

Québec socialist hits terror against Mohawks

The following statement was issued on August 27 by Michel Dugré, Communist League candidate for mayor of Montréal and member of the United Steelworkers union.

The labor movement, all working people, and other supporters of democratic and human rights across Canada and internationally need to move into action to prevent the Canadian and Québec governments from carrying out a bloody massacre of embattled Mohawk Indian fighters here in Montréal. We must demand an end to the racist terror being waged against Native people in this country.

These actions can join with the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto that provided a good example of what is needed by calling for the "immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all police and military forces

As we go to press, Mohawks have reached agreement with the government to dismantle barricades at Kahnawake that have been blocking a commuter bridge to Montréal for 51 days. While negotiations continue over outstanding issues, the barricades at Kanesatake west of Montréal remain in place.

to facilitate a peaceful negotiation process." The British Columbia Federation of Labour has also called for support of Natives' land claims and demand for self-government. And the United Transportation Union demanded the government sit down and negotiate the just demands of the Native peoples.

On August 27 the Canadian army was ordered by the federal government, at Québec's request, to use as much force as necessary to tear down Mohawk barricades at the borders of two Native communities just outside Montréal, Kanesatake and Kahnawake. The barricades were originally erected to prevent further seizure of Mohawk land at Kanesatake. A local politician wanted to expand an exclusive golf course.

Several hundred armed Mohawk Warriors, plus hundreds more Natives from the two communities, are surrounded by troops

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Curtis defense committee asks for constitutional protections

BY JON BIXBY
AND PRISCILLA SCHENK

DES MOINES, Iowa — At a news conference here August 23, leaders of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee announced the filing of a motion calling on Iowa District Court Judge Arthur Gamble to protect the defense committee's constitutional rights.

Prominent civil liberties attorney Mark Bennett, representing the defense committee, asked the judge for "a protective order barring unconstitutional intrusions into the affairs and finances of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee," defense committee leader Héctor Marroquín reported.

This fight arose out of a lawsuit filed by Keith and Denise Morris, parents of the

U.S. tightens blockade, anti-Iraq threats mount



Palestinians in Jordan demonstrate against U.S. war moves. Threats against Iraq have spurred massive protest by Arab peoples.

BY GREG McCARTAN

In a diplomatic victory for the U.S. government's growing military intervention in the Arab East, the United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution August 25 giving the United States and other countries the right to militarily enforce the blockade of Iraq.

The United States prior to the vote was already intercepting ships bound for Iraqi ports, and pressuring Jordan and other Arab

countries to break economic ties with the country.

Thomas Pickering, UN representative from the United States, hailed the UN decision. "History will judge us by our resolve in the face of Iraq's threats to international peace and security," he said, adding the resolution was "sufficiently broad to use armed force."

Continuing a massive 24-hour-a-day military build-up of forces in the Arabian Pen-

insula by air and sea, the U.S. government tightened the blockade of oil, food, medical supplies, and other vital items into or out of Iraq.

U.S. warships intercepted three vessels bound for Jordan's port of Aqaba, forcing one of them to turn back. Aqaba is Jordan's only port and it is connected by road to Iraq. Scores of merchant ships seeking portage are being challenged by U.S., French, and British

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Eastern strikers mobilize supporters for Labor Day actions across country

BY JUDY STRANAHAN

Machinists on strike against Eastern Airlines are mobilizing supporters at Labor Day actions around the country to celebrate their victory against union-busting and press forward the fight for a contract and jobs.

Eastern strikers in Miami have chartered buses to ferry unionists to nearby Broward County for an AFL-CIO organized Labor Day action. The buses, which will begin operation at 8:00 a.m. and be available for rides all day, were paid for by the Transport Workers Union local at Pan Am airlines.

At the Labor Day parade in New York City, Eastern strikers will be part of the contingent that leads the march. The Machinists are encouraging all their members and supporters to wear red strike T-shirts.

In Philadelphia, unionists who are on strike in the area — including Eastern strikers — will lead off an AFL-CIO organized march that is being sponsored by more than 100 unions.

Following the march, a rally will feature a number of speakers, including Bill George, president of the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO; C.A. (Obie) O'Brien, Eastern strike coordinator of Local 1776 of the International Association of Machinists; Ed Vezza, president of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1210; Bill Ray, member of the International Executive Board of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA); and Leona Smith, president of the National Union of the Homeless.

In Detroit, strikers will also be among those leading that city's big Labor Day pa-

rade. In previous years it has drawn 100,000 people. Eastern strikers will be handing out a special fact sheet that updates unionists about the strike at Eastern and will be distributing strike buttons for donations.

In Birmingham, Labor Day expanded picket lines are being sponsored by Alabama Jobs With Justice, Machinists District 100, and Amalgamated Transit Union locals 1493 and 1600. The picketing will be held at both the Municipal Airport and Greyhound bus station.

District 22 of the UMW centered in Price, Utah, is sponsoring a series of Labor Day activities this year, culminating in a parade and rally in nearby Helper. Two Eastern strikers, one from Phoenix and one from Los Angeles, will be on hand to participate in the events.

Joining them as speakers at the rally in Helper will be Greyhound strikers from Salt Lake City and UMW members from Sheridan, Wyoming, who are fighting to regain their jobs at the Decker Coal mine after a three-year strike.

A September 1 Labor Day weekend action organized by the Los Angeles County AFL-CIO in support of the Eastern strikers will be held at the international airport. The flier

Continued on Page 3

'Militant' helps get out the truth on U.S. war

BY RONI McCANN

As the U.S. government steps up its war moves in the Middle East, many working people and farmers — including those now in uniform, young people, and others are looking for the truth about the massive military deployment and discussing the situation.

What is this war all about? Which side is in working people's best interests? What's behind the conflict between Iraq and Kuwait? These are some of the questions *Militant* supporters have run into as they have made special efforts over the past two weeks to get the paper around on the job, at factory gates, on college campuses, and in working-class neighborhoods.

The *Militant* is especially important right now. It prints the truth about the U.S. war in the Arab East. It takes a clear stand in opposition to Washington's aggression against the Arab peoples and explains why. It features background on the history of the region and the decades-long struggle by the Arab peoples against imperialist domination. And it reports the responses to the war moves by workers, political activists, and youth in the United States and internationally.

Good opportunity on Labor Day

Labor Day activities slated in many cities across the country over the September 1-3 weekend promise increased opportunities to get out the *Militant*. Eastern strikers are mobilizing their supporters in a number of cities to help lead off Labor Day events. All participants will be interested in getting the latest news on the Machinists strike against Eastern as well as the U.S. troop mobilization in the Arab East.

Militant supporters report that the U.S. war moves in the Middle East have been a hot topic of discussion on Eastern picket lines.

In Atlanta, Georgia, where some people have gathered on overpasses in the city to wave American flags as the troops depart, one striker pointed out, "They have it all wrong."

"They should be waving little flags from Shell, Conoco, and Exxon, because that's what this war is all about," he said.

Discussions on the job

Militant supporters have also shown the paper around on the job where discussions on the events in the Arab East are numerous. In Detroit, Michigan, at the Thom Apple Valley meat-packing plant, five workers bought copies of the *Militant* from a supporter last week.

Israel invaded southern Lebanon, one worker pointed out, why doesn't the U.S. government do anything about that? Others were supportive of Washington's actions. "I'll go. I'll fight for my country," said a Chicano worker.

A railroad worker in Washington, D.C., sold five copies of the *Militant* on the job last week where the events were the center of conversation. In Atlanta *Militant* supporters at the Geo. A. Hormel & Co. meat-packing plant sold six copies of the paper to coworkers. One worker who said he wanted no part of a war in the Middle East bought the paper right away.

Two oil workers at a Chevron refinery in the Los Angeles area bought subscriptions to the paper at work over the August 25-26 weekend.

At the Saab-Scania plant near Stockholm, Sweden, *Militant* supporters sold at two gates last week, and four auto workers bought copies of the paper with coverage on the U.S. war in the Arab East.

Supporters in Sydney, Australia, also reported increased interest in the paper on



Militant/Eric Simpson

Seattle picket line protesting U.S. war moves in the Arab East. A newly formed coalition there has called a demonstration for September 8 and activists plan to build the action at upcoming Labor Day events. Coalitions to protest the U.S. war in the Middle East have been formed in several cities, including New York and Los Angeles.

weekly sales and at plant gates. They ordered an extra bundle for a "Bring the Frigates Home" march slated for September 1 to protest military intervention in the Persian Gulf.

Militant supporters in Austin, Minnesota,

have met farmers, laid-off packinghouse workers, and students during weekly sales and have gotten a good response to the paper. "I bought this whole thing at first," said a Minnesota farmer, "but then I figured out that farmers would lose \$6 million in dairy products alone — this is no war for farmers."

Militant supporters have also organized sales in Arab communities. Five papers were sold at a mosque in Dearborn, Michigan, and six copies and an introductory subscription were sold in Paterson, New Jersey. There, a leaflet for a public forum demanding "U.S. troops out of the Middle East" was scooped up by shoppers, posted in store windows, and placed on magazine racks.

Sales near military bases

Supporters of the *Militant* in Baltimore, Boston, and Oakland, California, have visited military bases and surrounding communities to sell the paper. In a neighborhood outside of Fort Ord in California, supporters sold 20 copies of the paper in three hours. At air force personnel housing and stores near Pease Air Force base in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, supporters from Boston sold 12 copies of the *Militant* last week, including three to soldiers and two to farmers.

Canada fund drive offsets papers' expense

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL — Supporters of the *Militant*, *Lutte ouvrière*, and *Perspectiva Mundial* in Canada raised nearly \$24,000 between June 1 and August 11 to defray the costs of shipping and mailing the socialist publications to distributors and subscribers across Canada.

An appeal for funds written in English, French, and Spanish pointed out the three publications' "main job is to get out the truth about the struggles of workers everywhere and to provide accurate and timely analysis on the complex changes taking place in the world today."

Members of the United Steelworkers of

America, International Association of Machinists, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU), the Canadian Auto Workers, and other unions contributed the big majority of the funds.

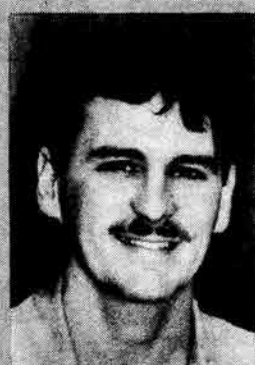
Vancouver supporters raised \$5,420, those in Toronto sent in \$8,056, and Montréal supporters collected \$9,465. Subscribers in other cities contributed the balance.

In Vancouver a bus driver and member of the Independent Canadian Transit Union donated \$25. An IAM member who works at Vancouver International Airport responded to the appeal saying the *Militant* "sure is a good little paper," and enclosed a donation of \$20.

Supporters of the three socialist publications held fund-raising events and meetings in Montréal, Toronto, and Vancouver. In Toronto garment worker and ACTWU member José Garcia told supporters at a fund-raising picnic that *Perspectiva Mundial* had helped him understand the developments in the Soviet Union over the past year.

In Toronto and Montréal fund-raising events were organized to hear *Militant* staff writer Greg McCartan present a slideshow and give an eyewitness report on the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. The Toronto and Vancouver meetings were addressed by representatives of the African National Congress. Some 130 people attended the meetings in the three cities.

'I have read the *Militant* for 13 years. During the last two in prison the paper has been my link with the struggles of workers and farmers. I appreciate the coverage of my fight for justice and of other frame-up victims.'



MARK CURTIS

Political and union activist framed up on charges of rape and burglary in 1988 and serving a 25-year sentence in Iowa

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Eastern strikers mobilize for Labor Day

"The Eastern strike is symbolic of the problems that workers are facing."

Continued from front page
publicizing the action calls for trade unionists to come to form a "human chain of labor."

Joe Mos, a Machinist strike coordinator in Los Angeles, said in an interview that strikers there are expecting a big turnout for the airport rally. In addition, members would be setting up a strike information booth at the Los Angeles County AFL-CIO sponsored picnic on Labor Day.

"I think we should be out there because we're really symbolic — the Eastern strike is symbolic of the problems that workers all over the country are facing right now, especially unionized workers with the threat of being replaced by scab workers, by 'replacement' workers," explained Mos.

"A lot of workers still have yet to be involved" in the strike, Mos continued, and "don't know how they can fight. But I know many, many workers are concerned about the problems," and indicated that the Eastern strike is helping to set an example for all working people.

On March 4, 1989, 8,500 members of the IAM struck Eastern Airlines in an effort to halt a company drive, headed by its chairman Frank Lorenzo, to break the union and impose massive concessions on the work force.

Since then, the strikers have maintained their picket lines and have reached out and gained solidarity from among working people in the United States and internationally.



Militant/Judy Stranahan

Machinists and supporters at August 4 picket at La Guardia Airport in New York

In the labor movement Lorenzo's name became synonymous with union-busting. He was dubbed the most hated boss in the United States as he strove to build a worldwide nonunion airline operation.

First, Lorenzo bought Continental Airlines in 1982, and in 1983 launched a successful drive to break the unions at the carrier.

Then, hoping to build on his conquest at Continental, Lorenzo bought Eastern in 1986 and launched the antiunion drive against the workers.

However, the Eastern strikers have blocked his efforts to bust the unions at the carrier and have dealt a big blow to the decade-long employers' offensive against

unions and working people.

On April 18 this year a bankruptcy judge removed Lorenzo from the day-to-day operations at Eastern. Lorenzo had proposed that the carriers' creditors receive 10 cents on each dollar owed.

Finally, on August 9 Lorenzo stepped down as chief executive of Continental Holdings Inc. and announced he was selling most of his stake in the holding company to the Scandinavian Airline System. Part of the deal also contained a clause obligating Lorenzo to stay out of the airline business for at least seven years.

Court-appointed trustee Martin Shugrue, attempting to stem the further decline of the airline, is seeking bankruptcy court permission to pay top executives a one-year salary bonus if they remain with "the company until it is reorganized or sold, and a smaller bonus if the airline is liquidated," the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* reported.

Shugrue said the moves are to counter "increasing concern that Eastern may be liquidated with the resultant loss of jobs." Of Eastern's 190 top managers, 76 have already quit.

Labor Day will be a real opportunity for all working people to celebrate the victories that the fighting ranks of the Machinists union have scored in their 18-month strike. It will be a chance to deepen solidarity with the Eastern workers' struggle.

Contributions to fund drive needed to boost expansion of socialist movement

The Socialist Workers Party has raised the goal of its Party-Building Fund from \$140,000 to \$150,000. The fund, announced in early August, has already received pledges of \$137,700.

"Raising the goal," said James Harris, the fund drive director, "will give those who have not already made a pledge a chance to participate. It will also place the party in an even better position to respond to the challenges and opportunities before socialists this fall."

"We want all readers of the *Militant*, Pathfinder books and pamphlets, and all the friends and supporters of the SWP to make a pledge, whatever the amount may be."

Harris explained that the purpose of the Party-Building Fund is to provide the resources needed to finance the outreach work of the socialist movement.

"We want to be able to reach the thousands of workers and farmers who are open to socialist ideas," he said, "because of the fights that they are involved in. This includes coal miners, Eastern Airlines strikers, workers behind prison bars, and others who see the *Militant* and the publications of Pathfinder as their publications."

"They are finding this material to be essential to their political education," Harris explained, not just literature that is interesting to read, but weapons that are needed in the fight. More workers and farmers think of Pathfinder and the *Militant* in this way than at any other time in the past two decades.

"The fund will enable working-class fighters to move out nationally and internationally with the *Militant* and the Spanish- and French-language publications *Perspectiva Mundial* and *Lutte ouvrière*. They will reach working people in struggle in both city and countryside, students, fighters for democratic rights, and others," the SWP leader said.

'New International'

"The fund will also help provide the resources to publish a new issue of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory, which will contain the political resolutions adopted by the SWP at its last convention."

Harris said contributions will also help field international reporting teams like the ones the *Militant* sent to South Africa, El Salvador, Panama, Cuba, the Philippines, and

elsewhere this past year. These teams help inspire Pathfinder publishing projects like the pamphlet *Nelson Mandela: Speeches 1990*.

"The fund will aid in maintaining the party's leadership school. The school gives leaders of the party an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the communist movement by studying the works of Marx and Engels," Harris said.

The political situation in the world is providing more openings for socialist ideas to be heard, Harris said. "The ruling class intends to make working people pay for the problems created by capitalism and the declining rate of profit. The rulers want to pocket even more of the world's wealth."

"Their drive to do this inevitably creates the fightbacks, the strikes, the social explosions, and the unexpected struggles that make working people reach out to find working-class answers to what we face. It becomes clearer to all of us that the solutions of the employers and their government can't be our solutions. In fact our interests are diametrically opposed to theirs," he said.

Harris noted that party supporters can explain to coworkers and other potential contributors to the fund the importance of having a weekly "published in the interests of working people" as the events around the U.S. military build-up in the Gulf unfold. The *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *Lutte ouvrière* provide their readers with the truth about U.S. war moves and reports on the response to these moves within the working class.

High stakes for working people

"The lies and distortions that appear in the bourgeois media are all intended to drum up support for the imperialist war effort," Harris said. "The socialist publications will explain the high stakes involved for working people, who will be the ones to fight and die in a war that is not in our interest."

"Contributing to the fund," said Harris "will help to insure that the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *Lutte ouvrière* are able to continue covering the events in the Middle East and on the picket lines at Eastern, the resistance in the coalfields and in South Africa, the Cuban revolution, and struggles throughout the world. In the coming weeks these publications will report what working people around the world — in and out of

uniform — really think of Washington's war moves around the world.

"Key to making the fund," Harris said, "will be to start immediately to increase the amount pledged from \$137,000 to \$150,000 and to turn the pledges into paid donations. Those who have pledged should start paying on their pledge as soon as possible and those who have not made a pledge should make one immediately."

The SWP has set a goal of collecting \$75,000 by October 15, the halfway mark in the drive. The *Militant* will report on the fund through a regular column during the drive along with the accompanying scoreboard.

Socialist Workers Party-Building Fund

\$137,000 has been pledged to the fund.
\$5,266 has been paid.
Our goal is to get immediate pledges for **\$150,000** and to collect **\$75,000**, the halfway point, by Oct. 1.

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\$150,000 by Dec. 1

125,000

100,000

75,000

50,000

25,000

*By Oct. 1

Arizona inmates' group sends solidarity message

Mark Curtis is a unionist and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa, who was framed by police on rape and burglary charges. He was convicted in September 1988 and is now serving a 25-year sentence in the John Bennett state

Africa to Canada have endorsed the committee's efforts.

For more information about the case or how you can help, write to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311; telephone (515) 246-

would like to let everyone know that we feel the whole case surrounding Mark Curtis is just one big antagonistic contradiction.

"We contend that Mark Curtis is a political prisoner, and we ask that he be released immediately so that much needed work can be done on the behalf of humanity. The time we live in now is a time that even a racist society like South Afrika is engaged in the process of releasing political prisoners. We plead that we don't pick up policies that we are asking other countries to drop."

the Notts Area Executive of the NUM endorsed the defense effort. Their executive had purchased 13 copies of *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis* video and distributed them to local branches.

The North-East Area NUM, which hosted the conference, also endorsed the Curtis defense effort. Many members from that region are Curtis supporters. Murton Branch members reported that they had organized a benefit social and raised £100 (US\$190) for the defense campaign. Two members of the Wearmouth branch signed up and said that their Branch had agreed to become an endorser of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

Four Yorkshire miners also became endorsers. At the annual miners' gala in Durham, which followed the NUM conference, another 45 people signed up as Curtis supporters.

At its monthly meeting July 26, the Waikato District Council of Trade Unions in New Zealand voted to donate \$200 (US\$124) towards the Curtis defense campaign. The unionists also took a collection and

raised another \$120 (US\$74).

Twenty-five unionists and representatives of unemployed groups attended the meeting, at which *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis* video was shown.

The Council of Trade Unions is the main national union federation in New Zealand. Each district has its own sub-branch comprised of affiliated unions in the region.

Carlos Montenegro Altamirano, an artist in Nicaragua especially well known for his india ink drawings of traditional dancers on the Pacific Coast and sketches of towns on the Atlantic Coast, has endorsed the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. The artist also painted a scene of Sandino's generals on the Pathfinder Mural in New York. Sandino, who is Nicaragua's national hero, organized a popular army and drove invading U.S. marines from the country in the 1930s.

Helen Arthur from Manchester, England; Pat Neale from Auckland, New Zealand; and Seth Galinsky from Managua, Nicaragua, contributed to this week's column.

DEFEND MARK CURTIS!



prison in Fort Madison, Iowa.

Despite harassment by authorities, he continues to be politically active in prison and refuses to be isolated from the world beyond the prison walls.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee, based in Des Moines, is leading an international campaign to fight for justice for Curtis and to defend his rights in prison. More than 8,000 unionists, defenders of democratic rights, political activists, prominent officials, and others from the Philippines to Sweden, from South

1695. If you have news or reports on activities in support of Mark Curtis from your city or country, please send them to the *Militant*.

The Afrikan Culture Workshop, an organization of Black inmates at the Federal Correctional Institution near Phoenix, recently sent a message of support to Mark Curtis signed by three of the group's officers. Below is an excerpt:

"We of the collective of the Afrikan Culture Workshop would like brother Mark Curtis to know that we support you 100 percent. We

New backing was won for Curtis' defense effort at the National Union of Mineworkers conference in Durham, England, July 9-12.

Twenty NUM members endorsed the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Among them were three young miners involved in the union's youth work. They also signed the international youth appeal for Curtis.

Curtis' case is becoming well known among British miners, many of whom have responded with solidarity and support.

Stan Crawford and Mick Davies, the president and vice-president of

Kate Kaku addresses UN rights body on Curtis

BY SUSAN BERMAN

GENEVA, Switzerland — "I ask you to take a stand on the side of human rights in my husband's case," said Kate Kaku at the 42nd session of the United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities. Kaku is the wife of Mark Curtis, jailed in the United States for his union and political activities.

"There is a history of governmental violation of justice and the right to a fair trial of trade unionists, civil rights fighters, and political activists in the United States. This pattern continues to the present," Kaku told the plenary session of the subcommittee on August 24. The subcommittee is a companion body to the UN Commission on Human Rights.

Kaku is leading an international delegation of supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee at the Geneva meeting. Kaku and John Studer, coordinator of the defense committee, were given credentials as delegates to the session by the Indigenous World Association. The IWA is one of dozens of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) approved by the United Nations to attend the subcommittee hearings and raise human rights violations. NGO participants with credentials, as well as observers from more than 80 governments, can make presentations before the subcommittee.

Kaku spoke under the agenda item on the "administration of justice and the human rights of detainees," where the subcommittee considered resolutions and contributions on the right to a fair trial, the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty, and protection from torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

U.S. violations of rights

"Unjustly imprisoned today is Leonard Peltier, an indigenous political activist framed after a U.S. military assault against the Pine Ridge Indian reservation," Kaku said. "Johnny Imani Harris has been in prison for 20 years, framed on charges of rape and robbery. Advocates of Puerto Rican independence are imprisoned in the United States for their activities, including Alejandrina Torres and Juan Segarra Palmer. Four members of the United Mine Workers of America were jailed for their participation in the 1984-85 strike against the A.T. Massey Coal Co.

"My husband Mark Curtis is also a victim of the abuse of human rights," she explained. Curtis was active as a packinghouse worker and unionist in Des Moines, Iowa. His prison term is a result of being framed up on charges of rape and burglary. The police frame-up stemmed from his participation in the defense of 17 coworkers from El Salvador and Mexico who were arrested in an illegal federal immigration raid at the plant where they worked.

"Increasing numbers of immigrant workers are coming to the United States," Kaku told the subcommittee. "Racism and anti-immigrant prejudice are used by the employers to divide the work force. Mark worked to unite all workers in his union."

The subcommittee is comprised of 26 members from a number of countries nominated for their expertise in the area of human rights.

After a prolonged and sometimes heated debate on the agenda item on "the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including policies of racial discrimination and segregation and of apartheid," the subcommittee was almost four days behind schedule.

As a result, delegations were forced to cut their remarks on little notice. Several had planned to include Mark Curtis' case in their statements, but for time reasons had to shorten their talks.

Jailed for help to minorities

Alejandro Teitelbaum, representing the American Association of Jurists headquartered in Argentina, in his statement to the subcommittee noted the many cases of "ethnic minorities in the United States" jailed under false accusations and subjected to cruel and unusual punishment, "and whites who were sentenced because of the help they gave to these minorities."

"With us here," Teitelbaum said, "is the wife of the North American Mark Curtis, a unionist and fighter for minority rights, accused of rape and sentenced to 25 years of incarceration as a result of a trial plagued with procedural irregularities."

Roxana Pastor, a delegate of the Service for Peace and Justice in Latin America (SERPAJ), said in an interview that her group had planned to raise the Curtis case before the time was cut. "I think for us Central Americans it's been important when the U.S. people speak about what's happening in Central America," she said. "And one of the things I think that the solidarity movement in the United States has not done is to attend to the human rights violations in the United States."

"When there's a clear case of someone who has been organizing the people who are in their own community, people who have come to the United States because of repression in Central America, and there's a repression from the U.S. justice system, we need to think about it as a very important case."

Rigoberta Menchú, a Guatemalan Indian leader representing the International Indian Treaty Council, had prepared remarks addressing Curtis' fight for political space in prison as part of her presentation. However, the subcommittee ruled that her group and three others had applied to speak too late and denied them the floor.

Kaku told the subcommittee about the



Militant/Susan Berman. Kate Kaku, left, talking with Rigoberta Menchú in Geneva. Menchú, a Guatemalan Indian leader representing the International Indian Treaty Council, is an endorser of the Curtis case.

systematic denial of due process of law in Curtis' case: his beating by the police, who called him a "Mexican-lover, just like you love those coloreds"; the denial of his right to cross-examine the central witness against him, the arresting officer, concerning the officer's suspension from the police force for lying and fabricating evidence in the past; and the judge's decision to deny a defense motion that would have informed the jury that Curtis' alibi covering the time of the alleged attack was a basis for acquittal.

"The most recent development in my husband's fight for justice is an ominous one for human rights," Kaku then reported. "A suit has been filed demanding massive punitive damages against Mark and I. The court has authorized a probe into the contributors and members of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee."

"This attempt to intrude into the finances of the committee is a frontal challenge to the right to free political association," she said. "It threatens defense committees and human rights organizations all over the world." Kaku urged the subcommittee "to use its authority to help bring an end to these violations of democratic rights and to aid us in strengthening human rights around the world."

On August 27 Kaku and Studer met with Maria Francisca Ize-Charrin, the human rights officer assigned to Curtis' case by UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, and Jan Martenson, director of the UN Centre for Human Rights. Kaku and Studer delivered an update on the case to Ize-Charrin, focusing on recent developments in the case, including the fight to defend Curtis' right to be politically active in prison and the current legal attack against the defense committee. Ize-Charrin told the defense committee representatives she would circulate an updated confidential communication to UN member states on the Curtis case and a request for a response from the U.S. government. She made a similar request following a February meeting with defense committee representatives.

Kaku and delegation members also met with dozens of other human rights activists who are attending the subcommittee session. Many, like Custodio López and Menchú, are already endorsers of the Curtis defense committee. Others, including Edith Ballantyne, secretary-general of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and Terry O'Shane of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Commission became endorsers and made contributions.

Right to privacy and freedom of association at stake in attack on Curtis committee

BY SELVA NEBBIA

An important fight regarding constitutional rights is currently under way in Des Moines, Iowa. It centers around the Mark Curtis Defense Committee's right to protect the privacy and freedom of association of its supporters and contributors.

Formed to win justice for Mark Curtis, the defense committee was set up shortly after his arrest in 1988. Curtis is a union and political activist who was framed up by Des Moines police and unjustly convicted of rape and burglary. He is serving a 25-year sentence.

Keith and Denise Morris, parents of the woman Curtis is alleged to have assaulted, filed a lawsuit for financial damages against Curtis. The lawsuit seeks thousands of dollars in damages. According to Iowa law, punitive damages "are allowed to punish and discourage the defendant."

Curtis and his wife, Kate Kaku, are both packinghouse workers. They have no funds, property, or other financial assets. Curtis currently makes 24 cents an hour at an Iowa prison.

Curtis, whose case is being handled by attorneys William Kutmus and George Eichhorn, was not permitted to attend the July 9 trial in the Morris' lawsuit.

Prior to the trial, Judge Arthur Gamble had ruled against Curtis by stating that his criminal conviction established his guilt, making him financially liable in the Morris' lawsuit. The only issue for the civil trial, therefore, was to determine the amount of the financial judgment to be awarded the Morris.

On August 3 Gamble ruled on a motion made by the Morris' attorney ordering defense committee treasurer Julia Terrell to testify about the committee's finances. The judge said he wanted to determine if Curtis has access to the committee's funds, thus making them available as part of a financial award.

The Morris' lawyer, Stuart Pepper, also asked that "all financial records and books concerning Mark Curtis Defense Committee from its inception to the present" be turned over to them.

"By targeting the defense committee itself, not only Mark and Kate," defense committee coordinator John Studer said during an August 17 interview, "the Morris' attorney, with the backing of Judge Gamble, has widened the scope of the lawsuit to include a frontal assault on the defense committee's right to privacy and its right to freedom of association."

"This poses a serious challenge," Studer

continued, "to the rights of all defense committees fighting frame-ups, and to the rights of unionists, civil libertarians, political activists and other opponents of frame-ups who have lent their support to the defense effort."

Following this new development the Mark Curtis Defense Committee retained its own attorney, Mark Bennett, a constitutional rights lawyer and general counsel for the Iowa Civil Liberties Union. Bennett recently filed a motion in the Iowa District Court for Polk County asking the court for a protective order barring unconstitutional intrusions into the affairs and finances of the committee.

Speaking of the attack on the defense committee, Bennett in a phone interview said, "I think this case goes far beyond the Mark Curtis Defense Committee."

'Serious incursion into rights'

"If parties in civil litigation are allowed to engage in comprehensive and intrusive discovery into the membership, or solicitation and distribution of funds," said Bennett, "I think it will have a tremendously chilling effect on a whole variety of First Amendment activities that groups, including defense committees, engage in."

"I see it as a very serious incursion into their freedom of association rights, and that is why we so vigorously resisted the subpoena in this case," the civil liberties lawyer explained.

"This is an important case in constitutional law; it happens to arise with the Mark Curtis Defense Committee," he noted. "The ability of litigants to go on a fishing expedition into the activities of organizations is a very sensitive constitutional question."

Studer explained that the defense committee has launched a campaign to win broad support for this fight and is encouraging all defenders of democratic rights to protest the attack against it, including among those who have not yet decided to endorse the Curtis case.

Purpose of the defense committee

Treasurer Terrell and coordinator Studer submitted affidavits supporting Bennett's motion. "The purpose of the committee," explained Terrell, "is to raise funds in order to pay the expenses of legal efforts to win freedom and vindication for Curtis, as well as to print and circulate literature to arouse public awareness about his plight."

The committee also raises funds to send representatives to present Curtis' case before human rights organizations. A delegation of supporters, including defense committee leader Kate Kaku, for example, just took the

and human rights fighters from around the country sent messages to the defense committee to protest this attack on constitutional rights. Among them were Merle Hansen, a well-known farm activist; Carmen Mullins, president of the United Mine Workers Student Auxiliary in Virginia; Wayne Ford, a leader in the Black community in Des Moines; the Hoover family of St. Louis, who are fighting their own frame-up case; political activist Hollis Watkins from Mississippi; civil rights activist Colonel Stone Johnson from Alabama; and a representative of the American Agricultural Movement of Iowa.

"I join with all those who believe that his financial lawsuit is a serious incursion into the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, and could set a serious precedent," read the message sent by farm activist Merle Hansen.

"This suit threatens the ability of someone accused of a crime to mobilize support for their defense. This violation of rights affects more than the Mark Curtis Defense Committee: it is an issue which affects everyone's civil rights," Hansen concluded.

A decision on the motion is expected within the next several weeks. Messages of support should be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311.



Militant/Margaret Jayko
Julia Terrell, treasurer of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, has been subpoenaed to turn over all financial records to the attorney for Keith and Denise Morris.

case to the United Nations in Geneva. (See article on page 4.) Studer and Kaku are scheduled to participate in the UN Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders to be held in Havana, Cuba, August 27-September 7.

Curtis has no control over funds

"Mark Curtis has absolutely no decision-making power with regard to the activities or financial allocations of the committee," said Terrell in her affidavit. "Mark Curtis has absolutely no control over how the funds of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee are spent. The funds of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee are not an asset of Mark Curtis personally."

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee currently has more than 8,000 endorsing members. It is comprised of individuals and organizations who are working to reverse the frame-up conviction and to win his freedom. They also come together, Studer explained, "to defend their own political rights, which are endangered by the violations of constitutional and legal rights to Mark Curtis."

In her affidavit, Terrell states, "I believe that compelled disclosure of information sought by the plaintiffs [the Morris] would subject members, supporters, and contributors of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee to continuing threats, harassment, and reprisals."

Studer in his affidavit states, "There are contributors for whom anonymity in their financial support is a precondition of their support." They "fear that if their involvement was made public they would face reprisal either from official or private sources."

Some contributors, Studer noted, "decline to be endorsing members to further protect their support from public disclosure and avoid harassment or retaliation."

In his motion before the court, Bennett provides examples of lawsuits won in the course of civil rights and democratic rights battles.

"Neither Julia Terrell nor the Mark Curtis Defense Committee's members, endorsers, supporters, or contributors," explained Bennett in a memorandum submitted to the court in support of his motion, "may constitutionally be compelled to disclose information relating to their political associations, affiliations, activities, membership, solicitation, or expenditure of funds."

A series of incidences point to the grounds supporters of the defense effort have in fearing harassment.

Defense committee supporters have been the object of a political campaign spearheaded by the Workers League that has been peddling the Des Moines police frame-up of Curtis around the world. Its main feature has been taking a letter written by Keith Morris and distributing it among those the Workers League has identified as defense committee supporters.

In his letter released publicly on October 17, 1988, Morris calls Curtis supporters "jackals" that can "only find strength in an unthinking pack."

The letter was printed in the *Bulletin* newspaper and widely distributed internationally by the Workers League. The main activity of this group since 1988 has been the identification and harassment of supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

In his affidavit to the court, Studer documents a number of cases where supporters of the committee were visited and intimi-

dated by agents and affiliates of the Workers League in order to pressure them to revoke their support, and intimidate others from affiliating or contributing to the defense effort.

The Workers League has published a book, entitled *The Mark Curtis Hoax*, which lists individuals and organizations that agents of the group have identified as affiliated to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. The book, Studer noted, contains "highly inflammatory characterizations of these individuals and organizations as well as charges they know to be false alleging connection between these individuals and organizations and U.S. government police agencies."

The book also contains extensive charges against the Socialist Workers Party, the party Curtis is a member of.

The book asserts, "In the fullest sense of the word, the Socialist Workers Party has become a sociopathic organization, a watering hole for all sorts of degenerate elements, social criminals, filled with hatred of the working class."

"The central threat of the *Hoax* book," Studer said, is that anyone associated with the defense committee "will be targeted for government attack." The threat is founded on baseless charge that the SWP is a front for the FBI.

In his affidavit Studer explained that prior to its campaign against the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, the Workers League's principal activity centered around a federal lawsuit filed in Los Angeles in 1979 by Alan Gelfand against the Socialist Workers Party. In his suit Gelfand claimed the SWP was controlled by agents of the FBI. "He later was compelled to admit under oath that the lawsuit was prepared, organized, and financed by the Workers League," explained Studer.

"Through this lawsuit he attempted to identify and depose dozens of individuals associated with the SWP," Studer stated.

On Aug. 15, 1989, a federal judge issued written findings in Gelfand's case in favor of the SWP, ruling that "there is no evidence" supporting any of Gelfand's accusations, and his motivation in bringing the suit was "to disrupt the SWP." The judge concluded that the years of "pretrial discovery" in the Gelfand-Workers League lawsuit had the purpose to "generate material for political attacks on the SWP by the Workers League."

Defense committee office attacked

Another example cited by Studer of the harassment supporters of the committee have been subject to was a July 15, 1988, incident where Keith Morris smashed the front windows of the defense committee office in Des Moines.

When taken to court to pay for the damages, Morris threatened to break the windows again. Curtis and another defense committee volunteer who were present were able to avoid physical assault only by escaping out the back door of the building.

"Responding to this attack against the right of the defense committee to protect the privacy of its contributors and supporters," said Studer, "will be a step in defending the democratic rights of all. Unions, civil rights organizations, political activists, and all who defend constitutional rights should join in this fight."

Studer urged that messages of support and financial contributions to wage the fight be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

Move to protect constitutional rights

Continued from front page

present." Terrell's testimony is to be taken prior to September 30.

"In support of this motion for protective order, Julia Terrell and John Studer, the coordinator of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, have filed detailed affidavits," attorney Bennett wrote.

The affidavits establish that the disclosures sought in the subpoena would open the committee's financial contributors, supporters, and members to threats, harassment, or reprisals. Such a compelled disclosure is in violation of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and the Iowa constitution as an infringement on the right to privacy and freedom of association.

Bennett asks Judge Gamble to withdraw the subpoena against Terrell and the defense committee. "The affidavits of Julia Terrell and John Studer conclusively establish that the Mark Curtis Defense Committee is not an asset of the Defendant available to him for response in damages," Bennett wrote.

Terrell explained to reporters at the district court press conference that "our supporters trust us to protect their privacy. We have a responsibility to protect them from fear of harassment and reprisals."

More than a dozen prominent civil rights

Socialist campaigners get good hearing for candidates' clear stand against war

BY JOHN COX

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Socialist Workers Party campaign is getting a good response from working people to its stand in opposition to U.S. war moves in the Arab East. Here, this response boosted efforts to place two socialist candidates on the ballot: Sam Manuel for U.S. Senate and Ike Nahem for mayor.

The SWP concluded a successful four-week petitioning drive with a big day of campaigning in the District of Columbia on August 25, gathering more than 1,900 signatures. At an open house that evening, Susan Winsten — an Eastern Airlines striker and SWP candidate for D.C. delegate to the House of Representatives — announced that 4,516 signatures had been collected for Manuel and 4,233 for Nahem, well over the 3,000 required for each candidate. The petitions were filed August 28 with the board of elections.

Dan Furman, who is chairperson of the D.C. Young Socialist Alliance and a candidate for U.S. Congress, joined a team of campaign supporters to participate in a demonstration of 150 people at the White House against U.S. intervention in the Middle East. Campaigners sold 10 copies of the *Militant* and got signatures on their petitions from 40 of the protesters.

Other campaign supporters found the mobilization of U.S. troops to the Arab East was a topic of discussion among almost everyone they talked to.

After hearing that the socialists oppose any U.S. intervention in the region — whether “unilateral” or under cover of a UN resolution — a young Jamaican worker said, “We need more people doing what you’re doing. This isn’t going to be like Grenada. It isn’t going to be easy for the United States to do what they want to do.”

“You should be allowed on TV so people can hear what you guys have to say,” he said.

“We only hear the government’s side.”

While campaigners noted a variety of opinions on the street, it was easy to get into discussions, and most people agreed that a U.S.-provoked war would not be in the interests of working people.

BY YVONNE HAYES

When New York SWP gubernatorial candidate Craig Gannon went to Albany on August 21 to file nominating petitions with the state board of elections, his party’s views on the Arab East were top on the list of questions reporters asked him. Several TV stations featured reports that evening on the socialist candidates who are speaking out against the U.S. war moves. Gannon has since had several requests for radio interviews, and a photo box featuring Gannon and Derek Bracey, SWP candidate for state attorney general, was carried in the state’s Greek-language daily *Proini*.

In Michigan socialist campaign supporters have distributed a statement defending the right of the Arab peoples to self-determination and condemning the U.S. blockade of Iraq. “Bring the troops home now! Lift the blockade! Sanctions against South Africa, not Iraq!” the statement demands.

Lea Sherman, socialist candidate for state board of education, appeared on TV Channel 68’s “Strictly Speaking” with Arab-American leaders. Cleve Andrew Pulley, SWP candidate in Detroit’s 13th Congressional District, did a 10-minute spot on the station’s prime-time news show.

Pulley — who spent two months in the stockade during the Vietnam War along with seven other antiwar GIs at Fort Jackson, South Carolina — is also scheduled to appear on a Channel 62 show September 1 with Sen. Carl Levin of Michigan.

Joanne Murphy, the SWP candidate for Michigan secretary of state, received a warm welcome from Arabs outside a Friday prayer



Militant/Yvonne Hayes
Cleve Andrew Pulley, SWP candidate for Congress from Michigan, talks with young people interested in socialism at recent party convention. He and socialist candidates across country are busy explaining their opposition to U.S. war in Arab East.

service at the mosque in Dearborn August 24. People were initially surprised to see non-Arabs speaking out against the U.S. deployment of troops in the Middle East, she said. Many spoke little English, but a sign — “U.S. out of Arab East; read the *Militant*” — got the message across.

In Los Angeles SWP candidates joined 200 other opponents of Washington’s war moves on August 17 at the Federal Building in Westwood.

Several participants asked Joel Britton, socialist candidate for California governor, if he had seen the coverage on his campaign in the *Los Angeles Times* that day. “Socialist

hope: With communism in retreat around the world, Joel Britton is a rare breed these days,” the paper wrote. “In announcing his candidacy, Britton denounced, among other things, ‘big oil companies’ for conspiring to embroil the United States in the Persian Gulf conflict. Of course, Britton himself works for Chevron, one of the world’s largest oil companies.”

Diana Cantú, who is running for lieutenant governor of California, spent a day campaigning in Seaside, a community that borders on Fort Ord south of San Francisco. “I’m very familiar with how the military goes where it has no business,” one woman, a recent retiree from military service, told Cantú.

“Wherever my country needs me, I go,” said a young Black man, the son of an army officer, when he saw the *Militant*’s headline calling for U.S. troops out of the Arab East. But a Vietnamese family right across the street reacted to the same headline by eagerly gathering up change to buy the paper.

Toba Singer from San Francisco contributed to this article.

Protests, teach-ins hit U.S. war moves

BY GREG McCARTAN

Picket lines, rallies, teach-ins, and educational forums protesting U.S. war moves in the Arab East are springing up across the country.

At a packed news conference in New York August 23, the newly formed Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East denounced “President Bush’s illegal, unconstitutional, and potentially catastrophic deployment of up to 250,000 U.S. troops” to the area. The group announced plans for a protest rally at Cooper Union in New York on September 13 at 7:00 p.m.

Phil Martin, a Greyhound striker and member of the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1202, whose son was just shipped out to the Middle East, told reporters, “I was in Vietnam. Can anyone in this room tell me why? We have no business being in the Middle East. Bring our sons home now!”

Ben Chitty, a spokesperson for the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Patricia Moore of the Center for Constitutional Rights, and former U.S. attorney general Ramsey Clark also spoke. Clark urged all opponents of U.S. troops in the Middle East to speak out, recalling the U.S. invasions of Grenada and Panama.

Some 5,000 demonstrators participated in a Los Angeles event to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Chicano Moratorium, a 1970 protest against the Vietnam War. They used the occasion to also protest the sending of U.S. troops. Marchers carried signs reading, “Chicanos against war in the Middle East,” and “U.S. out of the Persian Gulf now!”

Contingents of meat-packers, members of the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union, and the United Farm Workers, Machinists on strike at Eastern Airlines, and the Janitors for Justice organizing drive of the Service Employees International Union joined the march.

Fifty people picketed outside a suburban Minneapolis hotel August 15 while Vice-President Danforth Quayle spoke inside at a Republican Party fund-raiser. Endorsed by eight local groups, the picket denounced U.S.

intervention in the Middle East.

A march and rally of 200 was held in Boston; a picket of 40 heard speakers in Omaha, Nebraska; 150 students turned out to hear speakers at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh; an active duty marine and reservist joined 150 in a Chicago protest; and 200 attended a teach-in titled “U.S. Out of Persian Gulf” in Minneapolis.

At many of these events religious, labor, civil rights, antiwar, solidarity and veterans groups formed coalitions to mobilize the broadest numbers possible. While opposing U.S. intervention, some organizations are also calling on Iraq to leave Kuwait and denounce the Iraqi invasion. They take the position that Iraqi moves opened the door to U.S. military intervention in the area and equate demands for Iraq to leave Kuwait with the United States leaving the Persian Gulf.

In factories, mines, and mills across the country working people are discussing the war moves. A worker at Union Carbide in Charleston, West Virginia, reported that various opinions are discussed, but “most people are convinced it’s about oil, and most remember Vietnam,” she said.

One Union Carbide worker who did two tours in Vietnam said, “People in that country don’t want us there — that was made clear to me in Vietnam. We shouldn’t forget the importance of solidarity with the people over there,” he said.

The Young Socialist Alliance, an organization of students and young workers active in building the protest events, issued a statement in English and Spanish.

The intervention “is aimed at protecting the interests of the oil monopolies. They seek to prop up the rich monarchies in the region that serve imperialism’s interests,” the statement says.

“The Arab people are fighting for their sovereignty and self-determination. Tens of millions of toilers have fought for these rights,” the statement says, adding, “Young people in the United States have no interests in this war.”

Solidarizing with the struggles of the Arab peoples, the YSA said, “The lives of thou-

sands of young workers and farmers from the United States are threatened in this war,” and called for united protests across the country.

Vivian Sahner in New York and Nelson Blackstock in Los Angeles contributed to this article.

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U.S. gov't tightens blockade, increases military forces in Arab East

Continued from front page
warships every day in waters surrounding the Arabian peninsula.

Iraq depends on imports for about three-quarters of its food, and oil produced in the country is a vital export item. The Iraqi press agency said the country was beginning to experience a shortage of food and medicine and accused the United States of committing a "crime against humanity" for organizing the blockade.

Attempting to tighten the screws, the Israeli government announced it would begin to stop exports of Palestinian-produced vegetables, fruits, and other items through Jordan to Iraq. When questioned, officials were unclear how items from the West Bank bound for Iraq would be identified.

Some 50,000 reservists began receiving notices of mobilization.

Noting what the impact of the blockade could be on the Iraqi population, U.S. Sen. Alfonse D'Amato said, "We say the embargo will eventually force Saddam [Hussein, Iraq's president] to pull back because he won't be able to feed his people. But if there is a famine, that will create a moral dilemma for us. Can you imagine the TV pictures of starving kids?"

Flood of troops, matériel

The first of some 200 M-1 tanks of the 24th Infantry Division arrived in Saudi Arabia at the end of August in addition to the 50 M-60 tanks already there. More than 45,000 U.S. troops are now stationed in the country.

Dock workers on East Coast and Gulf ports in the United States are working round-the-clock shifts loading tanks, helicopters, artillery, and other weapons for fast shipment to the Arabian Peninsula. Fifty transport planes land every day at Saudi airfields.

Some 50,000 reservists began receiving notices of mobilization after being called up for active duty by President Bush. The reservists are needed to fly and maintain military transport planes for the extensive airlift. Medical personnel are also being called up.

To sustain the inflow of matériel the military plans to build ports in Saudi Arabia for the huge container ships needed in the operation. An estimated \$2.5 billion will be spent through the end of September on the mobilization. Seeking to bolster the Saudi monarchy's armed forces, the Bush administration rushed through a \$6 billion sale of fighter planes, tanks, and anti-aircraft missiles to the regime.

The aim of this operation, which President Bush termed one of the most important military operations in the century, is to reinstate oil-rich Kuwait's monarch, Sheik Jaber al-Ahmad al-Sabah, who fled to Saudi Arabia after the Iraqi forces crossed into Kuwait on August 2. Bush seeks also to overthrow President Saddam Hussein. Iraqis have considered Kuwait to be historically part of their country, forcefully separated by the imperialist powers to exploit its natural resources and to gain a foothold in the region.

With the blessing of the UN Security Council for the use of force in maintaining the blockade, Bush is attempting to cloak the U.S. war moves in the mantle of the world body.

Negotiations rejected

Despite President Hussein's repeated calls for negotiations, the Bush administration has rejected any moves toward a peaceful settlement. Instead, Bush expelled 36 of the 55 diplomats and staff of the Iraqi embassy in Washington. In response to Hussein's August 29 decision to release women and children currently detained in Iraq, a White House spokesperson responded skeptically, saying, "You can't take their word for anything."

Commenting on talks scheduled for August 30 between UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar and a representative of the Iraqi government, Bush said, "I don't particularly see more hope now because it's so clear what the world is demanding of Saddam Hussein. Clearly the objectives remain the same: Get out of Kuwait and restore the rightful leaders to their place," adding, "I don't yet see fruitful negotiations."

Following a meeting between Bush and 170 members of Congress, Republican Sen. Richard Lugar said Hussein must be driven from power, "and many of the forces he has aggregated have to be removed as a threat."

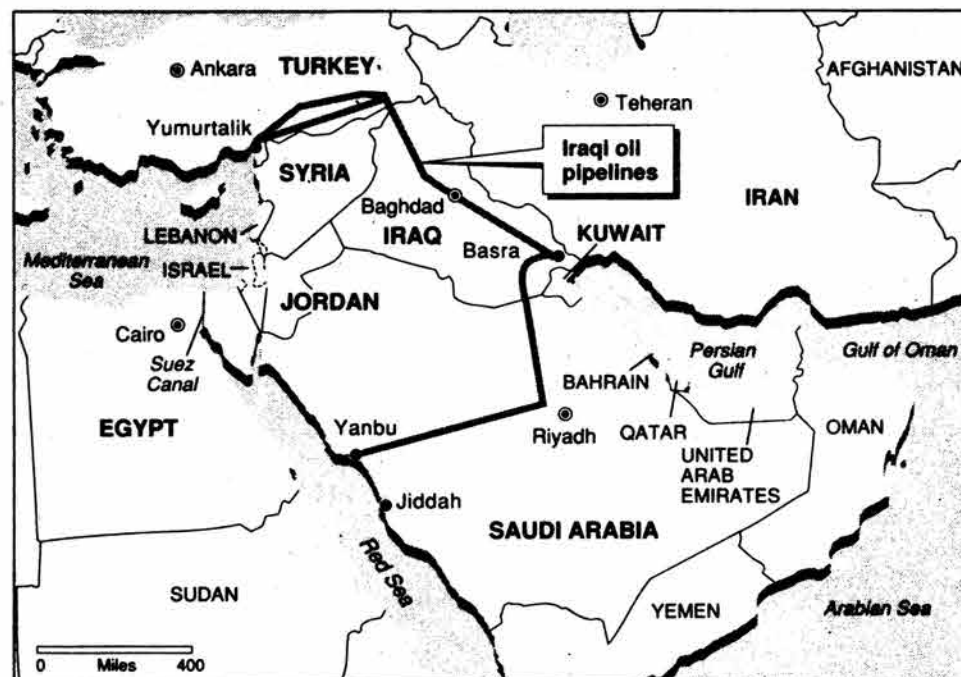
Democrat Thomas Foley said that during the meeting there was "strong support for the president's actions. He was commended by

international students attending a U.S. government-sponsored seminar on "Race Relations in the New South."

After a local TV crew arrived, the police quickly drove the Hoovers away. While in jail for seven hours until they were released on bail, the Hoovers were refused any medical care. The police had badly injured Gloria Hoover's shoulder when they dragged her 130 feet by the handcuffs after punching her face until she passed out.

It took Municipal Judge William Barnett only five minutes to find the Hoovers guilty on 11 of the 19 charges. The judge told the Hoovers, "Don't argue your constitutional rights with the Highway Patrol at midnight on a country road." He dropped eight of the charges, including all those against Benjamin Hoover, Jr., and fined the family members \$25 for each guilty count. They were allowed to return home to St. Louis to raise the money.

The Jackson police department did an internal investigation and found no fault with the police.



speaker after speaker. There were really no overall reservations."

As the foremost imperialist military power in the world, the U.S. government has acted quickly to protect the economic, military, and political interests of imperialism in the region. Clearly stating the forces are there for the foreseeable future, Washington is not only aiming at Iraq, but more broadly at the struggles of Arab working people.

Its deployment of troops and threatening of Iraq has been met with protest and condemnation in rallies and demonstrations throughout the Arab East. Few are unhappy with the demise of the Kuwaiti imperialist enclave, headed by an antiquated repressive monarchy.

For decades U.S., French, and British domination of the region's natural resources and exploitation of the labor of the Arab masses have been met with resistance, struggles, and revolutions. The colonial and imperialist powers have sought to maintain client regimes in the region that would keep these struggles in check and widen the ability of oil, chemical, and other companies to draw off the wealth of the region.

Monarchies overthrown

But as monarchies have fallen in Egypt, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, and Iran over the last four decades, the ability of Washington to rely on regional cops has diminished. The

battles to topple these repressive regimes has also intertwined with the struggle of the Palestinian people against the state of Israel.

With the Iraqi annexation of Kuwait and the ousting of the proimperialist monarchy, Washington directly intervened. It demanded Arab governments "put an Arab face" on the operation, bringing these regimes and Washington into more open conflict with the peoples of the region.

The preparations for war have gone hand in hand with a propaganda blitz by the big-business media in the United States. While some dissenting articles have appeared over the administration's course, many, such as *Newsweek's* front page "Horror Show, Saddam's Prisoners of War," help push the anti-Iraq propaganda. Despite these attempts, newspaper accounts from coast to coast agree that there is not a patriotic upswing, and that in fact many are wondering out loud why a war should be launched.

In addition, the events have precipitated a drop in stock markets around the world, and oil prices have shot up, adding to the perception among many working people that the economy is headed into a recession. The oil price hike by the big oil companies has rocked some Third World countries' economies that rely on imported oil, such as Chile and Brazil; and working people around the world are paying higher prices at the gas pump.

UN council okays use of force to blockade Iraq

BY SELVA NEBBIA

On August 25 the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution giving the United States and other countries a green light to use military force to halt shipping to and from Iraq.

The resolution, passed at 4:10 a.m., was approved by a vote of 13-to-0 after several days of diplomatic maneuvers by Washington to exert pressure on member countries. Yemen and Cuba abstained on the vote.

The resolution calls for countries with naval forces in the waters surrounding the

Arabian Peninsula "to use such measures commensurate to the specific circumstances as may be necessary under the authority of the Security Council to halt all inward and outward maritime shipping in order to inspect and verify their cargoes and destinations and to insure strict implementation of the provisions related to such shipping laid down in Resolution 661 (1990)."

Shortly before the resolution came up, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev warned President Saddam Hussein of Iraq to pull his country's troops out of Kuwait. "It now depends on the Iraqi side how the Security Council will act," he said.

Brent Scowcroft, the White House national security adviser, said the resolution allowed the United States to act as it saw fit to enforce the economic embargo. "That means no commerce should go in and out by sea, and that means that vessels will be stopped and inspected," he said.

Washington officials said the United States and its allies could use force to disable vessels by wrecking the rudders of ships determined to break the embargo.

Fifth UN resolution on Iraq

This was the fifth UN resolution directed at Iraq since it sent troops into Kuwait on August 2.

Resolution 660, the first to come before the Security Council, was passed on August 3. It condemned the Iraqi occupation and annexation of Kuwait, demanding the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all of Baghdad's forces from Kuwait. This resolution was approved by 14 of the member countries of the council.

Three days later Resolution 661, prohibiting member countries from buying oil from

Continued on Page 20

Appeal trial to hear Hoover frame-up case

BY LISA POTASH

ST. LOUIS — On September 12, members of the Hoover family go to a jury trial in Jackson, Mississippi, where they are appealing their 1989 convictions on charges of speeding, resisting arrest, and failing to obey a police officer. The Jackson police framed the Hoovers on these charges after beating and arresting them on Dec. 27, 1988.

The Black family was returning in a two-car caravan to their home in Berkeley, Missouri, after a Christmas visit with relatives in New Orleans. Passing through Jackson on the interstate, Benjamin Hoover, Sr., was stopped by police near one of the Jackson exits. His son in the second vehicle then pulled over. After stopping, Hoover Sr. got out of his van to ask the police what the problem was. From that point on, the cops submitted the Hoover family to racist slurs and physical assaults.

The police stopped beating the Hoovers only after spectators started to gather and take pictures, including from a bus filled with

Although the convictions are all misdemeanors, the Hoovers face jail time if they are not overturned on appeal.

Backing the Hoovers' fight to reverse this racist frame-up are the Jackson Concerned Citizens, National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, Equal Rights Congress, and the St. Louis Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

The Hoovers are urging supporters to attend their appeal trial, which will take place at 9:00 a.m. in the Hinds County Courthouse in Jackson. Letters asking that all the charges be dismissed can be addressed to Cynthia Lee Perry, Interim Chief Prosecutor, Office of the City Prosecutor, Department of Administration, 327 E. Pascagoula St., P.O. Box 17, Jackson, Miss. 39205.

St. Louis supporters will travel by bus to participate in a Hoover appeal rally in Jackson the day before the trial. For more information, write the Hoovers at P.O. Box 5905, St. Louis, Mo. 63134. Telephone (314) 521-6658.

Miners in Britain express support for strikers

Some 8,500 International Association of Machinists members struck Eastern Airlines March 4, 1989, in an effort to block the company's drive to break the union and impose massive concessions on workers.

As of the *Militant's* closing news date, Wednesday, August 29, the

greetings to the conference from United Mine Workers of America Local 2295, and Jerry Jones, president of UMW District 12. She also brought greetings to the gathering from the recent 12th National Conference of Women Miners that was organized by the Coal Employment Project.

Mickells, an oil worker from Philadelphia, brought greetings to the NUM conference from Local 8-901 of the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers union. Speaking to a conference social organized by the *Morning Star* newspaper, Mickells appealed for international solidarity with the Eastern strikers. "With the determination of the strikers, and solidarity from around the world, this strike can be won," she said.

Following both appeals, NUM members approached the U.S. unionists seeking addresses where solidarity messages could be sent to the strikers. Other delegates and NUM members hearing about the strike also expressed interest in organizing messages of support.

In a tour of the South Wales labor movement, Rich Stuart, a rail worker from Greensboro, North Carolina, was able to raise the Eastern strike before a number of union bodies and with trade union leaders in the region. The high point of the tour was his address to 100 at the union branch meeting of the striking Onllwyn coal washery workers.

The International Metalworkers Federation has sent a message to all its affiliated unions calling for a boycott of Eastern and Continental. The July meeting of the Confederation

of Engineering Unions, which represents 2 million engineering workers (machinists) in Britain, endorsed this appeal, including the proposal that neither union members nor officials fly the two airlines.

Earlier in the year, the International Transport Workers called for international support for the Eastern strike. The July journal of the Amalgamated Engineering Union reported, "Recently, a delegation from the International Transport Workers was in the UK [United Kingdom] and arrangements had been made for them to meet trade union representatives from Rolls Royce, Derby, who had responded positively and had undertaken to do what they could to help" the Eastern strikers.

In September the National Joint Council of unions, representing 15,000 British Airways workers at Heathrow airport, are considering a proposal to invite representatives of the Eastern strikers to address them. The proposal has the positive recommendation from the executive committee of the British Airways engineering workers joint shop stewards committee.

"Contract now! Contract now!" chanted 75 Eastern strikers and their supporters outside Eastern's doors at Washington National Airport August 4. After picketing in front of the terminal, the strikers walked through the airport wearing strike T-shirts and buttons. Seafarers, motion picture projectionists, service employees, and letter carriers were among the supporters at the action.

On August 9 — the day Frank Lorenzo announced the sale of his Continental stock to the Scandinavian Airways System — 75 Machinists union members joined the picket line in front of Eastern and Continental airlines, chanting "No contract, No peace!" The Machinists had come from the IAM leadership school in Placid Harbor, Maryland. Again, on August 16, the picket line grew to 75 unionists, many from the IAM leadership school.

Strikers sold more than \$300 in T-shirts and buttons at the picket line recently. IAM Local 796 is distributing a new T-shirt that has a map of Virginia on it and reads, "Support Eastern strikers. No scab airline in Virginia." The shirt was produced in response to Eastern's announcement that it plans to start service to Roanoke, Virginia, on September 6.

Brian Grogan from Britain and Nancy Brown, an Eastern striker and member of IAM Local 796 at Washington National Airport, contributed to this column.

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SUPPORT EASTERN STRIKERS!

strike was in its 544th day.

The Eastern workers' fight has won broad support from working people in the United States, Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, Canada, Bermuda, Sweden, New Zealand, France, and elsewhere in the world. Readers — especially Eastern strikers — are encouraged to send news of strike solidarity activities to this column.

Two trade unionists from the United States, Kathy Mickells and Mary Zins, attended the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) conference in Britain in July. Zins, a coal miner from Illinois, brought

In addition to attending the conference, Zins was invited to address a social organized by the Murton Branch of the NUM on the occasion of the unveiling of their new branch banner. In her presentation Zins told the 200 members, "the Eastern Airlines strikers are now in the 17th month of their strike. I know you know what that means." The NUM waged a prolonged national coal strike in 1984-85.

Zins explained the "tremendous solidarity" that had been extended to the Pittston coal miners of Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky, adding she was "sure the British miners will extend the same solidarity to the Eastern strikers."

Energy Dept. targets nuke worker who blew whistle

BY SUE KAWAKUBO AND ROBBIE SCHERR

"They treated me like I was a Third World country," said Ed Bricker, a member of Local 369 of the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers union. Bricker "blew the whistle" on safety violations at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, the largest nuclear weapons plant in the United States. The facility is located in southeastern Washington State.

A Department of Labor report released in July confirms that Bricker, a former shop steward, had been the victim of an intense campaign of harassment by Hanford's owners — Rockwell International and Westinghouse Hanford — and by the Department of Energy.

In addition to direct company harassment and interference into union affairs, security men hired by DOE contractors at Hanford set up a program called "Special Item — Mole" to arrange Bricker's "timely termination," to track and badger him, and to isolate him among fellow unionists.

"I'm a third generation Hanfordite," Bricker said in an interview. "I grew up here. My step-grandfather worked out here as security, my dad is an electrician, and originally I hired on in 1977 after coming off a mission" for the Latter-day Saints (Mormon) Church.

List of problems

In 1983 Bricker transferred into the Plutonium Finishing Plant. "I was really shocked at what I found — an aging, decrepit facility that should never have been restarted. Hoods [storage vessels] were so dirty you couldn't see in them, blueprints didn't match the actual piping configurations, training was inadequate, rules and regulations weren't being followed, and the list goes on," he said.

"I was shocked, as a former quality control inspector and engineer, that the nation would be relying for its defense on a facility such as this."

Bricker added that plutonium leaks were mended with tape. Plutonium is one of the most deadly substances on earth — a speck, if inhaled, can cause cancer. When he reported the unsafe conditions to management he said he was told, "We're here to produce." If we didn't, they would go out and find somebody who would do the job — employees off the street. It was like we were sacrificing our future for the nation's well being.

For the next several years the harassment against Bricker mounted. It included an attempt on his life when his oxygen supply was sabotaged while he was working in a containment vessel. He escaped by lunging out of the area into a corridor, where he passed out.

In 1985 a serious accident occurred at the facility, leaving a tank contaminated. Warning signs were posted, but were dropped when Washington Gov. Booth Gardner came through on a tour.

Decision to speak out

"I was there when the signs were dropped, and I watched his tour bus go through that mess. I kept my mouth shut and that was the source of a lot of sleepless nights for me because I realized we let some innocent people drive over some radioactivity. In 1986 the space shuttle blew up and I began to rethink some of my priorities," Bricker said. He then decided to take his information to Congress.

The revelations about the harassment of Bricker for reporting safety violations came directly on the heels of a DOE announcement that Hanford knowingly contaminated residents of the three cities surrounding the nuclear facility during World War II, then kept it secret for decades. The DOE also acknowledged that one of the radioactive waste tanks in the Hanford tank farm is in danger of exploding.

Bricker had hoped to receive help from the Federal Witness Protection Program, but because Hanford is not owned by the federal government, he has been told he does not qualify. While still being harassed at work, Bricker is fighting to retain his security clearance in order to work at the tank farm.



Militant/Robbie Scherr
Ed and Cindy Bricker and family in Hanford, Washington, in August. "I was really shocked at what I found — an aging, decrepit facility that should never have been restarted," said Ed Bricker.

Michigan auto workers win in 6-day strike

BY JEFF POWERS

FLINT, Michigan — Workers at the General Motors AC West complex here voted overwhelmingly to return to work following a six-day strike against the company. Ratification came after GM management agreed to meet United Auto Workers demands, promising not to eliminate 900 jobs. GM also said it would keep the complex open at least until 1995 and spend \$20 million to upgrade the AC West facility, which was first constructed in the 1920s.

Workers on the picket line at the massive 10-plant complex said that more than 11,000 jobs had been lost over the past 10 years through GM management's decisions to outsource work, often to nonunion parts plants.

"When I started to work here in 1967," one worker said, "There were 14,000 people at AC, now there are only 2,800."

"They told us we needed to get our quality up," another striker said. "We started scoring

145s every time and they still took the jobs out." These are the highest quality scores possible at GM.

"The company doesn't give a damn about you or your family," another worker explained. "You have to have at least 20 years seniority to be working in this place now."

Impact on other GM plants

Because of the just-in-time delivery system, the strike immediately began to affect production in a significant part of the GM system. The AC West complex makes automobile gas tanks, exhaust manifolds, doors, and grills. Within days after the strike started other GM plants began to close. Eventually, seven assembly plants and 10 components plants laid off 20,000 workers.

This undoubtedly led to GM management's decision to speedily settle with the union.

Strike votes on local agreements are scheduled to be taken at a number of other

GM plants within the next few days. Plants in Flint and Kalamazoo, Michigan, and Lordstown, Ohio, are set to give five-day notices to the corporation, signaling the possibility of additional walkouts.

On September 14 the national agreement covering 500,000 union workers at Ford, GM, and Chrysler is set to expire.

Since 1979 tens of thousands of United Auto Workers jobs have been eliminated through speed-up, job combinations, and outsourcing to nonunion shops.

At Lear Seating Corp. in Detroit, one of the city's biggest independent parts suppliers, the AC West strike was followed closely. "I hope those boys get everything they are asking for," one worker said. "If they win they win for all of us."

Jeff Powers is a member of United Auto Workers Local 174 at Lear Seating in Detroit.

What led to defeat of workers' and farmers' gov't in Nicaragua



Militant/Michael Baumann
May Day rally 1984 in Chinandega, Nicaragua. Banner is of Nicaragua's national hero Augusto César Sandino who said, "Only the workers and peasants will go all the way."

Introduction

BY JAMES HARRIS

The July 1979 victory of the Nicaraguan revolution, achieved through a massive popular insurrection, was an inspiration and a revolutionary example to the oppressed and exploited throughout the world. Led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), the revolution overturned the U.S.-backed Somoza family dictatorship and established a popular revolutionary government based on the country's workers and peasants.

The government established its revolutionary anti-imperialist character and direction through its actions. It carried out a far-reaching land reform and made serious inroads against capitalist domination.

The Socialist Workers Party has been an active supporter of the Nicaraguan revolution — a partisan in the fight of its workers and peasants to rid themselves of imperialism and its legacy of underdevelopment. The SWP has initiated and been a part of activities in solidarity with the revolution for more than a decade. The *Militant* has maintained a bureau in Nicaragua since 1979, and major articles by SWP leaders on Nicaragua were published in *New Internationalist*, a magazine of Marxist theory and politics. These articles have provided timely and accurate accounts of the course of the revolution from the conquest of power, through the victory of the Nicaraguan toilers in the U.S.-organized contra war, to the erosion and eventual demise of the workers' and

farmers' government.

Over the last several years the leadership of the FSLN has become explicit in its rejection of an anticapitalist course for the Nicaraguan revolution. They argue for, and have worked to lead, Nicaragua in the direction of long-term reliance on the capitalist market, already to the detriment of Nicaragua's toilers. They have turned the FSLN into a electoralist party, abandoning the perspective of building a party based on mobilized and politically conscious workers and peasants. They openly reject the communist course advocated in the Historic Program of the FSLN.

The following is a resolution adopted by the SWP at its convention in Oberlin, Ohio, in August. It was first adopted by the party's National Committee in July 1989. The information presented here is based on material from the *Militant* together with articles in *Barricada*, the FSLN daily paper, and *Barricada International*.

Since the resolution was written, the FSLN was defeated in the February 1990 elections by the proimperialist National Opposition Union (UNO) led by Violeta Chamorro, now the president of Nicaragua. This defeat registered the fact that the workers' and farmers' government had been lost even before the elections. Since February the FSLN and UNO have established a liberal bourgeois coalition government, which had been the aim of the FSLN prior to the elections.

The resolution states, "Should a new government displace the workers' and farmers' regime in Nicaragua, it may well be an FSLN government or a coalition headed by the FSLN." As events worked out, the FSLN is not the leadership of the coalition, but a partner in it. Its role in the government is, however, essential to the government's rule. A stable capitalist regime could not be established without the agreement and support of the FSLN.

The resolution will give *Militant* readers an overview of the evolution of the Nicaraguan revolution and how the workers' and farmers' government was overturned.

Defend Revolutionary Nicaragua: The Eroding Foundations of the Workers' and Farmers' Government

1. The political and economic course carried out since early 1988 by the government of Nicaragua has been based on increasing long-term reliance on the workings of the capitalist market. This leads away from deepening inroads on the property and social prerogatives of the exploiting classes, and away from increasing class consciousness, confidence, organization, and mobilization of the workers and peasants. Effective defense of the historic gains of the Nicaraguan revolution from the unremitting hatred and pressure from U.S. imperialism is being weakened.

As always, the more the market system is extended, the more capitalist social relations of production are reproduced and entrenched. Social inequalities and differentiation increase, and bourgeois values are promoted. The burden of the capitalist crisis in Nicaragua is shifted more onto the backs of the workers and peasants, especially the worst-off layers. The cumulative result is growing depoliticization, demoralization, and divisions within the working class and peasantry. The worker-peasant alliance that forms the class base of the workers' and farmers' government is weakened.

2. Unless there is a reversal of this fundamental course being pursued by the government and by the leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), the class relationship of forces will continue to shift against the exploited and oppressed. The social and political foundations of the workers' and farmers' government will continue to erode. The door will be opened for restructuring and reconsolidating the government on the basis of capitalist social relations and state machinery. The opportunity will

have been missed to establish the second workers' state in the Americas and join Cuba in the difficult but historically necessary effort to begin the construction of socialism.

The turn in policy direction by the government and FSLN leading toward such an outcome has already occurred; it does not lie in the future. Without a sharp political reorientation that reasserts an anticapitalist direction to the revolution, this course will result in the demise of the workers' and farmers' government.

3. It is not possible to predict the ways that such a qualitative change in the class character of the government of Nicaragua might occur. Since the victory of the Cuban revolution, workers' and farmers' governments have been reversed in Algeria (July 1965) and Grenada (October 1983). The counterrevolutionary coups in these two cases, organized against the central public leadership figure of the revolution, are not the only form through which the destruction of the worker and peasant character of such a government could occur.

Should a new government displace the workers' and farmers' regime in Nicaragua, it may well be an FSLN government or a coalition headed by the FSLN. The regime that emerged from the overthrow of the Algerian workers' and farmers' government, for example, remained under the leadership of the National Liberation Front (FLN), and continued for a substantial period to be looked to by the workers and peasants of Algeria as a revolutionary regime representing their interests. Even the counterrevolutionary government established by Bernard Coard's supporters in Grenada, while hated by the masses of working people for its murder of Maurice Bishop and dozens of others, retained the backing of the big majority of the New Jewel Movement, its leading committees, and the armed forces it dominated.

4. The accelerating erosion of the worker and farmer character of the government is the product of the policy course chosen and deepened by the leadership of the FSLN in the aftermath of the defeat of the U.S.-instigated and -financed counterrevolutionary war.

The hard-fought military victory over the contras brought renewed confidence to the toilers of Nicaragua and opened new opportunities to deepen and advance not only the anti-imperialist but also the anticapitalist development of the revolution. With the end of the war thousands of young, tested, and disciplined cadres from the Sandinista army became available to take on new leadership responsibilities on other fronts. Their enthusiasm and determination needed only to be directed and led.

Simultaneously, the political consciousness of the revolutionary cadres was deepened by the other decisive victory that the toilers of Nicaragua have won in the past half decade: the political victory on the Atlantic Coast registered in the adoption and initial implementation of the autonomy plan. The capacity of the revolutionary leadership to correct previously disastrous policies on the Atlantic Coast and win the majority of the *costeño* population away from the counterrevolution raised the political confidence of the Nicaraguan vanguard.

But the potential opened by these victories for deepening popular mobilizations and powerful new steps forward has not been realized. The momentum has been dissipated by the policies chosen by the FSLN leadership in the period since the end of the contra war.

5. The Sandinista leadership has rejected constructing a mass revolutionary party in Nicaragua growing out of the continuity of the FSLN's Historic Program, a party that is proletarian in the composition of its cadres and communist in program. While many workers and peasants have been brought into FSLN membership over the first 10 years of the revolution, the organization itself retains its top-down military structure. The ranks have no decision-making control over the political course of the FSLN or the selection of its leadership. As the 1990 elections approach, the FSLN leadership models the public face of the organization more

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and more on a radical bourgeois electoral party, with a mass following but no meaningful membership rights, and thus limited responsibilities, and with no political accountability of the leadership to the actual vanguard of a social class.

Under political and historical circumstances such as those inherited from the Somoza tyranny, a revolutionary organization may have to substitute itself for a working-class vanguard in order to carry out revolutionary action and lead the working people to power over an oppressive regime. The opening created by the conquest of power, however, must then be consciously used to transform the revolutionary organization into a communist party whose membership and leadership is increasingly composed of working people. In the absence of such a step, workers and poor peasants have no instrument to block the reproduction and reinforcement of capitalist social relations, fostered by the FSLN's current policy course, and the inevitable economic and political consequences of these relations.

6. The only development that can open the possibility of once again placing the Nicaraguan government on an anticapitalist course is a major revolutionary victory that directly affects Latin America and the Caribbean—whether generated by a mass uprising somewhere in the Americas, by a successful popular counteroffensive by workers and peasants to an aggressive use of U.S. military power in the region, or other circumstances.

Such an advance for the world revolution could rupture the relatively recent consensus in the FSLN leadership rejecting the lessons of the modern communist movement from Karl Marx to Ernesto Che Guevara. By common accord, FSLN leaders are today pursuing instead the goal of a long-term social pact based on "national unity," a goal that, if reached, institutionalizes class collaboration and is self-defeating for the workers and peasants.

A political initiative from sections of the FSLN leadership in the face of a major revolutionary victory in the Americas could, however, still galvanize proletarian and peasant forces in Nicaragua to struggle to defend the conquests of their revolution, and in the process to place their class stamp on its course.

Despite the toll taken by the current course of the government on the political self-confidence and political class clarity and morale of broad layers of working people, revolutionary-minded Nicaraguan workers and peasants have rich experiences from years of determined struggle. Their spirit and capacity to fight have not been broken.

7. A renewed forward march by a workers' and farmers' government in Nicaragua would lead in the direction of mobilizing the exploited and oppressed in a fight to end capitalist domination of the economy. It would result in a qualitative extension of workers' control of production and workers' democracy in city and countryside, in combination with the defense of the broad democratic and social rights conquered during the first decade of the revolutionary government. This course points toward the expropriation of major capitalist holdings in industry and agriculture, establishment of a state monopoly of exports and imports, and the institution of economic planning on this foundation. This would register the establishment of a workers' state.

The advances made possible by such a course in Nicaragua would add further evidence to the conviction expressed by Fidel Castro and Ernesto Che Guevara—a conviction now backed by thirty years of experience of the Cuban revolution—that the building of socialism not only can begin in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean following a genuine revolution, but offers the only way out of imperialist domination, economic devastation, and superexploitation of the masses of working people, as well as the only way to defend the gains of the democratic and anti-imperialist revolution.

To accomplish this, however, the goal of the revolutionary leadership has to be to organize the toilers to advance toward a workers' state, not, as in Nicaragua today, toward the consolidation of a bourgeois republic, however radical and anti-imperialist its pronouncements, and however firm its intention to defend Nicaragua's sovereignty and independence.

8. A concrete analysis of the course of the struggle of the toilers in Nicaragua over the past decade, both advances and setbacks, is necessary to understand the crisis now facing the workers and peasants and their government.

In July 1979 the Nicaraguan toilers, led by the FSLN, swept aside the capitalist-landlord tyranny headed by Anastasio Somoza and seized political power. They established a workers' and farmers' government—the form of government that can be expected to rapidly appear as the result of a successful anticapitalist revolution.

The actions of the new FSLN-led government, responding to the pressures of the workers and peasants, and taking leadership initiatives in an anticapitalist as well as a popular and anti-imperialist direction, determined its character as a workers' and farmers' government. The class foundations of such a government are established by the revolutionary displacement of the bourgeoisie from political power, the assumption of that power by an administration based on the

popular masses and that commands a new army, and the initiation of far-reaching changes in property relations.

9. The establishment of a workers' and farmers' government opened the possibility for Nicaragua's toilers and their allies to become the second people in the Americas to establish a workers' state and begin the construction of socialism. It opened the door to Nicaraguan working people, in the process of transforming their social relations, to begin transforming themselves into new women and men.

As the resolution adopted by the Socialist Workers Party National Committee in January 1980 explained:

"Given the desperate economic situation in Nicaragua, a pressing objective of the government has been to restore a minimal level of production in the privately owned industries and on the big and medium-sized farms still in the hands of their owners. It has appealed for aid from all countries to obtain credits and food.

"As the example of Cuba has proven, however, the needs of the masses cannot be met if private ownership is main-

historic crisis of proletarian leadership."

10. The Nicaraguan toilers triumphed over the Somoza dictatorship at the time of a rising worldwide wave of revolutionary victories. As 1979 began, the U.S.-backed monarchy in Iran was overthrown, and the Pol Pot chameleon house in Kampuchea was toppled. In March 1979 a workers' and farmers' government, led by the New Jewel Movement of Maurice Bishop, came to power on the Caribbean island of Grenada. Spurred by the triumph in Nicaragua, the revolutionary movement in El Salvador surged forward in city and countryside. The mass struggles of workers and peasants in Guatemala received new impetus. These advances followed by only a few years:

- the revolutionary overthrow of the landlord-based monarchy in Ethiopia in 1974;
- the victory over the U.S. imperialist-installed regime in Vietnam in 1975;
- the triumph over Portuguese colonialism in southern Africa in 1974-75, which inspired fighters for liberation



Militant/Anibal Yáñez

August 1979 mass rally in Managua following ouster of Somoza and establishment of new government

tained in the basic means of production. The laws of capitalist accumulation will distort the country's economy, subordinating real economic development and social betterment to the quest for profits and to imperialist exploitation. . . .

"While it would be adventurist to try to force the rhythm of the class struggle, it is also true that the pace of polarization and confrontation cannot be controlled by preconceived plans. The tempo will be dictated by the blows and counterblows between the masses and the FSLN on one side, and the exploiters on the other. With each new encroachment against the property and prerogatives of the landlords and business interests, the likelihood grows that some section of the bourgeoisie will throw down the gauntlet. In addition to radical measures by the government, the workers and peasants—suffering under economic burdens, capitalist sabotage, and social dislocation—will themselves take initiatives on the land, in their factories, and in the barrios. This is the historic record of the Russian, Cuban, and every other socialist revolution; there is an accelerating dialectical interplay between the leadership and the initiatives and responses by the masses, often unforeseen by the leadership.

"In revolutionary situations above all, history confirms Frederick Engels's observation that when controlled forces are put in motion, uncontrolled forces are inevitably put in motion as well. No amount of political preparation can annul this consequence of the class struggle. Instead, the aim of such preparation must be to increase the self-confidence and readiness of the masses to respond to new turns by defending their conquests and propelling their struggle forward. That is where their consciousness, organization, and mobilization will prove decisive. It is correct to make concessions to the class enemy when the relationship of forces leaves no alternative. But the masses must be told the class truth about such concessions, so that they can be better prepared to ward off the concomitant dangers.

"All this highlights the need for a revolutionary Marxist proletarian party to unify and lead the workers and their allies in accomplishing these tasks and defeating their class enemy. Forging the initial cadres of such a party out of the leadership and ranks of the FSLN would not only facilitate the socialist reconstruction of Nicaragua, but would mark an advance for the entire international workers movement in the fight to resolve the

from the Caribbean to Asia and the Pacific islands;

- the defeat—with decisive aid from Cuban volunteer forces—of the South African effort to block an independent Angolan government in early 1976;
- the explosive entry of a new generation of revolutionary youth into the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, registered by the Soweto uprising later in 1976; and
- the defeat in 1978—by an armed force led and largely made up of Cuban internationalist volunteers—of the U.S.-backed Somali invasion aimed at smashing the Ethiopian revolution.

These victories gave a powerful new impulse to the Cuban revolution. Hundreds of thousands of Cubans volunteered for internationalist duties in Ethiopia, Angola, Nicaragua, Grenada, and elsewhere, and the Cuban government provided unstinting internationalist solidarity as well as generous and unconditional material aid. In September 1979 Cuba assumed the chairmanship of the Movement of Nonaligned Nations, registering a substantial setback to Washington's unceasing efforts to isolate the Cuban revolution. In response to escalating U.S. military pressure in the wake of the revolutionary gains in Central America and the Caribbean, millions of Cubans in 1980 mobilized for the Marches of the Fighting People, and joined the newly established Territorial Troop Militia that transformed the defense strategy of the revolution into one based on the military preparedness and mobilization of the entire people.

The Nicaraguan workers' and farmers' government was part of this revolutionary advance, contributed mightily to it, and drew strength and encouragement from it.

11. In the opening years of the revolution the FSLN government, responding to the massive mobilizations and expanding organization of the toilers, carried out a series of expropriations and other measures against capitalist property and social prerogatives.

Nicaraguan working people were armed, trained, and organized on a mass scale to fight to defend the revolutionary power. In addition to building the Sandinista People's Army, popular militias were advocated, and in some cases began to be formed, in the factories, workplaces, and in the countryside. Neighborhood Sandinista Defense Committees (CDSs) took on nightly "vigilance" patrols in many areas, and were initially presented by the FSLN as bodies

that would be organized to help deepen the political mobilization and active involvement of working people in the revolution.

Government power was used to help launch and strengthen unions and other organizations of urban and rural workers and of toiling peasants—the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST), the Association of Rural Workers (ATC), the National Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG), and others.

Poor peasants and farm laborers pressed their demands for land through land occupations and other direct action. They appealed for and won the support of the government in many cases. The ATC and UNAG supported these demands for land. The ATC pressed for improved wages and safer and healthier working conditions for agricultural laborers on both private and state-owned farms, and the government took measures to respond to these demands.

Workers, often organized through locals of the CST, demanded confiscation of large enterprises in order to halt decapitalization and other forms of economic sabotage of the revolution by capitalist owners. Demonstrations were held and factory occupations organized by the toilers to press their proposals for swift and firm government action. In many cases, they were successful in impelling the government to expropriate capitalist enterprises.

These mass actions were accompanied by an intensification of the fight by women for equal rights, and the awakening of new struggles by the indigenous peoples and peoples of African origin on the Atlantic Coast against the forms of national oppression, racial discrimination, and political isolation historically imposed on them.

12. In following this course of action during the opening years of the revolution, the FSLN was acting in harmony with the line of its 1969 "Historic Program," drafted by Carlos Fonseca. This program, elaborated and presented to the Nicaraguan toilers in many forms during the struggle against the Somoza tyranny, pointed to the socialist road opened for all the Americas by the Cuban revolution. It

“The July 1979 triumph completely destroyed the armed power of the old regime . . .”

reknit continuity with the anti-imperialist struggle of Nicaragua's workers and peasants under Augusto Sandino's leadership.*

It was to this communist perspective that the cadres of the FSLN who led the revolutionary struggle in city and countryside were recruited. As Tomás Borge later explained, Fonseca brought Marxism to Central America.

13. Without dissent within the FSLN leadership, the revolutionary government declared from the time it was brought to power that the maintenance of a "mixed economy" constituted a strategic feature of the Nicaraguan revolution.

In and of itself, this was not an obstacle to the advance of the revolution. In a country of the economic and social structure inherited by revolutionary Nicaragua from its history of imperialist domination and landlord-capitalist exploitation, some mix of petty commodity production by peasants and artisans, expropriated industry and wholesale trade, and capitalist farming would be necessary. What that "mix" was, and how it was to evolve, would be determined in the course of the struggle between classes in Nicaragua. The FSLN responded positively to mass mobilizations and took initiatives that challenged capitalist prerogatives and expropriated capitalist property, and it was this course of action that was decisive.

14. The July 1979 triumph completely destroyed the armed power of the old regime. In its place, the revolution established a new executive dominated by the FSLN to whom all military and police powers are responsible. This leadership and government have not led the workers and peasants forward to overturn capitalist property relations, however.

Not only does capitalist domination of the economy remain intact, but representatives of opposing classes and the expression of contradictory class perspectives maintain a presence within the government and within the FSLN. This is true notwithstanding the fact that neither the government's cabinet, nor the FSLN's nine-member National Directorate, contain defenders of Nicaragua's wealthiest capitalist interests with their imperialist connections.

15. The clashing class pressures within the government of Nicaragua were already present when Washington initi-

ated, in late 1981, the contra military actions that would be expanded into a full-scale mercenary war by 1983.

The destruction wrought by the imperialist-organized and -financed contra armies accelerated the crisis of capitalism in Nicaragua. The workers' and farmers' government was faced with an escalating war and its terrible toll, including the deaths of almost 60,000 Nicaraguans; the U.S. embargo on trade and aid; devastation caused by several large-scale natural disasters; and failure to obtain aid from other countries — either from the imperialist countries or the workers' states — on the scale needed to begin reconstruction or maintain existing production levels. These conditions forced the government to cut back or abandon many social programs and development projects, interrupting the course it had charted to improve the living standards of working people and begin the process of developing Nicaragua.

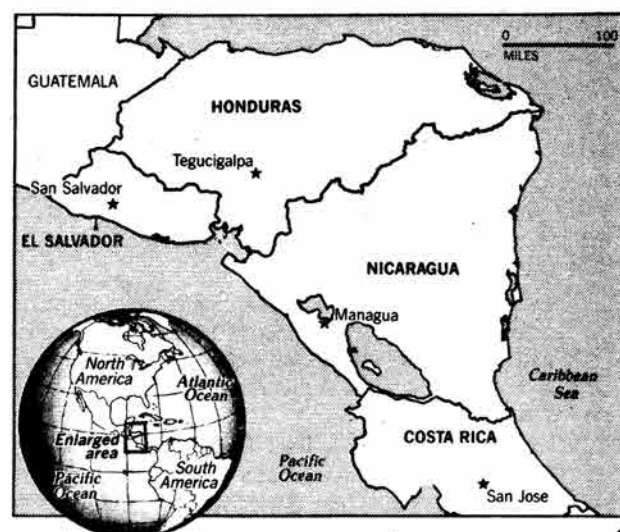
The contra war, however, did not alter the main lines along which the revolution needed to advance: deepening the organization, mobilization, self-confidence, and class consciousness of the workers and peasants, and strengthening the worker-peasant alliance under working-class leadership, in the struggle to eliminate the rents and mortgages system, do away with capitalist property relations, and on that foundation to begin economic planning.

16. Because of the predominance of capitalist property relations, the weight of the economic and social crisis in Nicaragua continually tends to be shifted onto the backs of the workers and poor peasants. It hits disproportionately hard at those already on the bottom.

Wage differentials are increasing. The social wage of workers has been reduced relative to the living standards of the middle classes as a result of cutbacks in government spending on subsidies of food and other necessities, health care, education, and housing. These laws of motion of capital also increase and accelerate differentiation among the peasantry.

17. One particularly critical manifestation of the capitalist crisis has been the continuing migration to Managua, where some one-third of the entire population of the country now resides. Growing numbers of working people in the capital city are currently not receiving even minimal social necessities, such as running water and electricity, let alone decent housing, education, and health care. Moreover, there are few jobs for these migrants. With falling industrial production and cutbacks in government budgets, there is today no prospect of productive employment for the big majority of working people in Managua.

Only by improving the conditions for the toilers in the countryside, and building a fighting mass movement of peasants and farm laborers linked with the urban workers, can this deepening social crisis be reversed. This requires deepening the land reform, providing working people with the wherewithal to make a living on the land, as well as prioritizing social programs for the rural areas in order to benefit the worst-off sections of the toilers. This would provide the basis for a political and social effort to inspire



The 1979 revolution had a powerful impact on workers and peasants in Latin America and the Caribbean. "The establishment of the workers' and farmers' government opened the possibility for Nicaragua's toilers and their allies to become the second peoples in the Americas to establish a workers' state and begin the construction of socialism."

large numbers of the toilers in Managua, in particular the youth, to move to the countryside where they can participate in productive work and help rebuild the country. If the totality of class relations were explained clearly and unambiguously to working people, and a revolutionary perspective were offered to them, there would be a response to such a national mobilization.

No successful effort to accomplish these goals is possible, however, without simultaneous progress toward the nationalization of basic industry and the beginning of economic planning. The maintenance of capitalist domination of manufacturing inevitably reinforces the tendency of the prices for agricultural inputs that the peasants must buy to rise faster than the prices they receive for the crops they produce. Moreover, with a substantial percentage of agricultural production still in capitalist hands, previous government measures to provide cheap credit and farm supplies have often boosted the profits of wealthy landowners while neither increasing agricultural investment and output nor substantially improving the lot of toiling peasants.

The economic policy course that the government and FSLN leadership are pursuing places a mounting burden of indebtedness and material want on the mass of toiling peasants and undermines the worker-peasant alliance on which the revolution is based.

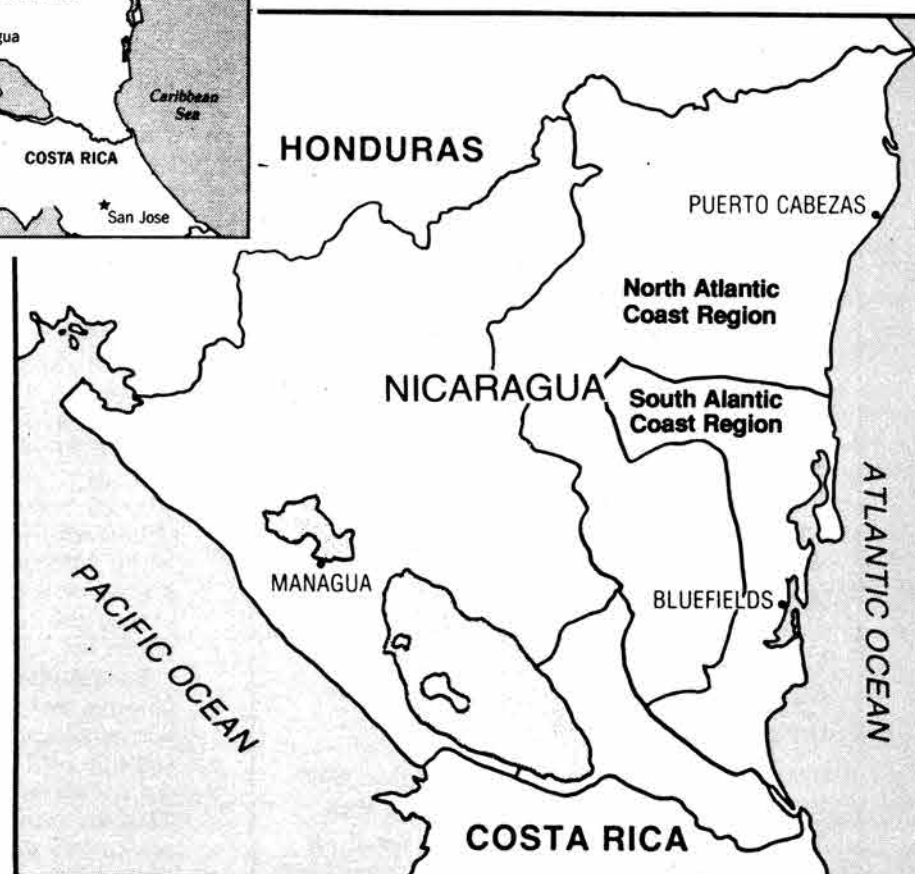
18. As the economic and social crisis has deepened, the FSLN has resisted mobilizing working people in city and countryside to extend workers' control over capitalist production or distribution, a step that would challenge the prerogatives of private ownership in these areas. Such steps, however, are necessary even to protect the current living standards of workers and peasants.

The rationing of essential foods and other basic items in increasingly short supply is the only way to guarantee that every resident of the country has fair access to such necessities. Instead of moving in this direction, however, the government has been moving away even from earlier policies that sought to provide certain basic commodities at subsidized prices to every Nicaraguan through neighborhood outlets.

Government control over foreign trade has also been weakened in areas where a significant degree of state domination had been established earlier. This retreat has been made in the face of threats from capitalists to further reduce investment in the production of agricultural commodities for export. Pressure to weaken state control over foreign trade has also come from imperialist and other capitalist governments and banking consortia dangling the always conditional offer of aid and loans. In response, the Nicaraguan government has increased the payment of "incentives" in dollars for export crops (which are dominated by capitalist landowners); relaxed currency controls; lifted many restrictions on imported goods, including luxury items; and widened the range of products that can be exported directly by capitalists. This further reduces the ability of the government to allocate export earnings to finance social programs and development projects. It also undermines efforts to control inflation and establish a stable currency unit, without which any effective economic planning is impossible.

The punitive expropriations of some capitalist holdings decreed by the government from time to time in response to provocations by individual bourgeois figures do not constitute a step away from this overall course. They are administrative measures, often applied in anger or frustration, aimed at pressuring the capitalists to go along with the

Continued on next page



* Carlos Fonseca Amador was the central leader of the FSLN from the time he helped found it in July 1961 until he was killed by the Somoza dictatorship on Nov. 8, 1976. Gen. Augusto César Sandino organized an army of workers and peasants in 1927 to drive the U.S. Marines, who had occupied Nicaragua in 1926, out of the country. He was murdered in 1934 by the U.S.-established National Guard, headed by Anastasio Somoza García.



Militant/Harvey McArthur

Ruins of a National Union of Farmers and Ranchers—run regional store following 1986 contra attack

Continued from previous page
government's social-pact policy.

These nationalizations, carried out largely without political preparation of, or even participation by, the workers, substitute state managers for private managers. Some layers of workers have initially welcomed these measures, anticipating that they will open the door to bettering their conditions and increasing workers' control over production. In fact, however, these nationalizations have done nothing to advance a course of mobilizing and increasing the class consciousness and confidence of the working class, or drawing workers into decisions on production and organization of work.

19. Attempts by unionized workers to gain a measure of control over decisions on production and conditions of work have been stalled or pushed back, as the government has adjusted to threats and pressure from capitalists. The FSLN has charted a policy of trying to convince workers that in the interests of reviving "the economy" (conveniently ignoring or denying its capitalist character), they should not resist increased exploitation of their labor by those capitalists whom Sandinista leaders call "patriotic producers." This policy has also strengthened the hands of capitalist-minded managers of state-owned factories and farms.

FSLN leaders have responded to strikes by workers protesting worsening conditions by condemning them for permitting themselves to be manipulated by "pseudorevo-

lutionaries," "agents of imperialism," or "instruments of the CIA." During the construction workers' strike in spring 1988, President Daniel Ortega referred to the strikers as "small groups of disoriented and confused workers who are being directed by people who are conscious elements of U.S. and counterrevolutionary policy," and "a minority group of ignorant workers—some of whom claim they are revolutionaries—who do not know who the enemy is." Some strikers were fired. In November 1988 FSLN Commander Jaime Wheelock told workers at the recently nationalized San Antonio sugar mill that "if anyone raises the banner of a strike here, we'll cut off his hands because it would be a crime against the people."

The FSLN's course has undermined steps taken during the first years of the revolution to increase working-class and trade union unity and to politically win workers away from proimperialist and Stalinist union leaderships to the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) and other prorevolution unions. These policies have politically strengthened rather than weakened the hand of antigovernment bureaucrats in the leadership of some Nicaraguan unions, who have sought to exploit the effects of the economic crisis on workers to organize political confrontations with the FSLN. Bourgeois opponents of the revolution have hypocritically sought to portray themselves as champions of workers' rights against government policies.

20. The struggle of the exploited peasants and agricultural laborers for a thoroughgoing agrarian reform has at times made substantial progress, at other times been pushed back. The peasants have been fighting for distribution of land to those who have none. They have also mobilized to demand adequate low-interest credit, technical aid, marketing assistance, cheaper supplies and equipment, and crop price guarantees, without which they cannot make a living on the land.

The initial expropriations of capitalist estates owned by the Somoza family and its close allies, implemented right after the July 1979 triumph, were followed in 1980 and 1981 by growing mobilizations, including land occupations, by landless peasants. Despite strong resistance from land-owning capitalists, the government decreed an agrarian reform law in 1981, providing for confiscation of idle land and its distribution to landless peasants, and nationalized many of the lands that had been occupied by peasants and farm laborers.

From the second half of 1981 through 1984, however, the distribution of land proceeded at a relatively slow pace, despite continuing peasant demands. Moreover, the land that was distributed was often conditioned on the agreement of the recipients to organize cooperative and in some cases collective farms.

By 1985, however, with the contra war a couple of years into full swing, peasant demands and pressure for land, including demonstrations and land takeovers, had grown again. In some parts of the country, the government also faced the problem of contra political influence on poor peasants who had not benefited from the land reform program. In response, the government accelerated the pace of confiscations of capitalist holdings and distribution of land in 1985 and 1986. It also eased the policy limiting land distribution to those who agreed to establish collective farms or cooperatives. In 1986 a revised and strengthened agrarian reform law was adopted.

Land distribution slowed sharply toward the end of 1986, however, once peasant mobilizations eased and the military tide turned decisively against the contras in favor of Nicaragua. In 1987 the number of families benefiting from land distribution dropped to the lowest level since 1982, and in 1988 the number fell still further. In January 1989 the government announced a halt to any further confiscations of land from capitalist farmers. President Daniel Ortega

declared that "enough land has been distributed already" and "there is no reason to take an inch of land from anyone." Any further distribution of land to the landless would have to be met out of properties already in the hands of the state or existing cooperatives, Ortega said.

As a result of the government's land, credit, and related policies, some poor peasants, including some who have benefited from land distribution programs, are once again being forced into increasing debt and dependence on selling their labor power just to be able to survive.

Without deepening the land reform, including, among other things, nationalization of the land, and without strengthening the alliance with the urban workers to fight for such a course, not only will capitalist relations be reinforced in the countryside, but the rents and mortgages system itself will be reimposed. Social differentiation will increase among toiling peasants, and between peasants and farm laborers and other rural wageworkers. Renewed land concentration and landlessness will result, as more and more peasants are driven off the soil by indebtedness. That some of the old landowning families may not return, their places now taken by newly enriched ones, does not change the fact that the semiproletarian layers in the countryside are left to the mercy of the workings of the laws of capitalism.

21. The decisive challenge of aiding the formation of fighting organizations of the poor peasants has not been met. The National Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG) was organized in 1981 as an organization based on small and medium peasants. In 1984, however, the FSLN made a turn toward encouraging large capitalist farmers to join UNAG as their organization. Their spokesmen and their class interests increasingly have dominated the organization since then, effectively blocking the development of UNAG as an organization based on the toilers, as well as undermining the politicization and self-confidence of poor peasants.

The capitalist farmers, the exploiters of agricultural workers, have been able to increasingly speak in the name of "the agricultural producers," leaving the poor peasants vulnerable to the antiworker and anti-city demagoguery of the capitalist farmers. This undermines the worker-peasant alliance.

22. The initial impact of the 1979 revolution on the Atlantic Coast had been to inspire demands for equality and against discrimination by the Black and Indian peoples of that region. But the first steps by the new government to bring social programs to the Coast were marred by administrative methods, insensitive at their best and brutally repressive at their worst. Such practices were compounded by the ignorance about Coastal social relations on the part of mestizos from the Pacific and the legacy of anti-Black and anti-Indian prejudice that could only be shed through common struggle and experience in advancing the revolution. The Sandinista's actions played into the hands of enemies of the revolution and aroused deep suspicion and bitter opposition among the indigenous peoples and among substantial numbers of Blacks.

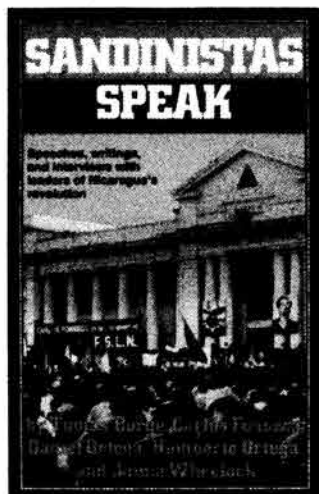
At the time of the 1979 victory, the FSLN had few Black cadres and even fewer Indian cadres. Nonetheless, it initially avoided its responsibility to politically organize and lead the indigenous populations and to bring costenos into FSLN membership and leadership. This default strengthened the political influence of Indian leaders who had not been won to the revolution, many of whom rapidly turned against it.

The widening of the contra war deepened the crisis. Once



Peasants from cooperatives receiving title to their land in further confiscations of land from capitalist farmers."

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again, the initial response of the FSLN and the government was to deepen their reliance on military and other administrative methods directed against the population. This only stiffened opposition on the Atlantic Coast, however, and set the stage for a full-scale military and political disaster that, if not reversed, would have given the imperialists the opening they needed for direct military intervention.

23. In December 1984 the government reversed its initial reactionary opposition to autonomy for the peoples of the Atlantic Coast and began to champion this demand. This was a response to growing pressures from Black and Indian supporters of the revolution, and to the fact that thousands of Miskitos and other Indians, as well as some Blacks, had joined armed groups allied with the contras.

The government and FSLN began to replace repression with efforts to draw the toilers of the Coast into politically resolving the conflicts that had arisen and organizing to exercise control over their own future. The government initiated discussions on a new autonomy statute, which helped inspire a stepped-up political campaign for autonomy by the Coast residents themselves, taking the form of meetings, rallies, discussions, and debates from 1985 to 1987.

The decision to champion the fight for autonomy made it possible to negotiate an end to the fighting with the armed groups of Miskitos and other Indians fighting in alliance with the contras, an essential element in defeating the contra military threat.

The new course also amounted to a historic rejection of the radical petty-bourgeois, social-democratic, and Stalinist policies toward oppressed nationalities that have done so much damage to the world revolution. It pointed back toward the example set on this question by the Bolshevik-led Communist International in its early years. As such, the autonomy process marked a revolutionary advance for the world workers' movement as a whole, as well as an inspiring example for revolutionary-minded fighters of the oppressed

“Gains won for women's rights became more vulnerable to erosion under the impact of budget cuts and large-scale layoffs...”

nationalities in the Caribbean and Latin America and throughout the globe — especially indigenous peoples and those of African origin. The FSLN sought to spread the international impact of this turn in policy by sponsoring conferences of indigenous peoples from throughout the Americas and encouraging these and other visitors to Nicaragua to visit the Atlantic Coast.

By rejecting the course of approaching the toilers as a problem to be administered, rather than as the makers of history to be drawn into governing and remaking society, the autonomy project also pointed the way forward for the revolution throughout Nicaragua. This turn and the victories it led to provided a substantial element of revolutionary political momentum to the class struggle as a whole, up to and through the adoption of the Autonomy Statute by the National Assembly in 1987.

The autonomy process, however, is a concrete reflection of the class struggle in Nicaragua and could not get too far

out ahead of the development of the revolution as a whole. Its further development and concretization, as well as the political education of mestizos both in the Atlantic and Pacific regions about the necessity of autonomy and the fight against anti-costeño prejudice and racial discrimination throughout Nicaragua and Central America, could only be possible with a new advance in the revolutionary process. Without such an advance, substantial further progress in the fight for autonomy will be impossible, and the gains that have been won will be eroded.

24. The establishment of the workers' and farmers' government in 1979 gave an impulse to the struggle of Nicaraguan women for equality and against oppression. Peasants and workers who were women began taking up the fight for their right to participate on an equal basis in all aspects of economic and social life, seeking to win the CST and other unions and mass organizations to this cause. Members of the ATC in particular stepped into the forefront of these struggles. Women began to organize in the factories where they worked. The fight was also initially taken up at the national level by the Nicaraguan Women's Association — Luisa Amanda Espinoza (AMNLAE), the Sandinista-led national women's rights organization.

With the support of the government and the FSLN, these fighters began to make progress in changing consciousness among women and men, and scoring victories such as the advancement of literacy among women, especially during the literacy campaign in 1980; the 1979 decree outlawing the exploitation of women in advertising; the construction of child-care facilities in some factories and large state farms; changes in divorce procedures to the benefit of women; the adoption of stronger child-support laws; the right of women to own land and join cooperative farms; the right of female agricultural workers (rather than their husbands) to the wages paid them for their labor; provisions in many union contracts and in the 1986 constitution requiring equal pay for men and women doing the same work; and the increasing incorporation of women into the militias and armed forces, including some combat units. With the advance of the fight for women's liberation came greater participation of women in many aspects of political life, particularly in the unions, in UNAG, and in the CDSs.

25. The fight for access to abortion as a woman's right, a decisive issue in the struggle for equality, has not been successful. In 1985-86 a public debate broke out on whether to repeal the law barring almost all abortions. This law, dating back to the Somoza period, has been left intact by the FSLN-led government. As a result, thousands of women each year were dying or suffering serious injuries from back-alley or self-induced abortions. Botched, illegal abortions had become, and remain, the leading cause of maternal death. Without conquering the right to decide whether and when to bear children, which is impossible unless abortion is legal and accessible, the way is blocked for workers and peasants who are female to take another qualitative step toward full equality. Nonetheless, no cabinet-level government official or any of the nine members of the FSLN National Directorate has ever come out in defense of legal abortion.

In March 1987 the FSLN issued a Proclamation on Women, which did not mention the right to abortion or birth control. This document registered the decision of the FSLN leadership to end the discussion on this question and — despite its strong words against machismo — sounded a retreat on the concrete fight for women's rights. On Sept. 26, 1987, Daniel Ortega, the chief executive officer of the FSLN and president of the republic, made his first major public statement on abortion rights, using the most reactionary rationalizations to oppose legalization, and speaking out against other aspects of women's fight for equality as well. In the same speech, Ortega also declared that Indians and Blacks had never suffered racial discrimination in Nicaragua, either under the Somoza regime or afterward.

Earlier gains won for women's rights, such as the establishment of child-care centers and the breakthrough of women into jobs previously closed to them, became more vulnerable to erosion under the impact of budget cuts and large-scale layoffs. This political retreat continued in 1988, symbolized by the FSLN-backed decision to reinstate beauty contests, despite protests from many women fighters, and by the fact that the newly elected national leadership of the Sandinista Youth did not include a single woman.

In early 1989 the AMNLAE leadership announced plans to introduce legislation into the National Assembly in the summer to legalize abortion, outlaw wife beating, and stiffen legal penalties against rape. By the middle of the year, however, AMNLAE leaders had bowed to pressures by the FSLN leadership, which openly argued that raising issues such as abortion rights, wife beating, or rape would — in the words of AMNLAE co-coordinator Monica Baltodano — “only create confusion” and hurt the FSLN's candidates “in an electoral period.” Among the AMNLAE figures advocating this course are FSLN cadres who at an earlier stage were outspoken about violence against women and strong defenders of abortion rights.

26. By the time the newly elected Nicaraguan government took office in early 1985, those leaders of the revolution least attracted to a socialist course had become

dominant in the government's executive branch and in the FSLN leadership. Nevertheless, the leadership of the government responded to pressure from the masses and took initiatives to advance important anti-imperialist and democratic tasks of the revolution.

First and foremost, the FSLN led the mobilization of the toilers of Nicaragua to defeat the imperialist-organized and -financed war. In addition, the Atlantic Coast autonomy process was set in motion in late 1984, and peasant mobilizations for land in 1985-86 led to an acceleration of land distribution and a stronger agrarian reform law.

With the signing of the Guatemala peace accords in August 1987, and the subsequent cease-fire with the contras in March 1988, the FSLN and the government faced new opportunities and new challenges to mobilize the toilers to strengthen their class-struggle organizations to lead forward the fight for the establishment of a workers' state. The victory over the contras set back the imperialist plans to

“It is not primarily the economic hardships that have deepened the disorientation and demobilization of the Nicaraguan toilers...”

overthrow the workers' and farmers' government. It heightened the self-confidence of the Nicaraguan toilers.

27. In February 1988 the Nicaraguan government enacted a large devaluation of the córdoba, which led to sharp increases in prices of basic foodstuffs and consumer goods. These were followed in June 1988 by another series of economic measures: abolition of the national wage and productivity scale, which meant, among other things, abandoning the minimum wage and other attempts to benefit the lowest-paid sector of the work force; curtailing government spending to maintain the prices paid to farmers for food staples; changes in credit policies to the detriment of the poorest peasants especially; further cutting back on government subsidies of basic foods sold through neighborhood stores; and expanding concessions to capitalist growers and processors of export commodities.

Further changes announced in December 1988 and January 1989, including the proclamation that there would be no further land expropriations, continued and deepened this policy course.

It is not primarily the economic hardships that have deepened the disorientation and demobilization of the Nicaraguan toilers in the face of these policy shifts in the aftermath of the victory over the U.S.-backed contras. It is the leadership default by the FSLN and the absence of any course projected for working people to act collectively against their exploiters and, drawing on their own labor and energies, to alter the course of their lives.

28. During the two years since the peace accords confirmed the victory over the contras, the weight of the Sandinista-led unions and mass organizations in influencing government policy has been reduced, their scope of responsibilities narrowed, membership participation diminished, and their political level consequently lowered.

Leaders of the CST and other prorevolution trade unions continue to implement and justify the government's policies, striving to convince workers that it is in their interests, and in the interests of the revolution, to sacrifice more while the capitalists get a bigger share of Nicaragua's wealth. The national leadership of the ATC, which had been in the vanguard on social policies such as land reform and women's rights, has also largely gone along.

Since the policies of the government and FSLN place an ever-greater burden of the crisis on the shoulders of working people, the prorevolution union leaders must increasingly subordinate efforts to mobilize the membership in a fight to advance workers' class interests. The necessary process of bringing forward into the leadership of the unions younger workers from the ranks — leaders experienced in organizing and mobilizing the union membership not only to fight

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Militant/Michael Baumann
1982. By 1989 “the government announced a halt to any

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for their own needs, but for land reform, a stronger worker-peasant alliance, women's rights, against anti-costeño prejudice, and to advance Nicaragua toward socialism and development — is blocked.

29. The place of the neighborhood CDSs, already in decline by the mid-1980s, has been qualitatively downgraded. To the extent they still exist, they function largely as neighborhood committees to carry out routine civic tasks. They are no longer projected by FSLN leaders as units of a mass organization with the responsibility to politically mobilize working people to defend and advance the social goals of the revolution.

Armed militias set up in some factories and urban workplaces in the first year or so of the revolution were not sustained into the second half of the 1980s. They declined as army reserve units and the implementation of the draft took on greater centrality in the effort to defend Nicaragua against the contra forces. In the countryside, however, militia units were decisive to the defense of the state farms, collective farms, and cooperatives. Since the cease-fire, there has been a de facto reduction in the weight and place of even these armed militias in rural areas. By early 1989 the Sandinista army and Ministry of the Interior were ordering all CST, ATC, and UNAG units to turn in their weapons, except for those in areas of the country where contra bands still operate.

30. The class battles opened by the 1979 triumph and the sustained mobilization of armed workers and peasants to defeat the contra army brought forward new generations of young revolutionary proletarian and peasant fighters,

“The coming recession at the opening of the 1990s will magnify the crisis throughout the Americas . . .

including a large layer of potential leaders. The decisive military defeat of the contras in the latter half of 1987 opened the possibility to draw these battle-tested cadres into revitalizing the leadership of the FSLN, the unions, other revolutionary organizations, and many government institutions and programs.

The Nicaraguan toilers, arms in hand, had crushed a counterrevolutionary mercenary army financed and organized by the mightiest imperialist power in history, which aimed at gutting Nicaragua's sovereignty and destroying the most basic gains of the revolution. There could have been no better opportunity than this triumph to organize, mobilize, and lead working people to begin the reconstruction and development of war-torn Nicaragua and to deepen the struggle to advance their class interests.

The FSLN leadership, however, has done the opposite. The revolutionary momentum among vanguard workers and peasants coming out of the defeat of the contras has been dissipated. To justify their policy course, FSLN leaders insisted for a year that the war was not over. The slogan of national unity, necessary to fight a successful war to defend Nicaragua's sovereignty, has been transformed into a call on working people to subordinate their interests to those of the exploiters in the name of rebuilding Nicaragua. No substantial section of the army has been reoriented toward productive labor on socially useful development projects,

even while remaining mobilized to meet emergency defense needs. The best cadres, steered and disciplined by their service in the Sandinista armed forces, are not being forged into a communist leadership of the Nicaraguan toilers.

This squandering of the revolutionary momentum and commitment of new generations of Nicaraguan toilers in the aftermath of the victory over the contras is the most important manifestation of the political failure of the course being charted by the FSLN leadership.

31. This leadership retreat in Nicaragua takes place in a world political framework in which no new workers' and farmers' governments have come to power since 1979. The pace of advances in the international struggle against imperialism that marked the latter half of the 1970s has not continued. Outside of Cuba, there has been no advance toward communist policies among revolutionary and anti-imperialist forces in Latin America or the Caribbean.

In Central America, the post-1979 upsurge in El Salvador did not succeed in conquering power, and, following the bloody assault by the U.S.-backed government in 1981, the revolutionary struggle there was pushed back. Despite its failure to deal a decisive defeat to the revolutionary forces or maintain stability amid deepening economic and social crisis, the U.S.-armed and -financed Salvadoran rulers have nonetheless been able to hold onto power and further consolidate a repressive bourgeois regime. The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), which groups together the major revolutionary organizations, has not been able to chart a clear and united political course to mobilize the workers and peasants to remove this regime.

In the Caribbean, the murderous Stalinist overthrow of the workers' and farmers' government in Grenada in 1983 further shifted the international relationship of forces to the detriment of the toilers in the region. It opened the door to the first large-scale direct assault by U.S. military forces in the Americas since the invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965.

The U.S.-organized contra war against Nicaragua, which was organized on a large scale beginning in 1983, was part of this counteroffensive by imperialism.

By the end of 1985 the opportunity had also been missed for the governments of Latin America, as well as Africa and Asia, to take up the proposal of Cuban President Fidel Castro to join together in repudiating further payments on the skyrocketing Third World debt. Since then, the imperialist governments and financial institutions have been able to play their game of divide and conquer with ever more devastating effectiveness, draining wealth and wresting concessions from Third World regimes one by one. In a growing number of Latin American and Caribbean countries, bourgeois nationalist, “populist,” or social-democratic regimes have become harsh debt collectors for the big imperialist banks. The governments of Michael Manley in Jamaica and Peronist leader Carlos Saúl Menem in Argentina are only two of the most recent examples of this phenomenon.

The formation in 1984 of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America registered a step forward for revolutionary forces in the region. Despite setbacks in Grenada and elsewhere, its founding was a product of the revolutionary momentum toward internationalist solidarity and anti-imperialist unity coming out of the 1979–80 advances. In the absence of any further revolutionary victories since that time, however, the Anti-Imperialist Organizations, too, has politically stagnated.

These negative developments weigh heavily on the Nicaraguan revolution, strengthening the hand of those who would continue to retreat from the perspective outlined in the Historic Program, and quieting the voices of those who see the road forward in Nicaragua as inextricably tied to

the perspective of extending the anticapitalist and anti-imperialist revolution in the Americas.

32. The economic and social plight facing the toilers of Nicaragua is part of the broader devastation throughout the Americas caused by the deepening world crisis of capitalism. The region is burdened by more than \$400 billion in debts to imperialist banks, financial institutions, and governments. Nicaragua itself has a debt of \$6.7 billion, representing largely unpaid interest on past borrowing, not substantial new loans, which have not been forthcoming from most imperialist governments and agencies.

Throughout Latin America and the Caribbean massive unemployment, runaway inflation, land dispossession, the growth of miserable urban shantytowns, rampant environmental destruction, and multiple other social ills afflict growing numbers of toilers. The effects of the crisis have been particularly acute in Central America; one consequence is that the number of refugees in this region is rivaled only by Southeast Asia and some of the most famine-stricken parts of Africa.

All these conditions have continued to worsen during a

“The consequences of maintaining capitalist relations of production are neither socially or politically neutral . . .

conjunctural upturn in the capitalist business cycle in the major imperialist countries. The coming recession at the opening of the 1990s will magnify the crisis throughout the Americas and the rest of the semicolonial world. A policy direction by the Nicaraguan government based on the prospect of international capitalist expansion and increased aid and trade with the imperialist countries, rather than on the reality of a coming world depression and intensified social crisis, is set on a headlong course toward disaster.

33. The course being pursued by the FSLN leadership has disoriented, demoralized, and demobilized large numbers of Nicaraguan workers and peasants. Many are not convinced that simply being told they must sacrifice even more is a strategy to advance the goals for which they made the revolution a decade ago.

FSLN leaders, however, are waging a political fight to win vanguard workers and peasants to their policy course. They hope to convince working people to subordinate their class interests and demands to the strategic need to strengthen capitalist production and market relations (the “mixed economy”) as the only realistic road forward for Nicaragua today. The FSLN leadership argues that only by maintaining a social pact with “patriotic” capitalists — that is, only by seeking to freeze the class struggle — will it be possible to ease the devastating social effects of the world capitalist economic crisis, permit a stabilization and improvement in living standards in the medium term, and lead toward socialism somewhere down the road.

34. No member of the FSLN National Directorate, or any other national leader, has stated disagreement with the government's current strategic course, or argued for an alternative, communist course. This leadership consensus was confirmed in March 1989, when the recent government measures were endorsed in a major two-part interview in *Barricada* by Tomás Borge, a founder of the FSLN and the most senior member of its National Directorate.

Borge sought to provide a theoretical justification for this policy course, arguing that market mechanisms are an expression of “objective relations” and “general economic laws” that transcend capitalism and socialism and can be used to “serve specific class interests.” “From the beginning,” he said, “the theories of scientific socialism discarded the idea of associating market relations with capitalism alone, as if they were alien to socialism.”

Contrary to these arguments, however, the consequences of maintaining capitalist relations of production are neither socially nor politically neutral. The market is not a fact of nature, but a social relationship that arises with class society and becomes generalized with the worldwide spread of capitalist domination and exploitation. Nicaragua's economic backwardness, and the conditions of its working people, are the product of their historic place in the social relations of production in the imperialist system, not simply the inadequacy of Nicaragua's forces of production. Only a qualitative change in those social relations of production can unleash the energies of Nicaragua's workers and peasants to begin developing the forces of production to their maximum on the basis of economic planning for the benefit of the many.

Maintaining the capitalist market system and its domination of industrial and agricultural production in Nicaragua strengthens the exploiting classes, deepens divisions and inequalities among the toilers, blocks progress toward economic and social development, and promotes the spread of bourgeois values. The FSLN government can no more guide a capitalist economy toward recovery and expansion than



Crowd celebrating first anniversary of Nicaragua's Autonomy Law Sept. 2, 1988, in Puerto Cabezas on the Atlantic Coast.

Militant/Larry Seigle

can the government of any other poverty-stricken capitalist country in Central America or elsewhere in the semicolonial world. Without easing the crisis in the countryside that results from capitalist domination of industry, trade, and agriculture, and without laying the nationalized foundation for steps toward a planned economy, no government efforts to reverse the crisis can be successful.

35. To bolster his justification of the policy course of the Sandinista-led government, Tomás Borge in the March 1989 *Barricada* interview cited the example of V.I. Lenin's New Economic Policy in the Soviet Republic in the early 1920s. This analogy is fundamentally mistaken.

The NEP was a necessary retreat toward widening market relations between the towns and working peasants in the exchange of basic food products for light industrial commodities (consumer goods and light farm equipment and supplies). Its aim was to strengthen the worker-peasant alliance, which had been weakened during the previous period of imperialist military intervention and civil war.

Moreover, Lenin always insisted that the indispensable precondition for this retreat was the conquest of state ownership of industry; nationalization of the land; and the state monopoly of foreign trade. The NEP was implemented after, not before, these tasks were accomplished, that is, after the establishment of a workers' state.

36. In the interests of maintaining the social pact with capitalist manufacturers and landowners, the FSLN leadership is not only seeking to somehow freeze the class struggle, but also to put political clarification of class realities on the back burner. FSLN leaders more and more often resort to language that obscures rather than clarifies conflicting class interests within Nicaragua. "Producers," for example, has been transformed from a scientific term referring to exploited working people, those whose labor truly does produce for the benefit of society, to a term used by many government and Sandinista officials to include wealthy capitalist farmers and ranchers, those who exploit.

The social and political consequences of obscuring the truth about the causes of exploitation and oppression, and the road toward their elimination, are no more neutral than the workings of the capitalist market system itself. Political clarity, class consciousness, and organization and action on that basis are the only weapons the toilers have to advance their historic interests. The bourgeoisie, on the other hand, does not need such clarity; the very operations of its social system reproduce and intensify oppression and exploitation behind the backs of working people and capitalists alike.

37. FSLN leaders also often assert that state property and a planned economy are incompatible with political liberties, or, as it is often put, that only the preservation of a "mixed economy" can guarantee "political pluralism." This argument, too, obscures the class truth.

The deepening of bourgeois democratic rights is a progressive development that increases the space for the exploited to organize and practice politics. But such advances have a revolutionary dynamic and are sustainable only if linked to a deepening of workers' democracy and control, strengthening the toilers in their struggle to do away with capitalist exploitation. Far from guaranteeing the maintenance and extension of political rights, the substitution of bourgeois parliamentary democracy and electoralism for concrete advances in workers' democracy opens the door to the restriction — if not destruction — of democratic freedoms that a restoration of capitalist political rule will inevitably bring.

“Leading the toilers to establish, consolidate, advance a workers' state requires the construction of a communist party . . .

To the degree that the FSLN leadership presents the forthcoming national election as a means in and of itself of bolstering the revolution, therefore, it is miseducating an entire generation of fighters. Moreover, the argument of the leadership of the FSLN and the government that the elections, by establishing the legitimacy of the FSLN government in the eyes of the world, can buy a breathing space from imperialist aggression is dangerously false and disorienting. As the example of revolutionary Cuba demonstrates, establishing international respect and political standing is not the same thing as garnering favorable bourgeois public opinion. It is only the former that strengthens the defense of a revolutionary government.

38. The leadership of the FSLN and the government is increasingly explicit in its rejection, as the way forward for Nicaragua, of the socialist road opened in the Americas by the Cuban revolution and advanced by its communist leadership. President Daniel Ortega and other Sandinista leaders have stated that the Nicaraguan government is modeling its policies instead on that of smaller imperialist powers, Sweden in particular.

The launching and deepening of the rectification process



FSLN election campaign rally in 1989. As elections approached FSLN "took on face of radical bourgeois party." Militant/Seth Galinsky

by the communist leadership in Cuba since 1986 marks the one political development in the region over the past half decade that builds on the revolutionary impulse of which the 1979 triumph in Nicaragua was a central part. Cuban communists have acted on the understanding that the revolution can only advance by building a vanguard party that is increasingly proletarian in the composition of its membership and leadership. Instead of reaching out to link up with this deepening course toward socialism by the Cuban leadership, however, FSLN leaders have chosen an opposite path.

Communism, as the historic expression of the class course toward which all modern struggles of the working class lead, is increasingly rejected. FSLN leaders more and more often speak in terms of a specific Nicaraguan ideology that is supposedly neither capitalist nor communist, and will somehow, some day lead the country toward democratic socialism. "Democracy" in the abstract, shorn of any class content, is the watchword.

This supposed third road between capitalism and socialism is presented by many Sandinista leaders as applicable not only to Nicaragua, but more generally to Latin America. Revolutionists from elsewhere in the Americas who look to the Nicaraguan revolution have been influenced to varying degrees by these anti-Marxist views, especially in the context of setbacks to revolutionary struggles in the region in the 1980s.

If the experience of the Nicaraguan revolution once again confirms anything, however, it is that there is no third road between capitalism and socialism. Any strategic orientation counterposed to mobilizing working people in a fight for socialism can lead only to the reinforcement of capitalist social relations and their devastating consequences for maintaining national sovereignty and extending economic development and social justice for the toilers.

39. The perspectives expressed by FSLN leaders gain strength from their convergence with the policies of the *perestroika* stage of Stalinism, which attracts and lends momentum to all anti-Marxist forces within the working-class movement internationally.

The supporters of *perestroika* hold out the illusion that the world is becoming a more peaceful one as the result of the policies of Mikhail Gorbachev, which are helping to tame imperialism. This illusion finds support among those who are hoping that the imperialist aggressors will leave Nicaragua alone, that the world capitalist crisis will ease, and that large-scale aid and cooperation will be forthcoming from capitalist governments and financial institutions. This, they hope, will give Nicaragua a chance to develop along its own road.

Nicaragua's toilers need peace in order to be able to recover from the destruction of the war and begin to rebuild their country. But the world that is being brought into being by the bipartisan course of the imperialist government in Washington, and its efforts to negotiate "détente" with Gorbachev's *perestroika* policies, will not bring peace for anti-imperialist struggles or for workers and peasants fighting for tolerable living and working conditions.

In line with the Sandinistas' own increasing reliance on capitalist market mechanisms, Daniel Ortega has spoken in positive terms about recent changes in Soviet economic policy that make aid and trade with Cuba, Nicaragua, and other embattled Third World countries more conditional on profit considerations of individual Soviet enterprises, and thus less sure and reliable. "They're doing things more through business operations," Ortega said in a recent inter-

view. "Before, the way things were done was fundamentally political; the political line was brought down and their companies implemented it. Now, with the business-style organization that they're promoting, new forms of cooperation that we couldn't see back then can be encouraged and explored, from company to company."

One of the foreign policy and foreign aid implications of *perestroika* is unambiguous: increasing pressure, direct and indirect, on revolutionary movements and governments to adjust their courses to place "regional conflicts" in the appropriate subordinate place and to settle them. But settlements do not mean peace with dignity, with honor, with independence; they mean peace on terms acceptable to imperialism.

40. Leading the toilers to establish, consolidate, and advance a workers' state requires the construction of a communist party. The elimination of capitalist exploitation and the inauguration of a planned economy demand a deeper and broader class consciousness and firmness of the worker-peasant alliance than does the earlier step of toppling capitalist political rule. Such consciousness can be forged only with the existence of a communist vanguard leading

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the class struggle forward. At the same time, it is only by leading the toilers in making this qualitative transformation from capitalism to the construction of socialism that a communist vanguard can become truly a mass, proletarian communist party.

Such leadership can never come from the ultraleft sects and Stalinist organizations in Nicaragua, whose antipeasant and anti-working-class strategic orientations have been and continue to be rejected by revolutionary-minded fighters. When Sandinistas say that they are more revolutionary, and even more communist, than the Communist Party of Nicaragua, the Nicaraguan Socialist Party, the Marxist-Leninist Party, and other groups claiming to be Marxist, they are speaking the truth.

A communist vanguard of the Nicaraguan working class can be forged only within and among the revolutionary-minded who defend the FSLN, which has won and retains the right to lead the workers and peasants. No such communist vanguard has been forged. Without an advance in this process, the revolution has not been able to move forward to the historic steps necessary to prevent its retrogression. The increasingly explicit rejection by a number of FSLN leaders of Marxism, communism, and the road opened for all Latin America and the Caribbean by the Cuban socialist revolution poses the major obstacle to advancing the broad leadership capable of guiding Nicaragua's toilers to reverse the erosion of the foundations of the workers' and farmers' government.

Those FSLN members and supporters who are most committed to defending and advancing the class interests of the workers and peasants, and who have not been politically broken by the grind of the past decade, increasingly find themselves in opposition to the strategic course being charted, even if this opposition is not fully conscious or consistent. What is needed in Nicaragua today is an opposition to the current course that is utterly loyal to the revolution and to the FSLN, seeks to implement the Historic Program, defends the communist perspective, fights for Marxism, and points toward the example of the Cuban revolution. It would draw together in a struggle to defend the revolution the veterans of the revolutionary struggle who have not abandoned the road they set out on when they joined the FSLN, as well as the class-struggle fighters of the younger generation.

41. Like the Nicaraguan capitalists, the U.S. imperialists have no doubts that, although the Nicaraguan revolution is not socialist, the workers' and farmers' government is the product of a true and profound revolution that has put political power in the hands of the working people. The U.S. rulers have no confidence in that government, and correctly so, despite the policies it is now implementing.

“Washington does not have, and cannot have, a stable strategy to advance its interests in Nicaragua and the rest of Central America...”

This is because of the revolution itself, and the class forces on which the government rests.

The bipartisan policy in Washington continues to be one of finding a way to replace the FSLN government, not merely to pressure it for more concessions. Negotiating probes by the U.S. rulers are accompanied by continuing covert support to murderous contra operations.

The Nicaraguan government's growing vulnerability does not satisfy the imperialists. It merely emboldens Washington to press harder toward its goal. The imperialists insistently demand greater concessions to Nicaragua's exploiting classes. Then, when the FSLN-led government is forced to take punitive measures against capitalists who despite these concessions challenge the social pact it is seeking to implement (such as the expropriation of three capitalist coffee growers in June 1989), Washington lashes out all the more harshly. This becomes another excuse for imperialist governments in Western Europe that do have economic relations with Nicaragua, as well as oil-exporting regimes in Latin America, to slow down on increasing grants and renegotiating loans, and to demand even stiffer conditions for such assistance.

No matter how much the Sandinistas seek to mollify bourgeois world public opinion, such concessions will not cause the U.S. government and its allies to relent on pursuing their class interests. It is a trap not to recognize that fact.

Washington does not have, and cannot have, a stable strategy to advance its interests in Nicaragua and the rest of Central America. Nor can it predict or control all the consequences of the forces it sets in motion. The U.S. rulers respond pragmatically to the evolution of the class struggle in Nicaragua, as throughout the world. Over the past two years, for example, the U.S. government has repeatedly misjudged its capacity to bring down the government in Panama through a combination of economic sanctions, military threats, and unrelenting propaganda. Washington remains capable of



May Day 1990 in Havana, Cuba. Leaders of FSLN chose “opposite path” than that of Cuban revolution.

policy lurches that can lead to military adventures.

42. The possibilities for large-scale action in the United States in defense of Nicaragua are more limited than they have been in past years. The end of the contra war has reduced, as an objective fact, the weight of Nicaragua as an issue in U.S. politics. Moreover, the political retreat of the FSLN and the Nicaraguan government in the face of the enormous challenges it faces has had an impact on the willingness of many of those who are partisans of that revolution to engage in action. This is reflected in the fact that possibilities for large-scale tours and work brigades to Nicaragua are fewer than they were in the past.

While necessarily affecting the weighting of priorities for communists in the United States, this does not alter the political axis of our work in relation to Nicaragua. We continue to take advantage of the opportunities that do exist for workers and farmers from the United States to visit Nicaragua, as well as of opportunities to work with others to bring Nicaraguan revolutionaries to the United States. We continue to join with others to oppose Washington's attempt to use economic and political pressure, backed up by military threats, to impose a proimperialist regime on Nicaragua. This includes demanding an end to all U.S. aid to the contras and to the trade embargo; massive government aid to Nicaragua; and the unconditional normalization of

relations with Nicaragua.

The broader changes and advances in U.S. politics and the class struggle — registered by the strike against Eastern Airlines, renewed labor struggles in the coal fields, the massive April 9 abortion rights demonstration, and greater receptivity to socialist publications — while modest, create better political conditions in which to build international working-class solidarity with fighting toilers the world over, from Central America to southern Africa.

Members of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance, as well as the comrades who make up the party's active supporters, are partisans of and fellow fighters with the FSLN; our movement is its sister revolutionary organization. It is from this standpoint that we participate in defending and advancing the Nicaraguan revolution and workers' and farmers' government. And it is from this standpoint that we work with other political forces to draw workers and farmers into defending revolutionary Nicaragua against Washington and its allies.

43. The circulation of the communist press to those throughout the world who are partisans of the Nicaraguan revolution is increasingly important. It is only in the pages of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *Lutte ouvrière* that the story is being reported of the concrete unfolding of the class struggle in Nicaragua, often through the on-the-scene reporting team in the Managua Bureau of our press.

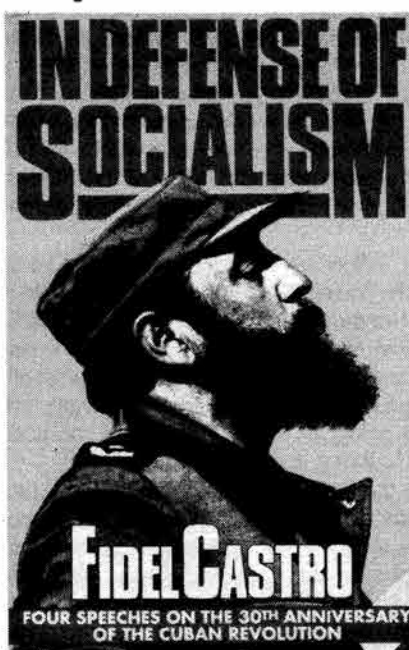
There needs to be an upgrading of the priority given to deepening the education of communist cadres about the experiences of workers' and farmers' governments not only in Nicaragua, but also in Cuba, Algeria, and Grenada. Education for Socialists bulletins and other Pathfinder publications (especially those by Joseph Hansen), as well as the *New Internationalist* magazine, are invaluable for this. We must introduce supporters of the Nicaraguan revolution to Pathfinder's books presenting the writings and speeches of Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, and other leaders of the Cuban revolution; the political legacy of the Communist International in Lenin's time; the works of U.S. communist leaders Farrell Dobbs and James P. Cannon; and the communist continuity on the fight for national liberation, women's emancipation, and the revolutionary transformation of the labor movement. This educational work is an essential component of the international efforts to defend the Nicaraguan workers' and farmers' government.

When supporters of the Nicaraguan revolution begin to understand the enormity of the consequences of the FSLN's current course, their first reaction is to step back and try to figure it out. Some become demoralized when their illusions are shattered and their hopes seem to become less realistic.

Our job is to pull them back from being disappointed, to pull them into the revolution as partisans of the toilers and of their world communist vanguard. We must help them recognize the stakes in defending the historic democratic and anti-imperialist gains of the Nicaraguan revolution, and the prospects it opened for the workers and farmers to march toward the conquest of the second workers' state in the Americas. Only by helping them to understand the Nicaraguan revolution and its line of march from that standpoint can we help them to act, and lead others to act, in defense of the revolution. And only in this way can we contribute to the development of communist leadership, which is made more, not less, important by the world that is emerging in the closing decade of the twentieth century.

With this approach, we can convince the best of the working people around the world who support the Nicaraguan revolution of the necessity of joining a proletarian party that fights for the communist future, and of the correctness and historical urgency of the choice summed up by Fidel Castro as “socialism or death.”

by **FIDEL CASTRO** from Pathfinder



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Southern farmers have 'right to the land'

Meeting discusses serious crisis facing Black, other working farmers

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

EPES, Alabama — The Federation of Southern Cooperatives Land Assistance Fund (FSC/LAF) held its 23rd annual meeting August 17-18 at its Rural Training Center near here. Over 200 Black farmers and rural and farm community activists attended. Many of the participants were members of the farm and housing cooperatives and credit unions that the FSC organizes throughout the rural South.

"We gotta right to this land — Saving the land for future generations," read the banner behind the podium. The general session opened with a report describing the serious crisis facing working farmers, especially Black farmers.

"Black farmers have faced not only the general decline in the farm economy but also neglect, racial discrimination, and economic exploitation. In 1890 there were over a million Black farmers owning 15 million acres, while in 1987 there were only 23,000 Black farmers owning 2.2 million acres. There are only seven Black farmers under the age of 35 in Alabama. This is why we have the theme 'We gotta right to this land,'" said Woodrow Keown, president of the FSC board of directors from Arkansas. "For over two decades the FSC/LAF has worked to help thousands of members keep their land through cooperative development, despite a hostile government, FBI harassment, droughts, and floods," Keown said.

Ralph Paige, executive director of the FSC/LAF, spoke about one of the central focuses of the federation's work, the 1990 Minority Farm Act. He explained that the 1990 Farm Bill does very little to address the severe problems of family farmers. But the Minority Farm Act has a good possibility of passing. It includes \$10 million for technical assistance, outreach, and education; establishment of a register to record Black land ownership to "track and take reasonable efforts to preserve minority farms"; and affirmative action in employment in U.S. Depart-

ment of Agriculture agencies in states with high minority rural populations.

John Zippert, director of program operations at the FSC training center, told the crowd, "The plan is to get rid of more family farmers, so a few corporations can dominate the food industry. Then they can do whatever they want. This is a fight for everyone who eats food, and we are on the cutting edge of that fight. Our job will be to make them enforce the Minority Farm Act."

Gains for farmers, farm workers

Baldemar Velásquez, president of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, gave greetings to the meeting. He announced that FLOC and the FSC have negotiated a cooperative agreement to work together to organize pickle cucumber producers throughout the country. Through this work, benefits that FLOC has won for farmers and farm workers in the Midwest can be extended to family farmers and farm workers in the South.

Merle Hansen, president of the North American Farm Alliance, also gave greetings. Hansen said that organizations like the federation have had a tremendous impact on the farm movement.

The meeting also heard guest speaker U.S. Congressman John Lewis from Georgia.

Workshops in credit union issues, rural housing development, and agricultural issues were held. The agriculture issues workshop, led by FSC staff from South Carolina and Mississippi, took discussion on the problem of securing adequate markets for the relatively small quantities of produce grown on an individual farm. Since vegetable production is labor intensive, most farm families do not have enough labor to produce in large quantities.

This makes it difficult for working farmers to obtain loans because they cannot get contracts for their produce.

Many of the farmers sell their produce locally on tailgates in church parking lots or to local stores.



Greene County Democrat/John Zippert

Part of crowd at meeting of Black farmers and rural and farm community activists in Alabama. "In 1890 there were over a million Black farmers owning 15 million acres, while in 1987 there were only 23,000 owning 2.2 million acres."

A lively discussion took place following the presentation. Hansen said that the U.S. government does not care about small farmers. Officials who regulate farm policy are on the boards of agribusinesses, he said. "You've got buyers of produce running farm policy in this country. It's like the fox running the hen house."

Ben Burkett, a farmer from Mississippi,

noted that the people who run agribusiness use food as a weapon when there is the potential to feed everyone in the United States.

Hansen pointed out that the U.S. military intervention in the Middle East is an example of Washington trying to be the world policeman. "Bush accuses Iraq of invading Kuwait but doesn't mention the U.S. military intervention in El Salvador or the U.S. invasion of Grenada or Panama," he said.

The housing workshop discussed the fight to get loans from the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA). The federation filed a lawsuit recently against the FmHA, seeking release of public information concerning the agency's handling of discrimination complaints. The FmHA takes up to a year and a half to respond to complaints by family farmers. By that time some farmers have lost their land.

"The FmHA has a long history of administering its loan programs in a racially discriminatory manner. The agency's discriminatory actions and failures to act have had an adverse impact on Black farmers' abilities to own farmland," states the suit.

Touring Decker miners win support

BY MIKE GALATI

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah — Members of the United Mine Workers of America on strike at a strip mine near Sheridan, Wyoming, completed a three-day visit here at the end of July.

The miners were invited to Salt Lake City by the presidents of four locals of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union. The tour was sponsored by OCAW Local 2-578 at Phillips Petroleum.

On Oct. 1, 1987, 240 members of UMWA Local 1972 struck Decker Coal Co. The Decker mine is located in Montana, just north of Sheridan. At issue in the strike was job security and benefits. The UMWA wanted contract provisions protecting its membership's jobs from being eliminated by subcontracting. The coal operators responded by hiring 200 scabs and replaced the strikers.

In June 1988 the union offered to return to work, but when 120 miners tried to go back they were told by the coal operators there were no jobs.

Since then the union has been fighting to get miners their jobs back. In February of this year a judge ruled that Decker Coal had to reinstate 80 miners. More than 50 have returned to work so far.

During the Salt Lake tour the miners had the opportunity to speak to hundreds of working people about their fight to gain UMWA representation in the mine and to get a contract. They organized informational picket lines in front of homes and businesses of members of the board of directors of Pacific Power Corp., which is one of the two principal owners of Decker Coal.

During a noon hour picket line at the offices of Utah Power & Light (UP&L), a subsidiary of Pacific Power, they were joined by UMWA miners from the UP&L-owned Cottonwood mine complex (formerly called the Wilberg mine), and by steelworkers, OCAW members, Greyhound strikers, rail workers, and other unionists from the area.

The striking miners also spoke before the Utah State AFL-CIO Executive Board, which offered its support to their struggle.

Fifty people attended a public event at an OCAW union hall. The meeting was chaired by Tim Birknew, president of OCAW Local 2-578. Other speakers at the meeting included Stan Rathburn, a striking Greyhound bus driver and member of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1384, and United Transportation Union General Chairman Dave Smith.

Larry Deeds, president of UMWA Local 1972, reviewed the history of their fight and expressed his appreciation for the support and solidarity the strikers had received.

He closed his remarks by explaining that over the last three years there was "Something we've learned — if you want justice, you have to take it. The Pittston Coal strike was a monumental victory for the unions in this country. I believe it will go down in history as the turning point in the decline of the labor movement," he said.

Greetings were also sent to the meeting from Eddie Croft on behalf of International Association of Machinists members on strike against Eastern Airlines in Los Angeles.

Cleveland State students fight racist firing

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

CLEVELAND — Black students at Cleveland State University are embroiled in a struggle against the racist firing of Dr. Raymond Winbush, former vice-president of minority affairs and human relations.

The students, faculty, and staff members, as well as community leaders have been participating in sit-in demonstrations since June 29 in the lobby of Fenn Tower, the CSU administration building.

The students are holding daily activities such as mass rallies, public meetings, and picketing of businesses owned by members of the university's Board of Trustees. Some events have drawn more than 200 people, including Black elected officials.

"I want to go home. It's not comfortable sleeping here, but this is going to affect everybody. This whole place has to change," said Dante Merriweather while sitting in at Fenn Tower. Merriweather is the president of Students for Dr. Raymond Winbush.

The students said they have received bomb threats, their phones have been cut off, the heat was turned on in the building, and they have witnessed police going through their personnel files.

Students are demanding the immediate reinstatement of Winbush, increased power and funding for the Office of Minority Affairs, and increased representation and com-

munication with the Office of the President and the Board of Trustees.

The decision to stage the sit-in was made after a June 28 Nelson Mandela send-off rally of 300 people at the university. The sit-in came after the university's president, John Flower, refused to respond to the rally participants' demands to reinstate Winbush. The Mandela event was organized by Black community leaders during the African National Congress leader's U.S. tour. They have since pledged their support to the sit-in.

Cleveland Mayor Michael White has charged CSU officials with being "racially insensitive and uncompromising" and has called for federal and state investigations into the "Winbush matter."

Longtime civil rights activist Rev. Otis Moss and other community leaders have organized food banks, financial assistance, and legal services for the students.

The Arab-American Action Committee donated \$1,000 and issued a statement pledging to "withdraw its 1,500 foreign students currently enrolled if by the beginning of the Fall Term . . . the University has not rehired Dr. Winbush and presented a clear effort to reform its policies where Minority and foreign students are concerned."

This organization pays CSU \$20,000 per student it sponsors, totalling \$30 million annually.

The hiring of Winbush was seen by many as a step toward remedying what many in the community, including former City Council president George Forbes, described as racist aspects of the university.

The charges of racism led to an investigation in 1987 by the U.S. Department of Labor, which found CSU engaged in discrimination in hiring and promotion of people of color.

The Greater Cleveland Roundtable, an organization of corporate presidents, government officials, and labor and community leaders, also issued a report in 1987 that found CSU had "serious problems related to race relations."

Current figures of minority enrollment and recruitment are dismal. Of the student population, 11.6 percent are Blacks or other minorities. Figures for graduation are even lower. Only 10.3 percent of the faculty are Black. Blacks and other oppressed nationalities comprise more than 50 percent of Cleveland's population.

The students are determined to have their demands met. "We'll be here as long as it takes," said Gilbert Harrison, president of the Organization of Afro-American Unity at CSU. "If it takes two days, two weeks, or two years, we're going to stick it out and we'll be here."

Boston meet celebrates Cuban revolution

BY BETSY SOARES
AND RICH CAHALANE

BOSTON — Three hundred fifty people attended a meeting here in defense of the Cuban revolution. The July 28 event marked 37 years since the young Fidel Castro led a group in an attack on the Moncada Barracks in Santiago de Cuba on July 26, 1953. It was held at the Boston campus of the University of Massachusetts and was the largest meeting for Cuba in this city in recent memory.

The first scheduled speaker was to have been Ricardo Alarcón, Cuba's ambassador to the United Nations. The U.S. State Department, however, denied him a visa to travel to Boston. In the days leading up to the event, the sponsoring organizations mounted a campaign to protest the State Department's refusal to allow Alarcón to leave New York City.

Gus Newport, the former mayor of Berkeley, California, co-chaired the meeting. He read a message protesting Alarcón's exclusion signed by 10 prominent politicians, labor

July 28 gathering protests State Department denial of visit to city by Cuba's UN representative.

officials, and civil libertarians from the Boston area. "By not allowing the ambassador to be with us tonight," the message read, "the Department of State appears to be trying to expand the embargo to preclude our ability

to engage in a dialogue with Mr. Alarcón. This represents an unacceptable restriction on our First Amendment rights.

"In the rapidly changing world situation there is less justification than ever for a continuation of the U.S. administration's policy of blockage and hostility toward Cuba."

The statement was then approved by the audience to be sent to the State Department.

Alarcón videotape

In a videotaped message, Alarcón discussed recent developments in Eastern Europe. He emphasized that despite what the capitalists wanted everyone to believe "socialism is in fact not dead, but alive and growing in Cuba."

In attempting to impose "free enterprise" on the workers in Eastern Europe, Alarcón

said, "it will happen that the people will begin again to organize and to mobilize to fight back. I am sure that the resurgence of the socialist movement will mature as those events develop in that part of the world." Through their rectification campaign, he said, Cubans were seeking to advance the goals of socialism.

Aggrey Mberé, the representative of the African National Congress of South Africa in Boston, opened the meeting emphasizing the respect the ANC has for Cuba and its contribution to the freedom struggle in southern Africa. "The spirit, courage, and commitment of the oppressed peoples of South Africa goes hand in glove with the deepest aspirations of the peoples of Cuba in general and the Cuban government in particular," he said.

U.S.-Cuban relations

Manuel Davis, acting chief at the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., spoke at the meeting about U.S.-Cuban relations and Cuba's role in the world today. The crowd welcomed him with a standing ovation and chants of "Cuba sí! Yanqui no!"

Davis paid tribute to the thousands of Cubans who have died defending Cuba's revolution or have been killed while on voluntary internationalist missions as doctors, teachers, technicians, or soldiers in Africa and elsewhere.

He explained that the hostility of the U.S. government and its trade embargo against Cuba has increased in recent years. But, "We are committed to keep on building and working on the socialist premises," he said to applause.

"The United States has to stop trying to impose its preconditions on Cuba," Davis said. "We will not accept any preconditions. We will not change any of our policies. We need the solidarity of the American people to help change the attitude of hostility against us by the U.S. government."

Unionists host meeting

The Cuban diplomat was also a special guest at a breakfast meeting organized by local trade unionists earlier in the day. The event was hosted by the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union Local 26. More than 60 people from a dozen unions attended, including striking Greyhound and Eastern Airlines workers.

Eastern strikers presented Davis with a "No Lorenzo!" T-shirt and hat. Davis said he was "very aware and very much interested in the struggles of U.S. workers. We never had an opportunity in the past to make links like this with American workers. This is very important for us."

During his stay here, Davis was interviewed by radio and television stations, and by newspapers.

250,000 E. German farmers protest

BY LÜKO WILLMS

FRANKFURT am MAIN, West Germany — Some 250,000 farmers across East Germany mounted protests against the government of Prime Minister Lothar de Maizière August 15. Demonstrations occurred in East Berlin — where 50,000 farmers gathered — and in Dresden, Rostock, Halle, Gera, Erfurt, and Suhl. Dozens of smaller cities and towns also saw actions.

The farmers demanded European Community prices for their produce. Since currency unification in July, there has been an almost total breakdown in the country's wholesaling network and in pricing.

Farmers have been unable to compete against West German food monopolies that have forced their goods off supermarket shelves. As a result, East German farmers have found themselves sitting on huge quantities of unsellable eggs, poultry, meat, vegetables, and flour. Fresh produce and cut flowers have been dumped.

'No farmers, no future'

"Who is being led to the block — the hogs or us?" read some farmers' banners in East Berlin. Other slogans ranged from "Stop the peasant killers in the government!" and "No farmers, no future!" to "Farmers aren't toys!" and "Is poverty the price of freedom?"

"Our patience has worn out," Edgar Moder, president of the East German agricultural cooperatives association, told rally participants. "We will not be fooled by this government and this parliament any longer!"

Moder called for emergency subsidies for farmers, saying up to 4 billion deutsche marks (US\$2.6 billion) is needed or 50 percent of the farms will go bankrupt. Some 660,000 people belong to 5,000 farm cooperatives. Average income has already dropped by as much as 50 percent. In early July more than a third of the cooperatives did not have enough cash to pay that month's salary to farmers.

When East German Minister for Agriculture Peter Pollack tried to speak to the East Berlin protesters, they whistled, jeered, and pelted him with eggs and tomatoes. The windows of his car were smashed. Pollack had been nominated for the post by the Social Democrats.

A similar response greeted Guenther Krause, the head of Prime Minister de



Hog barn at the Paetrow Agriculture Production Cooperative in East Germany. There has been an almost total breakdown in country's wholesaling and pricing network.

Maizière's Christian Democratic Union in parliament. "Liar! Liar!" farmers shouted.

On the same day representatives of the East German Agricultural Production Cooperatives and of West German farmers handed petitions to Ignaz Kiechle, the West German minister of agriculture. The petitions called on the Bonn government to aid East German farmers.

By evening de Maizière was forced to concede that his government had failed to respond to the growing crisis facing farmers

and fired four cabinet ministers responsible for the economy. Those dismissed included the ministers of agriculture, finance, economics, and justice.

On August 23 the East German parliament voted to set October 3 as the date for the political unification of the two Germanys. Unification had originally been set for December 2, but economic disintegration in the East and the government's resulting instability brought the issue of earlier unification to a head.

Phoenix action of 400 hits racist killing

BY KAREN RAY

PHOENIX — On July 18 some 400 people came out to protest the murder of Ric Rankins by five Smitty's grocery store employees. The demonstration was filled with handmade signs. Two of them read, "Insufficient funds is not a capital offense" and "Shop at Pry's; Smitty's hog ties."

On July 10 three Smitty's managers had followed Ric Rankins, a Black man, out of the store and accused him of writing a bad check a few days earlier. When Rankins tried to get into a waiting cab the three managers pulled him out of the car and placed him in a choke hold. One of the bosses took the keys out of the taxi.

Rankins was kept in the choke hold and his head smashed to the ground. He was then hog-tied by two security guards who had joined in the attack.

When the cops arrived, Rankins was unconscious and bleeding from the mouth with two Smitty's employees on top of him.

The cops untied Rankins, handcuffed him, and put him in the back of the patrol car before calling paramedics. One hour later he was pronounced dead at the hospital from a crushed larynx.

No arrests have been made. The county coroner's office has ruled Rankins' death a homicide. Both the offices of the Maricopa County attorney and the state attorney general have refused to bring charges, claiming

they have a conflict of interest. Investigators in both offices have worked for Smitty's, which is a chain store.

The case has been moved to Coconino County, 150 miles north of here. Officials there have made no decision as to whether they will press charges.

Leaders of the Black community have met with Smitty's management and demanded that the company fire the employees involved and make a public statement condemning their actions. Smitty's has refused to do both.

A community meeting on July 22 to map out plans for further protest actions against the murder drew 150 participants.

Umar Sharif, an organizer of the protests and a spokesman for the Nation of Islam, said, "Ric was Joe average man. He wrote a check that was returned for insufficient funds. He had a credit card that was no good. But he certainly did not deserve to die for those things. The question must be asked, 'What so offended them about Ric Rankins that they went out into the street after him?'"

Barlow case

Many who have been involved in the protests compare what has happened following the Rankins murder with what happened to Ronnie Barlow.

Accused of killing Robert Lockwood, Barlow, who is Black, was put in jail pending

investigation as soon as he turned himself in following the Oct. 7, 1989, shooting.

Lockwood, known as a violent racist, was in a car with two other white men when their car almost ran over Barlow, who was riding a bicycle. Lockwood got out of the car carrying a bottle and advanced towards Barlow yelling racist slurs. Barlow repeatedly told Lockwood to back off, but then shot him fearing for his life.

Inside Lockwood's car the cops found three clubs, two metal pipes, and an ax handle.

Barlow was convicted of second degree murder. On July 20 he was denied a motion for a new trial. The conviction was reduced to manslaughter and he is now facing five to 15 years in prison.

Sandra Smith, a friend of Rankins and one of the central organizers of the picketing in front of Smitty's, pledged to keep the picket lines up and get a boycott of the Smitty's chain under way. Many people have driven by the picket line and stopped to join in. Participants have brought signs from home and have come back day after day to show their outrage at this killing.

Smith said, "I go to the store to buy pig feet — I don't go to the store to be tied up like one."

Organizers have pledged to keep the pressure on until the attackers are prosecuted and justice won.

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September 16 actions called to demand: U.S. bases out of the Philippines!

BY STEVE BEREN

SEATTLE — Opponents of the presence of U.S. military bases in the Philippines have targeted September 16 as a day of protest. Demonstrations and educational activities are planned for New York, Washington, D.C., Cleveland, Philadelphia, Detroit, Minneapolis, Chicago, Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

In an interview, Greg Castilla, a member of the National Council of the Alliance for Philippine Concerns (APC), outlined the goals of the protests. Castilla is also a member of the Seattle-based Filipino Association for Community Education (FACE).

Protest organizers seek to inform the U.S. public about the reasons Filipinos oppose the bases as a violation of their national sovereignty, to demand of both the Philippine and U.S. governments that the treaty allowing the U.S. military bases not be renewed when it expires on Sept. 16, 1991, and, Castilla explained, "to strengthen and expand the Philippine solidarity network, and to provide direct support to the Philippine nationalist movement against the bases."

September 16 — one year to the date before the treaty is to expire — was selected as a day of protest to coincide with the date the Philippine government is to advise the U.S. government of its intentions regarding the renewal of the treaty. Exploratory talks have already begun and negotiations are underway for renewal of the treaty.

"We look at the bases as indication that the Philippine people are not free," Castilla said. He noted that the U.S.-Philippines mutual defense treaty was originally signed in 1947, to last for a period of 99 years, as a de facto condition of independence. "The people were not consulted. The agreement was not really legal," Castillo said.

In 1966 the treaty was modified to expire within 25 years. As the deadline approaches, the Aquino government is trying to quell



Greg Castilla, Filipino activist in Seattle. "We look at the bases as an indication that the Philippine people are not free."

anti-base activity and to reduce political space for those in the Philippines fighting against the presence of the bases, Castilla explained. He said that on May 16, during exploratory U.S.-Philippine talks, the Manila police attacked and violently broke up an anti-bases march near the U.S. embassy. Sixteen people were arrested, including Liddy

Alejandro, deputy secretary-general of Bayan, the leading organization in the anti-bases movement in the Philippines.

"A nation cannot claim to be sovereign if there are foreign military bases in its own land. These bases have been used as a staging ground for U.S. intervention in Southeast Asia and in Korea," Castilla said. This is not in the

interests of working people either in the United States or in the Philippines, he said.

The U.S. people are made to pay their tax dollars to maintain these bases. "But," Castilla said, "this money can be used here on the homeless, for the unemployed, to reduce tuition fees, and so on."

There are 20 bases and facilities, five of which are really big bases, Castilla said. Clark Air Base, for example, takes up 53,000 hectares of very fertile land, "an area the size of the nation of Singapore," Castilla said. It is a well-known fact that there are phantom jets — carriers of nuclear weapons — at Clark. This directly violates the Philippine constitution's prohibition against nuclear weapons, Castilla said.

The U.S. government claims that the Filipino people benefit from "all the money" spent by U.S. personnel. "There is no logic to the thinking that they have been helping us financially," Castilla said. "It is all geared for consumption — for bars, for prostitutes — and not for the development of production in the surrounding areas." In Olongapo, the area near the Subic Bay Naval Station, 70 percent of the population lives below the poverty level. Castilla said that the first AIDS case in the Philippines occurred in Olongapo, likely related to prostitution. "There are an increasing number of child prostitutes and abandoned Amerasian babies in the areas surrounding the bases," Castilla pointed out.

Government repression

Although the Aquino government is going through the formal process of the exploratory talks, "I think Aquino is for the extension of the bases' presence," Castilla said. The Aquino government increasingly resorts to repression, Castilla noted, pointing to the police attack on May 16; the March 1988 killing by soldiers of Rey Francisco, a leader of Kadena — a youth organization of the urban poor — for posting anti-bases material; and the more recent frame-up of Jaime Tadeo, the chairman of the Philippine Peasant Movement (KMP).

Castilla expressed the view that as the September 16 demonstrations in the Philippines led by Bayan get nearer, the Aquino government may very well resort to repression to discourage participation. This makes international solidarity, such as the demonstrations and activities planned for the United States, all the more important.

Castilla noted that the American Friends Service Committee, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, SANE/FREEZE, the Philippine Bases Network, and the Friends of the Filipino People are firm supporters of the fight to remove the U.S. military bases in the Philippines.

The APC is an alliance of more than 45 organizations in 25 cities in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. For more information, contact the APC at (415) 540-5230 in San Francisco, (213) 933-6443 in Los Angeles, or (301) 439-2229 on the East Coast.

Fiji rulers impose undemocratic constitution

BY MIKE BROWNE

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — A new constitution proclaimed in July by the government of the Pacific island country of Fiji has been denounced as "racist, undemocratic, and feudalistic," by the Fiji Labour Party-National Federation Party Coalition. The coalition was removed from government through a military coup in June 1987 after one month in office.

The new constitution is designed to concentrate power permanently in the hands of the indigenous Fijian chiefly aristocracy, who have dominated the government and the military in alliance with local and foreign business interests since independence from Britain in 1970. This power has in turn been used to maintain the chiefs' semi-feudal exploitation of the land and labor of indigenous Fijians, and their domination over the Indian people, who were first brought to Fiji from India as indentured laborers in the 1870s.

Fiji's population of 727,000 is relatively evenly divided between the two ethnic groups.

The new constitution provides for a two-chamber parliament. The upper house or "Senate of Chiefs" is to have 34 members appointed by the Fijian Great Council of Chiefs. Twenty-four of the 34 are to be ethnic Fijians.

The House of Representatives will have 69 members elected from racially separate voting rolls — 37 Fijian, 27 Indian, and five others. The posts of president and prime minister are to be reserved for Fijians, with the president appointed by the Great Council of Chiefs.

Urban ethnic Fijians, who are giving growing support to the Labour Party, are also discriminated against in the new constitution. Only seven of the 37 seats allocated to Fijians are from urban constituencies, where one-third of all ethnic Fijians live.

The announcement of the new constitution follows a period of growing opposition to the military-backed regime and its policies. In November 1989 some 50,000 people attended the funeral of Timoci Bavadra, the former leader of the Fiji Labour Party and

prime minister at the time of the 1987 coup. The Labour Party continues to hold rallies in towns and villages across Fiji, including one of 1,000 held in the country's capital city of Suva last May. This was the first time such a rally has been allowed since the coup.

The Labour Party has reached out to indigenous Fijians and exposed the regime. Supporters' claim that the coup was necessary to defend Fijians from an "Indian takeover".

Farmers' actions

Deteriorating living standards since the coup have led to a growing number of united actions by workers and farmers of both races. A strike by 1,100 nurses in July defied two government return-to-work orders and was resolved when other public sector workers threatened to call a national support strike. A harvesting boycott by 23,000 sugarcane farmers in June ignored government threats to send in the army to cut cane. The action forced the state-owned Fiji Sugar Corp. to offer improved contracts. The cane growers' protests, which involved rallies of up to 7,000 farmers, also saw the more militant National Farmers Union displace the traditional Cane-growers Council as the voice of working farmers. Farmers Union Secretary Mahendra Chaudhry is also secretary of the Fiji Trade Union Congress and a leading figure in the Labour Party.

Successful union organizing drives have also been undertaken among mine workers and the rapidly expanding garment industry. In both sectors the unions have succeeded in making the appalling working conditions and wages a public scandal.

A general strike by Fiji Indians in May closed shops, schools, and workplaces in protest of the government's decision to expel the Indian government's embassy staff in Suva. India had announced it would lead a campaign in the United Nations against the new constitution and continue to block Fiji's readmittance to the Commonwealth of Nations. Fiji forfeited its membership when it declared itself a republic in the course of the military coup.

The military-backed regime has been receiving increased support from the imperialist powers, however. France has provided substantial military aid to the regime since the coup, and Britain recently announced the resumption of military training for the Fiji army. Both New Zealand and Australia — which cut off aid during the coup — have indicated their desire to begin "normalizing" relations with Fiji.

With a 5,000-strong army — almost exclusively indigenous Fijian — Fiji remains one of the most militarized nations in the world given its population. The government's determination to use the army to maintain its power was underscored in March with a military exercise that shut down Suva using 1,000 soldiers — complete with roadblocks, barbed wire, and barricades.

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Peru and Ecuador: Examples of the Economic and Political Crisis Facing Latin America. Video on the peasant struggles in Peru. Speakers: Al Twiss, representative of the Human Rights Association of Peru; Juan Villagómez, Socialist Workers Party candidate for California treasurer, attended First Continental Conference of Indigenous Peoples, Quito, Ecuador. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Democratic Rights vs. Government Censorship. Speaker: George Williams, Socialist Workers Party, member United Food and Commercial Workers Local 442. Sat., Sept. 1, 7:30 p.m. 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd floor. Donation: \$2.50. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

The Patriot Game. A film on the struggle for human rights in the British-occupied Six Counties of Ireland. Wed., Sept. 5, 7 p.m. Martin Luther King Community Center, 450 Auburn Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Irish Northern Aid. For more information call (404) 352-5480 or 681-5674.

South Africa: End Apartheid Now! Current challenges in the fight for freedom in South Africa. Sat., Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m. 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd floor. Donation: \$2.50. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

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St. Paul

Women: Roots of Oppression, Road to Liberation. Speakers: Denise McInerney, Socialist Workers Party, member United Steelworkers Local 15199; Kari Sachs, Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., Sept. 1, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

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NEW JERSEY

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Victims of Corporate Greed: Attacks on Workers' Health, Safety, and the Environment. Speakers: Paul Eidsvik, member Teamsters local at Exxon refinery in Linden; Rachel Knapik, Socialist Workers Party, member Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 8-575. Video showing of *Out of Control!* Translation to Spanish and French. Sat., Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Brooklyn

Nelson Mandela and the Coming South African Revolution. Video showing of interview with Mandela during his historic North American tour. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Sept. 1, 7:30 p.m. 464 Bergen. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (718) 398-6983.

Manhattan

Socialist Workers Party 1990 Campaign Picnic. Sun., Sept. 2, 11 a.m. Central Park at 100th St. and Central Park West. Donation: \$8. For more information call (212) 675-6740, (718) 398-6983, or (201) 643-3341.

Socialist Workers Campaign Open House. Following the Labor Day march. Mon., Sept. 3, 3-6 p.m. 191 7th Ave. For more information call (212) 675-6740.

Support the Eastern Strike! Speaker: Susan Amuth, Socialist Workers Party candidate for lieutenant governor, member International Association of Machinists Local 1018 on strike against Eastern Airlines. Sat., Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m. 191 7th Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (212) 675-6740.

Militant Labor Forums

U.S. Troops Out of the Arab East! Hands Off Iraq!

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Speaker: Maceo Dixon, socialist candidate for Georgia governor. Socialist Workers campaign barbecue. Mon., Sept. 3, 12 noon to 6 p.m. 360 Woodrow Ave., Hapeville. Tel: (404) 577-4065 or 669-0245.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Speaker: Bob Robertson, Socialist Workers Party, member Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 7-1. Sat., Sept. 1, 7 p.m. 545 W Roosevelt Rd. Donation: \$3. Tel: (312) 829-6815 or 829-7018.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Speaker: Rashaad Ali, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Sept. 1. Dinner, 6 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

Speakers: Lanya Shihadeh, Detroit coordinator of American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; Mark Friedman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress, 16th C.D.

WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston

Inside Cuba Today. Slideshow by Jon Hillson, Socialist Workers Party, recently returned from reporting trip to Cuba for *Militant*. Sat., Sept. 8,

Sat., Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m. 5019½ Woodward Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (313) 831-1177.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

Speakers: Alan Dale, Emergency Committee on Persian Gulf; representative of Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Sept. 8, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

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Sat., Sept. 8, 7 p.m. 5534 Troost. Donation: \$3. Tel: (816) 444-7880.

ICELAND

Reykjavik

What Is the Conflict in the Persian Gulf About? Thurs., Sept. 13, 8 p.m. Klapparstíg 26. Tel: (91) 17513.

SWEDEN

Stockholm

Speaker: Representative of Communist League. Sat., Sept. 8, 2 p.m. Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

7 p.m. 116 McFarland St. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (304) 345-3040.

UN council okays force in blockade

Continued from Page 7

or having virtually any commercial or financial dealings with Iraq, was approved by a 13-0 vote. All five permanent members of the Security Council — the United States, Soviet Union, France, China and Britain — voted for it. Cuba and Yemen abstained. The other members of the Council are Canada, Finland, Colombia, Ethiopia, Malaysia, the Ivory Coast, Zaire, and Romania.

Explaining his country's votes, Ricardo Alarcón, Cuba's permanent representative to the UN, said to the body on August 6, "For Cuba the principles of nonintervention in the internal matters of other states, for whatever motive, . . . are essential principles of international order. And in defense of such principles we have expressed our displeasure with, and our rejection of, the intervention by Iraqi troops into Kuwaiti territory a few days ago, and we have expressed the need for the situation to be brought to an end with the removal of Iraqi troops from Kuwaiti territory and the reestablishment of Kuwait's full sovereignty.

"For us this is about two states and two governments with which we have and continue to maintain relations of friendship. That is why we are especially worried by the situation that has been created between them.

It is for this reason that my delegation voted in favor of Resolution 660 (1990)."

Alarcón then went on to explain Cuba's decision to abstain on the resolution that called for a blockade against Iraq. "Far from contributing to the solution of the conflict, the proposed imposition of sanctions tends to complicate the situation even further at a time when Iraq has already begun to withdraw its troops."

Castro letter to Arab leaders

Cuban President Fidel Castro sent a letter to the leaders of the Arab countries dated August 7. The message was reprinted by *Granma Weekly Review* August 19.

"Cuba didn't hesitate to cast its vote in favor of Resolution 660 of the Council adopted on August 2," Castro stated. "Not without pain and bitterness did we take that necessary and just step in line with our principled policy concerning the inadmissibility of resorting to force and military superiority to solve the contradictions among countries, more so when involved here is a fratricidal confrontation between Third World peoples."

"Those same principles," Castro said, "are very dear to us who are permanently threatened with aggression. Our conviction is that if there's something for us to do now, it is to refrain from adding fuel to the fire of war.

This determined our recent abstention in the case of a new Security Council draft resolution sponsored and zealously promoted by the United States."

Protesting the undemocratic character of the UN Security Council, where one of the permanent members can veto any action, Castro pointed to the inability of the body to "condemn Israeli genocide against the heroic *intifada* [the Palestinian uprising] or the actions of the Zionist army, which have caused the death of members of UN forces themselves in Lebanon."

Through its military intervention the U.S. government is "blocking any alternative for a negotiated political solution that is not subordinated to their geopolitical interests," Castro wrote to the Arab leaders.

Noting the U.S. invasions of Panama and Grenada and the bombing of Libya, Castro asked, "How can anyone fail to see the danger of U.S. involvement in an adventure of this nature?"

The Cuban president urged the Arab leaders to act in unison to "search for a negotiated solution between two Arab peoples. This would, of course, imply the withdrawal of the Iraqi troops and the full reinstatement of the sovereignty of Kuwait, without catastrophic wars," which would grow out of deepening U.S. involvement.

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MARYLAND: Baltimore: 2913 Green-

mount Ave. Zip: 21218. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

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

MICHIGAN: Detroit: 5019½ Woodward Ave. Zip: 48202. Tel: (313) 831-1177.

MINNESOTA: Austin: 407½ N. Main. Zip: 55912. Tel: (507) 433-3461. **Twin Cities:** 508 N. Snelling Ave., St. Paul. Zip: 55104. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

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

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NEW JERSEY: Newark: 141 Halsey. Zip: 07102. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

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WASHINGTON: Seattle: 1405 E. Madison. Zip: 98122. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

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Sydney: 19 Terry St., Surry Hills, Sydney NSW 2010. Tel: 02-281-3297.

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Cardiff: 9 Moira Terrace, Adamsdown. Postal code: CF2 1EJ. Tel: 0222-484677.

London: 47 The Cut. Postal code: SE1 8LL. Tel: 71-401 2293.

Manchester: Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Postal code: M4 4AA. Tel: 061-839 1766.

Sheffield: 2A Waverley House, 10 Joiner St.,

Sheffield S3 8GW. Tel: 0742-729469.

CANADA

Montréal: 6566, boul. St-Laurent. Postal code: H2S 3C6. Tel: (514) 273-2503.

Toronto: 410 Adelaide St. W., Suite 400. Postal code: M5V 1S8. Tel: (416) 861-1399.

Vancouver: 1053 Kingsway, Suite 102. Postal code: V5V 3C7. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

ICELAND

Reykjavik: Klapparstíg 26. Mailing address: P. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik. Tel: (91) 17513.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: 157a Symonds St. Postal Address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 793-075.

Christchurch: 593a Colombo St. (upstairs). Postal address: P.O. Box 22-530. Tel: (3) 656-055.

Wellington: 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Postal address: P.O. Box 9092. Tel: (4) 844-205.

SWEDEN

Stockholm: Vikingagatan 10. Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

Catch 22 — While there are no moratoriums on mortgage payments for reservists called to military duty, rent payments can be put off for three



Harry Ring

months — provided the rent is no more than \$150 a month.

And the mortgage is paid — The *New York Times* explains why the prez insists on continuing his vacation during the Gulf crisis: "His seaside home where he has vaca-

tioned every summer except 1944, has a strong psychic pull for him. Like Scarlett O'Hara and Tara, Mr. Bush believes that his Walker's Point estate is a place where he can recharge his energy and resolve."

Nothing sacred? — The *New York Times* reports that "biologists lately have discovered that in the animal kingdom there is almost no such thing as monogamy." Next they'll be telling us animals don't believe in God.

Solidarity? Honest labor? Not them — Spurred by disciplinary action against two club-happy Kansas City cops, police there are talking about a "union" — one, they assure, that would not strike or respect

picket lines. But the Fraternal Order of Police argues it has more to offer. They're a cops' organization, an official said, "not truck drivers or meat-cutters or forklift operators."

Participatory democracy — Warsaw police report an unprecedented rise in burglaries and robberies in the past year and, concurrently, a large sale of stun guns. Complained a Polish police official, "Democracy does not mean that everyone can shoot at everyone else."

Fairness, Thatcher style — The British government denied poll tax exemption to handicapped youth working in training programs for \$66 a week. An official explained

that such an exemption would encourage demands from other trainees and low-paid workers and thus harm the "fairness principles" assertedly built into the tax system.

Obviously an immoral type — A New York State hearing confirmed that NYNEX had hired private cops to probe Toby Squitieri, a former employee. He's the one who blew the whistle on the company-sponsored "pervert conventions" attended by NYNEX management folk, phone company suppliers, and company-hired prostitutes.

Due process, Israeli style — Now that he's been sentenced, Nehru Abu Seriah stands a chance of getting out of jail. The Israeli

military sentenced him to 30 days for leaving the Gaza Strip without his ID. Since he was held for 10 months before the court acted, Abu Seriah now qualifies for release.

Quality control — Chrysler was fined \$7.6 million, and paid \$16 million in civil damages, for rebuilding 30 wrecked cars and selling them as new, and also for odometer juggling.

Thought for the week — "How long can it be before Bush comes before us with the idea that we will need a huge, permanent force in the Middle East to ensure the survival of puppet regimes committed to American interests?" — New York *Newsday* columnist Robert Reno.

Socialist in Canada hits terror against Mohawks

Continued from front page

equipped with machine guns, armored personnel carriers, antitank weapons, rocket launchers, helicopters, and fighter jets.

Chief Billy Two Rivers explained, "We are not fighting the army, we are fighting for our rights and anyone who attacks those rights."

Over the past seven weeks Native people across Canada have moved into action to express their solidarity with the Mohawks. They have organized demonstrations and erected scores of barricades, blocking roads and railway lines and demanding that the federal government grant their land claims and the demands for self-government by the 1 million Native peoples in Canada. Scores of Indians have been arrested in Québec, Ontario, and British Columbia. In British Columbia, Royal Canadian Mounted Police set loose dogs on 150 Natives and attacked them with clubs.

Indian Affairs Minister Thomas Siddon has stated that the federal government is determined to defeat the Native struggle for sovereignty that, he said, could only lead to "the balkanization of Canada" and the "destabilization of the government."

Capitalists' offensive

In the context of the growing crisis of the capitalist system, the handful of millionaire and billionaire families that rule Canada are determined to use their courts, cops, and army to prevent workers, small farmers, and the oppressed from effectively defending their unions, wages, working conditions, lands, and democratic rights from deepening attacks.

Over the past 10 years thousands of workers have been arrested on picket lines for violating court injunctions that deny their right to picket and carry out effective strikes against the bosses. One example of their antilabor drive was in the Province of Alberta where the construction unions were almost entirely broken in the early 1980s by a joint offensive of the courts, government, and bosses.

Cop violence — including cold-blooded killings — is on the rise against Blacks, Natives, and other oppressed people. And now the capitalist politicians are discussing their need to better prepare the army, and in Québec to establish a paramilitary force, in order to crush "internal disorders."

The capitalist politicians and the big-business media have been working overtime to convince working people that the army is on the side of peace and justice and to turn the Mohawks — victims of several hundred years of oppression — into "criminals" and "terrorists."

The hypocrisy of Canada's rulers, who are responsible for decades of government violence against Native people in order to steal their land and means of livelihood, is staggering. The army surrounding Kahnawake and Kanesatake is the same army sent into Québec in October 1970 to crush the struggle of the Québécois for their national rights.

It is the same military force that is now being sent to the Persian Gulf on behalf of the owners of the banks and big oil companies to prevent the Arab peoples from controlling their own resources and to deny them national sovereignty.

Moreover, it was the trigger-happy Québec provincial police who on July 11 attacked a peaceful Mohawk barricade at Kanesatake

staffed by men, women, and children. The cops used tear gas and concussion grenades. Since then they have been waging a racist terror campaign against Mohawks. Georges Erasmus, leader of the Assembly of First Nations, the main organization of Indian peoples in Canada, has denounced Québec police for illegally detaining, beating, and torturing Natives.

The government drive to crush the Mohawks has also encouraged the organization of openly racist outfits like the so-called Solidarity Châteauguay, headed by an ex-cop. The government, the cops, and the army have given these reactionary, racist forces a free hand to organize racist thugs armed with baseball bats, bicycle chains, and metal rods to prevent the free flow of food, medicine, and other necessities into Kahnawake.

Communist League kicks off Ontario campaign

BY BRIGITTE GROUX

TORONTO — "Canada and the United States should get the troops out of the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula now," said Colin McKay at a news conference here August 23 that launched the Communist League campaign in the Ontario provincial elections.

Four candidates are running on the Communist League ticket for the September 6 election. McKay, the candidate in the Don Mills riding (district) of Toronto, is 28. He is national chairperson of the Young Socialists, a garment presser, and a member of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU). Twenty-six year old auto worker, United Steelworkers member, and organizer of the Toronto Young Socialists, Terry Stevenson, is the candidate in the Oakwood riding.

Maggie Trowe, the Downsview candidate, is also a garment worker and ACTWU member. She is the chairperson of the Communist League in Toronto. Joe Young, running in Parkdale, is an aircraft cleaner at Air Canada and a member of the International Association of Machinists.

The news conference was covered by four television stations and the York University radio station. Later a reporter from the *Toronto Star* interviewed Young.

After the news conference, one television station accompanied the candidates and their supporters while they campaigned. The evening news showed them talking to people at a street corner near downtown Toronto.

Television coverage gave prominence to the Communist League candidates' strong stand in defense of the Mohawks in Oka, Québec, who are defending their land against government and right-wing attacks. The candidates denounced the government's sending of the Canadian army to the Mohawks' barricades.

In the first week of their campaign the socialists campaigned in several working-class neighborhoods. At a sidewalk rally in the Gateway shopping center here, candidates and supporters gave talks on why Canada and the United States should get out of the Arab East.

A lively debate ensued when several supporters of Israel's foreign policy disputed the candidates' political stance. Out of this discussion two young French-speaking workers from Djibouti in Africa came to the Militant

With soldiers and cops watching, these racists have cut off Kahnawake from the outside world, prevented ambulances from leaving the community, attacked Mohawks trying to bring food into the community by road and water, as well as assaulted women and children who have decided to leave the two communities in face of the imminent army assault.

These forces have tried to cloak their racist character with Québécois nationalist slogans like "*Le Québec aux Québécois*," (Québec for the Québécois) transforming it from a demand defending the right of an oppressed people to their national self-determination into a reactionary racist slogan against immigrants, Blacks, and Native people. However, polls have consistently shown that a majority of Québécois and of working people

across Canada support Native rights. What is needed is leadership to mobilize that support in action.

Québécois, Natives, and all working people need to unite together in a common struggle against our common class enemy — Canada's ruling rich and their government, courts, army, and cops. By fighting for their rights against our common class enemies, the Mohawks strengthen the struggles of all working people, whether they are the workers on strike against Eastern Airlines, Stelco, or the Cape Breton coal bosses; Québécois fighting against anti-francophone discrimination; or women fighting for their right to abortion.

Unions and all supporters of democratic rights should join in the fight to win these just demands and halt the racist terror against Native peoples.

Labor Forum that evening to hear Joe Young speak against the imperialist military threat against Iraq.

The Communist League candidates are also building support for the strike of Eastern Airlines workers, now in its 18th month. They are regular participants on the Eastern picket lines at Pearson International Airport.

Joe Young walked an informational picket line of steelworkers on strike at Stelco Steel

in Hamilton, near Toronto. They marched outside a warehouse where steel had been stockpiled for the company. McKay attended a protest of 250 people against Canada's intervention in the Middle East.

Stevenson will speak at two Toronto universities on her experience in Cuba where she participated in voluntary work brigades during a recent two-week fact-finding and solidarity tour of Cuba.

—10 AND 25 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

Sept. 5, 1980

The massive workers' upsurge in Poland continues to gain momentum, spreading across the country and forcing the government to retreat. From the Baltic port cities of Gdansk, Gdynia, Sopot, and Szczecin, the strike has expanded to encompass 250,000 workers.

A mood of victory pervaded the strike coordinating committee headquarters at Gdansk's Lenin Shipyard. "Soon we may have delegates here from all over the country," one workers' leader declared.

In a speech before a meeting of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers Party (the Communist Party), party chief Edward Gierek claimed, "We are making basic shifts in party and government policy."

The official Central Trade Union Council, Gierek said, should hold new elections in all factories, with secret ballots and an unlimited number of candidates. If actually carried out, this would mark a major shift in trade-union policy.

A week earlier Gierek also admitted some of the failings of the official union apparatus, claiming that he took "a critical view of its bureaucracy and distance from the masses."

Upon first hearing Gierek's speech, strike leaders remained skeptical. Speaking before a crowd of 2,000 workers at the Lenin Shipyard, Lech Walesa, chairman of the Interfactory Strike Committee for the Gdansk region, stated, "These changes were a victory for us." But he added, "It's a patching up of holes. We want something new. Only free trade unions can make us happy, can give us a victory."

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interests of the Working People

Sept. 6, 1965

In Fidel Castro's July 26 speech commemorating the 12th anniversary of the attack on the Moncada Barracks, he dealt with the problems of bureaucratization of the administrative apparatus and proposed important steps for the decentralization of certain economic institutions.

Castro emphasized Cuba's political and ideological independence, stressing that Cuba must build upon her own experiences and not blindly copy from other countries.

Discussing the changes of government administration that the United Party of the Socialist Revolution is proposing to the people, Castro pointed to the importance of separating the role of the party from that of the administration of the state: "We are not seeking to have the party administer," he said. "No, on the contrary, the functions of the party are those of leadership in every field, of encouragement in every field, of continued work with the masses."

It is through the party, he stressed, that the problem of bureaucracy in the administration — which he characterizes as a petty bourgeois tendency — can best be solved. The Cuban premier said, "When we can have a combination of a technician and a revolutionary, that is better. But when there is no revolutionary technician to take charge of that post, then we must have a revolutionary cadre even if he is not a technician."

Hands off British coal union!

Fighting unionists from one end of the globe to the other can join the campaign underway in Britain to demand, "Hands off Arthur Scargill, Peter Heathfield, and the National Union of Mineworkers!"

That's the best way to answer the smear job against the British coal union that has been orchestrated by the big-business press in that country.

Scargill, the president of the NUM, and Heathfield, the union's secretary-general, have been the special target of the slanders, which have recently centered on the NUM's financial dealings with the International Miners' Organisation (IMO) during the 1984-85 British coal strike. At the time, NUM leaders organized to prevent the government from tying the union's hands by denying the membership access to its treasury during the big strike battle.

The smear campaign has the backing of a wide array of forces who, as Scargill explains, "cannot forgive the courageous fight of our members and their wives and families in the historic miners' strike."

During the strike the ranks of the NUM and their backers carried out sustained mobilizations aimed at staving off the government's shutdown of numerous mines.

While they did not win their key demand, the miners' fighting example inspired working people the world over. Mine union members around the world were in the forefront of the big solidarity efforts organized during the strike on the NUM's behalf. It was through this international outreach that the IMO was formed in 1985.

The union has been under constant attack since the end of the strike. Scores of mines have been shut down. British Coal management has fought to deepen divisions within the union, expand the workweek, and throw out work rules.

But the NUM ranks have refused to buckle. At the same time Scargill and Heathfield have been in the forefront of the IMO's efforts to forge links between miners from Eastern

Europe, the Soviet Union, Britain, South Africa, the United States, Latin America, and the Pacific. Solidarity activities generated by the IMO have aided the South African gold miners and many other fighters.

The solidarity generated through the IMO is an aid to current battles and has the potential to affect favorably future struggles that loom not too far down the road.

These facts do not go unnoticed by Britain's millionaire ruling families. Joined by their backers, from the Tory government to many in the trade union and Labour Party officialdom, they live in fear of union power being mobilized in big battles against the employers.

The rulers want to strike now to open the union up to extensive scrutiny and victimization. Their goal is to use the tools at their disposal, from the big-business press to the courts, to turn the union in on itself and remove its officers as a step toward gutting the union's fighting capacity. They also seek to sever the NUM's ties to the IMO and to miners reaching out for solidarity from around the world.

At a series of rallies now being held across Britain's coalfields, miners and their families and other working people are raising their voices in opposition to the attacks on the NUM.

Coal miners around the world should take the lead, mobilizing to get solidarity statements from a broad range of unions in support of the British mine union officials. Educational activities that explain the international stakes in this fight can also be organized.

A tool for aiding this process is the pamphlet written by Scargill being circulated by Women Against Pit Closures, which answers the charges about abuse of the union's finances. Copies of "Response to the Lightman Inquiry" can be ordered by writing Women Against Pit Closures, 9 South Crescent, Dodsworth, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S75 3LJ, England. The cost is 50 pence (US\$.85).

UN vote is blow to Arab rights

The shameful decision by the United Nations Security Council, under the leadership of the United States government, to approve the use of military force against Iraq is a diplomatic victory for imperialism and a blow to the right of self-determination for all Arab peoples. It will help to prolong imperialist military presence in the region, increase the growing probability of war, and justify U.S. attempts to force the Iraqi people to submit to its dictates.

For the first time in its 45-year history, the UN granted a military authority without the pretense of the UN flag over the operation.

The decision by the UN Security Council makes it complicit in maintaining the lie that the imperialists have a right to intervene in the Arab East. It is a cover for naked U.S. aggression and lends the UN's credibility to the campaign to brand Iraq an outlaw nation — outside the protection of international law and the bounds of solidarity. The UN Security Council has in reality simply rubber stamped the moves the United States and its allies have already been carrying out.

The U.S. government, as the chief world cop, is one of the most flagrant violators of international law and the right to self-determination, including its financing of the contra war against Nicaragua and the invasions of Grenada and Panama.

The goal of the military operation is to maintain imperialist domination over the people and the resources of the Arab East. To do this they are willing to commit tens of

thousands of troops and spend billions of dollars and go to war. Their wish is to place the Kuwaiti royal family puppet regime back in power and maintain the control of the oil companies in the region.

The conflict now shaping up in the Arab East is not just a conflict between Iraq and the United States, but a conflict between imperialism and the fight for self-determination by the Arab masses. This is what accounts for the overwhelming defense of Iraq by millions of Arabs.

The end of the Cold War has not heralded a new era of world peace, just the opposite. The deepening world economic crises will continue to foment revolutions and social explosions and drive imperialism toward more wars. Washington will act again and again to intervene directly with its massive military forces. And working people will be asked to pay the price economically and with their lives.

The war campaign of the government has not struck an enthusiastic response in the U.S. population. There is deep concern among working people in the United States about the current military moves in the Middle East. The unanimity that the U.S. rulers would like for their war moves does not yet exist. Many working people remember the historic defeat of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam.

Working people should be in the forefront of the protests now beginning against another Vietnam. We should demand, "U.S. troops out of the Arab East. End the blockade of Iraq!"

Protest attack on peace group

In an effort to intimidate those who oppose Washington's war policies, the U.S. Justice Department recently sent a letter to the National Agenda for Peace in El Salvador informing the peace organization that it "may have incurred an obligation to register pursuant to the Foreign Agents Registration Act [FARA] of 1938."

The reason the Justice Department gave for this move was an ad placed by the National Agenda in the *Washington Post*. The ad was in the form of an open letter urging President George Bush and the U.S. Congress to suspend aid to the Salvadoran government, aid "which fuels the war in El Salvador."

This attempt by Washington to use the FARA and other such legislation to intimidate groups and organizations that oppose its policies is not new. The act was part of setting up a secret police apparatus on the eve of World War II as the U.S. rulers were preparing to lead working people into the inter-imperialist slaughter.

The year the FARA was passed, Congress set up the Special Committee on Un-American Propaganda Activities, forerunner of the House Committee on Un-American Activities

that spearheaded the witch-hunt following World War II. Two years later, in 1940, Congress adopted the thought-control Smith Act and the Voorhis Act, which penalized political parties affiliated to international organizations.

As the social and economic crisis deepens, Washington will increase its pressure on the democratic rights of working people. It will step up its attempts to go after antiwar organizations such as the National Agenda and working-class, civil rights, and other organizations opposing government policy.

The government's police apparatus will pursue those who will increasingly see through its war propaganda on the Middle East as Washington pushes forward with its war drive against the Arab peoples.

Unionists, students, farmers, and all those concerned about civil liberties should vehemently oppose any attempts by the U.S. rulers to intimidate, harass, or limit constitutional rights of organizations such as the National Agenda. These hard-won democratic rights are an important conquest that, as U.S. war moves mount, opponents of U.S. policies will have to exercise and defend.

Defending Iraq from imperialist onslaught

BY DOUG JENNESS

Washington's massive military intervention in the Arab East is provoking debates in every home, workplace, and community across the United States and throughout the world. Our readers, too, are participating in these discussions and sharing their views with other workers and students. We urge you to write us about these exchanges and let us know the questions and opinions that are being raised.

This week we are publishing on the facing page a letter from reader Ed Meredith who expresses his outlook on the situation in the Arab East. He accurately cites Washington's

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

hypocrisy in using military intervention under the guise of defending national sovereignty in the Arab world. He also correctly denounces Washington's deployment of troops in Saudi Arabia, as well as in Panama last December.

But he suggests that we should also condemn the Iraqi takeover of Kuwait. This point deserves a reply as it is being raised by many people who oppose U.S. military intervention, including some who consider themselves socialists.

The arguments for the demand that Iraqi forces get out of Kuwait are that the occupation is a violation of international law and Kuwait's sovereignty and was a provocation that unnecessarily aroused the imperialists to mount a threatening military operation in the region.

This is the wrong starting point. We shouldn't begin with the legalities, even though there's some historical basis for Iraq's claim to Kuwait and no progressive-minded person is going to be upset with the toppling of a sheikdom that managed an imperialist drilling station.

Nor should we begin with who fired the first shot or even with the undemocratic character of Saddam Hussein's regime and its invasion and reactionary eight-year war against Iran that ended in 1988.

We must start with the international conflict between the imperialist ruling families and the great majority of peoples in the world who are oppressed by these profiteers. And with how this antagonism is unfolding in today's world — a world where the international capitalist economic crisis is bringing unbearable pressure on working people throughout the semicolonial world.

As big business in North America, Western Europe, and Japan scrambles to maintain profit rates in the face of stiffening competition, they are attempting to squeeze more out of workers and farmers in the Third World. They intensify pressure for cutbacks in social services and economic development in order to keep interest payments on mammoth debts rolling in. Living standards are dropping as malnutrition, hunger, and disease ravage tens of millions of people.

And as the conditions of life and work worsen so does the abuse of the environment as the imperialist money-grubbers devastate the natural resources of country after country. Oil-producing countries in the Third World — from Venezuela and Mexico to Libya and Iraq — are not immune from this crisis.

The imperialist pressure will inevitably lead to major social explosions as working people fight back to protect themselves and attempt to assert more control over the natural resources in their countries. Under these conditions it is inevitable that the imperialist ruling families are going to use military force to protect what they consider to be their private preserves.

We are headed into a period when we can anticipate more, not less, wars waged by imperialist military forces against oppressed nations. And Washington, which is the "world cop," as Meredith accurately puts it, plays the central role in this military aggression.

The Arab East has for decades been very important to colonial and imperialist powers. And today it is more important than ever because it supplies a huge part of the oil used in the imperialist countries. The big oil monopolies and bankers in the imperialist countries put up the capital to develop these oil fields, provide the equipment and machinery, and maintain the necessary international transportation and refining facilities and marketing operations. The stakes are high for the capitalists in these countries to maintain control over the flow of this essential raw material.

The Iraqi government's decision to beard the imperialist lion in its Kuwaiti den came in the historical context of the decades-long struggle by the Arab peoples against colonialism and imperialism and the conjunctural desire to strengthen its clout in affecting oil prices on the world market, thus increasing its income.

This is the Iraqi government's true crime in the eyes of the imperialist rulers and why they have decided to organize a war against Iraq. In this confrontation working people and all progressive-minded people must unambiguously and unconditionally defend Iraq against the imperialist onslaught. Qualifications about Iraq being "equally wrong" are erroneous and will only serve to undermine the fight against the war Washington is preparing.

How child abuse issue has been used against rights

BY PETER THIERJUNG

In the August 24 *Militant* I responded to objections raised by some readers to a July 13 editorial that protested a recent Supreme Court attack on democratic rights. Letters, both pro and con, were reprinted along with the column. We'll examine some additional points this week.

The Sixth Amendment guarantees everyone charged with a criminal offense the right to confront their accusers. But on June 27 the high court ruled that there are exceptions to this right. In cases of child abuse, the court said, a child's videotaped testimony could be allowed as evidence. The right to confront and cross-examine one's accusers, the court

AS I SEE IT

said, was dispensable.

The high court's attack on the Sixth Amendment was cloaked in the issue of child abuse, and the deception had its effect. The resulting disorientation among supporters of democratic rights was enough to stifle serious protest against the court decision.

The confusion on democratic rights and the issue of child abuse did not begin with this court ruling. A concerted campaign in the United States by the capitalist press, cops, prosecutors, and others over the last decade has deliberately promoted it. And the Supreme Court ruling is a legal reflection of how successful this campaign has been.

This campaign reached a hysterical pitch with a series of sensational "child abuse" cases in the mid-to-late 1980s. The most well-known case was that of Peggy McMartin Buckey and her son Ray Buckey, owners of a day-care center in Los Angeles. At one point in this case, police announced that they had 36 suspects and had uncovered 1,200 alleged victims of sexual abuse. The Buckeys were acquitted in January after the jury deliberated for nine weeks over evidence presented in the course of a 33-month trial that cost \$15 million. A second trial against Ray Buckey ended recently with a hung jury.

At the same time the Buckey case hit the newsstands, other fantastic stories surfaced. Preschool children in Sequim, Washington, told investigators that their teacher had taken them to graveyards and forced them to witness animal sacrifices. In Chicago children said that they were made to eat a boiled baby. A Memphis preschool teacher was acquitted of charges of terrorizing children by stuffing

a hamster with a bomb and then exploding it; but was convicted of kissing the genitals of a four-year-old boy.

As the July 13 *Militant* editorial explained, the accused in this rash of media-hyped child abuse cases tended to be teachers, camp counselors, child-care attendants, and members of "sex rings." In many of these cases, prosecutors could not provide physical evidence or other witnesses, and relied solely on the testimony of the children to get convictions — an extraordinary circumstance given the nature of the accusations and the numbers of alleged victims involved.

Harper's Magazine ran an article in May called "From the Mouths of Babes to a Jail Cell" by Dorothy Rabinowitz. The article details the frame-up of child-care attendant Kelly Michaels, then 26 years old, who was convicted in 1988 of 115 counts of sexual abuse and is now serving a 47-year term at a state prison in Clinton, New Jersey.

According to prosecutors, Michaels raped and assaulted 20 children with knives, forks, a wooden spoon, and Lego blocks. They also charged that she licked peanut butter off the children's genitals, played the piano in the nude, and made the children drink her urine and eat a "cake" of her feces. These crimes were said to have taken place during regular school hours at the Wee Care Day Nursery in an Episcopal church in Maplewood, New Jersey.

The prosecution maintained that she had been able to do all these things for nearly 150 school days without fellow teachers, school administrators, parents, visitors, or anyone working at the church or attending services ever noticing. Michaels voluntarily took two lie detector tests that back her denials. But because police did not ask her to sign a release form, the test results were barred at the trial.

Michaels' supervisor, who steadfastly maintained that she was a "model teacher," was prevented from testifying on her behalf. Indicted for failing to report child abuse, the supervisor could not testify at Michaels' trial without placing herself under threat of prosecution.

The judge refused to allow defense psychologists to examine the children, as the prosecution's doctors had been able to do, even though the case against Michaels rested solely on the testimony of the children.

A review by Rabinowitz of the techniques used by the child abuse "investigators" and "specialists" leads to the conclusion that the children were in fact coerced into giving the desired responses. "The abuse expert, a psychologist, had in effect told the jury that they must suspend all rational

belief if they were to understand the abuse the children had suffered," she wrote. "It was a world in which no meant yes, black meant white. Yet, the jury was told, they must believe its premises, believe the children, or else be counted guilty of betraying these young victims."

The prosecutor told Michaels' jury, "There is no physical evidence. Is the jury going to be able to understand this?" In effect, the prosecutor asked the jury to suspend rights guaranteed by the Constitution and accept hearsay testimony and accusations as evidence.

When Michaels was convicted after 13 days of jury deliberations, the judge refused her bail pending appeal. An appellate court ruled bail should be granted because of the constitutional questions posed in the trial. But the state's highest court vacated the bail decision after a public outcry.

After examining how the government has in reality used child abuse cases over the last 10 years, the *Militant* was right in asserting that the June 27 Supreme Court ruling sanctioned these witch-hunt methods and provided greater leeway for cops and prosecutors to slash away at the Bill of Rights and fabricate further frame-ups.

To point this out, however, does not downplay the seriousness of child abuse. "Child abuse is a crime, no less than a host of other heinous, antisocial crimes including rape and murder," the *Militant* correctly said. This crime should be prosecuted, no less than rape or murder. But, the character of the crime or the hysteria created around it does not justify gutting the need for facts and evidence, the right to a presumption of innocence, and other fundamental civil liberties.

Besides the abuse done to the Bill of Rights in cases like Michaels' and the Buckeys', one would have to conclude that the other victims of this hysterical campaign were the children, who for an important part of their childhood were manipulated and victimized by cops, prosecutors, and "experts."

Finally, one reader argued that in a revolutionary or a socialist society discarding the Sixth Amendment would be justified in such cases. I disagree. These rights, and the extent to which they govern politics and social relations, are the product of profound and historic struggles by working people. A socialist society, brought into being by the revolutionary action of working people — the vast majority — could only result in the extension and strengthening of democratic rights. Otherwise the idea that socialism is a historical advance for humanity becomes a lie.

LETTERS

'World cop'

The avowed concern of the United States for the sovereign rights of all nations in the current Middle Eastern crisis reeks of blatant hypocrisy when one considers the fact that eight months ago the United States violated the sovereignty of and continues to occupy the tiny Central American country of Panama.

While there can be no real justification for the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, their avowed reasons of "protecting national security" are every bit as just as the reasons used by the United States in its criminal invasion of Panama.

And to add insult to injury, now the United States on its own initiative is in the process of sending a possible 250,000 troops of its own into Saudi Arabia in an effort to prove to the Arabs and the world that the United States can still ably fill the shoes of world cop.

I believe that it is time for all of us to roundly condemn all violations of national sovereignty everywhere. We must face the fact that it was wrong for the Iraqis to invade Kuwait and it is equally wrong for the United States to have invaded and continue occupying Panama.

Ed Meredith
Caneyville, Kentucky

Won't tolerate war

I am a weekend disc jockey for a small country music station and work during the week buying and reselling hay, doing all the labor myself.

Last weekend I had an interesting experience. During an old country request show, I received a phone call from a regular listener. The lady was crying. She said she had a son in Saudi Arabia, another one going there, and a nephew who might be sent. She asked me what I would do if they started drafting people.

I told her I wasn't going to fight in a rich man's war.

"You're right, Tom," she said.

"It's just for money. Money is the root of all evil."

I hope you print this to show other working people that people in their class will not tolerate another imperialist war.

Tom McConnell
Louisville, Kentucky

AIDS coverage I

AIDS is an important issue for the *Militant* to cover. I compliment you on a fine history and scholarly overview of the crisis in the July 27 issue.

I suggest a minor but heartfelt change in phraseology from "AIDS patient" to PWA — person with AIDS. I infer from "patient" a state of being hospitalized or bedridden, categories that many who fit the federal Centers for Disease Control definition of AIDS do not fall into.

Numerous references were made in the July 27 *Militant* article to the "AIDS virus." I have been under the impression that there is no AIDS virus, only Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). The current "AIDS test," therefore, is an HIV test.

In fact, the common HIV test is actually a test for antibodies to the virus and is less accurate than the relatively new and prohibitively expensive procedure that tests for HIV directly. People, in droves, are being misled and therefore lied to.

Matthew Ainsworth
New York, New York

AIDS coverage II

The July 27 article, "AIDS spread in the U.S.," was a significant improvement in the *Militant's* coverage.

A clipping from the July 29 *Rocky Mountain News* uses a very specific term — pandemic — saying that at least 3 million women and children worldwide will die of AIDS in the 1990s. Given mortality and infection rates for HIV in the United States to date, the term "pandemic"



is a departure that warrants review. Implied in its use is an assumption related to the epidemic as a whole, yes?

What behaviors are associated with this "new" risk group of women and children? How does this affect the working class?

Michael Ellsworth
Denver, Colorado

Miami Cubans

In the article entitled "Miami Haitians assert rights after cop attack" (*Militant*, July 27), the Miami store owner Reyes, the perpetrator of a racist attack is identified as a Cuban. Why is this identification necessary?

Reyes' nationality does not contribute to an understanding of the importance of the events in Miami nor does it show the source of his

racist attitudes. While many Cubans in Miami reflect the backward prejudices of prerevolutionary Cuba, they are more often the victims of, rather than the aggressors in, racist acts. They certainly didn't introduce racism to Miami.

The identification of Reyes tends to perpetuate the racist idea that Cubans are all racists, an idea popular with the Miami section of the ruling class, anxious to hide their own role in maintaining racism. Haitians in Miami are properly protesting against this particular store for its racist act (and earlier ones) and not against "Cuban store owners" as is occurring here in Brooklyn against Korean merchants.

Having lived seven years in Miami, I witnessed changes within the Cuban community regarding many political issues. It does not

help to suggest that a relationship exists between being Cuban and being a racist.

Marty Anderson
Brooklyn, New York

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

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

Rallies defend coal miners' union

Campaign launched in Britain to mobilize support against attack

BY PETE CLIFFORD
AND SUE REID

SHEFFIELD, England — In the first five days of a campaign to defend the miners' union and its leadership from an antiunion witch-hunt, some 1,500 men and women heard Arthur Scargill and Peter Heathfield speak at rallies and meetings across the coalfields.

A rally here of 700 heard Scargill, the president of the National Union of Mineworkers, and Heathfield, the union's secretary general, explain the stakes in the union's fight.

"During the past five months Peter Heathfield and I have had to withstand the most vicious barrage of media abuse and smears in living memory," Scargill said. "We have had to face a 'trial by media,' and the fury against us has at times become hysterical."

These attacks, he said, are not just aimed at the union leaders but "the NUM itself. The Establishment cannot forgive the courageous fight of our members and their wives and families in the historic miners' strike."

The slander campaign, initiated by the *Daily Mirror*, began by alleging the NUM officials have used funds raised during the 1984-85 nationwide coal strike for their personal benefit.

The union took special financial accounting measures for a number of years to be able to continue functioning during the hard-fought strike and to avoid the effect of sequestration of funds and court-ordered receivership. When a union-commissioned inquiry by attorney Gavin Lightman cleared them of these charges, the slander campaign shifted its axis.

It is now charged that they had channeled £1.4 million (US\$2.6 million) to the International Miners' Organization, monies allegedly destined for the NUM. Under pressure to avoid legal liability, the NUM's National

Executive is suing the IMO, of which Scargill, Heathfield, and Alain Simon, of the General Confederation of Labor in France, are officers.

Sheffield rally

The Sheffield rally was chaired by Sylvia Pye, the chair of national Women Against Pit Closures. Addressing the meeting were Paul Foot, a journalist from the *Mirror* newspaper that is leading the media campaign against the NUM, and Dennis Skinner, an NUM-sponsored member of Parliament.

Greetings were received from the National Union of Railwaymen Sheffield City Branch, River Don Castings shop stewards' committee, Fred Roberts of the Sheffield Forgemasters joint shop stewards' committee, and Mark Curtis, a unionist in the United States framed up and jailed for his political activity. Also in the audience were representatives from the Oil Industry Liaison Committee, a rank-and-file union organization that recently held six one-day strikes over safety and union rights in the North Sea oil industry.

Skinner read a motion he put to Parliament backing the two miners' leaders, which was signed by 53 other MPs. Defending the IMO, he said it was "the only international miners' organization that fights to feed the starving of the Third World and helps those engaged in struggle. And that is why they want to smash it."

The IMO emerged out of efforts by miners' unions around the world to build support for the 1984-85 NUM strike. The organization has mobilized solidarity with miners in South Africa, Namibia, Britain, the Soviet Union, Morocco, and elsewhere. Some 43 mining unions, representing 6 million workers from 39 countries, are represented in the IMO.

"They will never forgive us for the '84-85 strike," Heathfield told the rally, "which cost them £10 to £12 billion. They want to ensure that the union in the mining industry is like



G.M. Cookson

National Union of Mineworkers President Arthur Scargill

the Union of Democratic Mineworkers [a proemployer strike-breaking outfit set up during the strike] and that we give the bosses no problems and conform. This," he said, "is a warning shot across the bow of any other union that is prepared to stand up and fight."

One of the allegations against the union leaders is that monies raised in the Soviet Union for the strike were instead paid to IMO accounts.

Funds from Soviet miners

Scargill explained that the \$1 million the Soviet miners tried to send the NUM in 1984 was not able to be deposited because of the sequestration orders. However, the funds were sent to the Miners' Trade Union International. This was confirmed by Alain Simon and by Shestakov, a Russian who was secretary to the MTUI at the time of the 1984-85 strike.

The Soviet miners had made it clear that they would not donate monies to any of the accounts set up for the British miners' hardship fund that were listed under names other than the NUM. Scargill added that "even at this late stage if the Soviet miners' union tells us that it is their intention to send monies specifically for the NUM then I see no difficulty in that money transfer."

Explaining he was under a mandate from the union's National Executive Committee and national conference to defy the sequestration, Scargill said, "the fact that we sustained the union, paid off its debts, repaid all the trade union loans, and made a donation of £35,000 to the Miners Support Fund deserves congratulations, not criticism."

At a similar rally in Manchester, greetings were received from the Engineers Union divisional organizer, John Tocher. On the platform was a member of the General Executive of the Transport and General Workers Union; a member of the European Parliament, Eddie Newman; and the president of Lancashire NUM, Steve Sullivan, who extended an invitation to Scargill to the Lancashire Area NUM conference. Print workers' representatives and rail workers gave support from the floor.

NUM branches held meetings at Bedworth, Coventry, where 150 miners and their wives attended. In Manton colliery in Yorkshire a message of support was received from the floor of a similar meeting from Dave Presley, Secretary of Worktop Trades Union Council and Stillingfleet, one of the Selby complex pits in North Yorkshire.

South African regime declares townships 'unrest areas,' sends in thousands of troops

BY GREG McCARTAN

Thousands of heavily-armed South African troops and police staged house-to-house searches and patrolled Black townships in armored vehicles. The apartheid regime said the number of police would be "drastically" increased.

The moves followed the government's designation of 27 townships as "unrest areas," including Soweto and others around Johannesburg. The August 24 security measures allow police to arrest and search people without warrant and to seize weapons. The regulations, declared under the Public Security Act of 1953, restore to the police many powers they exercised under recently revoked state of emergency regulations.

Police may arrest "any person whose detention is necessary for the combating or prevention of public disturbance, disorder, riot, or public violence." Public gatherings, such as marches, rallies, or processions, can be outlawed.

African National Congress Deputy President Nelson Mandela called the measures "totally useless," saying they represent the imposition of miniature states of emergency. The state of emergency "led to a great deal of dissatisfaction and led to an excuse for the police to abuse their rights," he said.

The government crackdown came after 500 people died in 11 days of violence, portrayed by the big-business media as fighting between supporters of the ANC and Inkatha. Headed by the chief minister of the KwaZulu Bantustan, Inkatha is a political organization with ties to the apartheid regime. It opposes many of the ANC's policies and political goals.

"Zulus vs. Mandela's group: Strife sets both back," read a *New York Times* headline of an article claiming incidents are a result of "latent tribal enmity between Zulus and Xhosas."

"Black-against-black violence engulfed the industrial heartland outside Johannesburg," an article in *Newsweek* magazine read. "Nelson Mandela, the man [South African President F.W.] de Klerk had counted on to unite the black opposition, dithered in his attempts to halt the ferocious warfare between his supporters and those of Zulu Chief Buthelezi."

Responding to these charges the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), in a mid-August statement, detailed the police- and Inkatha-organized attacks in the townships. "This reign of terror has been random in that all who are not Inkatha supporters — that is, the vast majority of the population — have been targets for attack," the statement said.

Scoring the police who "have consistently been seen to be aiding Inkatha in these attacks," and "in certain instances been implicated as having initiated independent attacks on those who are perceived to be opposed to Inkatha," the trade union federation said the events are "completely undermining the peace process in our country."

Through the assaults, "pro-apartheid elements" are trying to "create the impression that the oppressed people, far from being united, are divided along tribal lines, between Zulu and Xhosa, hostel dwellers and township residents, and that the ANC's base is 'tribal,'" the statement said. Another goal of the campaign was to "make it impossible for

anti-apartheid opposition to operate in the country," COSATU added.

Wide support for strike

On August 27 a strike shut down Johannesburg and the surrounding area. Tens of thousands stayed away from work during the one-day action called by the Soweto Civic Association to "protest the violence, police behavior, and to mourn our dead." At a march and rally of 50,000 in Soweto, eight ANC members killed during the attacks were honored.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu told the rally that "our freedom is at hand, but there are those who don't want us to have our freedom, so they have made us fight one another."

"We want to say to President de Klerk," Tutu said, "the evidence is overwhelming that the police are not impartial."

Nelson Mandela, attending a conference in Oslo, Norway, said, "The carnage has taken place mainly because of shootings and killing from the police themselves. The government has either lost control of the police or the police are doing what the government wants them to do."

Police raided the national headquarters of COSATU August 28 and arrested the federation's secretary-general, Jay Naidoo, and assistant secretary-general, Sydney Mufamadi. The regime claimed the two were arrested as "accomplices" to an alleged assault on an undercover police officer in the union's offices.

COSATU responded that they had contacted the police when they discovered the undercover agent, but the police raided the offices instead.