ers have responded by killing well over 1,200 people.

It is in this context that the AFL-CIO call for protests is made and why it is so important.

These rallies can be used to explain the truth about the just and democratic struggle of the Black majority for freedom.

The protests are also an occasion to voice opposition to Washington's support to the South African-backed UNITA terrorists in Angola led by Jonas Savimbi. Savimbi recently received a royal welcome from President Reagan in Washington.

Working people should also join in the activities of Central America Week March 16-24, called by the Inter-Religious Task Force on Central America. It is a timely opportunity to respond to the U.S.-backed and funded wars in Central America and demand: "No to contra aid!"

Both the March 22 AFL-CIO anti-apartheid rallies and March 16-24 Central America Week activities can also be building actions for more anti-apartheid and antiwar protests, such as the April 19 antiwar march in San Francisco and the June 14 anti-apartheid action in New York.

Human toll of crisis in Georgia countryside

BY SARA JEAN JOHNSTON

ATLANTA — Minutes before 711 acres of his farm were to be auctioned off on the steps of Burke County courthouse February 4, Georgia farmer Leonard Hill III shot and killed himself.

His suicide was a desperate attempt to save his farm.

AS I SEE IT

His widow, Annabell, told the media that Hill had told her, "I've got 20 minutes to stop the sale."

Hill left insurance policies neatly stacked on the nightstand in his bedroom. He had hoped they would pay off the \$62,000 being demanded by the Federal Land Bank of Central Georgia and the Farmers Production Credit Association, as well as the \$100,000 owed to other banks.

The auction was postponed. But Hill's creditors are standing by like vultures, waiting to see if the insurance policies will be enough to pay his debt.

The only response to this tragedy by the state government was to create a "crisis hotline" for the thousands of farm families now facing foreclosure. The hotline provides job referrals and psychiatric counseling. It is supposed to show the state's farmers that the government cares.

With the lifting of a four-year, court-ordered moratorium on Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) foreclosures, that agency is gearing up to show Georgia farmers just how much it cares. The FmHA — a government agency that is supposed to help the poorest farmers — is planning immediate action on all loans delinquent by more than \$100. In February they mailed out over 4,600 "notices of intent to take adverse action" to farm families.

Once farmers receive such notices, they have three days to respond and 30 days to work out what the FmHA calls "options." These "options" are "negotiable restructuring of the debt, voluntary liquidation, or paying all due and unpaid installments within 30 days."

Nationally, tens of thousands of farm families face foreclosure at the hands of the FmHA. According to government figures, Georgia farmers head the agency's list, with a full 53 percent of the state's farmers having "defaulted."

The average price of Georgia farmland has dropped 11 percent since 1981. In some areas of the state, the decline in land value is as high as 50 percent.

This decline in the value of their land has left farm families owing more money to the private and government banks than their land is worth. The banks can, therefore, accelerate loan payments due to "lack of sufficient collateral."

The current wave of foreclosures, engineered by the government and the banks, could force land values down further. This, in turn, could kick off yet another wave of foreclosures.

To pave the way for the FmHA, the big-business media and the government seized on the presence of the right-wing Heritage Library at an armed protest in Cochran, Georgia, last November to launch a campaign against farmers. The protest was in support of Oscar Lorricks, a 66-year-old Black farmer who faced eviction.

The big-business media tried to portray farmers as violent, right-wing fanatics who should be watched by the political police — the FBI and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI). The campaign was aimed at isolating farmers from other working people.

Headlines such as "Armed demonstrators avert farmer's eviction" and "Extremists are linked to farm protest" became common in the Atlanta papers.

The Atlanta Constitution, for example, called for a full investigation into the farm movement by the political police. A December 28 editorial stated: "Georgia officials are watching closely as right-wing radicals sniff the air, circle, and wait. The rabid right is stalking the farm crisis. It hopes to process the resentment of dispossessed farmers into Grade A political venom, while the GBI, FBI, county sheriffs and others want to prevent that."

"Thank goodness for their investigation. . . ."

According to the big-business media and Georgia officials, the 20 state troopers and GBI agents who evicted Sycamore farmer James Baker and his family without warning January 24 were his friends.

Baker arrived home from work that day to find his belongings loaded in a moving van. According to Sheriff Lamar Widdon, no warning was given to Baker — to prevent any protest that could stop the eviction.

Armed state troopers and cop agents, eviction papers in hand, are hardly friends of farmers and other working people. Neither are the government officials and their media mouthpieces who violence-bait the victims of state violence — farm families.

Working farmers in Georgia and across the country need real friends and allies to fight farm foreclosures. Those allies are the working class and other oppressed people.

Right-wing outfits like the Heritage Library lead away from these real allies. They give the ruling class, its cops, and its press a handle to attack the farm protest movement.

The developing alliance between the farm movement and the striking Hormel meatpackers of Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers union in Austin, Minnesota, is a powerful example of the way forward. Farmer-labor solidarity reflects the common interests of working people who are up against common enemies — the bosses, bankers, and capitalist politicians.

LETTERS

Reconsider editorial

The *Militant* should reconsider its editorial position in the case of Meir Kahane in your February 28 editorial "Attack on citizenship rights."

You correctly point out that Kahane is a "racist terrorist" who should be imprisoned for his crimes. You expose the hypocrisy of the government's move against him and the pretext for similar actions against radicals and socialists.

Nevertheless you are wrong in calling for a defense of Kahane — or for "opposing" the government's move against him.

A civil libertarian position can be positively harmful if it obscures class questions. The possible danger arising from a legal precedent is less important than the principle of working class solidarity against the ruling class and its thugs.

Maybe Meir Kahane is not a "close ally of the U.S. rulers," but he is certainly an enemy of working people. The rulers have acquiesced to his crimes through the complicity of their cops and courts. They sustain him and his fellow criminals through their backing for the Zionist regime in Palestine.

Let us defend Margaret Randall and demand justice for the killers of Alex Odeh. We have an interest in defending victims of capitalist injustice.

Readers of the *Militant* look to you for clear analysis and an uncompromising defense of the interests of working people. You should correct your position and print a retraction.

David Sandor
Salt Lake City, Utah

Jobs-protest convictions

On January 21 two Pittsburgh activists were sentenced to up to a year in jail for their participation in a jobs protest.

The two — Shipbuilders Local 61 President Darrell Becker and defrocked Lutheran pastor Doug Roth — were convicted of disorderly conduct and failure to disperse. They are out on bail, pending appeal. Also convicted was actor David Soul, star of the television show "Starsky and Hutch."

Soul was sentenced to two years' probation and fined \$1,000.

An open letter being distributed by Becker explains the facts behind the case:

"Last Easter Sunday, 35 church and union members assembled on the sidewalk in front of a wealthy Pittsburgh church to read the Bible and present a symbolic offering of scrap steel from a closed mill. Inside, Pittsburgh's corporate elite, the men who control our regional economy, worshipped. We were arrested."

They chose to protest because "Each day the outlook worsens as more companies work to bust unions through concessions and plant relocations."

"Rather than stand idly by and watch workers' lives and the labor movement destroyed," they protested at the wealthy church "to demand accountability from the people responsible for the economic disaster we are experiencing."

The heavy hand of the government has fallen on them with these harsh sentences to drive home the point that "it is a crime to protest [corporate] decisions and the massive unemployment they produce."

Messages of solidarity can be sent to: IUMSWA Local 61, 5015 Grand Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15225.

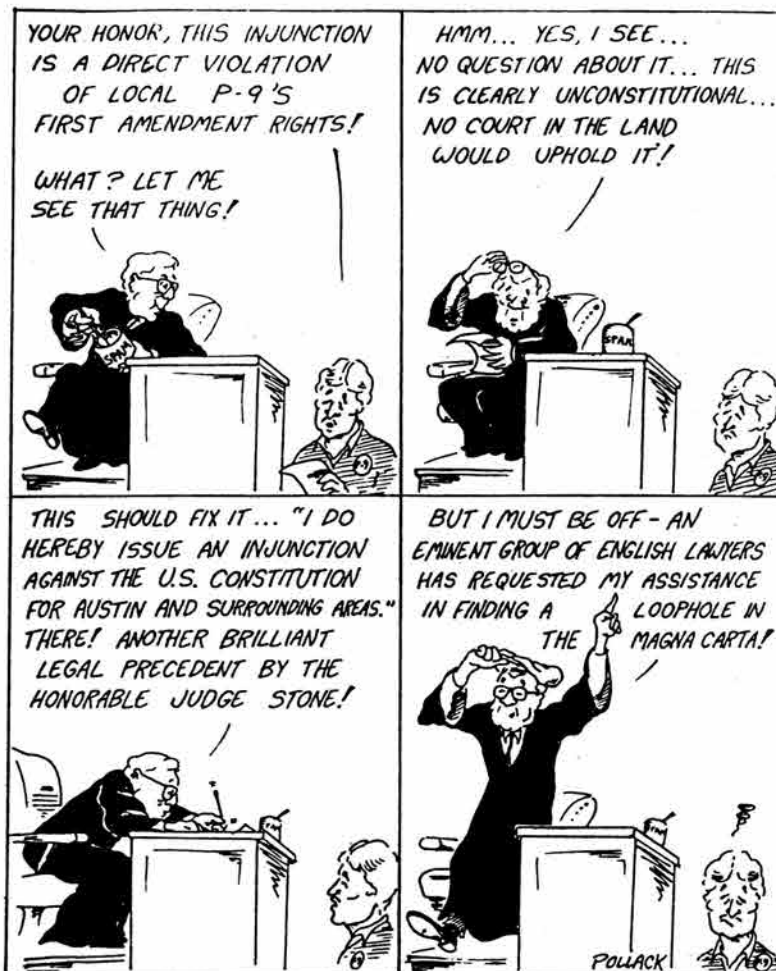
Mark Weddleton
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The shuttle

In light of the discussion opened up after the Challenger shuttle disaster regarding the U.S. government's manned space program, I think it would be of interest to readers for the *Militant* to do an article on this government's exploration of space.

In the debate going on, many scientists have addressed the question of whether or not it is necessary to risk human lives on these flights.

In the current issue of *Scientific American*, James Van Allen, a pioneer satellite scientist, said, "In the more than 28 years since the launching of Sputnik I the overwhelming majority of scientific and utilitarian achievements in space have come from unmanned,



automated, and commandable spacecraft."

It appears that the reasons for the U.S. government's decision to go ahead with so many manned flights (15 were planned for 1986) are political rather than based on scientific requirements.

At least three Star Wars experiments were to be conducted on shuttle flights this year. One of the flights last year was a top-secret mission and you don't have to be a genius to figure that it was a military mission.

Profit-hungry capitalists are competing with each other to develop innovations through experiments on the shuttles, renting space on these vehicles to do such things as manufacture medicines more cheaply.

Overall the question is whether the U.S. government uses scientific research for the betterment of mankind or for the subjugation and exploitation of the peoples of the world.

Daniela Dixon
San Francisco, California

Flight attendants

I was recently flying Eastern Airlines. During the flight I talked with three flight attendants about Eastern's policies towards them and the new concessions being proposed by the company.

They told me that things were getting worse for them and that they thought that Eastern was trying to force experienced flight attendants to quit by making work conditions intolerable.

For instance, work rules are being enforced to the hilt. One told me she was in the middle of working 22 straight nights before getting two days off. Another said that even though she had seven years seniority she had just been placed as a reserve.

It was their opinion that the machinists and pilots would get a fair settlement while the flight attendants would be sacrificed.

I showed them the copy of the *Militant* that had coverage of a recent union meeting of Eastern's

employees in Miami. They were all impressed with the coverage and said they would pass the paper around. They also wanted to know what both the paper and I thought should be done.

I pointed to the coverage of the United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-9 meatpackers' strike against Hormel and said that this was an example of a union fighting back. The flight attendants agreed and said that Eastern was out to break their union and would succeed if the union did not respond to protect its members.

Edwin Fruit
Salt Lake City, Utah

Divestment

At its meeting of January 28, the New Castle County Council voted to divest the county pension funds from all corporations or financial institutions doing business in South Africa. This victory was won by a militant and broadly based campaign that grew to involve the NAACP, the churches, and the New Castle County AFL-CIO. It was a movement that brought out hundreds of demonstrators to council meetings, people who would not go away until they won.

Three days before the crucial vote, 75 pickets closed down a bowling alley owned by County Executive Rita Justice. After this the three hold-outs on the council finally "saw the light" and the divestment bill was passed unanimously.

Roy Ingle
Wilmington, Delaware

Correction

"Strike at a glance" in the March 7 issue of the *Militant* erroneously reported that the locked-out workers at Hormel's plant in Ottumwa, Iowa, were picketing the plant. The Ottumwa workers have not set up a picket line.

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.

K.C. rally supports TWA strike

Machinists join flight attendants to shut down facility

Striking TWA flight attendants were joined by TWA ground workers for a 1,000-strong rally at the company's maintenance base in Kansas City March 10. This combined union action of the striking Independent Federation of Flight Attendants and the International Association of Machinists, which organizes the ground personnel, completely shut down the airline's main overhaul facility.

The machinists' support to the strike changes the relationship of forces in the walkout in favor of the flight attendants, who struck the concession-hungry company March 7.

About 250 flight attendants and their supporters had rallied in Kansas City March 3 to prepare for the strike. Flight attendants' leader Mary Ellen Miller denounced the sexist statements by company Chairman Carl Icahn who said, "These girls aren't breadwinners and can afford bigger cuts than other workers."

In many cities the strikers are wearing buttons reading: "We are breadwinners."

The strike against TWA began 12:01 a.m. March 7 when the 6,000 members of the flight attendants' union set up picket lines at airports throughout the United States.

Flight attendants at Lambert Field, the main St. Louis airport and TWA's domestic hub, explained the key issues to the *Militant*. At the top of the list is the company demand for a 22 percent pay cut.

The flight attendants had agreed to the same 15 percent cut as the International Association of Machinists ground workers and the Air Line Pilots Association. This was part of a give-back package sold to the unions by Icahn who was bidding against Texas Air Chairman Frank Lorenzo for control of TWA. Union officials accepted Icahn's concession demands to keep out Lorenzo. They feared Lorenzo, who is now in the process of buying Eastern Airlines, would destroy the unions as he did at Continental Airlines in 1983.

Striker Diane Jones, picketing in Miami, said she has second thoughts about the deal with Icahn. "We knew we'd have to fight Lorenzo. Now we see we have to fight Icahn. The concessions only made him greedier for more."

Icahn claims TWA cannot compete with nonunion airlines without more concessions. But two weeks ago he agreed to buy St. Louis-based Ozark Air Lines for \$250 million, and he claims to have \$600 million in cash available to last out a strike.

Union members in St. Louis also explained to the *Militant* how Icahn's proposed work-rule changes jeopardize the safety of flight crews and passengers. Icahn wants to be able to work attendants up to 80 hours a week. This is an inhuman work load, and an obvious safety hazard. The 1,500 new attendants who have been hired recently, plus management, are being used to break the strike. They are working without any flight experience.

The strikers have won support from many newly hired flight attendants. About 600 of them have refused to cross the picket lines. Starting pay for the new employees is \$12,000 a year, less than half what earlier hires make.

Unfortunately, TWA pilots are working in spite of the strike.

The company is also being helped by the government. In St. Louis, two strikers were handcuffed and jailed for picketing the employee parking lot. A U.S. district court ordered the union to post a \$100,000 bond before allowing any pickets to be set up.

In Kansas City a federal judge denied a company motion for a temporary restraining order to force the machinists' union members back to work. But the company is back in court trying to get an injunction

against the IAM.

And the Federal Aviation Administration is responsible for any TWA planes being in the air. They should all be grounded since federal safety regulations are not being met without the licensed mechanics and flight attendants working.

On March 11 Federal District Judge Howard Sachs ordered members of the International Association of Machinists to cross the flight attendants' picket lines.

The judge issued the order even though he said that the no-strike clause in the Machinists' contract is "ambiguous."

The IAM said it had no choice but to abide by the judge's order.

This article is based on reports from Jeff Powers in Kansas City, Vivian Sahner and Kim Kleinman in St. Louis, and Stu Singer in Miami.



Left, striking Minnesota meatpackers join flight attendants' picket line in Kansas City. Right, TWA strikers brought their children to picket lines.

MOVE commission hits Phila. gov't

BY STEPHEN BRIDE

PHILADELPHIA — Mayor Wilson Goode's handpicked commission to investigate the May 1985 police bombing of the Black group MOVE has turned on him with a report that accuses his administration of "reckless disregard for life and property" in connection with the assault.

The report charges that administration decisions to use 10,000 rounds of ammunition and high explosives and to drop a bomb on the MOVE rowhouse "would not likely have been made had the MOVE residence been situated in a white neighborhood."

It also calls for a grand jury to probe the deaths of five children in the May 13 police attack, saying they were the victims of what "appeared to be unjustified homicide."

The five were among 11 MOVE members who perished in the May 13 siege. Soon after that, Goode named the commission, packing it with allies and campaign contributors in an attempt to quell the controversy over the incident.

But the commission's public hearings on the matter last fall only fanned the flames — and now its report has fueled them.

"The plan to bomb the MOVE house was reckless, ill-conceived, and hastily approved," the report states. It "should have been rejected out of hand." The firepower used against MOVE was "unconscionable," especially given the presence of children.

Also "unconscionable" was the decision by then Police Commissioner Gregore Sambor and Fire Commissioner William Richmond to let the fire burn that police ignited when they dropped a bomb on the MOVE house. That fire leveled 61 houses in the Osage Avenue neighborhood and left 250 people homeless.

The "decision by the police commissioner and the fire commissioner to use the fire as a tactical weapon," the report says, "cannot be justified under any circumstances."

In all, the report concludes, administration and police conduct on May 13 was "grossly negligent."

The commission report attempts to make sense of the wildly conflicting testimony the panel heard last fall from city officials.

Goode, for example, testified he had not been told in advance that explosives would be used to breach the walls of the MOVE house or that a bomb would be dropped on it. Sambor and former city Managing Director Leo Brooks said he had. The commission believed Sambor and Brooks.

"The mayor, managing director, and police commissioner specifically approved the use of explosives" to blast through the walls, the report asserts.

As for the bombing: "The managing director told the mayor, in a conversation overheard by two other people, that the police would drop the explosives from a helicopter."

Police officers told the commission they had not fired on two adult MOVE members and four children who attempted to flee the burning house through a backyard. Thirteen-year-old Birdie Africa, one of two survivors of the inferno, said they had. His testimony was corroborated by several firefighters, and the commission sided with them.

"I do not believe," wrote commission member Charles Bowser in a separate opinion, "the testimony that one or more persons . . . ran back into the house for no apparent reason." They did it "because there was a greater threat to their lives in the yard. The threat was bullets from police weapons."

In his 64-page opinion, Bowser, a former deputy mayor here, went somewhat beyond the commission's findings.

"Dropping the bomb," he said, "was discussed, rehearsed, and planned. Therefore it was an intentional act. A homicide caused by an intentional act cannot be excused as accidental even if death was not intended."

Letting the fire burn, he continued, showed "extreme indifference to the value

of human life." Such indifference would not have existed "if the teen age child of the chief executive officer of a corporation had been in that house."

While the commission report stops short of calling anyone a liar, it does recommend further investigation by the district attorney and Justice Department "to resolve any issues that may arise as to possible perjurious testimony before the commission and before any grand jury."

The report also urges disciplinary action against six police officers who invoked the Fifth Amendment rather than testify about their role in the attack.

The commission, however, said nothing about the victimization of Ramona Africa, the other survivor of the police assault. Africa faces 14 years in prison for her February 9 conviction on charges of criminal conspiracy and riot.

Reaction to the report ranged from extreme uneasiness on the part of Goode supporters (one city councilman called it "devastating") to general approval from the still homeless residents of Osage Avenue.

Summing up community response to the events of May 13, Osage Avenue block captain Clifford Bond declared, "It was the most blatant misuse of power that I've ever seen in my life."

"So many people could see the negligence throughout the whole system," said former resident Robert Ford, that the commission "had no choice but to place the blame where the blame had to be laid."

McAliskey warns of threat to nationalists in N. Ireland

BY WILL REISSNER

These are dangerous times for Irish nationalists in British-ruled Northern Ireland, Bernadette Devlin McAliskey told a New York audience on March 9.

McAliskey, a leader of the struggle for Ireland's reunification, gained international attention in 1969 when she was elected to the British Parliament from Northern Ireland at the age of 21.

"At present our backs are to the wall," McAliskey stated. She warned that pro-British Loyalist forces in Northern Ireland are likely to carry out violent attacks against the Catholic, nationalist population there.

McAliskey and her husband Michael were themselves targets of a Loyalist mur-

der squad in January 1981, when gunmen broke into their home and shot them in the presence of their children.

During a March 3 Loyalist protest against a November pact signed by the British and Irish governments on Northern Ireland, the British-run police stood aside and let Loyalist mobs attack nationalists.

The Anglo-Irish agreement, she said, is really aimed at crushing the leading groups fighting for a reunified Ireland, particularly Sinn Féin.

"The Anglo-Irish agreement will do nothing for us on the ground" in Northern Ireland, McAliskey stated. Under the agreement, the Dublin government is allowed to make recommendations about af-

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