

Baghdad organizes slaughter of Kurds

BY SETH GALINSKY

The government of President Saddam Hussein in Iraq claimed March 28 to have retaken the northeastern Iraqi city of Kirkuk from Kurdish rebels. Tens of thousands of Iraqi troops have begun a massive assault on the Kurdish people.

Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani appealed for help. "The food situation is very serious," he said. "We will face starvation if we don't receive food in one month."

Kurds are an oppressed nationality in Iraq as well as in Iran, Turkey, Syria, and the Soviet Union.

In a special White House news briefing March 26 the Bush administration made it clear it favors the defeat of the Kurds by the government of Hussein.

As many as 150,000 Iraqi troops are involved in the fight for Kirkuk. The Iraqi government moved tens of thousands of troops northward after defeating rebellions in the south of the country led by Shi'ite Muslim groups. Even before the main assault began, one hospital reported 50 deaths a day from bombings by Iraqi helicopter and artillery attacks, and serious injuries from napalm.

Massoud Barzani, leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), said March 24 that the rebels control 90 percent of Iraqi Kurdistan. He spoke to reporters from the rebel-held town of Irbil. A similar party by the same name exists in Iran as well.

Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), returned to the Kurdish

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Tactical divisions grow over course in Mideast



Kurds under attack by troops loyal to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein retreat from Irbil, Iraq. Tens of thousands of Iraqi troops are involved in assault on Kurds.

U.S. rulers debate administration's policy decisions.

BY JAMES HARRIS

Growing tactical divisions have emerged in U.S. ruling circles over the Bush administration's tactical decisions during and after the imperialist war against the Iraqi people.

This highlights the fact that imperialism's military victory does not mean it has won the broader political goals it seeks in the region.

The ability of Hussein's military forces to combat revolts in northern and southern Iraq has led to questions from right-wing forces about the administration's conduct of the war and whether the military effort was halted too soon.

The March 27 *Wall Street Journal* carried an editorial titled "Collateral Damage" criticizing the decision not to continue the slaughter of the Iraqi army. The *Journal* also criticized the destruction of Iraq's infrastructure.

"The factional fighting now producing such gruesome reports could have been avoided if coalition forces had simply proceeded to destroy the rest of the Iraqi military and sought to establish effective control over the entire country, instead of stopping in southern Iraq," the paper stated.

"A new world order would be easier to build, it somehow seems to us, if the war planners had taken out the troublemaker [Hussein] and left the country's power plants alone. Trying to organize a new Iraq, of course, would be a frustrating and chancy task," the editorial added. "The attempt, however, would serve as recognition that just as

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April 6 action in Los Angeles to demand 'Gates must go!'

BY LISA AHLBERG

LOS ANGELES — A major march and rally has been called here for April 6 to protest police brutality and demand that Los Angeles Police Chief Daryl Gates resign.

Pressure continues to mount for Gates' ouster as a result of further revelations in the brutal cop beating of Rodney King, an unemployed construction worker. The March 3 attack against King exposed the fact that police brutality in Los Angeles is routine practice. Many people hold Chief Gates responsible for the actions of the city's cops. Gates, notorious for racist statements against Blacks, Latinos, and immigrant workers, has refused to step down.

Over 100 people representing dozens of Black, Latino, and other organizations met March 27 to begin organizing for the April 6 protest. Present were representatives from 10 National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) branches, the American Civil Liberties Union, Mexican American Political Association, Korean American Coalition, Rainbow Coalition, Brotherhood Crusade, Socialist Workers Party, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, and others. The meeting was called by Congresswoman Maxine Waters.

Activists distributed thousands of leaflets during the weekly protest at the Parker Center police station Saturday, March 30. The demonstration aims to "win new organizations to call for the removal or resignation of Gates," José De Sosa said in an interview as chanting pickets marched in front of the police headquarters. De Sosa is California State confer-

ence president of the NAACP branches.

On March 26 the four Los Angeles police officers seen on the videotape beating King pleaded "not guilty" to charges of assault with a deadly weapon, and unnecessarily beating a suspect under the cover of authority. A trial date has been set for May 13.

Further charges have been filed against two of the four on the felony charge of filing false police reports. Officer Laurence M. Powell and Sergeant Stacey C. Koon, both involved in the beating, wrote reports before they knew their actions were captured on videotape by an amateur cameraman.

"It's a cover-up, and it's disturbing," Deputy District Attorney Terry White was quoted as saying in the *Los Angeles Times*. "When you read this report and then see the video, you realize they're talking about two different incidents," he said. The videotape shows officers Powell and Wind striking King over and over with their batons. But the reports make no mention of repeated baton strikes or that King was kicked by any officers.

The second phase of the grand jury investigation opened March 28 as testimony was taken from police officers who were bystanders at the beating. There were a total of 27 officers present. They risk losing their jobs if they refuse to testify. Many of them face possible charges of aiding and abetting in the King beating or violations of California civil right laws.

One cop who was present at the beating, speaking on the condition of anonymity, told the *Times* that the public doesn't understand the reality of the work of the police and the

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Socialist candidate in Chicago explains views at press events

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

CHICAGO — At a March 20 press conference here at city hall, James Warren, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Chicago, condemned an announcement by the Illinois state government that it will make deep cutbacks in social services.

The news conference was one of several press engagements and other events Warren and his supporters have participated in through the final weeks of the campaign.

Illinois Governor Jim Edgar's proposal would massively cut the General Assistance public aid program, including eliminating medical aid to GA recipients.

Warren pointed to these cuts as an example of how the "capitalist system is coming apart at the seams. Worldwide their system is in a recession.

"As the economic crisis deepens, the ruling rich are trying to shore up their profits by attacking the living standards and rights of working people," Warren said. "The employers and their government are waging a war against working people at home and abroad."

Throughout the election campaign, the candidates and their supporters sought to get out the truth about and mobilize opposition to the imperialist war against Iraq. The war, Warren said, is the opening of wider and sharper conflicts, and more such wars, in the world as the ruling rich seek to salvage the crumbling capitalist world order.

The fact that nothing was solved for working people anywhere through the war, combined with the continued assaults on the rights and living standards of workers at home, shows why working people need to chart an independent political course, he said.

A member of the United Steelworkers of America, Warren, 39, is one of four candidates for mayor on the April 2 ballot.

He is joined on the SWP ticket by Estelle DeBates, running for City Clerk, and Eric Matheis, candidate for City Treasurer. DeBates is a machine operator and member of the International Association of Machinists. Matheis is a leader of the Chicago Young Socialist Alliance.

Democratic Party primary

In the February 26 primaries, Mayor Richard Daley received 63.6 percent of the vote. His Democratic contenders were Danny Davis of the Harold Washington Party, former mayor Jane Byrne, and Sheila Jones of the right-wing Lyndon LaRouche organization. Davis received 30.2 percent of the vote, Byrne 5.8 percent, and Jones .3 percent.

The Republican nominee, George Gott-

lieb, is a retired Chicago police sergeant. He has registered little support, leading the big-business press here to label the Democratic primary as "the election."

Following the primary, the Harold Washington Party announced it would run a candidate for mayor.

The Harold Washington Party has its roots in the election of the city's first Black mayor, Democrat Harold Washington, in 1983. He served as mayor until his death in 1987. Prior to that the Democratic party political machine ruled the city with an iron fist. It made sure Blacks never got their share of political representation.

Facing worsening conditions and suffering from racist segregation in housing and education, cop brutality, soaring unemployment, and lack of political representation, Blacks in Chicago rallied around putting a Black person in the city's highest office.

During Washington's administration, some programs were initiated that began to address the effects of the decades-long discrimination. Many workers — Black, Latino, and white — identified their interests and aspirations with Washington's administration, especially in the first years after his election.

A minority of Blacks advanced in business and civic administration while Washington was mayor. This layer has continued to do well for themselves. Their gains stand in sharp contrast, however, to the conditions faced by the majority of Black workers who have borne the brunt of the sharply worsening economic and social conditions.

The growing distance between the middle-class layer and the overwhelming majority of Blacks in Chicago is reflected in the crisis of the Harold Washington Party in the April 2 election.

Davis, a Washington supporter from the early 1980s, was identified with many of the reforms of that period. A front-runner for the Washington Party nomination, he refused to run following his primary defeat. Others prominent in the Washington Party in the past, such as former mayoral candidate Alderman Timothy Evans and former mayor Eugene Sawyer, kept low profiles as the party discussed its candidates. Many prominent Black businessmen in the city have declared their support for Daley.

Jacky Grimshaw, who was a close political advisor to Washington, said that the primary's election results show "that Harold Washington is dead and there is no way he's coming back."

On March 3 the Washington Party named Eugene Pincham, a former Illinois Appellate



Militant/Dana Burroughs

Chicago socialist candidates Eric Matheis, James Warren, and Estelle DeBates at March 20 press conference.

Court judge, its candidate. In a stated attempt to "broaden the party's appeal outside the African-American community," party leaders announced they would include a white person on their slate. They announced Larry Machaj, a Polish-American businessman, would run for city treasurer.

"We're forming a coalition that makes some sense," said James Hutchinson, vice-chairman of the party. "The two largest voting blocs in the Democratic party are Blacks and Polish-Americans."

Responding to the lack of support, Pincham threatened "chaos" in a March 15 statement to the press.

When asked to explain what he meant, the former judge said "disrespect for the law" and increased homicide rates, larcenies, and drug peddling.

Action Program

The socialist candidates have put forward an action program around which working people worldwide can fight to defend themselves from the growing effects of the developing economic crisis.

Warren said the central aspects of the action program include: fighting for proposals such as a shorter workweek with no cut in pay to combat unemployment; pay raises to keep up with the cost of living; enforcement of mandatory affirmative action quotas in the hiring of women and minorities; raising the minimum wage to union scale; and canceling the Third World debt that is strangling the majority of the world's population.

Speaking on the Stacy Taylor talk show on WLS radio March 22, Warren said working people need their own party, a party of labor. One caller doubted the possibilities for socialism because "people just want to sit back and have some government or something take care of them."

"Yes, outside of periods of big political developments that is true," Warren said. "But when people go through big social upheavals ordinary people begin to see themselves as a force that actually can have an impact on

changing history. That's what happened with the civil rights movement. That's what happened with the rise of the labor movement in the 1930s. That's what happened with the development of radical reconstruction following the Civil War.

"I think the reconstruction governments that arose at that time are the best example in this country of ordinary people taking politics into their own hands. I think that can come again," the socialist candidate said.

"Working people will look to others to solve their problems. Outside of social upheavals the last thing most workers do is see themselves as part of a class that can and must resolve the giant social and political problems facing humanity today.

"But we say that the only people working people can look to is ourselves. That is why we stand for a party of labor," Warren said.

"We say that the parties that exist in this country today, outside of the small working class parties like the Socialist Workers Party, are the parties of the rich.

"We need a party of working people that our class can use as a political weapon to advance the interests, needs, and concerns of working people worldwide," the mayoral candidate said.

"I agree with everything you said about the major political parties in this country," talk show host Taylor said. "But I have extreme doubts that your party, in the unlikely event that it was ever to take power anywhere — including Chicago, wouldn't be pretty much the same thing."

"I don't think so," Warren responded. "And I'll give you one example why. The party I'm in is a party of working people, not just in words but in deeds.

"Our people are industrial workers," he said. "For example, one of our candidates is a machinist. I am a steelworker. I run a crane five nights a week.

"The candidates of the SWP are fighters," Warren concluded. "We offer our campaign as a platform to all those in struggle for working people."



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Socialists explain why working people should support sovereignty for Québec

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO
AND STEVE PENNER

TORONTO, CANADA — Ontario Premier Robert Rae, of the New Democratic Party (NDP), has announced that his government will not move to make Ontario an official bilingual province.

"This is not only antidemocratic. It's also completely hypocritical," said Joe Young, Communist League candidate for mayor of Toronto.

A member of the International Association of Machinists, Young testified March 1 before the parliamentary Committee on Ontario in Confederation here.

While refusing to meet the just demands of Ontario's oppressed French-speaking people, "Rae and the rest of the NDP leadership play a leading role in the anti-Québec chorus, claiming concern for the rights of that province's English-language minority," he said.

"It is Canada's francophones — whether in Québec, Ontario or other provinces," said Young, "who face systematic discrimination because their language is French. Québec's English-speaking minority is not oppressed on the basis of language."

The committee is one of a number of such bodies set up by the federal government and provincial governments across the country. These committees seek to come up with proposals aimed at overcoming the deep-going political crisis facing Canada's rulers as a result of the growing resistance to national oppression and the rising support for Québec sovereignty among Québécois, an oppressed French-speaking nationality.

Québec is one of Canada's 10 provinces. Of its six million residents, 80 percent are French-speaking.

A recent report approved by the ruling party in Québec, the Québec Liberal Party, demanded that either the province be given the governmental powers needed to achieve the national and language rights of the Québécois or it will hold a referendum to establish a sovereign Québec.

Young was joined in presenting a brief to the committee by Michel Dugré, a member of the United Steelworkers in Québec. Dugré was also the Communist League candidate for mayor of Montréal in last November's election.

"The voices of working people and trade unionists must be heard on this crucial issue — not just those of capitalist politicians," Dugré said to journalists following the committee hearing.

Oppression of Québécois

In 1985 Québécois earned \$3,043 less, on average, than anglophones in the same province, Dugré said at the committee hearing.

Not only are the schools, hospitals, and social services in Québec segregated along language lines, but the services available to francophones are distinctly inferior to those available to those who speak English. In addition, Québec has by far the largest number of people living below the poverty line of any province in Canada — one third of the total number.

A brief submitted by the socialists to the committee explains that "Since Canada was founded in 1867, Québécois have been systematically denied the governmental powers necessary to overcome their oppression and freely determine their own future."

For example, the British North America Act of 1867 — the Canadian constitution — imposed a segregated school system on Québec, divided along both language and religious lines. Efforts by the Québec government to reform the segregated and religious character of its schools have been declared unconstitutional.

The revised 1982 Canadian constitution was imposed on Québec despite the overwhelming opposition of the province's government, political parties, major unions, main farmers' organizations, and other groups. It stripped Québec of some of the limited powers it had previously exercised to defend the rights of Québécois. As a result, the Québec National Assembly has refused to sign the 1982 constitution.

Last June a pact between Québec, Ottawa, and seven provinces was scuttled by the veto of provincial governments in Manitoba and Newfoundland.

Known as the Meech Lake Accord, it would have introduced some minor modifications in the constitution based on recognizing Québec as a "distinct society." These minor concessions were too much for many of Canada's capitalist politicians, who warned they would lead to a weakening of the federal government's powers.

'Final straw'

The rejection of even this pact was "the final straw" for most Québécois, Dugré said.

"Today, the overwhelming majority of Québécois have concluded that there is no way of winning our rights within this country's current, completely undemocratic constitutional setup," Dugré explained.

He and Young said that the fight for self-determination of Québécois is central for advancing the struggles of all working people in Canada.

Young said unionists and working people should oppose "the stepped-up chauvinist campaign being waged against the legitimate aspirations of the Québécois for self-determination and sovereignty."

"The federal government and others wage this campaign under the guise of promoting 'Canadian unity,'" he said. "Rather than weakening the fight of working people across Canada in defense of their rights, standard of living, and union organization, supporting the just and democratic demands of the Québécois strengthens it."

In an interview after the hearing he said that "we can never defend our interests if we allow the bosses and their governments to deny the democratic rights of anyone who is oppressed — whether it be on the basis of language, nationality, skin color, or sex."

Cross-Canada referendum

A Liberal Party member of the committee, Charles Beer, questioned Young and Dugré's position that holding a cross-Canada referendum to determine Québec's relationship to the rest of the country would be "completely undemocratic." Such a referendum is currently under consideration.

"We oppose any effort by Ottawa or the Ontario government to prevent the people of Québec from freely deciding our future relationship to Canada ourselves," Dugré said. "It would be as much a denial of the right of Québécois to self-determination as is the refusal of the Soviet government to recognize this elementary democratic right for the oppressed nationalities in that country."

Beer asked Dugré if he was also opposed to people outside Québec being part of the discussion. "To the contrary," the Montréal steelworker explained. "We think that working people across Canada should be fully part of this discussion. It is important that they be convinced that the federal and Ontario governments' 'Canadian unity' campaign



Militant/Monica Jones

Students in Québec protest tuition hikes. Not only are the schools, hospitals, and social services in Québec segregated along language lines, but the services available to francophones are distinctly inferior to those available for those who speak English.

against Québec is not in the interests of working people."

Another commission member, Gary Malkowski of the NDP, asked Dugré whether he supported Québec's Law 178. Adopted in 1989, the law forbids the use of languages other than French on commercial signs.

"No, I don't support it," Dugré replied. "The law is a violation of the democratic rights of all people in Québec to communicate in whatever language they choose."

"The problem has been that for years many of the signs and other forms of advertising in Montréal were only in English, despite the fact that a majority of the city's population is French-speaking," he said. "It often wasn't even possible for francophones to be served in our own language in department stores like Eaton's, in restaurants, or even in English-speaking hospitals. Many union contracts were only published in English even though the large majority of the work force is French-speaking."

Passing affirmative action legislation like Québec's Law 101, which defends language rights, is essential in the fight to end discrimination against francophones, Dugré said. "However, Law 178 is the opposite of the fight for national equality. The rights of Québécois cannot be won by denying the rights of others."

Dugré said that the capitalist government in Québec is just as anti-democratic as those in Ottawa and in the other provinces. "The fight to replace the capitalist rulers with a

workers' and farmers' government can only be advanced by uniting all of the oppressed and exploited in the fight for our rights," he said.

Native rights

In their submission to the committee the Communist League leaders also denounced the refusal of governments across Canada, including those in Québec and Ontario, to recognize the rights of Native people.

"Native peoples' land was stolen by this country's British and French colonial rulers, and subsequently by the capitalist government of the new Canadian confederation," the document says. "They were forced onto tiny reserves and denied many basic human as well as economic and political rights."

"As a result, the majority of the Native peoples in this country live in deplorable Third World conditions. They are also subjected to systematic racist attacks by the federal and provincial governments and their police agencies, including in both Ontario and Québec," the socialists said.

"Granting Native land claims and demands for political sovereignty is a precondition for their capacity to overcome the degrading system of oppression that has been imposed on them by force and violence. We demand an end to the racist cop beatings, arrests, and even killings of both Natives and Blacks that have taken place with growing regularity right across Canada over the past few years."

The socialists' brief also declared support for the demand of Franco-Ontarians that Ontario become officially bilingual in law and practice.

"This committee has heard submissions from groups like the Association for the Preservation of English in Canada, which is waging a chauvinist campaign in defense of 'English rights,'" Young said. "But the facts show that it is Franco-Ontarians whose rights are under attack. They continue to be forcibly assimilated in large numbers because of the suppression of their rights."

French-speaking people in Ontario suffer higher unemployment than those who are English-speaking. Twice as many francophones as anglophones have only a primary school education. More than half of Franco-Ontarian children do not have access to French-language schools. Many lack access to other services in French.

"There's absolutely no comparison between the extensive English-language services available in Québec, services which are superior to those available to Québécois, and the systematic denial of the rights of francophones in Ontario, Manitoba, and other English-only provinces," Young said in the interview.

"That's why the campaign in defense of 'English rights' in Québec by those who refuse to lift a finger in defense of French rights in either Ontario or Québec is pure chauvinist demagoguery," he said.

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Canadian court hits Native land rights

BY COLLEEN LEVIS

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — The British Columbia Supreme Court dealt a blow to Native rights March 8 in a ruling that the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en peoples in northwest British Columbia do not have title to the lands they and their ancestors have toiled on for 10,000 years.

In a 400-page document, Chief Justice Allan McEachern explicitly rejected the Indians' claim to the land and their right to self-government. Although recognizing their

ancestors occupied the land, the McEachern ruling said "the aboriginal rights of the natives were lawfully extinguished by the Crown [Great Britain] in the colonial period."

Reserves totaling about 72 square miles are presently assigned to the 8,000 Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en peoples. In some villages unemployment stands at 90 percent. They have been fighting for more than 100 years to reclaim traditional lands, which are spread over 34,200 square miles and located east of

the southern tip of the Alaskan panhandle.

Although never conquered in battle, nor signatories to any treaties ceding the land, McEachern says the Natives lost all rights at the time of the "discovery and occupation of the lands of this continent by European nations."

Rejection by British Columbia's highest court of the longest running aboriginal title and rights case in Canada outraged supporters of Native rights across the country.

Five hundred Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en people gathered at the Indian Friendship Centre in Smithers, in Gitksan-claimed territory, on the day of the ruling. In Vancouver, 300 supporters at Simon Fraser University expressed their solidarity, as did other supporters who demonstrated outside the Supreme Court.

Wii Seek, a Gitksan hereditary chief, said, "The land is ours. It's the relationship between ourselves, Canada, and the province that is negotiable."

"Don't sit back," said Mas Gak, another Gitksan leader. "You should be very angry at what's happened here today. We've got to assert ourselves on the land. Nobody is going to do that for us. We're going to have to do it ourselves."

The Supreme Court ruling grants that the Indians "could continue to use unoccupied or vacant Crown land of the colony for purposes equivalent to aboriginal rights until such lands were required for an adverse purpose."

In other words, they can use the land for berry-picking, hunting, trapping, and fishing until giant forestry or mining companies "need" the land. The McEachern ruling states that after operations such as clear-cut logging are completed, the Indians could again use the land.

Joe Mathias, chief of the Squamish band, said it is "truly a judgment that stands on racism" that defines Indians as "no better than the animals in the forest."



1990 protest by British Columbia Natives. Court says Natives lost all rights at time of "discovery" by Europeans.

Los Angeles forum hears testimony on cop abuses

BY ELIZABETH STONE

LOS ANGELES — Participants in a March 14 "Speak-out Against Police Brutality" here sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum testified about their experiences with growing cop abuse in the city.

Karol Hepp, executive director of the Police Misconduct Lawyers Referral Service, reported the number of complaints coming into her office each day have doubled in the past year. Youth are especially targeted. In 1990 more than 25,000 young people were arrested in the Black and Latino communities as part of "anti-gang" sweeps ordered by the city, she said. Only 1,300 were charged.

Stephen De Leon explained how he was roughed up by cops outside a rock concert. "The cop grabbed me by the back of my shirt, shoved me against a chain fence, and tried to kick me," he said.

Since he saw the video of the March 3 cop beating of Rodney King, De Leon has par-

ticipated in every demonstration against cop brutality he could find.

"I consider what was done to Rodney King to be a form of torture," he said. "The city is not listening to people. We have to speak out until we get [Los Angeles Police Chief] Daryl Gates out of there."

Cheryl Wessenu also urged participants in the meeting to join the fight to oust Gates. She had joined in building protests against the Mideast war after her son Michael had been sent to the Arab-Persian Gulf three months ago.

Her son was attacked by the Long Beach military police before being shipped out. "In the last three months," she said, "I've become a new kind of person."

Mark Maracle, a participant in the Mohawk people's struggle in Canada, told how Canadian cops and troops were used against his people. Wayne Karr, an activist in the fight for gay rights, spoke about police violence against gays.

The speak-out began with a video showing Los Angeles cops attacking a demonstration of janitors seeking decent wages and a union contract.

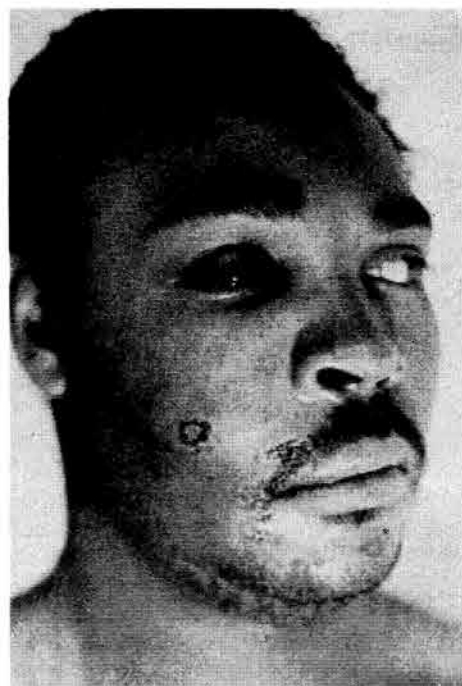
The video is being distributed by the Service Employees International Union as part of a national "Justice for Janitors" organizing drive.

Eli Green, Socialist Workers Party candidate for city council, urged those present to get their unions more involved in the fight to force Gates out of office and bring the cops involved in the assault on King to justice.

Police attacks on the unions and working people will escalate as economic conditions worsen, Green said. Such assaults are part and parcel of the offensive against working people by the employers and the government. Green said through their offensive the billionaire families that run the United States seek to place the burden of the capitalist economic crisis on the backs of working people.

"We are going to see more criminal cutbacks in the education budget, more unemployment, and cutbacks in social services," he said. "At the same time they'll continue to spend more money for cops and jails."

"We need more unity in the fight against police abuse," the socialist said. Protests in the city demanding 'Gates must go' can draw in broad numbers of workers and others who are either direct victims of or outraged by the beating of King, he said.



Rodney King after police beating

Los Angeles protesters seek inquiry into cop shooting of Samoans

BY ELIZABETH STONE

LOS ANGELES — A demonstration of 500 at the Compton police headquarters March 12 demanded an investigation into the fatal shooting of two Samoan-American brothers.

Italia and Pouvi Taulaulelei were shot and killed February 23 by a Compton cop in front of their home. Another brother, who the family reports witnessed the killing, claims it was an execution-style shooting, with the cop telling the brothers to kneel before shooting them.

The protest came after the release of the Los Angeles County coroner's report in which it was revealed that the cop shot so many bullets, 20 in all, that he had to reload his gun. Pouvi was shot 12 times, 8 in the back. Italia was shot 8 times, 5 in the back.

Pouvi, 34, worked in a warehouse at a chemical plant. Italia, 22, was a scholarship student at El Camino College, a member of the football team and founder of the college's Pacific Islanders Club.

Pouvi's son Niles carried a sign at the protest, "My daddy knelt. Why 12 bullets?"

Fuiava Alailima, one of the organizers of the protest, said he is angry that this and many other cases of cop brutality against Samoans have received little media attention. "It's like we are invisible," he said of the 60,000 Samoans living in Compton and southern California.

U.S. President George Bush talks about the "environmental terrorism of [Saddam] Hussein, yet nothing is said about the environmental terrorism of the U.S. government when it stores nuclear waste and tests nuclear bombs on our island," he said, referring to Samoa, a U.S. colony in the Pacific.

Ben Levi, another Samoan-American activist, got involved in anticop protests after he and other guests at a bridal shower were beaten by cops in 1988. Levi says the attack occurred after complaints by neighbors about noise at the party.

"All of a sudden I heard cops at the back door telling us to move to the front," he said. "They started throwing people out the door, beating them up, and kicking them. There were so many cop cars double-parked up and down the street. I couldn't tell you how many there were."

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Israel's expulsion of Palestinians from occupied lands condemned

The Israeli government's March 24 decision to expel four Palestinians from the Gaza Strip, a Palestinian territory occupied by Israel, was condemned by Ricardo Alarcón, acting chairman of the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. Alarcón is also Cuba's ambassador to the UN.

In a March 26 letter to UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, the Cuban diplomat also said that his committee was gravely concerned by "the increasing imposition of harsh collective punishment against the population of the occupied Palestinian territory, such as curfews, school closings, administrative detention, and other measures contrary to Israel's obligations as the occupying Power."

Alarcón called for all necessary measures to be taken to protect Palestinians living under Israeli occupation.

Russians defy ban and threats by Soviet President Gorbachev

An estimated 100,000 Russians defied bans, threats, and a mobilization of 50,000 cops and troops when they marched in the streets of Moscow March 28. Many demanded Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev resign.

Gorbachev had earlier issued a 20-day ban on street protests and instructed the Soviet Interior Ministry to take direct control of the Moscow city police.

The Russian parliament issued a second rebuke to the Soviet president when it declared illegal Gorbachev's ban and his decree assuming authority over the Moscow police.

Observers reported that the mobilization of military force to intimidate the demonstrators caused more indignation than fear.

Gorbachev's attempts to deter the protest came in the midst of the central government's plans to hike the prices of basic goods at the beginning of April and the growing demands from many republics for independence.

Washington's secret war against Libyan government flops

A two-year secret effort by Washington to overthrow the Libyan government of Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi ended in failure last December.

In the last months of the Reagan administration, Washington began training and providing military aid to 600 former Libyan soldiers at a base in Chad, which borders Libya.

The plan unraveled when Chadian guerrilla forces sympathetic to Libya toppled the Chad regime, established a new government, and exiled the U.S.-sponsored commando band. The paramilitary force finally ended up in Kenya after brief stints in Nigeria and Zaire.

Bush administration officials now admit that they released \$5 million in military aid to Kenya as a payoff. They originally claimed that the aid was approved because the Kenyan government had improved its human rights record.

The former royal family of Libya, deposed in 1969, has now claimed the commandos and vows to send them into combat against Qaddafi.

Other stories in the news

- The streets of Leipzig, Chemnitz, Schwerin, Cottbus, and other cities in the eastern part of Germany were filled March 18 by tens of thousands of workers. The protests were reminiscent of the ones at the end of 1989 that brought down the Stalinist regime. The demonstrators vowed to turn out every Monday, as they did then, until massive unemployment and declining living conditions are reversed.

- Police in the West African country of Togo attacked antigovernment demonstrations March 16, injuring scores. The repression came after a week of student strikes and growing protests demanding the end of the 24-year rule of President Gnassingbe Eyadéma. The opposition's demands include legalizing political parties, amnesty for dissidents, and a conference to determine the country's future government.

Protest to demand Gates quit

Continued from front page

"dirty, rotten, nasty stuff you have to do to people in a fight."

"Beating with a baton does not look nice but unfortunately it's something we have to do sometimes to take someone into custody," he said. King was struck 56 times.

California Highway Patrol Officer Melanie Singer, among those present at the scene, described the blows to King as "causing his face to split."

In a new ploy aimed at discrediting King, Los Angeles cops have belatedly claimed to have evidence that King committed an armed robbery 10 days before he was beaten by police. The state attorney general's office, supposedly more impartial than the Los Angeles authorities, agreed to investigate the charges.

"They almost killed this guy and now they're trying to smear his reputation," charged King's attorney Steven Lerman.

The Black Journalists Association of Southern California, in a letter to the *Times* March 31, objected to further charges that King was drunk at the time of the arrest. Complaining about the *Times*' assertion in a front page article that King was legally drunk, they wrote: "The fact that the tests were taken five hours after King was arrested leaves open a number of questions about the validity of the tests that were not addressed in the article."

As pressure built for his resignation, Gates unveiled a 10-point plan on March 27 aimed at reviving confidence in the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). Elements of the plan include a psychological profile of cops who commit violent acts and a review of department training practices. Danny Blake-well, president of the Brotherhood Crusade, a prominent Black organization, called Gates' program "too little, too late." In another move to deflect criticism, a five-member "blue-ribbon" panel has been named by Gates to investigate charges of police misconduct, headed by retired Supreme Court Justice John Arguelles.

Further revelations

Further revelations of racism within the Foothill Division of the LAPD have surfaced. As the FBI conducts interviews with police from the division where the King beating took place, a Black officer came forward and explained how she had found a Ku Klux Klan business card proclaiming "Racial Purity Is America's Security" on her car, parked in a lot accessible only to other police. She said a Black male officer had received a similar card in his locker. Officer Janine Bouey, who was mistakenly thought to be white by some cops, said she heard white cops freely using derogatory terms against Black cops.

Further fuel was added to the campaign for Gates' ouster when news surfaced that Mayor Tom Bradley asked the Police Commission to investigate the firing and subsequent rehiring of a cop who had a long history of abusive behavior toward working people in Los Angeles.

Councilman Michael Woo has become the first city council member to call for Gates' resignation. None of the current city council members up for re-election have called for the resignation of Gates. Ruth Galanter, who was elected as a liberal, chose her first piece of campaign literature to be an endorsement from the Los Angeles Police Protective League, the police union.

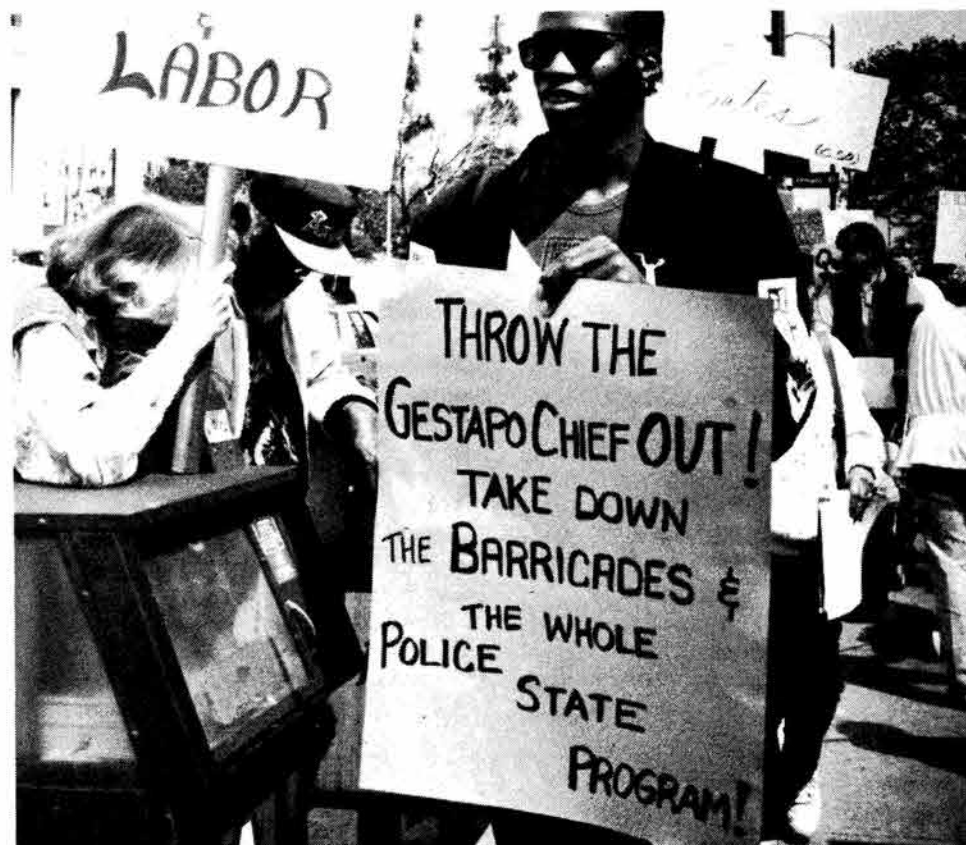
The issue of police brutality has become a big issue in local elections. Elizabeth Stone, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Board of Trustees of the Community College District appeared on cable television March 27 as part of a panel of other candidates.

She called on the Board of Trustees to issue a statement demanding the resignation of Chief Gates.

The United Neighborhoods Organization, an East Los Angeles Latino community organization representing thousands, became the latest organization to call for Gates to resign. "We want to show our African-American brothers and sisters that we stand with them," said a spokesman for the group.

Labor bodies join call

Several labor leaders added their call for Gates to step down in a letter printed in the *Times* on March 31. The letter was signed by Kent Wong, chairman, Alliance of Asian Pacific Labor; Alex Sweeten, president, A. Philip Randolph Institute; Al Hernandez, president, Labor Council for Latin American



Militant/Della Rossa

Los Angeles protest March 23 demands resignation of Daryl Gates

Advancement; and Max Mont, regional director, Jewish Labor Committee.

Members of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union Local 1-547 discussed the King beating at their recent union meeting. The membership voted to send a letter to Rodney King expressing their outrage at the beating.

Mayor Bradley has stopped short of calling on Gates to resign, instead suggesting that it is necessary for Gates to remove himself "from the center of this controversy" before the healing process can begin.

Many protesters have their own stories to tell of police abuse. At the March 30 protest a group of Latino junior high students described in interviews the harassment they receive. One of them showed the scar on his face where he had been beaten by the cops on March 6. Another said, "The cops get on the bullhorn saying racist things, like 'hey cholos get off the street.' They judge us by the way we dress." One of them added, "We need to get the youth out here — they're the ones that get harassed the most."

The Mexican consul general in Los Angeles accused the LAPD and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department of repeated use of excessive force against Mexican citizens at a press conference March 26. Six Mexican citizens have died in the last 12 months at the hands of the cops. He has sent a letter to the Mexican secretariat of foreign affairs asking that they request through diplomatic channels a U.S. Department of Justice investigation into police abuse against Mexican citizens in Southern California.

Writing in the *Times*, Alexander Cockburn revealed details of how another Black man, Tracy Mayberry, was beaten to death by Los Angeles cops Nov. 30, 1990. Witnesses to the beating of Mayberry say it lasted seven minutes. One neighbor said, "The best description I can give you is that it was like the same picture you see on TV when you see King's beating. Actually it was a little worse. I saw two batons broken on him." He died at the scene. While the police and district attorney's office say the case is not closed, no arrests have been made.

It was revealed in a March 29 *Times* article that the city of Los Angeles paid a record \$11.3 million in 1990 — more than any major city, except Detroit — to resolve lawsuits against the police for excessive force and false arrest.

In the wake of the impact of the King beating, prosecutors in the courtrooms of Los Angeles County complain that it is getting difficult to find impartial jurors. "We fear that every officer's credibility is being called into question," said Steven Sowders, head of Compton's district attorney's office. Bill Weiss, head deputy of the Van Nuys public defender's office, said, "For years and years defense attorneys have argued that there are racial problems with the Police Department. This incident will make it easier to make that point."

The leaflet for the April 6 march and rally says, "Gates must go! Rodney King's face was smashed in! Daryl

Gates is trying to save face."

Marchers will assemble at Broadway and Olympic, downtown Los Angeles, at noon. The march will begin at 1:00 P.M. A rally will be held at Parker Center at First and Los Angeles Streets at 2:00 p.m. A featured speaker will be Rev. Jesse Jackson. For more information call (213) 296-2630, (213) 382-2357, or (213) 487-1720.

Supreme Court ruling deals sharp blow to constitutional rights

BY PETER THIERJUNG

The U.S. Supreme Court delivered a sharp blow to constitutional rights March 26 with a ruling that permits coerced confessions in a criminal trial.

Chief Justice William Rehnquist, writing for the Court's majority, said that the admission of such confessions can be excused as a "harmless error" if it can be shown that other evidence at the trial was sufficient to win a conviction.

"The admission of an involuntary confession is a 'trial error' similar in both degree and kind to the erroneous admission of other types of evidence," Rehnquist wrote.

The High Court's ruling accepted an argument advanced in a brief submitted by the Bush administration. It asserted that there is "no reason to accord special status to a confession obtained by way of coercion."

The 5-4 decision struck at the heart of a 1967 ruling by the Court that the admission of coerced or involuntary confessions in a trial are grounds to automatically reverse a conviction and call for a new trial.

Justice Byron White wrote the dissenting opinion, stating that the Court was abandoning what it had regarded as an "axiomatic [proposition] that a defendant in a criminal case is deprived of due process of law if his conviction is founded, in whole or in part, upon an involuntary confession, without regard for the truth or falsity of the confession."

"A coerced confession is fundamentally different from other types of erroneously admitted evidence," White asserted.

Prior cases "have indicated that there are some constitutional rights so basic to a fair trial that their infraction can never be treated as a harmless error," White said. "Using a defendant's coerced confession against him is a denial of due process of law regardless of other evidence in the record aside from the confession."

The dissenting justice said that this constitutional protection ranked with two other rights, the right to counsel and to an unbiased judge — which, when denied, mandate overturning a conviction.

"At a time of more awareness of police brutality, [the decision] gives subtle encouragement to law enforcement to break the rules," Jeffrey Weiner, president-elect of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, told the press.

United Auto Workers members discuss contract proposals by aerospace giant

BY GEOFF MIRELOWITZ

LONG BEACH, California — At a packed meeting held here March 24 at Veterans Stadium 8,000 McDonnell Douglas workers decisively rejected the aerospace giant's offer of a new four-year contract. About 88 percent of the members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 148 voted "no."

Local 148 represents 19,700 workers who do final assembly on MD-80 and MD-11 commercial jets as well as on the U.S. Air Force C-17 cargo jet. Three other UAW locals are also covered by the proposed contract. On the same day UAW locals 1093 and 73 in Tulsa, Oklahoma, voted the pact down by a vote of 505-460. UAW Local 1482 in Melbourne, Arkansas approved the contract 200-40.

Although the local's bargaining committee joined top international union officials in recommending that the contract be ratified,

within minutes of the opening of the meeting it was clear that the membership had other ideas. One young woman waved a sign that read, "Better contract or bust."

Local President Richard Rios read a letter he received from one union member who objected to the union's failure to make all the new contract language available with enough time for each member to consider it. Rios said he had requested that international union officials make this information available. Some copies of contract proposals were on hand as workers streamed into the stadium. However, when Rios asked how many workers had not received copies, thousands stood up amid shouting and calls for the contract to be rejected.

Rios told the unionists that he had changed his mind about the pact and now recommended a "no" vote. UAW international of-

ficials had informed him, he said, that a vote to reject the contract would result in immediate strike action. This was widely viewed by most workers as a threat by the officials intended to produce a "yes" vote. No strike preparations had been undertaken prior to the vote.

Following his remarks, Rios offered each member of the local's bargaining committee two minutes to offer their recommendation on the contract. Four bargaining committee members recommended a "no" vote. They were met by loud cheers.

Two members, including Ned Scott, the committee chairperson, held to their "yes" recommendation. They were loudly booed as was one committee member who said he had no recommendation.

Neither Odessa Komer, UAW international vice president and aerospace depart-

ment director, nor Bruce Lee, UAW region 6 director, were offered the microphone and neither spoke at the meeting. Komer frequently walked toward the microphone but was booed as she did so.

The meeting lasted an hour before workers were asked to vote. Only officials had the right to speak.

The proposed wage increases of 3 percent in each of the first two years and 4 percent in each of the last two are widely viewed by workers as inadequate. This is compounded by the company's plan to pay only one 4 percent lump-sum bonus during the four-year pact. Such lump-sum bonuses were agreed to on a yearly basis by both Boeing and McDonnell Douglas in contracts negotiated at other plants with the International Association of Machinists during the past 18 months. The lump-sum payments represent a serious setback to unions fighting for general wage increases since they are not folded into the base pay.

Workers are also concerned about provisions that weaken health-care coverage for future retirees and for workers in some health-care plans today. Company plans to introduce a "non-standard workweek" for some workers, which would eliminate time-and-a-half and double-time pay for Saturday and Sunday, is also a source of opposition, as is the four-year length of the proposed pact.

The demand to see full contract language, not a summary, and for adequate time to consider the deal before voting are widespread.

At the monthly Local 148 meeting held March 28, workers voted overwhelmingly for an executive board recommendation that every member have the new contract language in writing for a minimum of seven days before any ratification vote.

Following the March 24 vote, workers returned to the job. "I am not authorizing a strike because the contract was never presented to the members," UAW regional director Lee told the *Long Beach Press-Telegram*.

"All we want to do is go back to the bargaining table," Rios told the *Los Angeles Times*. "We're not here to disrupt the company. We're here to get a good contract."

The company and union have agreed to a day-to-day extension of the old contract. New negotiations have reportedly begun. Many workers are beginning to consider what further action may be necessary to accomplish winning the goals of the union membership.

Natives to stand trial on criminal charges stemming from 1990 blockade in Québec

BY ROGER ANNIS

MONTREAL — On April 2 in Saint-Jérôme, Québec, the first of three groups of Mohawks and their supporters, who face criminal charges stemming from last summer's land rights confrontation with the Québec and Canadian governments, will stand trial.

The first group — Mohawk Indians Ronald Cross, Gordon Lazore, and Roger Lazore — faces a total of 59 charges, including assault with a weapon, uttering death threats, and possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose.

The confrontation began in Kanesatake, a Mohawk community 50 miles west of Montréal, on July 11, 1990, when the Sûreté du Québec (SQ), Québec's provincial police, stormed a blockade that had been erected to stop commercial development of Mohawk lands by non-native businessmen.

The police action provoked a seven-week armed standoff at Kanesatake and at Kahnawake, a Mohawk community in the Montréal urban region.

Forty-six Mohawks and supporters are held under siege in Kanesatake when the Canadian Army surrounded a health center during the final month of the confrontation, which ended September 26.

The trials are taking place in an atmosphere of judicial abuse and police intimidation of the Mohawk people.

In March the Québec attorney general decided to proceed with trials of two of the three groups according to "preferred indictments."

In the case of the first group charged, the procedure places all 59 charges before one trial and jury. This improves the government's chances to win convictions.

The preferred indictment of the second group of 41 accused will allow the prosecution to bypass a pre-trial discovery process, eliminating the possibility of filing for a

dismissal of charges for lack of evidence.

It will also be more difficult for defense lawyers to have access to both the evidence the government lawyers intend to present at the trial and the line of prosecution the government intends to follow.

Mohawk leaders stated that the campaign by police and government officials branding them as criminals will make it impossible to select a fair and impartial jury.

Police harassment in Kanesatake and Kahnawake has continued since September. Scores of arrests for minor traffic violations have occurred. Many Mohawks have been beaten by SQ officers. The most recent beatings took place in Kanesatake March 18.

Claude Ryan, Québec's minister of public security, has openly backed the stated goals of the SQ and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Canada's federal police, to reimpose their presence in the village center. Until last year, the entire Kahnawake reserve was a "no-go" territory for the SQ and RCMP, ever since the 1979 murder there by the SQ of Mohawk resident David Cross.

24-hour community checkpoints

Starting last summer a 24-hour community checkpoint has been maintained to keep the SQ and RCMP out of the town center. Church and human rights groups have been enlisted to act as monitors against police violence.

At the height of the confrontation, government officials promised they would resolve land rights issues with the Mohawks once the barricades were lifted and arms were put away.

"We are absolutely back to square one," Mike Myers, a representative of the Mohawk legal defense team, said in an interview. "In some ways matters have gotten worse."

"Police arrests and harassment at

Kahnawake have stepped up. The government is determined to impose the SQ in the community once again.

"And the biggest irony of all is that the land issue at Kanesatake is unresolved," he said. "The feds bought some swamp land in the disputed pine forest area and tried to pass this off as a settlement."

"The decision by the federal and provincial governments to go ahead with the prosecutions is part of the same mentality of confrontation they have displayed since the beginning," Myers continued.

Ellen Gabriel, one of the principal spokespersons for the Kanesatake Mohawks, summed up their goals in the upcoming trials: "We intend to assert our sovereignty at these trials."

"The trials must bring out all the events of last summer — the violent SQ raid on July 11, the violence of the police and army in the weeks that followed, and the looting of homes and destruction of property by the police and army," Gabriel said.

Much needed financial contributions to the Mohawk defense campaign as well as messages of support can be sent to the Liberation of the Mohawk Nation Defense Fund, Box 645, Kahnawake, Québec J0H 1B0.



'Justice for the Mohawks' says sign at August protest in Montréal.

Militant/Monica Jones

New Malcolm X poster

The Friends of the Pathfinder Mural has produced a new full-color poster featuring a portrait of Malcolm X.

The portrait of Malcolm X was painted on the six-story Pathfinder Mural by artist and sculptor Carole Byard. Byard teaches at Parsons School of Design in New York City. She has exhibited in several anti-apartheid shows as well as shows on Black history and culture — winning numerous awards for painting, sculpture, and illustrations.



THE YOUNG GENERATION OF WHITES, BLACKS, BROWNS — YOU'RE LIVING AT A TIME OF REVOLUTION. A TIME WHEN THERE'S GOT TO BE A CHANGE. PEOPLE IN POWER HAVE MISUSED IT, AND NOW THERE HAS TO BE A CHANGE AND A BETTER WORLD HAS TO BE BUILT.

MALCOLM X
LONDON, DECEMBER 3, 1964

The 18" by 24" poster is available for \$8.00. Bulk order rates are \$6.00 each for 10 or more, \$4.00 each for 30 or more, and \$3.00 each for 50 or more. Pre-paid orders should include \$2.50 for shipping and handling in the United States, and \$5.00 for international shipping per order.

Order from: Friends of the Pathfinder Mural, 191 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York, 10011, (212) 727-8421.

Baghdad organizes slaughter of Kurds

Continued from front page

town of Zahko March 26. He told thousands of cheering guerrillas that the fight would go on until "the whole of Iraq is liberated" from what he called "the bloody dictatorship of Baghdad."

Barzani said that the Kurdish guerrillas — known as *pesh mergas*, or "those who walk before death" — had sustained 5,000 dead or wounded, 3,000 alone in the capture of Kirkuk, before the start of the Iraqi government counterattack. Kirkuk, Iraq's fourth-largest city, accounted for one-third of oil exports before the U.S. bombing attacks devastated the country. Most of the rest of the region was captured by Kurdish forces without much of a fight.

The KDP and the PUK are the two main groups of Iraqi Kurds. The Communist Party of Iraq also has organized forces there. Together with four other groups they formed the Iraqi Kurdistan front in 1988.

The current uprising, which began soon after the provisional cease-fire between the U.S.-led forces and the Iraqi government, has made rapid progress. Journalists from the *Washington Post*, the *British Guardian*, the *New York Times*, and other papers have visited rebel-held territory in recent days.

Kurds win over Iraqi Arab soldiers

In an effort to win over Iraqi soldiers, who are mostly Arabs, the Kurdish rebels declared an amnesty for all Iraqi troops who surrender, and have treated those captured with respect. Tens of thousands of soldiers have accepted the amnesty offer.

Thousands of Kurds who were part of the Iraqi army in mostly Kurdish auxiliary units have gone over to the side of the rebels. The Kurdish forces have captured thousands of weapons and anti-aircraft guns. But according to one Kurdish commander, the guerrillas

Thousands of Kurds who were part of the Iraqi army have gone to rebel side.

are incapable of using much of the sophisticated weaponry.

KDP leader Barzani said the rebels have captured 30,000 Iraqi troops and sent 10,000 home. The remaining 20,000 cannot leave, because of the fighting in other parts of the country. Each freed Iraqi prisoner has been given safe-conduct passes issued by the KDP, the PUK, and the Communist Party.

"We don't want to fight the Kurds," said one Iraqi soldier. "We don't want any more war."

Ismail Kadim Qadr, the village headman of the Kurdish town of Bichirian, told the *Washington Post* that it was important to provide food and water for the Iraqi soldiers — thousands of who remain as unguarded prisoners or who are wandering around the countryside. "They are our guests and we are all Iraqis," he said.

Fighting for 'autonomy'

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the Iraqi flag still flies over the Kurdish-controlled areas. The Kurdish red, green, and yellow banner is not flying, Barzani said, because "we are absolutely still part of Iraq."

Independence for all of Kurdistan, is still a "strategic aim," Barzani stated but one to be accomplished "maybe in the next 10 years."

In an interview with the *New York Times* in November 1990, Talabani said that the Kurdish groups were fighting now for autonomy, not independence.

"You have to judge political objectives

according to realistic expectations," Talabani told the *Times*. "We don't want to be like the Palestinians and ask for the impossible. If there were a democratic government in Iraq, we would be happy to be Iraqis."

On March 24, Barzani invited all Iraqi opposition parties to come to Kurdistan to consider setting up a provisional government. "We [Kurds] are not trying to be the central government of Iraq," he said. "We as Kurds want autonomy."

Barzani said the provisional government would not be formed unless the United States and other nations agreed to recognize it.

Rebel leaders seek Turkish aid

PUK leader Talabani and an aide to KDP leader Barzani met with representatives of Turkish President Turgut Özal March 8 in Ankara, Turkey, to seek support.

The Kurdish leaders assured Özal that they would not allow the liberated territory in Iraq to be used by Kurdish groups fighting for Kurdish rights in Turkey. The main Kurdish group in Turkey, the Syrian-backed Kurdish Workers Party (PKK), has been waging a guerrilla war in favor of independence.

In spite of the commitment by the Iraqi Kurdish groups, some leaders of Özal's ruling party criticized the meeting. They fear that advances for Kurds in Iraq will inspire Kurds in Turkey to press for their demands.

"Özal has made a historic mistake by holding secret talks with guerilla leaders," said Hasan Guzel, a leader of Özal's party. "Such moves can be a serious threat to [Turkish] national unity."

Kurds repressed in five countries

There are an estimated 20-30 million Kurds living in Kurdistan, a mountainous region divided among five states. As many as 14 million Kurds live in Turkey; 7 million

in Iran; 5 million in Iraq (about 20 percent of that country's population); 1.4 million in Syria; and 400,000 in Soviet Armenia. They have been victims of discrimination and oppression in all five countries.

Precise figures on the number of Kurds are not available because of deliberate government undercounting. Until recently the government of Turkey refused to admit the existence of Kurds, calling them instead "mountain Turks."

Illegal to speak or write Kurdish

Formerly a nomadic people who lived by tending sheep, Kurds are now mostly peasants. They are known for their distinctive dress, distinct culture, and their long history of struggle.

The Kurdish language is related to Farsi, the language of Persians in Iran. Kurds are a non-Arab people, mostly Sunni Muslims, who have lived in the mountainous region since 2,000 B.C.

The Turkish government recently proposed a new law that would lift restrictions imposed in 1983 that made it illegal to speak Kurdish. Although speaking Kurdish, singing Kurdish songs in public, playing Kurdish records, and watching videotapes in Kurdish will be legal if the law passes, the publication of newspapers, magazines, and books in that language will still be prohibited.

Kurdish leader Massoud Barzani is the son of the late Mustafa Barzani, the central leader of Kurdish rebellions in Iraq in 1932 and from 1943-45. In 1945 the struggle of the Kurds in Iran had also gained momentum from victories of Azerbaijani workers and peasants who had established their own government after throwing the shah of Iran's forces out of the province.

Forced to flee Iraq in 1945, Mustafa Barzani became the military commander of the short-lived Kurdish Republic of Mahabad, set up in 1946 in northern Iran with the backing of the Soviet Union. When the uprising was crushed by a combined British, Iranian, and Iraqi military force, Barzani led his followers on a "long march" north to the Soviet Union, where he remained until 1958.

In the early 1970s, the Iraqi government promised the Kurds autonomy. But Kurds charged that the promise was never carried out. Among KDP demands in 1974 were the election of a national parliament, a Kurdish local assembly with real decision-making

Precision of U.S. bombs is big fraud

BY JAMES HARRIS

Figures on the bombing of Iraq released by U.S. military officials in mid-March expose the fakery of the "precision bombing" and "surgical strikes" claims made by Washington during the war.

Only a small percentage of the bombs dropped on Iraq and Kuwait were "smart" bombs, Air Force Gen. Merrill McPeak said at a Washington press briefing. McPeak held the briefing to "tell an American success story" and praise the Air Force role in the war.

Between January 17 and February 27, U.S. and allied forces flew 109,876 sorties. They dropped 88,500 tons of bombs — 50 percent more than what was unleashed against the Vietnamese people in 10 years of the Vietnam War.

During the war on Iraq, pictures of "smart" bombs hitting targets were repeatedly shown on television and spoken about in the media.

McPeak claimed the "smart" bombs, which are laser-guided, have an accuracy rate of 90 percent. But this is in dispute.

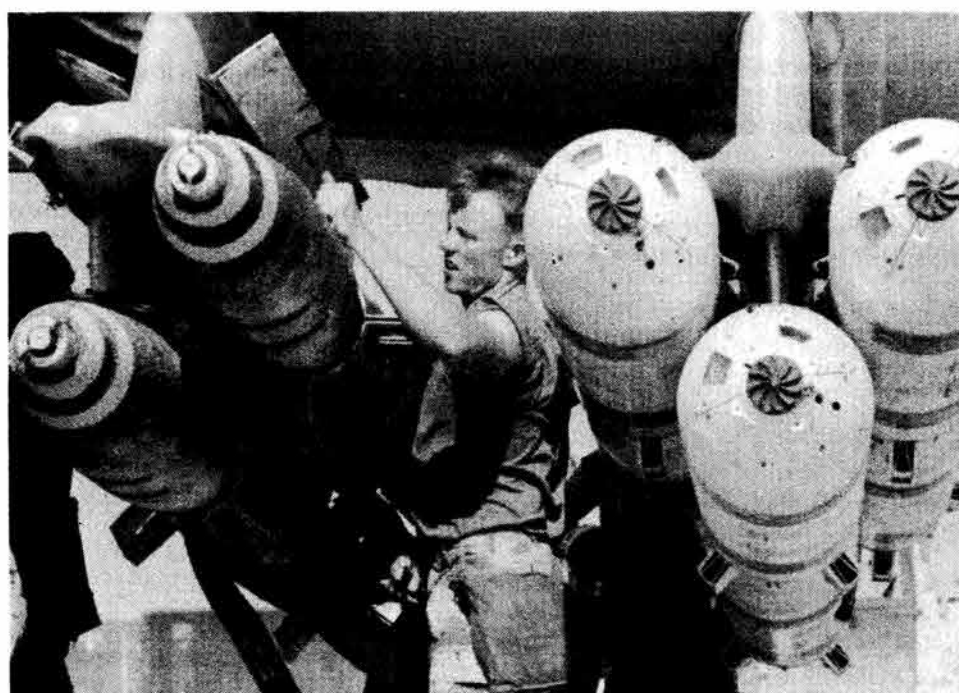
Former navy secretary John Lehman told the *Washington Post* that laser-guided bombs come within 10 feet of their intended target about 60 percent of the time. Lehman said that precision-guided munitions fail when they lose "sight" of laser light aimed by pilots and reflected back from the target. This can happen due to extreme aircraft maneuvers, clouds, smoke, or dust from nearby explosions.

"I'm sure some few of these Iraqi claims of collateral damage are true," said Lehman.

The unguided or "dumb" bombs, some of which have designs dating back to World War II, are even less accurate. Estimates range between 25 and 50 percent for their accuracy. These bombs are expected to hit within 50 to 100 feet of their target. In the war against Iraq, 81,980 tons of "dumb" bombs were dropped.

Added to this picture is the purposely misleading video footage by the military that portrayed only perfect hits and none of the misses. The *Post* quoted a U.S. military official who had access to the real bomb damage reports as saying, "You see pictures all the time of near-misses of [Iraqi armored and troop] relocations and so forth." The Pentagon did not release these pictures to the media.

Using the figures given out by the Pentagon and McPeak, the *Manchester Guardian*



Loading 500-pound bombs. U.S. and allied forces dropped 88,500 tons of bombs over Iraq and Kuwait — 50 percent more than what was unleashed against the Vietnamese people in 10 years of the Vietnam War.

estimates that 26,363 tons of bombs hit targets and 62,137 tons, or 70 percent, missed.

The bombing devastated the Iraqi people. U.S. government officials admit that between 100,000 and 200,000 Iraqi soldiers were killed during the war. There is no estimate on the number of civilians. The allied forces are turning trenches into mass graves at 49 locations.

The First Geneva Convention requires warring countries to report to each other what they know about the identities of those killed on the battlefield. According to the March 26 *Washington Post*, Washington has provided Baghdad with an estimate of the number of Iraqi dead, but refuses to release the figure publicly. Lt. Cmdr. John Tull, a spokesman for the U.S. Central Command in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, said giving out figures on the dead "gets into the business of enemy body counts, and we have said we are not going to do that."

A report by a United Nations fact-finding mission states that conditions in Iraq now are "near-apocalyptic" and that "most means of modern life support have been destroyed or

rendered tenuous. Iraq has, for some time to come, been relegated to a pre-industrial age, but with all the disabilities of post-industrial dependency on an intensive use of energy and technology."

The report concludes that an "imminent catastrophe" is possible, "which could include epidemic and famine, if massive life-supporting needs are not rapidly met."

The results of the bombing were not accidental. They fit into the U.S. plan of waging total war against Iraq. That meant destroying the ability of the country to sustain an army.

The chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Colin Powell, said in the opening stages of the bombing, "Our strategy to go after this army is very, very simple. First, we're going to cut it off, and then we're going to kill it."

Going after the means by which the Iraqi military exercised command and control, said Powell, meant "going after mobility, trucks that move supplies forward, anything that allows that army to function we will now go after."

There are 20-30 million Kurds in the Soviet Union, Iraq, Iran, Syria, Turkey.

power, and a program of industrialization for the Kurdish regions. Only 3 percent of Iraq's factories were located in the region at the time.

In the early 1970's, Iraqi Kurds received aid in their battle against Baghdad from the regime of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi in Iran. But when the Iraqi and Iranian governments reached agreement over a territorial dispute, the shah cut off aid to the Kurdish fighters. The Iraqi government then razed scores of Kurdish villages in revenge.

Although speaking Kurdish is not illegal in Iraq, the government undertook other discriminatory measures. Mass deportations of Kurds were carried out in cities like Kirkuk. They were replaced with Arabs brought in from the southern part of the country. Most oil workers in Kirkuk and Mosul are Arabs.

In 1979 the shah of Iran was overthrown by a massive revolution. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein ordered an invasion of Iran in an attempt to further the capitalist interests of his regime.

Kurdish fighters backed by Iran once again made headway in their fight for their rights. After Kurdish guerrillas, with aid from the Iranian army, took control of the town of Halabja, the Iraqi military dropped poison gas on the city in March 1988 killing 5,000 people.

Speaking on March 16, the third anniversary of the Halabja massacre, Hussein warned the Kurds that they were making the same "fatal error" they had made in previous uprisings.

"Their fate will be the same as those that came before," he said.

UN report: world's poorest countries hit by Mideast war

BY SELVA NEBBIA

The already devastated economies of the world's poorest countries have been further weakened as a result of the war against the people of Iraq, explains a recent United Nations report.

The report, prepared by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) entitled, "The Least Developed Countries 1990 Report," outlines the situation faced by the 440 million people who live in the world's 42 economically worst-off countries.

The seven-month-long war, which includes an ongoing embargo banning all trade with Iraq, resulted in a sharp drop in income from remittances sent home by workers from these countries who worked in the Arab-Persian Gulf States. A decline in tourism revenue and an increase in imports costs for petroleum and related products are also cited as major factors in the countries' worsening conditions.

Yemen, for example, is facing the loss of \$400 million in remittances and the costs of repatriation of about 885,000 Yemeni citizens returning from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. The great majority of these Yemeni workers, who constitute 8 percent of the country's population, were expelled by the Saudi government in retaliation for the Yemeni government's refusal to back the allied war against Iraq. In addition, Yemen was cut off from \$554 million in oil shipments and other aid from Iraq and Kuwait, according to the UNCTAD report.

For Bangladesh, the direct and indirect losses incurred as a result of the Arab-Persian Gulf war are currently estimated at \$1.4 billion. "This figure includes loss of workers' remittances, loss of export earnings, loss of belongings, savings and salaries of Bangladeshi employees in Iraq and Kuwait, and the cost of repatriation and initial rehabilitation of nationals previously employed in the Gulf region," the UN report explains.

Among the 42 countries classified as least developed by the United Nations are: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Samoa, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, and Yemen. Haiti is the only country in the Americas among the group.

Per capita income of \$200

These countries have an annual per capita income of slightly above \$200, explains the UN report, "corresponding to one quarter of the per capita income in all developing countries and to about 2 percent of the comparative figure for developed countries." The situation "has virtually not improved since 1980."

Tanzania, for example, has a per capita income of \$240, compared to Britain's \$9,800.

In at least 16 of the countries, the real per capita income was lower in 1990 than it was in 1980, says the UN report.

The living conditions prevailing in the 42 are "far below internationally accepted minimum standards," the report states. Adult literacy rates, for example, are barely two-thirds of those in even slightly more developed semicolonial countries.

Access to safe water is still a privilege and mainly confined to the better-off urban population. As a consequence, the countries have a "very high incidence of water-borne diseases such as malaria, river blindness and bilharzia." Women face even worse conditions, having in most of these countries about half as much access as men to health and educational services.

Foreign debt

One major contributor to the economic devastation of these countries has been the payments they are forced to make towards interest and servicing of the external debt. This has resulted in an outflow of \$3.8 billion in 1988 alone from the world's poorest countries to the coffers of the imperialist banks and financial institutions. This amount represented 28 percent of the annual export of goods and services of these countries.

The report says that by the end of 1988, the total accumulated external debt of the 42 amounted to about \$69 billion.

Of the countries' export earnings from goods and services, debt-service payments absorbed, on average, close to 30 percent and in several cases even 50 percent or more of the total.

The UN report makes a case for the cancellation of the foreign debt owed by the 42 as the only way for these countries to even have a chance at development. The debt-ser-

Tactical divisions on Mideast grow

Continued from front page

the U.S. was able to identify the changed requirements of modern warfare, it is also able to recognize the evolving order of world politics."

Right-wing columnist William Safire criticized the administration's course in a March 28 *New York Times* column. Safire wrote that the Bush administration should make use of the Kurdish rebellion to overthrow Hussein. The subhead for the column read: "U.S. waffling is losing the peace."

"Having repeatedly incited Iraqis to oust the tyrant in Baghdad; having publicly promised to clear the air of the dictator's deadly choppers — Mr. Bush suddenly choked up," wrote Safire.

"What is to explain his loss of nerve and sense of moral purpose? The answer is Brer Rabbit's fear of the 'tar baby': he does not want to become involved in a genuine uprising of Shiites in the south and Kurds in the north because that might lead to 'instability,'" Safire wrote.

"The word Mr. Bush should deliver to Baghdad is 'Freeze!' — no movement of armor no northward deployment of forces," the columnist said. "We should send a message to the Iraqi high command in Baghdad: Depose Saddam Hussein in 48 hours and begin negotiations with the Kurdish rebels — or else."

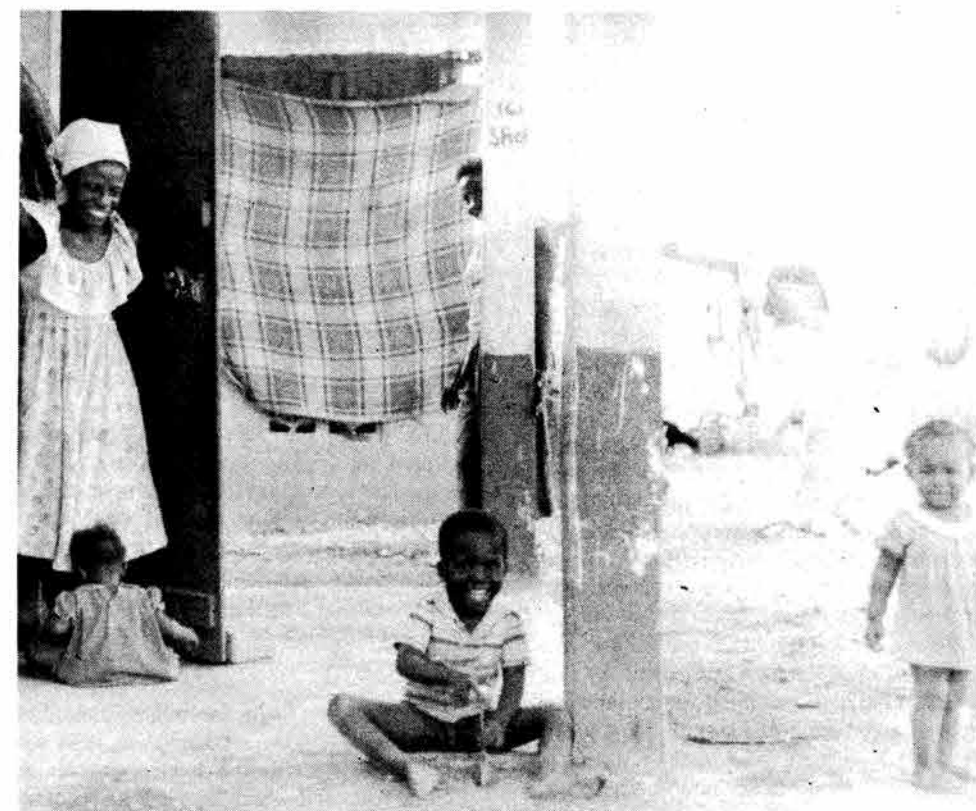
Another example of these divisions came out in an interview with Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf on March 27 with David Frost. The statement caused a flap with the White House.

By the third day of the invasion, Schwarzkopf said, "we had destroyed the Republican Guard as a militarily effective force."

Frost questioned whether the army had really been destroyed.

Schwarzkopf answered, "It is a question of how do you define the word 'destroy.' The Republican Guard was a militarily ineffective force and we had inflicted great damage upon them and they had been routed. Now, obviously, you know we didn't destroy them to the very last tank."

"Frankly, my recommendation had been, you know, continue the march," said Schwarzkopf. "I mean we had them in a rout and we could have continued to reap great destruction upon them. We could have com-



Militant/Michael Baumann
Cité Soleil, Port-au-Prince, Haiti. A United Nations report documented conditions in Haiti, one of the world's 42 poorest countries.

vice payments have been coupled with the lower prices many of the export products produced by these countries are getting on the world market.

The report cites the example of the disastrous effect the collapse of the international coffee prices has had on many of these countries. Coffee is their most important single export product.

In 1989, for example, coffee made up about 96 percent of Uganda's merchandise exports. "During the second half of the 1970s," the report explains, "one bag of coffee fetched about \$212. Uganda was at that time exporting 2.7 million bags of coffee. However, international coffee prices have gone into a nosedive in the meantime."

"As a consequence, Uganda's coffee earnings fell from \$270 million in 1988 to only \$160 million in 1989, a decline of 40 percent in one year. The same bag of Ugandan coffee which could be sold at more than \$200 a decade ago was worth less than \$70 in July 1990." This has had a devastating impact on Uganda's economy.

Besides the "enormous costs associated with the military conflict in the gulf," the UN report points to the world economic crisis, the "financial instability in the United States," and the "costs associated with the restructuring of eastern Europe" as factors contributing to the worsening economic conditions faced by the half-billion people in the 42 countries.

pletely closed the door and made it, in fact, a battle of annihilation.

"The President made the decision that we should stop at a given time, at a given place. That did leave some escape routes open for them to get back out," he said. "I think it was a very humane decision and a very courageous decision on his part also because it's one of those ones that historians are going to second-guess, you know forever. 'Why didn't he go for one more day?'; 'Why did we stop when we did, when we had them completely routed?' We are already getting the questions."

The administration reacted immediately to cover up this implied division, given the increasing right-wing criticism of the Bush administration for not going all the way in establishing complete control of Iraq.

A few days later Schwarzkopf apologized to the President for "a poor choice of words on my part [that] in any way would result in dishonor cast upon you." He also criticized the media for trying to blow his comments up into a major controversy.

The continued instability in the Arab-Persian Gulf is now the major obstacle U.S. imperialism faces in attaining its goals in the region.

Bush has made it clear that U.S. forces will not intervene in the civil war. U.S. troops occupy from 15 to 20 percent of southern Iraq.

U.S. commanders have said they will not shoot down Iraqi helicopters that are being used against the rebel forces in the north and south of the country. Rebel leaders have charged that the Iraqi government has also been using war planes to attack Kurdish positions. When rebels asked permission to fly Iraqi jets they had captured to fight against the Hussein regime, the *New York Times* reported they were turned down by Washington.

Washington hopes that Hussein's regime will defeat the rebels and then be overthrown by forces within his government or the army — which they consider a more stable option. "With this much turmoil, it seems to me unlikely he will survive," said Bush.

"We don't intend to involve ourselves in the internal conflict in Iraq," said White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater.

The Pentagon is moving ahead with plans

to set up a forward headquarters of the United States Central Command in the Gulf island-state of Bahrain. U.S. imperialism has sought for years to move the command headquarters from MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida, to the Gulf, but was unable to do so because of opposition from the governments in the region. U.S. officials have said that the military contingent would include 3,000 men.

There are more than 440,000 U.S. military personnel stationed in the Gulf region. The White House has stated that as soon as a permanent cease-fire is signed it will withdraw from Iraq. The U.S. army announced it plans to pull 20,000 troops out of Iraq in the next few weeks. This amounts to about a fifth of the troops now there.

The rebellions continue in both northern and southern Iraq, although reports indicate that the Baghdad regime has made significant headway in crushing them.

A Reuters report states that the city of Samawa, in the Euphrates Valley, was taken by the Iraqi army March 29. This was the last major southern town held by Shi'ite rebel forces.

Baghdad retook the city of Kirkuk in northern Iraq, which had been a major conquest by Kurdish forces. Government forces are now moving on other cities held by the Kurdish rebels. Baghdad claimed March 31 to have retaken the cities of Dohuk and Irbil in the north.

In both the north and south there are reports of massive civilian deaths and thousands of refugees fleeing their homes to get away from the fighting.

In the south, many Iraqis have fled to U.S.-occupied territory. An article in the *Christian Science Monitor* describes thousands roaming "the flat arid desert of southern Iraq, in search of water and food and the safety of the United States-occupied zone." Once they get there, the *Monitor* explained, they receive only what soldiers can spare from their own rations. There is no agency organized to help them.

"Don't give them anything. You'll start a riot. Please, please don't give them water," the *Monitor* quoted a U.S. soldier as telling reporters one evening. The soldier claimed the refugees would be given food and water in the morning.

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U.S. general on Mideast war

Schwarzkopf discusses conduct of war, lessons of Grenada

BY PETER THIERJUNG

Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, the commander of U.S. and allied forces in the Middle East, recently granted a series of interviews to the press. Many of his remarks centered on the conduct of the war against Iraq, the lessons of the 1983 invasion of Grenada, and the impact of the Vietnam War on U.S. forces.

In a March 27 television interview with David Frost, Schwarzkopf explained how Washington responded to the threat posed to Saudi Arabia by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

"I don't think there is any question at all that he would have eventually attacked Saudi Arabia," Schwarzkopf said. "I don't know whether he would have done it exactly at that moment or a week later, but, subsequently, you know, just the amount of ammunition, for instance, that we have found just north of the Kuwaiti border, the amount of supplies that were pre-positioned there is far in excess of anything anyone ever would have needed to either attack or defend Kuwait. So, obviously, I think we're all pretty well convinced that he had greater aims than just taking Kuwait."

Schwarzkopf claimed that "the war was not our choosing." The Iraqi regime, he said, "had ample opportunity to avoid the war."

Paraphrasing U.S. Civil War Gen. William Sherman, Schwarzkopf said, "War is the remedy that our enemy has chosen. Therefore, let them have as much of it as they want." Sherman, a Union general, is remembered for his "total war" tactics in the Civil War.

In 1864 he marched an army from Atlanta to Savannah, Georgia, leveling everything in its path, including railroads, bridges, public buildings, mills, cotton gins, and houses in order to defeat the Confederacy.

'Don't worry about enemy casualties'

"The reason why we had only 150 people killed" in the war against Iraq, Schwarzkopf said, "is because we so fiercely went after them that we struck terror into their hearts and that resulted in, I mean, 50,000 or 100,000 or 150,000 or whatever of them to be killed. I guess it could be put another way. If this battle had gone on for six months, there would have been a whole lot more than 50 or 100 or 150, so — so — but you don't — You don't pursue a battle worried about the casualties you inflict upon the enemy."

The general said the final drive against the Iraqi army, which included the massive bombing and massacre of retreating Iraqi troops, had nearly led to its annihilation, but U.S. President George Bush ordered a halt to the military offensive.

"Frankly, my recommendation had been, you know, continue the march," Schwarzkopf said. "I mean we had them in a rout and we could have continued to, you know, reap great destruction upon them."

This last remark prompted Bush and Defense Secretary Richard Cheney to publicly rebuke Schwarzkopf. They insisted that the general had agreed with the orders to halt the offensive. Schwarzkopf publicly apologized to Bush for his "poor choice of words" in a March 29 press conference.

Schwarzkopf revealed in the Frost inter-

view that the U.S. military was "never really terribly concerned about the chemical capability of the [Iraqi] Scud [missile], because even if they had a chemical warhead — and there were a lot of questions as to whether they did or not — we knew that they did not have an air-burst capability."

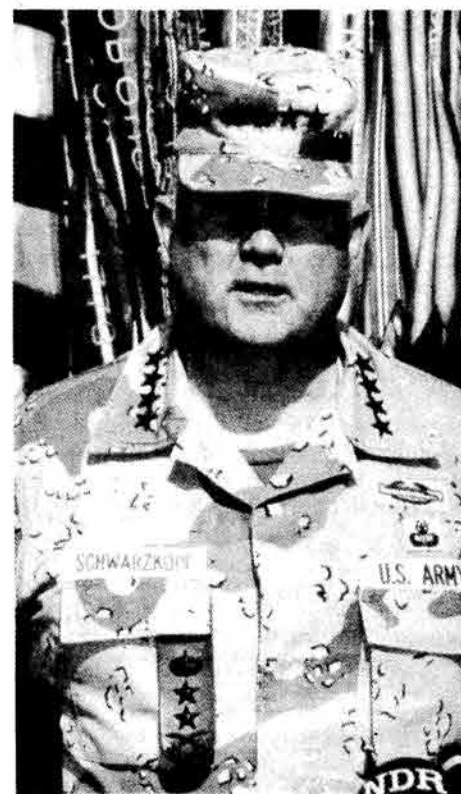
The Iraqis, said Schwarzkopf, "would have had [to have had] enough accuracy so you see that they could fire a salvo of these things in and have them all burst in some sort of a pattern to lay down a large cloud of chemical weapons." He called the Scud missile "militarily irrelevant."

Schwarzkopf explained in a March 15 interview with Barbara Walters that Hussein's greatest weakness in preparing for battle was his predictability. "We studied the Iran-Iraq campaigns very, very carefully and, based upon the Iran-Iraq campaigns, we came up with a lot of assumptions of what they would do and we weren't wrong a single time," he said.

"The more you watched his deployment of forces," Schwarzkopf told Frost, "the more he was stuffing his forces into a bag, for all intents and purposes, called Kuwait. And he was not defending his flank."

Schwarzkopf was particularly irritated when Cable News Network (CNN) aired stories by reporter Peter Arnett, who provided a picture of the civilian casualties inflicted on Iraq by the U.S. bombing. "The implication was almost as if we were lying to the American people when we were saying that we were deliberately trying not to target civilian targets," he told Walters.

In the Frost interview, Schwarzkopf



Allied commander Schwarzkopf: 'My recommendation was continue the march.'

charged CNN with "aiding and abetting an enemy."

Frost asked Schwarzkopf whether the will of soldiers to fight in a battle was more important than superior technology. "Absolutely. Absolutely," he replied. "Because, you see, they [the Iraqis] chose not to stay and fight."

Lessons of Grenada

In an interview published in the March 11 *New Republic*, Schwarzkopf said the greatest lesson of the 1983 U.S. invasion of Grenada was "never underestimate your enemy."

The invasion "was going to be quick in, quick and dirty," he said. "We were going to isolate the two airfields, we were going to get on top of all those critical buildings" — the government buildings, the radio station, the prison where Bishop was believed to be held — and "take them all and say, 'That's it, it's over with.'"

"But what started as a highly conventional operation went sour right away," Schwarzkopf said. "And it went sour because of the assumption that the Cubans weren't going to fight. We had 800 Cubans on the island who were well armed and damn sure were going to fight."

The Cubans were workers who had volunteered to help build a public airport in Grenada during the 1979-1983 revolution led by Grenada Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. Bishop's overthrow and murder by a Stalinist clique led by Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard handed Washington an opportunity to invade and assert its domination over the Caribbean island. The Cuban construction workers were attacked by the invading U.S. troops and fought back despite overwhelming odds.

Schwarzkopf said that it was also assumed that anti-aircraft weapons on the island would be ineffective and that helicopter movement would therefore be unhampered. But, he said, U.S. forces soon discovered that many of the Grenadan gunners had been trained in Cuba; they were brave and highly disciplined; not only did they remain in their posts in the face of withering fire from U.S. helicopter gunships, they fired back.

In his interview with Walters, Schwarzkopf discussed his views on the lessons of the Vietnam War. He said that as an officer during that war he had been forced to lie about the number of casualties in Vietnam. Walters asked if U.S. military officials refused to provide the numbers on Iraqi casualties to the press because of this experience.

"There was a terrible erosion in integrity in the armed forces during Vietnam," Schwarzkopf said. "I don't think that many of us came out of Vietnam and could hold our heads up and say 'My sense of integrity is still lily-white and pure,' because we all knew that we had lied about the body count. We all knew that there had been a lot of other lies and it did bad things to the officer corps."

After the Vietnam War "I came to understand that carelessness and negligence and lousy leadership and self-serving officers and generals cost human lives," Schwarzkopf said. "And you just can't forgive that. You cannot forgive that sort of crassness. People who are more concerned with their ambition than they are with their troops is unforgivable to me."

Toronto Labour Council backs right of Québec to self-determination

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

TORONTO — At its March 7 meeting the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto adopted a resolution backing self-determination for Québec.

"Today all unions in Québec, a vast majority of popular groups, women's groups, churches and all other significant social organizations favor independence," said

Monique Simmard. The vice president of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN) in Québec, Simmard was the invited speaker at the meeting.

The CSN leader said the "nationalist movement has never been so deeply rooted." She termed the movement toward independence as being "irreversible."

Simmard told the delegates and many ob-

servers who had come to hear the discussion that the national question is of utmost importance. She said, "It concerns us whether we live in Québec or any other part of the country."

Simmard explained that progressive forces in Canada, including many unions, have supported Québec's right to self-determination for many years. "But we may now have to admit that no one ever seriously thought it would happen. We are therefore unprepared for the fact it could happen within the next year or two," Simmard said.

Unionists in Québec and the rest of Canada, she said, "have a mutual challenge to promote what we believe is a just society, a society where there is social and economic justice, where we are not dominated by the corporations or the United States."

The CSN leader went on to explain that relations between Scandinavian states could serve as a model for future relations between Canada and an independent Québec. "We have more interests together, even if Québec separates, than we have with the United States."

Referring to recent struggles of Native peoples, Simmard explained that the Québec labor movement's perspective for independence would include "giving constitutional guarantees to First Nations on land claims and self-determination of their governments."

Following a discussion period, the Labour Council delegates voted overwhelmingly to endorse an Executive Board statement entitled "Quebec and the Future." The statement recommended that the Labour Council go on record "as recognizing the national rights of Québec, including self-determination, and popularize that position." It also called on the Canadian Labour Congress and the Ontario Federation of Labor "to organize speakers' tours of Québec trade unionists to events throughout the rest of Canada to educate members on the national question." The Council pledged to pursue the education of its own members "on all aspects of this question."

The Labour Council statement also included the need for discussion on the Native Rights struggle which has become more explosive in the last year since Québec police and the Canadian army attacked Mohawks defending their land in Québec. The statement recommended that "representatives of the First Nations be invited to address our council."

NEW INTERNATIONAL FUND

Washington's Assault on Iraq Opening Guns of World War III

Celebrating two new issues of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory: no. 7, special issue on Washington's war against Iraq, and no. 8, Che Guevara and the building of socialism.

The meetings listed below launch an international fund-raising effort to make the publication of these issues possible. They coincide with national meetings in each city of Socialist Workers Party members who are industrial trade unionists.

BOSTON

Speaker: Francisco Picado, Socialist Workers Party National Committee, member Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. Sat., April 6, 7 p.m. St. Stephen's Church, 419 Shawmut Ave., Donation: \$5. Tel.: (617) 247-6772.

DES MOINES, IOWA

Speaker: Ernie Mailhot, Socialist Workers Party National Committee. Sat., April 6, 7:30 p.m. 2105 Forest Ave., Donation: \$5. Tel.: (515) 246-8249.

PRICE, UTAH

Speaker: Cindy Jaquith, business and promotions director, *New International* magazine. Sat., April 6, 7:30 p.m. Ricardo's Restaurant (basement), 655 E. Main St., Donation: \$5. Tel.: (801) 637-6296 or 355-1124.

ATLANTA

Speaker: John Hawkins, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of

Birmingham, Alabama, member United Mine Workers of America. Sat., April 13, 7:30 p.m. Penta Hotel, Georgia Room, 590 Peachtree St. NW. Donation: \$5. Tel.: (404) 577-4065.

CHICAGO

Speaker: Mary Zins, Socialist Workers Party National Committee, member United Mine Workers of America. Sat., April 13. Donation: \$5. Tel.: (312) 829-6815, 829-7018.

NEW YORK

Speaker: Andrea Morell, national leader, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 13. Donation: \$5. Tel.: (212) 727-8421.

SAN FRANCISCO

Speaker: Joel Britton, Socialist Workers Party National Committee, member Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers. Sat., April 13, 7:30 p.m. Airport Travel Lodge, California Room, 326 S. Airport Blvd. Donation: \$5. Tel.: (415) 282-6255.

New magazines in French, English set to appear soon

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Two new issues of the Marxist magazine *New International*, and reprints of two issues of *Nouvelle Internationale*, the magazine in French, are being readied for the opening of the spring circulation campaign of socialist publications.

New International no. 7 carries a lead article on "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq," by Jack

NEW INTERNATIONAL FUND

Collected:
\$8,246

Goal:
\$75,000



Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.

Coming off the press at the same time is *New International* no. 8, on Che Guevara and the building of socialism. The issue includes two articles by Guevara that have long been out of print in English: "On the Concept of Value — A Reply to Alberto Mora" and "The Meaning of Socialist Planning — A Reply to Charles Bettelheim."

The issue also contains articles by Cuban Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, Cuban economist Carlos Tablada, *New International* Editor Mary-Alice Waters, and by *New International* Managing Editor Steve Clark and Jack Barnes.

The circulation drive will also have two issues that have been out of print of the magazine in French. Redesigned, with an attractive new cover, *Nouvelle Internationale* no. 1 contains the articles "Communism and the Fight for a Popular Revolutionary Government: 1848 to Today," by Waters, and "Their Trotsky and Ours: Communist Continuity Today," by Barnes.

Nouvelle Internationale no. 2 contains

"The Coming Revolution in South Africa," by Barnes, as well as "Land, Labor, and the Canadian Revolution," by Michel Dugré.

Making possible these first four issues is the New International Fund. Its goal is to raise \$75,000 by June 1. The four issues are part of a projected publication plan of 10 issues this year, including three issues of *Nueva Internacional*, the new magazine in Spanish.

The fund drive centers on bringing the magazine into the political discussions taking place in work places, farming communities, and on military bases and college and high school campuses.

Maceo Dixon writes that such a discussion led to a \$5 contribution from a worker at Atlantic Steel in Atlanta. The worker had previously subscribed to the *Militant* and had also purchased *New International* no. 6, featuring the article "The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop."

Opposed to the U.S. invasions of Grenada and Panama, this worker has supported the U.S.-led war against Iraq. Yet he wanted to contribute to the New International Fund, because, as he put it, the money "goes to a good cause."

Boosting the fund-raising effort is a series of public meetings organized to celebrate the publication of *New International* nos. 7 and 8 (see ad on page 9). Eleven meetings in the United States have already been scheduled, and supporters in other U.S. cities, as well as other countries, are preparing to hold meetings as well.

As the scoreboard this week shows, supporters in five more cities sent in funds. Supporters in Britain, Canada, and New Zealand, meanwhile, have sent in a breakdown of pledges to the fund city by city.

More than \$8,000, or 11 percent of the goal, has been received.

Contributions may be sent to New International Fund, 410 West St., New York 10014.

Scoreboard

Area	Goal	Paid	% of Total
Charleston, W.Va.	\$1,400	\$800	57%
San Francisco	3,500	1,115	32%
Atlanta	2,300	715	31%
Miami	1,200	350	29%
Cleveland	1,600	455	28%
Los Angeles	6,000	1,680	28%
Austin, Minn.	750	150	20%
Birmingham, Ala.	1,750	320	18%
Houston	1,500	255	17%
Omaha, Neb.	750	125	17%
Boston	1,500	200	13%
Philadelphia	2,000	150	8%
Newark, N.J.	3,800	260	7%
Albany, N.Y.	350		0%
Baltimore	900		0%
Chicago	2,600		0%
Des Moines	1,000		0%
Detroit	2,100		0%
Greensboro, N.C.	750		0%
Morgantown	1,250		0%
New York	7,000		0%
Phoenix	750		0%
Pittsburgh	1,900		0%
Price, Utah	600		0%
Salt Lake City	1,700		0%
San Diego	1,000		0%
Seattle	2,250		0%
St. Louis	2,000		0%
Twin Cities, Minn.	1,750		0%
Washington, D.C.	1,250		0%
TOTAL U.S.	\$57,200	\$6,575	11%
Canada	4,250	1,581	37%
Montréal	1,529	366	24%
Toronto	1,370	211	15%
Vancouver	791	494	62%
Other	560	510	91%
Australia	500		0%
Britain	6,500		0%
London	1,850		0%
Manchester	1,600		0%
Sheffield	1,600		0%
Other	1,450		0%
France	1,000		0%
Iceland	300		0%
New Zealand	3,011		0%
Auckland	770		0%
Christchurch	1,286		0%
Wellington	955		0%
Sweden	1,000		0%
Other		90	
TOTAL OVERALL	\$73,261	\$8,246	11%
SHOULD BE	\$75,000	\$21,107	28%

Labor officials lobby for antiscab bill

Continued from Page 16

industries, pushed to the wall by the employers, decided it is better to fight than concede.

"We can never forget our brothers and sisters at Eastern Airlines, Continental Airlines, International Paper, Colt Fire Arms, Phelps Dodge, the Chicago Tribune, Magic Chef, Greyhound and the New York Daily News, along with countless other IAM and other union members who have lost their jobs simply because they exercised their legal right to strike," *The Machinist* says.

While several of the strikes cited by the union paper took place during the worst years of the concessions, the battles at Eastern, International Paper, the *Daily News* and elsewhere signalled an important break from unionists simply voting for takeback contracts.

Far from showing that strikers face insurmountable legal barriers, these fights indicate it is possible to wage a struggle against the bosses' offensive.

Rather than mobilizing the resources of the labor movement to back these strikes, rally the support that exists among broad layers of working people for the battles, and exercise union power, the officialdom instead tells unionists to put their hopes in Congress, the courts, and a better business environment. This course has led to the continued weakening of the unions and the labor movement as a whole.

One reflection of this is that the number of strikes in 1990 reached an all-time low. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there were only 44 strikes involving 1,000 or more workers for the entire year. The annual average of strikes at companies of the same size since 1980 is 80. In the 30 years before 1980, the bureau recorded a low of 181 strikes at such companies in 1963, and

a high of 437 in 1953.

In addition, bureau statistics show that in 1990, 16.7 million workers — 16 percent of the work force — were members of unions, down from 25 percent in 1956.

As the dues base of the unions has grown smaller, the officialdom's course is one of simply trying to protect a narrower layer of unionized workers and deepen collaboration with the employers and their government.

In promoting the antiscab legislation, the officials have put forward no perspective for defending workers' rights and standard of living, or organizing the vast majority who are not currently members of any union. They have offered little more than lip service in support of affirmative action, rights for oppressed nationalities and women, and opposition to cuts in government spending for social programs. No mention is made of the continued declining standard of living and worsening social conditions faced by a wide section of the working class in the extensive material put out by the officials in their legislative campaign.

The scrapping of the 1938 antilabor legislation should be supported by all working people. Getting rid of the legislation, however, cannot substitute for a fighting strategy for the labor movement.

The course outlined by Kirkland and other labor tops will not halt the employers' offensive. Instead it will lead to the weakening of the labor movement.

In fighting the employers' antilabor offensive, mobilizing union power is the only way to wage effective strikes that shut down production. This kind of strike action will lead to victories that strengthen the unions. They can be an important part of building the kind of labor movement that acts as the organized strength of the working class.

Packinghouse worker fired for defending immigrants

BY IKE NAHEM

WASHINGTON, D.C. — "I was fired because I opposed the racist, discriminatory, and anti-union company policy of asking some workers — based on their looks, their citizenship status, or their race — for green cards every day.

"When I first heard of this practice I spoke to other coworkers about it. I then took it up with a union representative on the phone to see if there was anything we could do to stop such an obviously discriminatory policy."

This is how Bob Miller, a packinghouse worker at Mash's smokehouse and packaging plant in Landover, Maryland, described the beginning of a fight against the company's anti-immigrant policies. A green card is a government-issued identification card that allows immigrants to legally work in the United States. Miller was fired for "insubordination" on March 4.

Mash's, which specializes in the preparation and processing of ham, was bought in August 1990 by the Esskay company. It is a subsidiary of the Smithfield Corp., a giant food conglomerate and one of the largest meat-packing outfits in the eastern United States.

In the mid-1980s the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) was driven out of the plant by the company. Under the new ownership UFCW Local 27 was recognized as the bargaining agent for the plant's 150 workers. It wasn't until March 11, one week after Miller's firing, that workers approved a contract that runs for four years.

About half of the workers at Esskay are immigrants, most from Mexico and some from Southeast Asia and Africa.

When Miller called the union's offices, one of the local's officials agreed that the company's practice was discriminatory.

An AFL-CIO pamphlet, entitled *Working in the USA, Know Your Rights*, explains that "Employers can be charged penalties if found to have asked only those who look or sound foreign or are of a particular national origin for documents showing proof of their identity and work authorization."

Several days after talking with the union official, Miller said, "I signed in for the afternoon shift at the security shack by the

plant gate. I was told to see the plant manager right away."

Prior to being fired Miller was asked why he had contacted the union, what his "problem" was with the company policy, and his nationality.

Since the firing the union has taken up Miller's fight to win back his job with backpay. He has gotten assistance from the National Council of La Raza and the American Civil Liberties Union national immigration department. Miller was also interviewed on National Public Radio about his fight.

Youth meet in Cyprus to discuss Mideast war

BY ARGYRIS MALAPANIS

AND DEREK BRACEY

NICOSIA, Cyprus — The Youth Forum for a Just and Lasting Peace in the Middle East opened here March 30.

"While the war in the [Arab-Persian] Gulf has ended, the problems facing the peoples in the Middle East have accelerated," Puso Leonard Tladi said opening the international conference. "This war, led by the United States, was an unjust war against the Iraqi people. Our task as youth is not to analyze the war, but to draw lessons and decide on concrete actions to be taken."

Tladi is the president of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) based in Budapest, Hungary.

The youth forum is sponsored by the WFDY and is being hosted by the United Democratic Youth Organization of Cyprus. According to the forum program, the meeting will take up the challenges facing working people in the Middle East after the end of the Gulf war, the occupation of Iraqi territory by foreign troops, and the struggle for democracy and human rights in the region.

The Palestinian question, the crisis in Lebanon, and the occupation of northern Cyprus by Turkish troops will also be discussed.

More than 40 delegates of 25 youth organizations from 22 countries and the occupied Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza are participating in the conference.

Soviet vote masks disintegration of union

BY JUDY STRANAHAN

Voters in the Soviet Union approved a March 17 referendum initiated last December at the Congress of People's Deputies, the USSR's supreme constitutional authority. The measure was aimed at securing a mandate for Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's policies.

"Do you consider it necessary to preserve the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a renewed federation of equal sovereign republics, in which the rights and freedoms of people of any nationality will be fully guaranteed?" the referendum asked. Far from becoming a wide mandate, the initiative passed by a margin of 59 percent.

The decision to place the initiative before Soviet voters flows from the needs of the ruling stratum in the Soviet Union: the bureaucratic caste is faced with the disintegration of the USSR as oppressed nationalities fight for independence and there is a worsening of the deep-going economic crisis.

"The thing in question is the fate of our people and the fate of our whole civilization," President Gorbachev said prior to the vote. He claimed that rebellions in the republics and the disintegration of the union would lead to "the flames of war."

'People want life to be normal'

Giving the illusion that the regime is championing the true interests of the masses, Gorbachev said a "yes" vote "will make it possible to put an end to destructive processes taking place in our society and make a resolute turn toward the restoration of normal conditions of life and work." The Soviet people, he said, "are tired of endless disputes and rising passions . . . people want that life become normal."

Gorbachev had hoped for wide approval of the initiative as a cover with which to justify the course of the bureaucratic caste. Recently the regime has stepped up attacks on the rights and liberties of working people, assaults on workers' strikes, and increasing repressive measures against nationalist struggles in the republics.

In addition to Gorbachev's vigorous campaign for a 'yes' vote, the Communist Party (CP), KGB and army officials, and the Russian Orthodox Church also campaigned on behalf of the referendum. Using scare tactics, CP spokespeople said that should the initiative fail, the Soviet Union could face civil war with the republics, economic collapse, and poverty.

Vote exposes political crisis

Rather than marking a clear-cut victory for Gorbachev, the events leading up to the vote and the results of the initiative show that the political crisis in the Soviet Union is deepening.

Of the 15 republics in the Soviet Union, only Byelorussia, Kirghizia, Tadjikistan, and Turkmenistan voted on the initiative as it was originally stated, and did not add other questions to the ballot.

Six republics, including Lithuania and Latvia, refused to vote altogether. Latvia, Lithuania, and the republic of Estonia recently held their own polls favoring independence from the Soviet Union.

In addition to voting on the referendum, Ukrainians voted on a measure stating, "Ukraine is supposed to be in a Union of Soviet Sovereign States on the basis of the Declaration of Sovereignty." Three regions in the western Ukraine added a third ballot asking, "Do you want Ukraine to become an independent state?"

In Azerbaijan, people were asked, "Do you think it useful for Azerbaijan to further participate in a Union of Sovereign States as a Sovereign State?"

People in Uzbekistan were asked whether they wanted "to belong to a new Union."

In the republic of Russia, the referendum carried a measure on the direct election of a president for the republic. And people in Moscow voted whether to elect a mayor. Both of these initiatives were expected to pass.

The presidential-election measure was backed by Boris Yeltsin, who is chairman of the Russian parliament's presidium.

At one time a supporter of Gorbachev, Yeltsin recently called for his resignation. On a nationally televised program in late February, Yeltsin charged Gorbachev with bringing "the country to dictatorship, eloquently terming this 'presidential rule'."

Yeltsin is pressing for more autonomy for Russia and more control over the republic's resources.

A week before the poll was taken, up to 500,000 people rallied in Moscow to demand that Gorbachev resign. The protests called on others to vote "no" on the referendum.

Nationalist struggles in republics

Rising nationalist struggles within the republics are at the center of the accelerating crisis of the Soviet Union.

Massive protests, rallies, strikes, and other actions demanding national self-determination and rights have swept through the Soviet Union over the past period.

In January, Soviet military forces opened a brutal assault against pro-independence protests in Latvia and Lithuania. A year earlier, Soviet troops were used to impose martial law in the republic of Azerbaijan.

Pressing the need to continue to deny the rights of oppressed nationalities, Gorbachev portrayed those opposed to the referendum as seeking to bring widespread political and economic chaos to the country.

"My firm conviction is that if a deep split occurs in society, there will be no winners. All will be losers," he said on the eve of the vote.

"It is even hard to imagine how many troubles and calamities will follow the disintegration of the country, the opposition of people and ethnic groups," Gorbachev said on a national TV program.

"Disintegration of the power that is one of the bastions of peace today is fraught with an overall upheaval . . . of unprecedented dimensions," he said.

But rather than a "bastion of peace," the regime defends, through force and violence, the privileged bureaucratic layer that sits on top of Soviet society. The course of the regime is the opposite of that of the first years of the revolution.

Following the 1917 revolution, V.I. Lenin



Demonstration outside Kremlin. Sign tells Gorbachev: "No one trusts you any more. Get out!"

and the Bolshevik party advanced the communist perspective that the prison house of nations that existed under the czar could only become a true union through the voluntary association of the republics — based on the desire of working people to do so. With the rise of the counterrevolution headed by Joseph Stalin in the mid-1920s, this policy was reversed. The free union was again replaced with a prison house of nations, and has been kept together through force and violence organized through the secret police ever since.

Far from being a way for the Soviet people to engage in politics, the current referendum is a parliamentary tool used to buoy the power of the Soviet regime.

Leon Trotsky, a central leader of the Russian revolution who helped lead a fight to defend the communist course against the counterrevolution, characterized the Stalin regime as Bonapartist — one that appears to stand above classes in a society that is coming

apart. It acts to maintain order in the interests of the ruling stratum, in this case, the parasitic caste in the USSR.

"The Stalin regime," Trotsky said, "rising above a politically atomized society, resting upon a police and officers' corps, and allowing of no control whatever, is obviously a variation of Bonapartism." Trotsky explained that referendums and initiatives are "the democratic ritual of Bonapartism."

"From time to time, the question is presented to the citizens: for or against the leader?" Trotsky writes. "And the voter feels the barrel of a revolver between his shoulders."

Economic crisis deepens

As the political crisis continues, the Soviet economy is worsening as well. Despite attempts to attract loans and capital investment from imperialist countries — Washington, Bonn, and London have not come through to the extent hoped for.

A several-year-long infusion of funds from Western banks did not help. The Soviet government increased its net debt to \$39.3 billion in 1989 from \$16.7 billion in 1986. As a result, banks have virtually stopped all lending, demanding payment on the outstanding loans instead.

According to Jakov Urinson, the chief forecaster for Gosplan, the Soviet planning body, the USSR's gross national product (GNP) — the total value of all goods and services produced — will decline more than 11 percent in 1991. Nikolai Shmelov, an economist for the Academy of Sciences, told the daily *Moskovsky Komsomolets* recently that the GNP decline would reach 25 percent this year.

Shmelov also said that famine conditions may soon appear in the Soviet Union if the decline in agricultural production continues. He cited an ongoing mass slaughter of cattle, a reduction of plowed lands, and the possibility that potato plantings this year will be only a quarter of last year's.

According to Urinson, inflation would

Continued on Page 13



Moldavians, enforcing election boycott, burn ballot box seized from police station.

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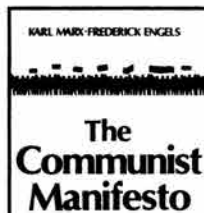
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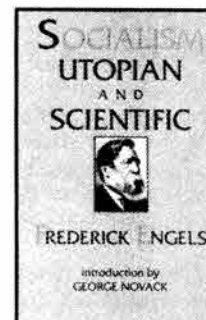
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Cuba — South Africa: After the Battle. Video. Sat., April 20, 7:30 p.m. 111 21st St. S. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

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Socialist Campaign Rally. Speakers: Elizabeth Stone, Juan Villagómez, John Evenhuis, Socialist Workers Party candidates for Board of Trustees of the Los Angeles Community College District. Sat., April 6, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Socialist Workers Campaign Committee. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

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Defend the Palestinian People. Sat., April 6, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (305) 323-3079.

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The People of Iraq Face 'Imminent Catastrophe.' Video. Speakers: Ken Morgan, Socialist Workers Party candidate for City Council, activist Baltimore Coalition Against U.S. Inter-

vention in the Middle East; Kaubar Siddique, Islamic Peoples Movement, editor *New Trend*. Sat., April 6, Dinner, 6 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: Dinner \$3, program \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

MINNESOTA

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Stop Cop Brutality. Video of interviews with victims. Speakers: Vince Bazzachini, International Association of Machinists Lodge 1833; Chris Spotted Eagle, artist; Evan Roberts, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Minneapolis School Board, member Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., April 6, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

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Socialist Educational Conference. Grand Opening Pathfinder Books. "The Fight Against Imperialism and War." Sat., April 6, 3 p.m. "Decline of the American Empire." Sat., April 6, 7:30 p.m. "Prospects for Socialism in the 1990s." Sun., April 7, 11 a.m. Speaker: James Mac Warren, Socialist Workers Party 1988 candidate for U.S. President. 1622 S Broadway. Donation: \$5. Sponsors: Young Socialist Alliance, Socialist Workers Campaign. Tel: (314) 421-3808, 361-0250.

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WASHINGTON

Seattle

The Soviet Union in World Politics. Speaker: Mark Severs, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 6, 7:30 p.m. 1405 E Madison. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

WEST VIRGINIA

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Revolutionary Cuba Today: Cuba's Role in the Fight against the War in the Middle East. Slideshow. Speaker: Jon Hillson, Socialist Workers Party, visited Cuba, member Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. Sat., April 6, 7:30 p.m. 221 Pleasant St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

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The Frame-up of Mark Curtis. Video. Speaker: Joyce Fairchild, Curtis supporter, participant in delegation to United Nations Commission on Human Rights meeting in Geneva. Fri., April 5, 7:30 p.m. Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Donation: £1. Sponsor: Militant Forums. Tel: 061-839 1766.

participant in delegation to United Nations Commission on Human Rights meeting in Geneva. Fri., April 5, 7:30 p.m. Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Donation: £1. Sponsor: Militant Forums. Tel: 061-839 1766.

CANADA

Montréal

Ottawa's Anti-Québec Campaign and the Fight for Québec Sovereignty. Speakers: Joe Young, Communist League candidate for mayor of Toronto, member International Association of Machinists; Michel Dugré, Communist League. Sat., April 6, 7:30 p.m. 6566 boul. Saint-Laurent. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Forum Lutte Ouvrière. Tel: (514) 273-2503.

Young Socialists Discussions on the Middle East War. Every Sun., 3 p.m. 6566 boul. Saint-Laurent. Tel: (514) 273-2503.

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Lessons for Today from World War II, Not a War for Democracy. Speaker: Mary Ellen Marus, Communist League. Sat., April 6, 7:30 p.m. 1053 Kingsway, Suite 102. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

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THE FRAME-UP OF MARK CURTIS



A packinghouse worker's fight for justice
BY MARGARET JAYKO

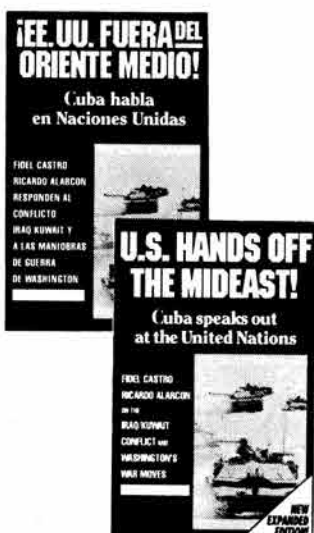
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—THE GREAT SOCIETY—

Yellow ribbon fares — Those special "welcome home" fares being offered to returning Gulf GIs



Harry Ring

by major airlines are generally higher than the discount fares now being offered the public. Like, American Airlines: San José to Newark; military round-trip fare, \$700; summer sale, \$398.

Fish story — In water-conscious California, San Diego Mayor Mau-

reen O'Connor pointed to the modest consumption at her two-acre homesite. She neglected to mention that her figures were from only one of two water meters on the property and she actually uses nine times as much as the average homeowner. She explains, "Just remember, I have two houses. It's just that the fish and trees live at one."

Peace dividend? — The makers of the Gulf war troop carrier, the Hummer, or Humee, are considering making the 5,200-pound dune buggy available to the public. About \$30,000, roof-mounted machine gun or missile launcher, extra.

Then why does he take better pay? — Once a month, Kevin Jenkins, chief honcho at Canadian Air-

lines International, assertedly cleans toilets, tosses baggage, and serves refreshments. "I don't believe I have a better job," he says. "I have a different job."

Human Values, Inc. — Airline exec Jenkins says he grew up in a family that emphasized human values, not business smarts. In the 15 months since he's headed up Canadian Airlines and five other outfits it swallowed up, 1,900 workers have been laid off, with more cutbacks scheduled.

The equitable society — In the past decade the income gap between workers and chief executives has doubled. In 1990, chief execs at 176 big corporations enjoyed a median compensation (half above, half

below) of \$1.7 million — 70 to 80 times the average worker's wage.

Dick Tracy — The first week in March, unemployment claims shot up by 519,000, an eight-year high. Said Samuel Kahan, chief economist at a Chicago bank, "This suggests that more people are being laid off and it signifies continuing weakening of the economy."

Take that — In Reno, Nevada, a judge found Andrew Anderson, an opponent of abortion rights, guilty of battery after he broke into a broadcasting studio and assaulted a talk show host because he didn't like what he was saying. The stern judge sentenced Anderson to 96 hours of community service.

Rights champion — Asked if she intended to challenge the "glass ceiling" keeping women executives out of top corporate jobs, Labor Secretary Lynn Martin was apparently vague enough that the media could report, variously, that she was for it, against it, and neutral. Maybe she offered the classic politician's response, "I'm already on that."

Lest we forget — Items for this column should be sent to Harry Ring, Pathfinder Bookstore, 2546 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90006. Clippings sent to the editorial office in New York are forwarded, but it takes longer.

Curtis defense wraps up successful fund drive

BY CHRIS REMPLE

DES MOINES, Iowa — Contributions of \$16,000 and pledges totaling \$26,500 have been made to a fund-raising drive by the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. The defense committee is organizing to rapidly collect the outstanding pledges to wrap up a successful fund effort.

The fund will cover the costs of the international delegation that traveled to Geneva, Switzerland, in February to attend a meeting of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Contributions will also be applied toward legal expenses in the continuing fight for Mark Curtis' freedom, including costs of filing a federal appeal of his conviction and pursuing a civil rights lawsuit against the Des Moines police, who severely beat him after his arrest.

Curtis, a union and political activist, was framed up by Des Moines police on rape and burglary charges in 1988. The frame-up stemmed from his defense of immigrant coworkers victimized during an immigration raid at the meat-packing plant where they worked. Curtis has already served more than 2 years of his 25-year jail term. His fight for justice has won support from across the United States and around the world.

Supporters and leaders of the defense effort have attended a series of UN human rights commission meetings. Each effort has broadened the worldwide knowledge and support of Curtis' case among governmental representatives, nongovernmental organizations, and prominent individuals.

A team of volunteers from across the United States was organized to help raise the funds. Rail workers from Seattle and Salt Lake City arrived in Des Moines to work on the fundraising full-time. They were joined by a supporter who happened to be moving across country and a unionist who works in the airline industry.

"We found deep interest in Mark's case," said Mitchell Rosenberg, coordinator of the fund drive. "When calling people for contributions, we discussed the fight to defend Mark in the context of current politics, especially the attacks on the labor movement and Washington's war against Iraq."

Letting supporters know about the new supporters of Curtis' fight, such as the National Union of Mineworkers of South Africa, Coretta Scott King, and Detroit Mayor Coleman Young, helped them see the political value of their contributions.

"When we explained Mark's fight, his

continuing activity in prison, and the growing support around the world," Rosenberg said, "supporters became eager to contribute."

Many supporters contacted had endorsed the defense committee during the past two years and "appreciated hearing from us again," the fund coordinator said. "By far the most enthusiastic support came from the labor movement, from unionists who have been through struggles and see this case as their own."

Rosenberg reported that a president of a United Mine Workers Union local in southern Illinois, who has been an endorser for some time, volunteered to take the case before the local for support. As a result, the members voted to donate \$500 to the defense effort. A local of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union made a contribution as well. Individual unionists also made contributions, some despite layoffs or being off work due to injury.

Civil rights fighters, primarily from the South, also responded enthusiastically to the fund. "New support can be won among artists and entertainers, some of whom are activists in social causes like the fight for abortion rights, to oppose war, or to defend political rights," Rosenberg said. "We received a contribution of \$1,000 from a prominent rock musician who wants to remain anonymous."

"Contributions for the fund drive came from a broad layer of supporters," Rosenberg

said. "First, from backers of Mark's fight who view it as their own and respond to all the needs of the defense committee. Second, from a broader layer who have supported some of the committee's efforts. And third, a small but important group of people who can make larger contributions."

"The bulk of the contributions were under \$100," Rosenberg added.

"The most significant gain for the ongoing work of the committee is that fundraising by support groups in the U.S. and around the world was stepped up," he said. "Groups in Britain, Sweden, Canada, and Iceland sent in contributions, as did a political organization in France."

In the United States, support groups in Austin, Minnesota; Chicago; Detroit; Miami; Newark, New Jersey; St. Louis; Salt Lake City; and Seattle combined reaching out for support with fundraising.

A recent meeting of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee voted to launch an aggressive campaign to reach out for new support in the labor movement. "Given the success in this fund drive, we're confident the outreach campaign will win new ground and support in the fight to defend Mark," Rosenberg concluded.

Outstanding pledges should be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311. Tax-deductible contributions can be made out to the Political Rights Defense Fund, Inc.

USSR vote masks disintegration

Continued from Page 11

reach 7 percent in March and unemployment stands at 2.5 percent. The budget deficit could grow to 18 percent to 20 percent of the state's expenses, he said. "We have been repeatedly on the verge of a crisis and I think we are in a critical situation already," Urinson said.

Sales tax and price increases

Responding to the economic situation, the Soviet government has imposed a 5 percent sales tax. The tax could place certain commodities out of the reach of the average Soviet worker, who makes 250 rubles a month. Some people have dubbed the new tax the "presidential tax," because Gorbachev used his presidential powers to raise their expenses, but not their standard of living.

More than one-third of the Soviet federal budget is spent on subsidizing food and other consumer goods. To offset the expense to the government, the regime has also set in motion increases on foodstuffs, goods for children, building materials, and consumer goods. The prices of some scarce items, like cars and electronics goods, will reportedly rise tenfold.

The government newspaper *Izvestia* reported government officials proposed Soviet citizens would be partially compensated for rising food costs and for other price increases from the budgets of the 15 Soviet republics. Russian Information Minister Mikhail Poltoranin said his republic could not afford the cost.

To prepare for a reaction to the increase in prices, in March the Soviet regime began to take steps to reinforce the police apparatus and instituted joint army-police patrols in more than 400 Soviet cities.

Strike by Soviet miners

Partly in response to the price increases, the Independent Miners' Union called a strike

around five demands. The demands include the resignation of Gorbachev, dissolution of the national parliament, resignation of the cabinet of ministers, transfer of power to the presidents of the republics, and improvements in the living standards and working conditions of miners.

After miners went on strike in 1989, the Soviet government agreed to improve wages and working conditions, which miners say the government failed to honor.

Over the past year, miners have received wage increases of as much as 100 percent, more vacation time, and a say in management decisions, but union leaders say many of these gains will be wiped out by price increases.

Of the 1.2 million miners in the Soviet Union, some 300,000 have so far joined the strike. Out of the 600 coal mines in operation, 165 pits have been closed.

Some miners have said they oppose the strike because they think the union's demands are unreasonable. Sergei Vasiliev, one of the miners who helped lead the 1989 strike at his mine in Donetsk, said the government "can give the miners more money only at the expense of someone else."

But Pavel Shushpanov, chairman of the union, explained, "We have no alternative." And at a news conference in Moscow, Alexander Sergeyev, deputy chairman of the union, said, "We will try to show that the workers of this country are not cowed, but are still capable of fighting for their rights."

Vadim V. Bakatin, an advisor to Gorbachev, accused the miners of "introducing chaos" and trying to "paralyze the entire economy."

Miners have complained that the government has responded to their strike by knocking out telephone and telegraph lines that connect mining regions with the rest of the country. They also say government officials have threatened them with heavy fines, lawsuits and other sanctions.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interests of the Working People
April 11, 1966

The international movement against the war in Vietnam came out in flying colors on March 25 and 26, it is now evident as reports come in from all over the world. As the citizens of Danang, Hué and Saigon paraded against the U.S.-supported military clique in south Vietnam, rallies against the war were held from Auckland, New Zealand, to Oslo, Norway; and from Ottawa to Tel Aviv.

In London, the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign held a rally on the night before the march which was addressed among other persons, by Ralph Schoenman of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation. Schoenman, who recently returned from a visit to north Vietnam, had testified in New York City in defense of David Mitchell — the student who refused to report for induction in the American army on the grounds that under the Nuremberg statutes, the United States is engaging in a criminal war.

In Vietnam, Schoenman stated, he talked to men and women who had suffered torture under techniques practiced by the Nazis and later by the French imperialists in Algeria.

THE MILITANT

Official Weekly Organ of the Socialist Workers Party

April 12, 1941

Newark's 45,000 colored people repre-

sent one-tenth of the city's population. In every sense, they are the most exploited and oppressed people in the city.

They are locked out of most of the big industries, forced to serve as janitors or porters or as domestic workers. Only in some of the steel and allied factories are they hired, and then almost exclusively as laborers, doing the heavy and dirty work.

The big corporation, Public Service, which milks the public out of millions each year, refuses to hire them except in menial jobs such as cleaning toilets or digging ditches.

The Brewster Aircraft plant of Port Newark, invited here by the City Commission under very favorable tax and rent terms, refuses to hire a single colored laborer. Prudential Insurance company, one of the biggest in the world, which gets millions from colored clients, will not hire any.

Consequently, a large part of the colored people are forced onto the relief rolls, or, if they are a little more lucky, onto WPA jobs, at standards which make it practically impossible for them to bring their families up under healthy conditions. This explains why the 'flu and pneumonia epidemics each year start sooner in the colored neighborhoods than elsewhere.

The overwhelming majority of city departments, although they are supposed to be conducted under civil service, maneuver to have only one or two, or no colored employees at all.

The City Hospital refuses to employ a single Negro doctor or nurse, although many are eligible and one fourth of the hospital's patients are colored.

Condemn assault on Kurds

Working people around the world should condemn the murderous assault on the Kurdish people being carried out by the Iraqi government.

An oppressed nationality divided between five countries, the Kurds in Iraq are demanding a form of autonomy through which they can claim some of their rights.

The Kurdish uprising had pushed Hussein's army out of a wide area of northern Iraq. The retaking of Kirkuk by tens of thousands of Iraqi troops was proudly displayed by Iraqi government officials to the foreign press.

This move is intertwined with Hussein smashing rebellions in the south of the country and the devastation caused by the U.S. blockade, bombing, and invasion of Iraq.

The lives and livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis lie in shambles. The March 20 United Nations report on conditions in Iraq explains the "imminent catastrophe" the country is facing. On top of the effects of the U.S. war, the Iraqi people now face the devastation brought upon them by the capitalist ruling regime in Baghdad.

The Hussein regime's interests are diametrically opposed to those of working people in the country. The government

actions toward the Kurds are cut from the same cloth as what was done to the Iraqi workers and peasants in uniform sent to sit in the Kuwaiti desert and endure the six-week U.S. bombardment.

As the allied war progressed, the Iraqi regime took away the air cover, the officer corps withdrew, and no effort was made to get food and other supplies to the troops. Hussein left the soldiers there for slaughter by the imperialists.

Working people should also reject the calls by some in U.S. ruling circles for U.S. intervention on behalf of the Kurds. Earlier, some of these same forces pressed the tactical prescription of prolonging the blockade of Iraq as the means of achieving Washington's war aims, rather than heading rapidly toward an invasion.

As its war against the Iraqi people as a whole shows, Washington is no friend of the Kurdish people. It is in alliance with the capitalist rulers in Turkey, Syria, and Iran who want to make sure the weakening of the Hussein regime does not result in the deepening of the fight for Kurdish self-determination.

Police Chief "Gates must go!"

The call for an April 6 protest in Los Angeles demanding "Gates must go!" is an example of the kind of actions needed to mobilize the thousands of working people outraged by the cop beating of Rodney King and to force Police Chief Daryl Gates from office.

Tens of thousands of people hold Gates accountable for the brutal actions of the Los Angeles cops. Forcing Gates out of office would be a giant victory for working people everywhere who are consistently told that their actions cannot affect change.

Continuing revelations have further exposed the rampant violence routinely meted out by Los Angeles cops to working people, especially Blacks and Latinos. Past incidents, including the killing of Tracy Mayberry — a Black man beaten to death by the cops last November, are seeing the light of day. The Mexican consul general in the city has spoken out against the excessive use of force by police against Mexican citizens there.

The call by labor officials and organizations for Gates' ouster is significant and reflects the depth of the anger among workers, who experience the arbitrary and heavy hand of cops as a daily fact of life.

All unionists should get involved in the fight to get Gates out. They should work to bring the pressure of their labor organizations to bear in this struggle against police brutality. A blow against cop violence in Los Angeles would

strengthen the ability of unionists to defend themselves in their own battles where police are used against them. The discussion and decision to send a message of support to Rodney King by members of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 1-547 is an example that unionists everywhere can emulate.

The widespread protests by working people and others in Los Angeles has turned a spotlight on the conduct of police across the country. The Los Angeles protests have encouraged victims of police brutality in other cities to speak out and demand justice. From New York to San Francisco, this spotlight is making it a little more difficult for the cops to conduct themselves with impunity.

Efforts by the cops to smear Rodney King — attempting to turn the victim into the criminal — are blatant diversions aimed at confusing the public. Protests like the April 6 action, however, help keep the focus on the cops' criminal and racist conduct.

Gates and his political backers have made it clear that they are not willing to give up without a fight. The police chief has vowed not to resign and is campaigning to counter growing sentiment for his ouster. More actions like the one on April 6 will help build the pressure on authorities to get rid of Gates and bring King's attackers to justice. This fight can be won. April 6 marks a step forward.

Ruling a blow to civil liberties

The recent Supreme Court ruling that a coerced confession need not automatically nullify a conviction represents a serious blow against democratic rights.

Allowing forced confessions to stand as part of a conviction sets a dangerous precedent that undermines and even reverses previous court rulings protecting people from victimization while in the hands of the authorities.

The court's decision reinforces the Bush administration's overall drive to boost the powers of cop agencies and the courts at the expense of civil liberties.

The ruling is particularly brazen because it has come at a time when more and more light has been shed on the brutal methods employed by the cops.

The decision will act as a green light to cops to use force and violence to shore up their cases. It gives a nod to both the cops and court prosecutors that it is acceptable to trample on the rights of working people in the pursuit of a conviction.

There are more than enough examples to show that police authorities are willing to apply ruthless methods in order to prop up their cases.

Britain's Birmingham Six were set free recently after serving 16 years in prison. Part of their frame-up conviction rested on confessions extracted out of the defendants while in police custody. In Britain, three Black youth, known as

the Tottenham Three, were convicted of murdering a cop solely on the basis of forced confessions.

Mark Curtis, a packinghouse worker and political activist in Des Moines, Iowa, was convicted in a rape frame-up. When he first arrived at the county jail following his arrest, the cops told him he would have to "confess to the charges." He was beaten when he refused.

Coerced confessions are not only used to back up political frame-ups. Anyone suspected of a crime, arrested, or facing charges, can potentially fall victim to these methods. In fact, civil libertarians have noted that a large number of confessions are obtained through coercive methods.

They correctly point out that this decision will codify the practice of coercing confessions and reinforce to prosecutors the notion that they need not fear dismissal of their case. Supporters of democratic rights have voiced well-founded concern that the ruling could accelerate the use of coercion to obtain confessions and convictions.

The Supreme Court ruling constitutes a blatant attack on civil liberties. It is aimed at all working people. The labor movement should roundly condemn the decision and actively oppose every attempt to undermine, limit, or overturn democratic rights.

Manifesto of SWP at end of WWII

BY GREG McCARTAN

A comprehensive presentation of the political conclusions workers — in and out of uniform — farmers, and students and other youth can draw from the imperialist assault on the Iraqi people will appear in the soon-to-be-released *New Internationalist* no. 7 entitled "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq."

Over the past months the *Militant* has encouraged its readers to study the lessons of opposition to earlier imperialist wars and assaults on working people at home. As Washington drags the world into more widespread and

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

bloody conflicts, fighting workers and youth can continue to draw on the historic experiences of the working class in its fight against imperialism and war.

World War II ended when the U.S. imperialists dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The August 18, 1945, issue of the *Militant*, published immediately after the official end of that war, featured a banner headline that read: "THERE IS NO PEACE!"

A manifesto of the SWP National Committee, addressed to "workers, farmers — toilers of America," said that "six years of wholesale slaughter and devastation have been brought to an awful climax with the discovery of the atomic bomb and its use, with frightful effect, against the people of Japan."

The devastating bombing of the two cities — the first use of nuclear weapons in a war — "sent a wave of revulsion and anxiety throughout the world, especially among the toiling populations who are the principle victims of war," the statement said.

"People of every land are celebrating the end of the carnage, not so much with joy as with a sense of relief that it has come to an end. They do not and cannot feel secure," said the party manifesto. "Over their celebrations, like a lowering cloud, hangs a grim foreboding of things yet to come."

This foreboding, combined with "a hatred of imperialist war," is driving workers "to revolutionary political conclusions. The imperialist rulers, who alone have profited from the war, seek to prevent this at all costs," the statement said. "They want to sidetrack the workers from the struggle to end the capitalist system and establish socialism, which is the only sure guarantee that another war will be impossible."

With the end of the war "all of the organs of the ruling class propaganda are mobilized to deceive the masses into thinking that the end of the war means the dawn of true and lasting peace and the peace can be preserved without revolutionary social change."

Moreover, the propaganda campaign aimed to "persuade the masses that even if another war should come, the American people need not fear annihilation because means will be found to 'control' the use of the atomic bomb and insure that it will not be used against this country."

Rejecting both of these conclusions, the SWP leadership pointed out that more wars were on the horizon.

"Two terrible world wars have proven . . . that capitalism is incapable of utilizing the great advances in science and technique for the enrichment of human life. In 'peace,' capitalism condemns the masses to poverty and insecurity amidst potential and plenty. In war, it conscripts industry and science for the mutual destruction of the peoples."

"Let no man deceive himself with the thought that because Germany and Japan have been defeated, a new war, at least during the lifetime of this generation, is unlikely. Capitalist appetites and imperialist rivalries remain. Only the focus of the antagonisms has shifted," the statement said.

"War is the end result of the ceaseless capitalist hunt for profits, markets, colonies, spheres of influence," it said.

Noting that wars cannot be prevented by "treaties and agreements among the imperialist bandits," the manifesto points out that "the United Nations organization will not be able to prevent a third world war. Its very formula of 'peace by force' implies war and not peace."

In the statement the party leadership refutes the propaganda — used by the ruling class then, as it does to this day — that divides the "nations into 'aggressors' and 'peace-lovers.'" This is a lie. The people of every nation hate war, for they are its victims. They are plunged into war by the capitalist rulers, who alone profit from it.

The statement concludes with a call to working people the world over.

"Only the working class, which suffers the cruelties of capitalism in peace and war, can deal the death-blow to this foul system. The workers can rally the broadest masses to their liberating banner and change the world. Having abolished capitalism, they can harness the productive forces and the wondrous discoveries of science to the service of human needs."

"All on one condition — that capitalism, the strangler of human progress, is destroyed!"

Rail workers protest contract proposals

BY MIKE GALATI

GILLETTE, Wyoming — Two hundred unionists and their families took part in a labor rally held here March 23. The rally, sponsored by United Transportation Union Local 465 in Gillette, was organized to protest the proposed Presidential Emergency Board's recommendations for a national freight contract in the railroad industry.

Negotiations between the 10 rail unions and the various railroads has been dragging on for almost three years. Railroad workers have been working under the terms of the expired contract.

On January 15 the Presidential Emergency Board, a three-member arbitration panel appointed by the White House under the terms of the federal Railway Labor Act, presented its report to President George Bush. The report is essentially a proposed contract settlement by the board to both the rail carriers and the unions. At this point it is a nonbinding proposal to both parties.

But in the past, when there have been national rail strikes, Congress has intervened to order the rail unions back to work and imposed a contract usually modeled after the recommendations of the presidential emergency boards.

The railroad companies wanted the board to recommend a pay freeze for all rail workers over the course of an eight-year contract. The employers were also seeking a 20 percent pay cut for conductors and brakemen.

The current board's recommendations represent a massive attack on the standard of living and working conditions of rail workers. The recommendations include a small wage increase of 10 percent over the term of the six-year proposed contract.

It would also include 11 percent in lump-sum pay increases spread over the life of the contract. These lump-sum payments would not become part of the wage base and would not figure into either benefits or pensions. Up to one-half of these lump-sum payments would be set aside to pay for increased health insurance costs to the carriers.

Other proposals include: increasing the out-of-pocket costs of health insurance coverage for current employees and imposing an inferior health insurance program on new hires; and increasing the basic-day-miles from 108 to 130. Numerous other attacks on work rules and working conditions include a proposal that any company attempts to further reduce train crew size be subject to binding arbitration if local agreements are not reached by October 1991.

The mileage figure is the equivalent of a day's pay for conductors, brakemen, and engineers who work over the road, outside the rail yard.

In 1985, when the last contract was adopted, the two rail unions agreed to increase the historic 100 mile figure two miles each year up to the present 108.

The board has recommended that the new contract mileage figure be set at 116 and increased each year until the 130 mark is reached in January 1985. This means a pay cut for workers in every year of the contract.

These proposed contract give-backs occur on the heels of seven years of record profits for the railroad bosses and have caused a discussion among rail workers about how the unions can fight to defend their interests. An important part of these discussions have been protest rallies organized by various rail unions throughout the West.

Unionists from the United Transportation Union (UTU), the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE), and the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees (BMWE) attended the Gillette rally. A contingent of 35 members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) and their families from Sheridan, Wyoming, made the 60-mile trip to attend the rally, as well as workers from several other unions.

Speakers at the rally blasted the Presidential Emergency Board's recommendations and called for the various rail unions to unite in order to prepare for the possibility of a national rail strike April 17.

Carl Stark, the chairman of BMWE Local 1074 in Sheridan, explained to the crowd what these recommendations would mean to maintenance-of-way employees: being forced to cover hundreds more miles of territory; only being assured of six months of work every year; and greater flexibility for the companies for start times of jobs. He also explained that the wage proposal, when inflation is taken into account, would mean that rail workers were being asked to take a 15 percent to 20 percent cut in their buying power over the life of the contract.

Stark went on to say that the railroads "are trying to destroy our family lives, and take away our right to make a good living for us and our families. If we don't stick together... there will only be two kinds of people in this country: the rich and the poor." He concluded by observing, "All wealth comes from labor and we deserve our fair share."

Throughout the day rail workers discussed whether and how the unions could wage a fight if the government imposed an injunction against a strike.

Dallas Wolf, a UMWA member who is heading up a drive to organize a number of the nonunion mines in and around Gillette, offered his views on this question when he spoke. "I want to make a suggestion to all the railroad workers. In the words of Martin Luther King when he spoke to a group of sanitation workers trying to organize a union in Tennessee: 'We won't let any fire hoses turn us around, we won't let any dogs turn us around, we won't let any police turn us around, and we will not let any injunctions turn us around.' You can take that as a suggestion from a mine worker."

Other speakers, including UTU international vice president from Seattle Byron Boyd and David Kiker, the UTU designated council from Denver, urged rail workers to write Congress and ask them not to interfere in the negotiations between the unions and the railroads.

The mood among many of the rail workers was summed up by Robert Nickens, vice-chair

of the BMWE, Burlington Northern System. "Come April 17 our extension is up. We've tried to deal with these people on these railroads for three years, we gave them another 60 days because of the war, but they haven't budged," Nickens said. "On April 17th we've got a contract we can live with, or we're gonna shut down the railroads in this country with the help of every union in this country."

One of the most enthusiastic responses of the day was given to Larry Deeds, president of UMWA Local 1972 in Sheridan. Deeds explained the struggle that locals 1972 and 2055 have been waging for over three years against the Decker Coal Company and its principle owner, Peter Kiewit and Sons. In 1987 Decker forced the unions to strike and brought in scabs to run the mines. Since that time UMWA locals have been waging an ongoing campaign to win their jobs back, which has included mass picketing at the mines, reaching out and speaking to other unionists across the country, and a corporate campaign.

Deeds explained some of the history of this fight, and thanked all of the local rail unions for the solidarity they have shown to the miners throughout this battle. He said that they are close to winning and that miners are planning to visit a number of cities this spring to press their corporate campaign against Decker and to reach out to other unions for solidarity.

One of the high points of the day's events was a spirited parade with union signs and banners. Unionists marched through downtown Gillette and past the Burlington Northern rail yard and offices.

Other speakers during the day included representatives from the Wyoming state AFL-CIO, the Wyoming state commissioner of labor, and UTU local representatives from Sheridan and Cheyenne, Wyoming; Edgemont, South Dakota; and Salt Lake City, Utah.

Mike Galati is a member of UTU Local 1366 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

LETTERS

'Break their teeth?'

I regard the *International Socialist Review* on the Gulf crisis as an essential tool for any real understanding of the war and the complexity of the issues involved.

That same clarity and depth of analysis is even more urgently needed today, in the aftermath of the bloody Allied attack. That is why I was disappointed after reading Greg McCartan's article in the March 15th *Militant* ("Washington using occupation, blockade, in drive to establish protectorate in Iraq").

I was left with a feeling that even though there aren't many signs of regional resistance to imperialist forces, one must believe by faith that "the imperialists will break their teeth in the attempt to achieve their goals."

As one example, the article says, "Only by breaking this resistance among workers in the United States would Washington be able to return to the day when it could send troops to defend and protect imperialist interests without having to worry about opposition at home developing."

In fact, that seems to be exactly the sort of situation this government has been able to pull through in this last bloody venture in spite of the opposition (however meager) at home.

I also want to point out that Robert Simms' article on the *maquiladoras* (in the same issue) suffered — in my view — from similar weaknesses. I am left understanding even less about why the AFL-CIO's concern about conditions of Mexican workers is "cynical." Not that I have a particular resistance to believing that, but I wished the article would have provided a much more insightful appraisal of the situation.

C.K.
New York, New York

Cuba and racism

I liked the article by Don Rojas in the March 8 *Militant*, "Cuba and the fight against racism — an answer to Carlos Moore." I particularly liked one of the facts he dealt with — how long it takes to break away from racism against Blacks.

We cannot break away from racism except under socialism. Even where government officials are firmly opposed to racism, as has happened in Cuba under socialism, racism does not go away automatically. It has to be lived down, and this hasn't happened.

A socialist government can help and does, as Rojas points out. But until workers and farmers bring this about, as has been going on under socialism in Cuba, we will continue to have racism with us.

I want to close on one of the last paragraphs in Rojas' article: "What I am convinced of, however (having also lived and worked in the United States, Eastern Europe, and the Caribbean and having been victimized by racism in all those regions), is that only through the struggle to deepen the revolution's working-class and internationalist roots and advance toward socialism can racism be fully uprooted in Cuba."

John Enestvedt
Sacred Heart, Minnesota

Back issues-I

I have enclosed \$5 for back issues with articles on Malcolm X circled from the *Militant* 1990 index.

I have been a regular subscriber/reader for several years, but usually have carried only a three- or six-month subscription. Evidently during one of the lapses when my subscription had expired I did not receive these copies or read these particular articles.

I would very much appreciate someone hunting them down and forwarding them to me.

O.F.
Terre Haute, Indiana



Here's the situation... You're black, you're in L.A. and you just exceeded the speed limit.

Back issues-II

Please send me any back issues analyzing events in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. You may deduct the cost from my total subscription payment.

A.G.
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Nicaragua reportage

Your news is excellent. Your reportage from Nicaragua was indispensable to me for the last four years. I'm very disappointed you dropped the coverage.

I think it is more important now than ever that you keep us informed. The Sandinistas will be back in four and a half more years. They need your help to keep us informed to help them win the next election.

G.B.

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.

A note from the editor...

A sentence in the introductory article of the April *International Socialist Review*, published in the April 5 issue of the *Militant*, inadvertently gave an incorrect impression of the character of the U.S. bombing campaign against Iraq. The *International Socialist Review* contained the March 20 United Nations report detailing the devastation of Iraq and the "near-apocalyptic" conditions in the country.

The introduction explains that Washington carried out its war to "strangle the country economically and to destroy anything that could help sustain the Iraqi army: food, medicine, transportation, communication centers, bridges, and warehouses."

The following sentence continued:

"While not planning or organizing massive bombing of civilians, the total war waged by Washington and its allies nevertheless devastated the population."

The above sentence gives the

impression that in its plans Washington somehow sought to avoid bombing civilian areas during its air war. But because the war was consciously organized to eliminate every possible means of support to the Iraqi army, the massive bombing of factories, roadways, bridges, and other targets was planned and carried out with absolutely no regard to the inevitable direct and indirect consequences for the lives of thousands of Iraqi noncombatants. Civilian areas of some cities, such as Basra, were harder hit than others.

The UN report, in fact, shows the extent to which the bombing destroyed food supplies, housing, water treatment plants, electrical generation systems, and other areas in the country. Tens of thousands of Iraqis were killed or maimed by the bombings and many others died as a result of the destruction of medical facilities and potable water supplies as well as other consequences of the war.

AFL-CIO lobbies for antiscab bill

Union officials' campaign in Congress is not way forward for labor

BY JUDY STRANAHAN

Top officials of AFL-CIO-affiliated unions are lobbying Congress heavily to pass legislation that would bar employers from hiring permanent replacement workers during a strike.

The two bills, H.R. 5 in the House and S. 55 in the Senate, were introduced in January. The House bill currently has 202 sponsors.

In early March, Labor Secretary Lynn Martin told a subcommittee of the House Education and Labor Committee that "senior advisers would recommend a veto" of the measures to President George Bush.

Martin said current labor laws have provided a balance between employers and workers and the proposed legislation would leave "little incentive for unions to moderate the use of the strike weapon."

The bills, Martin said, would "upset or destroy the delicate balance of collective bargaining" established by a Supreme Court decision five decades ago and subsequent rulings since.

If passed, the legislation would knock down a 1938 antilabor Supreme Court decision granting employers the right to permanently replace striking workers.

Lane Kirkland, president of the AFL-CIO; Lynn Williams, president of the United Steelworkers of America; and Owen Bieber, president of the United Auto Workers (UAW), were among the labor officials who also testified at the March hearings.

'Restoring some balance'

Through congressional testimony, union newspapers, and labor events, union officers argue that the legislation would rectify the setbacks suffered by the labor movement over the past decade. They point to the 1938 Supreme Court ruling as the heart of the problems facing the unions today.

Responding to Labor Secretary Martin's comments, Thomas Donahue, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO, told the March hearing, "The assertion that S. 55 would upset a fair and well-established balance between management and labor is fiction." He said S. 55 would be a step toward "restoring some of the balance" to labor's side that was lost by the 1938 court decision.

Kirkland said in his testimony, "When one party comes to the [negotiating] table with a desire not to agree but rather to force confrontation in the hope of destroying the other, the prospects for a peaceful, honorable, and mutually beneficial settlement are close to zero."

"That is particularly true when the other party has neither the desire nor the economic weapons to wage such a war," Kirkland continued. "In such situations, the rough balance of bargaining power that brings reason, moderation, and compromise into the bargaining process is destroyed."

In the January-February issue of the *OCAW Reporter*, newspaper of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union, OCAW President Joseph Misbrenner wrote, "I want to serve notice that OCAW is in the thick of the legislative struggle to pass" the two bills.

"As things stand today," Misbrenner continued, "the right to strike has all but disappeared. If you vote to strike, you're voting to be fired, in effect." He urged the union's membership to campaign for the legislation's passage.

The March issue of *The Machinist*, newspaper of the International Association of Machinists (IAM), is an example of the hard-sell approach of top officials in urging union members to get behind the lobbying efforts. The paper devoted four pages to the campaign to pass the legislation and included a call for union members to distribute and sign millions of postcards calling on Congress to pass the legislation. The paper also announced a union-wide canvass to begin April 8.

The February *Solidarity*, magazine of the

UAW, carried a full-page ad promoting the legislation. "You can help shape labor relations in the '90s by urging that Congress pass H.R. 5 and Senate Bill 55, to ban the hiring of permanent replacements during strikes," the ad reads. The magazine recommends UAW members write their representatives, telling them to pass the bills.

Retreat of labor movement

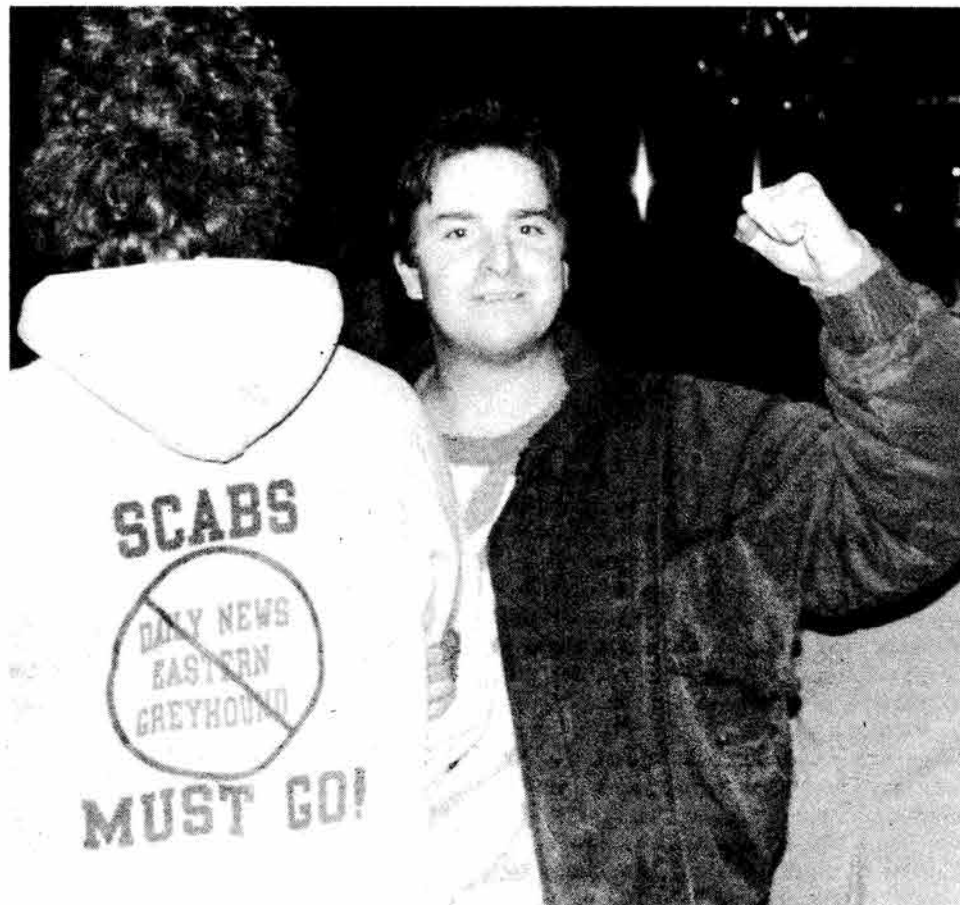
This drive on the part of the labor tops comes as the labor movement continues to retreat in the face of a more than decade-long offensive by the employers.

With the onset of a prolonged period of economic crisis in the mid-1970s, the employers began an assault on the unions in order to boost falling profits and increase their competitive edge. Companies demanded steep cutbacks in wages, working conditions, and benefits.

Workers in union after union, at the urging of union officers, began voting for these takebacks, leading to a virtual rout of the labor movement. Kirkland told the congressional hearing the extent to which the officialdom not only went along with the employers' demands, but sold them to the membership.

"I can cite you case after case where the trade union went to great lengths to rescue a company," Kirkland explained to the House subcommittee. "Chrysler could not have been saved and would not exist had it not been for the sacrifices and the investment of time and deferred wages that the UAW provided."

"That is the kind of cooperative relationship and the kind of collective bargaining that we believe in," Kirkland stated. "Collective bargaining is not a gravy train for trade unions. It is not a candy tree. Collective bargaining is a problem-solving process and when there are real problems it is a way to address them mutually, where each side can make appropriate contributions to the resolu-



Militant/Marc Lichtman

Daily News strike supporters at December 1990 rally

tion of those problems."

Kirkland recognized that this course "does not always yield great increases or continual improvements for workers. It frequently has to address the problem of what do we have to do to save this place of employment and to save these jobs."

The AFL-CIO head noted that union officials had gone "to great and extraordinary lengths" to carry out this course.

UAW and IAM officials point to the breaking of the unions at Continental Airlines and elsewhere in the early to mid-1980s as prime examples of how the employers used the antilabor legislation. They fail to add, however, that their course of "helping" the employers only emboldened the companies to seek more concessions. But after several rounds of takeback contracts, workers in some

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New York's mayor demands cuts in benefits, wages from city workers

BY FRED FELDMAN

NEW YORK — Mayor David Dinkins demanded at a March 20 meeting with top officials of municipal unions that city workers give back some paid holidays and health coverage, recent worker compensation increases, and other benefits in order to close the city's estimated \$3.1 billion budget deficit.

City officials are also pressing unions to agree to partial deferral of scheduled wage increases.

"Absolutely no givebacks," said Sandra Feldman, president of the United Federation of Teachers, after the meeting. Other officials indicated that while they were willing to have workers pay a "fair share" of the costs of the crisis, they disapproved of moves to "balance the budget on the backs of city workers."

"I have every confidence we can reach an accord," Dinkins said.

After a further meeting with union officials, according to *New York Newsday*, "The mayor and the labor leaders immediately imposed a news blackout on the talks, fearful that leaks about givebacks could inflame the city's rank-and-file workers and jeopardize efforts to reach an agreement."

City Budget Director Philip Michael upped the pressure March 21 by releasing a proposal for \$810 million in social-service and other budget cuts, on top of \$1.1 billion in cuts that are already being implemented. He threatened that the new cuts would take effect if unions rejected Dinkins' demands. He added that the cuts might be made even

if unions yielded, in the event of a worsening of the fiscal squeeze.

Michael's plan slashes funding for the parks and sanitation departments by nearly 25 percent, city hospitals by 17 percent, libraries by 13 percent, and other cultural institutions by 19 percent.

"We have an economic crisis here that is creating a budgetary crisis," explained First Deputy Mayor Norman Steisel on March 8, "and its impact is going to be much worse, proportionately greater, than we saw in the 1970s."

During that decade, the administrations of Abraham Beame and Edward Koch imposed cuts in services, massive layoffs, and takeback contracts — the solution to an earlier fiscal crisis demanded by the billionaire owners of banks and corporations.

Banks demand cuts

Last October Standard & Poor's announced that \$13 billion in New York City bonds were being placed on "credit watch." Such warnings can mean lower prices and higher interest rates for city bond issues.

Hyman Grossman, a managing director of Standard & Poor's, called on city officials to set a plan "that moves forward based on the new reality of a weakened economy and the counterproductivity of continual tax increases."

In an effort to satisfy the bond dealers, Budget Director Michael sent a letter February 4 to Moody's Investors Service, another bond-rating agency. He committed the city

to hundreds of millions of dollars in additional budget cuts, including obtaining a 1.5 percent wage deferral from city workers. "Negotiations on this issue have begun," he wrote.

Despite Michael's promise, Moody's dropped the rating of the city's bonds by one notch.

The *New York Times* revealed what Michael had promised to Moody's. Union officials denied that they were negotiating about wage deferrals, and Labor Relations Commissioner Eric Schmertz backed them in this. Michael's letter was "not helpful," Schmertz said. Union officials demanded that Michael resign.

In a February memorandum, however, Schmertz had told Michael: "I suggest you tell the rating agencies that deferrals are and will be part of our negotiations." On March 9 Schmertz was forced to resign by Dinkins, who backed the budget director.

Schmertz, who has been a professional mediator in labor disputes for 30 years, got strong backing from Stanley Hill, president of District Council 37 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, and Barry Feinstein, who heads Teamsters Local 237.

Schmertz did not voice any objection to wage deferrals and other budget cuts. "It's not enough for the mayor to say, 'I don't understand why the unions are giving me trouble,'" Schmertz complained after leaving his post. The unions "can be partners," he said, "but you have to treat them seriously."