

## Bush budget: no relief for workers, farmers

Statement by Socialist Workers '89 candidates

The following statement in response to President George Bush's 1990 budget proposal was released February 13 by Socialist Workers Party mayoral candidates James Harris in New York; Omari Musa in Chicago; Joel Britton in Los Angeles; Tom Leonard in St. Louis; Thabo Ntweng in Miami; Joe Swanson in Omaha, Nebraska; Denise McInerney in Minneapolis; Wendy Lyons in St. Paul, Minnesota; Greg Rosenberg in Houston; and Yvonne Hayes in Greensboro, North Carolina, along with Nan Bailey, SWP candidate for city council in Des Moines, Iowa.

When President George Bush went before a joint session of Congress February 9 to present his proposal for a \$1.16 trillion 1990 federal budget, working people had no reason to expect his plan to include much in the way of meaningful government action aimed at providing relief from the most pressing problems we face.

Bush's rhetoric about a "kinder, gentler nation" notwithstanding, his budget plan contains only minor changes from the proposal already submitted to Congress by former president Ronald Reagan, and resembles recent federal budgets in every essential way.

Bush explained at the start of his speech his intention to continue the U.S. rulers' policy — which enjoys support from both Democrats and Republicans — of massive military spending and decreased funding for social programs that benefit working people. "I don't propose to reverse direc-



Militant/Ellen Berman

February 1988. Atlanta demonstration demands decent housing for homeless workers.

tion," Bush stressed. "We're headed the right way."

"The right way," according to the ruling families that own the big corporations, banks, merchandizing firms, and real estate interests that dominate the U.S. economy, means government inaction in face of

the growing economic inequality brought about by the workings of the capitalist system.

During the economic "boom" of the 1980s, the U.S. rulers have succeeded in bringing about the greatest redistribution of

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## Int'l campaign demands freedom for Peruvian peasant leader Hugo Blanco

BY SELVA NEBBIA

An international campaign has been launched demanding that the Peruvian government free veteran peasant leader Hugo Blanco.

On February 9 Blanco, Luis Tuesta de la



Hugo Blanco

Militant/Lisa Hickler

Torre, and several peasants were kidnapped by the police in Pucallpa, Peru, while they were gathered at the Institute of Agrarian Research and Development of Ucayali. Blanco was shaved on the spot and his head covered, before he was taken away by the police and held incommunicado for the next two days.

Blanco is the organizational secretary of the Peruvian Peasant Federation (CCP) and a member of the central committee of the Unified Mariateguista Party (PUM). He is also a former deputy in the Constituent Assembly.

Tuesta is the general secretary of the Ucayali CCP and a member of the PUM.

On February 11 Tuesta was released. That day for the first time since the kidnappings, Juan Rojas, general secretary of the CCP, was able to talk with Blanco. "He was able to let us know that although he was in pain because of police beatings, he was not badly hurt," informed a spokesperson for the CCP in a telephone interview from Lima on February 13.

The peasants of Pucallpa, capital of the department of Ucayali in central Peru, had been on strike since January 25 demanding higher prices for their agricultural products, bank loans at affordable rates, and payment for rice crops sold to the government six months ago.

Blanco's arrest came after a series of repressive actions carried out in Pucallpa on February 9.

Early that day "eight peasants were

killed," the CCP spokesperson explained. "Later that morning a group of peasants and others gathered in Plaza de Armas, the town's main square, to protest the killings. They were gathered peacefully when the national police opened fire, killing some of them. The bodies were taken away by the police and have still not been produced.

"Then, at around 2:00 p.m.," she said, "the peasants were gathered at the soup

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## Socialists to run James Harris for mayor of New York City

BY SAM MANUEL

NEW YORK — "There are no local solutions to what is sometimes erroneously referred to as a 'crisis of the cities,'" explained James Harris, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor. Harris, a resident of Brooklyn, is a long-time activist in the labor and Black rights movements. He was the party's candidate in last year's New York senatorial race.

"The intolerable conditions working people confront in New York and other cities are not because of some problem with cities as such, but reflect the developing worldwide social and economic crisis," the socialist candidate said in a statement announcing his campaign for the November election.

## Philippine workers protest antilabor laws

BY RUSSELL JOHNSON

MANILA, Philippines — Some 10,000 workers halted traffic in downtown Manila for more than three hours on February 7, mobilized by the May 1 Movement (KMU) union federation. The workers were protesting the Philippine Senate's passage of antiunion legislation.

Many had come from the Valenzuela industrial belt on the northern outskirts of Manila, where a one-day strike drew workers from 137 factories, according to the KMU.

The legislation sponsored by Sen. Ernesto Herrera, a former official of the conservative Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, extends the life of all union contracts from three to five years, and bans strikes against employer violations of these agreements.

Another proposal being aired in Congress would strip away all legal protection and social security rights for workers in enterprises hiring less than 20 people.

These new antilabor laws reflect the economic restructuring that Corazon Aquino's administration has had to carry out as a condition for receiving new loans from the banks in New York, Tokyo, Sydney, and other financial centers. The Philippines has a foreign debt exceeding \$30 billion. Since September 1988, the government has fallen more than \$200 million in arrears in servicing this debt.

The World Bank, the Philippines' largest creditor, compelled the government to liberalize import controls and is demanding a say over the privatization of government-owned enterprises, including those taken over from the former dictator Ferdinand Marcos. The national airlines and the Philippine National Bank are expected to be the first under the hammer.

The large influx of foreign loans and investment funds since Marcos' overthrow in February 1986, the subsequent stabilization of the Aquino government, and increased world demand for agricultural exports such as sugar have fueled a significant economic upturn. From a 4 percent decline in the gross national product in 1986, the economy grew 6.7 percent in 1988. Inflation is running at 9 percent per

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Harris urged support for two important protest actions — a March 18 march and rally in New York City against U.S. intervention in El Salvador, and an April 9 march on Washington in support of abortion rights.

The socialist candidate called for normalization of relations with Cuba and an end to the U.S. government's economic and travel blockade. He called on Washington to end its economic embargo against Nicaragua and for massive U.S. government relief aid to offset the devastation caused there by Hurricane Joan and the contra war.

Harris also opposed U.S. government efforts to reduce the number of United Na-

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# Subscription renewal drive brings results

BY MARGARET JAYKO

NEW YORK — Initial results confirm that the one-month international drive to encourage new readers to renew their subscriptions to the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *Lutte ouvrière* will increase the number of people who become long-term readers and supporters of these three socialist publications.

The subscription renewal campaign is a follow-up to the international circulation drive that was carried out around the world at the end of last year. More than 9,000 people bought short-term introductory subscriptions to the English-, Spanish-, and French-language periodicals.

In contacting readers about renewing their subscriptions, supporters are introducing them to *New International* and *Nouvelle Internationale*, magazines of Marxist politics and theory.

Michael Italie, who is organizing the campaign to contact subscribers in Newark and the surrounding region, emphasized the importance of working in teams to solicit renewals as a way to build confidence and maximize effectiveness.

Even though the actual renewal drive began on February 11 and runs through March 11, supporters in Newark began in January to systematically contact those whose subscriptions were running out.

## Goal is to talk to all new subscribers

"Our goal," he said, "is to reach out to everyone who bought a subscription during last fall's circulation drive" — about 400 people in the Newark area. During the four weeks of the drive, Italie said, the pace of renewal phone calling and visits is being stepped up. "We'll organize teams of peo-

ple to make phone calls three or four nights a week and on Saturdays."

This is being combined with community, workplace, and campus sales of the *Militant*, *PM*, and *LO*. "This week, we're sending out half a dozen teams to sell on campuses around the region that are holding events marking Black History Month," he said.

Italie stressed the special effort needed to talk to *PM* and *LO* subscribers on the phone. "When you sell these publications on the street or at a factory gate, you can get by with much less Spanish or French because the person can see and read what you're trying to sell. But it's different when you call someone on the phone," he pointed out. "We're organizing special nights each week where we call *PM* subscribers or *LO* subscribers."

What has been the response so far? Italie had compiled comments written down by those making the phone calls about the people they spoke to:

—"Liked the paper, especially articles on Central America and the Caribbean."

—"Has been reading *Militant* for two years. Likes Middle East coverage and Central America."

—"Came to meeting in Harlem to launch Pathfinder book *Thomas Sankara Speaks*.

Had decided not to resubscribe. On the basis of Cuba coverage, changed his mind."

—"Not too interested but says her uncle is. He reads the paper each week."

—"Interested in Malcolm X."

—"Really liked Mark Curtis articles."

—"From Liberia. Especially likes Africa coverage. Interested in Burkina Faso."

—"Likes articles on labor/workers fighting."

## Loves 'Lutte ouvrière'

In Montréal, distributors of the socialist press have been contacting subscribers in Québec for two consecutive weekends. "The first Saturday, more than 20 people participated," said Katy LeRougetel in a telephone interview. "We went out in teams of two and visited subscribers. Eight people renewed their subscriptions."

She described some of the responses. "One young guy said the *Militant* had too much 'American news' and he didn't want anything to do with it."

"A Haitian garment worker said he loves *Lutte ouvrière* and bought a six-month subscription, along with a copy of *Nouvelle Internationale*."

For Black History Month, the Pathfinder Bookstore in Montréal has been "swamped with requests from university students to

set up book tables at Black history events. We just spent a whole week at Concordia University. We sold more than \$700 worth of literature and 11 subscriptions," reported LeRougetel.

Salm Kolis from Atlanta explained in a February 14 telephone interview, "We made appointments to go visit subscribers. Some people renewed right over the phone, but we encouraged people to let us drop by their house so we could have more thorough political discussions."

"Our team on Thursday night visited a Black worker who likes the *Militant*. He bought a one-year subscription and two issues of *New International*."

"On Saturday morning, we visited a young South African. He had already bought the *New International* and had made a contribution to the *Militant* Prisoners Subscription fund. He renewed his subscription and then took us to meet a bunch of his friends from South Africa who have been here about a year. They read and study *New International*. Two of them want to buy subscriptions — we're going to visit them tonight."

"On Monday evening we visited a Central America solidarity activist from Emory University. She renewed her subscriptions to the *Militant* and *PM*."

## Foundation awards \$500 to Pathfinder mural

BY FRED FELDMAN

NEW YORK — A panel of nine artists, community leaders, and arts professionals associated with the Cultural Council Foun-

dation has awarded \$500 to the Pathfinder Mural Project. Sam Manuel, director of the mural project, was informed of the grant in a January 23 letter from foundation President John Parkinson III.

The letter invited mural project representatives to a reception being held for all award recipients February 28.

The funds awarded come from the New York State Council on the Arts Decentralization Program, which is administered by the foundation.

This was the second contribution to the mural project authorized by the foundation. The earlier grant came to \$1,205.

In addition, Material for the Arts, a division of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, has donated nearly \$17,000 in painting materials over the course of the project, which began in 1987.

These contributions are helping to defray the costs, amounting to tens of thousands of dollars, of completing the six-story mural being painted on the south wall of the Pathfinder Building at the corner of West and Charles streets in Manhattan.

Many thousands of dollars are still required.

The completed mural will depict a printing press churning out pages with the portraits of revolutionary and working-class leaders from Karl Marx and Frederick Engels to Fidel Castro and Malcolm X.

Beneath the press, crowds of working people — including many leaders of past

struggles of the oppressed — march behind a banner that proclaims, "For a world without borders" in English, Spanish, and French.

The costs of producing the mural have been heightened by harassment of city officials. The mural project is fighting an attempt by the city's Environmental Control Board to impose up to \$3,500 in fines for the posting of leaflets publicizing a November 1987 open house, held at the Pathfinder Building to support the mural.

The Pathfinder Mural Project is continuing fund-raising efforts in preparation for the resumption of painting on the mural, scheduled for spring. To make a donation, fill out and mail the coupon below.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of ☐ \$1,000; ☐ \$500; ☐ \$100; ☐ \$50; ☐ \$25. Other amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_. Make checks payable to the Anchor Foundation.

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Send to: Pathfinder Mural Project, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Phone: (212) 741-0690.

## James Kutcher, 'legless veteran' who fought gov't witch-hunt, dies

NEW YORK — James Kutcher, the "legless veteran" who won a key fight against government witch-hunting in the 1950s, died here February 10 after a protracted illness. He was 76.

Kutcher joined the socialist movement during the 1930s depression and was a founding member of the Socialist Workers Party.

Drafted in World War II, he participated in the 1943 invasion of Italy. Seriously wounded, he suffered amputation of both legs.

After hospitalization and a protracted process of learning to walk on artificial legs, he obtained a civil service job as a clerk with the Veteran's Administration in Newark, his hometown.

In 1948, he was fired for "disloyalty." The sole basis for this was his acknowledged membership in the SWP.

Under a "loyalty" program created by the administration of President Harry Truman, a list of organizations arbitrarily

branded "subversive" was established. Government employees deemed to be members or supporters of these organizations were purged from their jobs.

Kutcher waged a militant fightback against being fired, insisting on his right to belong to an organization of his choice and hold a federal job. He wrote a book about his fight, and his life, *The Case of the Legless Veteran* (Pathfinder, New York, 1973, \$8.95).

The Kutcher Civil Rights Defense Committee won the support of hundreds of unions, many other organizations, and prominent public figures. After an eight-year fight, a U.S. appeals court ruled that Kutcher had been improperly fired. He was reinstated with back pay.

Kutcher remained active in the SWP until 1983 when he left with a group, the Fourth Internationalist Tendency.

A coming issue of the *Militant* will carry a fuller account of the significance of the Kutcher case and Kutcher's contributions to the workers' movement.

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Coeditors: MARGARET JAYKO and DOUG JENNESS

Circulation Director: NORTON SANDLER

Nicaragua Bureau Director: LARRY SEIGLE

Business Manager: JIM WHITE

Editorial Staff: Susan Apstein, Fred Feldman, Seth Galinsky (Nicaragua), Arthur Hughes, Cindy Jaquith, Susan LaMont, Sam Manuel, Harry Ring, Judy White (Nicaragua).

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# Israeli crisis grows sharper as Palestine uprising continues

BY HARRY RING

The Israeli regime is caught in a deepening political crisis. The crisis is sparked by the continuing Palestinian uprising and by the political gains registered by the Palestine Liberation Organization with its offer to negotiate with Israel.

At the same time, economic difficulties in Israel are becoming more acute as a result of the overhead cost of trying to crush the uprising.

There is a growing demoralization in the Israeli army, and this is reflected at the top. A number of military officers are pressing for a political solution to the uprising.

One measure of the Israeli government's difficulties is the recent moves by Washington, its staunchest ally and principal financial backer.

Secretary of State James Baker declared February 11 that Washington would not break off its discussions with the PLO despite an Israeli government appeal to do so. Meanwhile, the State Department issued a report that, with surprising harshness, criticized some of the Israeli regime's human rights violations against the Palestinians of the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

Israel's prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir, responded that only "forceful means" could end the uprising. A deputy foreign minister added that the ministry's top priority was to "stop this juggernaut, this worldwide stampede" to recognize and deal with the PLO.

Meanwhile, there were mounting indications of moves by some Israeli politicians to shift away from Shamir's seeming hard-nosed stance of no negotiations with the PLO.

## Release of Hussein

One significant straw in the wind was the release from prison of Faisal Hussein, an authoritative Palestinian leader who stands in solidarity with the PLO. A resident of Jerusalem, and by that token an Israeli citizen, Hussein was held without charges or trial for 18 of the past 21 months. Initially, Israeli officials had asserted that Hussein was a top PLO organizer plotting against "the security of the state."

Hussein was released after he held talks in prison with Shmuel Goren, the top Israeli civilian administrator for the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin said he had authorized the meeting with Hussein. Other officials said that Shamir was not informed.

Hussein was director of the Arab Studies Society, a widely respected research center. It was ordered shut down last July 30. So far, the ban has not been lifted.

Hussein said proposals floated by Israeli politicians for voting in the West Bank and Gaza could be considered, but added a series of provisos which, so far, are unacceptable to the Israelis.

Meanwhile, the Israeli daily *Maariv* reported that Hussein would be allowed to leave Israel to meet with PLO leaders provided he did not announce publicly that he intended to do so.

On February 11 in Rome, PLO leader Yassir Arafat said Israeli authorities are in contact with the PLO. "They send us many messages under the table," Arafat was quoted as saying.

## 'Militant' on one-week break to aid Pathfinder Building reorganization

The *Militant* will be taking a one-week break after this issue. The next issue that appears will be printed and mailed out March 2. It will be dated March 10, 1989.

We have scheduled this break so that staff members can participate in a reorganization project at the Pathfinder Building in New York. The Pathfinder Building houses the offices of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and Pathfinder publishers.

A January 29 *New York Times* dispatch from Jerusalem said, "After 408 days, 6,000 arrests, at least 361 deaths, and many thousands of injuries, the Palestinian uprising still rumbles steadily along. . . . But now for the first time, Israeli army officers as well as other leading officials are acknowledging with frustration and despair that nothing they can do will end it."

## Uprising can't be eradicated

The next day, the *Washington Post* reported from Jerusalem that some officers and many analysts "contend that the uprising has interfered with military training and damaged morale and threatens to create a generation of reluctant, anxiety-ridden officers and men who could refuse to take the initiative in Israel's next shooting war." Army chief of staff, Gen. Dan Shomron, told a parliamentary committee that "there is no such thing as eradicating the uprising because in its essence it expresses the struggle of nationalism."

At the same time, the cost of living is rising and new charges have been levied on government health and education services.

# 'Havana is the capital of the future'

BY WILL REISSNER

MINNEAPOLIS — Some 150 people gathered here February 4 to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the victory of the Cuban revolution.

The celebration, sponsored by a broad assortment of organizations, heard Mary-Alice Waters state that "30 years after the overthrow of the Batista dictatorship, the Cuban revolution is alive and well and stronger than ever."

Waters, who is editor of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* and a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, added that after three decades the revolution "is still on course, still advancing, and still true to its principles."

The celebration also heard from Don Rojas, a revolutionary leader from Grenada; Curtis Herron, pastor of the Zion Baptist Church that has a large Black congregation in north Minneapolis; and Tomi Riva Nuumbala, a member of the South West Africa People's Organisation of Namibia (SWAPO).

Waters noted that the U.S. press portrays the Cuban revolution as an utter failure, but points to the tremendous gains Cuba has made in the fields of education and health care. "You cannot make such gains without turning everything else in society upside down as well," the SWP leader stated.

She argued that "Havana and New York are today the two centers of world politics, with Havana the capital of the future, of what's possible, and New York the capital of reaction."

Noting that many are posing the question, "Is socialism still possible?" Waters responded that the reaffirmation and revitalization of the Cuban revolution "is the most important thing happening today, a revitalization marked by confidence in the capacities of ordinary working people."

## Gains from 'rectification'

The "rectification program" now being carried out in Cuba, Waters stated, is symbolized by the hundreds of thousands of people enrolled in voluntary work brigades, "which provide an alternative to capitalist methods of solving problems." Cuba's problems in the past, she stated, "stemmed from not enough socialism rather than too much socialism."

As further evidence of the revolution's continued health, Waters pointed to the ongoing internationalism of the Cuban people, marked for example by the sending of Cuban troops to Angola to fight against the apartheid government of South Africa's attacks on that country.



December 1988. Palestinians demonstrate in East Jerusalem, celebrating victory of U.S. government's agreement to talk with Palestine Liberation Organization.

Foreign investors are leery of added investments. And many countries are reluctant to buy Israeli products because of the widespread public hostility to Israel's repression against the Palestinians. The tourist industry, the biggest source of foreign revenue, has been dropping sharply since the uprising began.

The government said it spent \$225 mil-

lion last year trying to break the uprising and expects to spend \$125 million this year. West Bank and Gaza Palestinians bought \$650 million worth of Israeli products last year — \$278 million less than 1987.

Meanwhile, a national opinion poll showed that 53 percent of the Israeli people now favor negotiations with the PLO.

Rojas, a leader of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America, confessed to the gathering that he had been "carrying on a passionate love affair for 10 years, which began with love at first sight." The object of his love, he said, "is Cuba libre [free Cuba] and I share that love unjealously with millions of people around the world."

Rojas described Cuba as "in the leadership of the world revolutionary processes in 1989." As "the first free country in our Americas and the first socialist state in the Western Hemisphere," Cuba's accomplishments, Rojas added, "must be seen in the context of developments in Central America, the Caribbean, Latin America, and the whole Third World. Then we can understand the achievements of Cuba, which are the achievements of socialism, of a revolution that brought power to the workers and peasants and popular masses."

Cuba's internationalism, Rojas maintained, "is genuine, principled, selfless, and unmatched anywhere in the world." He pointed to the tremendous amounts of aid that Cuba provided Grenada during the four and a half years that the revolutionary government of Maurice Bishop and the New Jewel Movement (NJM) was in power on that Caribbean island. Bishop was overthrown and murdered in 1983 by a counter-revolutionary group within the ranks of the NJM.

Rev. Curtis Herron of Minneapolis' Zion Baptist Church visited Cuba in 1987 as part of a delegation to establish the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center in Havana. Herron told the meeting, "I am not an avowed socialist, but I saw some most remarkable things in a socialist country that I hope we can duplicate in this country."

## Gains for Blacks

While in Cuba, Herron related, he and other delegation members "looked for racism with the keen eyes of U.S. Blacks." While he said that "Blacks in Cuba still have not achieved equity, due to the legacy of the prerevolutionary period, in Cuba I truly believe that racism has been reversed." He argued that Cuba's experience shows that "take away the institutional base for racism and attitudes can change."

While expressing some reservations about Cuba — with regard to its official atheism and about "what will happen after Fidel dies" — Herron concluded that "the achievements of the revolution deserve to be celebrated. I wish to God we could have some of those things in Minneapolis."

Nuumbala stated that "thanks to the Cuban presence in southern Africa for the past 13 years, we Namibians will finally

enjoy our rights." Following a crushing military defeat at the hands of the forces of Cuba, Angola, and SWAPO at Cuito Cuanavale, Angola, in 1988, the South African regime has agreed to withdraw from Namibia and give that country its independence.

"As we celebrate the Cuban revolution," Nuumbala concluded, "let it be an example to us. Let us put hands together and say thank you to Comrade Fidel Castro for bringing change to the world."

The gathering was cosponsored by the Africana Student Cultural Center, Central America Resource Center, Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, Guatemala Solidarity Committee, Honeywell Project, Latin American Weekly Review, Mozambique Support Network, Nicaragua Solidarity Committee, Pledge of Resistance, Progressive Student Organization, Socialist Workers Party, Women Against Military Madness, and Young Socialist Alliance.

## 30th anniversary of Cuban revolution celebrated in Chicago

BY JOHN VOTAVA

CHICAGO — About 150 people turned out here February 4 to participate in a celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Cuban revolution. The event, held at the Randolph Street Gallery, also marked the 20th birthday of the sponsoring organization, the Venceremos Brigade.

Prexy Nesbitt, a representative of the government of Mozambique, spoke in praise of the Cuban government's role since 1975 in defending Angola from South African attack. He described the effort to force the apartheid regime to adhere to their treaty obligation to withdraw from Namibia.

Emma Lozano, a member of a local community organization who recently visited Cuba, also spoke.

When those in the main hall were asked how many had visited Cuba, at least 25 people raised their hands.

People came from Milwaukee, Detroit, and Toronto, as well as from the Chicago area.

There were a sizable number of college students from midwestern universities who are involved in a work-study program here. Representatives of the Nicaragua Solidarity Committee attended.

A video was shown of an interview with Fidel Castro conducted by a delegation of Chicago activists for the rights of the disabled.



# The presumption of innocence is a basic right

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

Pierre Paquette, president of the Montréal Central Council of the

to the presumption of innocence when charged with a crime. Based on the state's conduct of the Curtis trial, the young unionists concluded that Curtis was denied this fundamental right. They said he did not have a jury of his peers, and the prosecution failed to prove his guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Over the past weeks the right of presumption of innocence has become a big issue in Québec politics. Recently a jury acquitted Alain Chapleau. A young worker

related Chapleau's constitutional rights.

The January/February 1989 issue of *Canadian Dimension*, a socialist newsmagazine, published an article by Steve Penner, executive secretary of the Revolutionary Workers League, about the international Curtis defense campaign. Penner attended Curtis' trial last September.

The introduction to that issue of the magazine, under the title "Politics on Trial," began, "Politics and repression go hand in hand. Mark Curtis, a union activist, has been convicted on trumped-up charges of rape and burglary."

A lengthy article on Curtis' frame-up appeared in two of Iceland's daily newspapers at the end of December.

*Morgunbladið*, the largest daily in the country, ran a report by Ólaf Grétar Kristjánsson in its December 15 issue, titled, "Trade unionist gets a 25-year sentence."

The article appeared a couple of

weeks later in *Thjóðviljinn*, a social-democratic daily with a substantial circulation.

The Nov. 4, 1988, issue of the magazine of the Swedish Food Workers' Union carried coverage of the Curtis case, including a large photo of Curtis' face after being beaten by the cops the night he was arrested.

The article explained that Curtis was a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union and worked at the Swift meat-packing plant in Des Moines. It reported on the revelations of FBI surveillance of Curtis' antiwar activities carried out as part of the government's campaign against the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), as well as his support for the rights of immigrant workers.

An important new endorser of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee is Hans-Göran Franck, the most prominent civil libertarian in Sweden. He is a lawyer and a member of Parliament from the governing Social-Democratic Par-

ty. Franck was active in the Vietnam solidarity movement. He is currently defending nine Kurdish refugees whom the government has branded as "terrorists" and is threatening to deport.

Anton Nilsson, a 101-year-old political activist, has also signed an endorser card. He was sentenced to death after a 1908 strike in which a scab was killed. Massive protests forced the authorities to release him in 1918. He then went to Soviet Russia and became a pilot in the Red Army. He remains a political activist in Sweden to this day.

In a February 1 mailing, the Mark Curtis Defense Committee's officers announced, "Our current goal is to raise \$60,000 by May 1 to help finance the appeal and other legal expenses, and to continue the international defense campaign." Curtis is appealing his conviction on rape and burglary charges, and is planning to file a civil suit against the Des Moines cops for the beating they gave him. Funds are urgently needed.

Michel Dugré from Montréal contributed to this column.

## DEFEND MARK CURTIS!

Confederation of National Trade Unions, has added his name as an endorser of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. The CSN is the second largest of Québec's four union federations.

At its meeting on February 4, the National Committee of the CSN Youth also voted to support the efforts of the defense committee to win Curtis' freedom from prison.

Their discussion centered on the importance of the labor movement defending the right of individuals

accused of setting fire to a warehouse containing PCB chemicals in Saint-Basile-le-Grand last August, Chapleau has spent five months in prison.

The judge who presided at his trial condemned the methods used by the Québec provincial cops to force a confession out of Chapleau. The hours of barbarous interrogation were videotaped by the police themselves and shown to the judge, who then refused to accept the tape as evidence on the grounds that the interrogation vio-

## Filming begins in Des Moines on Curtis case video

BY PRISCILLA SCHENK

DES MOINES, Iowa — "The fact that a professional film director and writer will present in video form the truth about Mark Curtis is an important development. He will show the battle of workers in meat-packing, the travesty of Mark's trial and conviction, and the fight for justice," Stu Singer explained to the 25 people attending the weekly Mark Curtis Defense Committee meeting here February 8.

Singer is the coordinator of the committee defending Mark Curtis, a political activist and packinghouse worker serving a 25-year prison term on phony rape and burglary charges.

Director Nick Castle, Jr., was here to begin filming a video on the Curtis frame-up. Castle arrived as his new film *Tap* was released in 600 theaters from coast to coast.

The Hollywood production stars well-known dancer and actor Gregory Hines, as well as Sammy Davis, Jr., and prominent older Black "hoofers." Castle's father, Nick Castle, Sr., was the choreographer who collaborated with Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly on some of their best dance sequences.

Nick Castle, Jr.'s previous films include *The Last Starfighter* and *The Boy Who Could Fly*.

"I think he [Curtis] was set up," Castle said at *Tap*'s post-premiere party at Roseland in New York City, in explaining his next film. According to Castle, the Curtis video will be similar to the acclaimed documentary *The Thin Blue Line*, a film about a man falsely convicted of murder. "I have other projects," said Castle, "but there's an urgency here because he's sitting in prison."



Director Nick Castle explained plans for documentary on Curtis frame-up at January 11 meeting of defense committee. Curtis' brother Paul is on right.

Castle addressed the defense committee meeting about plans for filming the documentary. "The people of Des Moines will be a special part of this video," he said. "We'll start with quick interviews to show the breadth of support — from Sweden to Canada to New Zealand to the United States."

"I'll talk with Mark in prison, with the permission of the warden and with a professional video crew. Mark will tell his story: who he is, why he was living in Des Moines, what happened at the Swift meat-packing plant when 17 of his coworkers were arrested in an immigration raid. I'll also interview some of the victims of that

Immigration and Naturalization Service raid and others from Swift who know and support Mark.

"We want to get on film the ordinary people who have come to Mark's aid — activists from the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, farmers, neighbors and family, people who spoke at rallies on Mark's behalf, people who have sent letters and who have become supporters of Mark's defense," Castle said. "We'll also give an opportunity to those who oppose Mark to say why."

"We'll give a history of how frame-up charges and in particular the charge of rape has been used to get activists thrown in jail," the director noted. "We'll show part of the trial and interview Mark's attorney. We'll show the vicious beating Mark got from the police and take parts of television coverage on the case," Castle reported.

Defense committee coordinator Singer added, "It will show how we got involved and why we're working to break this frame-up and free Mark. Many who see this video will see themselves as Mark Curtis and will learn how they can be part of this fight. It will be an accurate, honest picture of this case."

### Not about rape

After the meeting some of the activists from the defense committee stayed to tell their story on film.

One was Edna Griffin, a well-known civil rights fighter in Des Moines. "This is part of me," she said. "As a resident since 1947 I feel very much a part of what is going on here. I've been around long enough to know that you have to look at the facts. This is not a case about rape. . . ."

This is not just a Black-white issue. I cannot see a white man go to jail unjustly. An injustice to one is an injustice to all and this kind of thing does not help in the fight against racism in any way."

Griffin told the story of how she became involved in the civil rights movement from the 1920s battles against lynchings in the South to the fight against segregation and in defense of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, who were framed up and executed during the 1950s witch-hunt.

Two supporters from Decorah, Iowa — Myung Mi Kim and Kevin Magee — participated in the defense committee meeting. They met Mark Curtis and his wife Kate Kaku when they first moved to Iowa. They had discussions about Nicaragua and other political issues.

"It was very ironic," Kevin recounted, "that the same weekend that this happened to Mark, something very positive was happening to me. I was invited to speak in Des Moines and show slides on Nicaragua and doing that helped me form my own political ideas."

Myung testified at Curtis' trial. "The trial had a sort of unreal quality," she said. "In this case a spectacle of a trial. It meant a lot to me to testify as a character witness for Mark, as a woman and a Third World woman. Not because I knew Mark Curtis well, but because I knew him by his actions."

### The facts

Hazel Zimmerman, defense committee secretary, told Castle, "I first met Mark at the United Mexican-American Center at a meeting to protest the arrest of immigrant workers at Swift meat-packing. Mark looked like someone had worked him over. He told me about the police, what they had done to him in jail. I had heard about police brutality, but that was the first time I had met someone who was a victim of it."

"I did get to know Mark fairly well, but my support is not based on my knowledge of Mark, but on the facts — that the prosecution's case is based on lies and fabrications."

"I never felt personally affected until I met Mark," Zimmerman said. "I didn't see my government as the cause of what was happening. I intend to see that other people get involved in it. I feel optimistic that anyone who takes the time to read about the case will be a supporter."

The next day Castle interviewed several other defense committee activists, including Julia and Les Terrell, their daughter Ruth and their granddaughter Lisa, who live across the street from Mark and Kate. Sandra Nelson, an activist who manages the defense committee office, was also interviewed.

## How you can help

• **Win sponsors for the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.** To date, more than 1,000 people from around the world have signed cards adding their names as sponsors. They include union officers, farm activists, government officials and leaders of political parties, antiracist and women's rights spokespersons, prominent civil libertarians, student leaders, and other frame-up victims.

Sponsor cards are available from the defense committee, along with a variety of literature on the case. Buttons that read: "Justice for Mark Curtis! An injury to one is an injury to all!" are also available.

• **Raise money.** The defense committee needs to raise \$60,000 in order to cover legal and publicity expenses. Con-

tributions 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.)

• **Write to Mark Curtis.** He is incarcerated in the Iowa State Men's Reformatory in Anamosa, Iowa. He can receive letters, cards, and photos only, not packages of any sort or money. Address letters to: Mark S. Curtis, No. 805338A, Box B, Anamosa, Iowa 52205. The defense committee would like to receive copies of the correspondence.

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



# Union organizing runs into resistance on Nicaraguan farm

BY LARRY SEIGLE

LA HÉRIDA, Matagalpa Province, Nicaragua — "Union? There isn't any union here," a worker tells a visitor arriving unannounced at the farm known as La Hérída.

When the stranger explains he is a reporter looking into reports of union organizing efforts here, the man responds, "I've only been working here six months, so I don't know much about what's been going on." Still, he says, the visitor might want to wait for a few minutes by the old farmhouse.

In about 20 minutes, a young man with an AK-47 assault rifle approaches. "I'm from the union," he says. After chatting for a while he suggests it might be useful "to talk with the other *compañeros*, too. Wait for me here."

After another 20 minutes, he returns with five other members of the informal union organizing committee. They are workers who have been fired for trying to start a union.

"We are fighting so that the people here don't have to live in slavery like before the victory over Somoza," says Carlos García. "Those times must be buried forever."

## Prime coffee land

La Hérída lies about 15 miles into the mountains northeast of the city of Matagalpa. It is prime coffee producing land.

The farm consists of 600 acres. It used to employ 40 workers year round, with perhaps another 60 or 70 during the harvest season. But production has fallen sharply in recent years, and the work force has shrunk. There are only six permanent workers right now.

"If this farm were worked well it could produce 40,000 *latas* of coffee," according to Carlos García. "But this year it is going to yield only 5,500 *latas*."

"Every year the harvest has been declining," adds José García, another member of the committee. "We, the working class, can revive this place, and make it produce."

"In reality, this farm has been abandoned," asserts Juan Dávila, who identifies himself as a member of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). Dávila used to work at the farm, and is now helping the organizing effort.

"If we let it go, it won't produce even 1,000 *latas* in the whole next harvest," Dávila says.

## No unions allowed

La Hérída's owner, Salvador Amador, lives in Matagalpa. He is a man of liberal, some might even say progressive, political views. He opposed the Somoza dictatorship, which was overthrown in 1979.

But he has never allowed a union to be organized on his farm.

The current organizing effort is the latest in a long series of attempts. Amador has dealt with each of them the same way: anyone discovered organizing a union gets fired.

"He doesn't like unions," says Carlos García. "He doesn't want demands for higher wages, better food, improved living conditions."

The most recent attempt to set up a union began in December at the opening of the coffee harvest. Amador responded by firing eight workers.

But several of the eight haven't left. Instead, they have remained to press their fight, and to try to win support from the Rural Workers Association (ATC) and the FSLN.

The dismissed workers are staying in a settlement just over the hill. Some have family there.

The settlement is part of a cooperative formed in 1980 by workers at La Hérída. They took over 100 acres of the farm and eventually won legal title from the government.

## Workers arrested

Several of the workers fired in December continued to take meals at the din-

ing room provided by the farm for its employees. This was part of an attempt to establish their job rights.

In an attempt to put a stop to this, at the end of January Amador instructed members of the Volunteer Police, a local auxiliary force, to arrest José García.

Juan Dávila explains, "The *compañero* was demanding his meals. He was without work for a couple of months, but he has to eat."

"Then the justice of the peace comes and tells José to get out, he's got no right to be here. But he has a right to because he works here."

The Volunteer Police took him down to the jail in San Ramón, the nearest town. He was released the following day.

This wasn't the first time workers have been arrested at La Hérída. Carlos García was taken into custody and held overnight for a similar reason last December.

The Volunteer Police around here, says José García, "defend the rights of a boss. They don't defend the rights of a worker."

The fight against such repression is a central aim of the farm workers. "We are part of the people," says Dávila, "and in Nicaragua the people have rights. But here at La Hérída we have no rights."

Because they have not been able to organize a union, the workers say, conditions at La Hérída are abysmal. The housing and food are far worse than on other farms, and the wages are the lowest around. There is no provision for health care for the workers.

"The workers are kept like slaves," says Carlos García. "But slavery ended here when we got rid of Somoza. Now there is freedom in Nicaragua, including the freedom to organize."

## Decapitalization

La Hérída is an illustration of what is known as decapitalization. Coffee trees will continue to produce for several years even without cultivation. But then their yield drops sharply.

For at least half a decade, Amador has been refusing to put the money he gets for the coffee crop back into the farm. The trees have not been cared for.

Instead, Amador has taken capital out of the business. He has probably put some of it in a bank in another country, and he and his family are living well on the rest.

"He is taking the capital out, and his wife is making two trips a year to Switzerland, which must cost thousands of dollars. Meanwhile, the workers are hungry and without medical care," Carlos García says.

The alternative to continued decapitalization and falling production, these workers argue, is for them to run the farm themselves as a cooperative.

"We are skilled and experienced hands," says José García. Counting the people on the land taken over in 1980, he calculates, there are 42 families "who are organized, who are prepared to stay here on the farm. We prefer that it be turned into a cooperative."

## Seeking union support

The organizing committee at La Hérída has been in contact with officials of the ATC, including José Adán Rivera, the union's regional secretary.

The workers consider themselves to be affiliated to the ATC. They are hoping for more support from the union. "We want the ATC to get a little more involved in solving this problem," Carlos García explains. "They should be closer to this situation."

But at the ATC regional office in Matagalpa, there is ambivalence about the whole business at La Hérída. From some, there is even criticism of the workers.

One member of the regional executive committee tried to discourage a visit to the farm. "Look, it's really not a very important place. There are only a handful of workers."

"What's more," he went on, "it has nothing to do with the ATC. Those people aren't members of the union. We aren't re-



Militant/Larry Seigle

Matagalpa Province, Nicaragua. Coffee farm workers preparing to turn in crop picked that day.

sponsible, legally or organizationally. Really they are using our name without authorization. And they are demanding confiscation of the farm without regard for how it might affect the political situation in the country."

## 'No one has an answer'

But José Adán Rivera, the regional secretary, readily concedes that the standoff at La Hérída is more complicated than that. "It's a case that no one has an answer to," he says.

The workers are "territorial members" of the union, he explains, referring to a structure that exists to incorporate members on farms where no local is organized.

"And of course we support the workers. If I were in their shoes, I would be doing exactly what they are doing," Rivera goes on.

But as long as Amador refuses to budge from his position, Rivera doesn't see anything the ATC can do except hope that the problem will go away. The union is not supporting the workers' call for confiscation of the property, he adds.

"Look, this has to do with internal contradictions in Nicaragua. The man is not a reactionary. He supports the revolution." According to Rivera, one of Amador's sons was killed in a guerrilla action organized by the FSLN in 1967.

The ATC leader adds that to call for turning the farm over to the workers would run counter to the government policy of seeking an "accord" with Nicaraguan capitalists. Central to this policy is the promise to halt confiscation of farms.

"We don't want the union burned by a case that isn't advisable for us," he says bluntly.

"What the revolution can do isn't simply a question of what we would like to do. The socialist countries can't aid us more than they have already been doing. We live within the sphere of influence of U.S. imperialism, in its backyard."

"Within this broader framework, confiscating this little farm just doesn't make sense."

Nonetheless, Rivera realizes, that's not the end of the matter. "Here the class struggle presses on all sides. And if the workers keep pushing at La Hérída... Well, who knows?"

He hopes somehow a way out will be found. "Maybe Amador will agree to sell the farm," he says, without much conviction.

Meanwhile, at La Hérída, the members of the union organizing committee are well aware of the recently announced government policy of halting all land expropriations.

"I heard the government decree stopping confiscations," says José García. "Of course there aren't going to be land confiscations. But if the boss isn't fulfilling his responsibilities to the workers, then, well, we feel it's our right to make the demand."

"We are clear about the policy of accord," adds Carlos García. "Of course we are in agreement with the policy. But we are not in agreement with living as we have been living here."

"We don't agree with that."

# 2,000 hear New York concert for Nicaragua hurricane relief

BY JON HILLSON

NEW YORK — More than 2,000 people attended a benefit concert here for Nicaragua, officially launching a national campaign to respond to the long-term impact of Hurricane Joan, which devastated the country's Atlantic Coast last October.

The February 7 event, which featured crowd-pleasing sets by Kris Kristofferson, Rubén Blades, Herbie Hancock, Richie Havens, Regina Bell, and exiled South African singer Sathima Bea Benjamin, was sponsored by After the Storm. It was, actress Maggie Jakobsen told the crowd, "just the beginning of concerts all across the country."

The concert attracted a diverse crowd, from elegantly attired couples who drove up to the Beacon Theatre in limousines, to political activists who scrimped for the \$20 lowest-scale tickets, or hospital workers, whose union bought a block of 20 seats.

Among those attending were author

Norman Mailer, singer Judy Collins, and actresses Joanne Woodward and Susan Sarandon. Woodward and Sarandon served on the concert steering committee along with Bianca Jagger and actor Richard Gere, who helped emcee the concert.

Gere introduced Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto, along with members of Nicaraguan embassy and United Nations mission staffs, to the cheers of the audience, several hundred of whom stood in recognition of the diplomats.

A slide show captured images of the Atlantic Coast before and after Hurricane Joan's 132-mile-an-hour winds destroyed farms, factories, forests, and towns. Afterward, Rev. Lucius Walker, executive director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization and leader of the recent Pastors for Peace convoy to Nicaragua, urged the crowd to donate funds to help rebuild Nicaragua.



# Campaigns opened in N. Carolina, Texas, Minnesota

Yvonne Hayes, a textile worker at Cone Mills and member of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Local 1391, has announced she is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Greensboro, North Carolina.

"In recent months, we have witnessed examples locally of a social catastrophe that is shaping up worldwide," Hayes told reporters at

the SWP's *Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*, a pamphlet published by Pathfinder, to learn more about the campaign.

In Texas, the SWP has announced that Greg Rosenberg, a Central America solidarity activist



Militant/Holbrook Mahn  
Yvonne Hayes

border in south Texas.

for Minneapolis mayor. McInerney is a garment worker and member of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union.

The recent death of an elderly Black couple, Lloyd Smalley and Lilian Wiese, in a cop crack raid in Minneapolis and the beating of Black students at a party after a Black history month event have sparked widespread discussion and growing protest in the Twin Cities.

At a community meeting in North Minneapolis February 7, Lyons was received with enthusiasm when she said that many people, both Black and white, were outraged at the killings. "The chief of police says they were casualties in a so-called war on crack. In other words, Black life is cheap. When Black life is cheap, all working people's lives are cheap."

On February 11, the Twin Cities campaign offices received a coupon sent by the Minneapolis Police, in an official envelope stamped with their postage meter. The coupon — stamped "bullshit" all over — was clipped from the socialist candidates' statement protesting cop violence. Lyons and McInerney immediately issued a statement protesting cop harassment, and filed complaints with the mayor's office, police chief, and Minneapolis Civil Rights Commission.

Supporters of SWP candidate for mayor of Chicago Omari Musa have announced a special week of campaign speaking engagements and other activities February 18-25. On February 18, Musa will be addressing the Militant Labor Forum in nearby Milwaukee, on "An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis." He'll be speaking about the legacy of Malcolm X at a film showing sponsored by the Young Socialist Alliance in Milwaukee on February 22. The next day, the socialist candidate will travel to southwest Illinois to speak at a Western Illinois University meeting sponsored by the Progressive Student Organization.

During the week, Musa and campaign supporters plan to distribute a new campaign brochure to workers at several Chicago-area plants, including Oscar Mayer Foods' meat-processing plant. On February 25, the week will wrap up with a day of campaigning in Chicago and an evening talk by Musa at the Militant Labor Forum on "The Coming Economic and Social Crisis: How Working People Can Defend Ourselves Against It."

Volunteers who would like to help the Chicago SWP campaign during this target week should contact the campaign offices at 6826 S. Stony Island Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60649; telephone (312) 363-7322.

## CAMPAIGNING FOR SOCIALISM

a February 13 news conference. "In October, Cone Mills announced the closing of two of its area plants — laying off nearly 1,000 workers. . . .

"The ink was not dry on the recent Supreme Court decision attacking affirmative action programs when the Guilford County commissioners went after a local program setting goals for contracting to minority- and female-owned businesses.

"Only a few days later, the Greensboro school board announced plans to 'unpair' elementary schools, eliminating the 'vestiges of desegregation,' according to officials," Hayes said.

A campaign supporter who works at White Oak textile mill got an interested response from her coworkers when she told them about Hayes' campaign. "You people have real good ideas," said one weaver, who bought a copy of

and member of International Association of Machinists Local 1303, will be its candidate for mayor of Houston. Rosenberg, who works at the Cooper Industries' Flow Control Plant in Missouri City, Texas, visited Nicaragua in 1984.

Rosenberg announced February 13 that his first act as a candidate will be to make a fact-finding trip to the lower Rio Grande Valley in mid-February. "As I campaign among workers, farmers, and young people throughout the state," the socialist candidate said, "I'll be explaining to everyone why it's important to support the rights of the thousands of immigrant workers from Latin America who are coming to the United States, fleeing economic devastation and social crisis." Many of these immigrants come to the United States across the Mexican

SWP mayoralty candidates in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, launched their campaigns recently by distributing a statement supporting protests against police violence in the Twin Cities.

Longtime SWP leader Wendy Lyons, a meat-packer and member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union, is running for mayor of St. Paul. Denise McInerney, chairperson of the Twin Cities chapter of the Young Socialist Alliance, is the candidate

## SWP candidate 'a voice of Iowa workers, farmers'

BY PAT SMITH

DES MOINES, Iowa — "We are about to run the type of campaign this city has never seen before," Nan Bailey told the Militant Labor Forum here on February 11. Bailey is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for city council in the 1st Ward.

At the center of her campaign, she said, is the defense of frame-up victim Mark Curtis.

The Socialist Workers campaign does not intend to express the needs of area bankers, real estate brokers, or factory bosses, stressed the 36-year-old packinghouse worker and union activist. Her campaign, instead, will be a voice of Iowa's workers and farmers, as part of the exploited producers of the world.

Bailey reviewed the growing problems facing working people in this state — more than 2,000 homeless; 10,000-20,000 Iowa farmers driven off their land from 1982 to 1987; an official poverty rate of 18 percent; and deteriorating conditions for Blacks and women.

Bailey detailed the facts that have come to light in a series of exposés about the racist and sexist brutality of the Des Moines Police Department.

The candidate expressed her opposition to the city council's decision to appeal a court ruling awarding former policewoman

Deborah Lynch \$10,000 in her suit against the Des Moines police. Lynch's trial exposed the degrading sexual harassment and racist abuse dished out by the cops to each other and to the public.

"We'll expose this abuse and solidarize with all its victims," declared Bailey, who is a longtime Black rights and women's rights activist. She singled out for special mention the case of unionist and political activist Mark Curtis, who was employed at the same place she works, the Swift/Monfort meat-packing plant here.

Curtis was arrested last March on phony charges of rape and burglary, beaten by the cops, convicted, and given a 25-year prison sentence. Bailey said Curtis is a victim of a political frame-up. She has been active from the beginning in the international effort to win justice for Curtis, who is also a member of the SWP.

Curtis was politically active as part of a layer of thousands of young working people who have had enough. This is what landed him behind bars, said Bailey. "The conditions they face are an inherent part of capitalism, and things will get worse unless working people make the decision to intervene," explained Bailey. She pointed to the accomplishments and inspiration of the Cuban revolution as proof that ordinary men and women can take political power

and run society better than the capitalists.

Carroll Nearmyer, president of the Iowa American Agriculture Movement, sent a support message to the meeting. Along with leading efforts against farm foreclosures, Nearmyer is actively opposing city authorities' dumping of sludge on area farmland.

Hazel Zimmerman, secretary of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, told forum participants that although she doesn't live in the 1st Ward, she supports the Socialist Workers campaign because Bailey "stands for human rights and the oppressed."

At a February 11 press conference, Bailey announced that her supporters have collected 275 signatures to get her name on the ballot, well over the 138 required.

Bailey is one of eight candidates seeking the city council seat recently vacated by liberal Democrat Elaine Szymoniak. A primary election will be held March 7 in this officially nonpartisan race. Voters will then choose between the two front-runners on April 4.

Other candidates include: Alfredo Alvarez, chair of the city's Human Rights Commission; Lando Valadez, investigator for the public defender's office; and former councilwoman Willie Glanton. Larry Carter, president of the Des Moines National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), is treasurer of



Militant/Linda Marcus  
Nan Bailey

Glanton's campaign.

The Bailey campaign can be contacted at 2105 Forest Ave., Des Moines, Iowa 50311; telephone (515) 246-1695.

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## Socialist in race for New York mayor

Continued from front page

proposals to be sent to Namibia. "Instead of reducing the UN troops, thousands more should be sent with sufficient means to give the Namibian people enough room to politically organize and make sure that apartheid colonial rule in Namibia is ended," Harris demanded.

The announcement of the socialist campaign comes in the wake of preliminary budget proposals by Mayor Edward Koch and Gov. Mario Cuomo that aim to eliminate thousands of jobs and cut funding for education, health care, and to the 100,000 homeless people in the city. Unemployment is officially 4.9 percent. "That is the lowest it has been in 18 years," explained Harris. But that figure hides the fact that "an estimated 45 percent of working-age people in the city have given up on the prospect of ever finding a job," he added.

Harris said he would be raising the proposals in the Socialist Workers Party's Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis as part of a discussion among working people on how to fight back. The action program proposes a shorter workweek to create more jobs by spreading the available work around; affirmative action quotas for Black, Latino, Asian, and women workers; and cancellation of the foreign debt burdening semicolonial countries.

Manhattan Borough President David Dinkins has announced that he will seek the Democratic nomination. Mayor Koch is also expected to run in the Democratic primary in a bid for a fourth term.

Ronald Lauder, heir to the Estée Lauder cosmetics firm and former ambassador to Austria, will seek the Republican nomination.





Militant/Michael Baumann

"Forum for Unity in the People's Camp" drew several hundred workers, students, peasants, and other political activists.

BY AL CAPPE  
AND MICHAEL BAUMANN

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — In February 1986 the people of Haiti rose up against murderous repression, threw off the hated dictatorship of Jean-Claude Duvalier, and began uprooting his gang of thugs — the Tontons Macoutes.

In the past three years, there has been an explosion of organization, political discussion, and mobilization, as workers, peasants, students, women, and others look for ways to press forward their demands for democratic rights and fundamental economic and social change.

Since Duvalier fled, Washington and the local ruling classes have jockeyed through a series of military regimes to keep the movement in check. The latest government of Gen. Prosper Avril, however, is growing increasingly isolated.

In November and January national protest strikes were organized by the Independent Federation of Haitian Workers (CATH) and other forces. There are more and more demonstrations chanting "Down with Avril."

Another strike on February 8-9 called by some liberal politicians protested government attempts to rig a future election, and the arrest of an opposition figure. Some reports say it was 40 percent effective.

The following report is drawn from a five-day visit to Haiti in early February. Militant reporters were able to visit working-class neighborhoods and meet with a number of trade union, student, and community activists.

We attended the "Forum for Unity in the People's Camp," a two-day meeting of opponents of the military regime organized by the National People's Assembly (APN), CATH, and other organizations.

Charles Faustin Jude is a peasant organizer from Bassin-Caiman in the north. He is a member of the APN and participated in setting up a literacy school with 78 students of all ages.

Faustin Jude recounted a recent experience in Bassin-Caiman that showed the force of the mobilization of the peasants.

"A local police chief was *dechouke* ['uprooted' — brought to justice] by the peasants," he said. "The local authorities fig-

## Cuban film viewed by Iranians in New York

BY MEHDI ASSAR

NEW YORK — "Response to the South African Escalation," a Cuban-made documentary, was shown in Brooklyn February 3 at a meeting sponsored by the Andishe Political-Cultural Center, an organization of Iranians living in the United States.

The video describes the decisive role that volunteers from Cuba played in helping Angolan forces roll back South African troops that had threatened to capture the town of Cuito Cuanavale in Angola.

About 30 people attended the showing. For four years, the center has been holding forums on various topics, mostly on and about Iran and conducted in the Farsi language, in the New York-New Jersey area.

A February 17 meeting at the Center will focus on the process of rectification taking place in Cuba.

ured that I had incited the peasants to do this. I was arrested Oct. 7, 1988, and held for two weeks in different jails.

"Several popular organizations protested this illegal action by the authorities. The peasants got in touch with a progressive lawyer, and I got a conditional release from jail. The reasons for my arrest were never specified. Essentially they were trying to intimidate me.

"Under Duvalier," Faustin Jude continued, "the Macoutes had no problem in acting openly. Now the aggressions and intimidations take place more timidly because of the revolutionary movement that continues among the peasants."

Faustin Jude concluded by expressing his admiration for the Cuban revolution, "both for its beginnings and its unfolding."

Three students from the Northern Students Association at Cap-Haïtien enthusiastically described their experiences.

"We have been working for about two years doing political education and mobilization among students," Alexis said. He asked that we not use his last name, not because of the authorities but because of difficulties with his parents.

"We want to build a student movement that is part of the struggle for liberation. To have a better education we have to have a better society.

"During the [January 17] strike we organized a rally of students. Students left school to participate in the rally. After the meeting, there was a demonstration. Two students were arrested. We then mobilized to go to the police station, and we immediately won their release."

Alexis and his friends explained that there is no public school system in Haiti. Schools are opened as businesses alongside stores.

"The schools are a reflection of our society. There are a lot of problems. The rooms are poorly ventilated and small. There is not much material. You have to pay to go to school, and you have to pay for the materials. Many students leave school because they can no longer pay. The teachers are poorly paid — perhaps \$60 a month. In the areas surrounding Cap-Haïtien students walk up to four kilometers to get to school.

"Our language, Creole, is not respected," Alexis said. "A whip is used for corporal punishment."

"The principals do not make it easy for us to organize in the schools. They don't want politics in the schools. However, through our work we have succeeded in getting meetings between us and some directors in order to negotiate things."

They, too, spoke of the Cuban revolution as an example for them. "I believe that the Cuban people are a courageous people," Alexis said, "and that their revolution shows the right road for us."

Haiti's army is made up of the same impoverished toilers it is designed to suppress. In the lower ranks, it is showing increasing signs of strain.

In one incident, a dozen young soldiers were arrested last October and later discharged from the army for having protested Tontons Macoutes influence among the officers.

Such purges have continued, with little publicity, a young former soldier told participants at the public forum here.

He said as many as 100 young soldiers

# Reporters' notebook: popular struggles deepen in Haiti

had been discharged in recent months for having been involved in protests. He described what had happened in his case.

He had been ordered to go out and kill people trying to vote in the Nov. 29, 1987, election, he said. But he was one of the many soldiers who had refused to carry out their orders.

Later, while stationed in the north of the country, he joined with other young soldiers to force the removal of a number of officers linked to the Tontons Macoutes.

Army headquarters in Port-au-Prince sent an official up to offer them \$4,000 each if they would refrain from further activity of this sort.

They rejected the bribe.

"We told them, if you give \$4,000 to every soldier, we'll take it too. But only under those conditions," the soldier explained.

When army headquarters responded by circulating the false story that they had accepted the payoff, the young soldiers forced a senior officer to state publicly that this was a lie.

Ten of the soldiers pinpointed as ringleaders were singled out for punitive action. They were disarmed, driven to the capital, and booted out of the army by the commander-in-chief personally.

Yves Joseph, a 36-year-old steelworker, has worked for 10 years at the Aciérie d'Haiti. The plant is a hot rolling mill and, with some 300 workers, one of Haiti's largest industrial work sites.

Joseph is part of the leadership of a struggle by steelworkers to regain their jobs. The steelworkers are a key contingent of the CATH, the country's main trade union federation.

The workers are paid every two weeks, about \$100 for 90 hours. There are many accidents in the plant.

Joseph explained what led to their 10-hour strike last November.

"The company gave a wage increase to six unionized workers. This was in violation of the contract, which says that the union must be consulted before any increases are given. This is to block the company's efforts to buy off or corrupt certain workers.

"We wrote a letter to the company saying they couldn't do this, that they had to give an increase to everybody," Joseph explained.

"On November 3 the company fired 10 workers, including two union leaders," he said. "On November 7 we went on strike for 10 hours. That day the company called in the army. The soldiers came into the factory with their weapons. The next day the company closed the factory and announced that it had fired 56 workers. We all stuck together, refusing to work while people are fired. The company has now hired other employees."

There are no railroads and virtually no buses in Haiti. The main means of transportation are the privately owned "tap-taps," brightly painted pickup trucks with benches in the back for seats.

The drivers of these trucks, many of whom rent the vehicles by day or week from wealthy fleet owners, are a key part of the economy in Port-au-Prince. Their participation in a protest strike has an immediate impact on business and industry.

These drivers also make up the bulk of the Metropolitan Public Transportation Drivers Union in Port-au-Prince. This union, which has about 1,000 members in the capital and another 300 in smaller towns, is affiliated with the CATH.

In an interview at the union's headquarters, union President Jean Claude Pierre-Louis spoke of the difficulties the drivers face.

The biggest problem, he said, was political — the repression aimed at keeping workers from organizing to effectively fight for their demands.

"Being a union leader is very, very difficult here," he said. The government is not strong enough to launch a frontal attack on the union or its public headquarters. But individual activists have to be careful about where they go after dark. And as a matter of precaution, union leaders sleep in a different location every night.

Top of the list among the driver's daily problems are the roads, Pierre-Louis said.

"There are big holes every few feet in the streets. That's why the tap-taps don't last. On average, a truck is in the shop for repairs seven or eight days a month because of the conditions of the roads."

Most drivers quit work by 8:00 p.m. Not because there aren't people who want rides, but because of bandits.

"I mean 'state bandits,'" Pierre-Louis said — soldiers who stop vehicles at will and shake down both passengers and drivers.

The drivers also point out they are being robbed at the gas pump. They pay \$1.95 a gallon for gasoline, more than half of which is for taxes levied for road repairs that are never made.

Jean-Bertrand Aristide is the most popular figure of the mass movement. He has been the target of numerous assassination attempts. On Sept. 11, 1988, his church was attacked, 13 people massacred, more than 70 wounded, the building burned. His order, the Salesians, tried to silence him by assigning him out of the country. He refused to comply and has been expelled from the order. Everywhere in Port-au-Prince we saw graffiti — "Father Aristide, stand strong, speak out and circulate."

Rue des Césars is not far from the American embassy with its air-conditioning and well-kept gardens. The garbage is heaped in huge piles in the road. There are open sewers along the street. It is a market street crowded with people peddling a few items. It is also home for many. As we pass by one evening, people are beginning to stretch out side by side behind the stalls. A woman washes her child, dipping a rag into a can of water. According to the conservative estimates of the World Bank, some 30,000 people sleep in the streets of Port-au-Prince.

Cité Soleil is a shantytown, crowded onto a narrow spit of land that juts into the sea on the northeastern side of Port-au-Prince. The people have thrown together shelters made of pieces of wood, of cardboard, of anything. There is no sewage system, no running water, no garbage collection. The flies swarm up from the ditch along the road. But for many it is the only alternative to starvation in the countryside.



# Crisis in Trinidad and Tobago leading to 'tumultuous times'

## Interview with leader of Oilfields Workers' Trade Union

BY JAMES HARRIS  
AND DON ROJAS

Trinidad and Tobago is in the midst of a deepgoing economic, social, and political crisis. That was the clear conclusion from our visit to that country of 1.2 million people in order to participate in the Second Caribbean Bookfair in October, and to launch the new Pathfinder book *One People, One Destiny: The Caribbean and Central America Today*.

During our trip we were able to interview Errol McLeod, president general of the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union (OWTU). With 11,000 members, the OWTU is the largest industrial union in the English-speaking Caribbean, and has a history of leading important working-class struggles.

"I see us having some tumultuous times in Trinidad and Tobago," McLeod told us as he described the crisis his country is undergoing.

Trinidad and Tobago, he said, has a "neocolonial economy" that is "organized to satisfy the needs of the multinational corporations," such as the 200 U.S. corporations doing business there.

Like other semicolonial countries economically dominated by the United States, Britain, and other imperialist countries, Trinidad and Tobago is especially vulnerable to shifts in the world market. In particular, the drop in the price of oil — the country's main source of revenue — has led in recent years to a growing strangulation of its economy. In 1987, for example, the Gross National Product shrank by 6.1 percent, after having contracted 5.5 percent in 1986. The trend has not abated over the last year. The decline has also affected the OWTU, which has lost 10,000 members.

Added to the drop in oil prices, a recent series of floods has devastated agricultural production, hitting the country's working farmers hardest of all.

### International Monetary Fund

Within this framework of economic decline, what weighs most heavily on Trinidad and Tobago's economy today is its foreign debt of \$471 million to bankers in New York, London, and other financial centers. Unable to service this debt, which, proportionately speaking, is gigantic, the government has recently sought \$143 million in new loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). But in return for granting the loans, the IMF has imposed a series of stringent conditions.

McLeod listed some of these:

"The IMF has prescribed large-scale devaluation of the country's currency.

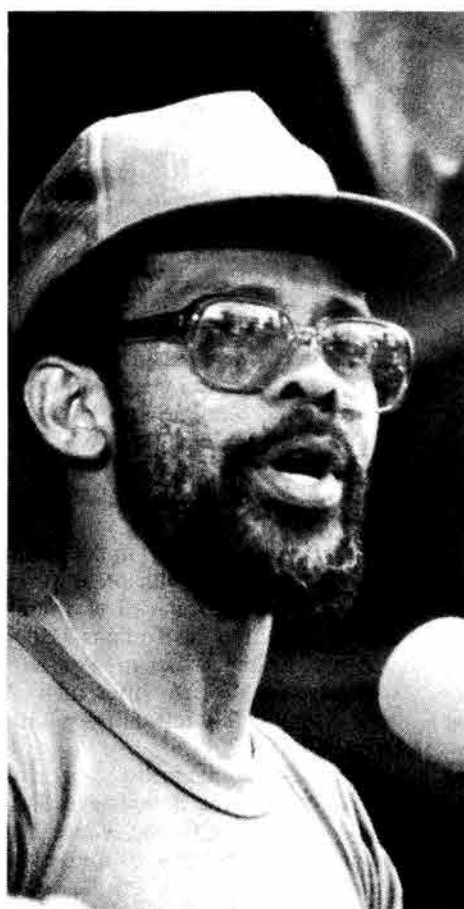
"It has prescribed that the government should reduce its wage bill by some TT\$2 billion [US\$470 million], or alternatively, that the government should retrench 50,000 workers."

In response, the government devalued the Trinidad and Tobago dollar by 15 percent in August, thereby raising prices of imported goods. Since most consumer goods are imported, this amounted to a general price hike without an offsetting increase in wages.

On November 16 shortly after we spoke with McLeod, the Trinidadian government announced plans to eliminate the jobs of 10,000 public employees within the next two years — 15 percent of the total number. This comes at a time when unemployment already stands at 22 percent — twice as high as six years ago.

At the same time, the government instituted a 10 percent across-the-board pay cut for all public employees, on top of taking steps to withhold agreed-to cost-of-living increases.

"The IMF has also prescribed that there should be the removal of import barriers," McLeod continued, and that "there should be the removal of price controls." This will mean "the poorest of the poor will be the hardest hit in that regard." The government has already agreed to these conditions, also announcing plans to impose a series of in-



Errol McLeod

Militant/Sam Manuel

direct taxes that will disproportionately affect working people.

On top of these austerity measures, moves are also under way to undermine Trinidad and Tobago's national sovereignty by selling off state-owned enterprises — what is called privatization — to the highest bidder, usually to foreign corporations.

"The IMF has prescribed privatization of those areas in the economy that we have under national control. That would be in food, steel, hotel industry, even the public

utilities," stated McLeod.

What privatization means concretely can be seen by what is happening to workers at the state-owned T&T Meat Processors, Ltd. The Trinidadian government is currently attempting to sell off that enterprise and lay off its entire work force. In response, the workers — who are members of the OWTU — have occupied the plant in opposition to the move.

### 'IMF must go!'

The IMF's blackmail, and the government's measures acceding to it, have already called forth a round of protest by Trinidadian working people.

On October 21, more than 3,000 workers marched through the capital city of Port of Spain chanting "IMF must go!" and expressing their opposition to the government's moves.

At the close of a rally at the Parliament building, the OWTU issued a resolution of 35 demands to be presented to the government. These included a moratorium on layoffs, stopping privatization of government-owned industries, a 50 percent cut in the food import bill, reintroduction of cost-of-living clauses in public service workers' contracts, and an end to devaluations of the national currency.

### The OWTU

Not accidentally, the center of growing opposition by working people to the latest measures is the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union. We asked McLeod to explain why this is so and describe more about the union.

"The OWTU is what you might call an omnibus [amalgamated] union. It organizes and represents workers in the oil industry — oil and petrochemical. It also organizes workers in the electricity company, workers in agriculture, workers in the hotel industry. We are in manufacturing, we are in food. We are in construction. So one might say that we are in almost every sector of the economy," McLeod said.

"In terms of the areas of the economy in which we find ourselves, we are the most significant, the most powerful union in Trinidad and Tobago," he said, "and I feel happy to say that we are the most significant and powerful union in the English-speaking Caribbean."

Since the early 1960s, the union has become widely known for its militant stance on a wide range of issues. The government felt so threatened by the union's growth, McLeod recounted, that it enacted the Industrial Stabilization Act specifically to limit the OWTU's growth in other sectors of the economy.

"We see the OWTU as being more than just a trade union that will bargain for wages and improve conditions and employment," McLeod explained.

"The OWTU is about building a new society. And you cannot build that new society only by winning higher wages."

Along those lines, he explained, the OWTU has taken up broader issues, such as the foreign debt. For example, it sent representatives to a 1985 international conference in Havana, Cuba, on the foreign debt, and participated in last year's anti-IMF conference in West Berlin.

Another activity that the OWTU has begun to sponsor is the now annual Caribbean Bookfair, which it views as a way of drawing in broader layers of society and to heighten their political understanding. This event, McLeod said, "allows us to have other people come and interact with the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union, meet with our international friends, benefit from the experiences of people from North America, people from Europe, people from Africa, and so on."

This approach fits into the OWTU's attempts to make contact with allies outside the labor movement. For example, the union has adopted positions favoring the country's working farmers, and has attempted to reach out to students and intellectuals.

The OWTU is also a leading member of the Congress of Progressive Trade Unions. McLeod explained that the CPTU is a federation that today has about 15 affiliated unions. It was the CPTU that sponsored the October 21 anti-IMF protest march.

Another federation, the Trinidad and Tobago Labour Congress (TTLIC), which is larger than the CPTU, receives funding from the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) and the AFL-CIO.

### Political crisis

Trinidad and Tobago's sharp economic crisis and discontent among working people has already led to a shake-up in the country's capitalist political structures. In December 1986 this widespread dissatisfaction brought the recently formed National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) to power in an election after 30 years of rule by the People's National Movement. Since that time, however, the government of Prime Minister A.N.R. Robinson has been rocked by repeated government crises.

McLeod spelled out the origin of these: "Whatever Margaret Thatcher and Reagan prescribe, that is what Robinson follows," he said. "So that in 18 months, the NAR has become in our view the most hate-bunch of people, at the leadership level, in all of Trinidad and Tobago."

The OWTU, explained McLeod, sees this political ferment as an opportunity to advance the interests of working people.

"The time when unions would have been concerning themselves only with wage negotiations and little local issues, that time is long gone," he said. "The leadership of the trade union movement, particularly the unions that are representing industrial workers, must begin to take a position on the political and economic issues affecting their countries."

"We have to intervene in the politics of our states," he continued. "We have to air-

## Don Rojas to speak in U.S.

BY DOUG COOPER

NEW YORK — Don Rojas, the well-known Caribbean journalist and political activist, will speak February 23 at Colgate University in Hamilton, New York, on "Ten Years After the Grenada Revolution: The Caribbean and Central America Today."

The meeting, sponsored by the West Indian Students' Association, will take place at 7:00 p.m. in the Clark Room of the Student Union.

Rojas worked in revolutionary Grenada from 1980 to 1983. He was the editor of the *Free West Indian* newspaper and later press secretary to Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. Bishop was murdered in a counter-revolutionary coup in October 1983. Since the U.S. invasion in 1983, Rojas remains barred from Grenada by the U.S.-imposed regime.

Rojas edited a recently published book by Pathfinder, *One People, One Destiny: The Caribbean and Central America Today*. It contains speeches by leaders of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America. Founded in Havana in 1984, this organization embraces 43 political organizations from more than 20 countries in the region. Rojas is the secretary for propaganda and information.

His talk will detail the increasingly explosive social, economic, and political conditions in the Caribbean and Central America today. Rojas attended the recent 30th anniversary celebrations of the Cuban revolution in Havana and then spent two weeks in Nicaragua.

Rojas will be available to speak throughout the next few months. Information on

arrangements and honoraria can be obtained from his publisher. Write or call Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Telephone: (212) 741-0690.

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Militant/Sam Manuel

**Tomato farmers in Green Valley, Trinidad and Tobago. Recent floods in this Caribbean country have devastated agricultural production, worsening problems already facing working farmers.**

to be in the ownership and control of our states. If we are not in control, then the two cents that we gained here, that we gained there, will be nothing, will be meaningless. If we are not in control of the politics, if we are not in power, then we cannot translate those trade union victories into anything that is meaningful."

#### Committee for Labour Solidarity

This view helps explain the initiative taken by the OWTU-supported Committee for Labour Solidarity (CLS) to form a new political party in Trinidad and Tobago.

"The Committee for Labour Solidarity is made up of some trade unionists, progressive intellectuals, small businessmen, farmers, some students," McLeod said. "We are saying that both the economy and the politics in the country must be addressed. You can't deal with one and leave the other."

"The CLS was established on June 19, 1981," he explained. "We thought that we should get ourselves involved at the work place, we should get ourselves involved in the communities, relate with the problems at the work place and the communities. And in our education series, we thought it should deal with the questions of classes and society, with the question of the state, with all the questions of the economy and what kinds of decisions are taken and what influences those decisions, the class interest that the particular party in power will represent. And the people, then, understanding all these things that we have been able to relate with them, started calling for a party."

This sentiment was clearly expressed in the October 21 protest, when one of the favorite chants was "We want a party, amen! A workers' party, amen!"

During a visit to New York in November, OWTU leader David Abdullah reported that a November 12 assembly sponsored by the CLS drew 1,200 people and adopted a draft program of the proposed new party. It also announced plans to hold the founding conference before the end of April 1989.

McLeod explained that the new organization would be "a party that represents the interests of those classes that have been disadvantaged." The convocation of the November 12 meeting stated that this effort is directed toward "workers, farmers, unemployed, self-employed, youth, students, housewives, small businesspeople, and patriotic intellectuals and professionals."

#### Workers must come together

"The OWTU's perspective, explained McLeod, goes beyond the shores of Trinidad and Tobago.

"I think that the workers in the United States of America, like the workers in the Soviet Union, the workers in Cuba, the workers in Great Britain, the workers in the Caribbean, all these workers must come together," he said.

"We have to come together on the question of the freedom of the people in southern Africa. We must come together on the question of the right to sovereignty of the people in Nicaragua. We must come together on the question of anti-imperialism generally."

In particular, the OWTU views itself as an integral part of the fight of working people throughout the Caribbean region. Many of their activities promote the goal of Caribbean unity, which, as McLeod stated, "is the broad perspective of the OWTU."

#### Grenada revolution

One development that had a big impact on the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union was

the 1979-83 revolution in nearby Grenada.

For years, the OWTU had maintained close relations with Grenada's revolutionary leaders. "We had a very important, a very close, a very intimate relationship with Maurice Bishop," McLeod related. "Indeed, I remember 1974 when Maurice Bishop came here to get away from the brutality that [Prime Minister Eric] Gairy had unleashed on them. And I remember Maurice and Unison Whiteman taking their shirts off to show us all the scars on their backs from the beatings by the Mongoose Gang."

"The OWTU was at its high point because of the revolutionary development in Grenada," explained McLeod. "Grenada

## UN leader justifies Namibia report

BY SAM MANUEL

Under pressure from the Movement of Nonaligned Countries and the Organization of African Unity, Secretary General of the United Nations Javier Pérez de Cuéllar issued an "explanatory statement" February 10 regarding UN forces for Namibia. The secretary general's aim was to offset opposition to a January 24 report to the UN Security Council that proposed reducing the number of UN peacekeeping troops to be sent to Namibia from 7,500 to 4,650.

The force is scheduled to arrive before April 1 when a UN plan to bring about Namibia's independence from South Africa is to begin. South Africa has militarily occupied that southwest African country since 1915. The 2,850 soldiers cut from the proposed force are to be held in reserve. They could be called into service at the discretion of the secretary general with the agreement of the Security Council.

The secretary general's statement said the permanent members of the Security Council have assured him that they would "respond promptly to any need for additional military personnel that I might deem warranted."

The permanent members of the Security Council — the United States, Soviet Union, China, France, and Britain — have demanded that the UN troops going to Namibia be reduced to 3,000. That proposal has been strongly opposed by the African and Nonaligned groups' representatives, seven of which are also rotating members of the Security Council.

"We want to see what form these assurances from the permanent members will take concretely," said Hinyangerwa Asheeke of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) Observer Mission to the UN. Asheeke termed "inaccurate and contradictory" a February 12 *New York Times* report, which said that the African and Nonaligned groups had accepted the secretary general's assurances.

In a January 29 speech to Namibian stu-

dents at Cuba's Isle of Youth, President Fidel Castro criticized the secretary general's report. "That report does not satisfy us. That report does not satisfy the Third World countries," Castro explained.

The outcome of the new stage of the battle for Namibia's independence, Castro added, "will not only depend on the UN soldiers that will be there, nor will it only depend on the civilian officials present."

"It is the Namibian people who will have to be mobilized and united to fight this last battle, this political battle," Castro said.

"That is why it has been said," the Cuban leader added, "that all Namibian students in Cuba who meet the age requirement to participate in the process should return to Namibia after the implementation of UN Resolution 435 to work on the tasks of educating and training the people, as well as to vote in the elections. Not a single vote can be lost," the Cuban leader stressed.

Following the elections the Namibian students would return to Cuba to finish their studies. But, explained Castro, "no one can guarantee that 100 percent of those who leave will return. . . . You are well-educated, prepared, organized, and disciplined. I think it is possible that SWAPO may need some of you there later."

#### Apartheid-trained police force

While the secretary general's report proposed to raise the number of UN police going to Namibia from 360 to 500, it reaffirmed an earlier Security Council position that "primary responsibility for maintaining law and order in Namibia" during the transition period shall rest with the "existing police forces."

The report requires the secretary general's Special Representative to Namibia to "satisfy himself" that the South African-appointed administrator-general ensures the "good conduct" and "suitability for continued employment" of the police force. The special representative would also make arrangements, when appro-

presented to the Caribbean an alternative that we had been talking about for a very long time, but which we were not able to put in place, as Maurice was able to."

In October 1983 the Bishop-led People's Revolutionary Government of Grenada was overturned by a coup organized by Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard. A week later U.S. troops invaded and imposed a government subservient to Washington.

"And the demise of that movement had serious consequences for us too," McLeod stated. "I know that quite a lot of people became disillusioned as a result of that."

But, the union leader continued, "These three revolutions — the Cuban, the Nicaraguan, the Grenadian — have helped a hell of a lot to develop our own consciousness." In particular, he stressed, "We have learned a hell of a lot from Cuba. . . . We have learned quite a lot of lessons from Fidel [Castro]."

#### Work stoppage

Since our discussion with McLeod, the level of working-class protest against the latest series of economic attacks has risen sharply. Currently, the country's two labor federations are planning a national one-day work stoppage to protest the government's 1989 IMF-imposed budget. The two main demands of the proposed action are to withdraw the budget and to convoke a national referendum on whether Trinidad and Tobago should be seeking new loans from the IMF.

This latest move highlights Errol McLeod's words about prospects for the struggle by Trinidadian working people: "I think that we are in for some very, very serious and exciting times."

priate, for UN police to accompany the existing police forces in the discharge of their duties.

The secretary general's report had said that 300 of the UN forces to Namibia would be unarmed observers. According to Asheeke, Pérez de Cuéllar now says those observers will be provided with defensive arms as originally specified in Resolution 435.

#### Return of refugees

Thousands of Namibians who are eligible to vote and participate in Namibia's transition to independence are living in exile. Their return to Namibia would be organized in large part by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. The secretary general's report proposes that the cost of the commission's work be borne voluntarily among UN member nations. The African and Nonaligned groups propose instead that each member be assessed the costs.

Asheeke said that opponents of reducing the UN force for Namibia would continue to consult with the secretary general but expected that the issue would be taken up in the Security Council soon. Under UN rules if a majority of the members of the Security Council were to vote against reducing the number of troops to be sent to Namibia, that vote could be vetoed by any one of the permanent members.

Under the provisions of Resolution 435 the UN force would oversee: the withdrawal of some 50,000 South African troops from Namibia; dissolution of the 24,000-member South West Africa Territorial Force; dissolution of the 3,000-member death squad unit known as Koevoet; UN-sponsored elections to establish the Namibian government.

The apartheid regime agreed to begin implementation of the UN plan first adopted in 1978 following the defeat of its troops last March at the Angolan town of Cuito Cuanavale by Angolan, Cuban, and SWAPO forces.



# Behind stepped-up corporate mergers in Canada

## Is 'free trade' deal to blame?

BY JOHN STEELE

**MONTRÉAL** — A major wave of corporate buyouts and mergers over a two-week period in January, in which almost \$10 billion (Canadian) changed hands, has grabbed the headlines, raised fears of mass layoffs, and refueled the debate in the labor movement over the Canada-U.S. "free trade" deal.

• Molson Co. Ltd. merged with the Carling O'Keefe Breweries of Canada Ltd. to form Molson Breweries, a \$1.6 billion brewing giant. Molson Breweries officials announced that seven of 16 plants across Canada will be closed, resulting in 500 layoffs and loss of an additional 900 jobs through attrition.

• In a \$248 million deal, Canadian Airlines International Ltd. eliminated one of its main competitors by buying out Wardair Inc.

• Then, Imperial Oil Ltd., 70 percent owned by Exxon Corp. in New York, announced it had dished out \$4.9 billion for Texaco Canada Inc.

• Finally, on January 26 the Montréal-based conglomerate, Power Corp. of Canada announced it was selling Consolidated-Bathurst Inc. — Canada's third-largest newsprint producer — to the Chicago-based Stone Container Corp. for a cool \$2.6 billion. This makes Stone the second-biggest pulp and paper producer in the world, with assets of \$5.7 billion.

Officials of Canada's main union federations and the trade union-linked New Democratic Party (NDP) condemned the deals and called on the Conservative government of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney to convene an emergency session of Parliament to stop them.

"Canadians are in danger of becoming tenants in their own nation to a few industrial landlords," charged Shirley Carr, president of the 2.3 million-member Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). "The labor movement predicted widespread job loss and disruption because of the free trade agreement [with the United States] and now our worst nightmares are being realized," she said.

Québec Federation of Labor (FTQ) President Louis Laberge pledged to mobilize the FTQ's 400,000 members to press Ottawa to stop the "economic shakeups" that he said would lead to a loss of economic independence and leave Québec "at the mercy of foreign decision-makers."

At a special three-hour closed meeting in Toronto February 1, 150 CLC union officials met to discuss the buyouts. They threatened to launch consumer boycotts of companies that decide to close plants and lay off workers.

### Doesn't help working people

The demand by the trade union and NDP heads for government action to stop the mergers and buyouts, and their threat to launch a boycott campaign to prevent layoffs, does nothing to help working people defend themselves against the intensifying efforts by employers and the government to make workers and farmers pay for the growing capitalist crisis.

First, the union and NDP officials' claim that the Canada-U.S. "free trade" deal is the cause of the mergers and buyouts is false. This obscures the real threat to workers and farmers: the worldwide crisis of capitalism and the increasing possibility of a catastrophic depression.

Second, their opposition to the drive for corporate concentration is a utopian perspective, harking back to a previous period in the development of capitalism before the turn of the century and the development of huge conglomerates.

Third, the perspective of a consumer boycott to save "our company," "our jobs," or "our country," is an obstacle to working people. It gets in their way of uniting in action around a series of demands that lead

toward defending their interests as a single class internationally against those of the billionaire families that rule the industrialized imperialist countries and dominate the rest of the capitalist world.

### Symptom of economic crisis

Buyouts and mergers leading to increased corporate concentration are nothing new. It is the way the capitalist system has always worked. What is new is that today the stepped-up rate of buyouts and mergers reflects a deepening economic crisis — rather than expansion — of the world capitalist economy.

Since the 1974-75 global recession, mergers and buyouts have been more profitable for many corporations in Europe, Canada, and the United States than expanding plant capacity or modernizing plants. In many cases, buyouts have led to the breakup and resale of portions of the gigantic holdings, rather than increased concentration.

In Canada, this "merger boom" has intensified over the past three years, supported by Mulroney's Conservative Party government. In 1988 there were 1,037 mergers and takeovers, as compared to 641 in 1984. Four mergers worth more than \$100 million were carried out in 1984. In 1988 there were 46. In the past three years there have been 135 major takeovers of more than \$100 million each, for a total cost of more than \$54 billion.

With or without the recent Canada-U.S. trade deal, concentration of capital through mega-mergers and buyouts would be rising because their roots lie in the workings of the international capitalist economy. The removal of tariffs between Canada and the United States simply lifts some of the obstacles to this process within North America.

Michael McCracken — an economist at Informatica Ltd., an Ottawa-based think tank — points out that the brewery, airline, and oil industries, where three of the recent mega-deals took place, were essentially exempted from the trade deal.

"We are seeing something that has been going on for some time now," he said. In the wake of the stock market crash in 1987 "it has become much easier to buy up your competitors to get additional capacity than to build new plants."

CLC President Carr is wrong when she suggests that working people face some kind of "corporate takeover of Canada," which they should resist by fighting against the growth of corporations.

### A history of concentration

Giant corporations and banks have been one of the characteristics of Canadian capitalism since the beginning of this century and earlier. Today, Canada has the highest level of corporate concentration of any of the major imperialist powers.

For example, five wealthy families control 80 percent of the 300 major companies that are the basis for determining the daily index of sales on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

The top 500 Canadian corporations — 1



Canada's Prime Minister Brian Mulroney (left) with U.S. President George Bush.

percent of all companies — have 67 percent of all company assets, 53 percent of sales, and 67 percent of all profits. The top 25 corporations control 35 percent of business assets.

The assets of these 25 companies are growing faster than the rest. From 1975 to 1985, their profits grew by 243 percent. The profits of all other enterprises rose by 112 percent over the same period.

The growing concentration of economic power in the hands of fewer and fewer ruling-class families is accompanied by a growing mountain of corporate debt, as corporations borrow heavily to pay for buyouts and to finance mergers.

In the words of Roger Stone of Stone Container, big size is the key to surviving any future recession because "you have to have earning power and the ability to borrow."

Many capitalists share his outlook. Since the 1981-82 recession, corporate debt in Canada and the United States has been climbing sharply and steadily. Despite Stone's blind optimism, financing expansion through debt rather than the issuing of shares (equity) makes corporations more vulnerable to bankruptcy during recessions.

Allan Taylor, chairman of the Royal Bank of Canada, issued a warning at the bank's recent annual meeting. He said that for the past decade borrowing in Canada has grown 30 percent faster than national income. Total corporate debt now stands at \$240 billion (in the United States it stands at US\$1.8 trillion). The total corporate, consumer, and governmental debt in Canada is now more than \$1 trillion, or roughly \$4,000 for every man, woman, and child.

By the first anniversary of the 1987 New York stock market crash, in both Canada and the United States debt levels were far higher relative to productive output than they were in 1980, just before the 1981-82 recession.

This debt structure means that the coming recession in Canada and the United States is likely to be more severe than the 1981-82 recession, with a greater number of corporate bankruptcies.

"At this point the prognosis would have to be for a severe recession because of the exceptional degree of North American fiscal overextension, foreign indebtedness, and bank exposure to Latin America," writes William Mackness in the February issue of the Toronto *Globe and Mail's* "Report on Business."

### United fightback needed

The demand to stop corporate buyouts and mergers raised by the union and NDP officials is a diversion for working people. Corporate concentration, the rise of corporate debt, and the deepening crisis of world capitalism cannot be stopped. Any course of action that flows from the perspective

that workers have a stake in how industries are organized, or in the size of corporations, undermines the capacity of working people to defend themselves against the capitalist class as a whole.

The perspective of fighting mergers and buyouts is another form of the reactionary Canadian nationalist anti-free trade campaign waged by the union and NDP officials over the past two years. This campaign calls on working people to oppose the Canada-U.S. trade bill to defend "Canadian sovereignty" against an alleged takeover of Canada by U.S. corporations. It lines working people up with those sectors of the capitalist class and their political representatives who oppose the deal.

Tying the interests of workers and farmers to the profitability of small, rather than big, capital is the heart of the so-called Solidarity Fund set up by the Québec Federation of Labor several years ago in response to the 1981-82 recession. The FTQ fund is used to bail out small businesses threatened with bankruptcy, to invest in the stock market, and for loans. The fund, now worth several hundred million dollars, is backed by the federal and Québec governments.

The FTQ brass has convinced 70,000 workers to buy shares in the fund on the basis that this is the way to create jobs and give workers a say in economic decisions. On the basis of the "success" of the fund, other labor federations across Canada are considering doing the same thing.

The union and NDP leaderships' opposition to mergers and buyouts, the FTQ's Solidarity Fund, the projected consumer boycott to stop layoffs, and the campaign against the Canada-U.S. trade deal all rest on the view that working people have a stake in how their class enemies organize their economic interests and trade arrangements. This is the opposite of the international working-class perspective working people need to face the coming recession.

Working people in North America need to join with the toilers of Latin America, Asia, and Africa in a struggle to force the imperialist banks and corporations to cancel the Third World debt.

To unify the employed and unemployed, an international struggle must be waged to force capitalist governments to shorten the workweek without reduction in pay, in order to spread the available jobs among all workers.

To overcome divisions in the working-class, the unions should take up the demands of those sections of the class that suffer discrimination at the hands of the employers — immigrants, women, Blacks, Québécois, Native people, and others. This means fighting for a legislated raise in the minimum wage and other affirmative action measures such as hiring quotas for those traditionally excluded from better-paying jobs.



## FEATURED in the FEBRUARY ISSUE

### USSR: The bureaucracy responds to the crisis

By Doug Jenness. The "reforms" of Mikhail Gorbachev are aimed at maintaining domination by the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union.

### No to racist police violence!

From Miami to Toronto, resistance is being organized against racist police attacks.

Available in Pathfinder bookstores listed on page 12, or by subscription. Four-month introductory subscriptions: US\$5 • Can. \$5 • 30FF. Send check or money order. U.S., Caribbean, Latin America, Pacific: 410 West St., New York, NY 10014 USA • Canada: C.P. 280, succursale de Lorimier, Montréal (Québec), Canada. • Africa, Europe, Middle East: 47 The Cut, London SE1 8LL, England.

**Lutte  
ouvrière**  
a socialist  
monthly  
magazine  
in French



# 'Antiterrorism' act: blow to democratic rights in Britain

BY PETER CLIFFORD

LONDON — By 235 to 134, the British Parliament recently approved a new Prevention of Terrorism Act. Since its enactment in 1974 by the then Labour Party government, the law has been subject to yearly renewal.

The new act will make it permanent and tougher. It permits the detention of individuals for up to seven days without charge; confiscation of funds going to the Irish republican struggle; harassment of fundraisers; and stipulates that those convicted of what are deemed "terrorist offenses" serve a minimum of two-thirds of their sentences, rather than half.

The legislation allows the authorities to exclude from Britain people who are British citizens. Some 260 people have been subject to such exclusion orders. The act also permits detention for up to one hour for people traveling between Ireland and Britain. In 1986 alone, some 60,000 were stopped at ports of entry in this way.

Labour Party members of Parliament voted against the new law. At a previous legislative stage, 47 Labour MPs defied leadership instructions to abstain on the act.

Opposition to the law has been fueled by the November 29 ruling of the European Court of Human Rights that the act contravened the European Human Rights Convention. The court backed the claim of four men from the north of Ireland who had been held for more than four days only to be released without charge. The convention demands that anyone arrested have prompt access to the judicial process.

The British government, a signatory to the convention, has been responsible for 40 percent of the cases found by the court to

have violated the convention's provisions. Almost all of these violations have occurred in the north of Ireland.

The vast majority of those held are released without charge. Of the 12,916 people detained up to 1988, 9,642 were not charged, let alone convicted of anything. Less than 2 percent of those arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act were ever convicted of any offense cited by the law. Of those arrested and held for up to seven days, 92.7 percent are arrested solely for interrogation and intimidation.

To these statistics must be added the prosecutions in the nonjury Diplock courts that exist in the north of Ireland, in which only a judge presides, and the frame-up convictions of Irish people in all types of British courts. The Guildford Four — three Irish men and a British woman who have been in prison since 1975 and whose case was recently referred to the court of appeal for reconsideration — were first arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

For those released without charge, the fact of their arrest may be cited in any future prosecution, and information gathered during interrogation — photographs and fingerprints — may remain on file for life.

*Peter Clifford was arrested and detained for 24 hours under the Prevention of Terrorism Act last November while he was on a book-selling trip to the north of Ireland on behalf of Pathfinder publishers. On March 18 Clifford will be returning to Ireland along with a delegation of labor and civil liberties personalities as part of a continuing campaign of protest. Messages of support and financial donations for this effort should be sent to Pathfinder, 47 The Cut, London SE1 8LL, England.*

## Thousands mark '72 massacre by British troops in Ireland

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — Some 2,000 marched here in a torrential rainfall January 28 to commemorate the 17th anniversary of Bloody Sunday. They shouted slogans demanding British troops be withdrawn from Ireland.

Four thousand marched in Derry in the north of Ireland the next day.

Bloody Sunday is the name given to the day in 1972 when paratroopers of the British Army opened fire on a peaceful, 15,000-strong demonstration in Derry. Fourteen people were killed in the January 30 attack; 28 others sustained serious injury from bullet wounds.

The British government at first tried to deny what had happened, claiming the army had fired in self-defense. But each of the army and police allegations were forced to be withdrawn one by one as the truth came out. At the conclusion of his inquest

into the shootings, the Derry city coroner reported, "I say without reservation it was sheer unadulterated murder."

In response to the British attack, protests spread around the world. In Ireland itself, 20,000 people took to the streets of Dublin and burned down the British embassy. The government of the south of Ireland declared a national day of mourning.

This didn't prevent a commission established by the British government from stating in April 1972 that the troops had done nothing wrong. In fact, the officer commanding the paratroopers at the time, Col. Derek Wilford, was awarded the Order of the British Empire in the queen's honors list for 1973.

It was not until December 1974 that the British government finally acknowledged some degree of army error, awarding £41,500 in compensation to the families of those killed.

Every year since, the Derry massacre has been commemorated with demonstrations in Ireland and Britain. A spokesperson for this year's London march, Conor Foley, said, "We have had more trade union support and sponsorship than any other year."

At the London rally, Labour Member of Parliament Ken Livingstone charged that death squads were operated in the north of Ireland by British secret services in the early 1970s. Emma Groves, blinded by a rubber bullet when a paratrooper shot her in the face, called for a ban on plastic bullets.

City Councillor Eddie Molloy — a Sinn Féin party elected official from Dunganon, Northern Ireland — blasted the British government's gag on broadcasting interviews by Irish republicans and their supporters. "The censorship is not aimed at Sinn Féin," he said. "It's aimed at preventing the British people from hearing what the British Army is doing in their name on the streets of Northern Ireland."



G.M. Cookson

London march in 1977 against British occupation of north of Ireland. New Prevention of Terrorism Act is government weapon against opponents of British rule in Ireland.

## —WORLD NEWS BRIEFS—

### Manley's party wins Jamaican elections

Election officials have indicated that the People's National Party (PNP) has won 44 of the 60 seats in the Jamaican Parliament, even though the vote count is not yet completed. The February 9 vote gave the PNP a majority that will make its leader, Michael Manley, prime minister. He will replace Edward Seaga of the Jamaica Labour Party.

The PNP last governed the island from 1972 to 1980. Under pressure of the struggles by Jamaican working people for improvements in their lives, the PNP government instituted several social reforms. It also maintained friendly relations with Cuba's revolutionary government.

The PNP was driven from power during the 1980 elections by a U.S.-backed campaign of destabilization and violence. Several U.S. government officials had called for Manley's removal. Armed gangs organized by the U.S.-backed Jamaica Labour Party killed hundreds of people during those elections. Most of the victims were suspected supporters of the PNP.

Throughout this year's election, Manley stressed a PNP government would follow a more moderate course than in the 1970s. He said that, while he would reinstate relations with Cuba, his first priorities would be to visit Washington "as fast as possible" to meet with President George Bush. State Department officials, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. Manley said he was "absolutely confident of a positive and creative relationship" with the Bush administration.

"We've all grown a little older, a little wiser, and little more mellow with the years," Manley explained.

### Chilean opposition names candidate

After four months of a bitter faction struggle, Patricio Aylwin has won the nomination of the Christian Democratic Party as its candidate in the presidential elections to be held in Chile in December. His selection came following a 21-hour meeting of the party's national committee over the February 4 weekend.

Aylwin will now attempt to win the support of the 15 other parties that made up the coalition that defeated Gen. Augusto Pinochet's attempt to extend his dictatorship through a plebiscite. A yes vote in the October 5 plebiscite would have extended Pinochet's rule another eight years.

Leaders of the other opposition parties have expressed anger at what they con-

sider the highhandedness of the Christian Democrats and are threatening to withhold support to its nominee, saying he is not a "consensus" candidate. Some of them have proposed that the presidential choice should be from one of the smaller parties or one without party affiliation.

Despite earlier speculation that General Pinochet might be nominated to run again, most of the parties that supported him are now looking at other possible candidates, all civilians.

Pinochet came to power in a 1973 military coup in which President Salvador Allende was killed. Thousands of unionists, students, and members of the Socialist and Communist parties and other radical organizations were killed or "disappeared" by the military following the coup.

### Dominican union hits deaths of Haitians

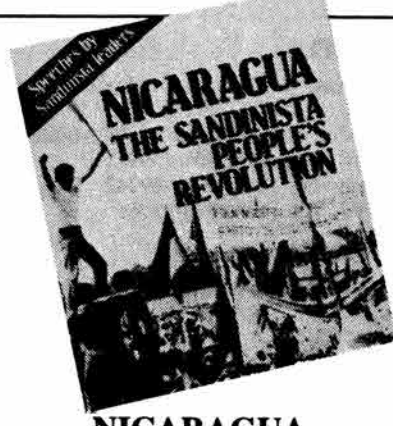
The National Federation of Sugar Workers in the Dominican Republic has said that the State Sugar Council should be held responsible for the death of an estimated 50 Haitian sugarcane cutters. They were killed when a truck carrying 100 Haitians plunged over a cliff January 27.

Union leader Pedro Martínez Álvarez charged the council was "buying those workers from Haitian authorities for the illicit sale of human beings," according to a January 31 Santo Domingo Radio report.

Until 1983 there had been an agreement between the Haitian and Dominican governments by which the Dominican government paid some \$3 million for 15,000 to 19,000 Haitians to cut sugarcane. The Dominican government has been criticized at various times by Amnesty International for its treatment of Haitian sugarcane workers.

Executives of the State Sugar Council denied that the Haitians were under contract to cut cane and have excused themselves from any responsibility for the accident. But the owner of the truck involved in the fatal accident said he had already transported seven truckloads of Haitians to a council-operated warehouse. He said he received \$4 a head for transporting the Haitians.

Martínez Álvarez said the union is demanding that the Dominican government respect the human rights of Haitian workers. The union plans to file a report on the accident with the International Labor Organization. "Those accidents will continue to occur because the purchase and kidnapping of Haitian workers continues in the border areas," Martínez Álvarez said.



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## CALIFORNIA

### Los Angeles

**The Fight to Defend Abortion Rights.** A panel discussion with Betty Ann Dowling, American Civil Liberties Union; others to be announced. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

### San Francisco

**An Injury to One Is an Injury to All!** An evening of poetry with Piri Thomas. A benefit for the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Sat., March 4, 7 p.m. Dolores Street Baptist Church (15th and Dolores). Sponsor: Supporters of Mark Curtis Defense Committee. For more information call (415) 282-6255.

**Tiempo de Victoria. El Salvador Ocho Años de Guerra.** Documentary film produced in 1988 by Radio Venceremos. Mon., March 6, 7:30 and 9:30 p.m. Cine York, 2789 24th St. Donation: \$5. Sponsor: Casa El Salvador. For more information call (415) 553-8925.

## GEORGIA

### Atlanta

**AIDS: Why Working People Need a Political Response.** Sat., Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m. 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd floor. Donation: \$2.50. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

**Workers at Eastern Fight Union-Busting by Bosses.** Speakers to be announced. Sat., March 4, 7:30 p.m. 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd floor. Donation: \$2.50. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

## ILLINOIS

### Chicago

**The Coming Economic and Social Crisis: How Working People Can Defend Ourselves Against It.** Speaker: Omari Musa, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor. Sat., Feb. 25. Refreshments 5 p.m.; program 6 p.m. Class: "The Fight for Women's Rights," 2 p.m. 6826 S Stony Island Ave. Donation: \$5 for both events. Sponsor: Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (312) 363-7322 or 363-7136.

**Report Back and Discussion by four Chicagoans on Their Recent Trip to El Salvador.** Fri., March 3, 7 p.m. Wellington Church, 615 W Wellington. Sponsor: El Salvador Action Coalition. For more information call (312) 227-2720.

### Macomb

**The Crisis Confronting Working People: An Action Program to Confront It.** Speaker: Omari Musa, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Chicago. Thurs, Feb. 23, 8 p.m. Student Union Heritage Room, Western Illinois University. Sponsor: Progressive Alliance. For more information call (309) 836-3316.

## IOWA

### Des Moines

**Mississippi Burning: Fact and Fiction.** Speaker: Stu Singer, coordinator, Mark Curtis Defense Committee and Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee volunteer in Mississippi, 1966. Sat., Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m. 2105 Forest Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (515) 246-1695.

## MARYLAND

### Baltimore

**The Freedom Struggle in Southern Africa.** Showing of Cuban documentary on the defeat of South African troops in Angola, with presentation by representative of Socialist Workers

Party. Sat., Feb. 25. Dinner 6 p.m.; program 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: Dinner \$3; forum \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (301) 235-0013.

## MASSACHUSETTS

### Boston

**The Fight Against Racism Today.** Speakers to be announced. Sat., Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m. 605 Massachusetts Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (617) 247-6772.

## MICHIGAN

### Detroit

**Malcolm X: A film.** Sat., Feb. 25, 11 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. 5019 1/2 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (313) 831-1177.

## MINNESOTA

### Austin

**Malcolm X: The Man and His Ideas.** Film: *Malcolm X and the Struggle for Freedom.* Speaker: Wendy Lyons, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of St. Paul. Translation to Spanish. Sun., Feb. 26, 7 p.m. 407 1/2 N Main St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (507) 433-3461.

### St. Paul

**Malcolm X's Legacy for Today.** Speakers: Wendy Lyons, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor; Sam Grant, community activist. Showing of *Malcolm X: The Struggle for Freedom.* Sat., Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

## MISSOURI

### St. Louis

**Malcolm X: His Message for Today.** Speakers: Jerry Buchanan, Black Awareness Support Group; Dennis Gallie, Socialist Workers Party, member United Auto Workers Local 325. Sat., Feb. 18, 7 p.m. 4907 Martin Luther King Dr. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (314) 361-0250.

## NEW JERSEY

### Newark

**The Political Legacy of Malcolm X, Internationalist and Revolutionary.** Sat., Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m. Translation to Spanish and French. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

## NEW YORK

### Manhattan

**Salvadoran Students Speak About Government Attacks on Universities.** René Hernández, Federation of Revolutionary Students; Solomon Alfaro Estrada, General Association of Salvadoran University Students. Mon., Feb. 20, 8 p.m. New School for Social Research, Main Auditorium, 65 5th Ave., and Tues., Feb. 21, 8 p.m. Loeb Student Center, Room 310, New York University. Sponsor: Coalition to Stop the U.S. War in El Salvador. For more information call (212) 431-9251.

**Dance and Celebrate Our Summer Brigade to Cuba.** Music with: DJ Will K. Wilkins of WBAI. Sat., Feb. 25, 8 p.m. to . . . Casa de las Américas, 104 W. 14th St. Donation: \$5. Sponsor: Antonio Maceo Brigade.

### Queens

**Jamaican Democracy and the Prospects for the Future of Caribbean Unity.** Speakers: Bruce Golding, chairman, Jamaica Labour

Party and member of Parliament; Paul Robertson, secretary, People's National Party; Trevor Munroe, secretary, Worker's Party of Jamaica; Carl Stone, chair, and Louis Lindsay, lecturer, Department of Government, University of the West Indies. Sun., Feb. 19, 4 p.m. York College, Room 3D01, 94-20 Guy Brewer Blvd., Jamaica. Sponsors: Coalition for Caribbean and Central American Unity, Black Students Caucus of York College. For more information call (718) 523-0927.

## NORTH CAROLINA

### Greensboro

**How Cuba Got Rid of Race Discrimination.** Sun., Feb. 26, 7 p.m. 2219 E Market. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (919) 272-5996.

## OHIO

### Cleveland

**The Civil Rights Movement: How Legal Segregation Was Overturned.** Speakers: Kathy Geathers, participant in Cleveland civil rights movement; Mary Brady, Socialist Workers Party; others. Video: Birmingham, 1963, from "Eyes on the Prize." Sat., Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m. 2521 Market Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (216) 861-6150.

## OREGON

### Portland

**Politics of the U.S. Justice System.** A panel discussion. Speakers: Kate Kaku, Mark Curtis Defense Committee, wife of Mark Curtis; Prof. John Haviland, Santiago Ventura Freedom Committee; Diane Million, Leonard Peltier Defense Committee; Brad Bouvenger, Columbia River Defense Project. Thurs., Feb. 23, 7 p.m. Reed College Student Union, 3203 SE Woodstock. Sponsor: Solidarity with the Peoples of the Americas. For more information call (503) 239-5009.

**Free Mark Curtis!** Speaker: Kate Kaku, Mark Curtis Defense Committee, wife of Mark Curtis. Sat., Feb. 25, 7 p.m. Reception to follow. Peace House, 2116 NE 18th. Sponsor: Supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. For more information call (503) 287-7416.

## PENNSYLVANIA

### Pittsburgh

**"The Free Trade" Debate — A Trap for Workers: The U.S.-Canadian Trade Pact.** Speaker: Margaret Manwaring, recent candidate of Revolutionary Workers League for Canadian Parliament, member United Steelworkers of America. Sat., March 11, 7:30 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave., Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

## TEXAS

### Houston

**Malcolm X Today.** Speaker: Randy Warren, Socialist Workers Party and member United Steelworkers of America Local 2228; others. Sat., Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

## WISCONSIN

### Milwaukee

**An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis.** Speaker: Omari Musa, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Chicago; Pat Grogan, former SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Wisconsin. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m. 4707 W Lisbon Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (414) 445-2076.

## TORONTO

### Angola, Namibia, South Africa: The Liberation Struggle and Cuba's Role

Speaker: **Armando Entralgo**, director for the Center of Middle East and African Studies in Cuba.

**Fri., Feb. 24, 7:30 p.m.**  
For location and further information call (416) 861-1399.

Sponsors: African National Congress, South African Congress of Trade Unions, Rally Against Apartheid, Revolutionary Workers League, Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association, Communist Party of Canada, Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa. Voluntary contribution.

**Malcolm X: The Struggle for Freedom.** A film. Speaker: Omari Musa, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Chicago. Wed., Feb. 22, 7 p.m. University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, Student Union E-280 at Kenwood and Maryland. Sponsor: Young Socialist Alliance. **The Legacy of Malcolm X.** Film: *Malcolm X: The Struggle for Freedom.* Speaker: Pat Grogan, former Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate. Sat., Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m. 4707 W Lisbon Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (416) 445-2076.

## BRITAIN

### London

**"Response to the South African Escalation."** Cuban video documentary on the Cuban and Angolan defeat of the South African forces at Cuito Cuanavale, Angola. Speakers: Victoria Brittain, editor Third World review page, *Guardian*; Akwe Amosu, from Nigeria. Sun., March 5, 6:30 p.m. Ritzy Cinema, Brixton. Sponsor: International Bookfair of Radical, Black, and Third World Books.

## CANADA

### Montréal

**Haiti: The Struggle Continues. An eyewitness report.** Translation to English and Spanish. Sat., Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m. 4274 Papineau, Suite 302. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Forum Lutte ouvrière. For more information call (514) 524-7992.

### Toronto

**Rally Against Racism: Stop Police Murders and Brutality.** Sat., Feb. 25, 1 p.m. Queen's Park. Sponsor: Black Action Defence Committee and Michael Wade Lawson Committee.

**Fighting Racism: From Miami to Toronto.** Sat., Feb. 25, open house immediately following Rally Against Racism at Queen's Park, with food and refreshments. Forum: 3:30 p.m. Speakers: Thabo Ntweng, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Miami, with eyewitness report of Miami rebellion; representative of Black Action Defence Committee; representative of Unity Force. International Student Center, 33 Saint George. Sponsor: Student Christian Movement and Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (416) 861-1399.

**Malcolm X Speaks. A video presentation.** Sun., March 5, 3 p.m. 410 Adelaide St. W, Suite 400. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor forum. For more information call (416) 861-1399.

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

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**GEORGIA:** Atlanta: 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd Floor. Zip: 30303. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

**ILLINOIS:** Chicago: 6826 S. Stony Island Ave. Zip: 60649. Tel: (312) 363-7322.

**INDIANA:** Muncie: c/o Brian Johnson, 619 1/2 N. Dill St. Zip: 47303. Tel: (317) 747-8543.

**IOWA:** Des Moines: 2105 Forest Ave. Zip:

50311. Tel: (515) 246-1695.

**LOUISIANA:** New Orleans: P.O. Box 53224. Zip: 70153. Tel: (504) 484-6418.

**MARYLAND:** Baltimore: 2913 Greenmount Ave. Zip: 21218. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

**MASSACHUSETTS:** Boston: SWP, YSA, 605 Massachusetts Ave. Zip: 02118. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

**MICHIGAN:** Detroit: 5019 1/2 Woodward Ave. Zip: 48202. Tel: (313) 831-1177.

**MINNESOTA:** Austin: 407 1/2 N. Main St. Zip: 55912. Tel: (507) 433-3461. **Twin Cities:** 508 N. Snelling Ave., St. Paul. Zip: 55104. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

**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.

**NEBRASKA:** Omaha: 140 S. 40th St. Zip: 68131. Tel: (402) 553-0245.

**NEW JERSEY:** Newark: 141 Halsey St. Zip: 07102. Tel: (201) 643-3341. **New Brunswick:** c/o Keith Jordan, 149 Somerset St. Zip: 08903. Tel: (201) 828-1874.

**NEW YORK:** Mid-Hudson: Box 1042, Annandale. Zip: 12504. Tel: (914) 758-0408. **New York:** 79 Leonard St. Zip: 10013. Tel: (212) 219-3679 or 925-1668. Pathfinder Books, 226-8445.

**NORTH CAROLINA:** Greensboro: 2219 E Market. Zip: 27401. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

**OHIO:** Cleveland: 2521 Market Ave. Zip: 44113. Tel: (216) 861-6150. **Columbus:** P.O. Box 02097. Zip: 43202.

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**PENNSYLVANIA:** Philadelphia: 2744 Germantown Ave. Zip: 19133. Tel: (215) 225-0213. **Pittsburgh:** 4905 Penn Ave. Zip: 15224. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

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

**UTAH:** Price: 253 E. Main St. Mailing address: P.O. Box 758. Zip: 84501. Tel: (801) 637-6294. **Salt Lake City:** 147 E. 900 South. Zip: 84111. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

**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,



**Job safety program** — In Australia, Yakka, a leading maker of work clothes, refuses to hire wom-



Harry Ring

en deemed to be short, fat, or timid. The managing director says a survey — described as "not a scientific study" — shows that those who fit this profile are prone to repetition strain injury.

**Come now** — A heartsick Congress voted not to take that 50 percent pay hike the same day that a Gallup poll showed 82 percent of the people against it. A report said, "Analysts at the Gallup Organization speculated that the opposition to pay raises might reflect in part the relatively low public esteem in which Congress is held."

**What if the new hires don't like screws either?** — New York will hire outside workers to replace inmates dishing up food in the city jails, a move warmly supported by the guards. They assertedly eat the same food as prisoners

and, maybe because of how it tastes, are always suspicious that hostile inmates have meddled with their food.

**But everything's fine** — Last year British farm income dropped a reported 25 percent.

**"National pride" scarcity** — Tim Fischer, a National Party member of the Australian Parliament, is pushing to have Australia Day celebrated on the day it falls, not the nearest Monday. He seems to suspect workers see it as a long weekend, not a day of patriotic observance. Meanwhile, Liberal Senator Stephen Mutch worries that

not enough people know the second verse to the national anthem.

**A weighty reason** — In the presidential contest, New York City officials neglected to count write-in votes, but say they will do so now. Why not earlier? Because, they explain, it's too much work to lift the rolls of write-in paper from the machines.

**Musn't alarm anyone** — British supermarkets are storing precooked, chilled foods at temperatures high enough to promote development of listeria food poisoning, which causes meningitis and stillbirth. Inspectors found listeria-

infected cook-chill food in three markets. What's the government doing about it? So far, nothing.

**It gains in translation** — *Langenscheidt's*, a German-English dictionary (1986 edition), translates "Judenstube" (Jewish school), and offers a colloquial usage: Making "an awful racket like in a Jewish school."

**Please, you take it** — "CEDAR, Mich. (AP) — In their far-ranging quest for new markets, Michigan cherry growers have come up with some unusual products. Take the cherry-pecan sausage, for example."

## International campaign demands release of Blanco

Continued from front page

kitchen of the Ucayali Institute for Agrarian Research and Development when the police carried out a raid. The police were armed with machine guns, and it is still not known how many peasants were killed.

"It was there that Hugo Blanco was arrested with Luis Tuesta. Hugo was beaten and taken away. The Ministry of the Interior didn't give word that he had been arrested until 10:00 p.m.," she said.

The police claim Blanco is responsible for the deaths of the peasants. The CCP reports that during a TV interview aired on February 13, Armando Villanueva, Peru's prime minister, declared the demonstrators attacked the police with firearms. Yet the police showed no signs of gun wounds.

Besides the peasants killed by police, many others were wounded, including two who have lost their eyesight and one who lost a leg, reported the CCP.

As soon as word got out about Blanco and Tuesta's kidnapping, an international campaign was mounted demanding to know their whereabouts and urging their release. Human rights organizations, solidarity groups, peasant and farm leaders, political parties, members of parliament, elected officials, and other prominent individuals have been contacted to support the emergency campaign.

Telegrams and messages have been sent to Peruvian President Alan García from around the world demanding Blanco's release.

Supporters of human rights in Europe are urging leaders of the social democratic parties in these countries to put pressure on García. His party, the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance, is part of the Socialist International.

On February 13 two of Blanco's children who live in Sweden led a group of 70 of

their schoolmates and others in a demonstration at the Peruvian embassy.

In France a delegation met on the same day with the Peruvian ambassador. Supporters in Paris have put out a poster calling for Blanco's release.

There were also actions in Italy, Germany, and Belgium.

In the United States, a protest campaign is getting under way.

Phone calls have been flooding both the Peruvian embassy in Washington, D.C., and the Peruvian Mission to the United Nations in New York City. The North American Farm Alliance sent the Peruvian embassy in Washington, D.C., a letter demanding Blanco's release.

Hugo Blanco became famous throughout Latin America in the 1960s when he began to organize peasants in the Cuzco region to defend the rights of the landless against the big landowners.

Because of his activity among the peasantry, Blanco was imprisoned in 1963 and threatened twice with the death penalty. A broad international campaign succeeded in staying the hands of his executioners and finally won his release seven and a half years later.

A demonstration scheduled to take place in Lima on February 17 was postponed in light of the February 14 assassination of Saúl Cantoral, general secretary of the Peruvian miners' federation. The miners' federation, which blamed a right-wing death squad for Cantoral's murder in Lima, will stage a one-day work stoppage to protest the killing.

The Federation of Peruvian Workers, the General Workers Federation of Peru, the National Assembly, the Peruvian Peasant Federation and other organizations are

planning a joint demonstration to protest both Blanco's continued arrest and the murder of Cantoral.

Telegrams and messages demanding Blanco's release should be sent to: Peruvian Embassy, Cesar Atala, 1700 Mas-

sachusetts Ave., Washington, D.C. 20036, telephone (202) 833-9860, or to the Peruvian Mission to the UN, 820 2nd Ave., New York, N.Y., telephone (212) 644-2850, or to any of the Peruvian embassies in other countries.

## Philippine workers protest

Continued from front page

year, and unemployment has fallen marginally.

This upturn is visible in the building boom currently under way in Manila. In many parts of the city, once vacant sites are now a hive of activity as hundreds of construction workers swarm along frail-looking wooden scaffolding, using ropes, buckets, and other primitive equipment to build new hotels, office blocks, and other buildings.

A number of companies have reported record profits for 1988. The Atlas Consolidated Mining N. Development Corp., for example, reported a 760.2 million peso profit for 1988, compared to a 175.3 million loss the previous year. (21 pesos equals one U.S. \$1.)

Atlas has been notorious for its union-busting efforts, including the murder and intimidation of union activists. The KMU reported January 23 that "the death toll involving unionists at Atlas, reportedly perpetrated by management-backed vigilan-

tes, has reached more than a dozen as of the end of 1988."

On the island of Negros, rising sugar prices and new prawn farming developments have brought renewed prosperity to the sugar-planting families that dominate the island. National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW) Vice-president Serge Cherniguin explained in an interview.

But, Cherniguin noted, this prosperity has brought new insecurity to sugar workers. During the sugar slump in the 1980s, NFSW members had been able to obtain more than 9,800 acres of idle sugar lands on which to grow food for themselves and their families, he said.

But now that planters wanted to expand their sugar production, they were evicting the farm workers, often with the help of the military. Three-quarters of the farm lots have been lost already, the union leader said. Many sugar workers remain dependent on international food aid. In response, the NFSW was demanding that the government implement its agrarian reform law and distribute foreclosed sugar lands to the farm workers.

## —10 AND 25 YEARS AGO—

### THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE  
Feb. 23, 1979

TEHRAN, Iran — Sunday, February 11, saw the culmination of the insurrection in Iran. An uprising of unprecedented proportions overthrew the government of the Pahlavi monarchy.

The Iranian armed forces crumbled in the face of popular defiance and a soldiers' rebellion.

The death knell of the shah's regime began when the army found itself incapable of keeping exiled religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini out of the country. He arrived here February 1.

The event that directly led to the insurrection in Tehran was the February 8 demonstration of more than 1 million called by Khomeini to support Mehdi Bazargan, his appointed prime minister in the new provisional government.

Hundreds of airmen from the Doshan Tappeh air base marched in uniform in their own contingents. The day before, the airmen had gone to Khomeini's headquarters to declare their allegiance to his provisional government.

In the face of continued protests by the airmen and rapidly crumbling discipline on the air base, the elite troops of the Royal Guard were sent to attack it February 9 and prevent the airmen's example from spreading.

As the cries for help from the airmen reached residents of the area, there was a massive display of revolutionary solidarity. Thousands poured out of their homes

in defiance of the curfew and rushed to the air base. There they helped the airmen construct barricades.

By Saturday, February 10, the airmen had taken control of the area around the base. They issued weapons to civilians.

Thousands began digging trenches and building barricades.

People took positions on rooftops.

By this time, the rest of the city had begun to mobilize.

## Milton Genecin: fighter for socialism for 50 years

BY HARRY RING

Milton Genecin, a socialist for more than 50 years, died in Los Angeles January 26 after a protracted illness. He was 80.

He was a founding member of the Socialist Workers Party in 1938 and a regular member of its national committee from 1957 to 1971. Over the years, he contributed to the *Militant* under the pen name Milton Alvin.

He was an SWP organizer at various times in New York, Toledo and Akron, Ohio, and Los Angeles.

His parents brought him to this country from Russia when he was five. After finishing high school in the 1920s he obtained a job on Wall Street as a runner. He quickly worked his way up the ladder, becoming the head of a brokerage firm.

With the onslaught of the depression following the 1929 stock market crash, that career came to an abrupt end. Genecin began thinking about the root source of the obvious social ills and turned to socialism.

He was deeply influenced at the time, he recalled, by reading Leon Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*. In late 1935, he joined the Socialist Party. He decided to do this when he learned that partisans of Trotsky's ideas were members of a left-wing caucus in the party.

He was a member of that caucus when it was expelled in 1937 and, at a New Year's conference in 1938, participated in the founding of the SWP.

In 1939 he began working as a machinist at the Crucible Steel plant in Harrison, New Jersey, and became a member of the grievance committee of the United Steelworkers union. For a period, he served as an organizer for the union.

In 1943 he was drafted into the army. On being discharged, he went to Ohio to help build the SWP there. He was the party's organizer in Akron for two years and then was organizer in Toledo and worked in an auto plant. He was active in the United Auto Workers.

In 1951, beset by health problems, he moved to Los Angeles and became a leading activist in the SWP there.

After working for a period as a machinist, he became the office manager for a plumbing contractor and then headed his own plumbing company. Throughout this period, he remained politically active and was a generous financial supporter of the movement.

In 1983 he broke with the SWP and became a founding member of the group Socialist Action.



LIBERTY, Miss. — Sheriff Daniel Jones said here last week he had failed to find "a single clue" in the shotgun slaying of a Negro who had seen a white man shoot another Negro active in a voter registration drive. "I've interviewed a lot of people but haven't come up with a thing yet," the sheriff said.

The body of Louis Allen, 44, was found early Saturday morning, February 1, by his teenage son.

Allen was a witness in the fatal shooting of Herbert Lee, a 52-year-old farmer gunned down outside a Liberty cotton gin in 1961. Lee was one of several Negroes active in a Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) vote drive. Allen later admitted to SNCC workers he had been forced to lie at a coroner's jury investigating the slaying that set free E.H. Hurst, a white man, then a member of the state legislature.



# SWP candidates on Bush budget

Continued from front page

income and wealth since the Great Depression of the 1930s. While the top capitalist families and upper layers of the middle classes have grown richer, millions of working people, especially Blacks and Latinos, have been driven deeper into poverty.

Far from taking action to aid the most hard-pressed workers and farmers, the Democratic- and Republican-run government has moved steadily in the opposite direction.

As expected, far and away the biggest single item in Bush's proposed budget remains money for war spending — \$300.4 billion. This astronomical sum pays for a vast military machine that has nothing to do with ensuring peace, as Bush claims. It is used, instead, to guard U.S. and other imperialist countries' interests in every corner of the globe.

U.S. military muscle serves to bully working people — from Central America to the Middle East to southern Africa — who are fighting for political sovereignty and against the economic devastation wrought by imperialist domination.

Bush's proposal is that funds for the military — which total more than the amounts allotted for education, welfare, the environment, and Medicare combined — be increased to keep pace with inflation.

The second-largest item in the budget is a proposed \$246.6 billion for Social Security, which includes a cost-of-living increase. While this cost-of-living adjustment, however small, is welcome, no increase in basic payments is included, which means that millions of retired working people on fixed incomes will continue to live on the edge of poverty — or below.

The third-largest item in the budget is \$173.3 billion for interest payments, the bulk of which go to wealthy bondholders. Bush wants \$4.5 billion more for interest payments next year than allocated in 1989.

While tipping his hat to the fact that all is not well for growing numbers of working people, Bush's budget priorities continue the rulers' drive to have working-class families individually bear the burden for what should be social responsibilities financed by the government. "Government should not be the provider of first resort for things that the private sector can produce better," Bush declared.

At least \$9.6 billion of the "savings" included in Bush's budget come from freezing payments on spending for social programs, although he has yet to provide details on what is being frozen. In other areas, there are outright funding cuts, including a \$1.9 billion slash in farm price supports, which will target debt-burdened working farmers first.

Small tax credits are proposed for low-income workers lucky enough to find child care for their children four years old and under, and also to parents who care for their young children at home.

But no proposals are forthcoming from either Democrats or Republicans for a massive program of federally funded child-care centers, so that millions of women who need and want to work can do so without having their wages eaten up by paying for private child care or having to worry about young children left home alone.

A small increase in Medicaid funds is included in Bush's plan for infants and pregnant women whose income is 130 percent of the poverty line. At the same time, he proposes slashing \$5 billion from Medicare funds for the elderly.

Public health is deteriorating, and preventable diseases, such as tuberculosis and infant diarrhea, are on the rise. Life expectancy for Black people is actually falling. Some 24 million working-class families have no health insurance at all.

Yet no proposals are made for a government-funded, national health-care plan that would provide decent and free medical care for everyone.

Among those most in need of guaranteed health care are people with AIDS, a growing number of whom are impoverished drug-users. Although 30,000 people in the United States have already died from AIDS, and as many as 1 million others are estimated to be infected, only \$1.6 billion is allotted for education about and research for the disease.

Instead of a major expansion of drug treatment facilities to make sure that all those seeking help for drug addiction are given immediate and humane care, the government's much-vaunted "war on drugs" will continue to center on beefing up state and local cop agencies, and Madison Avenue "antidrug" ad campaigns dubbed "education."

## Homeless

"We must care about those in 'the shadow of life,'" Bush said, "and I, like many Americans, am deeply troubled by the plight of the homeless. The causes of homelessness are many. History is long, but the moral imperative to act is clear."

History is indeed long if you are a worker without shelter. With millions of workers, including whole families, driven into the streets during the '80s "boom," Bush proposes \$676 million for aid to the homeless. This would be a drop in the bucket for New York City alone, with at least 100,000 homeless workers — much less for the entire country.

Nowhere is there a proposal for a sweeping, federally funded construction project to build affordable housing for millions of working families that need it.

The budget also contains no proposal to raise the \$3.35 minimum wage. Frozen since 1981, this pittance is now worth less in real dollars than the minimum wage in 1950.

## Propaganda on deficit

Bush made much of the fact that his budget proposal, if unchanged, ends up with a federal deficit of \$91.1 billion — some \$72 billion smaller than 1989. According to the Gramm-Rudman law, the federal budget is supposed to be "balanced" by 1993.

A section of the U.S. rulers has been promoting the idea that the federal deficit is a cause for concern by working people. Bush is one of those who even supports a constitutional amendment requiring a "balanced" federal budget.

What this means for workers, farmers, and small businesspeople, however, is that social spending will be further cut in the name of "balancing the budget." The propaganda about how bad the deficit is for "the country" is simply aimed at conditioning us to accept these cuts as necessary.

Concern over the deficit isn't so deep as to prevent Bush from proposing a major tax write-off for the wealthy, however. The day before presenting his budget plan, Bush unveiled a proposal to lower the tax rate on capital gains for individuals to a maximum of 15 percent, from 33 percent. Currently capital gains — that is, income from the sale of stocks, bonds, and the like — are taxed at the same rate as other income.

The wealthiest 5 percent of the U.S. population earns about 85 percent of all capital gains.

Cutting the tax rate alone, Treasury Department spokespeople admit, will reduce federal revenues by \$11.9 billion in the next fiscal year.

Some \$150 million is also proposed for "urban enterprise zones," which would give businesses hefty incentives for creating a few low-wage jobs in urban areas with high unemployment. At the same time, such businesses would be exempt from all kinds of government regulations.

## Capitalist budget

The \$1.16 trillion federal budget has little in it for working people — although it is wealth generated by our labor that goes to pay for it.

As conditions for tens of millions of workers, farmers, and small businesspeople worsen, a fight for meaningful government programs to meet our social needs will be part of the struggle to defend ourselves against the ravages the capitalist system has in store. Such a fight will become more pressing if the economic recession that is looming becomes severe and spreads internationally.

Tens of millions more working people face the prospect of losing our jobs, farms, homes, access to medical care, and other necessities of life.

Jobs for all is a realistic perspective we can fight for by demanding that the legal workweek be shortened from 40 to 30 hours, with no cut in pay. This, not "urban enterprise zones," is the answer to providing jobs for the 35 percent of Black youth who are unemployed, and for other jobless workers as well.

And we need to fight for a government guarantee that wages will rise along with prices.

We also need a massive program to restore what capitalism has destroyed or is allowing to decay and to build new, desperately needed public facilities. Housing, schools, hospitals, and child-care centers are wanting in every part of the country. Roads, bridges, tunnels, railroads, subways, and other parts of the transportation system are in dire disrepair. The environment is pockmarked and poisoned by toxic waste dumps and leaking nuclear plants. Undertaking these public projects would provide millions of jobs, and solve some of our most pressing social needs.

At the same time, an international campaign to build factories, production equipment, and social projects in the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America could provide jobs for millions more. This should be accompanied by a call on Washington and other imperialist governments to cancel the debt owed by semicolonial countries.

In addition, direct, massive economic aid needs to be sent to these countries. At the top of the list should be Nicaragua, which is reeling under the damage done by the U.S.-backed contra war, the economic crisis caused by imperialist economic domination, and the devastation of Hurricane Joan last October.

Working people also need to champion the demand for mandatory affirmative action, with quotas, in hiring and education for those of us who are Black, Latino, or women. In this way, we can fight to overcome some of the deepest divisions capitalism has fostered among working people, and put our class in a stronger position to protect ourselves against the capitalists' efforts to make us pay for the crisis of their system.

This perspective can unite working people in a movement to defend our most immediate interests today. It does so with a clear view to the much bigger battles that will confront us with the onset of the economic catastrophe that capitalism is bringing tomorrow.

# French revolution a watershed for humanity

BY DOUG JENNESS

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the opening of the French revolution, one of the great watersheds in the history of humanity.

More than 500 titles are churning their way through the French literary mills, and 56 conferences are scheduled this year to commemorate this event.

In other countries, too, articles are beginning to appear. Most include the usual sort of thing — the revolu-

## LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

tion was too bloody, it led to a new tyranny, and so on.

The one theme, however, of more than routine interest is that revolutions on the scale of the French example are not in the cards today.

Historian Robert Darnton, writing in the January 19 *New York Review of Books*, states, "Today most of us inhabit a world that we take to be not the best but the only world possible. The French Revolution has faded into an almost imperceptible past, its bright light obscured by a distance of two hundred years, so far away that we may barely believe in it. For the Revolution defies belief. It seems incredible that an entire people could rise up and transform the conditions of everyday existence."

An article in the Dec. 24, 1988, *Economist*, a British weekly, concludes, "At present 1789 may be regarded in France and the world as a toothless model. . . ."

"But," the article then adds, "for how much longer?"

This is an apt query. Cuban President Fidel Castro argued in a speech last October that the objective conditions that gave rise to the French revolution and the October 1917 Russian revolution are "accumulating in Latin America" today. He explained that unequal trade relations between the imperialist and semicolonial countries and the massive debt burden of the latter is laying the basis for "the possibility of major social eruptions because the countries are in such ruins as to be ungovernable."

This is similar to what happened in France leading up to 1789. France was the most populous country in Europe at the time and one of the most powerful, militarily and economically.

But the old monarchical regime, in which the landed nobility still enjoyed considerable privileges, was creating conditions of unbearable poverty and misery in both the towns and the countryside.

On the eve of the revolution hunger stalked the country and in some regions famine conditions existed. Millions of peasants either had too little land or no land at all. Tithes to the Catholic church, feudal dues and rents to the landlords, and a wide range of indirect taxes made it impossible for a good many to make enough to live on.

Seasonal employment was widespread for farm laborers, and unemployment was high in the towns. At least one-tenth of the population in rural France depended on begging for survival.

Moreover, the monarchy kept squeezing working people more and more to pay for its wars.

The revolution was no palace coup or military takeover. It was the most massive mobilization of the downtrodden and oppressed that the world had ever seen up to that point. The lives of millions of working people were transformed as they showed they were not only a suffering class, but a force capable of making their own history.

In the most substantial and enduring change of the revolution, the peasants confiscated the lands of the nobility and the church and uprooted feudal landlordism and privilege. This was a genuine revolution in property relations.

Even after the first republic was overturned in a coup by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1799, wherever the French army went in Europe it initiated antifeudal reforms. This process was the deepest in Belgium, the German Rhineland, and other areas incorporated for a period of time into the French empire.

In a real sense the revolution in France was not a "French" revolution, but an international whirlwind that inspired the toilers and democratic-minded forces throughout Europe. Europe would never be the same again as over the next decades democratic revolutionary movements eradicated one feudal and monarchical stronghold after the other.

But not only Europe was transformed. The revolution gave impetus to a slave rebellion in Haiti that swept away slavery and French colonial rule. And throughout Latin America a wave of anticolonial struggles won independence for most of Spain's former colonies.

When Castro compares the worsening conditions in Latin America today (and the rest of the semicolonial countries can be included too) to France in 1789, he is not referring simply to a revolutionary opening in this or that country, but the possibilities of revolution on a broader international scale, including the relatively more developed and populous countries.



# Klein case highlights erosion of abortion rights

BY FRED FELDMAN

A comatose, pregnant woman in New York has finally obtained an abortion — but not until antiabortion forces had been allowed to drag her family through a grueling, two-week battle in the state and federal courts.

The fight that had to be waged to obtain this completely legal and routine surgical procedure highlighted

## AS I SEE IT

the erosion of women's right to abortion that has been taking place.

Nancy Klein suffered a severe head injury in a Long Island automobile accident December 13. She has been in a coma ever since.

Doctors say that her chances of full recovery are not good. Klein's chances were not being helped, however, by the fact that she was pregnant.

Although doctors have expressed varying opinions on whether the pregnancy was a major threat to Nancy Klein's life, all appeared to agree that it could complicate her condition.

Supported by her parents, Nancy Klein's husband Martin decided to authorize an abortion.

At that point, antiabortion forces — with a lot of help from the courts and local officials — compelled him to run a legal gauntlet.

Hospital officials insisted that Martin be proclaimed his wife's legal guardian before they would operate. Klein filed a petition for guardianship January 26.

At this point John Short, a longtime antiabortion organizer, and attorney John Broderick intervened. They demanded that the petition be rejected and that Short be proclaimed guardian of the fetus.

Instead of dismissing this transparent interference out of hand, the court held two days of hearings that ended February 2.

The Nassau County district attorney's office then got

into the act, bringing in its own medical witnesses to counter those supporting Klein.

After deliberating for five more days, the judge ruled February 7 in favor of Martin Klein's application. The court held that the only legal issue was not what the effects of a completed pregnancy would be on Nancy Klein's health, but "the constitutional rights of a hospitalized comatose woman."

Nancy Klein, the decision conceded, "has the same constitutional rights [to an abortion] as any otherwise healthy approximately 17-week pregnant woman."

Short and Broderick then appealed to a higher state court, which stayed the ruling while arguments were heard. The abortion was blocked for another two days.

On February 9 this court decided not to hear the case. Short and his lawyer then appealed to the highest state court. Another day's delay. This court also refused to hear the appeal.

The U.S. Supreme Court was the next stop.

When Justice Thurgood Marshall rejected their plea, they turned to Justice Antonin Scalia. As this last move failed, the abortion procedures were begun February 10. The delay had made the operation a little riskier, but there were no complications.

The antiabortionists' attack on the Kleins revealed much about the reactionary ideological campaign that is at the heart of the efforts to roll back women's right to abortion.

The antiabortionists claim, in effect, that women are primarily bearers of children. All the democratic rights of women as human beings and as citizens — including the rights to life and health — are subordinated to this "sacred" function, in the antiabortionists' view.

Women's struggle for the right to control their own bodies, however, is central to their struggle for full equality and participation in the work force, politics, and every aspect of society.

It's a good thing that the courts finally threw out the claims against abortion rights in the Klein case, but there

was never really much chance that they would be accepted. More significant than the final outcome was the complicity of judges and other officials in enabling reactionary foes of women's rights to delay for weeks an operation that Nancy Klein was constitutionally entitled to have. And it gave credence to the notion that the courts should have a say in the private decision of whether or not to have an abortion.

In outright defiance of the law of the land established in the Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, the judges and district attorney treated as worthy of consideration the demands of Short and Broderick — total strangers to the injured woman — for control over the body of Nancy Klein.

A similar obstacle course now confronts other women across the country. Challenges from husbands or ex-husbands to attempts by women to obtain abortions, or claims by antiabortion organizations to act as legal guardians of fetuses, are given full-dress consideration in courtrooms, even though the 1973 ruling recognized that abortion is a woman's choice. Women involved have to wait out the proceedings before ending pregnancies that they do not want.

State legislatures produce a steady stream of gimmicks to get around the law. Cops allow "Operation Rescue" protesters to block entrances to abortion clinics for hours and harass those trying to enter.

These attempts to sabotage the right to abortion have been encouraged from the White House by presidents who urge on the foes of abortion rights and advocate making abortion illegal once more.

Working people and other supporters of women's rights need to oppose the full range of these attacks, along with the latest moves to win outright reversal of *Roe v. Wade* by the Supreme Court.

The scope of these assaults throws into relief the importance of organizing the biggest possible turnout for the April 9 rally in Washington, D.C., to defend women's right to abortion.

## LETTERS

### El Salvador

We in the Latin American Solidarity Committee and Pledge of Resistance (Binghamton-area chapter) have found the *Militant's* coverage of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador's March 18 and March 20 plans for protests around the El Salvador war and crisis to be useful. Thanks.  
T.R.  
Binghamton, New York

### Abortion

I first heard of your newsweekly when talking to some gentlemen working on behalf of Mark Curtis.

Since I grew up in a very small town in South Dakota, racism is incomprehensible to me. Why someone would feel the need to abuse, slander, and persecute another race or creed is shocking to me. The injustice to Mark Curtis made me ill.

I felt that those working to expose the corruption in the Des Moines police department (and elsewhere) were to be commended and supported. My husband was in agreement with several, but not all, the beliefs and positions held on labor rights, also. (He is a victim of John Morrell & Co.'s unfair labor practices.)

When the first issue of the *Militant* arrived, I glanced through the paper and was astonished to see that your paper supports abortion! I don't understand. On the front page of the current issue, you quote Fidel Castro: "Will rational socialism prevail as the most rational, compassionate, and humane system." And on the back page you boast stopping antiabortionist movements and encourage the effort to maintain abortion rights.

I see here a gaping flaw in your ideals. How can you uphold a compassionate and humane treatment for the human race yet defend the murder of the most defenseless?

You also state that abortion should not be used as a means of population control. I could not agree more. But it is pure non-

sense to argue the cause of "mother rights" to her own body when destroying the body of another to ensure such "rights." I see this slaughter of unborn people as just as oppressive and selfish as many of the governmental horrors you fight against.

Karen Treloar  
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

### 'Roe v. Wade'

Some 750 people crowded into Parents Hall at Drake University in Des Moines January 25 to hear Sara Weddington speak. In 1972, at the age of 26, Weddington argued the historic *Roe v. Wade* case before the U.S. Supreme Court, defending the right of women to obtain abortions.

Weddington explained how the *Roe v. Wade* decision came out of developing laws on privacy. She pointed to decisions by the Supreme Court prior to 1973 where the right to privacy was upheld and expanded.

After the presentation Weddington responded to about a dozen questions. No one who spoke was opposed to a woman's right to abortion. People asked: How can the state deny funding for abortion? How do we stop antiabortionists from blocking clinics? Why do antiabortion folks oppose funding for sex education?

Ted Leonard  
Des Moines, Iowa

### Every year

The *Militant* gets better every year.

M.C.  
Duluth, Minnesota

### Bhopal

On Dec. 3, 1984, several thousand residents of Bhopal, India, lost their lives in poison gas in one of the most gruesome disasters in history. Some called it murder. Others shrugged.

Add to the deaths the suffering of as many as 200,000 persons who survived the gas leak coming from a Union Carbide plant, but were harmed. Experts estimated that from 30,000 to 40,000 residents were seriously injured.



Bruce Beattie

It appears that Union Carbide Chairperson Warren Anderson was charged with criminal negligence and sent to prison. For six hours. This was designed to help quell public outrage in India, but a \$2,000 bail and a statement from Anderson saying he was "proud of the way the corporation responded" should only have further enraged the residents of Bhopal. And all decent Americans.

"Killer Carbide," as Bhopal residents labeled the corporation, sent about \$1 million in aid. This came to about \$5 per victim. A shipment of medicine was sent as well — enough for 300 to 400 persons.

David Wahl  
Cranston, Rhode Island

### Ecology and politics

Enclosed you'll find my check for another year of indispensable *Militants*, with my heartfelt thanks to you for fearless exposure of the true nature of capitalism, that outgrown profit system based on exploitation, perpetrated artificially by appeals to the lowest ele-

ments in human nature.

I have been a socialist my long 80 years of life. I have also been an ecologist, conscious of the interconnectedness of all life on this planet. I have for many years waited for and hoped for an expression of this realization from the political radical left. So far, I am disappointed. Don't you think it's time for us to grab the torch for the coexistent interests and concerns of ecology and politics?

Ruth Manning  
Westport, Connecticut

### Global insight

For years now your publication has provided me with the kind of global insight that I feel our class should have. I am an avid reader.

I would like to know whether you have *Guerrilla Warfare*, by Che Guevara, and *Cointelpro*, by Nelson Blackstock.

A prisoner  
Tennessee Colony, Texas

### Nicaragua coverage

The *Militant* has more coverage

of economic news from Nicaragua than any U.S. business magazine or newspaper. And more labor news than any U.S. labor newspaper or magazine. These are the main reasons I subscribe.

M.B.  
Salt Lake City, Utah

### South America, Cuba

I am interested in the history of South America and its struggle against North America's imperialism, together with a concise history of Cuba before and under Fidel Castro. I would appreciate it if you could send books concerning such issues.

A prisoner  
Warwick, New York

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.



## Salvador rebels press peace plan Leader discusses initiative at UN news conference

BY MARGARET JAYKO

UNITED NATIONS — The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) of El Salvador has announced two additional measures to press its proposal for democratic presidential elections and a cease-fire in that country's eight-year-long civil war. The FMLN is the bloc of five or-

and civilian personnel not involved in combat situations in El Salvador.

In deciding on a unilateral cease-fire during the meeting of the presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, the rebel forces said, "This is a gesture of peace and recognition of the spirit of Esquipulas II," referring to a

come to San Salvador to discuss the guerrillas' peace initiative. The date, place, and agenda were left undecided. The party leaders had been meeting for five days in an attempt to come up with a consensus counterproposal to that of the FMLN.

Aronet Díaz of the Nationalist Democratic Union reported that the parties had agreed to present all their questions in writing to the FMLN by Monday, February 13. "Three days after receiving the answers from the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front, the political parties will invite a delegation of the FMLN to hold direct talks, in a place mutually agreed upon," he said.

Col. René Emilio Ponce, armed forces chief of staff, said the military didn't like the idea of guerrilla commanders coming to the capital. But, he said, if they were invited by the parties, the military would respect that decision.

"They're still just playing around," was Rubén Zamora's response to the political parties' announcement. Zamora is a top leader of the FDR and secretary general of the Democratic Convergence. The Convergence is an electoral coalition of the Revolutionary National Movement, Social Christian Popular Movement — both of which are members of the FDR — plus the Social Democratic Party.

FDR leader Héctor Silva told the media, "We don't think the election will be postponed, though the last word has not been said. It's not quite a dead possibility."

On February 8 the Central Election Council, which oversees the balloting, declared that the vote could not be postponed beyond March 31.

At her press conference here, González stressed that the fate of the peace proposal is in the hands of El Salvador's political parties and armed forces, and Washington. It is important, she said, for the U.S. government to take a "clear position" in favor of the peace plan, given the fact that El Salvador's army is totally dependent on U.S. aid.

González discussed the "serious crisis" unfolding in her country, saying that it is moving rapidly toward a "social upheaval" by the Salvadoran people. "Many people

think that what the FMLN is looking for is a military victory," the FMLN-FDR representative stated. "But we're talking about something very different."

Economic, social, political, and military conditions are so bad in El Salvador, she stated, that "the people are willing to carry out more radical actions" leading to an insurrection. But this would mean, González continued, a continuation of the war, bloodshed, and the risk of increased military intervention by the U.S. government.

### Use elections to stop the war

Given this situation, said González, "We thought it was possible to make out of elections something that could stop the war." The latest FMLN proposals remove the aspects of previous peace plans that the Reagan administration dubbed "power-sharing" and deemed unacceptable.

This time, she said, the rebels' proposal recognizes the current government and calls for postponing the elections and taking steps to allow the "population to express itself freely, to define who should rule the country." This is the road to "irreversible peace," she added.

The National Unity of Salvadoran Workers, a coalition of labor, peasant, student, and antirepression organizations, is supporting the FMLN proposal.

By the FMLN and Democratic Convergence "joining forces in the political arena," González said, it is possible they can win the majority of the vote in the presidential elections. People who analyze the war only militarily, said González, think the FMLN's peace proposal "is a sign of weakness. But the main strength of the FMLN is political, not military."

In response to a question about what platform the FMLN would advance in the elections, González pointed out that the FMLN is calling for a vote for the Democratic Convergence and its platform. She also promised that this month the FMLN would be announcing its own program, which would go in the same direction as that of the Democratic Convergence.



Militant photos by Margaret Jayko

Guadalupe González (left) was introduced by Gustavo Acosta at news conference. Both are FMLN-FDR representatives.

ganizations waging an armed struggle against El Salvador's U.S.-backed, military-dominated government.

• On February 8 the FMLN declared a unilateral cease-fire for February 13 and 14, when five Central American presidents met in San Salvador to discuss a regional peace plan.

• The following day, two of the top guerrilla commanders of the FMLN sent a letter to all the country's political parties offering to go to San Salvador, El Salvador's capital city, to discuss the FMLN's peace initiative in person.

Guadalupe González, representative of the Political and Diplomatic Commission of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front-Revolutionary Democratic Front (FMLN-FDR), held a news briefing here to discuss the significance of the FMLN's recent proposals. The FDR includes political parties allied with the FMLN.

### Postpone elections, stop repression

On January 24 the FMLN made public a 12-point offer to participate in the presidential and legislative elections being staged by the government, which are slated to take place March 19. The coalition has opposed the past five national elections, which were carried out under U.S. and Salvadoran military auspices.

The FMLN called on the regime to postpone the voting for six months and take steps to halt repression and other interference in the elections by Washington and the army.

Two weeks later, the FMLN proposed a 60-day cease-fire, provided the government accepts its plan for rescheduling the presidential elections. The truce would run for 30 days before and after the voting. The FMLN also announced that it was suspending military attacks against U.S. military

regional peace plan signed by the five presidents in 1987. The FMLN has asked the Central America leaders to discuss its new proposal.

### Parties agree to meet with FMLN

Representatives of 13 Salvadoran political parties agreed to the FMLN's offer to

## Central American presidents agree to dismantle contra bases in Honduras

BY LARRY SEIGLE

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — The presidents of the five countries of Central America agreed February 14 to seek the dismantling of the contra bases in Honduras.

At a summit meeting in El Salvador, the presidents also called for a halt to open or covert military aid to "irregular forces or insurrectional movements in the area." They appealed to "insurrectional movements and irregular forces in the region, to join the constitutional processes of each country."

"In this spirit," their joint declaration said, "the presidents appeal to all sectors in El Salvador to participate in the next elections."

The accord calls for adopting, within 90 days, a "joint plan for the demobilization, repatriation, or voluntary relocation in Nicaragua and in third countries" of the contra forces and their families.

### Registers collapse of contras

This provision registers the collapse of the U.S.-organized mercenary forces, who after eight years of war were unable to achieve their goal of overthrowing the Sandinista government.

The continued presence of the armed group in Honduras has caused growing political problems for the pro-U.S. regime there. The major "third country" the contras are looking to for refuge is, of course, the United States.

The El Salvador agreement comes in the framework of new steps by the government in Managua aimed at reaching an economic and political "accord" with Nicaraguan capitalists and opposition groups.

According to the declaration, the presidents "were informed of the willingness expressed by the constitutional president of Nicaragua, Daniel Ortega Saavedra, to develop a process of democratization and national reconciliation in his country."

The accord cited "the following actions, among others" by the Nicaraguan president:

• The date for Nicaraguan elections will be advanced to no later than Feb. 25, 1990. Voting will take place for president, parliament, and municipal offices.

• The recently adopted election law will be revised in order to "guarantee political organization and action in the broadest sense for political parties."

• The Nicaraguan Law on Media will also be modified in order to "guarantee the free functioning of communications media."

• There will be an amnesty for an unspecified number of former members of Somoza's National Guard in the contra army who are now in prison. The prisoner release will be "in keeping with the classification made by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights."

In an editorial, *Barricada*, the voice of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, hailed the agreement as a "coup de grace to the remnants" of the contras who are still in Nicaragua.

### 'Fruit of people's victory'

"The definitive collapse of the mercenary army is the fruit of the resistance of the Nicaraguan people to the U.S. war of aggression and a direct result of the people's victory. Peace is near only thanks to the heroic sacrifice of the people in these eight years of war."

"For Nicaraguans," *Barricada* continued, "the possibility now exists to move on to a new situation of peace, political harmony, and national reconstruction, and to deepen democracy."