

Massacre in Beijing deepens China crisis

Killings protested in many Chinese cities



Rafael Molinero

June 3. Demonstrators surround soldiers near Great Hall of the People, Tiananmen Square, hours before the massacre.

BY FRED FELDMAN

The Chinese government's radio demanded June 8 that activists in student protests turn themselves in to the police. The

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announcement came in the wake of the slaughter of hundreds and possibly thousands of students and others in Beijing by Chinese government troops on June 3 and 4.

The military operation put an end to a peaceful protest by thousands in Tiananmen Square. This student-led action, which began May 13, demanded freedom of the press and other democratic rights, an end to corruption, and other changes.

Those killed included students and some of the up to 300,000 Beijing residents who reportedly came into the streets to oppose the crackdown. The victims were gunned down, beaten to death, or crushed by armored personnel carriers.

The Tiananmen protests, involving up to 1

million people at the peak, had been the high point of a wave of student demonstrations that had begun April 15.

A government television broadcast hailed troops for "victoriously crushing a counter-revolutionary rebellion." Another broadcast described the clearing of the square as an "initial victory" in a long battle against "dregs

of society." Those putting up resistance have been denounced as "thugs."

Eyewitnesses said that at least 700 people were killed when the 27th Army, formerly stationed in China's Inner Mongolia region, attacked. Student sources initially gave the

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Economic crisis, hunger impels tens of thousands to revolt in Argentina

BY MARCELO ZUGADI

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina — In the country of meat and wheat and of huge tracts of uncultivated fertile land, tens of thousands of people hounded by hunger broke into supermarkets to take food.

After five years of constitutional govern-

ment and only two weeks after the elections that brought victory to the Peronist party candidate, Carlos Menem, a spontaneous rebellion took place. It broke out in the main suburbs of Rosario, the country's second-largest city, and Buenos Aires, the capital.

Crisis of capitalism

The revolt revealed the deep crisis that Argentine capitalism is in. Not one of the leaders of the Peronist party and of the gov-

erning Radical Civic Union, which together received 85 percent of the votes in the May 14 elections, could imagine what was to occur. A few days after the elections they would witness the unheard-of sight of crowds taking food from supermarkets and groups of poor people armed with sticks, handguns, and rifles going through slums in search of food and willing to confront the repressive forces.

The official and visible Argentina, which

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June 16 actions target apartheid

Protest actions against apartheid will take place in several U.S. cities June 16-17. The actions will commemorate the June 16, 1976, massive revolt against apartheid by students in South Africa's Soweto, and demand that Washington impose comprehensive sanctions against the South African regime.

A March for the Children of South Africa will be held in Washington, D.C., Saturday, June 17. It will assemble at the Sylvan Theatre (near the Washington Monument) and march to the White House at 1:00 p.m. Speakers will include United Democratic Front leader Allan Boesak and Mpho Tutu.

The march and rally will be preceded by a day of lobbying on Friday, June 16, in support of legislation submitted by Congressman Ronald Dellums and Sen. Alan Cranston to impose sanctions

against South Africa.

A March and Rally for Sanctions Now will be held in New York City, Friday, June 16. The day of activities will begin with a picket at the offices of Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, at 7 Penn Plaza, 7th Avenue at 30th Street, at 3 p.m. The picket will be followed by a march to Mobil Oil headquarters, 150 East 42nd Street, and a rally beginning at 4:30 p.m.

A rally to Stand up for South African Workers and for Sanctions Against South Africa will be held in Chicago, Saturday, June 17. The rally will take place at the Charles A. Hayes Labor and Community Center, 4859 South Wabash, at 1:00 p.m. A Walk-A-Thon to raise funds for medical and legal aid for South African detainees and their families will start from the same site at 10:00 a.m. that morning.

Iowa warden defends attack on prisoners' democratic rights

BY SAM MANUEL

The warden of the Iowa State Men's Reformatory, John Thalacker, issued a letter June 2 in response to protests he has received from around the world against the prison administration's attacks on the democratic rights of inmates.

Mark Curtis, a political activist who was framed up by the Des Moines, Iowa, cops and is now serving a 25-year sentence at Anamosa, has been denied his right to receive a Spanish-English dictionary, a Spanish verb book, and copies of the Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* and the French-language publication *Lutte ouvrière*. Curtis has also been prohibited from receiving copies of the magazine of

the meat-packers' union in Sweden, which has reported on his frame-up.

In his letter, addressed to "fellow Iowans," Thalacker gives a list of 10 criteria that serve as the basis for excluding books and other written materials from the prison. Among the list is "encoded" materials. Thalacker asserts that foreign-language material has been considered to be a "type of encoded material" because the "average Iowan" is unable to read it.

Thalacker also wrote that a May 15 U.S. Supreme Court ruling upheld Federal Bureau of Prisons regulations "giving wide authority to ban magazines and other publi-

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Crisis, hunger impels revolt in Argentina

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in the midst of the crisis is able to eat every day and enjoys the privileges of a consumer society, watched in disbelief as owners of food stores and small markets set themselves up on their rooftops, their faces covered with handkerchiefs, and armed themselves with guns ready to stop the hungry. It is estimated that about 200,000 people participated in the actions in Rosario and a much greater number in Buenos Aires.

State of siege

The revolt was finally controlled by repression, complemented by an emergency plan for the free distribution of food in the poor neighborhoods around the country. On May 30, a few hours after the uprising had begun, outgoing president Raúl Alfonsín consulted president-elect Menem, and with his agreement, the executive power declared a state of siege. This was done without consulting parliament, as required by the constitution.

The congress later validated the measure, with only three dissenting votes.

The wave of repression left 15 dead and hundreds wounded, with more than 1,500 arrested around the country. The big-business parties and media blamed the left for the rebellion, and a repressive operation was launched against left parties.

Uncontrolled inflation

The eruption takes place as a result of growing and uncontrolled inflation. The effect on wages can be seen as follows: in March of this year a construction worker made 45.5 percent as much as in December 1983; a teacher, 46.2 percent; a metal worker, 59.3 percent; a public employee, 66 percent. Overall, the buying power of wage earners fell by 50 percent during the past five years.

But since February, this process has accelerated. According to official estimates, in May inflation reached 75 percent. But the cost of food went up more than 100 percent. Wages turned to dust, and the millions of unemployed who survive through temporary work, the so-called "do whatever they can," and those who beg were left with no other resource but their desperation.

The tension has not let up. Few believe that the motor power of hunger, the driving force in this wave of protests, will now lose steam. "There is no guarantee that the problem has been overcome," the ultraconservative daily *La Nación* said. The idea that the nightmare is over, declared *Clarín*, the daily with the largest circulation in the country, "seems more like an illusion than reality." An official intelligence report published June 4 warned that "within hours, the looting in Buenos Aires and Córdoba or in another northern province could break out again."

Emergency food distribution

The emergency plan set up to distribute food to the most needy sectors is inadequate.

At the same time, it is too much for a bankrupt state to bear. The disastrous effects of hyperinflation come on top of the fear that merchants will close their stores. The lack of food supplies can already be felt in many parts of the country — especially in the poor neighborhoods — and speculation doubles the already unpayable prices.

Even though the social eruption has been contained, it is clear that the crisis is just beginning. If the first instance of hyperinflation led to desperate actions by the most impoverished, everything indicates that the second wave of the crisis will hit the working class as a whole — this time not with a decline in wages but with massive layoffs and firings.

In an effort to attempt to control inflation, the government moved to sharply restrict the money supply. The acute lack of readily available money naturally produced an excessive rise in its cost, with interest rates going up to 30 percent daily.

Industry paralyzed

Faced with no guidelines for prices — in fact, without a currency — and overwhelmed by the lack of readily available money, small

and middle industrialists and businessmen closed down their companies, leaving hundreds of thousands of workers without work.

The large companies — the beneficiaries in the final analysis of this process — also closed temporarily and laid off their workers. Industry is almost totally paralyzed, with laid-off workers getting 70 percent of wages that even at 100 percent did not cover even one-quarter of what it costs to feed a family.

To unprecedented wage reductions is added the ruin of the middle sectors, who are swelling the multitudes of the impoverished, creating an explosive social crisis. This is not a feverish description of an imagined future derived from a theoretical analysis. It is the Argentine reality of today.

The capitalists are getting ready for a worsening crisis with a united front that is considerably consolidated and a repressive apparatus that is ready for action.

Menem cabinet

In this framework, Menem announced his future cabinet.

The character of the coming Peronist administration was signaled by the selections

for minister of the economy and foreign minister. Miguel Roig, who will be minister of the economy, was until last year the vice-president of Burge and Born, a multinational monopoly of Argentinian origin long linked to the agroexporting oligarchy. Domingo Cavallo, who will be foreign minister, is an economics graduate from Harvard University who was president of the Central Bank during the last period of the military dictatorship.

Both represent the so-called María Group, a coalition of the eight most powerful economic groups in the country. Cavallo is also the liaison with the New York-based City Bank, Argentina's main creditor. He has already reached an agreement to partially refinance the foreign debt in exchange for petroleum rights in the southern basin, the richest in the nation.

Having put together the governing Peronist team, the parties of the bosses are getting ready to move up the date — set by the constitution for December 10 — for turning power over to Menem. Through Alfonsín's resignation or by any other joint agreement, Menem could take power earlier than the scheduled date.

Socialists set summer education plan

BY DOUG JENNESS

Throughout the country this summer socialist activists will be engaged in an intensive program of education. The Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance are jointly organizing a nationally coordinated series of classes in more than 30 cities. These will lead up to and form the core of the educational program at an International Active Workers and Socialist Educational Conference in Oberlin, Ohio, August 5-9.

The program will include three class series.

One will study the political roots and organizational norms around which the Socialist Workers Party was founded in 1938. The SWP traces its political continuity to the early years of the Communist Party, founded in 1919 in response to the October 1917 Russian revolution; and to the communist fighters who kept on carrying out Marxist policies when the CP abandoned a revolutionary perspective in the late 1920s.

After their expulsion from the CP in 1928, these communists went through a rich process of organizing their forces that included a fusion with other working-class fighters moving in the same direction, splits, and an orientation to left-moving activists in the Socialist Party's left wing and youth organization.

The process by which the SWP developed, the political and organizational lessons learned in the course of that process,

and how the party responded to the challenge of the deepening capitalist crisis and the imperialist war drive as a working-class and international communist organization will be some of the themes of this set of classes.

Basic texts

The basic texts will include *The History of American Trotskyism* and *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party*, both by James P. Cannon, a founding leader of the SWP. Other appropriate material will be used from *Revolutionary Continuity: Marxist Leadership in the U.S.*, a two-volume work by Farrell Dobbs, also a founder of the SWP, as well from the four-volume series on the Teamsters struggles in the 1930s, by Dobbs. *The Founding of the Socialist Workers Party*, a book of 1938-39 documents on the SWP, and *Black Nationalism and Self-Determination*, by Leon Trotsky, a leader of the Russian revolution and the Communist International, will be studied.

A section on the SWP's political continuity from a resolution adopted in 1985 (in *New International*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 75-82) helps give an overview of the scope of the class series.

Another series that has been selected will take up the workers' and peasants' fight for their own government and the dictatorship of the working class, based on the experiences of the Cuban, Algerian, Grenadian, and Nicaraguan revolutions.

The basic reading for these classes will be from reports and resolutions adopted by the SWP as it explained and discussed the evolution of these revolutions.

Rectification process in Cuba

The third set of classes will be on the current rectification process in Cuba. This will center on the recently published *In Defense of Socialism*, which includes four speeches given in December and January by Cuban President Fidel Castro, on the 30th anniversary of the Cuban revolution.

Also to be used will be the Pathfinder pamphlet "Cuba Will Never Adopt Capitalist Methods", which includes a speech by Castro last July 26; two speeches by the Cuban leader reprinted in the *New International*, No. 6; and the Nov. 29, 1987, speech by Castro to a city of Havana provincial meeting of the Communist Party (reprinted in the Jan. 29, 1988, *Militant*).

The rectification process is part of a fight to place working people at the center of the revolutionary process in Cuba. The classes will discuss this process as part of Cuba's response to the challenges posed by the deepening international capitalist crisis and the unceasing military threats against the Cuban revolution.

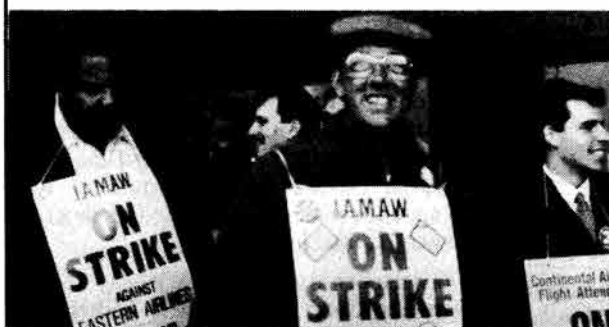
Pathfinder Books bookstores will be making slashed-price offers to summer school participants for the books and pamphlets that will be used in the classes.

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British communist campaign sparks discussion among rail workers

BY BRIAN GROGAN

LONDON — The fifth unofficial one-day stoppage by tube (subway) drivers once again brought the London Underground system to a standstill on June 1. Tube drivers are demanding a pay raise to compensate for the extra responsibilities resulting from the abolition of brakemen on the trains.

As the unofficial industrial action shows no signs of abating, the Underground unions are currently voting on a proposal for all-out strike action. The National Union of Railwaymen — the main rail union — previously had won a 7-to-1 majority vote for strike action, but the vote was declared illegal when the courts ruled that the wording on the ballot "may be confusing to workers."

The unofficial actions are causing concern to the government, which had assumed that its present antiunion laws would be sufficient to break any strike threat. Employment Minister Norman Fowler has threatened to bring

legislation into Parliament to outlaw such actions.

Doreen Weppler, a member of the NUR and the Communist League candidate in the June 15 election for European Parliament, responded to Fowler's attack. "It's typical of capitalist politicians who only have a police view of history. They cannot comprehend working people organizing for themselves. They deny that it is the employers and the government who cause the problems working people face, and they put down workers' legitimate reactions to their attacks on what they call 'trouble makers.'"

Weppler said that in spite of recent employer black lists and victimizations of workers, "people from nowhere" will come forward to lead actions as the situation of workers becomes increasingly unbearable. The employers and the government will find that all their laws and all their spy agencies are useless to deal with such a development.

Weppler was being interviewed as she participated in ballot duty for the NUR in a vote for all-out national action by 110,000 workers employed by British Rail.

The results of the votes by tube and British Rail workers will be announced June 12.

Sparks discussion at Waterloo

Weppler is a prominent union activist, and her candidacy has sparked discussion among rail workers. Campaign supporters have been out and about in the rail depots. At Waterloo Station, a major mainline station in London's South Inner constituency, Weppler spent an evening talking to different groups of workers about her campaign.

"A campaign supporter and I just went into each messroom. I introduced myself as a

candidate, and we talked to every worker about the policies we felt were necessary for working people to unite around today," Weppler reported. "We were struck by the openness of rail workers to the solutions to the daily problems we all face, solutions put forward in the election material, especially our proposals for building unity against the attacks of the bosses and their government."

"Affirmative action is a key question for rail workers, among whom there is a big percentage of Black workers," the communist candidate said. "Indeed, the attack on seniority in the London Underground is intended as a way to deny promotion to Black and women workers."

Weppler said few workers initially objected to the name of the Communist League, saying they were opposed to communism. "However, once we started to chat and show the relevance of our solutions to the social crisis and the deteriorating conditions on the job, this often disappeared," she reported. Many workers said they were heartened to see a rail worker "having a go" at putting a working-class viewpoint forward.

In these discussions, concerns were voiced at the recent action of the Labour Party leadership in a parallel election campaign for the British Parliament in Vauxhall, which is part of the same area where Weppler is running for the European Parliament. The Labour Party refused the nomination of a Black candidate by the local party and imposed its own candidate from the outside. Forty percent of Vauxhall constituency is Black, with as much as 51 percent of the heads of households being foreign-born.

In response to the LP's action, two Black



Militant

Doreen Weppler, rail worker and Communist League candidate for the European Parliament in June 15 elections.

candidates are standing independently of the party. Weppler said that workers who are Black are more and more likely to come forward as leaders of the working class as a whole as the capitalist economic crisis deepens. "More and more workers from the Third World are coming to Britain to find a livelihood denied to them because of the horrible crisis in their homelands," Weppler explained.

"Blacks will take their rightful place as leaders of our class, but the crucial question is the fight for a program that gives a basis for independent and united class action around the cancellation of the Third World debt, the fight for affirmative action for Blacks and women, and the fight for government action

Continued on Page 13

Ford in England admits using spies against employees

BY BRIAN GROGAN

LONDON — The Ford Motor Co. here has now admitted using the Economic League, a business-funded spy organization, to screen its employees. The disclosure came the day before the May 25 firing of Tony Hunt, a worker at the Dagenham plant in east London.

Hunt's branch of the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) has appealed the firing, and the national union has demanded that Ford break ties with the Economic League. Member of Parliament Bernie Grant, who represents Hunt's locality, has sent a letter of protest to Ford.

The TGWU branch has put out a bulletin to all workers in the plant calling for Hunt's reinstatement and an end to company spying. It is also contacting other members of Parliament and figures in the labor movement seeking support for his case.

Hunt worked at the same plant as Mick Gosling and Clare Smith, who were recently fired by Ford. Gosling, chairperson of the main union branch for Dagenham line workers, was prominent in the 1988 strike, which won a 8.9 percent wage increase this year for the Ford workers.

Smith came to management's attention by criticizing job-cutting and speedup plans.

Ford purge

On February 21, Stuart Hamer, Ford Europe's personnel director for production and manufacturing, told students at the London School of Economics that Ford had decided on a purge of what he described as "hard-left wreckers."

An active union member, Hunt has participated in fighting the firings of Gosling and Smith.

Management claims that Hunt, who has worked at Ford for eight months, was fired because he had not revealed all details of his educational background.

Hunt noted on his application that he had attended a university, and was not questioned further about this during the exhaustive interview procedure that Ford puts prospective employees through. Ford now says he should have volunteered more information.

The union dismissed the company's reasons as "nonsense." "The real reason," the local's bulletin states, is Hunt's union involvement and his politics. "The company wants to weaken the union and put the frighteners on us as they speed the line up, cut jobs, and prepare for the pay talks," it said.

The Dagenham plant workers have tended to be the most militant sector of the company's 33,000 hourly paid workers in Britain. A new round of wage negotiations begins in September.

Opponents of Hunt's firing have urged that messages of protest demanding his reinstatement be sent to: John Houghan, Director of Personnel, Ford Motor Company, Eagle Way, Brentwood, Essex CM13 3BW, England. Copies to: Transport and General Workers Union, 1107 branch, 27 Courtland Grove, Thamesmead, London SE28, England.

Salvadoran artist paints on Pathfinder mural

BY SELVA NEBBIA

NEW YORK — "Painting on the Pathfinder mural gives me great joy," said Isaías Mata. "I feel that I am painting on behalf of the Salvadoran people."

Mata, 33, is currently working on the six-story mural on the Pathfinder Building in Manhattan. He teaches painting at the School of the Arts of the University of El Salvador in San Salvador.

"This mural has impressed me because it is a collective effort of many artists," said Mata, referring to the character of the mural that has attracted many U.S. artists, as well as artists from around the world, as participants.

The Salvadoran artist will paint scenes of workers' and peasants' struggles in El Salvador, a country that for the past eight years has been involved in a civil war.

Describing the theme of his artistic creation, Mata explained, "My work is aimed at helping to push forward the process of liberation and towards peace that the Salvadoran people seek."

Mata has painted several murals in San Salvador. He prefers murals to paintings that hang on a wall, he explained, "because these paintings tend to become the exclusive property of those who can afford them and are not for the visual consumption of working people."

"As I began to paint murals," Mata said, "I found out that to the degree they reflect living struggles, they can have a tremendous impact."

Most of Mata's murals are on huge pieces of canvas mounted on wooden stands. "In El Salvador it is not feasible to paint on walls, so I make murals that are

movable," he explained. The movable murals can be taken to demonstrations and other meetings held by workers' organizations.

Two of Mata's murals were used by FENASTRAS, one of El Salvador's strongest union federations. His work was also featured at the Forum for Peace organized in El Salvador by a broad range of cultural organizations in February 1988.

Creating fraternal ties

Mata found out about the Pathfinder mural while in this country to put together three exhibitions of paintings by Salvadoran artists in San Francisco and in New York. "We brought the works of Salvadoran artists as a way to create fraternal ties between the people of the United States and the people of El Salvador," he said.

Though most of the artists represented in these exhibits are not very involved in the liberation struggle, their work reflects in some way the reality of the Salvadoran workers and peasants and of the war, explained Mata.

"In a society living under conditions of war, Salvadoran culture is logically quite contradictory," Mata pointed out. "Since the beginning of the war, cultural values have been distorted, yet there also exists a renaissance of new values."

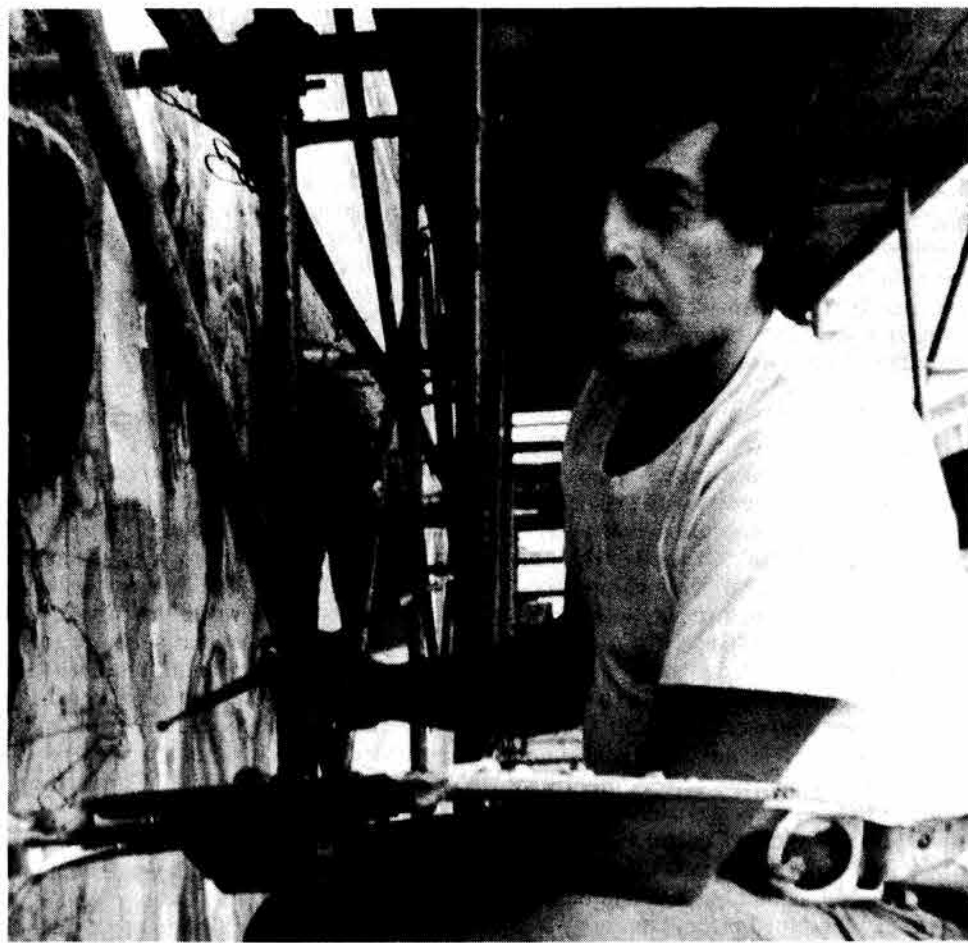
"In many parts of the country cultural forms are lost because people are constantly being displaced by the war," he said. "For example, many regional dialects have been lost forever."

"But at the same time," Mata explained, "both in the liberated zones and in the urban centers there is a rebirth of art. Art has become also part of the forms used in the struggle."

One of the forms this art takes is the graffiti painted on the walls throughout El Salvador, said Mata. "The writings on the walls have both political as well as an artistic content."

Mata spoke June 3 in Newark, New Jersey, on art and revolution in El Salvador and is scheduled to speak in Philadelphia and New York on June 9 and 10.

An open house to meet Mata and other artists participating in the mural project will take place from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. June 10 at the mural site at Charles and West streets.



Militant/Selva Nebbia

Isaías Mata, whose murals in El Salvador "aim at helping push forward the process of liberation and toward peace," works on wall of Pathfinder Building in New York.

Curtis defense gains new support in Australia

Mark Curtis is a unionist and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa, who is serving a 25-year jail term on frame-up charges of rape and burglary. The Mark Curtis Defense Com-

To avoid incidents, the THC officers and delegates excluded observers from the session that Kaku addressed. After she spoke, defense committee supporters were also invited in and provided with union



Kate Kaku

the newspaper of the Socialist Workers Party of Australia.

A number of prominent figures signed up as endorsers of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee during Kaku's tour in Australia.

They include: Peter Milton, Labor Party member of Parliament; Shorty O'Neill, a leading Aboriginal activist from Queensland; Betty Hounslow, a defender of immigrant rights; Dennis Freney, writer for the *Tribune*; Bill Davis, assistant secretary of the Victorian Plumbers' Union in Melbourne; Para Seneviratne, president of the Sri Lankan Human Rights Campaign;

and a number of others.

The Mark Curtis Defense Campaign in Australia is urging those wishing to offer support or obtain more information to contact the campaign at P.O. Box 153, Glebe, NSW 2037, or phone (02) 660 1673.

Thirty people signed endorser cards for Mark Curtis at the Labor Notes Conference held in Detroit May 19-21, and dozens more stopped by the defense table to find out about the case.

The conference, called "New Directions for Labor," featured workshops, panels, and presentations on a broad range of topics. It was attended by more than 1,000 people.

"A number of the people who came to the Labor Notes Conference were familiar with Mark's case and stopped at our table to get an update," said Ellen Whitt, a leader of the Curtis defense committee in Des Moines.

"But for many others," Whitt continued, "this was the first time that they had heard about the case. They took our literature and promised to get back to us." Curtis supporters sold 28 copies of the pamphlet *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis* by Margaret Jayko, and collected more than \$100 for the defense effort.

The Curtis endorsers came from a number of different unions. They included: Bob Machado, an organizer for United Food and Commercial Workers Local 26 in Detroit; Russ Leone, the head of the

Tool and Die unit at United Auto Workers Union Local 600 at the Ford River Rouge plant in Detroit; Peter Downs, recording secretary of UAW Local 2250 in St. Louis; and José Lopez Feijóo from the São Bernardo Metalworkers Union in Brazil.

"Mark Curtis did not get a fair trial. He was forbidden from producing key evidence. He was condemned by a jury made up solely of whites without any workers or farmers in it. He was presumed guilty from the beginning," said an article that appeared in the May 25 issue of *L'Alternative*.

L'Alternative, published in Montréal, is the paper that reflects the views of the Québec Communist Party. The article gives the facts that led to Curtis' frame-up and includes an appeal by the defense committee for support from its readers.

Peter Heathfield, a leader of the National Union of Mineworkers of Britain; Pete Seeger, activist and folksinger; and Herbert Aptheker, author and member of the national committee of the Communist Party of the United States, recently added their names to the list of more than 3,000 endorsers of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

Ron Poulsen from Australia, and Jeff Powers from Detroit contributed to this column.

DEFEND MARK CURTIS!

mittee 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.

During a tour of the Pacific region that brought her to New Zealand and the Philippines, Kate Kaku spent a week in Australia rallying support for justice for Mark Curtis.

Kaku, a laid-off packinghouse worker who is married to Curtis, is a leader of the international campaign against the frame-up of Curtis.

On May 11 Kaku addressed a meeting of union officials and delegates of the Trades Hall Council (THC) in Newcastle, an industrial port city north of Sydney.

About 15 supporters of the prosecution had spent the day at the hall in an unsuccessful attempt to intimidate the council into barring Kaku from speaking. They were members of the Socialist Labour League, which is associated with the Workers League in the United States and has a record of provocative and disruptive activities against strikes and other working-class struggles.

protection against the would-be disrupters.

In Wollongong, just south of Sydney, Kaku addressed the South Coast Trades and Labour Council. The gathering voted to write a letter of support to the defense campaign and to take the case up with state and federal parliamentarians.

Kaku also addressed a public meeting in Sydney on May 12. Representatives of the African National Congress of South Africa, the Committee to Defend Black Rights, and members of the Australian Labor Party and trade unions were among the 30 people who attended.

During her tour, Kaku met and spoke with members of a local city council and members of the Labor Party in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney. She met with representatives of the Campaign in Defense of Black Rights, which is fighting for measures to end the deaths of Blacks in police custody; and with members of Tranby Aboriginal College.

Kaku was also interviewed by several radio stations, and by *Tribune*, the paper of the Communist Party of Australia. An article on the tour also appeared in *Direct Action*,

Pittston Coal strike leaders arrested in Virginia

BY MAGGIE McCRAW

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Three United Mine Workers of America officials, leaders of the nine-week-old strike against Pittston Coal Group, were arrested at the courthouse in Abingdon, Virginia, on June 5. The three were handcuffed, put in leg irons, and taken to jail, where they are being held indefinitely.

Strike coordinator Marty Hudson, UMW District 28 President Jackie Stump, and International Representative C.A. Phillips were ordered arrested by U.S. District Judge Glen Williams. They were held in contempt of court for allegedly violating an order restricting strike activity.

The arrests came on the heels of a June 2 ruling by Russell County, Virginia, Judge Ronald McGlothlin. Pittston had urged the judge to "impose sanctions that cannot be ignored" against the union. McGlothlin did

ers had set up on the railroad's right-of-way following Pittston's threats to have them arrested and removed from roads leading to Pittston mines. The railroad had allowed the pickets until now.

Railroad attorneys say they plan no legal action to remove the miners, but they will seek reimbursement from the union if CSX is sued by Pittston.

Negotiations between the UMW and Pittston are continuing under nonbinding federal mediation. The *Charleston Gazette* has reported that Pittston Chairman Paul Douglas has begun sitting in on the talks.

'March for Justice'

The miners are continuing to picket and to gear up for a four-day "March for Justice" and a June 11 Charleston rally in support of striking Eastern Airlines workers and striking miners.

UMWA International Representative Howard Green told the *Charleston Gazette*, "Our folks are digging in. We feel we're in the middle of Tiananmen Square. . . . We just feel as an organization we're under siege by the government and, in particular, the judicial system. We're thinking of expanding the strike to include major portions of the industry as well as asking some of the other labor unions for help."

Mine Worker - Machinist tour

Striking miners from Pittston and New Beckley Mining have joined hands with members of the International Association of Machinists union who have shut down Eastern Airlines for 13 weeks. They are participating in a West Virginia tour to explain the issues in their strikes and to reach out for support and funds.

In the first week, the tour group held three news conferences, spoke to a meeting of Machinists who work for Union Carbide, hospital workers in the Huntington area, Steelworkers at five union meetings, United Mine Workers at six local meetings, and a Building and Construction Trades Council meeting. They talked with dozens of Charleston's homeless at a church meal program, and joined picket lines at a shopping mall that is being built with nonunion labor.

Thousands of dollars have already been

raised through plant-gate and mine-portal collections by Communication Workers union members at the Charleston phone company, Machinists at Rhone-Poulenc and Union Carbide, Steelworkers at the FMC and Monsanto chemical plants, miners at two mines, and six other plants organized by the Steelworkers.

At each event the strikers distributed material on their struggles, "Boycott Eastern" stickers, and leaflets for the June 11 solidarity rally here.

Starting June 6 the striking Machinists joined two four-day marches organized by

the Mine Workers. The marches are going through the coalfields of southern West Virginia and will culminate in Charleston for Saturday's rally, which will be addressed by Richard Trumka, president of the Mine Workers; William Winpisinger, president of the Machinists; Jesse Jackson of the Rainbow Coalition; and others.

Union members, activists in the National Organization for Women and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, homeless advocates, students, and others are organizing buses and carpools to get to the rally.

Miners continue to picket and gear up for 'March for Justice.'

just that, fining the union \$2.94 million and ruling that any future violations of a court order limiting the size of picket lines would result in a \$700,000 fine that would be doubled each day the order is violated.

While McGlothlin also ruled that the number of pickets at Pittston mines could be doubled to 30, he said each person over that number will be subject to a contempt hearing and possible jail sentence.

Another contempt citation

On May 30 Logan County, West Virginia, District Judge Eric O'Briant issued 10 civil contempt charges against the union for blocking the road to Pittston mines in Slab Fork Hollow. He limited the number of pickets allowed to seven and ordered the union to provide him with daily lists of "authorized" pickets. O'Briant denied Pittston's request that he order state troopers to arrest miners who violate the order.

Two days earlier CSX railroad officials asked the union to remove its picket line and picket shack from CSX property. Min-

Iowa warden defends attack

Continued from front page
cations sent to inmates."

"Every effort is made to ensure that any prisoner has access to some type of correspondence," Thalacker claimed. "Obviously, it is of greater concern for us when English is not the primary language of the prisoner," he added. Thalacker reiterated prison authorities' assertion that the additional cost of hiring staff with the skills to review foreign-language materials justifies prohibiting inmates from receiving them.

Thalacker also implied that supporters of Curtis were "distributing erroneous information."

Mark Curtis Defense Committee Secretary Hazel Zimmerman responded to Thalacker's letter on June 6. She explained that Thalacker failed to say what is false in the information distributed by supporters of Curtis. Zimmerman wrote that Curtis was told by prison officials that "inmates could not receive material in languages other than English if their first language is English."

"There is no reference to any such policy in your letter, and it is not a written policy of the Iowa Department of Corrections," Zimmerman added.

She noted that the books and magazines denied to Curtis "meet the requirements specified in your letter: 'unused and sent directly from the publisher or bookstore that does mail order business.'"

"Last month's U.S. Supreme Court decision, which you referred to, in no way sug-

gested that prisoners should be denied literature in languages other than English," Zimmerman explained. In response to Thalacker's charge that foreign languages are "encoded" because the "average Iowan" cannot read them, Zimmerman pointed out, "There are people in Iowa, including in the prisons, who are immigrants from countries where languages other than English are spoken."

"These people have the right to communicate in languages other than English whether or not they are in prison," she wrote.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is urging that protest messages be sent to the warden asking that he allow Curtis and other prisoners to receive non-English language materials of their choice and that he end restrictions on prisoners' rights to share literature with each other.

Protests should be addressed to: John A. Thalacker, Warden, Iowa State Men's Reformatory, Anamosa, Iowa 52205. Copies should be sent to Attorney General Thomas J. Miller, Hoover State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319, and to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311.

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Hormel company spying unmasked

At labor board hearings, fired unionist tells of harassment

BY CHRIS HOEPPNER

FREMONT, Neb. — Recent National Labor Relations Board hearings held here in the case of fired packinghouse worker Bob Langemeier have revealed systematic spying on union activists by Geo. A. Hormel & Co. The secret surveillance included spying on the Langemeier's home, videotaping a union rally, and secretly taping a forum that was held at the Pathfinder Bookstore in Des Moines, Iowa, on the struggle of meat-packing workers.

The evidence of company spying was presented in eight days of hearings held as a result of charges brought by the NLRB against Hormel for its firing of Langemeier for protected union activity. Langemeier had worked at the Hormel plant here for more than 21 years at the time of his last firing in May 1987. The hearings ended March 17.

The roots of Langemeier's case go back several years to the 1985-86 strike by United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-9 at the Hormel plant in Austin, Minnesota. P-9 members were fighting for a new contract that would restore wages and benefits cut drastically by the company the previous year.

In an effort to broaden support for their strike after the National Guard was called out against them in January 1986, Local P-9 immediately initiated a national boycott of Hormel products. They also sent roving pickets to other Hormel plants, including one in Ottumwa, Iowa, and the one here in Fremont.

In Fremont, the company "permanently replaced" 27 workers who honored the picket lines — including Langemeier — on the grounds that they were "sympathy strikers." In July 1987 Hormel was forced to recall 11 of the workers. Langemeier — who had been fired the previous May for alleged "boycott activity" — was not recalled. The NLRB upheld his claim that he had been fired for union activity.

Systematic harassment

During the March hearings, Langemeier detailed the systematic harassment he was subjected to by Hormel.

In June 1985, he recalled, he was forced to remove a "P-9 Proud" sticker from his hat. Plant personnel manager Ken Young repeatedly took down union material posted by Langemeier on the union's section of the plant bulletin board. In December 1985 he was fired for wearing a "P-9 Proud" sticker — even though, as UFCW Local 22 President Skip Niederdippe testified, he had removed it.

Langemeier was offered his job back in February 1986. Local P-9 had set up picket lines at the plant in January, however, and he refused to cross. He was later put on a "preferential hiring list."

Langemeier explained to the hearing how he had been inspired by Local P-9's

power, and by the democratic organization and mobilization of its ranks. He detailed the union activities he took part in to build support for the embattled Austin workers, including speaking to many union locals and participating in a trip to Britain. It was for these activities, Langemeier pointed out, that he was fired, not for supporting the boycott, which he testified he didn't consider to be very effective — that was simply a pretext, he said.

Wearing a red ribbon to show support for Machinists currently on strike at Eastern Airlines, Lois Langemeier also testified. She was a founder of the prounion Fremont United Support Group and is Langemeier's wife. The vehicles cited by Hormel as hav-

Company spied on Langemeier home.

ing "Boycott Hormel" stickers on them were either owned by her, or jointly owned with her husband, she said.

She explained that she did feel the boycott was effective, and that's why she put the stickers on, adding, "Hormel doesn't own me."

Hormel's antiunion spies

Hormel's response to the NLRB charges revealed that the company used finks and hired private investigators to spy on Langemeier, his family, and other workers.

Two members of UFCW Local 22 testified for the company. Local executive board member Jerry Rosenthal told the hearing that Langemeier gave him a flyer on Local P-9's fight after a union meeting in June 1987.

Mark Scott Braun testified that he informed the plant personnel manager that he saw Lois Langemeier put a "Boycott Hormel" sticker on the shelf of a local supermarket.

Hormel personnel manager Young testified that he fired Langemeier for "boycott activity," which included:

- Distribution of a flier entitled "Don't Vote Away Your Jobs," which discussed contract and safety issues;
- Having a "Boycott Hormel" sticker on his truck at a union meeting;
- Participation in a trip to Britain with meat-packers from UFCW Local P-9 and elsewhere to win support from British mine workers and Labour Party activists for the fight against Hormel;
- Being a speaker along with other labor activists at a Militant Labor Forum on the fight against the meat-packing bosses' offensive, held in Des Moines February 1987; and
- Participating in a march and rally for the Hormel strikers in Austin in March 1987.

In his testimony, Young cited Langemeier's refusal to take out an ad in the local paper dissociating himself from the Hormel boycott as evidence of the unionist's support for it.

He also produced photos — including one of a "Boycott Hormel" sticker on a truck — of Langemeier's home and vehicles.

Spying from dumpster

Two private investigators were called by the company to testify against Langemeier. One, from Baker & Associates, Inc., testified that he was hired by Hormel to videotape a parade and rally in Austin on March 14, 1987. The videos were used by Hormel to finger union activists participating in the events.

The other private cop told the hearing that he was hired to spy on the meat-packers' forum held in Des Moines.

He took down license plate numbers of cars parked in the area to give to Hormel, he said. In addition, he went around to the alley in back of the building and stood in a trash dumpster for some two hours while recording Langemeier's speech through a vent in the back wall.

The tape recording was not produced, but the spy told the hearing that Langemeier's speech indicated support for the



Militant/Holbrook Mahn
Bob Langemeier. Nebraska packinghouse worker built solidarity with Hormel workers' strike in Austin, Minnesota.

boycott, and for a "slowdown" if he got his job back. This testimony was refuted by Peter Bucy, a meat-packer and farmer who was present at the forum.

Attorneys' briefs are scheduled to be submitted to the judge by June 21, 1989. A decision in Langemeier's case will follow sometime after that.

St. Louis construction strikers win

BY JIM ROGERS

ST. LOUIS — On May 15, Operating Engineers Local 513 won a decisive victory against 220 construction companies after a two-week strike succeeded in shutting down virtually all construction here.

The strike began May 1 when the 600 union members walked out over the companies' demands for a continued wage freeze and changes in work rules that would have eliminated jobs and, in some cases, lowered pay. The union charged that the work rule proposals were a blatant attempt to break the union.

The Engineers, who operate the heavy machinery on construction projects, decided it was time to fight. As one member put it, "For the last three or four contracts, we gave. This time we gave nothing!" In the final settlement, the union got a \$.50 an hour raise for each of the three years the contract runs, and the contractors dropped all demands for work rule changes.

This was the first strike in construction here in 17 years. The vast majority of sites were shut down as all 20,000 members of the 12 other construction unions honored the strikers' picket lines.

The Operating Engineers also briefly set up pickets at the Anheuser-Busch brewery, where construction was going on. Members of the Teamsters union who work in the brewery refused to go in. The International Association of Machinists agreed not to cross picket lines that might be put up at plants organized by the Machinists. The strike was settled before this was done.

"Everybody finally realized that if you carry the union card in your pocket, you've got to stand up for one another. Otherwise it's meaningless," said striker Frank Busby, commenting on the wide solidarity the strike had received. "They were trying to break the union," he said.

Engineers' President Jack Martorelli

said, "Working people around here have been taking it on the chin for too long. I think we just gave the employers something to think about!"

Most of the other construction unions' contracts run out this summer. "I'm worried about a sort of ripple effect on contracts coming due in the next few months,"

said Associated General Contractors spokesman Alfred Fleischer. "The question is whether everybody says, 'You had your swing at it and got more than you expected. We'll try too.'"

Jim Rogers is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1345.

Canadian Steelworkers defend Québec French-language law

BY JOE YOUNG

QUÉBEC CITY — The most important decision of the 460 delegates at the 1989 Canadian policy conference of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) was to vote to defend Law 101. Law 101, which was adopted by the Québec government in 1977, contains affirmative action measures to promote the French language in Québec.

This is the first time that a Canada-wide union has voted to support the law, which has been the target of the federal government and big business. The USWA in Canada is already on record as supporting Québec's right to self-determination.

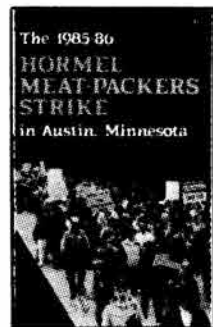
In the discussion, Leo Gerard, who is the director of District 6 in Ontario Province and a Franco-Ontarian, described the discrimination that francophones in that province are subjected to. He explained that the same thing would happen in Québec without special measures to promote French. Clément Godbout, who is the director of District 5 in Québec, welcomed the support of Steelworkers from Ontario. English-speaking delegates from outside Québec supported the resolution, which was adopted almost unanimously.

In particular, Local 1005, which represents the more than 8,000 workers who work at Stelco's major steel-making operation in Hamilton, Ontario, submitted a resolution condemning Ingersoll Rand. This company has several unilingual English-speaking foremen at its Sherbrooke, Québec, plant where the employees are overwhelmingly Québécois. The company has threatened to withdraw investment from Québec to protest against Québec's language legislation.

The resolution that was adopted concluded, "Therefore be it resolved that the USWA Policy Conference go on record supporting District 5 in its fight for French language rights against multinational companies such as Ingersoll Rand and that no job should be lost as a result of the desire of our Québec brothers and sisters to work in the language of their society."

In his speech to the April 26-28 conference, Lynn Williams, the international president, called on Steelworkers in Canada to show solidarity with the Eastern Airlines strike. He also said that worker buyouts of companies was an idea whose time has come.

A pamphlet on meat-packers' struggle



The 1985-86 Hormel Meat-Packers' Strike in Austin, Minnesota presents the facts about the Geo. A. Hormel & Co.'s union-busting attack on the workers at its Austin plant, and about how the Hormel workers fought

back and won support from unionists and farmers across the country.

Every unionist facing takeback demands and other attacks will want to read this story. 44 pp. \$1.00.

Available from Pathfinder bookstores listed on page 12, or by mail from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Please add \$1 for handling.

Eastern strikers in strong position to advance fight

Continued from front page

ruptcy judge's decision June 5 not to accept the offer of Chicago commodities speculator Joseph Ritchie to buy the airline.

The judge agreed with the bankruptcy examiner's recommendation that Eastern and its creditors should move ahead with Lorenzo's plan to reorganize Eastern. Liquidation of the airline is also being studied.

Ritchie deal: \$400 million in cuts

In recent weeks, Ritchie's bid had emerged as the only remaining offer to buy Eastern after several others collapsed.

To come up with the needed money, however, Ritchie demanded wage and benefits cuts from the unions of more than \$400 million. In addition to \$210 million in concessions agreed to by union officials in an earlier buyout attempt by Peter Ueberroth, Ritchie was asking for as much as \$175 to \$200 million in further wage and benefit cuts and work rule "savings" during the first six months of operations to get the airline running again.

This would have meant an average minimum pay cut per worker of about \$7,200, in addition to the concessions agreed to earlier. These added cuts were to be made if Eastern had losses of more than \$291 million during the first six months of renewed operations.

In order to aid Ritchie in coming up with enough money for the offer to be taken seriously, union officials offered to put up three times the amount Ritchie himself was offering to finance the buyout. The Machinists and pilots' unions would put up \$25 million, another \$50 million would be put up by some 10 AFL-CIO unions, and Ritchie would provide \$25 million. The AFL-CIO unions' money would be backed by pension-fund collateral.

While some strikers were disappointed when the Ritchie deal fell through, others thought it was a mistake for the unions to go along with his demands.

"As more workers found out what Ritchie's terms were, opposition to the deal grew," said striker Ernest Mailhot. Mailhot is on International Association of Machinists Local 1018's strike committee at La Guardia Airport in New York. "Many people I talked with on the picket line and in the union headquarters said, 'We don't have to accept this. This is what we've been striking against. We have to keep fighting.'"

A decision is expected soon on Eastern's request to sell its eight Philadelphia gates to USAir for \$85 million. Eastern is negotiating with American Airlines to sell its South American routes, valued at \$350 to \$500 million. On June 6 the bankruptcy judge approved the sale of four Eastern slots at Chicago's O'Hare Airport to AMR, American Airlines' parent company. The New York-Boston-Washington, D.C. shuttle has been sold to Donald Trump for \$365 million.

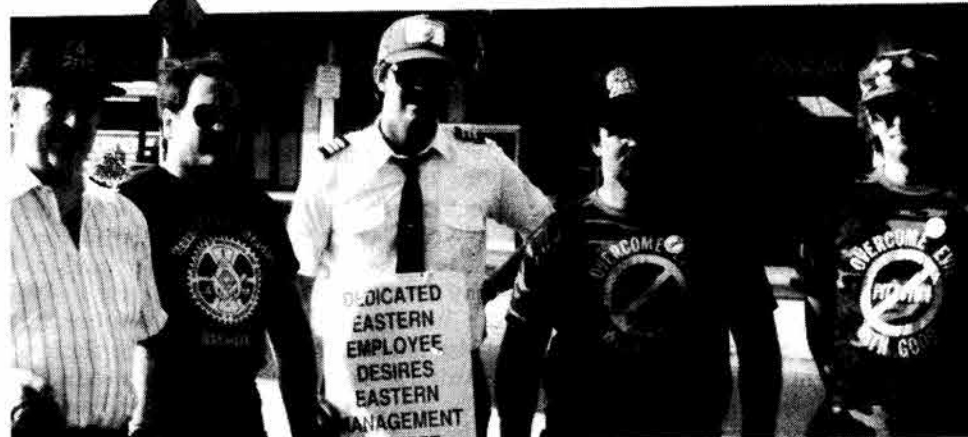
"These developments underscore what the strike at Eastern is really about," said Mailhot. "And that is the fight to defend our unions, and get the best wages and conditions we can win, at Eastern, no matter who owns it; at the shuttle; and at any other parts of the airline that are sold."

Trump Shuttle

On June 7 striking Machinists, flight attendants, and pilots hired from Eastern by the Trump Shuttle began reporting for work.

Trump had made the deal to buy Eastern's shuttle from Lorenzo last October before the strike started, and had hired workers from Eastern who applied to work for the shuttle.

The Transport Workers Union, which or-



Militant/Ernest Mailhot

United Mine Workers members on strike at Pittston Coal Group stopped by Eastern strike picket line at New York's La Guardia Airport June 1. Several members of Swedish Transport Workers' Union, which organizes workers at Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS), were also there that day, including Johnny Grönberg (left), the union's president. They were on a fact-finding trip about Eastern strike. SAS recently acquired part of Continental Airlines, also owned by Texas Air, Eastern's parent company.

ganizes Eastern flight attendants, and the Air Line Pilots Association have already reached agreements with Trump, based on their pre-strike contracts at Eastern. Trump, however, is demanding that both unions agree to a 90-day "relaxation" of work rules as the shuttle resumes operations.

As the 2:30 p.m., June 7, deadline to report for work got closer, officials of International Association of Machinists District 100 told the Eastern Machinists that an agreement with Trump was near, and they should go in to work.

Although many strikers thought it was wrong to return to work without a contract, even for a short time, the picket lines were taken down and workers went in.

Close to 700 Machinists, flight attendants, and pilots are returning to work at the shuttle, out of an expected work force of 1,000.

"After more than three months on strike, many workers at the shuttle will be going back in determined to remain part of the fight," said Mailhot. "The most important job now is reaching an agreement that is acceptable to the union members as rapidly as possible, and maintaining the unity of the three unions at the shuttle."

More empty flights?

At the end of April, Lorenzo outlined a plan to sell \$1.8 billion of Eastern's assets and restart operations as a smaller, nonunion carrier.

Lorenzo has stated that he will be starting up more flights in the coming weeks, with slashed fares to lure passengers. Strikers are discussing what to do about this.

It is useful to recall what happened the second weekend after the strike started, when Lorenzo announced the shuttle was resuming operations and dropped the fare to \$12 to tempt passengers.

Although more people did fly on the shuttle for a few days, the traffic soon dropped

back down to a trickle. The picket lines remained strong, and the only thing Lorenzo succeeded in doing was losing even more money by flying near-empty planes.

A similar response is needed this time around, and strikers can expect significant support. Already in Philadelphia, members of one rail union have promised to help beef up union picket lines on July 2, the day several flights to Atlanta are scheduled to resume.

Since it began March 4, the Eastern workers' strike has grown stronger.

After more than three months on the picket lines, the unity of the workers remains unbroken. A mood of determination and commitment to continue the fight for as long as necessary is evident on picket lines and in strike headquarters around the country.

As a result of the unions' combined strength, Eastern remains shut tight. Strikers' picket lines — often bolstered by supporters from other unions, family members, and others — have kept the airline's operations at a standstill.

The strikers have gained important experience in fighting in the last 100 days. They have learned how to keep the picket lines strong and strike headquarters functioning, and how to reach out and win broader support.

Machinists, flight attendants, and pilots have learned how to speak out and explain the issues in their fight to other working people. They've become experienced at organizing food banks, at helping those who need it to find temporary work, and at aiding each other in meeting some of the serious financial and practical difficulties of being on strike for many weeks.

Out of this battle, more workers are coming forward to help lead, gaining confidence from the members' resolve to keep fighting. This is a powerful reserve to draw on in the weeks ahead.

Philadelphia strikers organize

BY RONI McCANN

PHILADELPHIA — At Eastern Airlines' ticket counter in Terminal C at the Philadelphia International Airport, the lights are turned off, the counter is abandoned, and the area is quiet. Surrounding cocktail lounges and shops report that business is very slow. Many have been closed for weeks.

Across the aisle from the ticket counter, striking Eastern Machinists, flight attendants, and pilots take turns staffing an information table and distributing materials about their 14-week walkout. Hardly anyone passing by is hostile or antiunion, reported one striker who has staffed the table.

Outside, at the terminal entrance, there is round-the-clock picketing, in four-hour shifts. Strikers also cover the air freight gate and auto shop when possible.

There are almost 200 striking Machinists union members and more than 100 pilots. No flight attendants are based in Philadelphia — their nearest union local is in Newark, New Jersey. But about 75 live closer to Philadelphia than Newark and work with the strikers.

Part of picket duty includes staffing the union hall, which is just down the street from

the airport and is open 24 hours a day. Groups of strikers come in and out of the hall — changing shifts on picket duty, staffing phones, and carrying out other tasks. Along the back wall of the hall, numerous announcements with strike news are posted, as well as information on food distribution, sign-up sheets for strike activities, and picket schedules.

I visited the hall June 6, the day after news came from the bankruptcy court in New York indicating that Chicago commodities speculator Joseph Ritchie's bid to buy Eastern would be unsuccessful. This was a big topic of discussion among strikers at the union hall, who tried to find out the facts in the situation and talked about what it would mean for their fight.

There were also discussions about an announcement made June 5 that Eastern would start up three flights a day from Philadelphia to Atlanta on July 2. This is a challenge for the strike, one worker said, and a show of force will be needed on the picket line that day. That night, rail workers at the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way District Council meeting volunteered to be on the picket lines July 2.

McCann, Thierjung join 'Militant' staff

The *Militant* is pleased to announce two new additions to our staff: Roni McCann and Peter Thierjung. For the next couple of weeks McCann and Thierjung will be reporting on the Eastern Airlines strike from cities on the East Coast.

Before coming on staff, McCann was the organizer for the Socialist Workers Party branch in Los Angeles and a well-known anti-apartheid activist in the Los Angeles area. Earlier, she was a refinery worker and member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union.

Last October, McCann and Cindy Jaquith reported for the *Militant* on the Third Meeting of the Women's Continental Front Against Intervention, held in Havana, Cuba. Some 1,200 women, mainly from Latin America and the Caribbean, attended the conference.

Thierjung was organizer for the SWP branch in Oakland, California, before joining the *Militant* staff. He was also a member of the International Association of Machinists and worked at Airco Solar Products in Berkeley.

Before moving to California, Thierjung was national secretary of the Young Socialist Alliance, from 1983 to 1985.

In March, Thierjung was part of a delegation from Pathfinder publishers that traveled to the Philippines to participate in the 10-day Manila Bookfair and meetings launching new Pathfinder publications.

McCann and Thierjung recently spent several days in Miami to learn more about the Eastern strike. They will be returning to the West Coast to speak at Militant Labor Forums in Los Angeles and the Bay Area on "The Stakes in the Strike at Eastern Airlines," on Saturday, June 24. Send-off events to raise funds for the *Militant* will be held after the forums.

The Los Angeles forum, featuring McCann, will be held at 7:30 p.m., at 2546 W. Pico.

The Bay Area forum, with Thierjung, will be held at 7:30 p.m., location to be announced. For more information, in Los Angeles, call (213) 380-9460; in Oakland, call (415) 420-1165; and in San Francisco, call (415) 282-6255.



Roni McCann



Peter Thierjung

Militant photos

Unionists in Bermuda say no to strikebreaking

The International Association of Machinists struck Eastern Airlines March 4 in an effort to block the company's drive to break the unions and impose massive concessions on workers.

Backed by the 5,900 flight attendants and 3,400 pilots at East-

SUPPORT EASTERN STRIKERS!

ern, the strike by 8,500 Machinists has crippled the airline's operations since then. It has also won broad support from working people in the United States and Canada. Readers — especially Eastern strikers — are encouraged to send news of strike solidarity activities to this column.

From the International Association of Machinists' June 1 daily strike bulletin, known as the "hotsheet":

"Eastern announced yesterday that it will resume flights to Bermuda on June 9. However, union leader Mr. Ottiwell Simmons of the Bermuda Industrial Union warned the government that it will not accept strikebreaking Eastern Airlines into Bermuda. 'The BIU is supporting the pilots and engineers

[Machinists] on strike against Eastern and we are not going to do anything to encourage the Bermuda government to get into bed with strikebreakers.'"

Bermuda — a country made up of hundreds of small islands, 580 miles east of North Carolina — is a popular vacation spot for North Americans.

A "Solidarity Rally for Eastern Airline Strikers" is being planned for Los Angeles on Saturday, June 17.

International Association of Machinists' District 720, which organizes two of the three big McDonnell Douglas aerospace plants in the Los Angeles area, has issued a leaflet urging IAM members to join the rally and march.

"For more than three months, the IAM, pilots, and flight attendants have shut down Eastern Airlines," the leaflet says. "The strike is winning because of the unity shown by the three unions, and support from the entire labor movement. Every day, Frank Lorenzo is losing \$1.7 million.

"This strike is about the very existence of the union. Lorenzo wants to bust it like he did at Continental. Today, the fight is at Eastern — tomorrow, it could be at any company organized by the IAM — or any union. Now is the time for all of us to join the fight!"

The rally will begin at 10:00 a.m. in Parking Lot "C" at Los Angeles

International Airport, followed by a march to the Eastern and Continental airline terminals.

The action was called by the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, and strike supporters are working out of the federation's office to contact as many unions in the Los Angeles area as possible about attending the rally.

A picket line of Machinists, pilots, and members of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union was on hand at the Airport Hilton in Salt Lake City, Utah, June 3 in response to an Eastern "open house" aimed at recruiting scab flight attendants. The airline had advertised the event in the *Desert News* and *Salt Lake Tribune*.

The only two Eastern workers based in Salt Lake — both of whom are pilots — helped staff the picket line. One pilot went into the open house and spoke from the floor about the strike until he was removed.

After talking with the union pickets, most of the 40 or so would-be flight attendants decided not to go in for the interview.

More than 600 Trans World Airline workers in Kansas City, Missouri, have walked the Eastern picket line there since the strike started. Some have been out as many as 16 times.

There are 30 Eastern Machinists,

pilots, and flight attendants on strike in Kansas City. Machinists Local 1650, which organizes the 3,500 workers at TWA's maintenance base there, has been an important source of support for the Eastern workers.

Strike buttons and red "solidarity" ribbons are a common sight at the TWA base. Many Local 1650 members have pledged a weekly contribution to the Eastern strikers, and an average of \$5,000 is collected each week by union stewards. Local 1650's women's auxiliary and retirees' organizations have been part of luncheons and other fund-raising benefits for the strikers.

To encourage TWA workers and others to join them on the picket line, the Eastern strikers in Kansas City have produced a button. Below the familiar "Stop Lorenzo" logo, it says, "I walked the picket line at Eastern." There's only one way to get this button, strikers say: you have to earn it. The buttons are eagerly sought after.

On April 12 a plant collection for striking Eastern Airlines' workers took place at the big General Electric jet-engine plant in Cincinnati. The collection was organized after the March meeting of United Auto Workers Local 647, which represents more than 5,000 workers at GE. The Eastern strike office in Cleveland helped coordinate the effort.

Before the collection, Local 647 President Bill Adams traveled to the Eastern picket line in Louisville, Kentucky, and interviewed strikers there for an article in the GE local's newspaper.

GE workers contributed more than \$2,100 to the in-plant collection. Those who donated received "Stop Lorenzo" stickers, which remain up all over the plant. Striking Eastern Machinists from Louisville and Cleveland attended the Local 647's April union meeting, where an additional \$500 was donated. The three strikers got a standing ovation from the 200 UAW members at the meeting.

The *Boston Globe* reported May 25 that "many of the 100 or so Navy Reserve aviators and their crews plan to wear 'No Lorenzo' buttons while flying weekends out of Brunswick (Maine) Naval Air Station." Reservist Mark Frattasio explained that many of the navy reservists work for commercial airlines in their regular weekday jobs and feel solidarity with the Eastern pilots. "We'll put them on our flight suits and wear them while we're flying," he said.

Steve Warshell from Salt Lake City and Val Libby from Cincinnati contributed to this column.

A day 'pitching in' at Miami strike headquarters



Strikers and supporters packing food at Machinists' hall in Miami.

BY PETER THIERJUNG

MIAMI — International Association of Machinists Local 702 is an important center for the national strike against Eastern Airlines. Some 3,900 of the 8,500 Machinists on strike around the country are located here.

On June 5 I visited Local 702's strike headquarters. I felt right at home pitching in at the food bank, on the picket line, and on cleanup.

The headquarters — which can hold several hundred — was packed. It was Monday, when strikers pick up their strike benefit checks. Periodic announcements were made from the front podium to organize picketing and provide information about the strike and other activities.

That day, the local was urging strikers to attend the June 6 "Jobs with Justice" rally in Miami, and buses were being organized to get Machinists, flight attendants, and pilots to the event. Around the hall, small groups of workers were talking.

At noon, a leader of the struggle against

apartheid in South Africa arrived at the headquarters and was invited to speak to the strikers. Everyone listened and applauded his message of solidarity and appeal for unity.

I immediately got drawn into helping unload a huge freezer-truck of food parked behind the headquarters. It was for the strikers' food bank — an institution initiated by members of the local and strike supporters. As the food was unloaded, a dozen or more volunteers restocked refrigerators and freezers. At the same time, grocery bags were packed for strikers' families. A line had already formed, and we rushed to get out the bags of food.

Because of the length of the strike, the number of strikers requiring food assistance is growing. This week volunteers anticipated distributing nearly 1,000 bags of groceries.

As boxes and garbage started to pile up, a group of us began to clean up. I noticed that cleanup goes on constantly and that the floor is mopped several times a day.

Later we took a break and went to the

headquarters' kitchen, where people were busy making coffee, lemonade, and hot dogs. The kitchen functions on the basis of donations and purchases by the local. Sometimes strikers prepare homemade recipes. A flight attendant's cookies, made a few days earlier were still being raved about. A sympathetic employee of a local pizza parlor delivers seven large pizzas daily.

Near the kitchen pallets are stacked with crates of cucumbers and eggplant contributed by local farmers. Such donations of produce come in frequently, I was told.

A few children were roaming through the strike center, as parents involved in various tasks took turns keeping an eye on them.

Every four hours, pickets line up for dispatch. On the line, car horns blare all day long as passing drivers signal the support for the strikers. Pickets acknowledge their support with a thumbs-up sign, which has become a symbol of the strikers' determination.

As we picketed, a team of flight attendants and Machinists swept down the avenue picking up litter left by pickets. Flight attendant Betsy Romano was leading the team. Throughout the day I saw her involved in various tasks and helping others to get involved. Some strikers affectionately refer to her as the leader of the strike. "I never ask someone to do something I would not do myself," she said. Setting the example by doing is how to inspire fellow unionists to get involved, she explained.

Back at the headquarters I met another flight attendant and remarked how impressed I was by the level of organization.

"No one tells us what to do," she said. "We just see what needs to be done and do it. We're on strike, and we're an army, an army of labor, and that's how things get done." Flight attendants are present along with Machinists in many strike activities.

I also met other strike activists. One Machinist I spoke with explained how much he appreciated the unity of the three unions involved in the strike, especially the flight attendants, who receive no strike benefits. A few weeks ago he took it upon himself to organize a fund-raiser at a local disco for the flight attendants and raised \$250.

I asked another woman who has been very active how long she had been employed by Eastern. "Oh, I don't work for Eastern. I'm a dog groomer," she replied. A Machinist chimed in, "She works here 23 hours a day

and then goes home for one hour to take care of her business." The woman told me her mother is a member of the Communications Workers' union and had begun to come down to the union hall with her. Otherwise they would never see each other, she said.

On Monday a ruling was expected from the court in New York handling Eastern Airlines' bankruptcy case. This was a big topic of conversation and debate in the strike headquarters. Many hoped a new owner would resolve the issues at stake in the strike on terms favorable to the union.

As facts about Donald Trump's purchase of the Eastern shuttle became known, the debate intensified. Some strikers were shocked by Trump's efforts to break the unity of the three striking unions and by the fact that he has not signed a contract with the Machinists' union.

One Machinist who had believed Trump's promise to respect union rights said that Trump was "nothing but a dirty rat." Another angrily said that "Trump is just becoming another Lorenzo."

Every one of the strikers I spoke with emphasized the importance of their walkout. Many explained that this was not just a strike for Eastern employees. "Our strike is an example for all the working people of this country," said one Cuban-American Machinist. "If we can't get together now around this strike, then they will come after all of us." Many I talked to were obviously proud that they had been able to shut down the airline for almost 100 days. One Machinist insisted, "No matter who the owner is, we still have our strike."

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Sandinista Youth win in Nicaraguan student elections

BY SETH GALINSKY

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Candidates of the Sandinista Youth (JS-19) won a clear victory in recent elections for president and vice-president of the National Union of Nicaraguan Students (UNEN), which represents university students on campuses across the country. The JS-19 is the youth wing of the governing Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).

The student campaign attracted particular interest because many viewed it as something of a forerunner to the general elections scheduled for February 1990. In the campus balloting, conducted in May, JS-19 candidates María Ramírez and Mario Chamorro won 57 percent of the vote.

Second place went to the "Action" candidates, who polled 17 percent. They were backed by *La Prensa*, the right-wing daily.

A bloc calling itself Fun/Ojo (Nicaraguan University Front/Organization of Young Oppositionists) won 10 percent. Fun/Ojo was made up of groups tied to a number of antigovernment parties, including Social Christians, Conservatives, Liberals, and the Communist Party of Nicaragua. It was backed by *La Crónica*, an opposition weekly that presents itself as the "moderate" voice.

A fourth slate was fielded by the Revolutionary Workers Party, (PRT), which characterizes itself as Trotskyist. It was credited with 6 percent of the vote.

Close to 10 percent of the 17,000 students who voted either recorded abstentions or turned in invalid ballots.

In the previous election, held in 1987, the JS-19 won 59 percent of the vote and opposition slates received a combined total of 30 percent. In 1985, the JS-19 won 70 percent, against 15 percent for their opponents.

"The economic crisis has slightly affected our base of support," JS-19 presidential candidate Ramírez explained in an interview. "There are some people who are confused and do not understand the reasons for the problems," she added, "but the overwhelming majority of students are firm."

In 1980, Ramírez, at age 13, participated in the National Literacy Crusade, teaching people in the countryside how to read and write. She has also been a volunteer on five coffee-picking brigades.

Sandinista campaign

The JS-19 candidates campaigned mainly around what they considered to be student issues, but they clearly identified themselves with the FSLN and with the government. Their literature featured the government's logo for the upcoming celebration of the 10th anniversary of the revolution: a heart with the slogan "Never before has there been so much patriotism in the heart of a people."

"It is the youth who will decide the 1990 presidential elections," according to Napoleón López, outgoing president of UNEN and a JS-19 leader. "The youth vote plays an important role."

The views of the JS-19 and of the FSLN have changed over the course of the revolution, López explained, and these changes were reflected in the JS-19 campaign.

"In the FSLN we used to speak about the struggle for socialism, and in the first years we thought of it in terms of socialism in Cuba," he said. "But reality has pointed out a different tendency: the mixed economy and political pluralism."

The FSLN, he added, "represents the whole nation, and not just one class." However, "some sectors don't feel that they are represented inside the FSLN." The "mixed economy" implies political pluralism, he said, and that was reflected in the student elections.

The goal of the JS-19 in its campaign, he said, was "promoting not socialist consciousness, but patriotic consciousness." A vote for the JS-19 was "a vote for sovereignty and dignity," López added.

This reflects the FSLN's view, according to López, that it would be "craziness" to try

to "decree" socialism. "Socialism is not decreed, it is built," he continued.

"We have learned to look flexibly at socialism, instead of in an orthodox and schematic way."

Festivals and debates

There was a lot of interest in the campaign on Managua campuses. Supporters of the JS-19 were the most visible, wearing T-shirts urging a vote for their candidates. The JS-19 organized festivals with popular music, dance contests, sports events, and talent shows in the final stretch before the vote.

The week before the balloting, the candidates outlined their platforms in a heated debate, which was broadcast live on television and radio.

In her opening presentation, Ramírez stressed that the JS-19 has "10 years of experience" defending the interests of students. She contrasted this with the candidates of the other slates, who, she said, only showed up on campus during the student elections.

Ramírez emphasized several points in her "Plan of Action." She said the JS-19 favors guaranteeing university students who have completed their military service and are in the reserves that they will be called for active duty only during vacations so they won't have to miss classes.

Most male college students have already completed their two years of compulsory military service, but they can be recalled to active duty for shorter periods.

Ramírez also called for strengthening university autonomy and increasing contacts with student organizations around the world to obtain books for Nicaraguan campus libraries.

The Action candidate, Fanor Avendaño, focused his comments on proposals for improving academic performance, wage increases for professors, and free bus passes for students.

Action also proposed that college students be exempted from the draft until they graduate. The "Sandinistas act like Hitler" by drafting college students, he charged.

Fun/Ojo presidential candidate Alejandro Ortega said, "We are the civic opposition to Sandinista totalitarianism." He



Militant/Seth Galinsky

University students at candidates' debate in election for president and vice-president of the National Union of Nicaraguan Students.

called for a complete revision of the draft law, including adding a provision for conscientious objectors.

Students' views on draft

The issue of the military draft has been a major one for opposition groups, who have long campaigned against conscription. A sampling of campus views showed a range of opinions on this issue.

"I see the military service as a system of oppression that carries people off to die," said María de Jesús Aguirre, a student of industrial administration who said she was voting against the JS-19. "Even though it's only two years, that's two years lost out of a person's life, and then there are mobilizations during the school year that disrupt studies."

José Noel Rizo, an industrial engineering student, said, "Military service exists in every country in the world. And in Nicaragua it is more necessary because we are the victims of direct aggression."

Rizo said he disagreed with the proposals of the Action and Fun/Ojo candidates. "The right-wingers are trying to manipulate the issue. They think the people are ignorant, but they're mistaken."

College students should not be exempted from the service, said María Elena Ramírez, a medical student and JS-19 member. "In fact, it is important for stu-

dents to go because they are more conscious, and they can use their higher education to play an important role in the army."

Dispute over voting rights

One hotly disputed issue in the campaign was over who could vote. Action and Fun/Ojo challenged the eligibility of students who come to campus only on Saturdays. These are mostly workers, government employees, and members of the military, who are unable to attend classes during the week.

The opposition candidates also objected to voting by students at a special pre-college preparatory school, which is part of the university system and reportedly a stronghold of JS-19 supporters.

The election council ruled that both Saturday students and those in the preparatory school could vote.

Early in the campaign, the Action and Fun/Ojo candidates had charged that there was the danger of fraud. However, as the vote tallies arrived at the election council headquarters after the balloting ended, representatives of all the slates said the elections had been "clean and democratic" and accepted the results.

Ajax Delgado, national coordinator of the JS-19, said the victory for the JS-19 slate proved that "the students continue to support the revolution."

Environmentalists, unionists protest Exxon oil spill at stockholders' meet

BY MARY ROCHE

PARSIPPANY, N.J. — Three hundred people rallied outside Exxon's annual shareholders' meeting here May 18, protesting the Alaskan oil spill and Exxon's response to this disaster.

"We're here because we will no longer tolerate Exxon's arrogance and negligence," said Phyllis Salowe-Kaye of New Jersey Citizens Action. "We demand that Exxon make full restitution, clean up the mess, and stop profiting from their mistake."

The largely young and spirited crowd came from a broad range of environmental groups, including the National Wildlife Federation, National Audubon Society, American Littoral Society, and Mothers for a Clean Environment.

Demonstrators came from Alaska, Washington, Wisconsin, and New England.

'Exxon pay for cleanup'

Five protesters from AWARE, a high school environmental club, explained that "Exxon has a history of being against the environment." But, they said, the protest is not just against Exxon, but "all the oil companies."

Alaska environmental activist Randall Weiner hit a major theme of the day: that the oil companies should not be allowed to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. He

spoke of the danger to the caribou, birds, and polar bears oil drilling would present.

Jay Hair, president of the National Wildlife Federation, said the promises of the oil companies that they could cleanly and safely transport oil from Alaska's northern arctic slope was a case of "big oil and big lies."

Eastern strike

The connection between employers' attacks on labor and their assault on the environment was made by Ed Murphy from International Association of Machinists Local 1445, currently on strike against Eastern Airlines.

"We see the same corporate arrogance from Frank Lorenzo that you're seeing from Exxon," said Murphy. "These people must be held accountable." He concluded: "Don't fly Continental and support us at Eastern!"

Five workers from the Exxon Seamen's Union in New Jersey participated in the demonstration. They said they were not surprised by the Alaskan spill, because of cutbacks by Exxon and deteriorating working conditions.

They distributed an open letter that explained, "Our 'dispute' is about health and safety problems, and lack of needed skills training for new technology so employees can be productive. Our 'dispute' is about management demands for greater manning reductions where working conditions are al-

ready unsafe because of small crews and inadequate maintenance. . . . Our 'dispute' is that 'proper' lookouts are not always kept because of the small crews. Our 'dispute' is about long work hours and stress and fatigue."

The workers said the company had now "opened up a witch-hunt" and planned to begin random drug- and alcohol-testing.

Other unionists participating in the protest included members of the Communications Workers of America, Postal Workers, United Transportation Union, Teamsters, and Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers.

Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party campaigns of Cathy Sedwick for governor and Ernest Mailhot for state assembly from the 28th legislative district distributed a statement pointing to the lack of response from industry and government to such ecological disasters as the Alaskan oil spill. It called for a federal takeover of the cleanup efforts, a moratorium on shipping oil out of Port Valdez until adequate safety measures are put in place, and for the government to take over the Alaskan pipeline and the shipping of oil out of Port Valdez.

Mary Roche is a member of Teamsters Local 877 at Exxon Refinery and Chemical Plant in Linden, New Jersey.

U.S. 'hopes to impose its authority on Panama through force of arms'

Panama unionists denounce Washington's troop buildup.

BY JUDY WHITE

PANAMA CITY, Panama — Trade union officials here are speaking out against Washington's threats of military intervention and its attempt to undo the Panama Canal treaties.

In a series of interviews, the labor leaders also discussed the effects of U.S. economic sanctions on Panamanian workers and their struggle against antilabor measures demanded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The National Federation of Public Employees (FENASEP) issued a press release condemning the buildup of U.S. troops on canal zone bases following the May 7 Panamanian elections. Washington "now hopes to impose its authority through force of arms," the release said.

Based on treaties signed in 1977, the U.S. government is supposed to turn over control of the canal to Panama by the year 2000. Juan Antonio Samudio, president of FENASEP, described some of the problems Panama has already had getting Washington to implement the agreement.

In a show of disrespect for provisions of the accords, Samudio said, the Panama Canal Commission recently met in New Orleans to discuss canal affairs instead of doing so inside Panama. The commission is currently composed of five members from the United States and four from Panama.

Washington has 13 military bases strung across the center of the country. Among them is the headquarters of the Southern Command, the U.S. operations center for military interventions and espionage in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Senate threatens to turn down Panamanian as head of canal

The U.S. Senate passed a resolution June 1 warning President George Bush that it will refuse to confirm a Panamanian as administrator of the Panama Canal if the appointment is made by the government of Gen. Manuel Noriega.

To comply with the canal treaties signed by the U.S. and Panamanian governments in 1977, the Senate must approve a Panamanian nominated by the Panamanian government as chief administrator by January 1 of next year. This is part of the process of turning the waterway over to Panama by the year 2000, with the removal of all U.S. troops and 13 U.S. military bases. Included is the headquarters of the Southern Command, Washington's intelligence and operations center for Latin America.

The nonbinding "sense of the Senate" decision, which passed 63 to 31, says the president must be able to certify that the Panamanian government has been "democratically elected," under civilian control of the military, for an appointment to be considered.

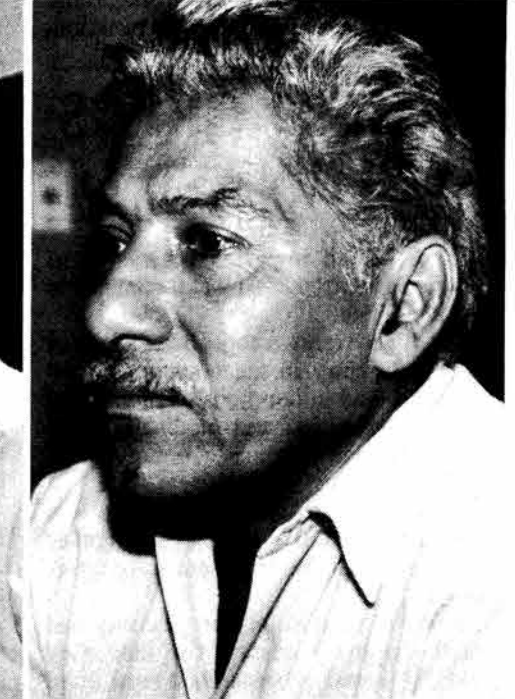
The resolution's sponsor, Sen. Daniel Coats (R.-Ind.), explained that no one Noriega would choose would be acceptable to the Senate.

"The United States Senate does not intend to turn over the Panama Canal to Panamanian control until Noriega is given the boot he so richly deserves," added Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole (R.-Kan.).

Several leading Democrats, including Sen. Christopher Dodd, opposed the resolution because it plays into Noriega's hands. "It would be General Noriega's best day in three months," Dodd said, because he will use the resolution to argue that U.S. opposition to him is rooted in a desire to renege on the treaties.

"More than the canal, the North Americans are interested in their bases," said Martín González, an official of the National Council of Organized Workers (CONATO). "The bases are part of Washington's thirst to dominate the world."

CONATO, said González, is an "anti-imperialist" bloc of labor organizations,



Panamanian trade union leaders, from left to right: Eduardo Ríos, Pablo Arosemena, and Juan Antonio Samudio.

embodying the majority of unions in the country.

'Problem not Noriega'

Several officials spoke out against the U.S. government's demand that Gen. Manuel Noriega, head of Panama's Defense Forces, step down.

"The problem isn't Noriega," said Samudio. "The problem is the 'vital interests' the United States has in this hemisphere."

"The Panamanian military is playing a very important role here now in the fight for independence and sovereignty of our country," said Pablo Arosemena. "I'm not talking about whether they are honest or not. What interests us is that they are identified with the interests of the people, and as long as they are, we are going to be on their side."

Arosemena is an official of the Workers Federation of the Republic of Panama, an affiliate of the Interamerican Regional Workers Organization (ORIT).

1972 Labor Code

In the context of massive protests demanding Panamanian sovereignty over the canal zone and the canal, the pro-Washington regime in Panama was overturned by Gen. Omar Torrijos. In addition to laying the basis for the treaties turning the canal over to Panama, this opened up a big expansion of workers' right to organize. Among other reforms, the Torrijos government promulgated the 1972 Labor Code.

"The code tended to protect the interests of workers," Arosemena explained. "The main gain was the establishment of the right to collective bargaining. Between 1947 and 1972 only 29 contracts had been negotiated by the labor movement. But within one year of the adoption of the 1972 code, almost 200 contracts were signed."

"This led to substantial improvements in wages and living and working conditions, and to the strengthening of the union movement. The new code also provided for greater job security."

In 1976 the IMF demanded that the Panamanian government weaken the Labor Code, Arosemena said. "The two-week probation period for new hires won in the 1972 code was extended to three months. Now the bosses could just hire and fire, hire and fire."

The changes also weakened the rights of workers fighting to get back on the job after being fired and made union organizing more difficult, he noted.

In the mid-1980s, the IMF demanded

that the Panamanian government enact even more stringent measures: the firing of tens of thousands of public employees, the dismantling of state agricultural enterprises that were not profitable, and the transfer to private hands of those that were.

These IMF demands met with massive resistance by organized labor. A series of

actions, including general strikes, took place, with CONATO leading the protests.

"We organized a nine-day general strike in 1986," explained CONATO leader González. "But the Noriega government paid no attention to our warnings of the dangers involved" in conceding to the IMF. "The military occupied several key industries," he said, and broke the strike. Several state-run enterprises were closed down or privatized. Thousands of workers lost their jobs.

A series of FENASEP strikes were successful in blocking the proposed layoff of 30,000 public workers, which to this day has not been carried out. The public employees' union is also fighting the government around job security. Labor grades and job descriptions do not exist for their members, leaving them at the mercy of their supervisors.

1988 economic sanctions

In 1987 Washington began demanding that Noriega resign, after he refused a U.S. proposal to allow the training of contra troops on Panamanian soil. In 1988 Washington stepped up the pressure with a series of severe economic sanctions. Included was a prohibition on U.S. companies in Panama paying taxes, which meant they

halted paying social security for their employees. Panamanian government funds in U.S. banks were frozen. All U.S. aid programs were severed.

These moves accelerated the economic crisis in Panama. Official unemployment rose from 12 to 16 percent in 1988 and to 20 percent in Panama City.

Construction was one of the industries where workers were worst hit by the economic squeeze. Eduardo Ríos, general secretary of the SUNTRACS construction union, said that prior to 1987 they had 20,000 working members. Now they have just 1,200 working.

Ríos and other labor officials argued for returning to the 1972 Labor Code and reversing the other IMF measures. By not doing this, they said, Panama's government is weakening its base of support among workers.

Pablo Arosemena cited the example of bank workers, some of whom have been drawn into actions organized by the pro-U.S. minority here.

"In Panama," Arosemena said, "the Labor Code permits unionization, but in practice it does not permit unions. According to law, bank workers have the right to establish unions with legal recognition. But the international banking center is so strong that the bank workers' union has never been granted legal recognition by the government. The IMF has insisted that it not be recognized."

"Now the government is paying the price for following the IMF dictates on this," he stated.

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Mao regime's 'great leap' into economic disaster, 1955-59

BY FRED FELDMAN

(Second of a series)

From 1949 to the mid-1950s, the Chinese workers, peasants, and other toilers scored enormous gains. They swept away the landlord-capitalist government and established a unified national government based on the support of the workers and peasants, ended imperialist domination,

BEHIND CRISIS IN CHINA

and held off an imperialist invasion of neighboring North Korea that threatened to extend to China.

The Chinese masses abolished the rule of the landed gentry in the countryside and distributed land to hundreds of millions of peasants. Capitalists and merchants were expropriated and a planned economy established.

Big gains were scored in education, health care, women's rights, and other areas. Industrial development strode forward.

Hundreds of millions of peasants had won the right to possess the land they worked. A massive burden had been lifted from their shoulders in the form of rent payments, services to landlords, debt slavery, and plunder by big traders.

Soon, many peasants sought to consolidate what they had gained and make further advances by collaborating with other peasants in establishing small-scale cooperatives. By pooling their tools, animals, and labor, they sought to maximize production and assure their families an adequate and improving living standard.

Cooperation among the peasants also helped to limit the danger of the peasants being stripped of their land or falling under the domination of the better-off layers in the countryside.

The government, headed by Mao Tse-tung, responded to these initiatives in December 1951 by preparing a "Project on Mutual Aid and Cooperation," which called for encouraging more peasant house-

holds to join mutual-aid teams and cooperatives. The teams began with four or five families — eventually growing to 20 or 30 — that pooled their labor power, tools, and animals in planting, harvesting, and upkeep of the land.

Even prior to the December 1951 plan, about 25 percent of peasant households had joined such teams. The number rose steadily to 60 percent by 1955, and larger-scale cooperatives began to take root in some provinces.

The Mao regime turned away from this course in 1955, however. Unwilling to rely on the initiative and mobilization of the peasants themselves in expanding cooperation, the government sought tighter control over the peasants' labor and product, as well as greater political control over the villages.

The sharp change in course reflected the Mao regime's role as the representative of a privileged bureaucratic caste — based in the ruling Communist Party, government bodies, and officer caste of the army.

The central concern of this layer was stabilizing its own rule and the privileges that came with it. They regarded the workers and peasants as objects of the policy decisions of the bureaucratic machine, not as makers of their own history.

Forced collectivization

In October 1955 Mao, backed by a resolution adopted by the party, called for an all-out campaign to organize the peasants into what were termed "higher-stage" cooperatives.

Each of the 100 to 250 peasant households in these units had formal title to its land and retained a house and a garden-sized personal plot of land. These plots amounted overall to an average of between 2 and 5 percent of each village's arable land. The rest was to be worked under the direction of the cooperative.

From 30 to 40 percent of the harvest became the property of the collective. The rest was to be distributed to the peasants, although they were obliged to sell much of this to the state.

The peasants were to be guaranteed an amount of grain sufficient to meet mini-



Peasants at work in rice paddy. Formation of peasant cooperatives on voluntary basis, which was advancing in early 1950s, was disrupted when government carried out massive forced collectivization of agriculture.

mum diet requirements. Cooperatives were generally controlled by party and government officials, not by the peasant toilers who belonged to them.

Millions of peasants were unhappy about the setup that was forced on them. Acts of resistance included the slaughter of livestock and even some assassinations of local officials. But by mid-1957 — less than two years after the decision to carry out collectivization was proclaimed — 96 percent of peasant households belonged to "higher-stage" cooperatives.

"Commandism was widespread, not only during the period of the formation of coops but throughout the collective period," conceded William Hinton in the March 1989 *Monthly Review*. Hinton has spent considerable time in China and backed the basic policies of the Mao regime. "Coops set up by command tended to degenerate into stagnant feudal fiefs run by local Communist lords who were, in some cases, as bad if not worse than the landlords they replaced."

In 1956, in an effort to win more support among technical and professional layers, as well as artists and writers, the regime announced a relaxation of cultural and political repression. Mao proclaimed the slogan "Let a hundred flowers bloom, let a hundred schools of thought contend."

This unleashed a storm of criticism, and Mao quickly shifted gears. About 100,000 people were convicted of "antiparty activity," and up to 1 million CP members were penalized.

At a Communist Party congress in May 1958, the Mao regime proclaimed a drive to transform China into an industrial giant in a short time. Liu Shao-chi, head of the National People's Congress, the Chinese legislative body, called at the congress for "a great revolutionary leap toward the building of socialism," while Mao was said to have proclaimed the goal "Catch up with England in 15 years."

'Great Leap Forward'

At the heart of what Liu termed "a Great Leap Forward" was an effort to reorganize agriculture so as to shift a portion of the rural population to industrial production and large-scale construction projects. What took place was a frenzied administrative drive.

In August the party called on peasants — millions of whom had only recently been driven into collectives — to rush into much more extensive institutions called "people's communes." Within a few months, 99 percent of the peasants had reportedly been organized into these units.

Each commune brought together about 5,000 peasant families, who were to have no personal property except clothes, furniture, a little money, and some other small items. The small private plot provided to each peasant household in the cooperatives was taken over by the communes.

In order to shift women from household to industrial and agricultural labor, peasants were to eat in communal dining rooms — although this unpopular measure proved unenforceable in many areas — and to utilize communal laundries and other ser-

vices. The goal was set of establishing communal sleeping facilities, eliminating private dwellings as well.

The August 1958 party resolution on the communes termed such steps a "short cut" to communism.

The regime also called on working people to establish steel-making furnaces in their backyards, and many were removed from their jobs to gather and melt down scrap for these operations.

Everywhere managers and workers were pushed hard to fulfill the sharply increased production quotas. Work accidents rose sharply as safety measures were set aside.

Initially the government reported enormous increases in production but later admitted that the statistics had been wildly exaggerated.

The road to famine

The drive to meet unrealistic production quotas in factories led to a ruinous decline in quality. Machinery was misused or went into disrepair as machine repair installations were shifted to production to meet goals.

All but a few of the backyard steel furnaces proved worthless, wasting enormous quantities of human labor power. Poorly planned irrigation and other projects damaged the environment and may have weakened the country's defenses against disastrous weather conditions in 1959 and the following years.

Although the 1958 harvest was higher than the previous year's, the compulsory reorganization of agriculture and the excessive diversion of rural labor to industry began to take a deadly toll. In 1959 food grain production dropped from at least 200 million metric tons to 165 million, and then to 150 million in 1960.

Beginning in 1960, China's foreign trade plummeted. As evidence mounted that the "Great Leap Forward" adventure was becoming a grisly fiasco, the government began withholding most economic statistics.

In July 1959 Defense Minister Peng Teh-huai wrote a letter to Mao Tse-tung, cautiously criticizing Mao's economic course. At a party plenum held in August, Peng was ousted from his post.

Famine stalked the country, and millions are reported to have died as a result.

Mao's regime beating a retreat in mid-1959. The form of the People's Communes were maintained, but the peasant members were again allowed to work small private plots. Compulsory communal living and dining were ended. The actual organization of agriculture returned to the level of the former cooperatives, with a much larger role and voice for smaller production teams.

In the wake of the "great leap" adventure, Mao turned over more of the day-to-day governing responsibility to Liu Shao-chi (who became head of state in 1959), Deng Xiaoping, and others.

The next article in this series will describe the factional war that Mao declared in 1966 against Liu, Deng, and their followers in the name of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution."

(To be continued)

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In June PM carries an article on the roots, strength, and challenges of the strike by the International Association of Machinists against Eastern.

From when it began on March 4, the strikers have presented the ruling families of the United States with a significant fight. With the support of flight attendants and pilots, the Machinists have brought the company's operations to a halt, something no other national strike has been able to accomplish in recent years. And the strikers are winning broad support from other unionists.



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How Cuba aided Vietnam liberation struggle

Expansion of Ho Chi Minh Trail helped in final push to victory

BY JON HILLSON

HAVANA, Cuba — Details about Cuban participation in the Vietnamese liberation struggle were given to members of the 20th anniversary contingent of the Venceremos Brigade during their recent stay here. The brigade organizes people from the United States to visit Cuba and participate in work projects.

The account was given by Raúl Valdes Vivo, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba. Currently director of membership education for the party, Valdes Vivo served as Cuba's ambassador to North Vietnam during the 1960s and early '70s, prior to the unification of that country.

He also was Cuba's representative in the "jungle embassy," he explained, headquartered in South Vietnam, in territory liberated by the National Liberation Front. The NLF fought for the country's freedom against Washington and its puppet regime in Saigon.

Until U.S.-backed forces installed a regime servile to Washington's war aims in Cambodia in 1970, Valdes Vivo also served as Cuba's ambassador there. And he was in charge of the work of Cuban Communist Party members living and working in Indochina at the time.

Cuban participation helped shorten war

"Cuba participated in the final construction of the Ho Chi Minh Trail," Valdes Vivo told a conference hall packed with *brigadistas* and Cubans as the story was told publicly for the first time.

"Thanks to Cuban participation we saved two years of war," the Communist Party leader explained.

Valdes Vivo said the Cuban government, with the concurrence of the top leadership of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, believed now was the time to present this history, because some say "Central America could be the next Vietnam."

A book by Valdes Vivo on this subject, with full documentation, is being completed.

It was, Valdes Vivo said to cheers, both the struggle of the Vietnamese "and the resistance of the people of the United States" that brought victory to the Vietnamese people.

In September 1973 Fidel Castro, the only head of state who visited North Vietnam under war conditions, was in Hanoi on a well-publicized visit.

For some time, Valdes Vivo said, Vietnamese and Cuban officials had been discussing construction of a vitally important nonmilitary highway in the north needed for "civil development."

By this time, U.S. ground troops had been withdrawn as part of the Paris peace accords, signed in January 1973. A truce supposedly reigned.

But Washington had created the fourth-largest army in the world in South Vietnam, along with a state-of-the-art armada.

The Saigon forces repeatedly violated the truce and were attempting to consolidate their positions. This meant prolonging the war and the division of the country for years.

Saigon needed to massively concentrate its forces in Vietnam's central regions to maintain the puppet state.

Castro had a secret meeting with North Vietnamese Premier Pham Van Dong and Minister of Defense Vo Nguyen Giap, Valdes Vivo said.

The Vietnamese leaders proposed to Castro that Cuban engineers come up with a plan "to broaden the [Ho Chi Minh] Trail to reach the central regions."

The trail was named after the top leader of the Vietnamese Communist Party, who died in 1969. It was an intricate web of foot and supply trails and narrow roads that wound from northern Vietnam to the south, arching westward in and out of Laos.

Massive aerial bombardment by U.S. planes failed to destroy the trail.

In February 1971, the Saigon regime threw nearly 30,000 ground troops at the trail. But the Saigon forces were pushed back by Vietnamese liberation fighters, whose superior morale, motivation, and courage made up for the difference in troops, airborne firepower, and weapons.



U.S. troops flee Saigon in 1975. Widening of Ho Chi Minh Trail contributed to rout of U.S.-backed Saigon army and ending U.S. domination in South Vietnam.

But to mount a final push against the U.S.-backed army, tanks would be needed, the Vietnamese told Castro, and the Ho Chi Minh Trail's paths were far too narrow, surrounded as they were by jungle growth.

Three requests

As plans for Castro to visit the south were finalized, the Cuban leader went to New Delhi, India, for a meeting of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries. On the day Castro was set to leave New Delhi, news reached him, Valdes Vivo said, that there was a coup d'état in Chile.

Still Castro proceeded as planned to southern Vietnam, where he surveyed the area proposed for the expansion of the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Satisfied, the Cuban leadership delegation agreed to three requests made by Pham Van Dong and General

Giap, Valdes Vivo said. These were "to send equipment to broaden the Ho Chi Minh Trail, to prepare Vietnamese to handle the equipment, and to send teams to train them and give them instructions."

Japanese firms were approached with a request to purchase tractors and other appropriate technology for the construction of a road in the north for civil development.

A frank description of the intended use for the equipment would have made the acquisition impossible, Valdes Vivo pointed out.

As the plan got under way, Vietnamese chosen for the operation went to Cuba to be trained in the use of the tractors, road construction, and related activity. The Cuban instructors did not speak about the project, nor, Valdes Vivo explained, did the Vietnamese.

Only when "they saw each other again in Vietnam on the Ho Chi Minh Trail," he noted with a smile, did they realize what their common experience in Cuba was about. These 23 Cuban trainers were joined in the roadwork by 600 additional Cuban construction workers.

Meanwhile, U.S. intelligence on the movement between Cuba and Vietnam was conveyed to Cuba by the Soviet government. The CIA believed, Valdes Vivo said, that the Vietnamese were in Cuba "to get training for tanks that we had and they didn't."

But shipment by Cuba to Vietnam of these tanks, the Cuban communist explained, "would have violated provisions of the protocols" under which Cuba had received the armaments in the first place. No consideration of such a shipment was even contemplated.

"And to this day," Valdes Vivo said, Washington "did not know what was happening. When the tanks began appearing in the central regions, they had no idea where they came from. Even in his book *The Third World War*, [Richard] Nixon still doesn't know."

As the Vietnamese liberation forces moved south on the Ho Chi Minh Trail, they began their march toward Saigon accompanied by mobile tank units. When the key central region city of Banmethuot was taken by the Vietnamese tank and infantry forces on March 11, 1975, the shock waves rocked Saigon's forces, which had already begun disintegrating.

Four days later, South Vietnamese dictator Nguyen Van Thieu ordered the puppet regime's "northern provinces" abandoned. By the end of the month, the major cities of Danang and Hue had been liberated, as one of the world's biggest armies and air forces collapsed.

One month later, on April 30, Saigon was freed of occupation forces, and Vietnam belonged to the Vietnamese.

"Without Cuba's participation Vietnam would have won anyway," Valdes Vivo said. "A small group of Cubans worked for nine months, while the Vietnamese fought for 20 years against the U.S.-dominated regime."

"Cuba contributed with a drop of water," Valdes Vivo added. "But that drop made the glass overflow."

Forum hits efforts to censor Rushdie

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

NEW YORK — In an event focusing on the legal and commercial angles, some 70 people attended a forum here at AT&T corporate headquarters May 10 discussing "Lessons From the Rushdie Affair."

The audience and panelists — made up predominantly of lawyers, publishers, and booksellers — were unanimous in their condemnation of efforts to censor Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses* as "blasphemous."

Several speakers went further and put Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's death threats against Rushdie in the context of what panelist Robert Wedgeworth called "a steady rise in censorship affairs."

Wedgeworth, who is dean of Columbia University's School of Library Services, reminded the audience of a recent FBI operation urging librarians to turn in the names of people requesting "suspicious" books.

Bernard Rath, president of the American Booksellers Association, spoke of a growing problem of censorship in both Europe and North America. "Thatcher is a hypocrite," he said, pointing out that the British government, while claiming to defend freedom of speech, banned sales of *Spycatcher*, a book on the internal workings of its secret police.

"Thatcher is a greater threat to freedom of speech in England than the Ayatollah [Khomeini]," agreed Irwin Karp, a prominent civil liberties attorney who chaired the panel.

Former U.S. judge Marvin Frankel, however, focused on attacking Iran. He condemned what he called the Bush administration's "tepid response," suggesting instead that the U.S. sponsor an international

boycott of Iran.

The meeting, which was sponsored by Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, was also addressed by Harriet Pilpel, vice chairperson of the National Advisory Council of the American Civil Liberties Union; Melvin Wulf, former general counsel of the ACLU; and former congressional representative Robert Drinan.

A representative of Pathfinder publishers,

speaking in the discussion period, condemned the moves to censor Rushdie's book and the way the affair was being used to reinforce censorship in general. He also reported on the campaign to publicize and win protests against the recent book-banning decree in Grenada, where 86 political books and pamphlets have been placed on an embargo list.

Australia: hundreds protest cop killing of Aborigine

BY MANUELE MANU AND LINDA SCOTT

SYDNEY, Australia — More than 600 marchers made their way through the center of the city here May 5 to protest the police shooting of David Gundy. Gundy, a 29-year-old Aboriginal man, was shot in his bed during a Special Weapons Operations Squad (SWOS) raid. The Aboriginal people in Australia are descended from indigenous inhabitants of the island continent.

Gundy's house was one of six that police raided while looking for a suspect in the shooting of two policemen.

In a statement to the media at the rally, Warren Martens of the Committee to Defend Black Rights, which called the protest, said the killing of Gundy was not an isolated incident.

"We are receiving complaints from Aboriginal residents that they are being picked up and taken into custody. Some have had guns pointed at their heads. The police seem

to be victimizing and terrorizing Aboriginal people on the basis of the color of their skin."

The march began with a rally featuring speakers from unions and other organizations. It was held outside the SWOS headquarters.

Speakers demanded an independent inquiry into the killing by the Royal Commission, which is currently hearing claims from the families of Aborigines who have died in custody.

In a reference to the high number of Aboriginal deaths in police custody, marchers chanted, "They say it's suicide. We say it's genocide."

The march ended in a rally outside the New South Wales parliament building. A representative of the Trade Union Committee for Aboriginal Rights stated that unionists and others have to be "prepared to get people out in the streets for Aboriginal justice.... The Royal Commission would not have taken place without pressure."

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

U.S. Hands Off Panama! Speaker: Barry Fatland, Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sat., June 17, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

Oakland

Medicine for Profit or Human Need?: The Growing Crisis in Health Care. Speakers: Mary Henry, union representative, Hospital Workers Union 250; Al Steinback, M.D., representative Physicians for a National Health Plan; Everado Hernandez, family mental health educator, counselor, La Clínica de la Raza; Paul Montauk, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., June 10, 7:30 p.m. 3702 Telegraph Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (415) 420-1165.

FLORIDA

Miami

U.S. Hands Off Panama! Speaker: Thabo Ntweng, 1989 Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor. Translation to Spanish and French. Sat., June 10, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (305) 756-1020.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Women and the Cuban Revolution. Celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Cuban revolution. Speakers: Carolina Aguilar and Catherine Ribas, leaders of the Federation of Cuban Women. Sun., June 11, 4 p.m. Giles Hall, Spelman College, 350 Spelman Lane. For more information call (404) 621-5793.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

The Rights of Indigenous People from Wisconsin to Brazil. Speakers: participants in the movement for Indian fishing rights in northern Wisconsin; representative Kaiyapo Support Group. Sat., June 10, 6 p.m. 6826 S Stony Island Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (312) 363-7322 or 363-7136.

Defending Abortion Rights Today. Speakers: activists in movement to defend abortion clinics. Sat., June 17, 6 p.m. 6826 S Stony Island Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (312) 363-7322 or 363-7136.

Ten Years After the Grenada Revolution: The Caribbean and Central America Today. Speaker: Don Rojas, former press secretary to Grenada's assassinated prime minister, Maurice Bishop. Translation to Spanish. Thurs., June 29, 6:30 p.m. Center for Inner City Studies, Northeastern University, 700 E Oakwood. Sponsors: All African Peoples Revolutionary Party, FACT, 21st Century Books, Socialist Workers Party, Pathfinder Press. For more information call (312) 268-7500 or 363-7322.

IOWA

Des Moines

Defend a Woman's Right to Choose: Keep Abortion Safe and Legal. Speakers: Shelly Bain, member National Organization for Women; Judy Bierkamp, member National Abortion Rights Action League; Marian Carr, Socialist Workers Party, member United Food and Commercial Workers Local 431. Sat., June 10, 7:30 p.m. 2105 Forest Ave. Donation: \$2.

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MINNESOTA

Austin

U.S. Hands Off Panama! Speaker: Dean Peoples, Socialist Workers Party, member United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-6. Sat., June 10, 7 p.m. 407½ N Main St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (507) 433-3461.

MISSOURI

Kansas City

The Eastern Strike and the Stakes for Working People. Speakers: Mary Ellen Miller, president Independent Federation of Flight Attendants; Steve Marshall, *Militant* correspondent covering Pittston miners' strike, member United Transportation Union. Translation to Spanish. Sun., June 18, 7 p.m. 5534 Troost. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (816) 444-7880.

MISSOURI

St. Louis

Speak-Out in Support of Eastern Strike. A panel discussion with St. Louis unionists involved in supporting striking Machinists. Sat., June 10, 7:30 p.m. 4907 Martin Luther King Dr. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (314) 361-0250.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Sanctions Now! March and Rally — Soweto Day, a Celebration of the Uprising of South African Youth. Mobil Out of South Africa and Namibia! Speakers from African National Congress of South Africa and South West Africa People's Organisation of Namibia. Cultural presentations by the ANC Sechaba Singers and Dinizulu Drum and Dance Ensemble. Fri., June 16, 3 p.m. Picket at Sen. Alfonse D'Amato's office, 7 Penn Plaza, 7th Ave. between 30th and 31st sts.; rally at Mobil Oil headquarters, 150 E 42nd St., between 3rd and Lexington avenues. Cultural presentations begin at 4 p.m. Sponsor: The Northeast Region Southern Africa Solidarity Network. For more information call (212) 870-2928 or 962-1210.

The Irish Liberation Struggle Today. Speaker: Mairead Keane, head of Sinn Féin's Women's Department, member Sinn Féin National Executive. Translation to Spanish. Mon., June 26, 6:30 p.m.; Talk 8 p.m. Washington Square Methodist Church, 135 W 4 St. Sponsor: Irish Women's Studies Group. For more information call (718) 253-6640.

OHIO

Cleveland

Bitter Coal Miners' Strike in Appalachia. An eyewitness account by Ned Measel, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., June 10, 7:30 p.m. 2521 Market Ave. Donation: \$2.50. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (216) 861-6150.

March Against Apartheid. Assemble 12 noon at Cleveland State University, Euclid and 22nd; 1 p.m. march to Public Square for rally. Reception 7:30 p.m. at 2720 Fairmount Ave. Donation: \$10. Sponsor: Northeast Ohio Anti-apartheid Committee.

OREGON

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Cuba Now: A Report from Recent Visitors.

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NEW YORK

Manhattan

Speaker: Doug Jenness, editor of the *Militant*. Sat., June 17, 7:30 p.m. 191 7th Ave. For more information call (212) 675-6740.

Speakers: Steve Craine, participant in April trip to Cuba with the Venceremos Brigade; others. Sat., June 10, 7:30 p.m. 2730 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. (formerly Union). Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Forum. For more information call (503) 287-7416.

The Battle Against AIDS. Speaker: Peter Thierjung, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., June 17, 7:30 p.m. 2730 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. (formerly Union). Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Forum. For more information call (503) 287-7416.

Timber Monopolies vs. Working People — The Fight to Protect Jobs and the Environment. A panel discussion on the log-export referendum, fight to protect old forests, and how to defend jobs of workers in wood industry. Sat., June 24, 7:30 p.m. 2730 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. (formerly Union). Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Forum. For more information call (503) 287-7416.

TEXAS

Houston

The Eastern Strike: What's at Stake for Working People. Speakers: Greg Rosenberg, member International Association of Machinists, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor. Sat., June 10, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

U.S. Hands Off Panama! Sat., June 17, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

WASHINGTON

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The Battle Against AIDS. Speakers: Peter Thierjung, Socialist Workers Party; representative of ACT-UP. Fri., June 16, 7:30 p.m. 5517 Rainier Ave. S. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (206) 723-5330.

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CANADA

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Speakers: John Steele, leader of Revolutionary Workers League; others. Sat., June 10, 7:30 p.m. 4274 Papineau, Suite 302. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Forum Lutte Ouvrière. For more information call (514) 524-7992.

BRITAIN

London

The Attack on Democratic Rights. Public meeting. Tues., June 20, 6:30 p.m. Unity House, Euston Rd. Sponsor: London Transport District Council of National Union of Railwaymen.

CANADA

Toronto

Solidarity with Strike Against Eastern Airlines. Speakers: Maggie Trowe, Revolutionary Workers League, member Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 132. Sat., June 10, 7:30 p.m. 410 Adelaide St. W., Suite 400. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (416) 861-1399.

Law 101: Affirmative Action Which All Working People Should Support. Speaker: Michel Prairie, editor of *Lutte ouvrière*. Sat., June 17, 2 p.m. 410 Adelaide St. W., Suite 400. Donation: \$3. Backyard benefit buffet for *Lutte ouvrière* fund drive will follow at 6 p.m., 86 Duplex Ave. Donation: \$6. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (416) 861-1399.

IRELAND

Dublin

Cuba and Angola: Victory Against South Africa. Video presentation of "The Response to the South African Escalation," a Cuban documentary on the battle of Cuito Cuanavale, Angola. Speakers: Louise Asmal, Anti-Apartheid Movement; representative Ireland-Cuba Friendship Society. Mon., June 26, 7 p.m. Dublin Resource Centre, Crow St., Dublin 2.

SWEDEN

Stockholm

U.S. Hands Off Panama! Speaker: Maria Hamberg. Sat., June 17, 15.00. Folkets Hus, room 614 (entrance Barnhusgatan 12).

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Why not, it's just kids — "This area contains dangerous and contaminated materials which are harmful to human life. No trespass-



Harry Ring

ing by order of City of Jersey City." — Sign at toxic waste site where the Jersey City Board of Education is considering building an elementary school.

And brush your teeth — At

least 60 percent of chickens sold in Britain are contaminated with salmonella. In the first four months of 1989, the number of reported food-poisoning cases jumped nearly 60 percent. The government response? Ten million pamphlets advising people to keep their pets out of the kitchen, clean their refrigerators, and otherwise improve their hygiene.

From your friendly free-enterpriser — "The United States annually exports about 500 million pounds of pesticides that are banned, restricted, or not licensed for domestic use." — News item.

Bigoted? The N.Y. Times? —

An article in the *Times* on advertising by lawyers commented: "One will never see Sullivan & Cromwell alongside the bartending schools or high school equivalency courses. Most are personal-injury firms, whose names, like Longi & Loscalzo or Gersowitz & Libo, seem lifted from the log at Ellis Island."

A mere hint — The day after the above item, a *Times* Editors' Note conceded that it "suggested" ethnic disparagement.

Fun and games, Israeli-style — A new computer game, Intifada, is being peddled in Israel. Gives participants the opportunity to

club, gas, or shoot Palestinian protesters. The game was invented by a supporter of Kach, the hard-core racist gang that wants to drive out all Palestinians.

A break for the little guy — The EPA proposes that some 300,000 companies that make or store less than 10,000 pounds of dangerous chemicals be exempted from filing annual reports. The alleged environmental protection agency said this will end an onerous burden on small companies and, also, save the industry up to \$100 million a year in paperwork.

Quaylespeak — "Verbosity leads to unclear, inarticulate things."

The vice-president on why he'll be more attentive to language.

The magic makers — "Advertising can show a consumer how a baby powder helps affirm her role as a nurturing mother. . . . Or it can show a teenager how a soft drink helps assert his or her emerging independence." — A Madison Avenue ad executive.

Child-like candor — "We're selling perception as much as reality. We want to fill a need in the consumer's mind, and it really doesn't matter if the need is real or imagined." — A Farberware exec announcing a new coffee pot that can be used in a microwave.

Massacre in capital city heightens crisis in China

Continued from front page
figure of 2,600.

Many other estimates of the number slain also are in the thousands. The White House said U.S. government cables from Beijing estimated that anywhere from 1,000 to 5,000 people had died.

Yuan Mu, a spokesman for the Chinese government, claimed June 6 that the death toll was 300. He maintained that most of those killed were soldiers.

Until June 8, when official television broadcasts showed Premier Li Peng reviewing troops, the top officials — Li, President Yang Shangkun, and Deng Xiaoping — had not appeared publicly since days before the attack on Beijing. Zhao Ziyang, general secretary of the ruling Communist Party, has not appeared in public since May 20.

About half the workers in Shanghai, China's largest city, were said to be absent from their jobs. "Workers have pulled buses across Shanghai's main arteries," reported Jay Matthews from that city in the June 6 *Washington Post*.

"Workers in Hangzhou have even succeeded in blocking train tracks with buses and other equipment," he reported.

Protesters were also reported to have blocked a key rail line and a bridge over the Yangtze River in the urban complex of Wuhan. Similar actions were reported in Guangzhou (formerly known as Canton).

Killings of protesters by military units were reported to have taken place in Chengdu, the capital of the southern province of Sichuan.

Rumors were widespread for several days that some sectors of the armed forces had opposed the crackdown and might challenge the 27th Army.

In the June 7 *Washington Post*, Daniel Southerland reported that forces from the 38th and 40th armies, popularly believed to have opposed the slaughter, have been given food and moral support by residents of Beijing and its suburbs.

Some 3,000 soldiers of the 28th Army in Beijing reportedly refused to participate in the attack on Tiananmen.

Hong Kong

A huge throng marched in Hong Kong, a Chinese city which is held by the British government as a colony, to protest the Beijing government's actions. "Today's demonstration seemed to rival in size a huge march of two weeks ago when an estimated 1 million

people, roughly a sixth of the entire population of Hong Kong, turned out to support the Beijing students' demands for democracy," wrote *New York Times* correspondent Richard Bernstein.

Under an agreement between the British and Chinese governments, Hong Kong is to be restored to China in 1997.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, who visited China in mid-May to mark the reestablishment of normal ties with the Chinese government, commented on the events to reporters June 6.

"At the press conference in China," he stated, "I said that we are in favor of a dialogue of [Chinese] state and party organs, working people, and students. The answer to these questions can only be decided through dialogue. This is also my position now."

The student-led protest in Tiananmen Square had begun on the eve of the Soviet head of state's visit to China.

The students' demands

The demands of the demonstrators for democratic rights, an end to corruption, and other changes have won substantial support among working people in the cities.

As the protest continued, it also tended to both widen and bring more into the open fissures within the government over how to respond to the growth of unrest.

The students called for the resignation of Li Peng and retirement of Deng, whom they saw as irreconcilably opposed to their goals. They threw their support to party head Zhao Ziyang, who signaled that he favored steps toward meeting a few of their demands.

On May 20 the government of President Yang and Premier Li responded with a proclamation of martial law in parts of Beijing. The outpouring of about 1 million Beijing citizens to protest this action further deepened the divisions in the government.

Zhao Ziyang was reportedly stripped of his powers for opposing the crackdown. A campaign of denunciation against him was carried out in the party and army officer caste.

Public opposition to the crackdown was voiced in some sections of the military command structure.

With attention focused on the faction fight in the party, the sit-in dwindled to about 10,000, apparently raising confidence among some officials that a bloody example could be made of the remaining protesters.

This is not the only time that the Chinese army has been used to suppress popular pro-

tests, although the scale of the slaughter in the capital made this event particularly shocking in China and abroad.

Red Guards

In the late 1960s, the army was used to back the Red Guards, made up mostly of rural youth, in repressing foes of Chinese ruler Mao Tse-tung within the party and government, as well as suspected critics in every part of society. Hundreds of thousands lost their lives in the course of this purge, termed the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution." At its conclusion, the army was unleashed against the Red Guards themselves.

In April 1976 the military was mobilized to disperse a protest of 100,000 in Tiananmen Square that had denounced the Mao regime's repression and other policies. Some protesters were beaten to death.

Since the 1949 revolution — which overthrew landlordism, capitalism, and imperialist oppression — China has been dominated by a privileged bureaucratic caste made up of government officials, party officials, and the officer caste of the armed forces.

To defend and improve their privileged positions, this caste monopolizes political power and denies democratic rights to workers, peasants, students, and others. Protests, independent organizations, and even paintings or poetry that lack an official seal of approval are often viewed as a potentially deadly threat.

Above all, the bureaucratic caste fears the emergence of organizations and massive struggles among the toiling masses.

Hu Qili, until recently a Politburo member and spokesperson for the Chinese government, voiced this fear when he warned that granting the demands of the student protest-

ers could lead to the emergence of "many Walesas" in China. This was a reference to Lech Walesa, the head of the Solidarity trade union in Poland, which was born out of massive working-class and farmer protests in the early 1980s.

Frustration among students, working people, and others over the denial of democratic rights has heightened as economic difficulties have mounted in recent years.

Economic squeeze

Over the past decade, the regime has reorganized the economy to open much more space for capitalist commodity production in agriculture and industry, rely more heavily on capitalist market forces to guide the economy, and expand foreign trade and investment by capitalists from other countries.

Over the last 10 years, economic growth averaged close to 10 percent annually. Social differentiation and antagonisms increased, as corruption expanded throughout the officialdom and a layer of rich traders, lenders, factory owners, and capitalist farmers appeared.

Since 1985 workers, peasants, and other toilers have faced a tightening squeeze on their living standards. Grain production has dropped or stagnated. Fertilizer shortages led peasants in some areas to attack warehouses. Due primarily to the massive expansion of credit, inflation has reached an annual rate of 50 percent, the highest since the 1949 revolution.

In March 1989 the government adopted a budget that has tightened the squeeze. New taxes were imposed on farmers who produce crops other than grain for the market and on privately owned businesses. Work was halted on some 18,000 projects that were under construction.

— 10 AND 25 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWS WEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

June 15, 1979

A massive uprising of workers and peasants opposed to the bloody dictatorship of Gen. Anastasio Somoza is sweeping Nicaragua. Rebels from the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) control León, the second-largest city, and a general strike has shut down Managua, the capital.

The general strike, called for June 4 by the FSLN in Managua, has brought the capital and a half-dozen other cities to a standstill. Most of the stores and factories in Managua were closed and transportation shut down. The FSLN said that general strikes in Estelí, Jinotega, and Matagalpa were also successful.

In a savage effort to drown the uprising in blood, Somoza's National Guard used paralyzing gases, tanks, helicopters, and gunboats against rebels in the southern area of Rivas.

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interests of the Working People

June 15, 1964

Since June 2, when the trial of African nationalist leaders Nelson Mandela, Walter

Sisulu, and seven others on 192 charges of sabotage ended, the world has been waiting with bated breath for the sentencing. Will South Africa's fascist-like regime send the defendants to the gallows?

Mandela was deputy president of the African National Congress, South Africa's oldest black political movement, until it was outlawed. Sisulu was ANC secretary-general.

On April 20, after a six-week recess, the trial resumed, and Mandela made a four-hour address to the court. In this remarkable speech he freely admitted having helped to organize Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), which committed sabotage against symbols of apartheid and economic targets. The maximum penalty for sabotage is death.

He also told why the ANC had abandoned pacifism as an effective means of overcoming the subjection of the 11 million blacks in South Africa's population of 14 million. "But the hard facts were that 50 years of nonviolence had brought the African people nothing but more and more repressive legislation and fewer and fewer rights," he said.

(Mandela's courtroom speech is reprinted in *The Struggle Is My Life*, Pathfinder, \$8.95. It is available from bookstores listed on page 12, or by mail from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Please include \$1 for postage.)

Communist campaigns in Britain

Continued from Page 3
to shorten the working week."

The openness of the local community to such a program could be gauged from the interest displayed in a Pathfinder bookstall at a local council-sponsored Africa music festival held May 30. Of the 6,000 people who participated, more than half were Black and the rest preponderantly foreign-born. At the campaign bookstall, £174 (US\$278) worth of books were sold.

This event was part of a whole weekend of Communist League election activities involving supporters from all over the country, as well as from France, Sweden, Belgium, Canada, and the United States. The election

campaign was significantly reinforced by the participation of these supporters. Twelve tables were set up in different parts of London on Saturday, May 27.

One table was set up with the help of Swedish supporters at a rally to defend Kurdish refugees in Britain, at the Halkevi Centre in east London.

On the day's activities, some £400 worth of literature was sold, as well as 165 copies of the *Militant*. Many new people were introduced to London's Pathfinder Bookshop. Income for the bookstore in the following week was £1,250, the highest since record sales the week the shop opened.

Battle for rights in China

The slaughter by government troops of many hundreds of students and other people in Beijing has aroused the justified outrage of working people all over the world. This mass execution for the crime of demanding elementary democratic rights was a blow to the struggles of working people everywhere.

The government of Deng Xiaoping and Premier Li Peng has attempted to pass off the peaceful protest in Tiananmen Square as a "counterrevolutionary rebellion" by "thugs" and "dregs of society."

There was no counterrevolutionary uprising. The students had gathered in the square to assert their rights as citizens to assemble and petition the government for the redress of their grievances. At the top of their list of demands was freedom of the press, the right to assemble, and other elementary democratic rights.

Large numbers of workers and peasants throughout China were in solidarity with these demands, and for good reason.

Like working people everywhere, China's toilers need the right to discuss, read, organize, strike, and demonstrate. Without the elbow room these rights provide for political discussion and organization, it is much more difficult for working people to unite to defend their interests and lead society forward.

The battle of working people for these rights was opened up on a large scale by the bourgeois-democratic revolutions that took place in the Netherlands in the 16th century, Britain in the 17th century, and France and the United States in the 18th century.

Working people in China have been fighting for these rights for many decades. Although the 1949 workers' and peasants' revolution scored colossal gains, including the overthrow of landlordism and capitalist political rule, which

laid the basis for economically expropriating the capitalist class, little headway was made in winning basic political rights.

On the contrary, under the privileged bureaucratic caste that has held political power since the 1949 revolution, the level of democratic rights for the masses remains far below the level working people have won and gotten institutionalized in many capitalist countries.

The government publicly claims the right to suppress any expression it disagrees with — whether a poem, newspaper article, or demonstration. The masses of the people are denied any voice in who governs, or in what policies are carried out. And those who protest can be mowed down by guns or armored personnel carriers.

The outrageous character of this denial of rights has been brought home to growing numbers of Chinese people by the expansion of cultural contact with other countries. Many youths from China go to school in the United States and Western Europe, for example.

As a result, hundreds of thousands of Chinese youth have learned more about the freedoms of speech, press, organization, and assembly — denied to them in their own country — that have been institutionalized to a significant degree through struggles in the United States, Japan, and other capitalist countries.

The Chinese masses want and need these democratic rights, just as the masses of people in the capitalist countries do.

In the face of the Beijing slaughter, many students and workers in China are attempting to continue the struggle. Workers and farmers around the world should stand with them as they fight to compel the government to respect their basic rights.

Babies, fetuses and women's right to abortion

BY DOUG JENNESS

Some readers may have missed the brief item in a few newspapers on May 27 reporting that the day before, a grand jury in Illinois refused to indict Melanie Green. Green is the mother I wrote about several weeks ago who was being prosecuted for involuntary manslaughter after her baby was born with drugs in its system and died two days later.

I noted that punishing drug addicts as criminals will only inhibit more of the victims from seeking rehabilitation for fear of being arrested. And this goes for pregnant women taking drugs too. Repressive measures that make

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them afraid to seek adequate prenatal care and rehabilitation only insures that even more children will be born impaired. That's why the grand jury decision to drop the prosecution of Green deserves a cheer.

In a letter printed on the opposite page, reader Linda Slodki writes that she found the column where I took up the Green case to be "educational and an important contribution countering the ongoing attacks against working people today."

Slodki objects, however, to the term "unborn baby" that was used in the column and suggests that the scientific description is "fetus." Her point is well taken.

Without birth there can be no baby. That's what a baby is — a small child or infant. It's neither logical nor scientifically precise to refer to a baby that hasn't been born yet.

In most places the column used the more accurate designation of "fetus" proposed by Slodki for what was being described. The *Webster's* dictionary defines fetus as "an unborn or unhatched vertebrate, especially after attaining the basic structural plan of its kind."

Slodki points out the pitfall of not being clear or permitting sloppiness on this: ammunition is unnecessarily given to opponents of a woman's right to have an abortion. One of the principal charges of the anti-abortion rights forces is that abortion is murder, that it is essentially a form of infanticide. In this context to start talking about babies when fetuses are involved can reinforce the erroneous contention that abortion is murder.

This was one of the main points of the column — to show how opponents of abortion rights contend that a pregnant woman's behavior that might have contributed to the death of a child should be treated as homicide. "If the courts are to rule that a woman is guilty of murder if her child dies as a result of drug use during pregnancy," I pointed out, "isn't it also murder if she has a doctor actually remove the fetus and destroy it? This is the line of argument by the anti-abortion rights crowd."

Recognizing the distinction between a fetus and a baby, however, doesn't mean that abortion rights fighters should fall into the trap of arguing that a fetus is simply a clump of cells like any other. It is not; it is an embryonic human life. It has the potential, if the pregnancy is brought to term, of becoming a child. This is one reason why there is a great deal of sensitivity and concern about abortion and why having or not having one is a difficult decision for many women. Choosing to have an abortion is very different than deciding to have an appendectomy or a tooth pulled.

For abortion rights fighters to disregard this or to slip into advocating abortions rather than defending the right of women to have abortions will unnecessarily risk excluding a great many people from supporting the fight for abortion rights. Many women who don't think abortions are right and would not have one themselves can be won to the fight for abortion rights. In fact, many have been as shown by interviews with participants in the April 9 abortion rights march in Washington, D.C.

Many people, both men and women, who have reservations about abortions recognize that making abortions illegal doesn't eliminate them. It only forces women to get them under more hazardous conditions, increasing the risk of maiming and death.

Moreover, the abortion rights fight is not a campaign in favor of abortion, including as a substitute for safe and accessible contraceptives. The framework of the abortion rights fight is to guarantee women the right to be able to choose if and when to have children. This opens the opportunity for advancing women's equality.

When women can control their own childbearing functions — without the intervention of the state, church, husband, boyfriend, or parents — it enables them to participate more fully in all aspects of social and political life. They are more easily able to become part of the work force and win economic independence.

Being clear about this will help make it possible to unite more people in the abortion rights fight even though there are different opinions on abortion itself.

Bush greets Khomeini's death

The death June 4 of Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of the government of Iran since the 1979 revolution in that country, has been greeted favorably by top U.S. officials.

"With his passing," declared President George Bush, "we hope Iran will now move toward assuming a responsible role in the international community."

Bush takes it for granted that the U.S. government has the right to determine who is or is not being "responsible" and who is or is not a part of "the international community."

In the view of the White House and the handful of capitalist families who rule the United States, the Iranian people went off the straight and narrow in 1978 and 1979. Millions rose up against and ousted a murderous monarchy that had been placed in power, dominated, and backed to the end by U.S. imperialism.

The shah's regime, to a considerable extent based on big landlords, enabled U.S. bankers and industrialists to reap billions in profits from the exploitation of Iran's working people and its oil resources.

A force of 45,000 U.S. advisers helped train secret-police torturers, advise the army, and run the economy. The U.S. rulers stood behind the hated monarch as his troops gunned down thousands of protesters in the streets.

With the popular revolution that toppled the monarchy in February 1979, the domination of the countryside by the landed aristocracy linked to the shah was ended. U.S. advisers were sent packing. The Iranian government halted its support to Israel and South Africa, shut down CIA "listening posts," and set a foreign policy independent of Washington.

The U.S. imperialists responded to this revolution with a deluge of reactionary, anti-Muslim, and racist propaganda against Iran. By screaming against Iran and "the ayatollah," the major U.S. media sought to prevent working people in the United States from finding out the truth about the U.S. government's role in Iran and the revolution.

The uprising against the shah was falsely portrayed as resulting in a tyranny worse than the shah's and as having "turned the clock back by a millennium" (as columnist William Safire put it in the June 5 *New York Times*).

The U.S. rulers did not stop at smearing Iran. They provided the shah with political asylum in the United States in October 1979, provoking the occupation of the U.S. embassy in Tehran and the holding of its personnel as hostages by Iranian students. Washington staged an unsuc-

cessful military raid on Iran in April 1980.

The White House broke diplomatic relations, froze Iranian assets in the United States, and imposed an economic embargo. The U.S. rulers covertly backed the invasion of Iran launched by the Iraqi government in 1980. In 1987 and 1988, a U.S.-led armada occupied the Persian Gulf and attacked Iranian forces there in order to forestall the possibility that Iran would win the war with Iraq.

This record is the reason why millions of Iranians hate U.S. imperialism.

Khomeini won the support of millions because of his irreconcilable opposition to the monarchy, and his denunciations and defiance of U.S. imperialism. The imperialists never forgave him for giving voice to these popular sentiments.

Khomeini utilized the political capital he gained in this way to help consolidate a capitalist government in the wake of the overthrow of the shah. This regime has rolled back many of the democratic rights and halted the social gains that the workers, farmers, and other toiling people had begun to make.

In his last months, Khomeini sought to rally Muslim backing around the world for a reactionary campaign calling for the murder of author Salman Rushdie and the suppression of his novel *The Satanic Verses*.

But the blows that have been dealt to Iran's working people have not crushed their outrage at imperialist oppression or their desire to struggle against it. Sentiments of solidarity with anti-imperialist struggles around the world have taken deep root among Iran's workers and peasants. Khomeini did not create these views, and they did not die with him.

Millions of combative Iranian toiling people are the big obstacle that the Bush administration faces, as it seeks to advance U.S. imperialism's goal of regaining Iran as a "responsible" part of its world empire.

Working people in this country have no interest in supporting the U.S. rulers' attacks, threats, and maneuvers against our Iranian brothers and sisters. Workers, farmers, and opponents of U.S. intervention should call on Washington to immediately lift the economic embargo against Iran, return the frozen assets, withdraw U.S. forces and weaponry from the Persian Gulf region, and offer unconditionally to establish normal diplomatic relations.

Dizzy Gillespie's musical encounter with Cuba

A Night in Havana: Dizzy Gillespie in Cuba. A film directed by John Holland. Interview conducted by Allen Honigberg. Distributed by Cubana Bop, 565 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012.

BY M.J. RAHN

This film, a documentary in a loose sense, is based on a tour Dizzy Gillespie and his band made to Cuba in 1985. It's a good introduction to bebop, the modern jazz form

IN REVIEW

that came out of the 1940s and was founded by Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Thelonious Monk, and other musicians. The film is also an exposition of the rich cultural life in Cuba, in particular the African origins of present-day Cuban music, dance and art.

Featuring Gillespie, the movie can't help but have a large dose of youthful humor, even though the musician is

now 71 years old.

Another highlight of the film is the trumpet virtuosity of Arturo Sandoval, one of the best-known Cuban musicians in the world. He does things on the trumpet that are hard to believe.

A Night in Havana is primarily musical, not political, but viewers will come away with a favorable picture of Cuba and its people, who appear uninhibited, enthusiastic, and confident. Gillespie notes the destruction of some of the degrading aspects of life that he witnessed before the revolution. Havana's streets today are "so peaceful," he says.

Gillespie, whose full name is John Birks Gillespie, explains that in Cuba, the slaves from Africa were able to hold onto more of their language, religion, customs, and drums than slaves in the United States. As a result, the rhythmic base and tempo of Cuban music is quite different than the spirituals, blues, and jazz that Blacks created in this country.

Contributing to both U.S. and Cuban music, Gillespie, Mario Bauza, and Chano Pozo welded together Cuban

percussion, rhythms, and harmonies with the music of the young bop rebels. The result was Afro-Cuban jazz. This made Gillespie's trip to Havana particularly fitting.

A centerpiece of the movie is a concert, the high point of which is Gillespie and Sandoval trading solos on the classic, "A Night in Tunisia." Sandoval plays some incredibly fast-paced and high-pitched riffs.

In a scene where Gillespie meets Fidel Castro, the Cuban leader discusses some of the cultural similarities between African slaves in Cuba and the United States.

The concert finishes with a big Cuban-U.S. ensemble playing "Manteca," which Gillespie and Chano Pozo wrote in the 1940s. In conclusion Gillespie says, "In the coming years there's going to be an integration of American, Cuban, Brazilian, and West Indian styles. And then you're really going to hear some music. And I'm going to be here."

Hopefully, the film will get national distribution. It deserves to be seen widely both for its educational value and just for the fun of all the great music. And it helps break down some barriers against the Cuban revolution.

LETTERS

'Unborn babies'

I just finished reading the Learning About Socialism column "Drugs, pregnancy, and abortion rights," by Doug Jenness, in the May 26 issue.

I wanted to respond to a term used in the phrase "pregnant women and the unborn babies they are carrying." I am surprised the *Militant* would use the term "unborn babies." It is the first time I recollect ever seeing it in the paper.

It is scientifically correct to refer to the fetus as exactly that, a fetus. And I think any usage of a term, particularly this one, that is employed constantly by opponents of a woman's right to abortion, miseducates readers of the *Militant*.

We do not want to fall in a trap of whether a fetus is a baby. And we should use only terms that are scientifically correct.

Otherwise, the article is educational and an important contribution countering the ongoing attacks against working people today.

Linda Slodki
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Chinese youth

What's happening in China has to be one of the premier events. The Chinese students are sick and tired of the corruption in government there. They want the kind of change that mandates reform: political, social, and economic.

Youth changes the face of the world. Students in Korea acted and got rid of the repressive Syngman Rhee. In corrupt Cuba, men in the their 20s formed the vertebrae for the revolution that ousted Fulgencio Batista. In South America, when President Richard Nixon was stoned, those stones came from the hands of "angry college men."

Nearly all of America's recent political setbacks worldwide have largely been influenced by the energy and wrath of students. This period in history when people, especially young people, in so-called backward nations are striking back for freedoms is unmatched since the 18th century. It is a new age dawning.

Lee-Steven Hutchison
Seattle, Washington

Mark Curtis defense

The *Militant* is a very valuable tool in winning new support for

Mark's fight, especially when talking with people who've never been aware of political frame-ups.

April Kimmach
Atlanta, Illinois

Sam Owens

Three hundred people turned out May 7 to remember Sam Owens with a march for justice. A 25-year-old Black man, Owens was shot to death at his home in Winnsboro, North Carolina, last January by a sheriff's deputy.

He had a history of mental illness. Owens' mother explained that the family would call the Fairfield County sheriff's department to take Owens to a nearby hospital in Columbia for treatment. On more than 40 occasions, officers had responded to calls to assist Owens.

What the family did not know was that the police had abused Owens in the past and that he was afraid of them.

On January 5 Owens fled from his home and climbed a tree in the backyard when police were called to the home. Eight officers arrived on the scene. His father pleaded with Owens for more than an hour to come down from the tree. After his father went back to the house, the cops began to taunt Owens, calling him "faggot" and "coward."

By the time Owens began to come down the tree, another officer had arrived, bringing to nine the number of cops ready to arrest him.

Deputy Keith Lewis shot Owens in the stomach and chest. Fatally wounded, he was handcuffed and dragged 175 feet to a waiting ambulance. He lay by the side of the road 15 minutes before being taken to the hospital and was pronounced dead on arrival.

The coroner's office has refused to hold an inquest. There has been no discipline of any of the officers involved.

In a leaflet to build the march, demands were raised for a coroner's inquest and the removal of the officers involved. The leaflet also demanded that all police officers be required to receive training in dealing with the mentally impaired.

Participants in the march came from South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, and New York.

Sherrie Love
Winnsboro, South Carolina

Bhopal victims

I recently attended a news conference of victims of the 1984 Union Carbide chemical leak in Bhopal, India. It was held in front of the Marathon oil refinery in Texas City and was part of a tour of the United States by victims of the Union Carbide disaster.

Marathon released 18 tons of deadly hydrofluoric acid into the atmosphere in October 1987 in a

chemical spill that resulted in the evacuation of 4,000 Texas City residents and emergency treatment of 800.

The Bhopal victims' tour is to forge links with U.S. workers and victims of industrial hazards. The Texas leg of their activities was sponsored by local environmental groups and the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union.

The Bhopal residents are seeking to inform people in the United States about the \$470 million settlement to the disaster victims. The terms of the agreement release Union Carbide from any further responsibility for the accident. It is currently under appeal in India's Supreme Court.

Katy Karlin
Texas City, Texas

Environment

I didn't know that every drink from a styrofoam cup contributes to the further destruction of the earth's ozone layer. I found out that styrofoam is one of the major sources of the chlorofluorocarbons that are depleting the ozone layer. No more coffee to go.

I have heard about the greenhouse effect due to the destruction of the Amazon rain forests, but I didn't know that had anything to do with taking the kids out for burgers. I just found out that U.S. burgers are made with South American beef (because it's cheap). I didn't know that the forests are being destroyed by cancer-causing pesticides and herbicides so the cows can be raised for fast food.

The Institute of Ecosystems reports that every hamburger produced with South American beef represents the destruction of about 55 square feet of rain forest.

Jobee Knight
Los Angeles, California

Population

A letter on population control in the May 26 issue caught my eye. It takes the *Militant* to task for opposing population control schemes and raises important questions.

John-Michael Eggertsen implies that unless the current growth in the world population is arrested, no social system — not even socialism — can save humanity from ever-increasing misery and poverty. He says the *Militant* "refuses to admit that this world's resources are finite and that it is a problem when the world population has more than doubled, from 2.5 billion people in 1950 to more than 5 billion just 39 years later."

"If this trend continues, there will be no quality of human life regardless of the political system."

The problem with this notion of the relationship between poverty and population is that it is completely ahistorical and anti-materialist.

TELL IT LIKE IT IS

By DUNAGIN



"I believe ethics should be a personal matter between a congressman and whoever he takes a bribe from."

It is not the case that world population growth has outstripped our resources or our ability to adequately feed, clothe, and shelter all of humanity or that it threatens to do so anytime in the foreseeable future.

Capitalism, in its death agony, has delivered us up to a quite different paradox. In the midst of the greatest abundance of wealth ever known in human history, tens of millions are allowed to die every year for want of food and other basic necessities.

People are starving to death today not because there is not enough food in the world, but precisely because there is "too much." Too much, that is, for the tiny minority of superrich families that control the production and distribution of the world's food and fiber to sell at a profit.

The logic of Eggertsen's position is that working people have only ourselves to blame for our current declining standard of living, and that the only solution for us is to practice birth control.

But for Marxists, human beings are not the consumers of a supposedly "finite" number of resources contained on this planet. Rather, we are the creators of all wealth. For us, more people means the possibility of creating even greater wealth.

Mike Galati
Salt Lake City, Utah

Prochoice victory

Supporters of women's right to safe, legal abortion scored a victory here when Operation Rescue's first attempt to close the Preterm-Cleveland clinic was successfully turned back.

By 6:00 a.m. some 150 pro-choice volunteers had formed a human chain protecting an en-

trance. By 7:40 a.m. several hundred Operation Rescue people had surrounded a different, nearby clinic, blocking both its doors and setting up a picket line in front. The police began arresting people at this clinic.

When we sent 10 prochoice supporters over, the Operation Rescue forces took off running at top speed back toward Preterm, apparently thinking we had abandoned our positions there. Soon about 80 sat down on the sidewalk in front of a door that was locked. The police gave warnings, and then began picking them up and hauling them away.

Operation Rescue moved their line onto clinic property and a second wave of sit-downs began. The police hauled away this bunch too, arresting a total of 119 for the day.

Meanwhile escorts were successfully taking patients and staff into the building. All patients were seen that day.

Marty Pettit
Cleveland, Ohio

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

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Correction

In the article "'Lutte ouvrière' fund drive to raise \$20,000 by June 15" the June 9 *Militant* reports the dates of the drive as May 15 to June 15. The actual dates are May 15 to July 15.

S. Africa threatens Namibia freedom

South West Africa People's Organisation leader speaks in Sweden

BY ANITA ÖSTLING

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — At a solidarity meeting held here recently, Niilo Taapopi, chief representative to the Scandinavian countries for the South West Africa People's Organisation, said, "The process of independence is not going smoothly." The South African government, he said, is going all out to stop implementation of United Nations Resolution 435.

SWAPO is the liberation movement that has led the resistance against the apartheid regime's occupation of Namibia for more than two decades.

Resolution 435 is the UN plan for independence in Namibia.

Taapopi explained that SWAPO is cautiously optimistic about the peace plan. "We are cautious because we know that apartheid South Africa does not honor agreements," the SWAPO leader said. "We also know that South Africa hasn't changed. It came to the negotiating table because of our armed struggle."

Taapopi said a big blow was dealt to the South African forces in the battle of Cuito Cuanavale in southern Angola in 1988. "The combined forces of Angolan soldiers, Cuban internationalists, and SWAPO guerrillas defeated the 'invincible white power,'" he explained.

The negotiations following that defeat led to the implementation of Resolution 435 in Namibia. The UN was to monitor the process through its peacekeeping force, UNTAG.

Resolution 435 specifies that the number of UNTAG soldiers should be 7,500. But a unanimous decision by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council — Britain, China, France, the Soviet Union, and the United States — reduced the number to 4,650.

"We were against the reduction," Taapopi said. "So was the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Nonaligned Movement, in other words a vast majority of the UN members."

April 1 was to be the date for beginning the independence process in Namibia. But the day ended in a bloodbath. Close to 200 SWAPO guerrillas and Namibian civilians were killed by South African troops.

UNTAG had not yet arrived in northern Namibia to monitor the process. South Africa seized the opportunity to hit SWAPO and offered its "assistance" to the UN emissary Martti Ahtisaari. He agreed to accept the offer.

According to the timetable, the number of South African troops in Namibia should

by now be reduced to 8,000, the political prisoners released, and the refugees (around 70,000) on their way home.

Taapopi explained that this has not happened. "There are still 100,000 South African troops in Namibia, no prisoners have been released, and the return of the refugees is postponed indefinitely."

Despite all this, SWAPO has announced its wish for "national reconciliation." It wants to carry through the process and hold elections on November 1 as a unified nation.

Taapopi said there are two principal parties in Namibia. One is SWAPO. The other is the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), sponsored and supported by the South African government. The DTA has so far received \$60 million from the apartheid regime.

Taapopi was followed by the chief representative to the Scandinavian countries for the African National Congress of South Africa, Billy Modise. Modise had just returned from Africa and reported on decisions taken by the ANC international leadership in Lusaka, Zambia.

"We will increase our support for SWAPO. In fact, the ANC has decided to put its entire machinery at work to secure a SWAPO victory in the elections."



April 1989 march in Windhoek, Namibia, for Namibian independence and a SWAPO-led government. Marchers hold portraits of SWAPO President Sam Nujoma.

Israel rounds up thousands, moves to impose work permits on Palestinians

BY HARRY RING

On May 16 Israeli police rounded up thousands of Palestinians who live in Gaza and work inside the "green line," Israel's pre-1967 borders.

Meanwhile, the entire Gaza Strip was put under round-the-clock curfew. When the curfew is lifted, workers will be able to return to their jobs inside the green line only on the basis of a system of individual passes now being readied. Officials indicated the pass system will also be applied to workers from the West Bank.

The action was accompanied by bloody new assaults. In a single week in mid-May, 17 Palestinians were shot dead by Israeli soldiers.

In the biggest mass arrest since the uprising began, the army jailed 200 people in

Gaza who it said were members of Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement. The main political base of Hamas is in Gaza, but it is also active in the struggle in the West Bank.

As with many others who have been arrested, the army charged that those jailed were "leaders" of the uprising. It also accused Hamas of ordering the death of Palestinian agents in Israel.

Among those arrested was Sheik Ahmed Yassin, a leader of Hamas. Yassin, 51, is a quadriplegic confined to a wheelchair.

New hardships

The Israeli decision to curb the employment of Gaza workers inside the green line will mean an onerous new hardship for the

Palestinians. But, if persisted in, it will also mean heavy losses for an entire sector of Israel's capitalists.

Of Gaza's 650,000 residents, an estimated 60,000 work across the green line.

With the imposition of a pass system, each worker will have to obtain an individual permit. An occupation official in Gaza said those with "criminal" records would not be given permits. In April the government said 30,000 Palestinians had been imprisoned since the beginning of the uprising in December 1987.

Mohammad Qannitah, a leader of the General Federation of Palestinian Trade Unions in the Gaza Strip, said, "The Israeli measure will force the unemployment rate in the Gaza Strip sky high." The Gaza jobless rate, he said, already exceeds 50 percent.

Construction workers hit hard

In construction, Palestinians comprise 80 percent of the work force. According to a builders' association official, Palestinians in the industry number 40,000 to 50,000, with about 70 percent of these coming from Gaza.

He told Israel Radio that the expulsion of the Gaza workers put the industry on the brink of disaster.

Palestinian workers inside the green line are said to earn from \$20 to \$25 for a 14-hour day.

Jewish workers, employers say, demand half again as much and insist on shorter hours.

To intensify its pressure, the Israeli regime also barred Gaza farmers from exporting citrus products across the green line, at least temporarily. Citrus exports are an important source of income for Gaza.

The regime has also hit economically at Palestinians in the West Bank and inside the green line. So far this year no permits have been issued to Palestinian merchants inside the green line to buy and market produce from the West Bank.

With the double squeeze by Jordan and Israel, prices of West Bank fruits and vegetables have dropped by as much as two-thirds.

Solidarity with Eastern strike and Panama featured at Northwest socialist conference

BY MICHEL DUGRÉ

VANCOUVER, Canada — More than 60 activists participated in a Pacific Northwest Socialist Educational Conference here May 27-28. The conference was organized by supporters of the *Militant* newspaper.

In welcoming the participants to the conference, which was held at the Langara Community College, conference coordinator Fred Nelson, a member of the International Woodworkers of America, explained that it was an "opportunity for activists from the United States, Canada, and elsewhere to get together and discuss through some of the key questions facing working people today."

The conference opened with a report from *Militant* reporter Cindy Jaquith, who recently returned from Panama where she covered the Panamanian elections and the efforts of the U.S. government to topple the Panamanian government.

The conference centered on two reports concerning the strike of the International As-

sociation of Machinists against Eastern Airlines. The first talk was given by James Harris, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York. The second was presented by striking Eastern Airlines worker Ernest Mailhot, a member of the strike committee of IAM Local 1018 at La Guardia Airport in New York.

Harris explained why the strike was the most important labor battle in North America in 10 years, the outcome of which could affect many other struggles now under way.

Mailhot described many examples that show how the success by the Eastern workers in keeping Eastern's fleet on the ground has inspired other working people.

"Whatever [Eastern owner] Frank Lorenzo does to Eastern, we have to fight to maintain the union, and we need the solidarity of all workers to do it," said Mailhot.

The closing talk was given by John Steele, a leader of the Revolutionary Workers League in Canada.

"Strikes like the Eastern strike are one side of the picture, and they point the way forward for our class," Steele said. "But the other side of the picture is the continued political retreat of the labor movement in Canada and the United States in face of the attacks of the employers."

Steele gave as an example the reactionary Canadian nationalist campaign waged by Canadian trade union and New Democratic Party leaders against the Canada-U.S. "free trade" pact, which he argued, has weakened the capacity of workers and farmers to defend themselves against the impact of the coming recession.

During the course of the conference, Dan Fein from Seattle reported on the latest developments in the international campaign to defend framed-up Des Moines, Iowa, packing-house worker Mark Curtis.

More than \$200 was raised at the conference toward the \$20,000 fund drive of the monthly French-language magazine *Lutte ouvrière* published in Montréal.