

U.S. denial of Arafat visa condemned around world



Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yassir Arafat

BY HARRY RING

International protest greeted Washington's November 26 decision to prevent PLO leader Yassir Arafat from entering the United States to speak before the United Nations. It was expected that the UN General Assembly would convene in Geneva, Switzerland, so that Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, could be heard.

Arafat had been slated to address a UN session in New York on the recent declara-

tion by the Palestine National Council of an independent Palestinian state.

That declaration had come as the uprising of the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip entered its 12th month. Hundreds of Palestinians have been killed by Israeli security forces and thousands wounded or jailed.

Secretary of State George Shultz formally denied Arafat a visa. Fifty-one U.S. senators, including Vice-president-elect Danforth Quayle, had urged him to bar the

PLO leader. Shultz' action was endorsed by President Ronald Reagan and President-elect George Bush.

Denial of the visa violated a U.S. host-country agreement not to interfere with the travel of UN members to its New York headquarters. The PLO maintains a recognized observer mission at the United Nations.

The Shultz statement conceded that the UN treaty obligated granting visas to PLO members. But, the statement claimed, Arafat was an exception because he allegedly had been an "accessory" to terrorism against U.S. citizens. Therefore, Shultz asserted, the government must bar his entry "to safeguard its own security."

By utilizing the charge of terrorism, Washington has sought wherever possible to exclude the PLO from negotiations and discussions on the Palestine issue. The PLO is regarded by the Palestinian people as their representative.

Responding to the U.S. decision, Arafat inquired: "Why are they afraid that I speak to world public opinion and explain the new Palestinian decisions?"

Clovis Maksoud, chief UN representative of the Arab League, declared:

"The Palestine National Council has taken very important and substantive decisions that need to be communicated to the world body at the highest level. And it is not for the U.S. to decide who speaks for the Palestinians on a particular issue. If this is allowed to become a precedent, it will be a very dangerous one."

UN Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar scored the denial of the visa as a violation of U.S. legal obligations.

Governments of Arab countries declared their opposition to the action. A number of Washington's European allies also objected to the move against Arafat.

The only declared support for Washing-

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Relief aid convoy heads for Nicaragua

BY HARRY RING

A convoy set out for Nicaragua November 28 carrying relief supplies for that hurricane-stricken country.

Sponsored by Pastors for Peace, trucks, buses, and other vehicles departed from Detroit, Boston, Seattle, Miami, and Oberlin, Ohio. Another busload of supplies was slated to leave two days later from Missoula, Montana.

Along the route, vehicles from other cities will join in, for a total of 20 vehicles. These include three eight-ton flatbed trucks, four schoolbuses, and several pickup trucks.

They are focusing on collecting food supplies such as rice, beans, and powdered milk, in addition to antibiotics and other medicines.

Rallies to publicize Nicaragua's need and solicit added donations will be made at stops along the way. It is expected that more supplies will be collected than the vehicles can carry. The surplus will be shipped to Nicaragua through the humanitarian aid organization Quest for Peace.

The convoy will make similar stops in Mexico. Along with the supplies, the 20 vehicles will be turned over to Nicaragua to aid the reconstruction process.

The convoy is a project of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization. Its director, Lucius Walker, was wounded last summer during a contra attack on a passenger boat in Nicaragua. The convoy was initiated as a response to this. A range of church groups and other organizations are supporting the project.

The convoy's organizing center is in Detroit. A key activist has been Anne Wisda, 54, who is a nun. She will be a driver in the convoy.

In a telephone interview, Wisda discussed her involvement in the project.

"I'm going on this pilgrimage," she said, "because I believe in peace, not violence...in self-determination, not imperialism."

She added, "Because of these deep beliefs, I oppose U.S. policy in Nicaragua."

She has been to Nicaragua twice, she said, and has seen the destruction brought by the contras and the CIA. The additional havoc wrought by Hurricane Joan added to her resolve to aid Nicaragua.

In Monroe, where she lives, she's been collecting relief supplies and has found the response "very positive."

"When people know the truth of what's

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Mandela 'still prisoner of S. Africa'

BY SAM MANUEL

Several South African government officials, including President Pieter Botha, have said that Nelson Mandela will not be returned to Pollsmoor Prison.

Mandela is being held under guard at the Constantiaburg clinic. He was transferred from Pollsmoor Prison on August 12 to a nearby hospital after contracting tuberculosis. He was later moved to the clinic on September 1.

Mandela is a central leader of the African National Congress, which is fighting to

overthrow the apartheid regime and to establish a nonracial, democratic South Africa. He was imprisoned on a life sentence along with other leaders of the ANC in 1964. International pressure for his release has intensified over the last year.

Mandela has consistently rejected all offers by the apartheid rulers to release him on the condition that he renounce the use of violence in fighting against apartheid, and collaborate with the regime.

In a November 24 statement, South African Minister of Justice Kobie Coetsee said Mandela would be transferred to "secure living accommodations where he will be able to receive members of his family more freely." Coetsee claimed that if totally freed Mandela's safety would be at risk.

Winnie Mandela said her husband "still remains a prisoner of the South African Government and there is no indication of any release."

Nelson Mandela's lawyer, Ismail Ayob, doubted that the announcement was part of a phased release of the ANC leader. He added that if totally freed Mandela "would have every protection from his own community."

One day before Coetsee's statement on Mandela, the government commuted the death sentences of a group of young Blacks known as the Sharpeville Six. They received instead prison terms varying from 18 to 25 years.

During their trial no evidence was ever produced showing that the six actually committed any crime. The trial judge ruled that the defendants were guilty because

they shared a "common purpose" with a crowd that killed a township councilman.

Despite the reprieve for the Sharpeville Six, five other Black South Africans were executed in Pretoria November 24. The total number of people hanged in South Africa this year stands at 115.

On November 26 the apartheid government released two longtime opponents of the regime. They were Zephania Mothopeng, 75 years old, a founder and leader of the Pan-Africanist Congress, and Harry Gwala, 69 years old, a veteran trade unionist and member of the ANC.

Big push needed to collect rest of \$250,000 Pathfinder Fund

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Local organizers of the Pathfinder Fund drive are mobilizing in a final push to collect the \$250,000 needed to keep getting Pathfinder books into the hands of workers and farmers around the world.

Successful completion of the drive will make it possible for Pathfinder to publish a new collection of speeches by Malcolm X and to promote and distribute several new books by and about leaders of the Cuban revolution.

As we go to press, \$171,641 of the \$261,263 pledged to the fund has been collected.

The drive was scheduled to end December 1, past the closing news date of this issue of the *Militant*. In next week's issue

we will print the final scoreboard.

Fund organizers have until Tuesday, December 6, to send in the remaining contributions they have collected so they will appear on the scoreboard. All donations *in hand* but not yet in the mail to the Pathfinder Fund as of December 6 should be reported by phone to the fund office in New York.

Fund organizers contacted by telephone indicated that while collecting the final \$79,000 in a very short time will be a challenge, the money is there.

The systematic work of talking to each contributor and collecting their donation right away will need to become the main activity of Pathfinder supporters until the

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ANC leader Nelson Mandela

INS renews challenge to Randall U.S. residency application

BY FRED FELDMAN

The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service has renewed its challenge to the application for permanent residency of Margaret Randall. Randall is a poet and the author of *Women in Cuba*, *Sandino's Daughters*, and other books.

Her residency application is pending before the Board of Immigration Appeals.

Earlier this year, INS officials dropped efforts to deport Randall. But after a little-publicized measure was rushed through Congress in October, removing a barrier to attacks on the political rights of immigrants, the INS is again characterizing her as "excludable."

In December 1987, Congress had suspended provisions of the 1952 McCarran-Walter Act that allowed the government to exclude visitors or would-be immigrants to this country on ideological grounds. The suspension meant that noncitizens could not be barred from the United States because of "past, current, or expected statements, beliefs, or associations" that would be protected by the Constitution if they were citizens.

The suspended provisions of the McCarran-Walter Act had allowed exclusion of immigrants and visitors who allegedly "write or publish . . . knowingly circulate, distribute, print or display . . . or have in their possession for the purpose of circulation, distribution or display any written or printed matter . . . teaching the economic, international and governmental doctrines of world communism or the establishment

in the United States of totalitarian dictatorship."

In October, Congress voted to extend the suspension for visitors for two years beyond the original March 1989 deadline, but reinstituted provisions allowing exclusion on political grounds of those applying for permanent residency.

David Cole, the attorney who is representing Randall in her fight for the right to live here, and Lucas Guttentag, director of the American Civil Liberties Union's immigrants' rights project, wrote a letter published in the November 28 *New York Times*. They said the October congressional action means immigrants "can once again be deported for advocating such proscribed doctrines as 'world communism' or for association with organizations that support those ideas."

In addition to applicants such as Randall, Cole and Guttentag continued, immigration officials might attempt to use the law to strike at the rights of those who have already been granted permanent residency.

"Those who became permanent residents under the original section," they wrote, "must now fear traveling abroad be-

cause they can be barred from returning."

Born in the United States, Margaret Randall gave up her citizenship in 1967 in order to find work in Mexico, where she was living at the time. She returned to the United States in 1984 and applied for permanent residency. The INS rejected the request and ordered her deported solely on the basis of her political ideas.

An immigration judge upheld the order, declaring that the views expressed in Randall's books went "far beyond mere dissent . . . of the United States or its policies."

The deportation move stirred wide opposition. Literary figures including Norman Mailer, Arthur Miller, William Styron, Kurt Vonnegut, and Alice Walker were among those who rallied to Randall's defense. A Jan. 7, 1988, editorial in the *Washington Post* called for dropping the case against her.

In February, shortly after Congress suspended the McCarran-Walter provisions, INS officials announced they would no longer press for Randall's deportation.

Randall then renewed her effort to win permanent residency.

But INS officials now claim that her case



Author Margaret Randall faces victimization under 1950s witch-hunting legislation.

no longer falls under the December 1987 measure, which was in effect when she filed her most recent application. "The Service would say that she falls under the law of the present time," INS appellate counsel David Dixon told the *New York daily Newsday*.

Under the bill passed in October, officials claim, the government can again attempt to exclude Randall because of her writings on political issues.

Relief aid convoy heads for Nicaragua

Continued from front page

happening," she said, "there's an outpouring of generosity."

In one Monroe elementary school, 17 cartons of school supplies and foodstuffs were collected.

Meanwhile, across the country, a host of groups have been soliciting aid for Nicaragua. One of the more energetic of these is Elders for Survival, in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Since the hurricane struck Nicaragua, members of Elders for Survival have been on the streets of San Francisco, Berkeley, and Oakland with collection tables.

They have already collected some \$5,000 in cash, plus food and other supplies. In addition, they have contributed \$4,000 from their treasury.

In a telephone interview, Sarah Chrome of San Francisco discussed the group's work.

Elders for Survival was founded in 1973 and initially focused on antinuclear activity. In 1985 they began to center on Nicaragua.

They have worked to rally opposition to contra aid and to build solidarity with Nicaragua. They have organized three elders' brigades to pick coffee there.

With the hurricane, they began the relief tabling.

"Generally, the response has been very good," Chrome said. "People are con-

cerned about the hurricane and the damage.

"What was interesting to me," she added, "was that a number of people said, 'Yes, and the U.S. government isn't doing anything to help them.'"

She said that the media in the area has reported only briefly on Washington's refusal to give emergency relief and she was somewhat surprised by the number of people who were aware of this.

She said her group has also had good results in soliciting foodstuffs and other items from merchants. "Some may not give a great deal," she said, "but it adds up."

Relief efforts are being pressed in other countries too. In Puerto Rico, a "Nicaragua needs us" appeal was made by the Young Socialists, which is associated with the Puerto Rican Socialist Party.

Their appeal for relief contributions notes the failure of the Puerto Rican government to respond to Nicaragua's need. Calling on all friends of Nicaragua to pitch in, the appeal declares, "The Young Socialists has joined with other organizations to collect money and materials . . . and in this way express our solidarity with our Nicaraguan brothers and sisters."

Arafat exclusion condemned

Continued from front page

ton came from Israel. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir saluted the exclusion of Arafat because "it puts the PLO in its right place as an organization one should not deal with and one should try to neutralize."

Like Washington, the Israeli regime has flatly rejected consideration of a recent PLO offer to negotiate a settlement of the Palestine issue with the Israeli regime and other interested parties.

At the mid-November meeting of the PLO-led Palestine National Council in Algiers, it was voted to declare an indepen-

dent Palestinian state. The borders of such a state were left undefined.

The council adopted a statement that, as a basis for international negotiations, included calling for an international conference based on acceptance of UN resolutions. This includes Resolution 242, which calls for recognition of the territorial integrity of all existing Middle East states, including Israel.

At the same time, the statement insisted that any negotiations must guarantee the "legitimate national rights" of the Palestinian people — above all, "the right of self-determination."

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Circulation campaign goes over the top!

BY NORTON SANDLER

We welcome our new readers from Portland, Oregon, to Morgantown, West Virginia, to Sweden and Australia.

During the past 10 weeks our distributors around the world successfully mobilized to sell subscriptions to the *Militant* and the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial*, as well as individual copies of the Marxist magazines *New International* and *Nouvelle Internationale*. We sold 11,364 total — 109 percent of our combined goal.

In several cities supporters made a big push during the final days, selling more than 200 subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*. That enabled us to make the goals set for all three publications.

This was accomplished as we were also selling 18,645 copies of the *Action Program* to *Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*. Introducing workers, students, and farmers to both the *Action Program* and the periodicals made this our largest outreach effort in some time.

The *Action Program* is a Pathfinder pamphlet in English and Spanish that contains proposals being advanced by the Socialist Workers Party. It is also available in French in the November issue of *Lutte ouvrière*.

As they crisscrossed the country during the recent election campaign, James Warren and Kathleen Mickells, the Socialist Workers Party candidates for president and vice-president, encouraged those they met to discuss and help circulate the *Action Program*. It details steps necessary for working people to unify internationally so that we can effectively fight back against the employer and government attacks that will mount as the world capitalist economic crisis deepens.

Across the board, distributors report that focusing their discussions with potential readers on the *Action Program* proposals was essential to the success of the drive.

Important steps forward were registered in winning new readers for the publications around the world. This can be seen by comparing this effort to the drive carried out from March to June of this year.

In New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Britain, and Iceland supporters all increased the total sold as compared to last spring.

In Sweden distributors took a goal for the first time and after meeting initial success, raised their target.

An international team from Canada, Britain, and the United States sold 65 subscriptions and 90 *New Internationals* in the Caribbean.

Last spring, 13 percent of the overall total of subscriptions and copies of *New International* were sold outside the United States — to 1,224 new readers.

This time around our supporters introduced 2,192 working people outside the United States to the publications, or 19 percent of the total. And they sold 2,609 *Action Programs* outside the United States.

Though our figures are incomplete, more than 700 *Militant* and *PM* readers in the United States indicated on the subscription forms that they are members of unions or farm organizations.

We are in the process of collecting information on how many industrial workers were introduced to the *Action Program*. A report already received from Minneapolis and St. Paul shows that distributors there sold 100 *Action Programs* to their coworkers in industry. Another 50 were sold during their weekly sales at factory gates.

These distributors teamed up with other Midwest supporters to sell nearly 100 *Action Programs* to packinghouse workers at the John Morrell plant in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

This fall's drive was also our biggest effort to date in sales of the Marxist magazines *New International* and *Nouvelle Internationale*, with an increase of 487 over the drive last spring. These publications contain articles, documents, and speeches that go into greater depth on major questions facing working people around the world than space considerations in the *Militant* allow.

Distributors made a conscious push on selling complete sets of the six issues of *New International* to their coworkers.

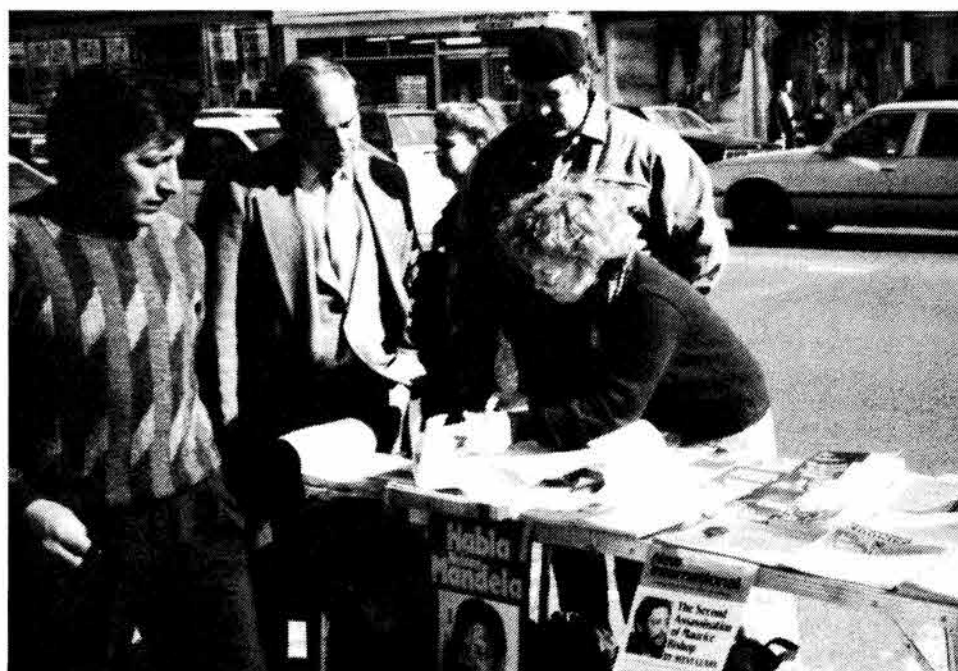
The drive was boosted considerably by publication of a new issue of the French-language *Nouvelle Internationale*. From Montréal to Paris to New Caledonia, it provides an important tool to reach out to French-speaking workers.

Distributors in this country were able to introduce *Nouvelle Internationale* to the growing number of their coworkers born in Haiti and the French-speaking countries in Africa. Many were also sold on campuses and in working-class neighborhoods.

More than 1,300 *Militant* and *PM* subscriptions were sold on campuses, not only in cities where distributors live but in outlying areas.

Supporters report that political discussions with students, often held in conjunction with campaigning for SWP candidates, helped win several new members to the Young Socialist Alliance.

During the course of the drive, 965 readers renewed their *Militant* or *PM* subscriptions.



Militant/Candace Wagner

Newark distributors at table in West New York, New Jersey. Supporters in 19 cities around the world exceeded projected targets for sales of publications and *Action Program*.

Sales drive final scoreboard

Area	Drive Goals			Militant subscriptions		New International* single copies		Perspectiva Mundial subscriptions	
	Goal	Sold	% Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
UNITED STATES									
Portland, Ore.	160	183	114	120	140	25	27	15	16
Salt Lake City	125	139	111	90	97	20	22	15	20
Morgantown, WV	175	194	111	135	137	30	47	10	10
Greensboro, NC	150	166	111	110	121	25	28	15	17
Phoenix	160	177	111	80	91	25	21	55	65
Oakland, Calif.	215	237	110	120	161	45	27	50	49
Birmingham	185	203	110	145	155	30	37	10	11
Newark	530	581	110	275	279	140	176	115	126
Pittsburgh	250	273	109	185	197	45	60	20	16
New York	1,200	1,303	109	600	620	300	375	300	308
Charleston, WV	105	113	108	85	87	15	19	5	7
Omaha	135	144	107	90	94	25	29	20	21
Boston	350	372	106	230	216	50	86	70	70
St. Louis	220	232	105	170	160	40	63	10	9
Milwaukee	170	177	104	110	112	35	36	25	29
Twin Cities	350	364	104	270	275	50	51	30	38
Los Angeles	700	727	104	375	382	125	128	200	217
Houston	215	223	104	140	127	30	41	45	55
Kansas City	120	124	103	75	80	20	24	25	20
Philadelphia	250	258	103	160	165	40	40	50	53
Cleveland	165	170	103	110	112	40	43	15	15
Price, Utah	70	72	103	50	50	10	11	10	11
Austin, Minn.	110	113	103	85	86	15	17	10	10
Seattle	275	281	102	200	218	25	27	50	36
Des Moines	210	212	101	150	151	40	40	20	21
Washington, DC	250	252	101	150	125	50	68	50	59
Chicago	460	448	97	300	305	60	60	100	83
Atlanta	220	212	96	160	173	40	13	20	26
Baltimore	215	202	94	175	175	30	15	10	12
Detroit	265	241	91	200	200	40	27	25	14
Miami	300	261	87	185	146	55	54	60	61
San Francisco	350	279	80	200	194	75	33	75	52
National teams	200	129	65	130	86	20	2	50	41
Columbus	25	15	60	25	15	-	-	-	-
Denver	24	29	121	15	15	2	6	7	8
Louisville	5	1	20	5	1	-	-	-	-
Other U.S.	-	65	-	-	49	-	14	-	2
U.S. totals	8,923	9,172	103	5,719	5,797	1,617	1,767	1,587	1,608
AUSTRALIA									
	50	50	100	35	34	5	6	10	10
BRITAIN									
Nottingham	61	90	148	35	39	20	42	6	9
London	145	196	135	75	114	30	45	40	37
Manchester	70	84	120	50	52	15	26	5	6
South Yorks	90	86	96	50	67	20	13	20	6
South Wales	80	47	59	40	38	30	3	10	6
Other Britain	54	90	167	25	52	20	35	9	3
Britain totals	500	593	119	275	362	135	164	90	67
CANADA									
Vancouver	45	58	129	30	40	5	6	10	12
Montréal	275	258	94	125	116	75	93	75	49
Toronto	400	354	89	250	214	75	76	75	64
National team	-	129	-	-	102	-	11	-	16
Other Canada	-	5	-	-	5	-	-	-	-
Canada totals	720	804	112	405	477	155	186	160	141
ICELAND									
	32	26	81	25	22	5	4	2	0
NEW ZEALAND									
Christchurch	87	99	114	60	61	25	35	2	3
Auckland	145	162	112	100	106	35	44	10	12
Wellington	118	129	109	85	89	30	37	3	3
New Zealand totals	350	390	111	245	256	90	116	15	18
PUERTO RICO									
	30	17	57	5	5	2	2	23	10
SWEDEN									
	65	65	100	35	39	10	5	20	21
Other International	-	247	-	-	113	-	111	-	23
Totals	10,670	11,364	109%	6,744	7,105	2,019	2,361	1,907	1,898
Should be		10,400	100%		6,630		1,895		1,875

*Includes *Nouvelle Internationale*

Action Program final scoreboard

Area	Goal	Sold	% Sold	Area	Goal	Sold	% Sold
UNITED STATES							
Greensboro, NC	250	361	144	Baltimore	375	219	58
Phoenix	230	250	109	Austin, Minn.	200	100	50
Milwaukee	325	346	106	National teams	500	546	109
Twin Cities	700	725	104	Columbus	50	8	16
Price, Utah	150	155	103	U.S. totals	18,180	16,036	88
Portland, Ore.	275	284	103	AUSTRALIA			
Philadelphia	475	487	103		50	40	80
Los Angeles	1,100	1,124	102	BRITAIN			
Kansas City	275	280	102		100	105	105
Atlanta	450	458	102	Nottingham	100	98	98
Cleveland	350	356	102	Manchester	100	175	88
Seattle	425	432	102	London	200	74	74
Salt Lake City	225	228	101	South Wales	200	124	62
Birmingham	325	329	101	Other Britain	100	56	56
Morgantown, WV	400	404	101	Britain totals	800	632	79
Newark	1,000	1,010	101	CANADA			
Des Moines	350	351	100		250	329	132
Omaha	400	401	100	Montréal	45	46	102
Charleston, WV	350	341	97	Toronto	700	581	83
Oakland	575	560	97	National team	-	82	-
Boston	575	525	91	Canada totals	995	1,038	104
Washington, DC	575	503	87	ICELAND			
St. Louis	500	425	85		10	4	40
Chicago	700	589	84	NEW ZEALAND			
Houston	450	359	80		250	328	131
Miami	500	381	76	Auckland	150	195	130
Detroit	525	389	74	Christchurch	210	213	101
San Francisco	700	505	72	Wellington	610	736	121
Pittsburgh	400	280	70	PUERTO RICO			
New York	3,500	2,325	66		30	18	60
				SWEDEN			
					50	31	62
				Other international	-	110	-
				Totals	20,725	18,645	91%
				Should be		20,540	100%

Calif.: 3,000 march to demand justice for farm workers

BY MARK WEDDLETON

SAN FRANCISCO — Chanting "Boycott grapes," some 3,000 marchers took to the streets of San Francisco November 19 to demand justice for farm workers. Contingents of farm workers joined together with other unionists, Chicanos, antiwar activists, students, and lesbian and gay groups in support of the United Farm Workers union boycott of California table grapes.

The boycott is part of an effort by the UFW to demand an end to the use by grape growers of five pesticides that pose severe health problems for farm workers, their families, and consumers.

A central theme of the day was also to seek justice in the brutal beating of UFW Vice-president Dolores Huerta. On September 14 Huerta was assaulted by San Francisco cops as she was handing out leaflets publicizing the boycott at a protest against George Bush. She was hospitalized with broken ribs and a ruptured spleen.

A few days before the march a grand jury investigating the beating refused to indict the cop responsible. They chose instead to call for a "reform" of crowd control techniques including a recommendation that the cops spy on protest groups.

"Viva Dolores" was a popular chant. Huerta participated in the march, riding in a car because she is still recovering from her injuries.

As the march passed by stores selling table grapes the contingents of farm workers from Napa, Salinas, and other parts of the state led the crowd in calling on the stores to stop selling grapes. A farm worker from Merced explained that the pesticides used on the grapes are causing children of farm workers to be born with missing or malformed arms and legs. Farm workers have collapsed in the fields, poisoned by the cancer-causing pesticides. And some of this poison remains on the grapes when consumers eat them.

The growers have made inroads in undermining the progress made by the UFW in the 1960s and '70s. They have driven down wages, eliminated medical insurance and other benefits, and drastically worsened working conditions. Shortly before the march, the state supreme court ruled

that the companies can keep union organizers — and even friends and relatives — out of the guarded and fenced-in labor camps many farm workers are forced to live in.

The march culminated in a rally outside of a Safeway grocery store (one of the large chains that have refused to remove grapes from the shelves). The speakers included Baldemar Velasquez, president of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee; actor Martin Sheen; and others.

Domingo Argueta, a Salvadoran farm worker, brought a message of solidarity from the Salvadoran refugees in the Mesa Grande camp in Honduras.

Jack Henning, secretary-treasurer of the state AFL-CIO, blasted the attempt to whitewash the beating of Huerta. "What is this, El Salvador?" he asked. "We demand that the mayor reject the grand jury report and speak out against the surveillance of



Farm Workers Vice-president Dolores Huerta (left).

trade unionists and other dissenters."

International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union President Jim Herman spoke out against the growers' use of pesticides and their trampling on the right to organize. "The ILWU would be happy once again to throw grapes into the San Francisco Bay Harbor, to march and dem-

onstrate," he declared. "We're here today to prove the fight has just, once again, begun."

Dolores Huerta wrapped up the rally by calling on those present to reject not only the violence done to her, but also "the violence done to farm workers and their families through the use of pesticides."

Canada rally hails French-language journals

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

MONTREAL — A public meeting here November 26 celebrated the launching of the French-language *Lutte ouvrière* in a new monthly magazine format and the publication of the third issue of *Nouvelle Internationale*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory. Some 40 people attended.

Michel Prairie, editor of *Lutte ouvrière* and coeditor of *Nouvelle Internationale*, was the featured speaker. He explained that these two publications are helping prepare workers and farmers for the big class battles that will develop as the world economic crisis deepens.

Prairie described the rectification process under way in Cuba today under the leadership of the Cuban Communist Party, which is seeking to deepen communist consciousness among workers and farmers in Cuba. Prairie also cited Cuba's exemplary role in providing relief to Nicaragua following the devastation brought by Hurricane Joan.

He said that *Nouvelle Internationale* and *Lutte ouvrière* have and will continue to place a priority on making available in French speeches and documents by leaders of the Cuban Communist Party.

Prairie also emphasized the importance of the two French-language publications for workers in Canada. Seven million out of a population of 25 million here speak French as their first language.

The favorable reception to *Nouvelle Internationale* and *Lutte ouvrière* by workers, students, and others is "a direct reflection of the existence of a growing layer of

working people who are becoming interested in communist ideas," said Prairie.

David Gakunzi stressed that *Lutte ouvrière* and *Nouvelle Internationale* are important for revolutionaries around the world. Gakunzi is a leader of the Thomas Sankara International Association and the editor of *Coumbite* magazine, published in Paris.

Sankara headed the revolutionary government in the West African country of Burkina Faso until his assassination in a counterrevolutionary coup in 1987.

Gakunzi praised *Nouvelle Internationale*'s editors for including speeches by Sankara, Maurice Bishop of Grenada, and Cuban Communist Party leader Fidel Castro in the current issue.

Susanna Ounei-Small, the New Zealand representative of the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS) in the French colony of New Caledonia, sent greetings to the meeting.

Also speaking was Norton Sandler, circulation director for the *Militant*. Sandler was part of a team of volunteers from the United States, Canada, and Britain who recently helped expand the distribution of Pathfinder books in the English-speaking Caribbean.

"Everywhere we went we found a real thirst for revolutionary literature," Sandler said.

He also cited several examples of how *Militant* distributors in the United States are using *Nouvelle Internationale* and *Lutte ouvrière* to reach out to Haitian-born and other French-speaking workers and students.



Militant/Alicia Merel

Editor Michel Prairie

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Court sets back defendants' rights

BY HARRY RING

The Supreme Court has ruled that police failure to preserve evidence does not violate a defendant's constitutional right to due process of law unless it can be proven that the cops acted in "bad faith."

The November 29 ruling came in the case of Larry Youngblood, who was convicted in Arizona on charges of kidnapping and sodomizing a 10-year-old boy. There were no witnesses, and Youngblood had insisted that he was mistakenly identified by the youth.

Police had mishandled the boy's clothing in such a way as to make it impossible to determine whether the semen residue on the clothing was Youngblood's. Because the police did this, the Arizona Court of Appeals overturned Youngblood's conviction.

The state court held that when there is an issue of identity at a trial and police permit the destruction of evidence relating to it, that is a denial of constitutional rights, regardless of why it happened.

The Supreme Court, by a vote of 6-3, overturned that state court's decision.

The majority opinion, written by Chief Justice William Rehnquist, said, "Unless a criminal defendant can show bad faith on the part of the police, failure to preserve potentially useful evidence does not constitute a denial of due process of law."

To show "bad faith," he continued, the defense must prove that the police knew the evidence would be helpful to the defense at the time they lost or destroyed it.

Rehnquist admitted that in Youngblood's case, there was a "likelihood" that the mishandled evidence might have proven him innocent.

The majority contended that using "bad faith" as a yardstick is good because it put "reasonable bounds on the police obligation to preserve evidence."

In a dissenting opinion, Justices Harry Blackmun, Thurgood Marshall, and William Brennan declared that the standard should be whether the loss of evidence denied a defendant a fair trial, regardless of how the evidence was lost.

The minority opinion added, "The Constitution requires that criminal defendants be provided with a fair trial, not merely a 'good faith' try at a fair trial."

Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast: How Miskito Indian women organize, make gains

BY JUDY WHITE

SANTA MARTA, Nicaragua — "We are a new movement," says Susana Morley, coordinator of the Women's Movement of the North Atlantic Autonomous Region. "We have groups in several towns and villages. Their role is to explain the importance of the Women's Movement, to help the women improve their standard of living, and to raise the self-confidence of women. We need to help each other and keep an eye on the behavior of the men."

Some 125 Miskito women and a handful of men attended a conference of the Women's Movement held here last September. It was the first such gathering ever held in one of the many Indian villages in this region.

Participants came from 21 small farming and fishing villages in the area northwest of Puerto Cabezas. These are isolated communities with no electricity or running water. The women work long hours in the fields to produce food for their families, in addition to cooking, cleaning, and taking care of their children. They sell whatever small surplus they produce to buy other basic necessities.

Because of lack of transportation in the region, one delegation had to walk several days to get to the meeting. Women from another community swam across rivers since there is no road connecting their village to Santa Marta.

Susana Morley, a Miskito, opened the meeting.

The situation of Atlantic Coast women has changed since the victory of the Sandinista revolution in 1979, she said. That victory "opened the possibility for the first time for women to overcome their oppression."

The Santa Marta meeting was called to discuss what collective economic projects women wanted to organize in their villages.

"We, as a movement, plan to bring projects to the villages — even if they're small ones," Morley explained in an interview with the *Militant*. "We aim to help women work together, collectively, so that they will feel a bond to other women, so that they won't remain alone at home just thinking about their problems, and so that women can defend themselves economically."

Sewing cooperatives

One woman took the floor to ask for help in organizing a sewing cooperative. "We have 60 women organized in our village," she said. "There is one *compañera* who knows how to sew, but we need help from the government to get the sewing machines."

Yolanda Gorden from Santa Marta said, "The rain destroyed our crops. Anyway the land isn't good for agriculture and the plots are far from our village." Women in that community also want to establish a sewing cooperative, she said. They feel they could make a better living sewing and selling clothing than working in agriculture.

Erlinda Baldiramos from Santa Rosa said a community corn grinder was needed in that village to free women from the burden of spending several hours a day grinding meal.

"Thirty-five women from Tuara want a chain saw," reported another woman. Many of these women are single mothers or widows. They want the chain saw to cut trees and make planks to build houses. Their communities are being resettled only now that the contra war has ended, and



Militant/Judy White
Susana Morley, coordinator of Women's Movement of North Atlantic Autonomous Region: "We aim to help women work together, collectively . . . so they won't remain alone at home thinking about their problems and so they can defend themselves economically."

building homes is one of the first tasks they face.

Women from Betania proposed establishing a community dining room. Another delegation wanted help forming a cooperative to raise chickens. Community orchards were proposed by participants from one neighborhood in Puerto Cabezas.

Dorotea Wilson, a Sandinista leader and member of the Nicaraguan National Assembly, spoke at the close of the meeting.

The regional government can provide resources for some small projects, she said. However, different women had often proposed different projects for each village, and this lack of agreement was an obstacle to their working together.

"We need to go back to our communities and reach a consensus on where to start," Wilson explained. "A project shouldn't benefit just a few people, but the whole community. Your task is to organize all the women in your village and decide which project you want to begin with."

Obstacles faced

Morley spoke to the *Militant* about the many obstacles blocking Miskito women's broader participation in society here.

"Many women have a baby every year," Morley said. "Some have 10 or 15 children. This is something that really worries me."

"When you encourage women to get involved in the movement or to continue their education, the first thing they say is, 'Look, I already have so many children. My husband works on the farm. We just work, eat, and sleep. That's all. I don't have time to continue education.'"

"I talk to them about birth control and tell them to go to the Ministry of Health to get the pill," Morley said. "But some of them are embarrassed to have a male doctor examine them. Others go but often there aren't any pills available."

Many men and women believe women should bear as many children as possible, Morley pointed out. "They say you must do as God wills and that women who use the pill won't go to heaven."

At the Santa Marta conference, many women announced how many children they have when they introduced themselves. Family size ranged from three to 23. Those with the most children got big applause.

Morley spoke about the difficulties of rural women who are working to help their children get a higher education. "The students get their room and board free," she pointed out, "but their mothers work even harder to get some surplus produce to sell to buy them shoes, notebooks, and pens. It's not so bad when the crops are good, but when there are floods, like this year, the

women have to go out and cut firewood to sell."

The severity of Nicaragua's economic crisis has also driven some women to prostitution, Morley observed, including 13- and 14-year-olds.

Some progress made

Despite the obstacles some important progress has been made here as a result of the Sandinista revolution.

The 1980 literacy campaign had an important effect among women in raising their sense of self-worth, according to Morley. "Women say to me, 'I am ready to learn to read and write. I already know how to write my name. Now I want to start with the numbers.'" They want to learn arithmetic, she continued, to avoid being

cheated when they sell their produce in the market.

Expanded social services have made free medical care available to area women for the first time.

In addition, the recently approved Autonomy Law calls for "promoting the integration, development, and participation of women in all aspects of the political, social, cultural, and economic life of the region."

The Women's Movement is starting to play a role in this process.

The group is involved in doing follow-up literacy work among women in the neighborhoods of Puerto Cabezas.

In addition, the Women's Movement has an ongoing program of training for Miskito women. Although the number of women involved so far has been small, scholarships are used to send Miskito women from the villages to study health care in Managua and León. "And we plan to look for more scholarships from other institutions," Morley said.

As part of promoting small economic projects for women, the group is planning training in dressmaking, "because that is what the women ask for most."

"The attitudes of the men are also changing," Morley reported. Although there has been opposition from many to their wives going away for training, "others look around and see so many people concerned about women, and this makes them think. Some of them now want their wives to continue their education."

One important step forward was the fact that this conference was held in a Miskito village. Until recently, the danger of attacks by the contras would have made it impossible to hold a meeting outside the main towns in the North Atlantic region.

The Santa Marta meeting also reflected a growing self-confidence that some women feel. "At earlier gatherings of the Women's Movement," Wilson said, "mainly men spoke. Or the men sat with the women and told them what to say. This is the first time the women have spoken their mind with no coaching from men."

Companies hike up workers' share of health-care costs

With medical costs rising more than 10 percent this year, and expected to jump another 20 percent in the next year, employers are moving to sharply increase the costs borne by workers covered by medical insurance plans.

"Few employers are not cutting back," a report in the November 22 *New York Times* quoted business consultant Lawrence Leisure as saying.

The *Times* reported that the average medical expenses of workers covered by a sampling of health plans jumped by 58 percent from 1985 to '87.

TRW Inc. has announced it will no longer guarantee a certain level of medical benefits to retirees. Pillsbury is making a similar move.

J.C. Penney Co. will now cover spouses of employees only if the employee is the principal wage earner in the family.

A growing list of corporations are imposing extra costs on workers who use doctors or hospitals of their choice, rather than selecting from a company-approved list.

The latest steps accelerate a trend that has been gaining throughout the 1980s.

About 42 percent of companies now require payments from employees on their health plans, up from a maximum of 28 percent in the early 1980s.

The overwhelming majority of companies now require employees to pay 20 percent of medical costs up to a certain amount, on top of the initial deductible.

In 1987 the average deductible in medical coverage plans was \$100. "In 1989 the most common deductible will be \$150 to \$200," another corporate adviser told the *Times*.

At the same time, the "health maintenance organizations" that provide many of

the insurance plans are also reducing the scope of their coverage, placing additional costs on workers.

In 1986 an employee with relatively broad coverage would have paid about \$240 out of pocket for a Caesarian section. Now the cost to the employee would be about \$620. The cost to an employee of a hysterectomy has jumped from \$600 to \$1,200 in five years.

Commission finds 20 million youth suffer big income drop

The average real income of male workers aged 20 to 24 who have not finished high school has dropped 42 percent from 1973 to 1986, when inflation is taken into account. In 1986 dollars, their annual income fell from \$11,815 to \$6,853.

Earnings of youths who finished high school but did not go to college dropped by 28 percent in the same time period, from \$15,221 to \$10,924.

The income of college graduates, on the other hand, remained the same when inflation is allowed for.

These were among the findings of the Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship headed by Harold Howe, former U.S. commissioner of education. The commission's report dealt with the 20 million youth aged 16 to 24 who will never attend college.

One-third of all families headed by a person under 25, the group reported, had an income that fell below the government's poverty line — up from one-sixth in 1973.

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Union women learn about Curtis defense campaign

Mark Curtis is a unionist and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa, who is serving 25 years in jail on frame-up charges of rape and burglary. The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is leading an international protest campaign to fight

this frame-up to the increased hardships faced by workers, mounting numbers of farm foreclosures, cases of police brutality, and government-sanctioned job discrimination against Black, Latino, and women workers.

Several delegates said they were

defense table.

Forty-seven participants at a European-wide auto workers gathering in Paris signed Curtis petitions. People were there from Austria, Belgium, Britain, France, Holland, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and West Germany, as well as the United States. The meeting took place in October and was initiated by the Fourth International.

Time was allotted early in the agenda for a presentation on the defense effort. This sparked plenty of informal discussions for the next day and a half.

Signers included Antonio Gil Mainar, general secretary of the union executive commission of Catalonia at Volkswagen in Barcelona, Spain; and Lars Henriksson, chair of Group 11 of the Metal Workers Union at Volvo in Göteborg, Sweden.

The October 20-26 issue of *Rouge*, the newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League of France, carried an article titled "Justice for Mark Curtis."

The November 16 issue of the *Guardian* newspaper, a radical weekly published in New York, ran a prominent article on Curtis' frame-up, written by Rebecca Johns.

"It is particularly reprehensible

to feminists that the Des Moines police would use the charge of attempted rape to try to discredit this young man, himself a spokesperson for women's rights, when legitimate rape charges brought by women are often ignored or treated with little respect," Johns quotes Pamela Valadez, president of the Greensboro, North Carolina, chapter of the National Organization for Women. The quote is from a letter Valadez wrote to Des Moines Police Chief William Moulder.

"When the police came to arrest [Curtis], it was apparent that they knew who he was," Valadez told the *Guardian*.

She added, "Whenever someone who is beaten to a bloody pulp by the police is charged with assault, there are a lot of questions." She was referring to the assault charges filed against Curtis by the cops who beat him at the city jail the night he was arrested. They later dropped the charges.

The Curtis defense effort won the backing of 250 unionists at a Jobs with Justice rally in Los Angeles on October 29. Signers chipped in \$231.75 (plus \$50 pledged), and, as the day wore on, more and more people were wearing "Justice for Mark Curtis" buttons. Between 1,000 to 2,000 peo-

ple participated in the event.

The Curtis defense effort was organized at a table sponsored by the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union and staffed by Curtis backers from OCAW Local 1-547 and the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union. Most of those who signed the petitions were labor activists and officials.

A number of the unionists said they would welcome having a representative of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee come before their executive board and membership meetings to explain this frame-up and appeal for support.

A teacher and member of the National Education Association from Burbank, California, signed the petition and asked if she could help. She sought out members of her union and others she knew and returned to the table later with a half dozen petitions filled with names.

A number of women unionists who signed told the Curtis campaigners that their sons had also been beaten or mistreated by cops. One, who used to live in Sioux City, Iowa, told of her husband's experiences in a meat-packing plant.

Joel Britton, Maceo Dixon, and Janet Post contributed to this column.

DEFEND MARK CURTIS!

for justice for Curtis. To contact the committee, write Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311. Telephone (515) 246-1695.

Curtis supporters set up an informational table at the Fifth Biennial Convention of the Coalition of Labor Union Women. More than 900 unionists registered for the conference, which was held in Seattle November 17-20.

Seventy-five people signed Curtis petitions or wanted to receive more information. These included delegates from 22 states, as well as guests from Britain and West Germany. Many unionists took packets of Curtis defense committee material for their locals. Delegates donated \$170 to the defense committee.

Several unionists from the Midwest connected the fight against

"not surprised at all" that Curtis had been framed up, and a few mentioned other working-class fighters that had been similarly targeted. They compared Curtis' beating by Des Moines cops the night he was arrested with the San Francisco police assault on Dolores Huerta, first vice-president of the United Farm Workers union, last September.

A woman farmer from Tennessee whose farm was recently foreclosed on plans to publicize the defense effort among farmers' organizations. Members of human rights committees from locals of the auto workers' union agreed to discuss this frame-up with other members of their committees.

The episode of the nationally syndicated TV show "On Trial" that included footage from Curtis' September trial was played at the

Marroquín victory celebrated at Des Moines rally

BY JON HILLSON
AND PAT SMITH

DES MOINES, Iowa — The decision of the U.S. government to grant Mexican-born political activist Héctor Marroquín permanent residence status in the United States is "a great victory for all of us who fight for social justice," Alfredo Alvarez, chairperson of the Des Moines Human Rights Commission, told a meeting here to celebrate that achievement.

Marroquín, a national committee member of the Socialist Workers Party, won his green card earlier this fall after an 11-year struggle.

The November 19 event here, held at the United Mexican-American Community Center, drew 50 people. It was sponsored by the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee.

Alvarez commented on a report issued November 17 by the Des Moines Civil Service Commission that criticized the city's police for racist and sexist departmental practices. "It appears things are unraveling a bit faster than people anticipated," Alvarez said, referring to a previous police scandal last summer. That controversy had involved abuse of police officers who are female by fellow cops, and officers dressing up in Ku Klux Klan robes to harass cops who are Black.

Alvarez also urged that "all those who support social justice" now take up restrictive U.S. immigration policies and the "English-only" movement, both of which, he said, are "underpinned by racism" and directed against working people from Latin America and elsewhere who have come to the United States in search of jobs and a better life.

Dolores Perales is the mother-in-law of one of the 17 undocumented workers who

were arrested by immigration cops during a raid at the Swift meat-packing plant here last March. Perales has worked her entire life as a farm worker and a packinghouse worker. She described the fight to win justice for her son-in-law and other victims of *la migra* — the immigration police.

The protests against the arrest of the 17 won widespread support and the eventual dropping of the felony charges against the one Salvadoran and 16 Mexican workers.

Combined with Marroquín's residency victory, these prove, she said, that "it is time for all of us to stand up and speak out."

Walter Galvin brought greetings from the nearly 2,000 members of the Des Moines Education Association. Its parent organization, the 1.9-million-member National Education Association, has been an important backer of Marroquín's fight.

"I'm not here as a socialist," Galvin

Continued on Page 12

Letter of apology from U.S. Customs Service

In an important victory, the U.S. Customs Service has been forced to declare that the racist abuse suffered by Héctor Marroquín at the hands of a U.S. customs agent "was not acceptable" and "will not be tolerated."

Marroquín is the Mexican-born political activist who recently won an 11-year battle with the U.S. government to gain permanent residency status.

On August 31 Marroquín, his attorney Claudia Slovinsky, and several supporters of his case were at the Toronto airport. They were returning to New York following Marroquín's interview by the U.S. consul in Toronto that day. The interview was one of the final steps Marroquín had to go through to get his "green card," which shows he is a permanent resident.

When Marroquín and Slovinsky got to U.S. customs at the airport, Marroquín presented the customs agent with his Mexican passport and the immigrant visa that had been granted him by the State Department — signifying its approval of his green-card application.

"So, you used to be a *mojado* in my country," the agent said to Marroquín. *Mojado* is Spanish for "wetback," a racist term often used by border cops to refer to Mexican immigrants. "So you lived illegally in my country," the agent continued.

Turning to Slovinsky, the agent went on. "So, you make your money off bringing these *mojados* in," he said.

In response to this and more racist abuse, Slovinsky filed a complaint with the U.S. Customs Service commissioner.

On October 28 Slovinsky received a reply from A. Donald Gilman of the U.S. Customs Service. The Toronto airport agent, the letter states, "did indeed use the unfortunate choice of words."

"We apologize for any unpleasantness Mr. Marroquín experienced," said Gilman, whose letter is reproduced here.



DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
U.S. CUSTOMS SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.



BAG-2-01-IC:W LW

Ms. Claudia Slovinsky
Attorney at Law
396 Broadway
New York, New York 10013

Dear Ms. Slovinsky:

This is in reply to your October 17, 1988, letter concerning U.S. Customs treatment of Mr. Hector Andres Marroquin Manriquez at Customs Canadian preclearance location at the Lester Pearson International Airport in Toronto, Canada.

We regret any unpleasantness Mr. Marroquin experienced as a result of his Customs processing. Regardless of the circumstances, we expect our officers to treat all travelers with courtesy and respect. We were, therefore, concerned with your belief that the Customs inspector was abusive to Mr. Marroquin. If we find that one of our officers has failed to meet our high professional standards, we take firm corrective action.

The Regional Commissioner of Customs, 55 East Monroe Street, Chicago, Illinois 60603-5790, has investigated this matter. He found that the inspector did indeed use the unfortunate choice of words, which your client believed to be rude and insulting. The inspector was counseled regarding his demeanor towards travelers. He was also advised that the behavior he exhibited was not acceptable. Please be assured the manner in which he conducted himself will not be tolerated anywhere in the Customs Service.

Once again, we apologize for any unpleasantness Mr. Marroquin experienced. We hope that his future contacts with our Service are more pleasant. Please let us know if we can be of any other assistance.

Sincerely,

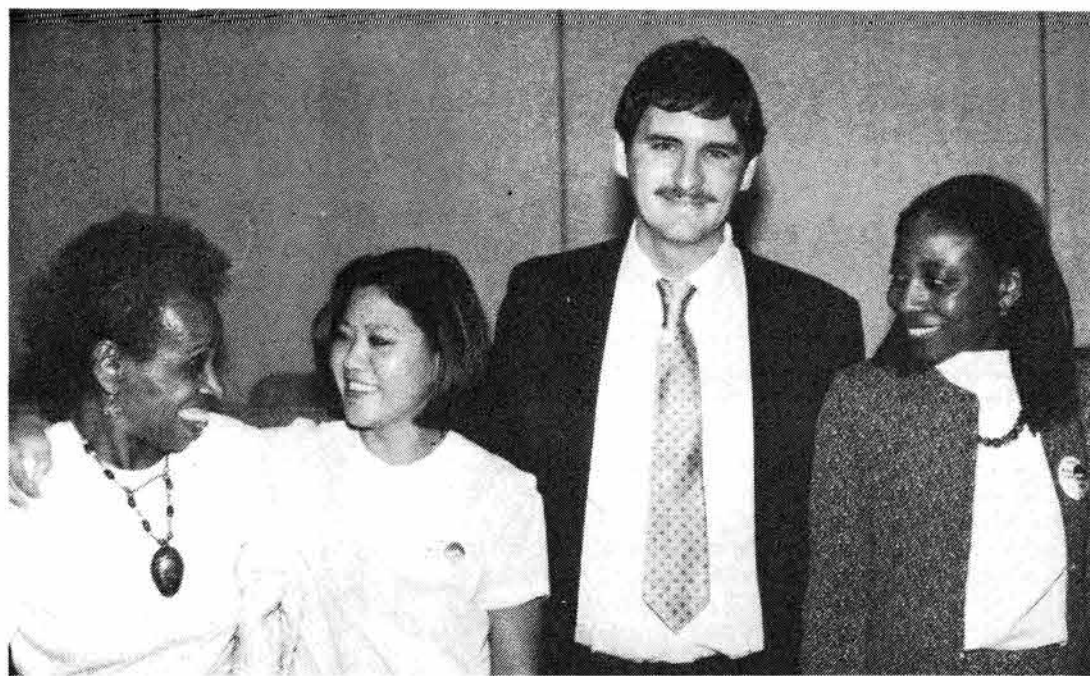
A. Donald Gilman

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Militant/Sara Lobman

Alfredo Alvarez, chairperson, Des Moines Human Rights Commission.



Militant/Linda Marcus

Mark Curtis and supporters (left to right) Des Moines civil rights activist Edna Griffin; Kate Kaku, packinghouse worker and Curtis' wife; and Susan Mnumzana from African National Congress of South Africa mission to United Nations.

How mayor, police tried to undercut Curtis support

BY MARGARET JAYKO

(Ninth of a series)

DES MOINES, Iowa — As described so far in this series, there were a lot of reasons why the ruling class in Des Moines would pick Mark Curtis to frame up.

Curtis was a rebellious young packinghouse worker who was a union militant at the Swift plant here. He fought the company on health and safety issues and de-

The Mark Curtis Story



fended his immigrant coworkers. He helped organize solidarity activities with packing workers fighting for safer working conditions and higher wages against Hormel in Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska; Morrell in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and Sioux City, Iowa; Cudahy in Cudahy, Wisconsin; Iowa Beef Processors in Dakota City, Nebraska; and Swift in Marshalltown, Iowa.

Curtis promoted support for farmers fighting against foreclosures, for a protest against police racism in the suburb of Clive, and for demonstrations against U.S. intervention in Central America.

He carried out this political activity as a member of the Socialist Workers Party and discussed with coworkers his support for the Cuban revolution. He sold socialist books and newspapers to coworkers, friends, neighbors, and in working-class communities around the city and region.

From the rulers' point of view, a successful conviction of Curtis on phony rape charges, with a stiff jail term, would serve to intimidate other working people, like Curtis, who want to stand up and fight back against the employers, bankers, and government.

Curtis was framed up, not because he was way out ahead of or divorced from the current conflicts between those who work for a living and those who exploit workers for a living, but because he was right in the center of those fights, helping to lead them, along with thousands of other young workers.

That's why the Mark Curtis Defense Committee rapidly won the support of hundreds of workers in Des Moines, throughout the state, and nationally.

Mark Curtis is a packinghouse worker, unionist, and political activist in Des Moines, Iowa. On Sept. 14, 1988, he was convicted on frame-up charges of sexual abuse and burglary. He was sentenced to serve 25 years in jail.

Unionists, farmers, and youth around the world recognize that Curtis is one of those workers who are starting to stand up and fight back against the employers and their government. In their thousands, working people are beginning to join the fight for justice for Curtis.

The Mark Curtis Story is a multipart series that describes what happened to Curtis, where it fits into the class struggle, and the big stakes for working people in the fight against this frame-up.

Right from the beginning the defense campaign was an international effort. Curtis supporters explained that it was not a struggle of interest primarily to U.S. workers and farmers, with people from other countries also contributing their support. Rather, the issues in the Curtis fight are the same questions that working people are grappling with from New Zealand to Mexico and from South Africa to the Philippines; the injury being done to Curtis was an injury to working people everywhere. If the U.S. ruling class could get away unscathed with railroading Curtis to jail, then it would encourage frame-ups and police violence every place where working people are under attack by the capitalist rulers.

The initial surge of support for Curtis raised the already high stakes in this fight. Surprised by the response, anti-working-class forces sought to undercut the Curtis defense campaign. This reactionary effort was led from the county prosecutor's office and city hall.

People identifying themselves as representatives of the Des Moines cops and Polk County sheriff's office contacted some of those who sent the first messages to the police protesting Curtis' arrest and beating.

Howard Mayhew, a longtime political and trade union activist now retired in Whiting, New Jersey, explained, "A man who said he was a sheriff called and asked me if I had sent a telegram to Des Moines. He said he wanted to make sure it had really been sent by me. I assured him it had, and he hung up."

Bronson Rozier in Louisville, Kentucky, also got a call. The person on the other end asked Rozier if he'd sent a message to Des Moines and if he was a member of the Socialist Workers Party.

On March 28, Doug Womack, president of United Auto Workers Local 893 in Marshalltown, Iowa, sent a letter to Des Moines Mayor John Dorrian. Womack wrote that he had been contacted "by Mark and several of his associates" and summarized Curtis' explanation of his arrest and beating by the cops on March 4.

"I have no idea if the charges of either party are true or not," Womack explained, "but I'm not naive enough to think things of this nature don't happen either!"

Mayor declares Curtis guilty

A week and a half later, the auto union official received a letter from the mayor attempting to rebut the defense campaign. Dorrian's letter contained many of the major arguments that would be used by pro-frame-up forces. Curtis wrote back to Dorrian a point-by-point refutation.

The mayor assumed that since Curtis was charged with sexual assault and assaulting police officers, he was guilty.

Curtis' arrest, he wrote, "followed officers being summoned to a private residence where Mr. Curtis was attempting to rape a 15-year-old female. Charges have been filed, and the evidence in the case is quite clear."

The mayor also repeated the police story that while cops were interrogating Curtis, he "attacked and injured one of the officers. In the course of the restraint, Mr. Curtis suffered an injury to his right eyebrow." (Curtis actually suffered a shattered left cheekbone after being smashed across the face with a billy club.)

For the mayor, a report by the cops was

good enough to prove Curtis' guilt. He didn't even tip his hat to Curtis' constitutional right to be presumed innocent.

The mayor argued that Curtis' claim to be a political activist was a fraud. He wrote that while Curtis "is portraying himself as a major social activist who has had prominent roles in protest marches," in fact, "a spokesperson for the local National Council of Christians and Jews organization disclaims the fact that Mr. Curtis is a prominent leader of the community. In addition, Human Rights Commission members did not know of Mr. Curtis prior to his arrest. Hispanic leaders have been consulted and they recognize inconsistencies in his claims."

Curtis answered these anonymous sources in his letter to Dorrian:

"I do not claim to be a prominent leader. I have been an activist for more than 10 years in opposition to the war in Central America, against racism, in support of women's rights, in defense of immigrants and in support of unions and farmers."

"I have protested against the city of Des Moines refusing to rename University Avenue for Dr. Martin Luther King. I am the director of the Militant Labor Forum series held at the Pathfinder Bookstore here in Des Moines. I am an active member of Local 431 of the United Food and Commercial Workers union at the Swift/Monfort meat-packing plant where I work. I am the past National Chairperson of the Young Socialist Alliance and I am a member of the Socialist Workers Party. . . .

"At work I am known as a union activist. My coworkers, and Swift management too, know I stand up for better safety and working conditions. I speak Spanish and actively defend the rights of immigrant workers."

Burglary charge added

Two weeks after the mayor sent his letter, Curtis was arraigned at the Polk County Courthouse in downtown Des Moines. At the arraignment, Curtis received the formal charges. They had been changed since his arrest.

The original charge of sexual abuse in the second degree was changed to sexual abuse in the third degree, and a charge of burglary in the first degree was added. The burglary charge carries a mandatory sentence of 25 years.

The prosecution explained that Curtis' presence in the house of the alleged victim constituted "burglary"; no one claimed that he had stolen anything.

At the arraignment, Assistant County Attorney Catherine Thune tried to get Judge Anthony Critelli to increase the already exorbitant bail of \$30,000, but the judge refused to do so. This was the first of several attempts by the prosecution to use the courts to victimize Curtis further.

As support for Curtis continued to mount, police officials began to publicly attack the defense effort. An article in the May 4, 1988, *Des Moines Register* titled, "Accused rapist receives letters of support" reported that "Des Moines police have received more than 400 letters from across the country demanding that charges be dropped against Mark Curtis, the Swift packing plant employee charged with an attempted sex crime."

"Police say they are baffled by the attention focused on the case because they believe they have solid evidence to support the charges against Curtis."

"Still, the case has drawn national support for Curtis from a network of organizations. Many of the letters contain petitions signed by dozens of Curtis supporters. Police say some letters even have foreign postmarks."

Register staff writer Tom Alex quoted Des Moines Police Chief William Moulder: "Most of the letters have been coming from people who are not in a position to know what happened. The department is confident the proper charges have been filed."

It also quoted police Sgt. Thomas Van Baale: "These people are hearing only one side of the story. Fortunately, we have a judicial system that will allow both sides of the story to be told."

(To be continued)

How you can help

- **New literature available.** The Mark Curtis Defense Committee has just issued two new brochures to help supporters get out the truth about the fight for justice for Curtis.

- One is the text of the motion for a new trial, which Judge Harry Perkins ruled against on November 18 right before he sentenced Curtis to 25 years in jail.

- The second new piece is the text of Curtis' statement before the court just prior to his sentencing.

- Buttons that read: "Justice for Mark Curtis, an injury to one is an injury to all," as well as other literature, are also available.

- **Sign up endorsers for the defense committee.** The committee has launched an international drive to sign up 5,000 endorsers by March 4, the anniversary of Curtis' arrest and beating.

- **Raise money.** The defense committee needs to raise \$60,000 by December 31 in order to cover legal and publicity expenses. Contributions should be

sent to the Des Moines defense committee. (Checks for large tax-deductible contributions may be made out to the Political Rights Defense Fund, Inc.)

- **Build the Héctor Marroquín tour.** This Mexican-born political activist recently won an 11-year battle against government efforts to deport him for his political activities. Marroquín's national speaking tour is celebrating this victory and urging supporters of this fight to campaign for freedom for Curtis because the same political issues are at the heart of both cases. Contact the defense committee to find out when Marroquín will be in your area.

- **Get out the truth.** Representatives of the defense committee are available to speak at meetings.

- **Write to Mark Curtis.** Letters can be sent to him at the defense committee office.

Contact the Mark Curtis Defense Committee at Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311. Telephone (515) 246-1695.

Meetings celebrate life of communist Oscar Coover, Jr.

SWP leader never stopped learning from class struggle

BY SUSAN LaMONT

NEW YORK — Meetings to celebrate the life and political contributions of longtime Socialist Workers Party leader Oscar Coover were held here in New York November 18 and in Los Angeles November 20.

Coover was 68 when he died of cancer October 28 in Los Angeles, where he and his longtime comrade and companion Della Rossa had lived for more than 30 years.

SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes and Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*, spoke at both meetings.

"Oscar Coover was a communist, a working-class fighter throughout the whole of his political life," said SWP leader James Harris, welcoming almost 150 people to the New York meeting. "His activity began as a 14-year-old working-class kid on the picket lines in Minneapolis in the great strike battles of 1934, and ended only with his recent death, after more than 50 years of struggle."

Out of his participation in the Minnesota labor battles of the 1930s and experience in a revolutionary socialist youth organization, Coover joined the Socialist Workers Party in 1938. He went on to become a leading activist in the party's work in the maritime industry unions in the 1940s. (For a more extensive article on Coover's life, see the November 18 *Militant*.)

Along with thousands of other class-conscious workers, Coover was both a victim of and fighter against the ruling class' anticommunist witch-hunt during the 1950s.

Later he participated in the civil rights movement and was a defender of Malcolm X and his political ideas. Coover was a partisan of the Cuban revolution from its inception, and an active builder of the movement against the Vietnam War. "Oscar's life was part of the history of our class, and its struggle for power," Harris said.

The New York and Los Angeles meetings were enriched by letters and messages that arrived from many cities from comrades, young and old; fellow unionists; and political collaborators who had worked with Coover over the years.

Pathfinder Building

In the last two decades of his life, one of Coover's most important political contributions was to help lead the reconstruction of what is now called the Pathfinder Building in New York, which houses the

offices of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and Pathfinder publishers. This political project was accomplished through the organization of volunteer brigades that helped establish the working-class attitudes and norms of professionalism that all those working in the Pathfinder Building strive for.

Craig Gannon, SWP national organization secretary, described to the New York meeting how he first met Coover in January 1971 while working on that project. "I had come to New York for the Young Socialist Alliance national convention," Gannon recalled. "I wasn't yet a member of the YSA, but I heard about a work brigade that was being put together to transform this old manufacturing building on the Hudson River. It was a volunteer job — a construction minibrigade — with long hours, and no one knew when it would be done. I said 'fine.'"

"This was the work crew that Oscar was in charge of," Gannon continued. "He had the task of transforming the building — starting with the top two-and-a-half floors, which at the time were an old warehouse and a parking garage — into professional, usable space."

Coover, who was then living in Los Angeles, had taken a break from his job as a carpenter in the movie studios to come to New York in late 1970 to prepare the reconstruction. The work crew, which lasted more than six months, was made up of 20 to 30 volunteers at a time, most of them young and new to the revolutionary movement. They were full of enthusiasm, but — in the majority of cases — without much in the way of skills, Gannon explained.

The effort was aided by several older party members and supporters, including Clifton DeBerry, Stan Lipman, George Bryant, Bob Redrup, and John Enestvedt, who had the needed skills and helped train the younger crew members in carpentry, painting, electrical work, purchasing, and other aspects of construction.

The crew learned more than just how to do construction work, Gannon stressed. Led by Coover, the work crew became a political training ground as well, where members learned to work together in a disciplined and professional way. Gannon himself joined the YSA and SWP in the course of working on the crew.

Coover also taught the crew the importance of safety on the job and of having a responsible attitude toward coworkers' life and limb. He would always point with

pride to the excellent safety record of any job he was responsible for, whether it was working on the Pathfinder Building or on the construction of the Tappan Zee Bridge, which spans the Hudson.

As many as 70 people, men and women, participated in the international construction team at the Pathfinder Building, said Gannon. He described how Coover would always convince any volunteer who came in to work on the project to spend more time than they had planned. "If someone came to help for the weekend, he would have them there for a week. If someone came for a week, he would have them there for a month," recalled George Bryant, a crew volunteer and member of a group that later became the Revolutionary Workers League of Canada, in his message to the meetings.

A tight budget

In the course of working six- and seven-day weeks, 12 or more hours a day, the crew was forged into a team that learned how to do what had to be done. "And we learned to do it on a tight budget," Gannon added, with labor power often used instead of renting expensive equipment.

Coover educated crew members about the importance of taking finances seriously, Gannon said. "This was the movement's money, it was hard to raise, and it wasn't something we got easily. We were going to use it wisely."

Another political lesson the crew learned was that if a job is worth doing, it's worth doing right, Gannon said, no matter how difficult, and even if it had to be done over. Gannon explained how this seriousness and professionalism carried over into other things the crew did, including sales of the *Militant* at the giant April 1971 demonstration in Washington, D.C., against the war in Vietnam.

Coover called them all together before the demonstration, Gannon said, and told them all that they were going to be not only the best construction crew, but the best sales team too. And they were too — after putting in a full day working on the building, and then riding all night on buses to the demonstration.

Several years later, Coover returned to New York to lead a second construction crew that helped renovate the rest of the building, where a marine repair business had been housed.

In the years since then, "Oscar stayed involved in the transformation of the Pathfinder Building," Gannon said. "His last visit to discuss future changes was in the spring of 1987."

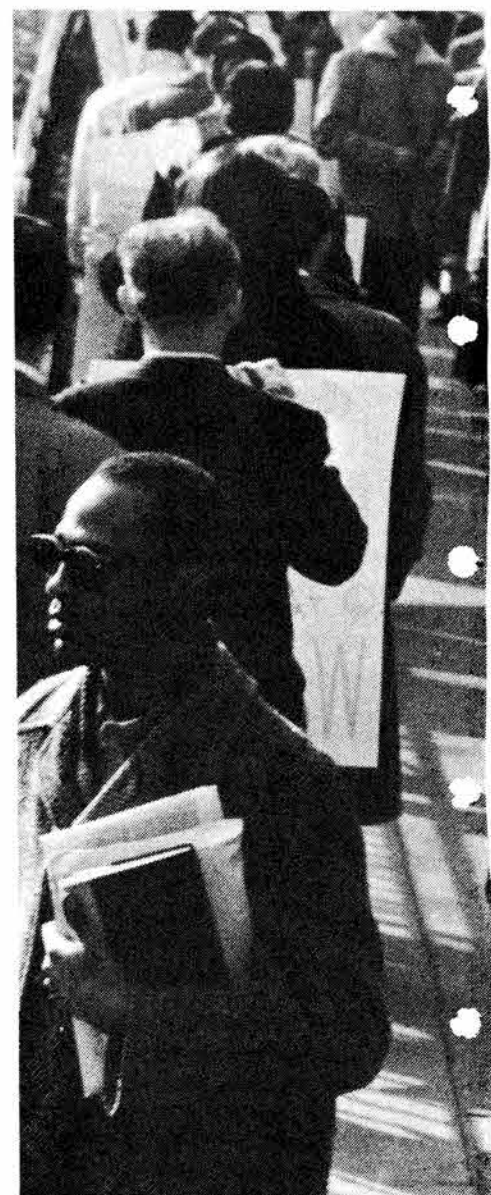
Many of the messages to the meetings came from participants in the Pathfinder Building work crew and other construction projects Coover helped lead over the years. Bill Anderson, Francisco Picado, Jerry Freiwirth, Dick McBride, John Enestvedt, Bernie Senter, and project coplaner Wayne Glover all paid tribute to this aspect of Coover's contribution to the continuity of communist leadership and experience.

A message from Pathfinder Mural Project Director Sam Manuel — who was also on the 1971 work crew — noted that Coover's most recent contribution to the Pathfinder Building was to follow the progress of the mural currently being painted on the outside of the six-story structure, and to propose several ideas for its promotion.

Communist continuity

"Oscar wasn't an extraordinarily talented person," Mary-Alice Waters told the New York and Los Angeles meetings. "He was an ordinarily talented person — a strong, capable, and determined individual like hundreds of thousands of other working people we all know and work with."

"What made Oscar different was the way his early life experiences shaped him politically," she said, "growing up in Minneapolis in the midst of the depression,



Coover worked with new generation of fight support of Cuban revolution. Pickets such as Committee, were often the target of violent

being part of the great labor organizing battles, led by communists, that turned Minneapolis into a union town and the Midwest into a bastion of labor strength. Those experiences gave Oscar a deep and unshakable confidence in the capacities of ordinary working men and women to transform the world, and an understanding of the irreplaceable role of revolutionary leadership in that process."

"Oscar became a communist," Waters continued. "He became what Marx and Engels called a 'party man' — someone who understands that it is only by working in a conscious, organized way, with others who share a common class perspective, that the world can be changed."

"In that capacity, as a party activist, Oscar played an important role as a link in the chain of communist continuity that is so vital to the future of humanity," Waters stressed.

"Through more than 50 years of political activity, Oscar helped to form that braid of different generations in the Socialist Workers Party that has assured our continuity and capacity to learn from past struggles of the working class, so that the lessons of these struggles can be handed down from one generation to the next."

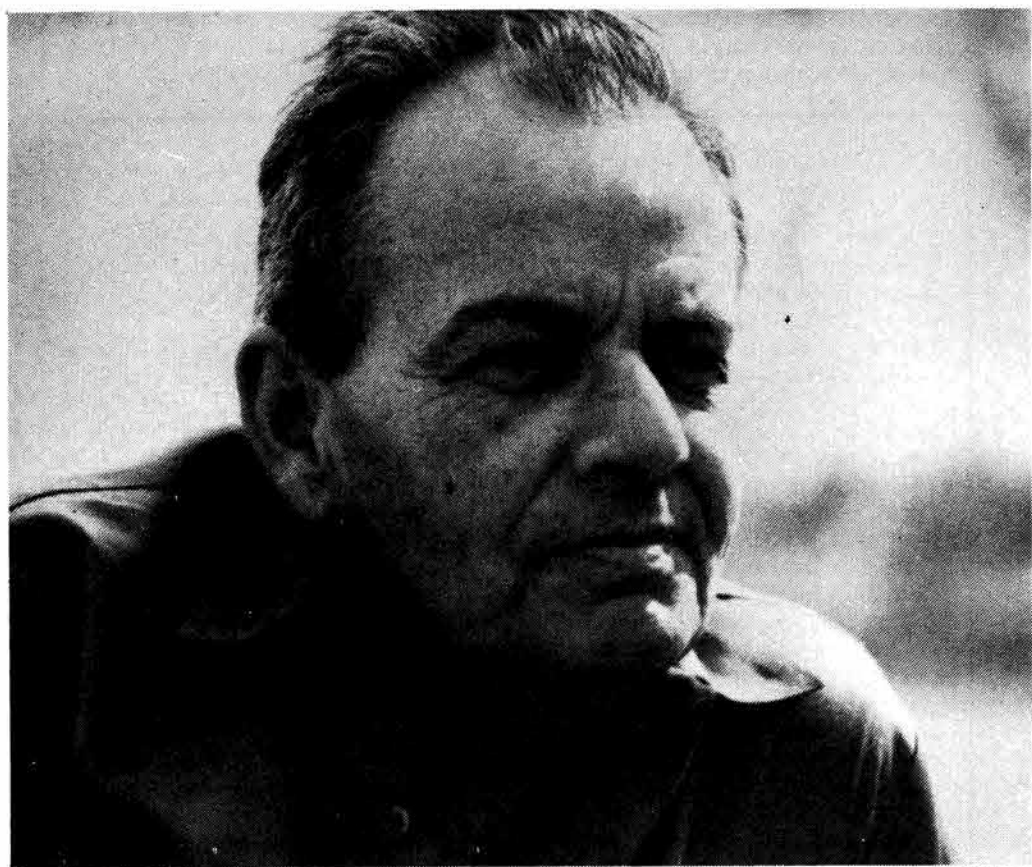
Waters recalled first meeting Oscar when she was a young YSA leader who had moved from Minnesota to California to go to school in the early 1960s.

The reactionary political climate generated by the Cold War anticommunist witch-hunt had begun to recede at that time under the blows of the rising civil rights movement. The triumph of the Cuban revolution in 1959 and its uncompromising anti-imperialist policies were educating a new generation of youth inside the United States about the character of the U.S. government.

The SWP was beginning to break out of the isolation and decline of the earlier decade. Youth, especially on the campuses, were being attracted to the workers' movement. After several years of preparation and the growth of Young Socialist Clubs, the Young Socialist Alliance was formed in 1960.

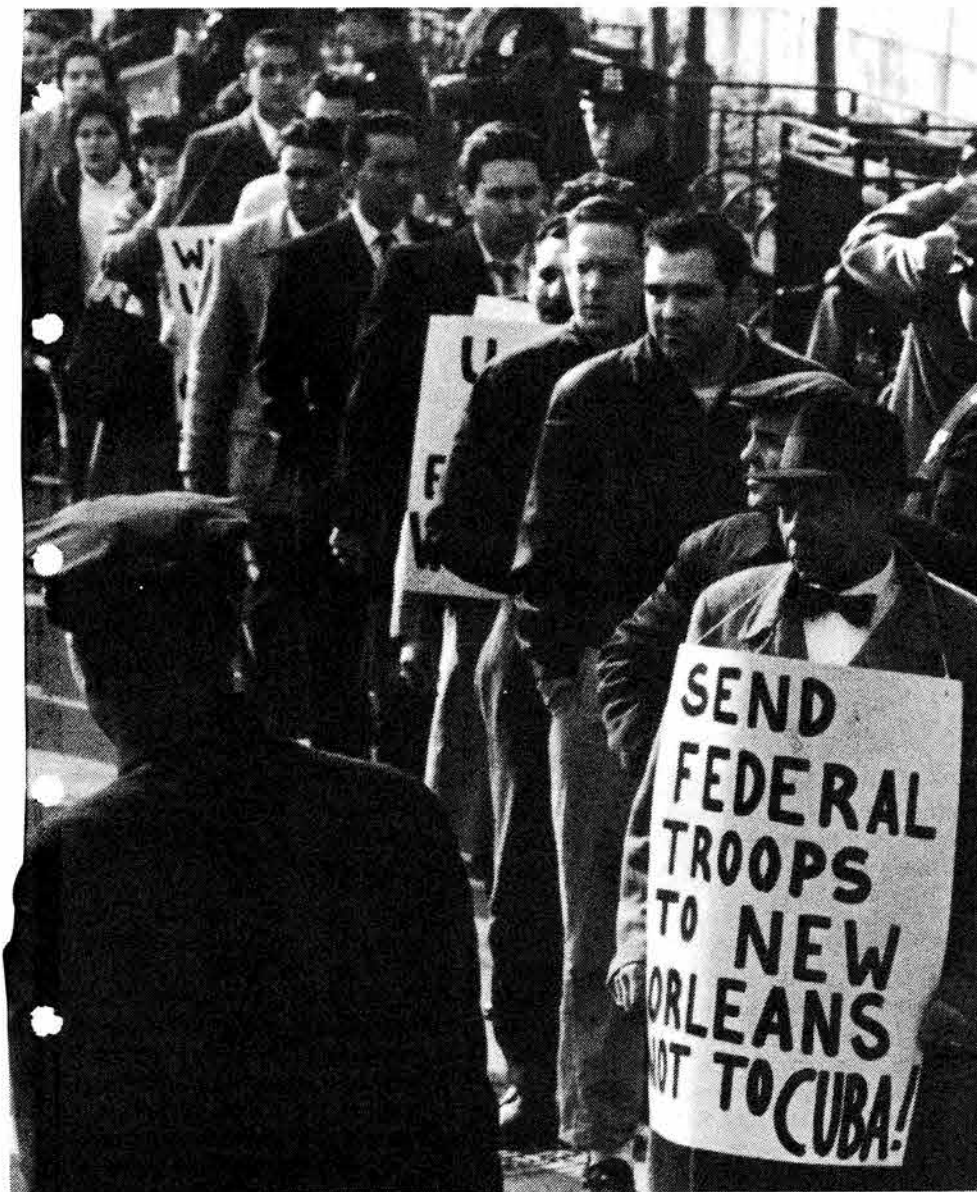
"That renewal was a historic turning point in the history of the Socialist Workers Party," Waters emphasized. "Without that process beginning when it did, the continuity of the communist movement in the United States would have been threatened."

The renewal didn't happen automati-



Oscar Coover, Jr.

Militant



Militant/Joseph Hansen
 joining SWP in late 1950s and '60s in defending meetings and demonstrations in
 the one above at the United Nations in 1960, organized by the Fair Play for Cuba
 attack by anticommunist Cubans.

cally, Waters added. It had to be fought for and led. Some older members had become used to the semi-sectarian existence forced on the party in the 1950s, and were far from happy that young people were joining.

The youth, on the other hand, were full of energy and enthusiasm, but sometimes questioned whether they had much to learn from the older generation.

"The process of braiding together the different generations can only come about through the common political experiences of different generations of party members working together, learning from each other, developing mutual confidence, and respect in the process of going through common struggle," Waters explained. Coover helped lead that process in Los Angeles and in the party as a whole.

Messages from Jim Lambrecht and S. Anne Weiss, both of whom worked with Coover in the early 1960s, pointed out that it took time for him to become convinced that there were potential working-class fighters and communists among the students who were joining. Oscar was eventually won over, Waters pointed out, but only through experiences like working together with the youth in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee.

Defense of Cuban revolution

"One of the most important things that Oscar did was lead the party's work in Los

Angeles in defense of the Cuban revolution in the early 1960s," she said. SWP and YSA members were active in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, which published materials and held educational meetings and demonstrations defending the revolution. The committee had been founded in 1960 and by the following year had 7,000 members in 21 cities.

Public meetings organized by the Fair Play for Cuba Committee in Los Angeles and other cities had to be politically, and physically, defended from violent attack by right-wing Cuban exiles, Waters recalled. The Los Angeles Pathfinder Bookstore and SWP campaign headquarters were also attacked, firebombed, broken into, and burglarized repeatedly by anti-Castro Cubans and various police agencies during the 1960s.

In the course of responding to these assaults, Coover helped educate new members in how the party defends itself and its activity, especially under conditions of sharp class polarization, she said. Younger comrades learned that political space is something the working class must continually fight to win, politically and in the streets.

Waters added that as one of the older members with long experience in the labor movement, Oscar had much to contribute in this area as well. At the same time, he was not afraid to keep learning, and growing politically, even when it meant questioning old ways of doing things.

Oscar was one of those who supported the SWP's decision in the late 1970s to have the majority of its members get jobs in basic industry and become active in the industrial unions, she said.

"Not only did he support that decision when we began," said Waters, "but he supported it as we carried it out. And he agreed wholeheartedly with *how* we did it — orienting to the ranks of the unions, especially the younger workers on the job, not toward building power blocks with 'progressive officials'; and carrying our communist politics onto the job. We're looking for the real political openings that exist, not aiming at some illusory long-term stability by settling into some job."

"As the party moved forward, so did Oscar," continued Waters. "And over the last decade, Oscar rethought many of the party's earlier experiences in the unions."

"He began to look more deeply at the party's concrete experiences in Minneapolis and the Midwest during the 1930s, to learn

from that. Oscar was not afraid to change his mind, to think things through. He knew being a communist means working at politics, and never ceasing to grow politically with new experiences. He came to the conclusion that the party today is stronger politically, and better prepared for what is coming in the class struggle than it has ever been."

Divided soul of working class

In his remarks at the meetings, Jack Barnes described a letter in which Coover recalled how the differences between his mother and father had helped shape his political views.

Oscar Coover, Sr., was one of the founders of the U.S. communist movement and had played a central role in the union organizing battles in Minnesota during the 1930s.

"I had grown up with his example," Coover wrote, "and it was contrasted to my mother's. She had an Irish Catholic background, and had worked from the age of 13 in department stores, hotels, and eventually on the railroads as a telephone operator. She was always a worker, but with middle-class aspirations, and she worked at those ambitions."

This description of Coover's family, Barnes noted, is an example of "the divided soul of the working class, especially in the imperialist countries."

Coover's mother faced the dilemma many workers face, especially in immigrant generations, he said, including millions of immigrant workers in the United States today. They are torn between the reality of their life and future as part of the working class, and the temptation to believe it's possible to live as a middle-class person and attain some security — to "make it" under capitalism.

The most difficult challenge facing the working class since the rise of imperialism has been to become conscious of this divided soul, Barnes said, which comes first from the possibility, and then the illusion, that one does not have to rise with one's class, but can rise out of it. Or become part of a layer of the class that's safe from the ups and downs of declining capitalism.

"Oscar always insisted that if he had not faced up to the conflicting pressures operating on workers when he was a young person, and continually looked them in the face," Barnes said, "he would have never lived through the trajectory of his life, and remained the kind of revolutionist he became as a teenager."

A 'blue-eyed communist'

Barnes read from a letter he received from Catarino Garza, who described working with Coover in the late 1940s in the National Maritime Union.

"When he first met Oscar," Barnes explained, "Catarino was a Mexican-Puerto Rican kid from the South Bronx who never had any reason in his life to think that people with white skin and blue eyes, whose first language was English, had much to recommend them to the human race."

Garza was 18 and Coover 26 when they shipped out together on what was at that time one of the largest ships at sea. Coover was the union's ship chairman, responsible for negotiating for the deck, engine, and steward departments. Garza had chosen to go into the steward department, where more workers spoke Spanish.

Given the class divisions on board, Garza wrote, "It wasn't very common for a deck hand to know anyone as lowly as a night porter." Nevertheless, he said, Coover — who worked on the deck — "made sure everyone knew I was his friend and fellow socialist." He discovered that Coover was known as a fighter, and had influence on the ship, "especially among the Black deck gang and the more informed Blacks in the steward's department."

"These experiences are bigger tests for young workers trying to find out what kind of party they are joining, who their comrades are, and who their fellow fighters really are than any number of educational classes," commented Barnes.

Petitioning in upstate New York

Garza also described an experience with Coover a few years later when they were both in the New York SWP branch. It was the early 1950s, and the party was petitioning to get its candidate for governor on the ballot. A signature distribution requirement in effect at that time required signatures to be submitted from counties throughout the state — including from rural, sparsely populated areas in upstate New York.

"It was Oscar and Al Taplin who introduced me to the white world outside of New York City," Garza recalled. "It was a petition campaign for governor in the midst of the witch-hunt. Oscar, Al, and I were given the best car and told to get the signatures we needed in the counties from Plattsburgh down to Albany."

"After a day's travel, I had a ball in the pit of my stomach," Garza continued. "I had never seen so many blue-eyed people in my life. I was scared, but I couldn't admit it. I tried to carry my end, but Oscar and Al had to get the bulk of the signatures in those northern counties. When we got to Albany's Black ghetto, it was another story. Oscar laughed that rich, full laugh of his about my change in Albany."

"Oscar was, in my eyes, one of the finest specimens of native-born American workers. I'm proud to have known him, and to have him call me comrade and friend. He's an example of a communist worker, and there's nothing better," wrote Garza.

A message from Ed Shaw, who also worked in maritime during this period, recalled Coover's role in a political faction fight that broke out in the SWP during the early 1950s. Shaw later became the SWP's national organization secretary, and was the party's 1964 vice-presidential candidate.

Shaw was a new SWP member in the late 1940s. "In 1947, I sailed out of the port of Baltimore, where Oscar had become an NMU official," he wrote, "but the next year most of us were working the big passenger ships out of New York. It wasn't until 1952 that I had the opportunity to get to know Oscar really well, and we became fast friends." By then the anticommunist witch-hunt and decline in labor struggles had forced Coover and other class fighters out of the NMU.

As the period of reaction deepened, "a factional struggle opened in the party," Shaw said. "A sizable minority developed based on what was a conservative attitude and retreat in the face of the witch-hunt. The minority's most solid base was in Detroit among union members who had settled into long-term, well-paying jobs. They claimed to represent the working class and trade unionist base of the party, and they came after Oscar with hammer and tongs, hoping to win him over."

"Oscar had endured firsthand some onslaughts of the witch-hunt," Shaw's message continued. "Knowing these things about Oscar, the 'trade unionist' minority figured him for an easy mark because a series of setbacks can conservatize even strong-willed people. And for a little while, they seemed to be making headway."

The minority criticized their opponents' personal weaknesses as much as, or more than, their politics, Shaw recalled. "Whenever we find a political argument buttressed by comments about an opponent's personal habits or attitudes, we should realize there is more than likely a basic weakness

Continued on next page

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Meetings celebrate life of SWP leader Oscar Coover Jr.

Continued from previous page in the politics."

Despite initial impressions that the minority was winning Coover to their views, "he became, ultimately, a solid majority supporter," said Shaw.

"Oscar explained the lesson he learned from that experience: you don't have to be close personally to all comrades as individuals to be able to work together with them as a team, but you must have political agreement if your teamwork is going to survive unexpected shifts and challenges," Shaw said.

Continued political development

Barnes also discussed Coover's experiences on the Pathfinder construction crew — but from the point of view of what he learned, not what he taught. The young members of the crew helped to transform Coover's life when he was well past middle age, Barnes said. They inspired him with confidence in the movement and what the new generation could accomplish, something he had not been entirely convinced of before.

"There's no such thing as finally getting yourself settled in to being a revolutionary, and then just chugging along and doing fine," Barnes emphasized. "That's not the way it works."

Turning points come in everyone's life, he continued. Shifts happen — physical and social shifts, political insights, individual difficulties and disappointments, advances in experiences, and sharp changes that can't be anticipated. When they accumulate, one has to deal with them, think about them, face them, and ab-

sorb them politically, in order to move forward on a new basis.

Participating in the construction crew was the beginning of such a change in Coover, Barnes said. He became more aware of all the possibilities of the movement.

Barnes also emphasized the centrality for Coover's continued political growth of the party's 1978 decision to base its work in the industrial working class. "Oscar really came back home again — not in a sentimental journey of some kind, but in reexamining and finding the roots of what he really learned as a young fighter on the picket lines in Minneapolis."

'Moment of truth'

Joel Britton, an oil worker and recent SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from California, spoke to the more than 150 people attending the Los Angeles meeting about Coover's contributions during the last years of his life. The meeting, held in the letter carriers' union hall, was attended by comrades, coworkers, friends, and family from Phoenix, San Diego, and the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Area, as well as Los Angeles.

Britton described what Coover called a "moment of truth" that he experienced when he retired from building sets for the Hollywood studios, and realized he was no longer able to maintain the level of activity expected of SWP members.

"In collaboration with the party leadership, Oscar took an important initiative in 1983," Britton explained. "He took on the responsibility of helping promote a more conscious approach to the involvement and



Militant

Group of volunteers from the 1971 construction crew Coover headed that began transforming Pathfinder Building in New York. Coover taught crew members to work together in a disciplined, professional way, and young volunteers inspired him with confidence in party's future and new generation of leaders.

organization of the party's supporters.

"Oscar set the example for those who agree with the SWP and want to support what the party is doing and saying, but who aren't able to be members," continued Britton. "He set an example by reading the *Militant* and our other publications — from first page to last — to stay politically in tune with the movement. And he took initiatives to help organize other active supporters to meet and work together collectively on a more regular, monthly basis."

Britton described the satisfaction Coover derived from his work as a party supporter. Oscar would say he didn't have the "juice" he once had, Britton said, but he had as much as many people. "He was responsible

for constructing, organizing, and helping staff the Los Angeles Pathfinder Bookstore, helping make it the vital, seven-day-a-week center of political discussion and activity that it is today."

"Oscar made many contributions to the struggle to construct a communist vanguard," Britton said, "but his contributions in these past five years, as a leader of the SWP's conscious, organized active supporters, have been some of his most important."

Coover was inspired by the Nicaraguan revolution and the continued advances of the Cuban revolution, Britton added. He welcomed the growth in Los Angeles of the Young Socialist Alliance chapter, composed now in part of young, Spanish-speaking immigrant workers. And he pitched in to aid the party's work in the industrial unions in whatever ways he could. "Oscar was comfortably 'in sync' with the party's political activity, and supremely confident of its prospects," Britton said.

Jeannie Frankel, an active supporter of the SWP who in recent years worked closely with Coover to organize other supporters, co-chaired the Los Angeles meeting, along with SWP leader Elizabeth Stone.

Frankel read a letter saluting Oscar Coover's life received by Della Rossa from Los Angeles Councilman Robert Farrel, who worked with Coover in the civil rights movement during the 1960s.

Olga Rodríguez, Southern California circulation director for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, ended the Los Angeles meeting with an appeal for contributions in Coover's honor to the \$250,000 Pathfinder Fund. Some \$5,265 was pledged at the meeting, in addition to funds already raised.

Nelson Blackstock and Elizabeth Stone, from Los Angeles, also contributed to this article.

Push to collect Pathfinder Fund needed

Continued from front page money is in, however.

Fund organizers' confidence is bolstered both by the success of the just-concluded international effort to sell the Pathfinder pamphlet *Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis* — 18,645 in English and Spanish were sold — and by the rallies held in many cities to celebrate Pathfinder books this fall.

Through the rallies the number of contributors to the fund increased to more than

1,100. Tens of thousands of extra dollars were raised for the fund, demonstrating what important tools Pathfinder books are in the eyes of working-class fighters today.

An Austin, Minnesota, rally to celebrate the book *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution*, published by Pathfinder/Pacific and Asia, illustrated this.

The event was held November 6. Three of those speaking on the platform were workers who described how books distributed by Pathfinder were just what they were looking for after they found themselves immersed in political struggle.

Buck Heegard, who was a leading activist in the 1985-86 strike at the Hormel meat-packing plant in Austin, told how he came into contact with Pathfinder books as he traveled around the country rallying support for that strike. He singled out the Pathfinder pamphlet by Fred Halstead, *The 1985-86 Hormel Meat-Packers' Strike in Austin, Minnesota*, as playing a particularly important role.

Dale Shidester, a former coal miner, had honored the Hormel strikers' roving picket lines at his meat-packing plant in Ottumwa, Iowa. Today he works at the Hormel plant in Austin.

Shidester described how as he got involved in that strike battle, he found he wanted to read more, especially about working-class struggles around the world. That was why he sought out Pathfinder literature and *New Internationalist*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory.

Christine Evert, a warehouse worker and member of the Young Socialist Alliance, talked about Che Guevara's writings on young people, quoting from the chapter in the book on "What a Young Communist Should Be."

The book's editor, David Deutschmann, and anti-apartheid activist Urule Igbaboa, also spoke.

It's to make sure the books and pamphlets are there for the next layers of workers who go into struggle that makes successful completion of the \$250,000 Fund the top priority of Pathfinder supporters now.

Pathfinder Fund contributions

UNITED STATES	Goal	Received
Atlanta	5,000	2,740
Austin, Minn.	2,850	2,740
Baltimore	3,000	800
Birmingham	7,000	3,040
Boston	9,000	5,247
Charleston, W. Va.	3,500	2,535
Chicago	10,100	5,428
Cleveland	5,400	3,622
Des Moines	3,300	1,300
Detroit	6,100	4,283
Greensboro, N.C.	2,800	1,848
Houston	8,500	7,468
Kansas City	3,700	2,390
Los Angeles	20,000	9,892
Miami	5,500	4,035
Milwaukee	3,000	2,688
Morgantown, W.Va.	4,500	2,662
Newark	12,000	10,823
New York	27,000	21,037
Oakland	13,000	8,400
Omaha	3,800	2,937
Philadelphia	7,000	4,005
Phoenix	3,500	1,185
Pittsburgh	5,000	2,802
Portland, Ore.	4,100	2,951
Price, Utah	2,250	1,770
Salt Lake City	6,300	5,918
San Francisco	11,500	9,532
Seattle	7,000	3,740
St. Louis	8,800	8,146
Twin Cities	12,000	6,870
Washington, D.C.	7,500	4,512
Other U.S.	7,500	3,622
Total U.S.	241,500	160,968
INTERNATIONAL	Pledged	Received
Australia	820	470
Britain	3,966	1,696
Canada	9,720	5,778
France	200	200
Germany	150	150
Iceland	1,010	102
New Zealand	2,055	435
Sweden	565	565
Other International	1,277	1,277
Total U.S. goals and int'l pledges	261,263	
Total received		171,641

\$250,000

Pathfinder Fund

250,000

Collected \$171,641

☐ Enclosed is \$_____ for the fund.

☐ I pledge \$_____ to the fund.

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Country _____

Clip and mail to: Pathfinder Fund, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

from Pathfinder

Fidel Castro Nothing Can Stop the Course of History

"Undoubtedly the longest and most wide-ranging interview ever conducted with Cuban President Fidel Castro. In it, Castro speaks directly to the people of the United States on questions of vital importance to citizens of both our countries." From the preface by Rep. Mervyn M. Dymally, who with Jeffrey M. Elliot conducted the interview. 276 pages, \$8.95. Available from Pathfinder Bookstores listed on page 12 or by mail from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Please include \$1.00 for postage and handling.

'Sankara awakened the African countryside'

Messages hail book of speeches by Burkina revolutionary leader

We are reprinting several messages received by Pathfinder marking its recent publication of *Thomas Sankara Speaks: The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87*.

The book is the first collection of the speeches of Sankara, who led the Aug. 4, 1983, revolution in the West African country of Burkina Faso, previously known as Upper Volta. Sankara was murdered in a 1987 counterrevolutionary coup.

The book will be launched at meetings in Britain on December 3 and Sweden on December 11. A similar meeting was held in New York's Harlem community on November 13.

M. Tangirai

Secretary general Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions

On behalf of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions and the working people of Zimbabwe we wish to express our militant solidarity on the launching and celebrating of the publication of Thomas Sankara's speeches and the Burkina Faso revolution.

Thomas Sankara reflected the revolutionary youth and vision so greatly desired by the people of Africa, oppressed by imperialist hegemony. We miss and mourn this unwavering combatant of rare consciousness. *A luta continua.*

Thomas Sankara Collective Paris

In a country known as one of the poorest in the continent, the regime of Thomas Sankara took as its principle the greatest possible limitation of economic and financial dependency and the increased utilization of the country's natural resources and of the food and textiles produced there.

In the four years available to the Burkinabè revolution, it already changed the face of the country. A process of political awakening in the countryside was under way, one which gained international influence. This influence was due to this government's humanism and strict standards, qualities personified in the very person of its leader.

Basil Davidson

Author and historian

I commend this book to everyone, wherever they may be, who has a serious interest and care for the Africa of today and the Africa of tomorrow. Thomas Sankara lived and worked and thought and spoke for both.

Dennis Brutus

Exiled South African poet

This is an informative and inspiring book. It is especially useful for the infor-

mation about Sankara's work against apartheid South Africa, support for Nicaragua, and canceling the Third World debt. I congratulate Pathfinder for publishing this work. I will be active in getting it widely read and discussed.

Dr. Leonard Jeffries

Chairman,
Black Studies Department,
City College of New York

It is a great benefit to the African world and the world in general that this young revolutionary spirit has been kept alive. Even though his life was short, it was very worthwhile, like Malcolm X's was.

Sankara was very close to us here at City College because he continued our revolutionary tradition, which comes out of the student struggle in 1969, to open this college and the university system to African, Asian, and Latin American and other poor peoples around the world. And he did this through a visit to the CCNY campus.

Ben Dupuy

Editor, *Haiti Progrès*, New York

Few here in the United States know of Sankara's tremendous contributions to extending revolutionary theory, particularly in the framework of forging a revolutionary society from an underdeveloped one in Africa. His messages were lucid and concrete. His teachings have particular relevance for those of us working in the Caribbean and Central American context.

Adrian Saunders

Leader of the United People's Movement of St. Vincent and the Grenadines

I think that this book is of inestimable value to those of us living in the Third World who are struggling to throw off the shackles of our colonial and neocolonial past, and involve our people in the forging of their own destinies.

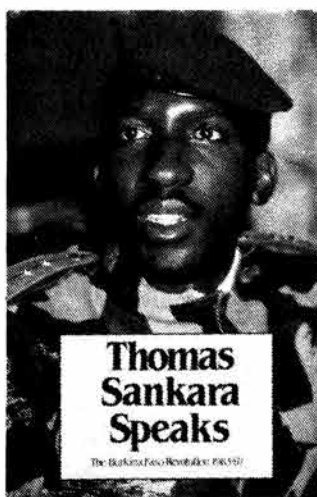
Terry Marryshow

Leader of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement of Grenada

Sankara will always be remembered as a vertical revolutionary and anti-imperialist fighter who dedicated his life to the cause of eliminating poverty and underdevelopment not only in Burkina Faso, but in all of Africa. *Thomas Sankara Speaks* brings you closer to the man and his innermost thoughts and should be read by the revolutionaries.

Grassroots Books Zimbabwe

Thank you Pathfinder for making it possible to read Sankara in English. You've done a great job.



Thomas
Sankara
Speaks

The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87

260 pp., \$9.95

from **Pathfinder**

THOMAS SANKARA SPEAKS THE BURKINA FASO REVOLUTION 1983-87

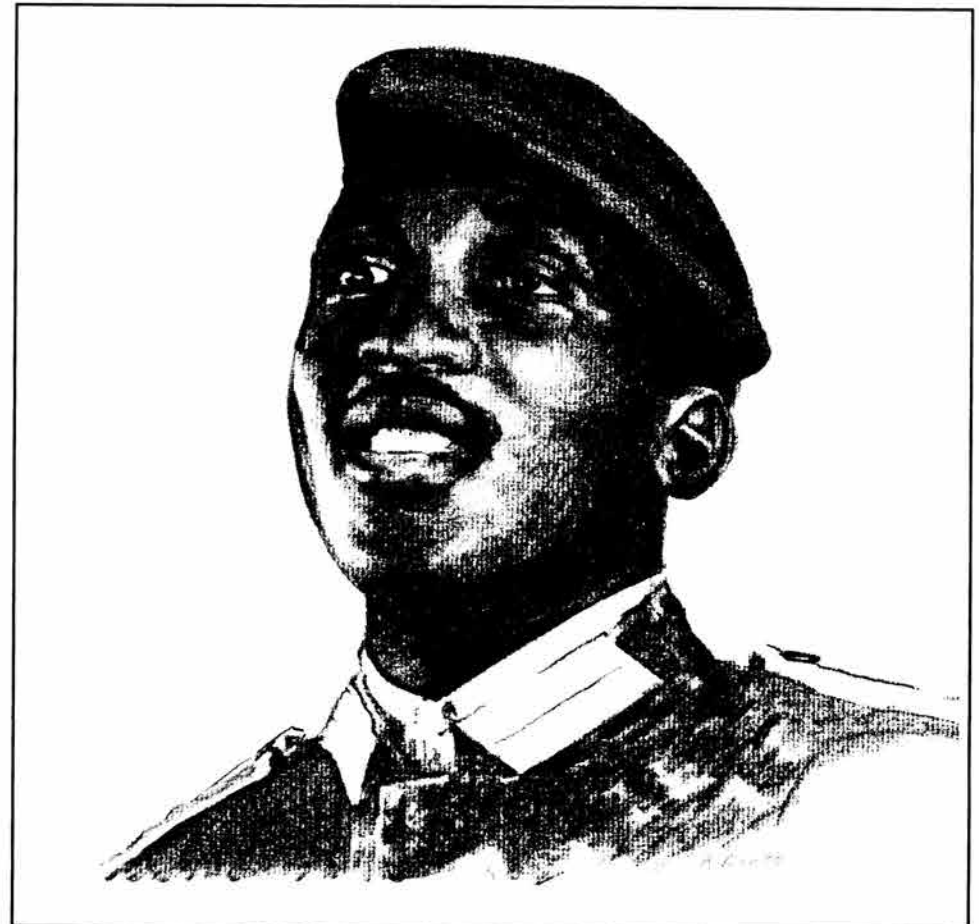
"Those who believed in the struggle embarked upon by Sankara must devote themselves to remaining true to his memory and conveying his message to others."

**Thomas Sankara International
Association, Paris**

To get this book:

Contact the **Pathfinder bookstore** nearest you listed on page 12, or by mail from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. \$9.95 (please include \$1.00 postage and handling.)

For mail orders in **Africa, Europe, Middle East**: Central Books, 14 The Leathermarket, London SE1 3ER, England; **In Asia and Pacific**: Hale & Iremonger, GPO Box 2552, Sydney NSW 2001, Australia. **In Canada**: P.O. Box 9600, Station A, Toronto, Ont. M5W 2C7, Canada.



Militant drawing by Bob Allen

Thomas Sankara

Safiya Bendele

Director, Center for Women's Development, Medgar Evers College, New York

Here is a true revolutionary understanding that the rising of women is the rising of the nation. Thomas Sankara's commitment to humankind remains a sterling example for us.

Sarah Santana

Areito magazine

As people working to disseminate the truth of Cuban and Latin American reality outside and inside the United States, the *Areito* Collective congratulates Pathfinder on its publication of *Thomas Sankara Speaks*, another important contribution to the integration of revolutionary thought from different cultures and latitudes.

Madjid Abdullah

Polisario Front mission to the United Nations

In a very short time, Sankara reversed the course of events in his own country, Burkina Faso, where he played a central role in the dynamization of the economy, democratization of the country, and the participation of the people in the life of their homeland.

He also made his ideas known in and beyond Africa, whether on the question of justice, equality, or in worldwide problems such as the debt, trade, underdevelopment, and international cooperation.

Ohio nuclear workers on strike

Continued from back page

sions about large-scale contamination from the Fernald plant stem from a 1985 class-action lawsuit against NLO, filed by 14,000 area residents for \$300 million.

To protect NLO from liability, the DOE admitted knowing about the radioactive materials leaking from the plant. NLO, says the DOE, violated safety requirements under orders, and therefore can't be held accountable. William Vaughn, a former Reagan administration official, said that the DOE took this course because "every penny that went to safety programs was a penny taken away from manufacturing nuclear warheads."

DOE, as a federal agency, claims it cannot be sued for the damage inflicted upon Fernald-area residents.

Following the DOE's admissions, more than 250 people attended a meeting of the Fernald Residents for Environmental Safe-

Ernesto Godoy

Revolutionary Democratic Front-Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front of El Salvador, New York

We wish to extend our solidarity with the people of Burkina Faso and for the efforts to preserve Sankara's political ideals for peace and social progress in the book *Thomas Sankara Speaks: The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87*.

Mark Curtis

Frame-up victim currently serving 25 years in an Iowa jail.

When I started serving my time in mid-September, one of the three books I brought with me here to jail was *Thomas Sankara Speaks*. And mine have not been the only hands that it has passed through.

Mel Tapley

Amsterdam News, New York

One great thing about Thomas Sankara was that he came to Harlem.

He mentioned about some thinking of "Harlem as a trash heap." But he also spoke of those who believe that "Harlem will give the African soul its true dimension."

He spoke of building not a world for Blacks alone, but he said we have to teach other people how to love each other. He also talked about freeing our brothers in South Africa.

ty and Health (FRESH) in late October, including many Fernald workers, FATLC President David Day, and three representatives from Physicians for Social Responsibility.

People at the meeting wanted to know if they would ever be able to eat food from their gardens again, and why the DOE doesn't test meat from local cows. Others asked if the plant could ever be reopened safely, and when clean-up of the site will start.

One woman, when asked if she would move if she could, said with tears in her eyes, "Tonight." Her father-in-law died of lung cancer, she has thyroid problems, and her husband has multiple sclerosis. "I'm terrified what might happen to my three kids," she added. "Everyone I talk to has cancer in their family."

"Chernobyl was an accident," commented another person. "Fernald is no accident!"

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Victory for Héctor Marroquín. Landmark immigration case won after 11-year fight. Speakers: Héctor Marroquín, Mexican-born socialist who recently won permanent residency in the United States; Peter Schey, executive director, National Center for Immigrant Rights. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 10, 7:30 p.m. United Methodist Church, 1010 S Flower. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Mark Curtis Defense Committee. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

San Francisco

Social Explosion in El Salvador: How Will the Bush Administration Respond? Speaker: Arnaldo Ramos, international representative Revolutionary Democratic Front-Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front of El Salvador. Sun., Dec. 4, 7 p.m. American Indian Center, 225 Valencia St. Donation: \$5-\$7. Sponsor: Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador. For more information call (415) 648-8222.

Red, White, and Black Ball. Benefit party for Nicaragua hurricane relief. Sat., Dec. 31, 9 p.m. - 2 a.m. Caribbean Allstars, Diane Amos, DJ music. Longshoreman's Hall, 400 W Point (at Taylor). Donation: \$14, \$15-\$25 at door. Sponsors: S.F. Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, Nicaragua Information Center, Community Action, Nest Foundation. For more information call (415) 648-8222.

FLORIDA

Miami

Behind Changes in Political Attitudes of Cubans in Miami. A panel discussion. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 3, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (305) 756-1020.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

Justice for Mark Curtis! Speaker: Robert Bruce. Video of Mark Curtis' trial. Sat., Dec. 10, 7:30 p.m. 5019½ Woodward Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (313) 961-0395.

MINNESOTA

Austin

Massive Aid Needed for Nicaragua. Speaker: Harvey McArthur, former correspondent for the *Militant's* Managua Bureau. Class: "The Peasants' Fight for Land in the Nicaraguan Revolution." Sun., Dec. 4, 3 p.m., followed by dinner at 5 p.m. "An Eyewitness Report on Hurricane Joan and the Challenges Facing the Nicaraguan Revolution." Sun., Dec. 4, 6 p.m. Donation: \$5 for all events. 407½ N Main St. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (507) 433-3461.

St. Paul

Chile's Dictatorship in Crisis. Speaker: Hernán Vidal, professor of Spanish and Portuguese at University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, recently returned from Chile. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 10, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Forum, Pathfinder Bookstore. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

Classes on Nicaragua. Two classes by Harvey McArthur, former correspondent with *Militant's* Managua Bureau. "Nicaragua's Land Reform." Sat., Dec. 17, 4 p.m., followed by Nicaraguan dinner. "Ten Years of Revolution on Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast." Sat., Dec. 17, 7:30 p.m. Party to follow. Translation to Spanish. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2 for each

class, \$3 for dinner. Sponsor: Militant Forum, Pathfinder Bookstore, Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

MISSOURI

Kansas City

Glasnost, Perestroika, and the Soviet Union Today. Speaker: Greg Nelson, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., Dec. 4, 6 p.m. 5534 Troost. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (816) 444-7880.

The Palestinian Struggle Today. A panel discussion. Sun., Dec. 11, 6 p.m. 5534 Troost. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (816) 444-7880.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Massive U.S. Aid to Nicaragua Now! Speakers: Jim Moske, Young Socialist Alliance, member United Auto Workers Local 950; Jim Burchell, Northeast organizer for Quest for Peace. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 10, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Commemoration of South African Human Rights Day. Protest demonstration to demand that Mobil Oil cease its collaboration with South African regime. Fri., Dec. 9, noon. Mobil Oil headquarters, 150 E 42nd St., between Lexington and 3rd avenues. Sponsor: New York-Southern Africa Solidarity Coalition. For more information call (212) 690-7180.

Anniversary of the Palestinian Uprising. Vigil to honor those who have given their lives for the freedom and independence of Palestine. Fri., Dec. 9. Assemble 4:30 p.m. at the Israeli mission to the UN, 800 2nd Ave. (at 42nd St.). March 5:30 p.m. to U.S. mission. Sponsor: Palestine Solidarity Committee. For more information call (212) 964-7299.

TEXAS

Austin

A Victory Over Apartheid. Showing of the Cuban TV documentary "Response to the South

African Escalation" on the defeat of South African troops in Angola. Wed., Dec. 7, 7 p.m. University Teaching Center Room 3.112, University of Texas. Sponsor: African Students Association; A Luta Continua; Pathfinder Bookstore, Houston; University of Texas Chicanos Against Military Intervention in Latin America (CAMILA). For more information call (512) 476-3667.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

Massive Aid to Nicaragua Now! An eyewitness report on the aftermath of Hurricane Joan. Speaker: Regula Burki, M.D. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 10, 7:30 p.m. 147 E 900 S. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Forum. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Reconstructing Nicaragua. Speakers to be announced. Sat., Dec. 10, 7:30 p.m. 3165 Mt. Pleasant NW. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (202) 797-7699.

Why the Minimum Wage Should Be Raised. Speaker: Debbie Lazar, Socialist Workers Party, member United Steelworkers of America Local 14287. Sat., Dec. 17, 7:30 p.m. 3165 Mt. Pleasant NW. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (202) 797-7699.

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee

Nicaragua Today: Rebuilding in the Wake of Hurricane Joan. An eyewitness report. Speaker: Harvey McArthur, former correspondent with *Militant's* Managua Bureau. Translation to Spanish. Sun., Dec. 11, 3 p.m. 4707 W Lisbon Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (414) 445-2076.

Welfare "Reform": An Attack on Working People. Speakers: Sandi Sherman, Socialist Workers Party, member United Auto Workers union; others. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 17, 7:30 p.m. 4707 W Lisbon Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (414) 445-2076.

Iowa rally celebrates Marroquín victory

Continued from Page 6

said, "or because I'm an immigrant, but because we believe in Héctor. We believe in him as a human being who has the right to be a political dissident and be in this country."

G. W. Blake Blakesley, pastor of the Scotch Ridge Presbyterian Church in Carlisle, Iowa, hailed Marroquín for "refusing to buckle under the pressure to say something he did not believe because it would be easier to get residency." Washington used Marroquín's political activities and Marxist ideas to try to deny him permanent residency and deport him.

Framed up on criminal charges

Marroquín was the afternoon's featured speaker. He discussed how he was framed up on phony charges of armed robbery, murder, and terrorism by the Mexican police in the early 1970s, forcing him to

flee for his life to the United States.

Affirming his intent to use his "victory to the fullest for all who suffer political victimization," Marroquín told the crowd his top priority now is "to win justice, freedom, and vindication for Mark Curtis."

Curtis, a 29-year-old unionist and political activist, was recently sentenced to 25 years in an Iowa prison, framed up on rape and burglary charges. He is appealing his conviction. Until his arrest and beating at the hands of Des Moines police last March, Curtis worked at the Swift packinghouse here. Curtis, like Marroquín, is a member of the SWP.

Marroquín, Curtis fights: same issues

Marroquín carefully explained the lies and contradictions in the prosecution's case against Curtis. He reviewed the links between his case and that of Curtis. "It was here," he said, in the United Mexican-

BRITAIN

Cardiff

Ireland: A Miscarriage of Justice. Speaker: Peter Clifford, recently arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Wed., Dec. 7, 7:30 p.m. The Bosun Public House, Angelina St., Butetown. Sponsor: New International Forum.

London

Ireland: A Miscarriage of Justice. Speakers: Errol Smalley, secretary of the Campaign to Free the Guildford Four and uncle of Guildford victim Paul Hill; Peter Clifford, recently arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Fri., Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m. 47 The Cut, SE 1. Donation: £1. Sponsor: New International Forum. For more information call 01-401-2293.

CANADA

Montréal

The Foreign Debt of the Caribbean: The Role of Canadian Imperialism. Speaker: Susan Berman, just returned from tour of Caribbean for Pathfinder publishers. Translation to French and Spanish. Fri., Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m. 4274 Papineau, Suite 302. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Forum Lutte Ouvrière. For more information call (514) 524-7992.

A Year of the Intifada: The Palestinian Struggle Today. Speaker: Abdullah Abdullah, representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Canada. Translation to French and Spanish. Sat., Dec. 17, 7:30 p.m. 4274 Papineau, Suite 302. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Forum Lutte Ouvrière. For more information call (514) 524-7992.

SWEDEN

Stockholm

Celebrate the Publication of Thomas Sankara Speaks. Speakers: representative, Thomas Sankara Collective in Paris; Niilo Taapopi, chief representative of South West Africa People's Organisation in the Nordic countries; Yolisa Modise, representative of the Women's Section of the African National Congress of South Africa in Scandinavia; Mary-Alice Waters, Pathfinder, New York; Eva Palm, metal worker. Translation to English and Swedish. Sun., Dec. 11, 5 p.m. U-Forum, Birger Jarlsgatan 61. Sponsor: Pathfinder.

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MISSOURI: Kansas City: 5534 Troost Ave. Zip: 64110. Tel: (816) 444-7880. **St. Louis:** 4907 Martin Luther King Dr. Zip: 63113. Tel: (314) 361-0250.

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OREGON: Portland: 2730 NE Union. Zip: 97212. Tel: (503) 287-7416.

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TEXAS: Austin: c/o Mike Rose, 7409 Berkman Dr. Zip: 78752. Tel: (512) 452-3923. **Houston:** 4806 Alameda. Zip: 77004. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

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WASHINGTON, D.C.: 3165 Mt. Pleasant St. NW. Zip: 20010. Tel: (202) 797-7699, 797-7021.

WASHINGTON: Seattle: 5517 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118. Tel: (206) 723-5330.

WEST VIRGINIA: Charleston: 116 McFarland St. Zip: 25301. Tel: (304) 345-3040. **Morgantown:** 221 Pleasant St. Zip: 26505. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

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

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 181 Glebe Point Rd., 2nd floor,

American Community Center, "that supporters of the Swift 17, including Mark, rallied on March 4, just hours before he was arrested, beaten, and framed up. And he was a leader in the plant of the fight to unite workers and defend the Swift 17."

"I know," continued Marroquín, "some of my supporters defend Mark Curtis. Some want to find out more and that's important. And some don't support him. I respect this, but I have to speak out."

"Ours is the same fight," emphasized Marroquín, "and that's why I urge all those who supported me to unite to get this brother out of jail."

After the meeting, several participants went to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee office. A couple of workers from Swift who hadn't made it to the rally showed up as well, and everyone watched a videotape of excerpts from Curtis' September trial.

Glebe. Postal address: P.O. Box 153 Glebe, Sydney NSW 2037. Tel: 02-660 1673.

BRITAIN

London: 47 The Cut, SE1 8LL. Tel: 01-401 2293.

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Stockholm: P.O. Box 5024, S-12505 Älvsjö. Tel: (08) 722-9342.

What you don't know won't kill you? — The British government persistently refused to disclose manufacturer's safety information on pesticides, arguing the



Harry Ring

data could be used by rival companies. Now, to spur competition in the field, the files are being opened to manufacturers — but not to the public.

And no crook either? — Dan Quayle is no "intellectual midget." — Richard Nixon.

Who says there's no progress — George Russell, a Baltimore corporate lawyer, became the first Black to be admitted to the "exclusive" all-male Maryland Club. (The club does employ Black waiters.)

What a few \$\$\$ can do — Intrigued that \$20 billion may prove insufficient to buy out RJR Nabisco, a reporter calculated what you can do with that amount. Like, buy 225,988 median-priced homes; sponsor 80 million impoverished children for a year; or,

send Dan Quayle to the University of Indiana law school for 6.8 million years.

But not to worry — The chairman of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board explained that when the federal deposit insurance system was set up, the intent was to cover "normal" losses, not the catastrophic ones now being generated by the savings and loan industry.

The esthetes — Those who disparage the coarseness of the rich should note that in ultraplush Palm Beach, the garbage trucks are removed at night to West Palm Beach so as not to mar the beauty of the area.

Eau de B.O. — Donald and Ivana Trump, British royalty, and others have paid Keith Foster up to \$10,000 to concoct a personal fragrance for them. This involves hours of psychological probing, plus having the subject wear a handkerchief close to the body overnight. "Everybody has a signature odor," explains Foster. "It's like karma."

Figures-don't-lie dep't. — A study found there were excessive death rates at 12 percent of Veterans' Administration hospitals. The chief honcho ordered a new study with a more "rigorous" statistical method. The figure dropped to 3.5 percent.

The maid will love them — New York designer Norma Kamali offers custom-made furniture at custom-made prices. But a real deal is the stretch-silk satin sheets (\$550 and \$700 a set.) "Aren't they great," she enthuses. "And you can wash them."

Tip to claustrophobes — Apparently at capacity underground, Gardens of Memories, a New Jersey burial operation, is offering above-ground slots. Their ad: "The clean burial — not underground with earth's disturbing elements." The clincher: "Minimize the trauma — seeing a loved one buried underground only adds to the stress."

W. Virginia socialists appeal ballot restrictions

BY JOANNE MURPHY

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — A legal challenge to West Virginia's undemocratic elections laws has been announced by the Socialist Workers Party.

Jim Gotesky, SWP candidate for Congress from the 3rd C.D. during the recent elections, told a November 3 news conference here that the SWP would appeal a September 13 court decision. That decision kept the SWP presidential ticket, as well as state and local candidates, off the ballot in West Virginia for the November 8 elections.

The appeal is being filed in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Virginia.

Bruce Perrone, president of the West Virginia Civil Liberties Union, also spoke at the news conference. He explained why

the WVCLU is handling the SWP's appeal.

West Virginia, Perrone said, "imposes two kinds of restrictions, filing-fee requirements and petitions signed by voters, that we feel together are inappropriate."

The West Virginia law fundamentally restricts the First Amendment rights of all Americans to voice their ideas and participate in open political discourse," Perrone said.

Current West Virginia law requires candidates of parties other than the Democrats or Republicans who cannot afford to pay the required filing fee to collect four signatures for every dollar of the fee that isn't paid. It was amended in this way after the SWP succeeded in getting on the ballot in 1984.

The filing fees for the SWP presidential,

vice-presidential, state, and local candidates this year would have totaled nearly \$5,000. To get the fee waived, SWP campaign supporters would have had to submit 20,000 valid signatures gathered on petitions.

This comes on top of the requirement that nominating petitions containing 7,357 valid signatures have to be submitted, even if the filing fee is fully paid.

Other ballot restrictions in West Virginia include early deadlines for submitting petitions for local office; requiring signers to publicly state their intention to vote for the candidate whose petition they sign; and requiring those collecting signatures to read any potential signer the law stating that signers give up their right to vote in the primary election if they sign.

In 1986 and 1987, SWP candidates were excluded from the ballot despite paying the filing fees and collecting up to triple the required number of signatures. The

fees were paid under protest.

The SWP filed a legal challenge to the state's ballot requirements in April 1988. The lateness of the decision on that suit made it impossible to appeal in time for the November elections.

Robert Bastress, a volunteer attorney for the WVCLU and professor at West Virginia University Law School in Morgantown, is handling the SWP's appeal. He represented the SWP and other interested parties in a 1980 lawsuit that overturned aspects of West Virginia's election law that had kept virtually all candidates who were not Democrats or Republicans off the ballot from 1940 to 1980.

A Fair Ballot Appeal Fund has been established to win backing for the SWP's appeal, and to help cover printing and travel costs. Endorsements and contributions can be sent to: WVCLU-Fair Ballot Appeal Fund, P.O. Box 1509, Charleston, W. Va. 25325-1509.

SWP '88 presidential vote totals

James Warren and Kathleen Mickells, Socialist Workers Party candidates for U.S. president and vice-president, were officially credited with 11,435 votes in the November 8 elections, according to an Associated Press canvass of election results in all 50 states. The figures were released November 21.

The SWP ticket was on the ballot in 15 states and Washington, D.C., this year. In 1984 the SWP was on the ballot in 23 states and the District of Columbia and was credited with 24,687 votes.

In the 1988 voting, Larry Holmes, Workers World Party candidate for presi-

dent, was credited with 6,628 votes.

Willia Kenoyer, presidential candidate of the Socialist Party, was reported as receiving 3,412 votes.

The Communist Party did not field a ticket in this year's presidential race.

The New Alliance Party candidate Lenora Fulani, who was on the ballot in 50 states, was credited with 201,430 votes.

Libertarian Party candidate Ron Paul was credited with 409,412 votes.

Lyndon LaRouche, leader of a small fascist outfit, ran as the candidate of the National Economic Recovery ticket, and received 23,713 votes, according to the canvass.

—10 AND 25 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

Dec. 8, 1978

Millions of words have been written about the tragic events in Jonestown, the People's Temple colony in Guyana. Many of the accounts contradict each other, and some are clearly pure fabrication. But one thing is true of all these reports: they skirt the real meaning of the mass deaths.

When hundreds of human beings together commit suicide, taking their children along with them, it begs the question to simply say that these people were dupes of a crazed cult leader. The basic explanation is social and political.

It is neither an exaggeration nor an oversimplification to say that capitalism is responsible for what happened in Guyana.

The people who followed Rev. Jim Jones to Guyana were in blind flight. They were trying to escape the exploitation, the racism, and the pervasive brutality that are the indelible features of the capitalist society in which we live.

They were alienated from this society. And rightly so. The awful tragedy is that they didn't know how to fight the evils of capitalism, and fell victim to the warped vision of a cult leader.

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interests of the Working People

Dec. 9, 1963

Price 10¢

(The Militant reprinted an article by Peter Kihss of the New York Times. His article was headlined "Accused Assassin Belied Tenets of Marxism, Experts Here Agree." Below are excerpts.)

Political groups that consider themselves to be the exponents of Marxism contended here yesterday that Marxism opposed assassinations or individual terrorism. Thus they argued that the man accused of assassinating President Kennedy was not a true

"Marxist" despite his own assertions to that effect.

The groups expressed concern over misconceptions that might arise because Lee H. Oswald had styled himself a "Marxist" in a much-discussed telecast in New Orleans.

Norman Thomas, six-time Socialist candidate for President, and leaders of the Communist, Socialist Workers, and Socialist Labor parties and the Progressive Labor Movement all contended that true Marxism opposed violence against individuals.

They cited Karl Marx, the German socialist, as having long battled terrorists such as Mikhail Bakunin, the Russian anarchist who believed in destroying the state.

Marx's program for achieving socialism, they held in substance, envisioned a class struggle, with the individual counting for relatively little.

For the Trotskyites, [Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Farrell] Dobbs said Trotsky had written a pamphlet in 1934 on "The Kirov Assassination," in which he cited "the negative aspect of Marxism toward the tactic of individual terror." In this, Trotsky quoted an article he wrote in 1911.

It said that "the capitalist state is not founded upon ministers and cannot be destroyed with them," because "the classes it serves will always find new men, the mechanism remains whole and continues its work."

"The only way that the political and basic social problems of the human race can be settled in a civilized way," Mr. Dobbs said, "is for society to be guided by majority decision, which is reached after full and free public debate in which all points of view are heard."

"Individual acts of terrorism in the last analysis can serve only the forces of reaction who want to repress political and constitutional liberties because they seize upon the individual terrorist act as a pretext to attack the rights of society as a whole."

ACTION PROGRAM TO CONFRONT THE COMING ECONOMIC CRISIS

Pathfinder has published an Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis proposed by the Socialist Workers Party National Committee.

The pamphlet is available in English and Spanish.

Includes "The Fight for a Shorter Workweek, Yesterday and Today" by Doug Jenness. The pamphlet is available in English and Spanish.

In French, the Action Program is available in the November 1988 issue of *Lutte ouvrière*.

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Let Yassir Arafat into U.S.

By barring Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yassir Arafat from entering the United States to speak before the United Nations General Assembly in New York, the U.S. government attacked the right of the people of this country and the world to hear the views of the representatives of the Palestinian people.

This action is part of a decades-long campaign by the U.S. and Israeli governments to deny the legitimacy of the PLO, recognized by the vast majority of the Palestinian people as their representative, and to bar it from participating in discussions or negotiations concerning Palestine.

Last year the U.S. government closed the Palestine Information Office in Washington, D.C., which distributed material expressing the views of the PLO.

In June 1988 a federal court halted a Reagan administration move, backed by Congress, to close the PLO observer mission to the United Nations.

The attempt to ostracize and silence the PLO shows that Washington, no less than the Israeli regime, is opposed to self-determination for the Palestinian people.

By smearing Arafat as a terrorist, the Reagan administration is trying to divert growing worldwide outrage against the Israeli regime's expulsion and oppression of millions of Palestinians.

The state of Israel was founded in 1948 through the expulsion of 700,000 Palestinians from their homeland and the seizure of their property. Terrorism has been an essential component of the Israeli capitalist rulers' drive to establish and maintain the oppression of the Palestinian people — from the slaughter of 250 residents of the Pal-

estinian village of Deir Yassin in 1948, to massacres of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon during the 1982 Israeli invasion, to the assassination of PLO leader Khalil Al-Wazir last April.

Today, U.S. policy aims to strengthen the hand of the Israeli regime as it attempts to crush protests in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and other parts of Israeli-held Palestine.

None of this is terrorism in Washington's book. The U.S. rulers have bankrolled these crimes, and armed the perpetrators to the teeth.

The terrorist label is pinned instead on Palestinians who resist — whether they do so with guns, stones, picket signs, pens, or speeches.

The barring of Arafat from the United Nations session in New York also sheds light on the hypocrisy of Washington's attempt to pass itself off as a peacemaker in the Middle East.

The U.S. and Israeli rulers sometimes voice tactical differences over how to combat the Palestinian struggle. Regardless of those disputes, however, U.S. diplomacy serves to provide cover for the Israeli regime's continual suppression of all those fighting for Palestinian self-determination. The denial of a visa to Arafat is one further confirmation.

Workers, farmers, and everyone else who supports basic democratic rights should add their voices to the worldwide demand that the U.S. government reverse its decision and allow Yassir Arafat to speak at the United Nations.

Youth and minimum wage

The continued growth in the number of workers who are paid below, at, or just above the federal minimum wage is highlighting the urgency for labor of the fight for a substantial increase.

A recently published study found that the real annual income of male workers aged 20 to 24 who did not finish high school had dropped 42 percent since 1973, to just \$6,853 in 1986. The income of youth who graduated high school but did not go to college dropped by 28 percent in the same period.

In capitalist society, wages are set from the bottom up. Holding down the minimum wage tends to keep the wages of all workers lower. There has been no increase in the minimum wage, now at \$3.35 an hour, since 1981.

Freezing the minimum wage at this miserable level has helped make it easier for the employers to force big cuts in living standards on young people, workers who have no union protection, immigrants, Blacks, women, and

other targets of discrimination.

That's why Republican and Democratic politicians have blocked an increase so far — even the paltry increase over three years to \$4.55 an hour that was considered during the last session of Congress.

The minimum wage is a measure of affirmative action that limits the employers' power to use gross inequalities in wages to divide and weaken the working class. Workers' success in unifying our forces is a decisive factor in today's struggles to defend our unions and working conditions — and in the big battles that are coming as the capitalist system enters a sharper crisis.

The unity needed to win these struggles will only be forged through the labor movement providing leadership and unstinting support to the struggles of the most exploited, least protected, and most discriminated against workers. The demand for a higher minimum wage is an important part of this struggle.

Frame-ups 'in good faith'?

On November 29 the U.S. Supreme Court made it a little easier for police and prosecutors to railroad working people to jail.

A six-to-three ruling upheld the conviction in Arizona of Larry Youngblood, who had been found guilty of kidnapping and sodomizing a 10-year-old boy, even though the police had mishandled the victim's clothing so that it was impossible to determine whether semen residue was Youngblood's. Youngblood insists that he was mistakenly identified by the victim.

"Unless a criminal defendant can show bad faith on the part of the police," declared Chief Justice William Rehnquist in the court majority's opinion, "failure to preserve potentially useful evidence does not constitute a denial of due process of law."

Rehnquist conceded the "likelihood" that the evidence in this case could have exonerated Youngblood. But, he insisted, the defendant must show that the police knew that the evidence would be helpful to the defense when they destroyed or damaged it.

The ruling is a severe blow to the right of defendants to be presumed innocent. The presumption of innocence, established as a legal principle over centuries of struggle, is vital to working people in our fight to defend ourselves against a system of justice that is stacked against us.

The ruling class has launched many attacks in recent years aimed at eroding this right. Under the 1984 federal Bail Reform Act, for instance, judges may imprison accused persons without bail if they are deemed to be potentially dangerous — in effect finding them guilty and punishing them before the trial takes place.

The decision in *Arizona v. Youngblood* shifts the bur-

den of proof further onto the defendant. It allows police to destroy or damage potentially vital evidence — unless the defendant can prove not only that the cops did so, but that they acted in a particular state of mind: "bad faith."

Given the difficulties of proving such a thing, the high court decision will make it easier for cops to frame people up through destruction of evidence.

The frame-up trial of political activist Mark Curtis in Des Moines, Iowa, last September, provided an example of the way the government uses the presumption of guilt, as opposed to innocence, to shape the way evidence is developed and presented in criminal trials. Curtis was convicted of rape and burglary and has now been sentenced to 25 years in prison.

At the trial, police specialist Paul Bush said that there was no evidence that Curtis had been in physical contact with the alleged rape victim — including no exchange of pubic hairs between them. Bush admitted, however, that he had made no effort to determine whether pubic hairs or physical evidence pointing to any other possible perpetrator were present.

Bush had operated, in reality, on the assumption that his job was not to find out who, if anyone, committed the alleged crime, but to hunt for evidence against Curtis.

Rehnquist asserted that the new standard set in *Arizona v. Youngblood* "limits the extent of the police's obligation to preserve evidence to reasonable bounds."

In fact, the ruling is a green light not only to police sloppiness and negligence, but to the suppression, destruction, and alteration of evidence as part of outright frame-ups.

Thomas Sankara on saving trees and forests

Editor Doug Jenness is on vacation. This week's column is a selection from *Thomas Sankara Speaks: The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87*, recently published by Pathfinder.

Burkina Faso, formerly Upper Volta, is a West African country that won its independence from France in 1960. Sankara became president after a popular revolt toppled an imperialist-dominated regime on Aug. 4,

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

1983. A counterrevolutionary coup overthrew the Sankara-led revolutionary government on Oct. 15, 1987. He was murdered.

Following are excerpts from "Save Our Trees, Our Environment, Our Lives," a speech Sankara delivered to the First International Tree and Forest Conference held in Paris on Feb. 5, 1986. They are copyright 1988, Pathfinder. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

* * *

My country, Burkina Faso, is without question one of the rare countries on this planet justified in calling and viewing itself as a microcosm of all the natural evils from which mankind still suffers at the end of this 20th century.

Eight million Burkinabè have internalized this reality during 23 painful years. They have watched their mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters die, decimated by hunger, famine, disease, and ignorance. With tears in their eyes, they have watched their ponds and rivers dry up.

Since 1973 they have seen their environment deteriorate, their trees die, and the desert invade the land with giant steps. It is estimated that the desert in the Sahel advances at the rate of seven kilometers per year. [The Sahel is a region of north central Africa, running from Senegal in the west to Ethiopia in the east, where water supplies are low and severe droughts have taken place.]

Since Aug. 4, 1983, water, trees, and life — if not survival itself — have been fundamental and sacred in all actions taken by the National Council of the Revolution, which is leading Burkina Faso.

The Burkinabè people are now conducting a successful struggle for a green Burkina. Ten million trees have been planted under the auspices of a People's Development Program lasting 15 months.

I have come to join with you in deploring the harshness of nature. But I have also come to denounce the one whose selfishness is the source of his neighbor's misfortune. Colonialism has pillaged our forests without the least thought of replenishing them for our tomorrows.

The unpunished destruction of the biosphere by savage and murderous forays on the land and in the air continues.

We are not against progress, but we want progress that is not carried out anarchically and with criminal neglect for other people's rights. We therefore wish to affirm that the battle against the encroachment of the desert is a battle to establish a balance between man, nature, and society. As such, it is a battle that is above all political, one whose outcome is not determined by fate.

We have to fight to find the financial means to exploit our existing water resources — that is, to finance drilling operations, reservoirs, and dams. This is the place to denounce the one-sided contracts and draconian conditions imposed by banks and other financial institutions that preclude our projects in this area. These prohibitive conditions bring on traumatizing indebtedness, robbing us of all meaningful freedom of action.

Neither fallacious Malthusian arguments — and I assert that Africa remains an underpopulated continent — nor those vacation resorts pompously and demagogically called "reforestation operations" provide a solution. We are backed up against the wall in our destitution like bald and mangy dogs whose lamentations and cries disturb the quiet peace of the manufacturers and merchants of misery.

Explained in this way, our struggle to defend the trees and the forest is first and foremost a democratic struggle that must be waged by the people. The sterile and expensive excitement of a handful of engineers and forestry experts will accomplish nothing.

Nor can the tender consciences of a multitude of forums and institutions — sincere and praiseworthy though they may be — make the Sahel green again, when we lack the funds to drill wells for drinking water just a hundred meters deep, and money abounds to drill oil wells 3,000 meters deep!

As Karl Marx said, those who live in a palace do not think about the same things, nor in the same way, as those who live in a hut. This struggle to defend the trees and the forest is above all a struggle against imperialism. Imperialism is the pyromaniac setting fire to our forests and savannah.

Airport workers oppose Michigan nuclear waste dump

Editors' note: The following letter appeared in the November issue of *The Local Lodge 141 Transporter* newsletter of International Association of Machinists Local 141. Local 141 organizes mechanics, ground

UNION TALK

crews, and ticket agents who work for Northwest and other airlines at the Detroit Metropolitan Airport. Local 141 member Mark Friedman sent us the newsletter.

"I had discussed the October 28 *Militant* story '40-year disaster at government nuclear plants,' with subscribers at work," Friedman told the *Militant*. "Then several of us started circulating the enclosed letter at work, and instead of a few cosigners, we ended up with 60!"

A coalition of environmental and antinuclear groups from Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio have formed the Tri-State Coalition to stop the construction of a nuclear waste dump in south central Michigan. They are linking up with groups in other states as well.

* * *

"We will be Chernobylizing ourselves by scattering

waste all over the country without needing a nuclear accident to do it for us. . . ." Mary Sinclair, co-chair, Don't Waste Michigan; founder, Great Lakes Energy Alliance.

As much as 4 million cubic feet of radioactive wastes are to be disposed of at a site within the Great Lakes watershed during the next 20 years. Ninety-nine percent of the waste will come from nuclear plants. The state and federal governments want us, the working people and farmers, to foot the bill for this disposal, just as we have been forced to pay higher taxes and utility costs to subsidize the nuclear power companies.

The Low Level Radioactive Policy Act of 1980, backed by the private producers of radioactive waste, gave disposal responsibility to the states. This encouraged states to join together in compacts. Michigan joined the Midwest Interstate Compact in 1982 and has now been chosen as the future site for the neighboring six states. The construction of a costly facility in the area containing 95 percent of the country's surface freshwater is an enormous and stupid risk.

Soon after the decision to have Michigan "host" the nuclear dump, activists joined together, speaking out at Waste Commission public hearings. Antidump spokespeople got favorable coverage, especially after Democratic Gov. James Blanchard announced his support for

the dump in south central Michigan.

The Hillsdale Organization for the Preservation of the Environment (HOPE) organized with Don't Waste Michigan, and mobilized 3,500 people from the rural farming community of 70,000 to protest the dump. Widespread and intense public opposition to the dump caused the Waste Dump Authority to hold a public hearing. More than 1,000 residents packed the Hillsdale High School gymnasium.

Opposition to the dump continues to grow as thousands of working people and farmers learn of the dangers of radioactivity and the fact that any accident in transportation or storage could mean the deaths of tens of thousands.

Don't Waste Michigan proposes the following: Radioactive waste should not be permanently disposed of in the Great Lakes Basin; radioactive waste should not be disposed of above water tables; waste should remain at the reactor sites in temporary, above-ground, monitored, retrievable storage until the plant is shut down; and they should be shut down now. Michigan must withdraw from the compact now.

You can help keep Michigan from becoming a nuclear waste dump. Call or write: Don't Waste Michigan, 227 Custer Ave., Lansing, Michigan 48912, (517) 487-6873.

LETTERS

Nicaragua solidarity

I work at Aquascutum, a garment factory in Montréal. I'm a member of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union.

When a coworker of mine told me about the hurricane that hit Nicaragua, we decided to set up a table in our cafeteria at work to collect money for Urgence Nicaragua, an emergency coalition of international aid groups and unions.

Workers from Greece and Jamaica had done this when disasters hit those countries and so we were able to get the company's permission. We made up a poster and a box and got some leaflets with a few details about the people of Nicaragua.

What struck us most was the fact that most people hadn't even heard about the hurricane. I myself hadn't seen it on the news. Nevertheless, we collected \$94 and had a few good discussions with people. Some people learned about Nicaragua for the first time.

Everyone who I spoke with was appalled at the amount of aid Canada gave to Nicaragua as compared to hurricane relief to Jamaica (\$900,000 as compared to \$13 million). Everyone felt as I did that the aid to Nicaragua should have equalled that sent to Jamaica.

In the past our union has passed resolutions urging aid to Nicaragua. I sincerely hope that more workers can do what we did to show solidarity for the people of that country and help them rebuild and stand free to fight and defend the revolution. We know that the Nicaraguans are a strong people, but they need all the help we can give them.

Monette Bouvier
Montréal, Canada

As if I was there

I write this letter out of hunger. A mental hunger. You are one of the sources that can provide certain vitamins for the mind and enrich my entire being.

I'm a prisoner and striving to uplift my political consciousness. One of the brothers here lets me see your paper once in awhile, but he can't always give me the paper because he has other brothers seeking knowledge also. I'd like to ask if I can be placed on the list so that I can receive a subscription to the *Militant*.

You have some good writers and when you go to cover a story you give a lot of points other papers leave out. I feel as if I was there myself with the reporter, carrying loads of film and writing pads. Thanks for a job well done.
A prisoner
Stormville, New York

Iran

I want to write to you about some of the developments here since July 18, when the Iranian government accepted United Nations Resolution 598 calling for a cease-fire in the eight-year-old Iran-Iraq war.

Right after Iran accepted that resolution the Iraqi government started its biggest military attack ever against Iran.

There was a massive response by Iranian working people to this attack. Hundreds of thousands went to the war fronts as volunteers. I think this was the biggest mobilization in Iran since the war began.

I volunteered to go, and finished the preparatory work, but was told that more people had gone to the fronts than they could handle. Every day some 350 people died of thirst in the Khuzistan front because it was hard to get water to so many people.

The Iraqi army was pushed back so fast that they were astonished. In my opinion if anybody wanted to find out whether the Iranian revolution was alive or not, the answer was given clearly on July 28, when the attack was definitively beaten back.

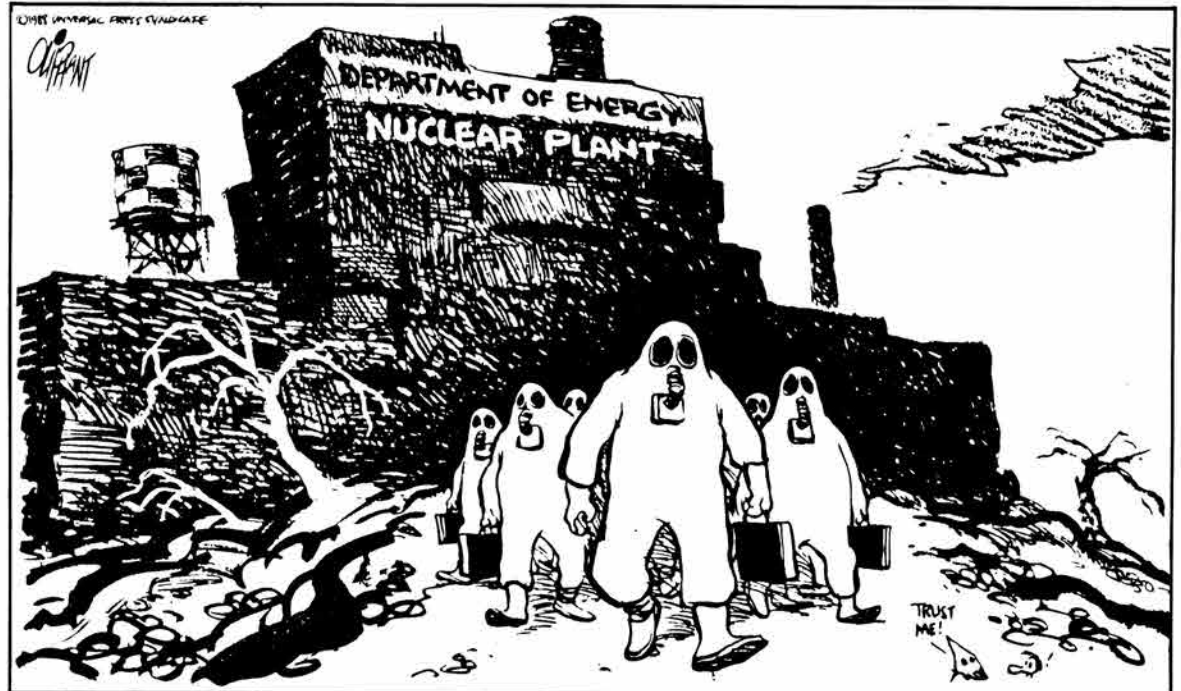
Only after its forces were pushed back did the Iraqi regime agree to negotiate.

After the UN-sponsored negotiations started, there was a big move by the right wing in Iran to disarm the Pasdaran (Revolutionary Guards), the force that has spearheaded the war effort. A proposal was taken to the Iranian parliament to dissolve the Pasdaran into the army, which is left over from the shah's regime.

The move met with resistance. Four thousand commanders and leaders of the Pasdaran gathered in Tehran in a "seminar." After this, the proposal was withdrawn from the parliament for six months.

A lot of propaganda is being carried out by the *Resalat* newspaper, the voice of the bazaar-based merchants and clerics, in defense of free enterprise. It sees the root of Iran's economic problems as the present governmental controls on foreign trade and advocates uncontrolled economic relations with the imperialist countries as the way out of scarcity and inflation.

One can say that this is the biggest debate that is going on among Iranian working people. They are discussing capitalism and whether it can solve our problems.
A.H.
Tehran, Iran



Oliphant

"Greetings. We are from the government. We are here to help you."

Around the globe

I'm a prisoner at the Texas Department of Corrections. How could I go about receiving your paper?

I was introduced to the *Militant* by one of my comrades. It was really a shock to me to know about what's happening around the globe. It's very hard for me to find out what's going on due to the fact that I don't watch TV, nor do I receive any papers.

So that's the purpose of writing to you: so that I'll be up to date on what's happening.

A prisoner
Rosharon, Texas

Abe Isserman

I attended a meeting recently to honor Abe Isserman, who died in April at the age of 87.

Isserman was a prominent labor and civil rights attorney in the 1920s, '30s, and '40s. Maurice Isserman, his grandson and author of a book on the Communist Party during the 1950s witchhunt titled *Which Side Were You On?*, said at the meeting that Isserman represented workers in "labor cases ranging from farm workers in New Jersey to miners in Idaho and that he knew people ranging from A.J. Muste to Gerhard Eisler."

The invitation to the meeting noted that Isserman was the attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union and a member of its national board from 1935 to 1939, resigning in 1939 in protest at the expulsion of a founding member, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn of the Communist Party. He also represented the Jehovah Witnesses in their fight against compulsory reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag.

But Isserman was best known as one of five attorneys defending leaders of the Communist Party from frame-up charges in the 1949 Smith Act trial. Among the 11 CP leaders framed up were Eugene Dennis, Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., Henry Winston, John Gates, Gil Green, Carl Winter, and Gus Hall.

The Smith Act was first used against leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and of Teamsters Local Union 544 in Minneapolis in 1941. At that trial 29 people were indicted and 18 were railroaded to prison, including James P. Cannon, national secretary of the SWP; Farrell Dobbs, a central leader of the Teamsters' local and national labor secretary of the SWP; and Albert Goldman, the party's attorney. Goldman conducted the legal defense of the 1941 Smith Act defendants.

In the 1949 trial of Communist Party leaders, the defense lawyers were punished along with the defendants. Isserman went to jail for four months and was disbarred from practicing law for 13 years, until 1961.

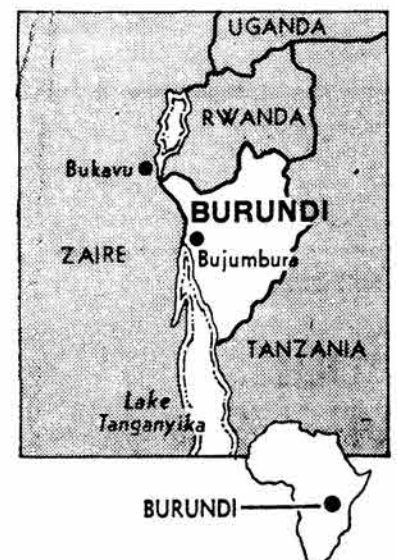
Many of those attending the meeting worked with Isserman and had also been victimized by the witchhunt. Gil Green spoke, as did Rep. George Crockett of Michigan. Crockett was also one of the attorneys representing the 1949 CP defendants.

The prominent constitutional attorney Leonard Boudin chaired the Isserman memorial meeting. Boudin led the legal team representing the SWP in its historic suit against FBI spying. In that case, not only did the government lose, but it was forced to pay the legal fees incurred by Boudin's law firm in the course of the trial, increasing the

sweep of this legal victory.
Chris Rayson
Newark, New Jersey

Correction

In coverage of the New York book launching of *Thomas Sankara Speaks*, Burundi was incorrectly referred to as a West African country. Burundi is in east-central Africa.



The *Militant* special prisoner fund makes it possible to send reduced-rate subscriptions to prisoners who can't pay for them. To help this important cause, send your contribution to: *Militant Prisoner Subscription Fund*, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

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.

CLUW backs abortion rights march

Labor union women's convention supports April 9 demonstration

BY ILONA GERSH

SEATTLE — On the final day of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) national convention, delegates voted unanimously to support the abortion rights demonstration called by the National Organization for Women (NOW) for Washington, D.C., on April 9.

The CLUW convention, attended by more than 1,000 delegates and observers from a range of unions, took place here November 17-20.

The April 9 March for Women's Equality and Women's Lives was originally called by NOW to support the Equal Rights Amendment, slated to be reintroduced into Congress next year. But recent right-wing attacks on abortion clinics around the country; attempts to reverse the Jan. 22, 1973, Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion; and passage of three antiabortion referenda during the recent elections led NOW to change the focus of the national march and rally.

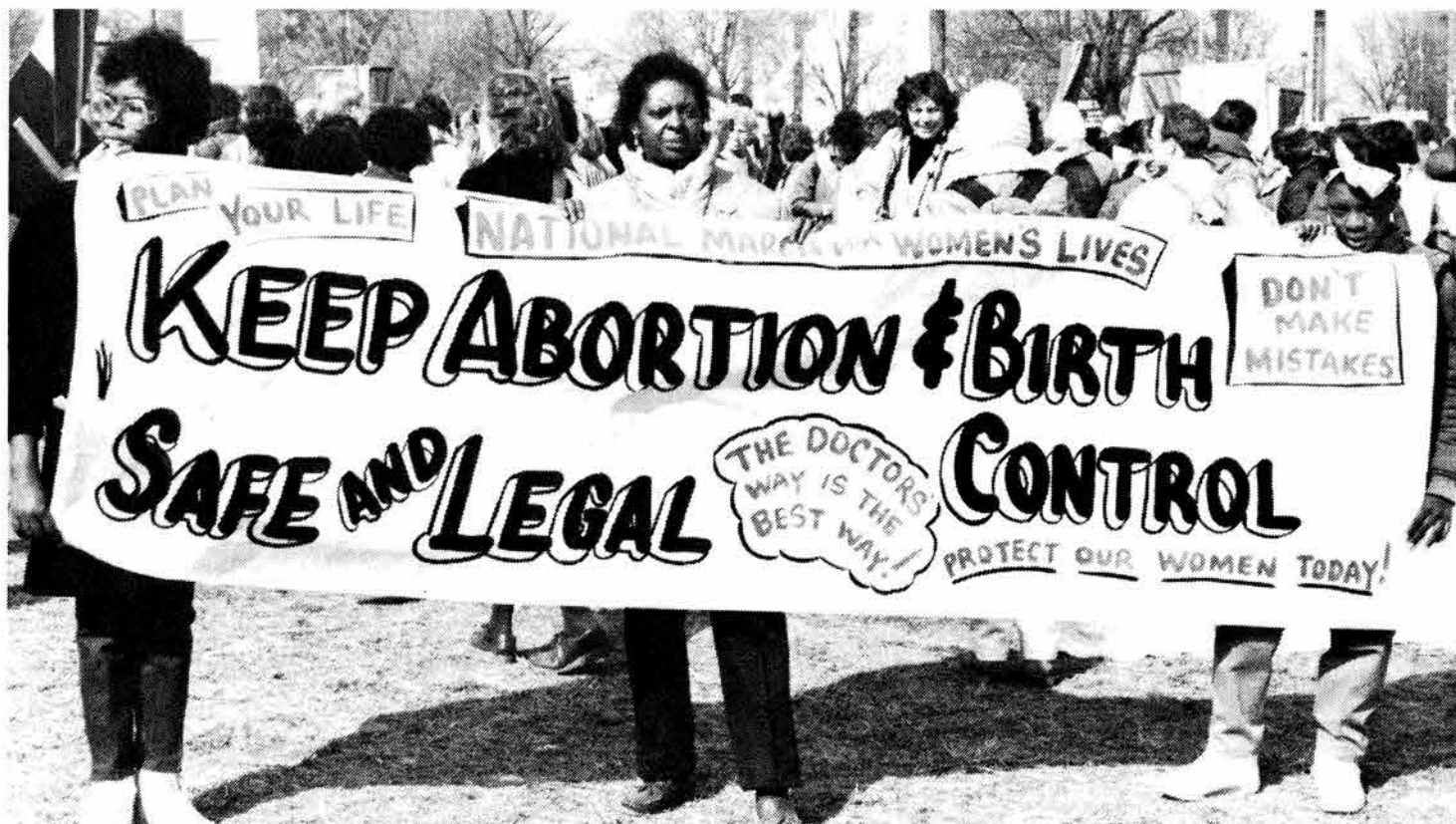
NOW is also planning to hold January 22 actions around the country to defend abortion rights.

NOW President Molly Yard addressed the CLUW convention and urged delegates to convince their unions to defend abortion rights. The labor movement is an important ally of women and their fight for equality, she explained.

"This is a struggle for working women, just as it is for women from all walks of life," Yard said. "We can't begin to speak of freedom for women until we have the right to decide whether or not to bear children. No woman is free without the right to control her reproductive life. It's a woman's right to say what she will do with her body."

Following the vote, convention participants rose in a standing ovation.

Attending the convention were officials and members of the Auto union, Steelworkers, Machinists, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union, International Union of Electronic Workers, Service Employees' International Union, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, and other unions.



Militant/Holbrook Mahn
National Organization for Women (NOW) sponsored last national demonstration for abortion rights in March 1986. NOW President Molly Yard urged delegates to recent CLUW convention to involve their unions in defense of abortion rights.

Ohio nuclear workers on strike

BY VAL LIBBY, GREG SACK,
AND MORRIS STARKY

CINCINNATI — More than 600 production workers at the Fernald uranium-processing center have been on strike against Westinghouse Materials Co. of Ohio since October 7. The workers are members of 14 unions that make up the Fernald Atomic Trades Labor Council (FATLC).

Westinghouse operates the Fernald facility, which is located in a farming area 18 miles northwest of here, under a contract from the Department of Energy (DOE). Materials using uranium and plutonium are produced there for the U.S. nuclear weapons arsenal. Production has been stopped since the strike started.

One of the main issues in the strike is

Westinghouse's demand that workers pay more for health insurance and medicine, and accept a reduction in the length of long-term disability coverage. The unions are also opposing company proposals to subcontract work and to combine jobs, both of which would worsen the already unsafe conditions in the plant.

"I don't think we would have gone out if it wasn't for the medical benefits they want to take away," said one striker. Another worker pointed to the millions currently being spent to repair and upgrade the Fernald facility, which was built in 1951. "Right now, you can see them pouring millions of dollars in to fix up the offices and fix up the beauty of the place," said Stanley Bippus. "And then for them to want me to pay my own health insurance, or part of it,

is a slap in the face."

The health dangers to workers and area residents from Fernald made headlines around the country in mid-October after the DOE admitted that for nearly 40 years, thousands of tons of radioactive uranium waste had been secretly released from the plant into the surrounding environment.

Runoff from the plant had carried 167,000 pounds of uranium waste into the Great Miami River. Some 268,000 pounds had been discharged into the air as dust, and another 12.7 million pounds was stored in leaky pits at the plant. The pits are above the Great Miami aquifer, which is a source of drinking water for parts of Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky. The DOE has also stockpiled 2.4 million pounds of thorium at the plant. Exposure to thorium is nearly as dangerous as plutonium as a cause of bone cancer.

In September the FATLC revealed that at least 13 and possibly 50 workers had been exposed to plutonium contamination in two incidents from 1985 to 1987. The unions, pointing to the fact that any exposure to plutonium is dangerous, have been fighting for independent testing and company-paid medical treatment for all workers.

In the early 1980s, environmental groups and area residents began educating about the threat posed by Fernald. They pressed for government action.

In 1984 workers at the plant defied a government gag-order and began reporting huge uranium dust leaks to the public. The unions campaigned to force the government to tell the truth about the extent of water and air pollution at Fernald.

In 1985, after being forced to test some water wells near the plant, the U.S. Geological Survey reported that the level of radioactive material in three wells was 40 times the federal limit.

Faced with growing public scrutiny and pressure, Fernald's previous operator, NLO, pulled out in 1986 and Westinghouse took over the operation. In 1987 Westinghouse dumped a ton of uranium and a half ton of toxic chemicals into the environment.

The reason for the DOE's recent admis-

Continued on Page 11

Oregon vigil aids threatened farmers

BY JANET POST

PORTLAND, Ore. — Oregon farmers facing possible foreclosure organized a 45-hour vigil over Thanksgiving at the Interchurch Center here.

Farmers staffed telephones, and debt-ridden farmers and ranchers throughout the state were urged to call in for advice on restructuring their debts. The vigil was coordinated by Common Ground of the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon.

Organizers chose a 45-hour time span for the vigil because of the 45 days that thousands of farmers across the country now have to file debt restructuring applications with the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA).

In late October, the FmHA began sending out notices to 83,000 farmers who are more than 180 days past due in their loans. The notices instructed the farmers to show cause why their farms should not be taken from them. Some 750 Oregon farmers received the delinquent-loan warnings.

The two-and-a-half pound notices also contained applications for debt restructuring.

The FmHA has given estimates ranging as high as 50 percent on the number of farms that could be foreclosed on. Foreclo-

sure is automatic for farmers who do not submit the applications or show they are eligible for relief. The 200,000 FmHA borrowers are among the poorest of the 2.1 million U.S. farmers.

Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont, who chairs the Senate Agriculture Committee, predicts that 9,000 to 10,000 farms nationally will be foreclosed on in the near future.

Under a federal law enacted earlier this year, a farmer's loan must be restructured if a mediator determines that it would be cheaper for the FmHA to do so than to go through foreclosure proceedings.

To qualify for debt restructuring, farmers must prove that failure to make loan payments was due to circumstances beyond their control. They must draw up a five-year economic plan showing that the loan can be repaid if the debt is restructured. Included in the extensive information required in the application are an aerial photo of the farmer's land and a list of crop or livestock prices.

David Chen, director of the FmHA in Oregon, blamed some of the foreclosures on farmers who "don't know how to manage a farm."

Roger Loe, a farmer from Silverton,

Oregon, who helped staff the vigil, said Chen is wrong about farmers. The current problems of farmers come from years of accumulated hardships imposed by the government, he said.

"For many years, the government has had a plan to eliminate a large number of farms," said Loe. "The top corporations want to control the price of food like they control the price of energy."

"The corporations and banks also want to grab up more land as substance to back the dollar," he continued. "The price of land in some states has fallen by 40 to 50 percent since 1979-81, while interest rates on equipment and supplies have gone from 11 percent to as high as 20 percent."

Al Troutman, a farmer from Aurora, Oregon, also helped staff the farmers' vigil. Troutman's farm was sold in late November in a sheriff's sale. He has filed for Chapter 12 bankruptcy under the bankruptcy act passed for small farmers with debts under \$1.5 million.

"It's impossible to measure the stress on farmers right now," Troutman said. "Every day there's a new problem. Thousands of farmers across the country are having to spend Thanksgiving filling out these forms to save their own farms."