

Mandela, Castro share platform at July 26 mass rally in Cuba

ANC leader salutes Cuba, aid to Africa

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

MATANZAS, Cuba — "The people of Cuba hold a special place in the hearts of the people of Africa," Nelson Mandela told the July 26 rally here marking the 38th anniversary of the beginning of the Cuban revolution. "The Cuban internationalists have made a contribution to African independence, freedom, and justice unparalleled for its principles and selfless character."

The president of the African National Congress headed a delegation of ANC leaders who spent three days in Cuba as part of their five-country tour of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Mandela's tribute to the internationalism of the Cuban revolution and his clear presentation to the Cuban people of the goals and character of the struggle in South Africa today was the high point of his visit. It undoubtedly helped to advance Cubans' understanding of and identification with the mass struggle to bring down the apartheid regime.

Awarded the Order of José Martí

At the ceremony in Matanzas, the province where the first slave rebellions of the 19th century occurred, Mandela was also decorated with the Order of José Martí. The medal, the highest honor awarded by the Cuban Council of State, was bestowed in recognition of Mandela's outstanding leadership and the role of the ANC in the "broad and heroic struggle of the Black people of South Africa against the apartheid regime."

On arriving at the José Martí international airport Mandela was warmly greeted by Cuban President Fidel Castro and other members of the Cuban leadership, as well as a small but enthusiastic crowd of Havana residents who turned out on the four-day holiday weekend to welcome the ANC leader.

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Victory for working people scored in Gates' resignation

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — The decision by Daryl Gates to retire as police chief is a victory for the "Gates must go" forces that sprang up in the wake of the videotaped police beating of Rodney King.

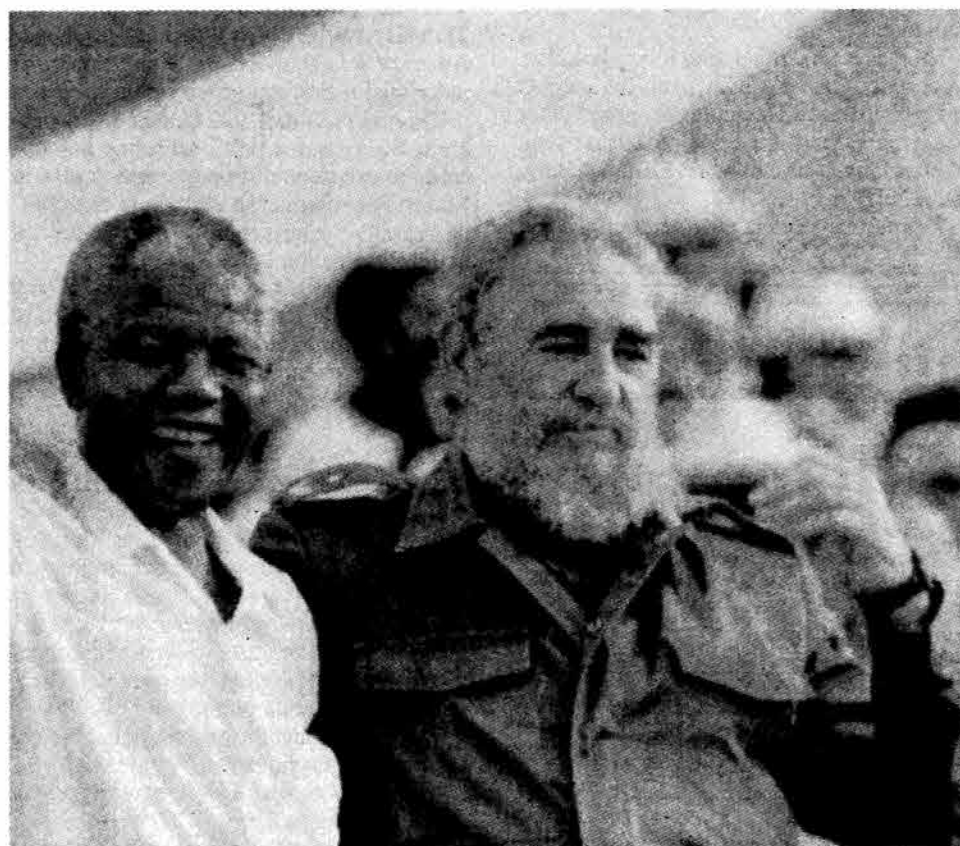
In the July 22 letter announcing his decision to quit, Gates set April 1992 as the date of his retirement.

In a separate letter he added that if a successor has not been chosen by then, he would stay on until one is.

Danny Bakewell of the Brotherhood Crusade commented that it was "dangerous" to take Gates' word that he will retire.

"We cannot blindly trust his so-called 'timetable,'" the civil rights activist warned.

The announcement of Gates' decision came after nearly five months of political strife in the city, marked by a deepening polarization between the broad forces fight-



"Cuban internationalists made a contribution to African independence, freedom, and justice unparalleled for its principled and selfless character," Mandela told rally.

Young socialist convention plans set

BY CAITLIN DIXON

NEW YORK — Only nine days remain until the opening of the 27th National Convention of the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA). Youth from around the country, Europe, Asia, Africa, and North America plan to attend. YSA members and chapters are continuing a concerted effort to make sure all interested young people can get to Oberlin, Ohio, to participate.

All participants are invited to attend convention sessions from 10:00 a.m. on Friday, August 9, through Saturday evening. Sunday will be a session for YSA delegates, who will elect a new National Committee.

Delegates to the convention will be discussing and voting on proposals that will help transform and strengthen the internationalist revolutionary youth organization.

The convention program includes eyewitness reports from leaders of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Greg McCartan, editor of the *Militant* newspaper, attended the African National Congress conference in Durban, South Africa this past month, and will speak of developments in that country in his talk, "National Liberation, Stalinism,

and Communism: African National Congress Fighters Face the Coming Struggles," on Friday night. On Saturday, Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *New International* magazine, will deliver "The Cuban Revolution Faces a Changing World: Rectification at a Cross-

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Come to the 27th National Convention

of the YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE

August 9-10 Oberlin College Oberlin, Ohio

Eyewitness Reports

"National Liberation, Stalinism, and Communism: African National Congress Fighters Face the Coming Struggles"

by Greg McCartan, editor of the *Militant* newspaper, attended
July ANC national conference in Durban, South Africa
Friday, August 9, 7:30 p.m.

"The Cuban Revolution Faces a Changing World: Rectification at a Crossroad"

by Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *New International*
magazine, just returned from reporting trip to Cuba
Saturday, August 10, 7:30 p.m.

"Youth, the Working Class, and Capitalism: Sharpening Class Polarization in U.S. Politics"

by Jack Barnes for the National Committee
of the Socialist Workers Party
Saturday, August 10, 1:00 p.m.

☐ Yes! I want to come to the convention. Please send me more information.

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For more information: call the YSA nearest you (see page 12), or write YSA, P.O. Box 211, New York, N.Y. 10011. Tel: (212) 727-8422.

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Behind debate on Clarence Thomas

Nominee's right-wing views divide middle-class Blacks

BY JAMES HARRIS

An emerging debate over U.S. President George Bush's nomination of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court highlights the class divisions within the Black nationality and the need for independent working-class political action.

So far the debate in the Black population has been dominated by leaders of civil rights organizations, Black elected officials, and other middle-class individuals.

Some back Thomas because they agree with his right-wing views. Those who say they disagree with his political stands on even basic issues of democratic rights are divided between supporting Thomas because he is Black and opposing him in spite of his nationality.

President George Bush has picked Thomas because his virulent anti-working-class politics will aid the ruling rich in their continued assault on the democratic rights and living standards of working people.

The debate has arisen because of the rising number of decisions by the Supreme Court that chip away at hard-won rights and liber-

ties. Few who claim to represent the interests of working people who are Black put these rulings in the context of the broader employer-government offensive.

Thomas, an appellate court judge, has been outspoken in his opposition to raising the minimum wage, school busing, affirmative action, abortion rights, and other measures aimed at unifying working people.

The Bush administration and Thomas have worked overtime to take the maximum propaganda advantage of Thomas' impoverished youth and rise to bourgeois circles. Thomas is touted as a role model and example of "individual initiative and self-help." The official version of his life history is used to discount the need for working-class solidarity. Social welfare programs are labeled "handouts."

Thomas is fond of relating folksy homilies supposedly handed down from his parents and grandparents. He quotes his grandfather as saying: "Man ain't got no business on relief as long as he can work. Damn welfare, that relief!"

Thomas' supporters are attempting to use

the hype around his background as a means to secure the Supreme Court seat and gain wider legitimacy in bourgeois public opinion for the views he presents.

"Anybody who takes him on in the area of civil rights is taking on the grandson of a sharecropper," crowed Republican Senator Orrin Hatch.

Right-wing views

A former head of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Thomas has actively campaigned against affirmative action. "I believe in compensation for actual victims, not for people whose only claim to victimization is that they are members of a historically oppressed group," he says.

As far as affirmative action quotas go, Thomas says he doesn't "believe in quotas. America was founded on a philosophy of individual rights, not group rights."

Thomas calls the 1979 *United Steelworkers v. Weber* Supreme Court ruling that upheld the use of an affirmative action plan at Kaiser Aluminum "an egregious example" of "creative interpretation of" the federal antidiscrimination law.

Thomas, while stating that he agreed with the outcome of the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court case, nevertheless has criticisms of it. The *Brown* decision provided the legal basis for school desegregation.

The landmark ruling led to "a disastrous series of cases requiring busing and other policies that were irrelevant to parents' concern for a decent education," says Thomas.

Despite his vaunted concern for individual rights, Thomas has raised objections to the decision in *Griswold v. Connecticut*, a Supreme Court ruling that widened the constitutional right to privacy. The right to privacy is one of the underpinnings of the *Roe v. Wade* decision and the constitutional protection of abortion rights.

Thomas is also in favor of requiring prayer in public schools.

"My mother says that when they took God out of the schools, the schools went to hell. She may be right. Religion is certainly a source of positive values, and we need as many positive values in the schools as we can get," he says.

Some middle-class Blacks have supported Thomas' nomination and his stands on these issues. Others see the clash of his views with their liberal opinions as subordinate to the fact he is Black and up for an important government post. They feel that this is reason enough to support him. Their stance reflects their own desires to become more integrated into the capitalist economic and social system as Thomas is doing.

Class differentiation

Victories won by the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s broke down many legal and de facto barriers faced by Blacks in jobs, education, housing, and other aspects of social and political life.

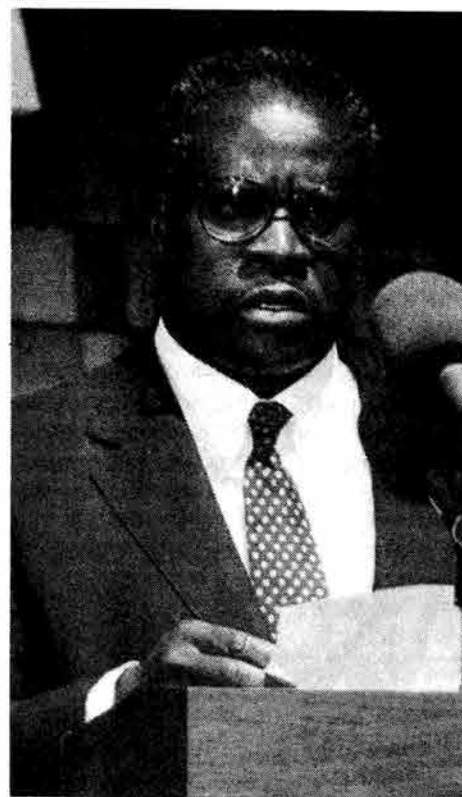
Out of the gains of this massive working-class movement a substantially larger layer of the Black nationality than has existed at anytime in the past has been able to become middle class. In income, social milieu, and political outlook, this layer is far removed from the big majority of Blacks who remain working-class.

While still concerned about racism and discrimination, Blacks who are middle class have to a great degree integrated themselves into the broader middle class and adopted its concerns and class outlook, including its fear and contempt for working people, Black or white.

At the same time the vast majority of Blacks face sharply worsening social and economic conditions, suffering the brunt of the ruling-class offensive against the living standards and working conditions of all working people. According to conservative government figures, about one-third of the Black population lives under the official poverty level.

For many in the well-off layer of men and women who are not so directly affected by the ruling-class assaults on working people, the fact that Thomas is Black is for them more important than any political stance he might hold.

"He is committed to equal opportunity. He's committed to fairness and is committed to justice," said Louis Sullivan, secretary of



Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas calls welfare a "handout," opposes affirmative action quotas and right to privacy.

the Department of Health and Human Services, a Black who firmly supports Thomas.

"I'm trying to deal with the nomination in the context of what our realities are," said John Jacob, president of the National Urban League. "If Judge Thomas is not selected, what the Administration has proven is that, standing in the wings are a bunch of other folks who are not African-American, who have not had the kinds of life experience that Judge Thomas has had, but who have the same philosophical traits that we criticize in him."

New York attorney and Black activist C. Vernon Mason, who is best known for his involvement in the Tawana Brawley case in New York, also supported Thomas.

"His background is from the rough side of the mountains," said Mason to New York *Newsday*. "I think what we'll see is someone who will bring a different perspective to the bench and someone who will examine a number of issues involving the black community that have been ignored."

Calvin Butts, political activist and pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, took a more ambivalent stance.

"But I'm not going to be one of those people who says Clarence Thomas can destroy everything. In truth, there is not much he can do anyway, the way the court is set up."

"So what is the sense of beating up on Clarence Thomas? Some conservative — even if not Thomas — is going to be confirmed. So I pray to my ancestors that they reach down into the heart of that Black boy and turn him around."

Since his nomination Thomas has taken a more conciliatory tone toward the various civil rights organizations and their leaderships. Earlier he, like many right-wingers, baited the civil rights establishment for its inconsistency, complacency, and lack of perspective in the struggle for Black rights.

All they do is "bitch, whine and moan," he is quoted as saying. He has now backed away from this harsher stance and credits the civil rights movement for making his own progress possible.

"I, of course, have benefited greatly from the civil rights movement, from the Justice whom I'm nominated to succeed," Thomas says, referring to Thurgood Marshall, who recently retired from the court.

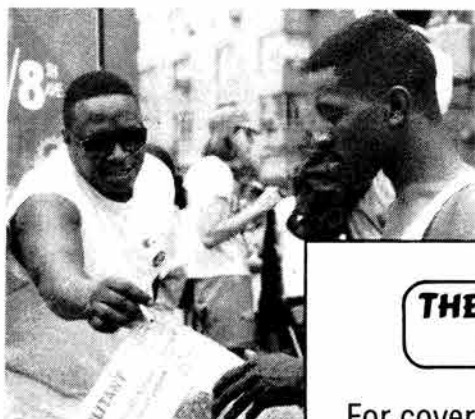
To some degree Thomas pitches his message to those who have become frustrated with the lack of progress in the struggle for Black rights and who see a paralyzed middle-class leadership unable and unwilling to chart a course forward.

In attacking affirmative action Judge Thomas demagogically said to a *Miami Herald* reporter, "If quotas help you, fine. If they get you a BMW or Mercedes, say that is why you want quotas. Man, quotas are for the black middle class. But look at what's happening to the masses. Those are my people. They are just where they were before any of these policies."

The National Association for the Ad-

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The double squeeze on working farmers

Prices too low to meet rising costs

BY DOUG JENNESS

(First in a series)

For several years there have been exaggerated reports from government officials, agricultural economists, and newspaper editors about the extent working farmers have recovered from a decade of crisis. Many signs now clearly point to a worsening situation for working farmers.

These developments shatter the notion that farmers are going to enjoy long-run stability or prosperity. To the contrary, like working farmers throughout the world, they are caught in a double squeeze between low prices for the commodities they produce and sell and the mounting prices they pay for fuel, fertilizer, seeds, machinery, rent, and interest.

Corn, wheat, and soybean producers and dairy farmers have been particularly hard hit the past year. In April the *Wall Street Journal* reported that a \$2 billion drop in U.S. wheat exports resulted in a sharp dive in income for wheat farmers. The same report said prices dairy farmers get for their milk are down about 20 percent since last summer.

These trends have continued. In July the price of corn was down about 24 percent from the same time in 1990. The price of wheat dropped 20 percent and soybean prices were 13 percent lower. Government officials are predicting that net farm income this year will be substantially lower than last year's and that farm failures will rise for the first time since 1987.

The reason dairy farmers are having so much difficulty making ends meet "is that the government sets milk prices, and it sets them too low," said Jo Bates, president of the Empire State Family Farm Alliance.

The ones who profit from this, she explained in a telephone interview, are the dairy processors, the "middlemen," who have a monopoly on the market. They buy the milk cheap from the farmers and sell it at increasingly higher prices to the supermarkets. "Dairy farmers in New York are only able to pay two-thirds of our day-to-day costs," she said. "We're using up our equity, and more and more of us are going down."

Bates noted that in Washington County in upstate New York where she farms, the number of dairy farmers has decreased from 1,000 to less than 300 in the past decade. The number of cows on these farms range from 50 to 400.

"We should be getting cost-of-living increases," the farm protest leader said, "but the government doesn't even consider setting the price so that we can make a living."

A survey conducted by Norwest Corp., a Minneapolis-based bank-holding company, revealed that 1.4 percent of farmers borrowing from bankers in the Upper Midwest had recently quit farming. This was the first time in five years the attrition rate had gone up so much. During the worst of the farm crisis in the mid-1980s, 3.8 percent of the bankers' farm borrowers folded.

Another signal that more farmers are feeling the pinch is that calls to state-supported telephone hotlines in the Midwest have soared in recent months. According to a report in the *Wall Street Journal*, the Iowa State University Rural Concern Hotline is getting 600 calls a month, about double last year's rate.

Decade-long slump

During the decade-long slump that began in the mid-1970s and continued through 1986 — the worst crisis for working farmers since the 1930s — hundreds of thousands of farmers and their families were forced off their land because they couldn't keep up with the interest payments on bank loans and mortgages. When the banks foreclosed on their loans many farm families were forcibly driven out of their homes and off their land by sheriffs' posses. Their farms, machinery, and livestock were put up for sale in public auctions.

Between 1980 and 1987 the number of farms dropped 14 percent, from 2.428 million to 2.088 million. During the same period the average size of farms increased 7 percent, from 429 to 462 acres. From 1980 to 1986 the total tractor horsepower increased more than 2 percent, from 304 million to 311 million.

Widespread protests by working farmers and their supporters were organized to demand an end to the foreclosures and press the government to provide relief. They set up many new local and national organizations to advance their struggle, some of which still exist.

Recent gatherings of farmers have discussed some of the problems facing working farmers. In January there was a conference of small farmers in South Carolina and the American Agriculture Movement Inc.'s national convention in Arkansas. In February a national conference of Black farmers took place in Washington, D.C., and a Northeast farmers' meeting was held in Vermont.

The National Rural Strategy Summit, a coalition of various farm protest organizations, met last November to discuss the farm bill then pending in Congress. The Summit called a demonstration for Washington, D.C., on March 7.

The action, however, was postponed. The February 5 *AAM Reporter* quoted Summit Chairman Merle Hansen stating that "the war with Iraq has changed our plans. We do not feel that the American public is going to be ready or willing to deal with secondary issues as soon as March. Nor do we want to add to security problems for our government."

As of July 24, according to the AAM's national office in Washington, D.C., the action had not been rescheduled.

No control over conditions

Working farmers are victims of conditions over which they have no control. But these are not primarily natural conditions — bad weather, insect infestation, and so on — as devastating as these can be. They are social conditions, the result of the workings of capitalism — exorbitant interest rates; monopoly control over marketing; and monopoly-rigged pricing of farm machinery, fertilizer, seeds, and fuel.

The capitalist rents and mortgages system is particularly onerous. Through rents and interest landlords and bankers suck up a big hunk of the wealth working farmers create. Moreover, when the producers can't keep up



Militant/Jon Flanders

Dairy farmers protest in New York state. "Dairy farmers in New York are only able to pay two-thirds of our day-to-day costs," said Jo Bates, president of the Empire State Family Farm Alliance.

with their payments, the parasitic exploiters can take their land away, depriving them of an essential means for their livelihood.

Holding a title to the land is no guarantee of being able to keep the use of the land. Since farmland is one of the principal forms of collateral that farmers use to obtain bank loans for operating expenses or purchasing new equipment or livestock, they lose title to the land when they can't pay back their debts.

With rent and interest payments on mortgages and loans leading to increased costs for exploited farmers on the one hand, incomes are kept low because farmers are forced into the role of price takers on the other. Throughout the 20th century the ruling capitalist families in the United States have increasingly concentrated and monopolized food and fiber processing and distribution. As this has developed, the commercial capitalists have been able to set prices.

This, for example, is what dairy farmers face. Although many dairies are referred to and may have originated as cooperatives, they have been largely transformed from instruments of leverage by the producers into profitable capitalist enterprises. Many dairy farmers sign contracts with "their" coopera-

tives to deliver a specified quantity of milk.

Food processors in general are attempting to get farmers to sign contracts rather than sell their own products on the market. Under such agreements farmers are more tightly tied to the marketing monopolies. They have to buy feed, seed, and fertilizer from the processor. Many poultry raisers also buy their chicks from corporate processors.

This process has intensified with the blows working farmers took in the 1970s and 1980s. Contract farming, for example, is increasing in hog production. An article in the June 2 *Des Moines Register* describes how North Carolina-based Murphy Farms provides young pigs to Iowa farmers and helps them construct finishing buildings with automated feeding and cleaning systems.

The farmers are then guaranteed a price from Murphy Farms as long as death losses aren't too high and if the hogs use a minimum of food for each pound of weight they gain. As this spreads the result will be even greater capitalist domination over working hog farmers and their families.

The next article will take up the efforts of working farmers to get relief from the government and the 1990 farm bill.

Algoma Steel pleads poverty; cuts wages

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

SAULT STE. MARIE, Ontario, Canada — Faced with massive concession demands and cries of poverty by the Algoma Steel Corp., members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) here voted to accept wage reductions for the next four months. The June 27 vote — 2,506 to 930 — was the first step in a "worker buyout" scheme advocated by the union officialdom.

The concession amounts to a cut of \$2.89 per hour, 14.5 percent of the average hourly wage of \$19.64. It was proposed by Ontario USWA Director Leo Gerard and the presidents of the six USWA locals at Algoma Steel.

The USWA leadership plans to put the \$10 million accumulated from the wage concessions into a "Save Our Jobs Fund," part of a \$50 million loan Algoma Steel says it needs to continue operating while the union works to put together its buyout proposal.

The loan would be guaranteed by Algoma workers, Dofasco (the giant Hamilton steel-maker that bought Algoma for \$562 million in 1988), the Ontario government, the federal government, and the banks.

In order to stimulate worker buyouts to save financially strapped or bankrupt companies, the Ontario government of the New Democratic Party (NDP) has announced plans to put forward a discussion paper and draft legislation in July that would give employees tax incentives for participating in buyouts. The NDP is a social-democratic party that advocates workers make concessions in the face of Canada's economic crisis. Among its central leaders are many top union officials.

The USWA officials recognize that workers could lose their money and that more jobs could be lost. They motivate their proposal

by pointing to what they claim are examples of successful union-organized employee buyouts at Echo Bay Mines, LTV Corp., and Kerotest Manufacturing in the United States.

The union officials unveiled their plans June 19 in response to a company proposal made in May. Algoma had announced it needed a \$60 million loan to meet its payroll and make payments on its \$800 million debt to its creditors, in particular the Royal Bank of Canada. The company demanded an immediate 20 percent wage cut and insisted wage increases be limited to 1.5 percent in 1992 and 3 percent from 1993 to 1996. Algoma also proposed the elimination of several product lines and cutting the work force by 50 percent.

112-day strike

Algoma's renewed demand for concessions are a major attack on the USWA. The ranks concluded a successful 112-day strike last November, reversing a pattern of concessions over many years.

Two-and-a-half months into the strike, workers rejected a new set of concession demands by the company. They finally succeeded in winning a three-year contract in which hourly wages, including cost-of-living raises, would increase by 17.5 percent or \$2.89 an hour over three years. The contracts also contained a letter of agreement between Algoma and the union on limiting the contracting out of union jobs and on the indexing of workers' pensions.

Ten thousand USWA members at another major steelmaker, Stelco, walked out at plants in Alberta, Ontario, and Québec at the same time as the Algoma workers. The combined strikes paralyzed 54 percent of Canada's steel production. Stelco workers won similar provisions around contracting

out, pensions, and wages. But the Stelco bosses succeeded in breaking the chain bargaining of Stelco locals.

At Algoma the bosses did not succeed in dividing the six USWA locals that organize workers in Sault Ste. Marie and Wawa, Ontario.

Discussion on buyout

The proposal to accept concessions as a way to save jobs has provoked a broad discussion among Algoma workers.

While most workers were unhappy about the proposal, the majority expressed the opinion that the union's buyout proposal, including the four-month wage cut, was their only alternative given Algoma's financial crisis. The June 24 *Sault Star* published an article featuring the comments of several Algoma workers.

"I don't think much of the plan. But if it has to be done, it has to be done," said John Fischer.

"With this huge debt looming over everyone, do we really have any options?" asked John Douville, a 36-year veteran in mechanics and auto parts. Dave Hammerstedt, in electrical engineering, was withholding his support "until I know for sure it will save the plant."

Other workers were opposed. "No one's going to cut my mortgage payments or grocery bill," said one of them.

"They should shut her down. I can't afford to work here," said another.

Most workers had many questions. "I would buy into the plan only if we had some say in our destiny and future. If we work there, we should be allowed some input into what goes on," said Gary Primeau from quality control.

Student protests rock campuses in Papua New Guinea

BY BOB ANDREWS

SYDNEY, Australia — Acting in the face of an ongoing student boycott of classes and exams, university administrators in Papua New Guinea closed the main campus in Port Moresby for the rest of the year. The officials also announced mass expulsions at the University of Technology (Unitech) in Lae.

Papua New Guinea is a country made up of the eastern part of the island of New Guinea, in the South Pacific, as well as several surrounding islands. The population is 3.5 million. Until 1975, Papua New Guinea was a colony of Australia. It remains a heavily dependent neocolony today.

Students at the country's two universities had been spearheading national protests against a proposed pay rise for members of the national parliament, passed without debate on the final day of the parliamentary session May 22.

Although the government backed down May 28 and promised to rescind the pay rises when parliament reconvened July 9, the students resolved to stay out until the politicians fulfilled their pledge.

When the parliament met July 9 it voted as one of the first orders of business to postpone the wage rises until after the next election. By then the students had faced an increasingly tough response from the government, including the June 4-5 occupation of both campuses by armed police firing tear gas and shotguns.

How protests began

The wave of militant student-led protests against the politicians' wage rise erupted May 24 with a protest by almost 1,000 students — which is most of the student population — on the Waigani campus of the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) in Port Moresby.

The students there declared a boycott of classes, which quickly spread to other campuses, including Unitech in Lae, Forestry College in Bulolo, Teachers College in Garkoka, Mount Hagen Technical College, and Vudal Agricultural College near Rabaul on the island of New Britain. High school students also took part.

During protests May 24-25, 11 government vehicles were burned on the Port Moresby campus. On Lae campus students confiscated 15 government vehicles. On May 27 Minister of Education Utula Samana was dragged from his car, which was then overturned and torched.

Following these incidents, students leaders stressed that they want the protests to be peaceful. Students began to stage rallies in Port Moresby and Lae to drum up support for their campaign to have the politicians' pay rise cancelled, winning broad support from the general public.

Students also marched or rallied in Rabaul and Mt. Hagen. In Bulolo all government vehicles were ordered into the police station yard when students marched May 29. Most government offices there were forced to close down May 30.

A National Union of Students Congress, held in Lae May 31, resolved to continue the protest campaign and called for a general strike June 6-7 if parliament had not been recalled by then to rescind the pay increases.

The NUS declared that "we believe that such a pay rise for MPs [Members of Parliament] is not warranted especially in light of the ailing economic situation of this country."

"Furthermore, the mass who constitute the nonemployed sector is hard hit by means of the ever-increasing cost of living."

Students closed off Waigani and Lae campuses at the beginning of the protests, setting up roadblocks to determine who could enter.

The police responded May 28 with a roadblock of their own outside Waigani campus. Police Commissioner Ila Geno threatened that the police would "act swiftly and decisively to contain any situation of unlawful assembly in any public place."

In Lae, the provincial premier warned June 4, "It is going to be nasty if the boycott continues." Later that evening 100 fully armed police moved onto the University of Technology campus firing rifle shots and tear gas.

Early on June 5 another squad of 100 fully armed police occupied the Waigani campus in Port Moresby. On the same day 80-100 students from the Vudal Agricultural College were stopped at a police roadblock. Shots were fired, a number of students beaten, and about 40 arrested.

The student strike entered a new phase June 17 when students on both UPNG and Unitech decided to boycott first semester exams.

In response to this the prime minister, Rabbie Namiliu, threatened to terminate the scholarships of students who didn't take exams. On June 19 the Unitech administration placed the campus under a state of emergency, taking wide powers to search rooms and suspend students. NUS President Wilson Pesh and 20 other students were banned from campus.

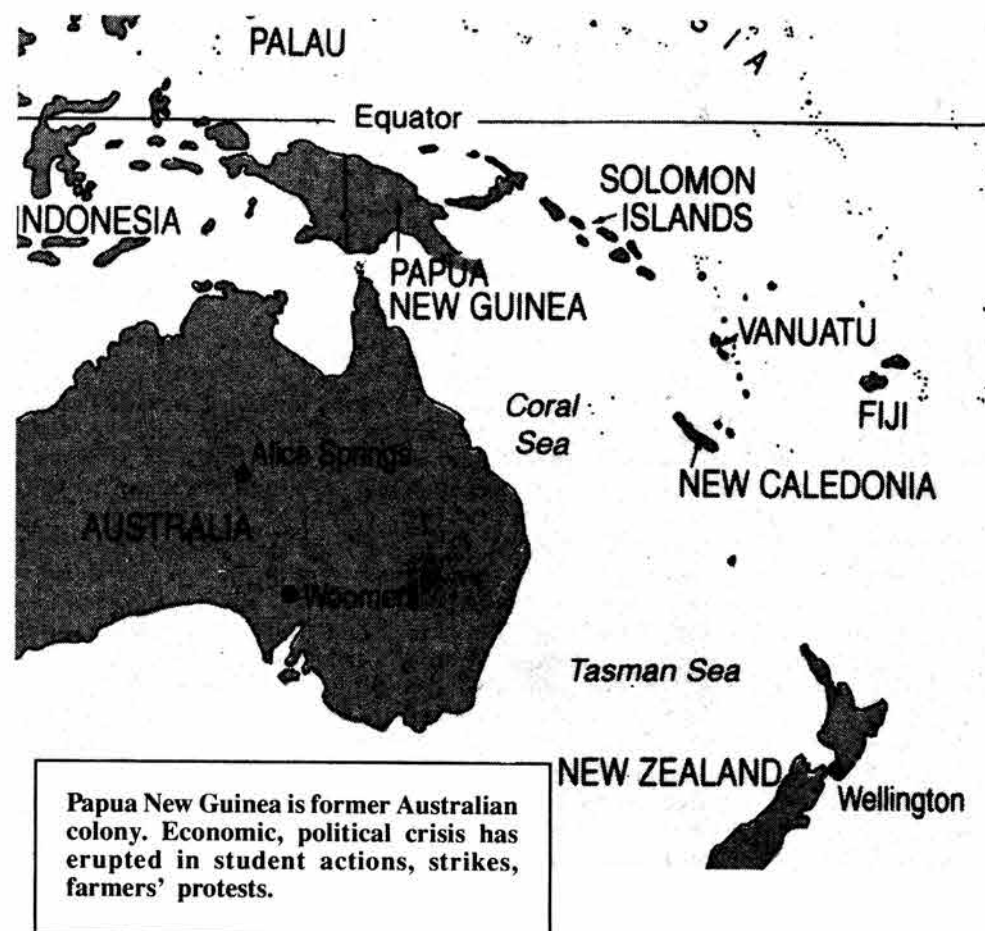
In Port Moresby the UPNG administration suspended the Student Representative Council indefinitely June 19 and banned student forums. Two hundred cops converged on Waigani campus and arrested three students. Two, Klower Waini and the SRC President Peterson Pipi, were charged with provoking a breach of the peace and released the following day on bail.

On the first day of exams at Unitech, June 24, a student forum of 500 was held outside the main gates of the campus. Two days later the vice-chancellor, Sam Pearce, announced the expulsion of 340 students. More than 90 percent of the students at Unitech boycotted the exams and have been formally failed in their first semester courses.

Faced with a boycott of exams in Port Moresby the Academic Board at the UPNG met June 28 and postponed the exams there until mid-July, threatening that those who didn't appear would be failed. They also cancelled second semester courses in the faculties of arts, education, law, and science — that is, the Waigani campus is closed for the rest of the year.

Political, economic crisis

The protests mark a deepening political crisis in Papua New Guinea. Harsh austerity measures, including wage restraints and cuts



in health and education spending, have been in place since January 1990 after the Australian-owned Panguna copper mine on the island of Bougainville closed.

The mine, which accounted for about 40 percent of Papua New Guinea's export income and 20 percent of government revenue, was shut down in May 1989 due to sabotage by landholders demanding compensation for the mining operation on their land.

Bougainville has been in the hands of pro-independence forces for over a year. They have withstood a bloody police operation by the Australian-trained Papua New Guinea army that include the use of Australian army helicopters and a total blockade of the island from March 1990 to February 1991.

Also symptomatic of the social tensions in Papua New Guinea was a May 29-30 strike at the giant Australian-owned Porgera gold mine near Wabag in the Central Highlands.

When the Porgera Workers' Union president, Jethro Tulim, was barred from entering the mine to attend a meeting with company officials over a series of union demands, 300 surface workers converged on the main security gate and staged an overnight sit-in

strike blocking the gate.

The following morning police, who had been flown in by company helicopter, fired shotguns and tear gas at the strikers, wounding two. The strike ended following a meeting between the union and the company.

The country's economy has been hit by low coffee prices in recent years. Some 200,000 smallholders produce 70 percent of the coffee crop. One estimate puts the number of households that rely on coffee growing as their main source of cash income at 50 percent of the total.

Papua New Guinea's villages have traditionally engaged in subsistence agriculture. But with the greater penetration of capital over the past few decades a large layer of unemployed youth have moved to the towns. Some 50,000 youth competed for 9,000 jobs in 1989.

On March 14 Prime Minister Rabbie Namiliu announced a "war on crime." Measures include an 8:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. curfew in four main cities — Port Moresby, Lae, Mt. Hagen and Popondetta, the tattooing of all convicted prisoners, and the creation of a national guard in which all youth aged 13 to 19 years would do one year of compulsory service.

British miners face fight on jobs, wages

BY RICH PALSER

BLACKPOOL, Britain — The annual conference of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), held here July 8-11, focused on the challenges facing coal miners in defending their jobs and forcing British Coal to negotiate on wages.

Opening the conference, NUM President Arthur Scargill said that since 1985, 101 pits have been shut down. Some 115,000 fewer miners are working as a result.

Scargill warned the work force would be reduced to 30,000 union members at 30 mines if these trends continue, "unless our union reasserts itself and fights for the survival of the industry with the same determination we saw between 1982 and 1985."

The NUM waged a hard-fought strike in 1984-85 against government plans to shut down "unprofitable" coal mines.

The NUM president also said a reorientation of the Labour Party is needed. The Labour Party leadership had abandoned basic principles on the grounds they had to do so in order to win the next election, he said. "Policies such as nationalization and unilateral nuclear disarmament are ditched along the way whilst the European Economic Community and the City of London are courted. And finally you end up with the grotesque spectacle of a Labour leader... supporting privatization in Liverpool."

Workers are currently fighting layoffs and wage cuts imposed through the privatization of services by the Labour-controlled Liverpool Council.

Warning that in the past the election of a Labour government "has given us the unsavory spectacle of the Labour Party leadership trying to run capitalism better than the To-

ries," Scargill said the NUM should fight for a Labour government "that will, hopefully, regenerate Britain's economy, revive our health service, rebuild our education, welfare, and transport systems."

Negotiations on wages

Scargill also called for a campaign to force British Coal to the negotiating table over wages and working conditions. British Coal unilaterally scrapped an agreed-upon conciliation scheme following the 1984-85 strike. The board gave sole negotiating rights to a breakaway scab union in areas and pits where a majority of miners belong to the pro-company outfit.

Scargill argued against the union accepting, as some members have urged, this new negotiating structure. "No trade union can possibly give away the right to represent its members," he said. "We have every right to demand a conciliation scheme giving our union recognition and representation for all our members."

NUM General Secretary Peter Heathfield warned that the conciliation scheme imposed by British Coal emerged during the 1984-85 strike, when the employers set out to "reclaim their right to manage."

These moves by the employers are aimed at "getting miners to go to work and do as they are told," he said, and are part of the government's policy of moving away from national negotiations and breaking the union's negotiating strength.

By a two-thirds majority the conference voted to maintain the stance of the union against acceptance of the conciliation scheme. A special delegate conference will be held to plan further action in the event British Coal refuses to negotiate the union's wage claim.

One of the highlights of the meeting was a report from two NUM leaders, David Guy and Frank Cave, on their recent fact-finding tour of South Africa.

Guy and Cave described their visit to a company hostel where Black miners are housed. "It was surrounded by barbed wire, security guards with guns, and guard dogs," said Guy. The two asked to see the security guards' weapons arsenal. "It contained every conceivable weapon," Guy reported. "I asked someone from security why they had so many weapons and was told that sometimes they had trouble with some of the 'inmates.'"

"When I asked why people should be locked up like prisoners the reply I got from the owners was that they had the right to protect their property," said Cave. "When I asked why they had not got barbed wire fencing 'round their white employees' houses, which they also own, there was deathly silence — no reply."

Guy told the conference that white miners earn on average five times the pay of the highest paid Black miner. In 1990, 675 Black miners died in mining disasters.

The conference unanimously backed a resolution which declared: "As British miners we recognise that we have a particularly common cause with the miners of South Africa against the domination of the multinational mining companies. These companies mercilessly exploit the Black South African miner."

The resolution called for the release of all political prisoners, the ending of all forms of apartheid, a halt to state violence and state-supported violence against the working class in South Africa, and for political rights for all South Africans.

Israeli government's intransigence threatens 'peace' conference plans

BY JAMES HARRIS

Despite an agreement reached between five Arab regimes and Washington, Israeli government objections threaten to unravel plans for a Mideast "peace" conference.

The conference has been pushed by the Bush administration since the end of its war against the Iraqi people. Washington hopes it can parlay its massive military intervention into imposing a "solution" to the Palestinian struggle for self-determination.

The refusal of the Palestinian people inside "Greater Israel" to submit to Tel Aviv's denial of their rights has so far been the sticking point for Washington and capitalist regimes in the Mideast in making progress on the conference.

On July 18 Secretary of State James Baker announced that Syrian President Hafez al-Assad had accepted the U.S. proposal for a peace conference. The announced deal was seen as a breakthrough for Washington.

"I am pleased to report that Syria has agreed to the proposals we have made," said Baker, "including coming to a peace conference. The terms of reference would be a comprehensive settlement based on UN resolutions 242 and 338. I think this is an extraordinarily important and positive step."

"The meeting with President Assad was good," said Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk al-Sharaa. "There was no difficulty having agreement."

Resolutions 242 and 338

Security Council Resolution 242, approved in 1967, calls for Israel to trade the land it conquered from Arab countries that year for the Arab governments' recognition of its borders. The resolution's purposely vague formulations are continually debated and do not stipulate how much land is to be returned. Resolution 338, approved in 1973 at the end of another war between Israel and several Arab countries, calls for negotiations.

Until its recent announcement Syria's position on the structure and content of the proposed peace conference was a major stumbling block to the meeting. In May, President Assad stated that Syria would not participate in a conference unless the United Nations played a central role in the meeting. The conference would have to be the first gathering of an ongoing body capable of hearing, discussing, and resolving differences, Assad said.

Israel opposed the conference and objected to both proposals from Syria.

In a June 1 letter to Assad and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Bush proposed compromises on these positions: that the United Nations have an observer at the conference's opening event, but that the observer not be allowed to actively participate; and that after the opening ceremony, the conference be reconvened only for reports from bilateral negotiations between Israel and individual Arab regimes, such as Syria or Jordan. Even with these stipulations, Bush proposed that the conference only be reconvened with the full agreement of all participants.

Governments in Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia quickly agreed to participate after Assad's announcement. These regimes are on a course of adopting a more



Militant/Argiris Malapanis
Palestinian house on West Bank destroyed by Israeli army. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir defiantly refuses to consider returning any land stolen from Arabs.

conciliatory stance toward Israel and preparing the way for direct negotiations.

Arab boycott of Israel

The Egyptian and Saudi Arabian regimes also called on Arab countries to drop the economic boycott of Israel if Tel Aviv agreed to certain concessions.

The boycott has been in effect since 1948, the year that Israel was founded. It bans trade between Arab countries and Israel, and it also bars any Arab nation from doing business with a company that does business with Israel. The cessation of the boycott would be a step toward ending Israel's economic and political isolation in the region and the normalization of relations.

"If Israel could suspend the building of settlements in the occupied territories I believe that the Arab states should make a reciprocal concession by suspending the boycott," said Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

The concessions that the Arab regimes are willing to make serve to highlight the refusal of Israel to make compromises. The Israeli regime so far will not even consider the "land for peace" proposal.

In fact, the government is doing the opposite by continuing its policy of building settlements on land it stole from its Arab neighbors in the 1967 war. On each of Baker's previous visits to Israel after the Gulf war, the Israeli government made a point of defiantly moving trailers for settlers into new areas of the West Bank, disregarding U.S. government opposition.

"Jewish settlements are not an obstacle to peace, they are an obstacle to war," said Ariel Sharon, Israel's housing minister.

"I do not believe in territorial compromise," Shamir said July 24. "Our country is very small. Where would you find among the nations of the world a people who would be ready to give up the territory of their homeland?"

Trinh said he had met with Barbara Robertson and Johanna Lundy July 23 and invited them to come to Vietnam to conduct their own investigation.

The ambassador also announced that his government had decided to allow three U.S. veteran organizations to set up an office in Hanoi, Vietnam's capital, to pursue investigations of those killed or designated as missing in action. The three veterans organizations to staff the office are Vietnam Veterans of America, American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

"We demand that whoever produced the picture cooperate with our government and the U.S. government to get to the bottom of and clarify this matter," Trinh said. "If they refuse to cooperate and the investigation shows that the picture was fabricated for money-making purposes, they should be condemned by public opinion."

Israel is also demanding that it have final say on which Palestinian representatives attend the conference. Shamir stated that Tel Aviv will not participate in the meeting if Palestinians from East Jerusalem or with any connection to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) participate.

Israel has a long-standing position of no talks with the PLO. The regime says that allowing the attendance of Palestinians from East Jerusalem would give legitimacy to the Palestinians' position that East Jerusalem is not part of Israel, Shamir said.

"We must know who are the people who will compose the Palestinian delegation within the Palestinian-Jordanian delegation," he told the *New York Times* July 24. "This is our right. Under no circumstances can they be from East Jerusalem. Jerusalem, united in its completeness, is the capital of Israel."

Palestinians meet with Baker

In meetings with Palestinian representatives, Baker told them that they are in too weak a position to negotiate and should accept Israeli demands.

"We told Mr. Baker that the United States does not recognize the Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem, so how does he expect us to?" explained Hanan Ashrawi, a West Bank Palestinian leader who has been meeting with Baker.

"There is no Palestinian — credible or incredible — who will be prepared to take part in a peace conference in which no Palestinians from East Jerusalem are allowed," she said. "It is a matter of substance. It means accepting the Israeli annexation."

The widespread solidarity with the Palestinian people and their struggle for self-determination among the Arab masses is an obstacle to the Arab regimes, who wish to participate in the conference, adopt a more conciliatory approach toward Israel, and establish even closer links to U.S. imperialism. They hope to not be seen as simply selling out Palestinian demands in pursuit of these goals.

The war against Iraq showed the growing willingness of capitalist regimes in various Arab countries to openly collaborate with imperialism. This limits Israel's heretofore unique position in the region as a cat's paw for imperialism, with its well-equipped and modern army. Israel is no longer imperialism's only reliable ally in the Mideast.

Utilizing its alliances with the Arab regimes, Washington is trying to achieve its broader goal of bringing stability for its economic and political interests to the Mideast. The U.S. government hopes to work with Arab regimes to solve the thorny political question in the region, that of the fight of the Palestinian people for self-determination. They are willing to do this at the expense of the Israeli regime's immediate interests. For its part, Tel Aviv shows few signs of willingness to compromise.

WORLD NEWS BRIEFS



Cholera spreads at 'catastrophic pace' on African continent

Cholera is spreading through Africa at "a catastrophic pace," a report by the World Health Organization said July 23. The disease is easily preventable and can be treated.

The 45,000 known cholera cases in Africa reported so far this year exceed the total number for 1990. The death rate for those infected by the cholera bacterium is 6 percent to 10 percent in some African countries, but reaches as high as 30 percent in particular areas.

Zambia reported the highest number of cases, 11,000. Almost 1,000 people there have already died. Nigeria, which had no reports of cholera for several years, now reports 7,600 cases and 990 deaths. Ghana has 6,500 cases, more than 10 times the number last year.

Health professionals attribute the disease's spread to the declining maintenance of water systems and sanitation by governments caught in the grip of the growing capitalist economic crisis and massive debt payments to imperialist banks. Cholera disappeared in the United States, Canada, and other developed countries a century ago with the introduction of improved water and sewage systems.

Prime ministers of North and South Korea to meet for talks

North Korean Prime Minister Yon Hyong Muk proposed a fourth round of talks with the prime minister of South Korea be held August 27 in Pyongyang, the North's capital. South Korean authorities accepted Muk's initiative.

The talks, aimed at reducing political and military tension on the Korean peninsula, were suspended by the North earlier this year after the Seoul regime proceeded with "Team Spirit" military exercises, involving 45,000 U.S. troops.

In a phone message to the South Korean prime minister, Muk challenged Seoul to "create a good atmosphere for the dialogue" by releasing South Koreans imprisoned for visiting the North, including Im Su Kyung.

Im, a university student in South Korea, was arrested in 1989 after traveling to Pyongyang for the 13th World Festival of Youth and Students. She was convicted under the notorious National Security Law, which prohibits contact or travel to the North and forbids advocating ideas judged by the Seoul regime to benefit the "enemy."

Former monarch to head Cambodian UN delegation

Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the former monarch of Cambodia, will head an official delegation representing Cambodia at the United Nations. It includes Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen and Khieu Samphan, a leader of the Khmer Rouge.

The setup was agreed to during peace talks by the government in Phnom Penh and the counterrevolutionary guerrillas that fought unsuccessfully for 12 years to overthrow it. The counterrevolutionary groupings include Sihanouk's troops, those of former capitalist forces that overthrew Sihanouk, and Pol Pot's hated Khmer Rouge, which killed at least 1 million people (estimates range as high as 3 million) during his genocidal rule from 1975-79. These forces coordinated efforts against the Phnom Penh government.

Sihanouk was also elected president of the new Supreme National Council of Cambodia by unanimous vote of representatives of the government and guerilla forces. The council will govern during a transition period when elections for a new government are planned.

While a cease-fire agreement has been signed, there are still issues of contention between the opposing sides. The Cambodian government has objected to a call for the "factions," including the government, to demobilize their forces. Hun Sen has maintained that to dismantle the government's troops would open the door to the Khmer Rouge seizing military control. The Khmer Rouge has at least 30,000 troops and is the strongest and best armed group in the counterrevolutionary coalition.

Supposed POW photo is cruel hoax

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sent back to the United States after the 1973 agreement between Washington and Hanoi ending the war. "Vietnam has no interest whatsoever in holding U.S. prisoners," he said.

Since the end of the Vietnam War, 13 joint investigations and more than 100 trips to 28 of the 40 provinces in Vietnam have occurred with the cooperation of the Vietnamese government to verify the fate of some of the 2,300 U.S. GIs designated as missing in action.

Trinh said U.S. records show that Lundy and Stevens were shot down over Laos; Lundy in 1966 and Stevens in 1969. Pentagon records list them as "killed in action."

The results of the 9th joint U.S.-Vietnam investigation held in February and March of 1990 show that Robertson was killed when his plane crashed, the ambassador said.

NLRB says Ravenswood lockout is illegal

BY MARY NELL BOCKMAN

RAVENSWOOD, West Virginia — Hundreds of steelworkers fighting for a contract against Ravenswood Aluminum Corporation (RAC) rallied at their union hall July 18 after learning that the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) upheld the union's charges against the company.

Seventeen hundred members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 5668 have been on strike since Nov. 1, 1990, when management refused to extend the union contract and threw the workers out of the plant.

The NLRB backed the union's complaint that RAC failed to bargain in good faith and declared an impasse in negotiations with the union when none existed. It also states that the company illegally locked out union members; implemented its final contract offer on Nov. 29, 1990; and replaced the Steelworkers with scabs.

Ed Verst, director of NLRB District 9, said the complaints against RAC will be heard before an administrative law judge September 23. Verst said the NLRB will seek to reinstate the unionists with back pay. At the hearing both the company and the union can offer evidence and cross-examine witnesses. A decision against RAC can be appealed to the full labor relations board and then to the federal court system. Verst has said a final ruling "could take years."

USWA District officials urged the crowd at the union hall to continue picketing RAC plant gates here and step up a union-sponsored campaign that promotes a consumer boycott of products made with RAC aluminum.

Chief union negotiator Joe Chapman said the NLRB ruling "is a significant event, not just for Ravenswood. I think it sends a message that the tactics used by Ravenswood are not the way the game's going to be played."

Unionists on the picket line expressed guarded optimism. "It sounds good but I'm not going to count my money till I get it in my hand," one said. Another added, "This is just what the advisory board of the NLRB says. They can't make the company do anything."

Because the company has successfully gotten production going again and the union officialdom has refused to continue the frequent rank-and-file mobilizations that occurred early on in the fight, many strikers believe a favorable NLRB ruling is their only hope.

Picketers also reported that federal marshals had recently arrived in Ravenswood. They are accompanying scabs leaving the plant at shift change and visited the union hall to ask that effigies with company offi-

cials names on them be taken down from the front of the union hall grounds.

RAC President Don Worledge responded to the ruling in a news release. The statement read, in part:

"We intend to pursue this matter, even into the court system, because we believe the evidence will show RAC has acted in good faith and according to the law in this matter."

The statement reaffirmed RAC's commitment to the 1,100 scabs now working in the plant. "The dedication and enthusiasm of the permanent replacement workers are very important to us," he said, "and the management of RAC believes we owe them our loyalty in return." RAC placed an ad in a local newspaper the day after the NLRB ruling urging the scabs to continue to report for work.

Concessions imposed on rail workers

BY RAY PARSONS

A three-person board set up by Congress in April has upheld earlier concession demands on rail workers made by the Presidential Emergency Board (PEB).

The board's findings took effect July 28.

The last contract covering rail workers was signed in 1985. It expired three years ago and rail owners have been pushing for massive concessions ever since. Last year, the PEB was set up by Bush to settle the dispute. Earlier this year, the board made nonbinding recommendations that included many concession demands that a majority of union members considered unacceptable.

On April 17, 235,000 members of eight rail unions struck major U.S. freight carriers. Nineteen hours into the strike, the top union officials ordered the rail workers to return to work when Congress declared the strike "illegal."

The three-person review board, appointed by U.S. President George Bush, rejected the unions' proposed modifications to the PEB's findings. Rail workers cannot vote on this latest round of attacks against them.

Even in the short period of the walkout, strikers in a number of areas reported important solidarity from working people who recognized the attempt to fight the worsening conditions rail workers face.

Railroad owners demanded changes in work rules that would increase the safety hazards already associated with the rail industry and lead to further job loss, including reducing the number of workers on each train crew.

The NLRB ruling came five days after unemployment benefits for the steelworkers expired. Local members received \$250 per week after the state of West Virginia ruled RAC had locked them out. Ravenswood strikers receive financial assistance from the union to pay bills or grocery vouchers, amounting to \$100 per worker per week. The International Steelworkers' strike fund has a balance of \$150 million, according to Gary Hubbard, International Communications Director.

The local at RAC has stepped up its campaign to appeal for solidarity and financial support from other unions. A new video premiered at the weekly Tuesday night picnic July 9.

"The Battle of Fort RAC" is a 16-minute film that tells the story of the fight for safety

and a contract by Local 5668. Interviews with local members and their families and footage of the fortress built around the plant dramatize the eight month battle.

Union officials announced that the video has been sent to every USWA District office in the country and is also available from Local 5668. Supporters present at the picnic signed up to get copies to show at union meetings in southern West Virginia.

Delegations from other unions have been coming to the Tuesday picnics held at "Fort Unity," a newly constructed park with a kitchen, covered shelter and stage built on the grounds of the union hall.

Mary Nell Bockman is a member of USWA Local 40 in Huntington, West Virginia.



In April, 235,000 rail workers went on strike, but union officials ordered members back to work after Congress declared strike illegal. Above, March 28 rail workers rally in Gillette, Wyoming.

The PEB's recommendations, presented January 15, represented a massive attack on workers' standard of living and working conditions.

While the recommendations included an 11 percent pay raise in lump sum pay increases spread over the life of the contract, these payments would not become part of the wage base, would not figure into benefits or pensions, and up to one-half would be set aside to pay for increased health insurance costs to the carriers.

Other proposals included increasing out-of-pocket costs of health insurance coverage for current employees, covering up to 25

percent of increased health insurance costs, and imposing an inferior health care program on new hires.

The PEB proposed increasing the basic-day miles from 108 to 130. 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 addition to approving the PEB's recommendations, the new board ruled July 18 that crew sizes be negotiated on a local basis and that any disputes be settled in arbitration. The findings also require track-maintenance workers to travel much farther to do their work.

A spokesman for Union Pacific Corp.'s rail unit echoed the freight carrier's delight with the results. Saying they had hoped for steeper concessions, he said, "On the balance we think the report is fair and we're pleased that the special board has maintained the integrity of the original recommendations."

Ray Parsons is a member of United Transportation Union Local 1291 and works for Norfolk Southern Railroad based out of Birmingham.

Textile workers to vote on joining union

BY NAOMI CRAINE

GREENSBORO, North Carolina — Workers at Fieldcrest Cannon Textile mills in and around Kannapolis, North Carolina, will vote August 20-21 on whether to join the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU). The mills employ 9,000 workers.

Forty-five hundred Fieldcrest Cannon workers belong to ACTWU at the mills owned by Fieldcrest before it bought Cannon Mills in 1986. Workers at Cannon have tried unsuccessfully to unionize several times before. The most recent organizing drive, in 1985, was defeated by a 2-1 majority after a hard 15-month campaign. The company's owners and other local capitalists waged a vicious fight against the workers, including threatening to close the mills if the union was voted in.

Despite that loss the organizing drive is getting a good response. Union organizers report 4,000 workers signed union cards in the first four days of the campaign. It took 12 months to get a similar number of cards in 1985. The most recent union organizing meeting drew about 500 people.

A few workers from other ACTWU-organized mills in the area have gone to Kannapolis to help union-building efforts. So far the union has not organized large numbers of rank-and-file members to go help.

The union is winning support based on a number of issues. Over the past few years wages have been driven down substantially. Work loads and the length of the workday have increased at the same time.

A Fieldcrest Cannon worker who is active

in the organizing drive explained in an interview that in some of the mills the company has reorganized the jobs, making them harder to do. When workers complain they are treated with no respect or dignity.

The pension fund is another issue. The old Cannon pension fund, which is separate from the current pension plan, was invested in a California insurance company by former Cannon Mills owner David Murdock.

Murdock got several million dollars from the deal. The insurance company is now bankrupt. The bankruptcy court ordered a 30 percent cut in pension payments to Cannon retirees in April, and Fieldcrest Cannon is refusing to make up the difference. ACTWU members at Fieldcrest Cannon protested the pension cuts at a stockholders' meeting in April.

There are safety issues, too. One example workers point to is a \$73,800 fine against the company for an elevator accident at Fieldcrest Cannon in Kannapolis that injured 13 workers.

A union victory would mean a lot for workers in the region, a highly industrialized area. Textile mills abound in small cities and towns. Few are unionized. Workers in other industries in the area, like tobacco and garment, are watching the organizing drive. A number of those interviewed at a Kannapolis supermarket were hoping the union gets in.

The company is campaigning against the union, according to local papers, by showing workers antiunion videotapes. Kannapolis city officials have also spoken out against the

union, saying that it would discourage other industries from locating in the city.

Naomi Craine is a member of ACTWU Local 385T at Fieldcrest Cannon's Decorative Bedding mill in Eden, North Carolina.

Behind debate on Clarence Thomas

Continued from Page 2

vancement of Colored People has not taken a position on the nomination.

Benjamin Hooks, executive director of the NAACP, said, "We're not going to be stampeded into mass hysteria just because someone says we're waffling. What we're doing is what we've always done. We're not waffling."

Many influential Black organizations and individuals oppose Thomas, but despite the debate not one of them has broken out of the confines of a discussion about the Supreme Court and sought to mobilize working people to fight against the attacks on affirmative action, abortion rights, and other democratic rights.

In a vote of 19-1 the Congressional Black Caucus opposed the nomination. The dissenting vote came from the one Republican member of the overwhelmingly Democratic Party body. Six members did not vote.

Speaking against the nomination, Representative Edolphus Towns said Thomas "was not the person to carry on the legacy of Thurgood Marshall."

Nationally syndicated columnist Carl

Rowan also urged opposition to Thomas' nomination.

Calling the selection of Thomas a "deft political move by President Bush," Rowan predicted that Thomas will be confirmed.

"Choosing a black conservative to replace Justice Thurgood Marshall has divided black America," Rowan wrote. "It has won Bush and Thomas the support of Republican conservatives who in normal circumstances wouldn't give a black man the sweat off their brows. It has given Mr. Bush protection against cries that his administration is racist and anti-poor in its ranting cries of 'quota bill' in opposing the civil rights legislation pending in Congress."

Haywood Burns, chairman emeritus of the National Conference of Black Lawyers, sharply criticized Thomas in an article on the opinion page of the July 19 *New York Times*.

Citing Thomas' reactionary political positions, Burns said, "These and other issues related to his qualifications — not the role model and American Dream nonissues — should be explored in detail during the Senate hearings."

Safety hearings discuss hazards of diesel equipment in underground mines

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) has begun to take some serious steps toward implementing regulations governing the use of diesel equipment in underground coal mines in the United States.

After more than a decade of stalling, a series of hearings were held in Salt Lake City, Pittsburgh, Chicago, and Birmingham in March at which MSHA officials presented draft regulations for public comment.

The hearings, requested by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), drew hundreds of miners and other unionists. Many testified on the extent of the health hazard presented by the use of diesel equipment in the enclosed atmosphere of underground mines. "MSHA has finally acted to regulate the growing use of diesel equipment in underground coal mines and that's a step forward," said Jim Weeks at the Salt Lake City hearing. "But we can't ignore the fact that the agency has failed to address the chronic health risks diesel exhaust poses to coal miners." Weeks is the UMWA's deputy director of occupational health.

At the hearings in Birmingham, miner after miner related their experiences working in mines where diesel equipment is used.

Charlie Jones from UMWA District 23 in Kentucky described the headaches and nausea many miners began to suffer when the company he works for introduced diesel equipment. "I worked on a unit with a diesel ram car," Jones said. "I had headaches and took aspirin every day. The company should have studied the effects of the fumes."

"What are the long term effects?" he asked. "I know one thing, the immediate effects are it makes you sick."

Although diesel equipment has been employed in U.S. underground mines since 1946, its use was limited until the mid-1970's.

During the decade that followed, the capitalist owners of mining companies found themselves under the lash of stiffening competition, the result of a rapid expansion of investment in the industry on the heels of the 1973 oil crisis.

Hundreds of weaker mining outfits went under. The work force at union-organized mines decreased from 160,000 working miners to 80,000. Coal production doubled and the use of diesel equipment in the mines increased tenfold — from 150 units in 1974 to 1,500 units in 120 mines in 1989.

As early as 1975 the director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), in a letter to MSHA, expressed serious concerns about the dangers posed to miners' health by diesel exhaust compounds and their interaction with coal dust.

Ten years later MSHA was only beginning to study the effects of diesel exhaust in underground mines. The agency did not start drafting regulations covering diesel equipment until 1988.

Ron Carver works at the Chetopa Mine in UMWA District 20 in Alabama. He described one of the damaging effects that diesel exhaust can have on the human lung. "It's like laughing gas; it causes the lungs to swell," he said. "And when scrubbers aren't working properly the fumes are unbearable."

Diesel exhaust is a mixture of some 9,000 different compounds produced when diesel fuel is burned. Exposure to diesel exhaust is known to cause chronic respiratory illnesses, increased chances of heart attack, eye irritation, and fatigue.

Moreover, some of the compounds are known to be carcinogenic. Workers exposed to high levels of these chemicals run the risk of developing cancer in 10 to 30 years.

NIOSH estimates that approximately 1.35 million workers are exposed to high levels of diesel exhaust in 80,000 work-places.

One of the most dangerous of the compounds contained in diesel exhaust is particulate matter — more commonly known as

soot. Soot was the first chemical compound encountered in the workplace that was found to cause cancer among workers exposed to it.

That was in 1775. The workers involved were English chimney sweeps.

The amount of soot produced by diesel engines is 30 to 100 times greater than that produced by gasoline engines. Added to this are other byproducts of combustion such as carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, nitrogen oxide, and sulfur oxides.

In an underground mine, diesel engines can produce nitrogen dioxide at similar levels found in polluted city air.

One positive aspect of the proposed regulations is the mandatory training of diesel mechanics to maintain equipment underground.

Several electricians at the hearings in Birmingham said they received little training before being assigned to work on diesel equipment. Proper maintenance is essential to keeping exhaust emissions low.

But just as important is the widespread practice among companies of harassing electricians and other miners who try to insure that the equipment is operated safely.

One electrician who works for Jim Walter Resources in Alabama described the company harassment he was put through.

"There was a blue fog throughout the section from the diesel exhaust," he said. "Lots of times the automatic cutoff switches that won't let the equipment operate when the water or oil systems are out of order are jumped out to keep the machines running."

"Many miners are reluctant to complain because of the constant threat of layoffs," he said.

While welcoming MSHA's belated first step toward regulating diesel equipment in the mines, miners pointed to several important weaknesses in the agency's proposal.

Foremost among these is the lack of a maximum level for exposure to diesel particulate.

The only chemical compounds the regulations propose to measure and limit are carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, and nitrogen oxide.

These chemical compounds are to be measured by weekly sampling of air in the returns — not in the immediate area where diesel equipment is operated and where concentrations of the chemicals to which the operators are exposed are much higher.

Only when concentrations of these compounds in the returns exceed 50 percent of the allowable limit will companies be forced to take samples of the air operators actually breathe. If the personal sample exceeds 75 percent of the allowable limit, companies will be required to monitor the exposure level each shift.

But nowhere do the proposed regulations say what is required of companies if exposure levels are exceeded. In fact, every effort is made to make the regulations something mining companies can easily live with.

One example of this is a passage in the proposed regulations that states: "The air in the immediate return would be a combination of several air splits of lesser quantities and therefore would be a diluted concentration of possible personal exposures to other areas of the mine ventilated by the air. MSHA believes this action level will not be burdensome upon the operator [mine owner]."

In an article on the union's participation in the hearings, the March-April *UMWA Journal* reported that MSHA has announced it will issue an exposure limit for diesel particulate later this year. No date, the *Journal* pointed out, has been set for release of the final rules.

Alyson Kennedy is a member of UMWA Local 2368. She works at Jim Walter #5 Mine in Brookwood, Alabama.



Miners being transported from underground mine. Use of diesel equipment increased tenfold from 1974 to 1989. Diesel exhaust causes respiratory illness, increased chance of heart attack, fatigue.



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

RICH STUART

Pathfinder, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Britain, and Canada, publishes the works of working-class and communist leaders who have made central contributions to the forward march of humanity against exploitation and oppression. Pathfinder bookstores are listed in the directory on page 12.

"From New York, The Hand of a Friend — Pathfinder Press" is the title of a feature article in the June 14 issue of the Cuban newspaper *Ahora!* Published by the Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of Holguín Province, *Ahora!* tells its readers, "Pathfinder is a U.S. publishing house that prints the works of revolutionary working-class leaders. Since 1959 it has published texts by leaders of the Cuban revolution, and it is considered the principal publisher abroad of the speeches of Fidel Castro in English."

Ahora! continues, "Authors such as Nelson Mandela, Malcolm X, Marx, Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, Carlos Fonseca, Che Guevara, and Leon Trotsky are among those published by this prestigious publishing house."

Ahora! salutes Pathfinder for its contribution of books to the Benito Juárez Library of the Oscar Lucero Moya Higher Technical Institute of Holguín. The library now has an exhibit entitled "From New York, the Hand of a Friend," displaying

15 Pathfinder books by Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, Leon Trotsky, Malcolm X, and Che Guevara. The exhibit's centerpiece is Pathfinder's *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism* by Carlos Tablada.

Pathfinder was the first U.S. publisher to respond to the library's request for donations. In return, the library sent 14 books from Cuba to Pathfinder as a gesture of solidarity and requested six more titles from the new Pathfinder catalog.

Ahora! describes the Pathfinder Mural in Manhattan as "a collective work by painters from 20 countries, among them Cuba."

Pathfinder has just released a new edition of the popular book *OUT NOW! A Participant's Account of the Movement in the U.S. Against the Vietnam War*, by Fred Halstead. With a forward by Socialist Workers Party leader Kate Kaku and a striking new cover designed by Eric Simpson, the book is must reading for workers, farmers, and young fighters who want to learn about the historic fight millions of people waged against Washington's aggression in Vietnam.

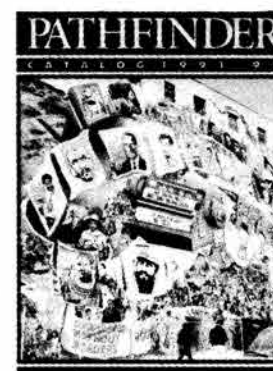
OUT NOW! is on sale at Pathfinder bookstores around the world and is available to Pathfinder Readers Club members for a 25 percent discount until September 1.

The Pathfinder Readers Club

For an annual fee of U.S. \$10 (£5), members of the Readers Club receive a 15 percent discount on all Pathfinder publications at any of the forty Pathfinder bookstores around the world. Members also enjoy even higher discounts on special selected titles and receive a free Pathfinder catalog.

To join and to obtain a list of Pathfinder bookstores, send the annual fee to Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014.

Discount does not apply to issues of *New International*, *Nueva Internacional*, or *Nouvelle Internationale*.



ANC discusses the fight in South Africa for a constituent assembly and a republic

BY GREG McCARTAN

The African National Congress is fighting for a constituent assembly in South Africa, elected on the basis of one person, one vote. The convening of the assembly would mark a giant step in the struggle for the election of a new parliament, marking the establishment of a democratic republic in South Africa.

ANC President Nelson Mandela said in remarks at the closing of the organization's 48th Conference, held in Durban July 2-6, that "we are not yet in a state of transition" to a nonracial South Africa. "There still remains an enormous difference in the perceptions of the oppressed about the nature of the necessary changes that have to occur and the character of a future society and that of the National Party government."

"We have convened," he said in his speech opening the conference, "as part of our continuing effort to make further inputs into the unstoppable offensive to end the criminal system of apartheid, to transform South Africa into a nonracial democracy, and to reconstruct it as a country of justice, prosperity, and peace for all our people, both black and white, in keeping with the objectives contained in the Freedom Charter."

The Freedom Charter was adopted in 1955 in Kliptown, near Johannesburg, by the Con-

gress of the People, a broadly-attended gathering of delegates from several democratic organizations. As a revolutionary democratic program the charter has served for decades as a guide to action in the battle to bring down the apartheid state structures and forge a South African nation.

The tactics used by the ANC to advance the strategic aims of the revolutionary struggle are posed in a new way because of the enormous victories scored in the fight against apartheid—a by-product of which are the decisions by the Pretoria regime to lift the ban on political organizations, release a number of political prisoners, scrap central pieces of apartheid legislation, and publicly pledge to extend the vote to the entire adult population.

Documents were put forward by conference commissions and adopted by the delegates on a range of matters: negotiations with the de Klerk government, how to respond to violent attacks in townships, land reform, health care, international relations, and the perspectives for the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation).

In addition, the ANC's newly published "Bill of Rights for a New South Africa" was discussed, a constitution for a South African republic circulated, and a new ANC constitution adopted.

Different points of view on these questions were debated at the conference and in articles and resolutions leading up to the meeting.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Response in big-business media

The conference was widely covered in the big-business press. For the entire week the serious deliberations on policy issues, the democratic nature of the discussions, and the very fact that such a historic conference was being held in the country were the political focus of attention in South Africa.

Statements by government officials and editorials in the press concentrated on calling on the ANC to stop public protest activities, end its support for sanctions, and become a "political party." By "political party" their bourgeois voices mean an electoral organization that organizes to win elections, not a revolutionary democratic organization that is also preparing to run for public office.

Following the election of the new ANC National Executive Committee, a barrage of editorials and opinion columns demanded the ANC identify those leaders who are also members of the South African Communist Party (SACP).

Pretoria's minister of constitutional development, Gerrit Viljoen, said one "negative aspect" of the conference was that "confusion

continues and the apparent decisive role of the SACP within the ANC has been confirmed." He said "critics" would continue to regard the "ANC and SACP as one."

The South African *Sunday Times* said the leadership election "underlines the dilemma facing the ANC: Whether it can transform itself from a national liberation movement into a streamlined political party complete with specific policies."

"Though times are rapidly altering the perceptions about how disadvantaged the ANC still is," wrote John Patten in an opinion column in the *Natal Mercury*, "the organisation nevertheless wishes to retain its role as a resistance or liberation movement instead of a political party, and to reserve the right to use methods that do not fit comfortably in a democracy." The author did not offer any ideas of how to bring about a democracy in

a country where Blacks are still denied citizenship rights and a white minority regime remains the government.

After numerous articles appeared in nearly every newspaper speculating on how many SACP members were elected to the ANC leadership, *The Citizen*, a conservative daily, said in an editorial that "the public is entitled to know who the Communists in the NEC are because of the role they are playing not only in the SACP, but in the ANC itself."

ANC leaders refused to be drawn into these traps and responded effectively to each charge.

In press conferences and speeches they explained the goal of the organization was to draw millions more into the struggle. They explained that there is no contradiction between building a revolutionary democratic organization and standing for elections if they occur.

"If the government does not want mass action it is easy for them to stop mass action, by opening the gates of parliament to all," Mandela told supporters at a July 7 rally of 50,000 in Durban to celebrate the ANC conference. Denied the vote the majority has no other way but mass action to bring its aspirations to bear on the government, he said.

As the red-baiting of the ANC leadership escalated, the organization's newly elected secretary general, Cyril Ramaphosa, directed ANC NEC members not to answer questions as to their political affiliations. Ramaphosa, who is one of six officers of the ANC, said he did not belong to the SACP after numerous articles in the press identified him as a member.

Some leaders of the ANC have previously identified themselves as members of the SACP, an organization in South Africa that is now legal. These include NEC members Chris Hani, Joe Slovo, Cheryl Carolus, Harry Gwala, and others.

'McCarthyite witch-hunt'

Ramaphosa called the attack on the ANC by supporters of the current regime a "McCarthyite witch-hunt." He said that "for 40 years South Africa has borne the brunt of anti-Communist hysteria which visited upon

our country and its people the horrors of detention without trial, torture, the murder of patriots at the hands of their torturers, and successive states of emergency."

In addition to these attacks on the ANC, the ruling National Party is taking steps to try to appeal to wider layers of the population for support. It seeks to portray itself as the best hope for impoverished Black workers and to delay elections for as long as possible.

A report by the South Africa Institute of Race Relations says that the National Party is attempting to form alliances with the Inkatha Freedom Party, Labour Party, Solidarity, Zion Christian Church, and various Bantustan officials.

Inkatha is headed by the chief minister of the KwaZulu Bantustan, Mangosuthu Buthelezi. The report indicates that since the Inkatha Freedom Party opened its doors to

to free political activity and association."

A resolution on the violence endorsed the course of keeping political fire on the government by demanding it end involvement in numerous attacks in Black townships and stop turning a blind eye to the murderous assaults when they occur.

Last year, opposition among many ANC members had blocked an initiative by Mandela to meet with Buthelezi. Doing this, some ANC members argued, would only serve to play down Inkatha's role in the violence and give Buthelezi unwarranted political stature.

Mandela sought to make clear the ANC's goal of drawing Inkatha away from collaboration with the government and de-escalating the spiraling violence, especially in Natal. This would help counter government propaganda that the fighting was a feud between the ANC and Inkatha and a result of "tribal" rivalries.

A meeting between Buthelezi and Mandela was eventually held at the end of January this year. A joint resolution called for "an end to the present violence," said "both parties are committed to political tolerance and freedom of political activity," and set up "joint mechanisms" to resolve further disputes.

The course of seeking talks with Buthelezi has helped shift the burden of bringing an end to the violence back on the government and exposed Inkatha when its members have been involved in ongoing assaults.

As to winning over South Africans attracted to Inkatha to the ANC's political program, John Jeffery, a leader of the commission on violence, told a press conference that "some Inkatha members have joined the ANC. But that is not the aim of the ANC."

"Inkatha has a right to recruit members as do other organizations," he said.

Several commission members downplayed the fact that Blacks join Inkatha because of its political perspectives, saying instead that recruitment is a result of intimidation.

"There are people who are moving from the ANC to Inkatha because of a matter of necessity," Jeffery said. Jobs, education, and housing are often denied those who do not join Inkatha in areas controlled by the KwaZulu administration.

The conference resolved to begin a "publicity campaign both locally and internationally to expose the true nature of the violence" and to complete the "task of forming self defence units in all areas." The ANC called for community-based self-defense organizations last spring.

A resolution on the negotiations with the government notes that "the Pretoria regime has not yet removed all the obstacles to negotiations" and "has thereby blocked progress towards the creation of a climate conducive to negotiations."

The resolution calls negotiations "an additional terrain of the struggle." The talks "do not win our freedom," the resolution says, "but represent the recognition of the victories we win on the ground."

Fighting for political space

Currently talks between the regime and the ANC focus on matters related to the release of political prisoners, ending the violence, and the return of political exiles. Until such matters are resolved negotiations and steps toward election of a constituent assembly will not begin.

Throughout its history the ANC has demanded the regime enter into negotiations on ending apartheid, extending citizenship and democratic rights to all regardless of race or nationality, and the establishment of a republic whose franchise is based on one person, one vote.

In his closing address to the ANC conference, Mandela said that "the government during the last 40 years has told the country and the world that the solution to the problems of this country was the policy of apartheid, in which blacks would continue to be hewers of wood and drawers of water."

"On the contrary we announced a nonracial policy," Mandela explained. "We announced that we were and still are fighting for a democratic South Africa, molded on the principle of one person, one vote. The government has now admitted they were wrong and we were right."



Militant/Ruth Haswell

Conference delegates discussed and debated the immediate tasks before the revolutionary democratic organization and the steps needed to draw millions into the struggle.

whites, "substantial numbers" have joined.

The Labour Party is an organization of Coloureds that agreed to participate in the apartheid regime's illegitimate "tricameral" parliament. Real legislative powers are vested in the white-only chamber of parliament. The other two chambers—one for those designated by the regime as "Coloureds" and the other for "Asians"—are aimed at providing window dressing for this racist setup.

The government is also taking pains to portray itself as the initiator of the reforms that, in reality, it has been forced to make. The regime contends that the lifting of laws denying Blacks access to land and those that imposed segregation of housing, health and educational institutions, and public facilities virtually amounts to complete equality for Blacks.

Combined with continued repression of the democratic movement through its promotion of violent attacks on Blacks, the National Party hopes to hold onto power as long as possible and minimize the development of the revolutionary struggle in the country.

As these conflicts sharpen in the months ahead, the issues discussed and debated at the ANC conference will become life-and-death questions for the future of the national, democratic revolution. Progress in deepening the revolutionary struggle will advance prospects for the ANC to win hegemony in the democratic movement and forge the kind of organization needed to lead the fight for a constituent assembly and a republic.

Conference discussions and documents took up the immediate tasks of winning greater space for working people to engage in political activity in the country.

Countering the violence

A resolution on negotiations adopted by the ANC conference explains that "the campaign of terror carried out against the people intended to destabilise society, intimidate the people, undermine and weaken the ANC, its allies and the rest of the democratic movement is an obstacle to the objective of creating a climate conducive to negotiations and

Militant editor Greg McCartan was part of a three-person Militant reporting team at the July 2-6 ANC conference in Durban.

The two issues related to the negotiations most discussed at the ANC conference were (1) the accountability of the leadership to the membership and (2) whether or not unnecessary concessions have been made by the ANC to the government in pursuit of a climate of free political activity.

The resolution on negotiations states that the "conference directs the NEC, as a matter of extreme urgency, to take steps to ensure the creation of appropriate and effective mechanisms for consultation and communication with the membership" on steps taken in talks with the government.

By forcing the government into negotiations, Mandela said to the July 7 rally in Durban, "We are gaining what is ours. We do not go to the negotiating table as beggars."

"The manner in which we have handled the negotiations up to now has been subject to severe criticism both inside and outside this hall," Mandela said to the crowd. "Some of these criticisms have been fair."

Mandela acknowledged the need to establish ways to report more effectively on the outcome of discussions with the government. But, he said, "we can't adjourn the meeting for a referendum" on every issue up for discussion. "On fundamental issues the leadership has to consult" with the membership, Mandela said.

The 'four pillars'

The place of what many in the ANC call the "four pillars" of the anti-apartheid struggle was taken up at the meeting. These are the armed struggle; mass action; the underground organization; and international solidarity — usually defined as the sanctions enacted against the Pretoria regime by governments around the world.

During the years of severe government repression, the ANC was pushed back and many leaders were exiled from the country. Given these conditions, the ANC had to rely to a substantial degree on these forms of advancing the struggle.

Victories scored through the deepening battle inside the country over the past decade, as well as decisive military defeats suffered by the regime in the late 1980s in its expansionist invasion of Angola, have altered these conditions, however.

Possibilities for revolutionary struggle by tens of millions on a scale not previously possible have been opened up today. The detour imposed on the ANC of having to rely to the degree it did on sanctions, the armed actions, and underground organization has ended.

Reorienting to this new situation is the central challenge before the ANC. Turning to the masses of working people — including white workers, Indians, and Coloureds — and winning them to the political perspectives of the ANC is the only road toward this goal.

Some delegates expressed the view that the fight has been weakened because the armed struggle, sanctions, and underground organization seem to have less of a role to play today.

The conference made a significant adjustment in the ANC's position on sanctions in a discussion in the international affairs commission. Summing up some of the initial ideas raised in the meeting, Mandela said proposals by ANC leader Thabo Mbeki were "an attempt to get the delegates as well as the organization not to rely on mere rhetoric but to look at the problem as it is developing."

Noting that Washington, the European Community, and numerous countries in Africa had lifted a range of sanctions or were on the verge of doing so, Mandela said the ANC should adopt the perspective of a phased lifting of the measures. "Unless there is a great deal of flexibility and imagination we will be left holding a shell and nothing else," he said.

Differing opinion

One ANC leader who differed from the approach on the sanctions and mass action adopted by the conference was Mac Maharaj. A prominent figure in the ANC underground, Maharaj had said prior to the conference that he would not stand for re-election to the ANC National Executive Committee.

At a press briefing at the conference



Conference hall at the University of Durban-Westville. The historic meeting held the country's political attention for the entire week.

Maharaj announced he had been convinced to run for the NEC. Differences with the course of the organization could be ironed out, he said.

Maharaj said that those who advocated a "phasing out" of sanctions based their approach on the "wrong premises." He also argued that mass action had to be "unleashed in a far wider and more concentrated way."

This assertion was rebutted by Mandela, who added a note of caution as to how "mass action" should be organized.

Seeing mass action as simply an endless series of strikes, boycotts, demonstrations, and other forms of protest can lead to political disorientation and resulting demobilization on the part of working people.

"Many people have alleged that we are now giving more attention to negotiations and ignoring mass action," Mandela said in his closing address. "We regret to say that this is an allegation which is made by people who have no real idea of what is happening in their own organization, in their own country."

"It is common knowledge that at no time in our history have we had so many forms of mass actions as we have done during the last two years," he said.

"Our labor organizations have had to give us a warning that we must not just resort to mass action every time we get angry," he continued. "The question of mass action must be carefully examined because of the downturn in the economy of the country and the high level of unemployment."

Umkhonto we Sizwe

The commission on Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) debated what role the ANC's armed wing should play now that its actions have been suspended. Some expressed reservations about the ending of the guerrilla effort, although it consisted mostly of small-scale hit-and-run sabotage.

Large numbers of MK members remain in camps outside of South Africa. Some commission members noted dissatisfaction among the ranks of MK in the camps who feel their role has been diminished. After the commission ended, the conference decided to hold a separate meeting of MK members in coming months to address those concerns more fully.

It was decided to keep MK in a state of "constant combat readiness" and to ask friendly countries to train its members in naval, aircraft, and army officer training in order to become integrated into a post-apartheid South African armed forces.

MK Chief of Staff Chris Hani said that the government had to recognize the role of the ANC's armed wing in a future defense force. He said, in turn, that the current South African Defence Force and South African Police had "quite an important role to play" in the future armed forces.

Joe Modise, commander of MK, was asked at a news conference if the suspension of the armed struggle was a significant concession by the ANC, since MK had never seriously challenged the government.

Modise replied that the armed actions had been like "fleas on the body" of the state, but they forced the regime to commit large numbers of troops to protect areas of the country.

Hani said he and Modise had not been to camps outside the country since April 1990.

The commission also decided that MK members now inside South Africa would assist in setting up the community-based

self-defense organizations throughout the country, which the ANC has called for in response to the rising number of vigilante attacks on townships, members of the ANC, and others fighting apartheid.

"We must defend our people at the same time as we push forward the process of leading to the transfer of power to our people," Mandela said of the need for these defense committees. Numerous resolutions at the conference noted that making rapid progress on establishing these defense units was needed, because little had been done to encourage their formation in the past months.

Hani, however, took a cautious approach to formation of the units. They must be carefully organized and supervised, he said, or else they will "degenerate into lynching squads."

Following the July 2-6 meeting, the ANC leadership announced that a policy conference would be held in several months to discuss questions of economy, land, health, education, and other issues.

While the need to come to a decision on these matters was raised by Mandela in his opening address, a full discussion of them by the delegates did not take place. Coming to a majority agreement on these questions, which are central to the revolutionary democratic program articulated in the Freedom Charter, is essential in meeting the goal of winning broader numbers to the organization.

Building mass-based ANC

"It is proper here to be absolutely brutal about our weaknesses" in building "a mass-based ANC to the fullest extent," Mandela said in his closing address.

"Many of us have made the mistake of thinking that the mere declaration of our policy in the Freedom Charter . . . meant the masses would come rushing to join the ANC. This is not our position."

He noted that some of the nearly 1,000 ANC chapters had been set up "so as to exclude minority groups," that is, whites, Coloureds, and Indians. This "indicates that the overwhelming majority of Africans in this country are not taking into account the minority groups of this country."

Mandela urged the delegates to reach out to toilers in the rural areas, whites, Indians, and Coloureds in door-to-door campaigns "to bring the policies of the ANC alive to the people."

Two of the most controversial sections of the Freedom Charter being debated inside and outside the ANC are (1) nationalizations of banking, industrial monopolies, and mineral wealth and (2) a radical land reform. The charter calls for making land available to Blacks who want to farm, backed up by a government program of cheap credit and assistance in providing needed implements and other support.

The debate on nationalizations has unfolded in the ANC monthly journal *Mayibuye*. An unsigned article in the February 1991 issue raises possible advantages and disadvantages of such measures.

Positive aspects, the article states, could include ensuring basic services are available to all, improving working conditions in those industries, ensuring that "the profits from nationalised industries are invested in useful ways," and democratizing the economy.

The possible disadvantages it cites are indebtedness from borrowing large sums of

money to buy out the targeted industries; the possibility of "skilled personnel leaving the country"; the fact that "nationalisation is no longer favoured in the world today"; and the danger that benefits might only go to those working in the industry.

"We cannot have the view that nationalisation will give a new democratic government the means to provide us all with jobs, houses and education," the article concludes. "We need to look more carefully at the economic reality and begin to find a more overall economic policy that will begin to solve our problems."

In a speech to Portuguese businessmen July 12, Mandela said he did not advocate the nationalization of all small trading concerns. But the "monopoly of our national economy cannot rest with a few multinationals," he said.

"After the traumatic experience of apartheid, where the majority of the people have had no access to resources, it would be foolish of us not to use state power to rectify this injustice," Mandela said.

Land reform

A resolution on land reform was distributed to delegates, guests, and the press at the conference.

"The alienation of land from the indigenous peoples and the denial of the African majority's rights to land and political power in our country" are intimately connected, the resolution begins. "Apartheid has destroyed the productive capacity of black rural producers. On commercial farms workers are devoid of any legal protection and are highly exploited."

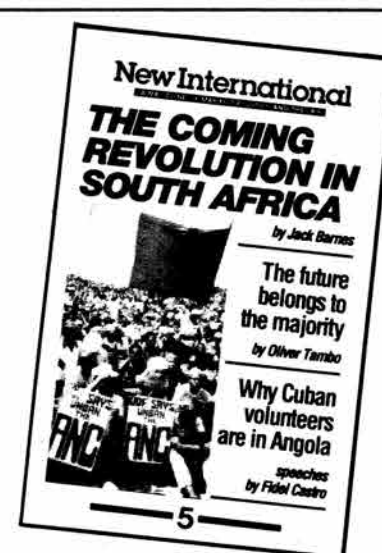
The document states that land "is a natural resource to be used for the benefit of the nation" and calls for "a comprehensive land reform."

"Restoring land" to those driven off their farms by the regime is the central axis of the document. It calls for a "comprehensive agricultural support structure," with the state playing a "leading role in the acquisition and redistribution of land to the poor."

One of the most comprehensive documents distributed at the meeting was the "Bill of Rights for a New South Africa."

The document is based on those aspects of the Freedom Charter that address democratic, political, and cultural freedoms and the right to education, health care, a job, and a fair trial. In addition, it details

Continued on Page 12



New International no. 5 focuses on the revolutionary struggle in South Africa, its impact throughout southern Africa and worldwide, and the tasks of opponents of apartheid in the labor movement internationally.

The feature article, **The Coming Revolution in South Africa** by Jack Barnes, discusses the national, democratic revolution and the battle to establish a nonracial democratic republic.

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ANC leader salutes Cuba, role in Africa

Continued from front page

Other activities included the inauguration of an impressive housing complex called the Pan-American Village, in which thousands of athletes competing in the August 2-18 Pan-American games here will be lodged; the laying of a wreath at the monument to Cuba's national hero, José Martí; a tour of Old Havana and the Museum of the Revolution; a well-attended press conference; and time for discussions between the ANC delegation and their hosts.

A planned visit to the Isle of Youth, where thousands of African young people are studying and working on full scholarships provided by the Cuban government, had to be cancelled.

Mandela's powerful speech to the thousands of Matanzas residents and guests who filled the plaza was broadcast live on radio and television and heard by millions of Cubans. It was also published in full in the next day's *Granma*, the newspaper of the Cuban Communist Party. Due to a paper shortage, *Granma* is the only national daily now being published in Cuba.

Cuba's example: no surrender

In his tribute to the Cuban people at the Matanzas rally, Mandela pointed to the concrete gains of the revolution in terms of

economic development and advances in health care, education, and the elimination of racism and inequality. But most important, he stressed, is the example of the Cuban revolution for all those everywhere fighting for freedom and justice.

"There are many things we have learned from your experiences," Mandela told the crowd. "In particular we are moved by your affirmation of the historical connection to the continent and people of Africa. Your consistent commitment to the systematic eradication of racism is unparalleled. But the most important lesson that you have for us is that no matter what the odds, no matter under what difficulties, you have to struggle, there can be no surrender. It is a case of freedom or death."

Referring to the extremely difficult conditions Cuba faces today as the effects of the 32-year U.S. trade embargo are compounded by the near total collapse of trade with Eastern Europe and to a lesser degree with the Soviet Union, Mandela noted that "your country is experiencing many difficulties now, but we have confidence that the resilient people of Cuba will overcome these as they have helped other countries overcome theirs."

"We admire the sacrifices of the Cuban people in maintaining their independence and sovereignty in the face of the vicious,

imperialist-orchestrated campaign to destroy the impressive gains made by the Cuban revolution," Mandela said.

"We too want to control our own destiny," he went on. "We are determined that the people of South Africa will make their future and that they will continue to exercise their full democratic rights after liberation from apartheid. We do not want the popular participation to cease at the moment when apartheid goes. We want to have the moment of liberation open the way to ever deeper democracy."

Returning to this same theme later in the speech Mandela explained that the goal of the ANC remains the achievement of the demands of the Freedom Charter adopted in 1955, and that the people of South Africa will settle for nothing less.

"No process of negotiations can succeed until the apartheid regime realizes that there will not be peace unless there is freedom and that we are not going to negotiate away our just demands," Mandela explained. "They must understand that we will reject any constitutional scheme that aims at continued white privileges."

"There is reason to believe that we have not yet succeeded in bringing this home to the government," the ANC leader noted, "and we warn them that if they do not listen we have to use our power to convince them. That power is the power of the people. Ultimately we know that the masses will not only demand but win full rights in a non-racial, nonsexist, democratic South Africa."

"But we are not only seeking a particular goal," he went on. "We also propose a particular route for realizing it, and that is a route that involves the people all the way through. We do not want a process where a deal is struck over the heads of the people and their role is merely to applaud."

"The government resists this with all force because the question of how the constitution is made, how the negotiations take place, is vitally connected to whether or not a democratic result ensues," he said.

Africa's debt to Cuba

In addition to explaining the current stage of the struggle in South Africa and the stance of the ANC toward the negotiations with the apartheid government, Mandela concentrated a significant part of his remarks on what he called "the great debt we owe the people of Cuba."

Mandela recalled that he was in prison in 1975 when he first learned of the massive aid to the people of Angola from the internationalist forces of Cuba. "We in Africa are accustomed to being the victims of other countries that want to tear apart our territory or subvert our independence," he noted.

"In the history of Africa there is no other case of a people that allied themselves with us in our defense," he said.

Those who fought and died in Angola, Mandela noted, were only a small percentage of those who volunteered. "For the Cuban people internationalism is not simply a word, but something we have seen put to the test for the good of large sections of humanity."

The ANC leader then turned to what he called the "truly historic significance" of the battle at Cuito Cuanavale in Angola. In early 1988 the combined forces of Cuba, Angola, and the Namibian independence fighters of SWAPO decisively defeated a massive invasion of Angola by the South African army. "The crushing defeat of the racist army at Cuito Cuanavale was a victory for all of

Africa," Mandela said.

"That impressive defeat of the racist army at Cuito Cuanavale gave Angola the chance to enjoy peace and consolidate its own sovereignty."

"The defeat of the racist army allowed the fighting people of Namibia to finally achieve their independence."

"The decisive defeat of the apartheid aggressors destroyed the myth of the invincibility of the white oppressor."

"The defeat of the apartheid army was an inspiration to the fighting people of South Africa," the ANC president said.

"Without the defeat inflicted at Cuito Cuanavale our organizations would not have been unbanned," he explained, adding that "the defeat of the racist army at Cuito Cuanavale made it possible for me to be present with you here today."

"Cuito Cuanavale constitutes a landmark in the history of the struggle for the independence of southern Africa," the ANC leader said, and "was a turning point in the struggle for the liberation of the continent and of our country from the lash of apartheid."

With the poor of the earth

Mandela expressed concern over the Bush administration's decision to lift many economic sanctions imposed against South Africa by the U.S. government. Mandela noted that this was the context in which the ANC deeply appreciated the friendship of Cuba.

He recalled the ANC's first experience with the internationalism of the Cuban revolution. In the 1960s, when the ANC was forced by the indiscriminate massacres of the apartheid regime to take up arms to defend the struggle, ANC representatives went to many governments in search of aid. Only in Cuba, Mandela recalled, were they received not by low-level government functionaries but by the highest officials. They were immediately offered everything they needed and wanted. "That was our first experience with Cuban internationalism," he said.

Today, Mandela remarked, "you are with us because both our organizations, the Communist Party of Cuba and the ANC, are fighting for oppressed masses to ensure that those who make the wealth enjoy its fruits. Your great apostle, José Martí, said, 'With the poor people of the earth I want to share my fate.'"

"We in the ANC will always stand with the poor and rightless. Not only do we stand with them, we will ensure sooner rather than later that they rule the land of their birth and — in the words of the Freedom Charter — the people shall govern," Mandela said. "And when that moment arrives it will have been made possible not only by our own efforts but through the solidarity, support, and encouragement of the great Cuban people."

Mandela closed his remarks by referring to the Order of José Martí that had been awarded him minutes earlier.

"I am very much humbled by this award," he said, "because I do not think I deserve it. It is an award that should be given to those who have already won the freedom of their peoples."

The award has been given, he noted, in recognition of the fact "that the people of South Africa stand on their feet and are fighting for their freedom. We sincerely hope that in the days that lie ahead we will prove worthy of the confidence which is expressed in this award."

Outpouring of support greets Mandela on Jamaica tour stop

BY OSBORNE HART

KINGSTON, Jamaica — An outpouring of support greeted African National Congress (ANC) President Nelson Mandela and his wife Winnie as they began a day long visit here July 24.

The Mandelas arrived via Cubana Airlines as part of their Caribbean and Latin American tour. Scheduled stops include Cuba, Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina.

Airport workers applauded and shouted "Mandela! Mandela!" as the South African leader made his way through the crowd shaking hands and raising his fist in response.

As the motorcade proceeded from the airport to the capital city, workers from the Shell Oil refinery and the huge cement plant along the route greeted Mandela waving placards reading "Down with apartheid."

Crowds numbering in the tens of thousands lined streets of the downtown area waving the ANC and Jamaican flags chanting a colloquial phrase, "Man de ya!" [The man is here] which rhymes with Mandela. As the motorcade passed, youths ran alongside and behind the Mandelas' car, some wearing "Welcome Mandela to Jamaica" T-shirts.

In honor of the ANC president's visit, the Jamaican government declared a half-day holiday. Jamaican Broadcasting Company television and RJR radio broadcasted the ceremonies and events for the Mandelas. In the days prior to the visit the *Daily Gleaner*, the major newspaper on the island, featured the ANC Freedom Charter and a series of articles covering the recent ANC conference.

To a standing ovation, Mandela told the Jamaican people and the world that sanctions against the apartheid regime must continue.

"We cannot as yet take it for granted that apartheid will go down without a fight," the ANC leader said. "Nor can we assume that the destruction of apartheid, when it does occur, will lead without hindrance to the birth of a truly democratic South Africa."

"It would, therefore, be dangerously premature for the international community to lift, as some have regrettably done, existing pressures, including sanctions. Change in South Africa will only become truly profound and irreversible when all our people, regardless of race, color, creed, or sex shall have won the right to vote," Mandela stated.

As one Jamaican told us, of Mandela's uncompromising stance against apartheid, "I really like Mandela. He pushes out strong words."

Prime Minister Michael Manley presented a resolution to the Parliament, approved unanimously, reiterating Jamaica's ban on trade with South Africa and urging others to continue their sanctions.

"We will not lift it [the ban] until it is clear that the fundamental principle of one man or one woman, one vote, is irrevocably in place," Manley stated after Mandela's speech



Militant/Osborne Hart
Crowd at stadium where Mandela spoke

to parliament. Jamaica has had sanctions against South Africa since the late 1950s.

The highlight of Mandela's stay was a mass rally at the National Stadium. More than 45,000 people from all over Kingston jammed the stadium to overflow capacity. A majority of the crowd waited more than seven hours to hear the ANC leader speak. They were entertained in a concert of more than 60 reggae artists and bands prior to Mandela's arrival.

Earlier in the day, a ceremony honoring Mandela was held at the University of the West Indies (UWI). Thousands cheered him from the rooftops and on the mall of the campus as he walked to the auditorium where he received an honorary Doctorate of Laws degree. Mandela's speech to those gathered at UWI stressed the role of education in a post-apartheid South Africa and that the process of dismantling apartheid is not over.

Despite the moves that the government of F.W. de Klerk has been forced to take as a result of the pressure of the South African masses and international solidarity, this is a "regime that still seeks to preserve white domination and privilege," Mandela said.

Concluding his talk, Mandela said the masses of South Africa were inspired by the solidarity afforded them from Jamaicans. He invoked the words of the famous reggae singer Bob Marley as an example of that solidarity: "Get up, stand up. Stand up for your rights."

Books on Cuba from Pathfinder

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In Defense of Socialism

By Fidel Castro

In these speeches from 1988-89, Castro argues that the future belongs to socialism, not capitalism. Castro also discusses Cuba's role in helping to defend the peoples of Angola and Namibia against the apartheid regime. 142 pp., \$12.95

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Castro hails struggle against apartheid

Continued from front page

Castro also took advantage of the occasion to explain the increasing instability of the U.S. economy, the deepening rivalries between Washington and its imperialist competitors in Europe and Japan, and the reasons why capitalism cannot solve the accelerating social crisis in Latin America.

Other guests introduced at the beginning of the celebration and warmly embraced by Castro and Mandela were Rashid Karwawa, a leader of Tanzania's ruling party; Luis Inacio Lula de Silva, president of the Workers Party of Brazil; Guennadi Kisiliov, member of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR; and Brahim Gail, a leader of the Polisario Front from the Sahara. Daniel Ortega, newly elected secretary general of the Sandinista National Liberation Front of Nicaragua, was also introduced as a special guest.

Calling South African apartheid "hateful and repugnant," Castro said "there cannot be a more just cause than the one led by the ANC and Comrade Mandela."

Referring both to the U.S. government and the capitalist governments of Western Europe, Castro noted that "the West supported apartheid. It made available technology. It contributed billions of dollars in investments and untold amounts of arms. And it gave it political support."

"Imperialism never broke with apartheid," Castro said. "It maintained and still maintains excellent relations with apartheid."

Who created apartheid? Castro asked the crowd. "Communists, socialists, socialism? No. It is a creation that expresses the essence of capitalism. It is a creation of colonialism and neocolonialism."

Castro noted that while Cuba, which had systematically worked to eradicate the legacy of racial discrimination, was blockaded by Washington to "punish it for its revolution and its social justice," the boycott against South Africa was ignored by the imperialists, who only implemented "some lukewarm economic measures."

Cuba risked everything

Imperialist support to the racist regime in South Africa stands in stark contrast to Cuba's record of bold opposition.

In 1975 when Angola was invaded by the South African army, Cuba responded to Angola's request for aid with troops.

Castro noted how Cuba did everything possible to help Angola, including weakening the island's own military defense by sending troops and weapons. "The revolution risked its own existence," he said.

"It played all its cards."

"Our combatants made it possible to maintain the integrity of the sister republic of Angola and achieve peace," Castro stated. "They contributed to the existence of an independent Namibia."

"We knew that those events would profoundly affect the life of southern Africa," Castro continued. "One of the motives, one of the great incentives that drove us forward, was that we knew that by solving the problem there in Angola, the forces that fought against apartheid would also benefit from our struggle."

Above all else, the key element in the anti-apartheid fight, Castro said, has been the heroism and spirit of sacrifice and struggle of the South African people, led by the ANC.

The presence of Mandela in Cuba, Castro added, was proof that "the blood of our internationalist fighters was not shed in vain."

The U.S. government has tried to pressure the ANC to break its ties with the Cuban leadership. At the same time, many people who used to consider themselves revolutionaries, Castro stated, now regret ever having pretended to be socialists, communists, or "friends of communists."

"I don't know if you are sufficiently conscious," Fidel told the crowd, "of the symbolism and above all the valor" of Mandela's visit to Cuba and speech in Matanzas.

More than once Castro was interrupted by shouts from the crowd of "Fidel, Mandela, Cuba will be respected."

A tremendous wave of neoliberalism

Castro also took the opportunity of the Matanzas rally to talk about the First Ibero-

American Summit, which took place in Guadalajara, Mexico, July 17-19. Castro was one of 23 heads of state or government from 19 Latin American countries, plus Spain and Portugal, who attended (see *Militant*, August 2).

The Guadalajara meeting occurred in the context of the "tremendous wave of neoliberalism sweeping Latin America and the whole world," Castro remarked.

The government leaders attending the summit spoke about injustice, the poverty of millions in Latin America, and of inequality, Fidel noted.

"I asked, where does injustice and inequality come from? Where does poverty and inequality come from? Where do all of these calamities come from, if not from capitalism?"

In Guadalajara, Castro said, people talked "as if the creator of heaven and earth is responsible for the fact that there are poor people, as if the social system does not have anything to do with this."

"It's incredible," he exclaimed.

The world "is divided between immensely rich capitalist countries and the immense majority of extremely poor countries," Castro said.

The Cuban president pointed to the 250 million people in Latin America who live in poverty, to the high rate of infant mortality, and other indications of the crisis.

While Latin America is divided, Castro said, the imperialist powers in Europe, Japan, and the United States are becoming more protectionist.

In Guadalajara, Castro raised the need for Latin American economic integration and a united stance to defend the interests of the people of the region in the face of what he called the three economic blocs.

There would be no need for Cuba to abandon its socialist course to be part of an integrated Latin America, Castro said.

The Cuban leader told the Matanzas rally about the thousands of demonstrators who assembled outside the summit meeting. They warmly welcomed Castro to Mexico and booed U.S.-imposed Panamanian President Guillermo Endara.

Anyone with any "class instinct," Castro said, knows that Cuba is with the poor, the oppressed, and the exploited of the world.

Putting out fire with gasoline

Capitalism, Castro noted, whether it is called market economy, neoliberalism, privatization, or any other "strange name," will not solve Latin America's problems.

"The Soviet Union needs tens of billions of dollars. Where is this money?" he asked. "Today the whole world is asking for money. The countries of Eastern Europe need money... The Middle East needs money in enormous quantities. And Latin America owes \$430 billion" in its foreign debt. The imperialist countries are not swimming in gold, he said.

"To think that the neoliberal recipes are going to promote the miracle of development in our countries is an incredible illusion," he stated. "It's like wanting to put out a fire with gasoline."

The world has changed over the past several decades, Castro stressed.

Today, he said "the main worry of the United States in the face of the new international situation is its competition with Europe and Japan."

"But of these three blocs the United States is the worst off," Castro stated.

"Nobody believes that the United States is lying in a bed of roses from the economic point of view."

"In Europe, Germany—a defeated power in World War II—is the most powerful. Japan, another loser, is powerful."

No longer center of capitalism

Castro detailed the economic crisis facing the U.S. rulers. After World War II, the rate of profit in the United States was as high as 24 percent, he said. Now it is down to 8 percent. He pointed to the low rate of savings, the huge public and private debt, the trade deficit, and the declining competitiveness of industries such as auto and chemicals.

"The United States was the center of capitalism," Castro said. "The richest of all countries, the most competitive. After the second World War it had total hege-



Cuban volunteers in Angola made decisive contribution to defeat of invasion by South African army. Fidel Castro described apartheid as "a creation that expresses the essence of capitalism."

mony. It has lost these positions."

The Cuban communist leader said that the United States was more powerful than ever militarily and "politically it has enormous influence. But economically it is weaker than ever. It has serious problems."

Castro recalled that during an interview a U.S. reporter told him the Soviet Union was ruined by the arms race.

"I told him that 'the Soviet Union may be first, but that you [the United States] were also ruined. Don't sing victory,' I told him."

It remains to be seen, Castro said, "how the world will evolve with this phenomenon of competition between the great economic blocs."

With the events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union some people are saying that Cuba must change, Fidel said. "What they want is not change, but to put the gears in reverse."

"Capitalism is in vogue because of the political disasters in Eastern Europe," Castro said.

"This is not the best place to analyze the reasons" for the events there, the Cuban leader stated. "We have our opinions about all of these questions and we have had our own ideas for some time."

"But it was Che [Guevara] who had very clear ideas on this, clearer than the waters of Varadero. Che was a prophet. He foresaw what some practices in the construction of socialism would lead to."

Putting the present difficulties into historic perspective, Castro explained that private property has existed for thousands of years. "For thousands of years," he remarked, "not only things, but men were objects of property."

Without disparaging the contributions of ancient Greece to art and culture, for example, Castro said it cannot be forgotten that it was a slave society.

"Four guys met in a courtyard and they called this democracy," he said. "The rest of the citizens had no rights and the great majority were slaves."

Slavery had its impact in Latin America as well, Castro pointed out. Africans were torn from their homes and brought "to this hemisphere to be enslaved and exploited to their last drop of sweat and blood."

Even after the elimination of slavery, racial discrimination continued in Cuba. Like South Africa, Castro said, Blacks "on one side, and whites on the other."

Cuban revolution makes great strides

With the 1959 victory of the Cuban revolution, giant strides were made in eliminating racial discrimination and other economic and social inequalities.

The agrarian reform granted land to small peasants. Unemployment was eliminated and women domestic workers free from what Castro called both "open and semihidden forms of prostitution." The factories and wealth of the nation were placed in the hands of the people.

"How far we slaves have come," Castro said, referring both to Cuba's revolution and the struggle against apartheid in South Africa.

"Don't come and speak to us about the times past when there were beggars, prosti-

tution, the systematic theft of the public treasury, lowly politicians, the shameless exploitation of workers, landless peasants... racial discrimination."

"We already know about capitalism," Castro stated to loud applause. "And we are not going back."

Castro referred to the "special period" Cuba is going through, due to the sharp drop in trade with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union—previously Cuba's main trading partners—since the beginning of 1990. During the first six months of 1991, oil was virtually the only product arriving from the USSR, and in far smaller quantities than Cuba needs.

Some factories have been closed, newspaper circulation is reduced, virtually all food is rationed except for fresh fruits and vegetables, and working hours have been cut back due to shortages in every area.

To begin to meet the challenge, volunteer brigades and contingents have been organized for work in the countryside to increase Cuba's agricultural production. Tens of thousands of bicycles have been distributed to provide transportation in the absence of sufficient gasoline supplies.

"What are they going to threaten us with?" Castro asked, referring to those who want Cuba to "change."

"With starvation, with blockades, with wars?"

"We will work things out one way or another," Castro said to the Matanzas participants, who listened attentively to every word throughout his speech. "But we will not return to the slave barracks."

"Let's not emphasize that we are imperfect and have deficiencies," Castro told the crowd. "We know that and we will not forget it. Let's emphasize the effort that our people are making, their virtues and capacity for sacrifice."

'Socialism is in diapers'

"Capitalism is thousands of years old," Castro said. But socialism is still "in diapers... still in those first six or seven days of a child's life that are the most dangerous."

"We are in the intensive care postnatal unit," Castro added. "It is logical that... socialism would pass through dangers and difficulties."

But no matter how difficult things become, "the more we know about imperialism and its miseries, the more socialist, the more communist we feel," he said.

"We are fighting for a better world," Castro declared. "A world like the one Marx and Engels wanted, where men are brothers, not wolves."

"We are internationalists. We are not narrow nationalists or chauvinists," Castro said. "The blood of Angolans is our blood. The blood of Namibians is our blood... The blood of humanity is our blood."

"Internationalism today means to defend and preserve the Cuban revolution. It is our greatest revolutionary duty," he concluded, "to defend this front line, this bastion of socialism. That is the greatest service we can ever do for humanity."

Socialist youth set convention plans

Continued from front page

road," a talk based on her recent reporting trip to Cuba. Saturday afternoon will feature "Youth, the Working Class, and Capitalism: Sharpening Class Polarization in U.S. Politics," by Jack Barnes, for the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party.

The convention will also include two reports from the YSA leadership. One will welcome participants to the historic convention, and the second will address the challenges and political opportunities the YSA faces in the coming months. The report will discuss putting at the center of the YSA's work defending the Cuban revolution, building support for framed-up packinghouse worker Mark Curtis, and the importance of the distribution of revolutionary literature such as the *Militant* and *Pathfinder* books.

In addition to these talks, the convention will feature a range of classes. Participants will be able to choose from subjects such as "The Revolutionary Internationalist Legacy of Malcolm X," given by Mac Warren; "How Marx and Engels Became Communists," given by Héctor Marroquín; and "500 Years of Colonialism: Puerto Rico's Fight for Independence," given by Doug Jenness. Other classes include "Marxism and the Fight for Women's Emancipation," "Stalinism, the 1945-46 Revolution in Yugoslavia, and the Class Conflict There Today," and "Cops, Cop Violence and Class Polarization."

The convention will also provide a history of the YSA with a film and slide show. The film, a chronicle of the 1971 YSA convention, provides a sense of the leading role the organization has played in U.S. politics over the last 30 years.

The film shows the YSA's part in the fight against the Vietnam War — especially relevant now as YSAers come out of building opposition to the war against the Iraqi people. The movie features interviews with young GIs who explain their antiwar position and shows YSA activists as part of the fight for women's rights, such as the right to legal abortion.

YSA members and chapters around the country continue to work to attract new participants to the convention. The New York chapter has been using a petition drive to win ballot status for socialist candidates in the city council race there to discuss politics and distribute leaflets for the convention. Over 20 young people have signed up for more information on the YSA there.

The Los Angeles YSA chapter expects a number of contacts to attend the convention, and has reserved a block of discount plane tickets to Cleveland to make sure everyone can attend. In addition, the chapter has been promoting the convention through a class series on Cuba over the last few weeks and is holding a fund-raising dinner in conjunction with a forum on police brutality.

A YSA team, consisting of members from New York, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C., is already in Cleveland to prepare for the upcoming convention.

For more information on registration and transportation to the YSA convention, or to join the convention building team in Ohio, contact the YSA national office at (212) 727-8422.

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At the Militant Labor Forum you can express your opinion, listen to the views of fellow fighters, and exchange ideas on how to best advance the interests of workers and farmers the world over.

ALABAMA

Birmingham

Railroad Workers' Contract: Which Way Forward? Speaker: Ray Parsons, Socialist Workers Party, member United Transportation Union Local 1291; others. Sun., Aug. 4, 5:30 p.m. 111 21st St. S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

Free Mark Curtis! Excerpts from video, The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis. Speaker: Pat Hunt, Socialist Workers Party, activist in Birmingham Supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Sun., Aug. 18, 5:30 p.m. 111 21st St. S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

IOWA

Des Moines

Class Conflict in Yugoslavia Today: Lessons of the 1945-46 Revolution. Speaker: representative Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Aug. 3, 7:30 p.m. 2105 Forest Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (515) 246-8249.

ANC discusses fight in South Africa for constituent assembly

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the rights of workers, women, disabled persons, and children.

Need for organization

Taking steps to reverse organizational weaknesses was the subject of a report to the conference by outgoing secretary general Alfred Nzo.

In reaching out to explain the ANC perspectives, "we appear very happy to remain pigeonholed within the confines of populist rhetoric and clichés," Nzo said, according to the *Sunday Star*. It would be "blatantly naive of us to become complacent and act as if under no circumstances whatsoever can the ANC be threatened or even be removed from the leadership pedestal it now occupies."

One additional step to take, Treasurer General Thomas Nkobi said, was for the ANC to become self-financing. In 1990, 5 percent of the organization's funds came from the membership. Although significant contributions came from abroad, Nkobi said, monies raised during Mandela's tour to the United States last year have yet to reach the ANC. Nkobi said that some ANC property abroad will be sold and the funds returned to the ANC in South Africa. The central goal, he said, must be to base the ANC's finances on the workers, farmers, and others inside the country who support the organization.

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

MARYLAND

Baltimore

The 1945-46 Revolution in Yugoslavia and the Class Conflict There Today. Speaker: Jim Sarsgard, Socialist Workers Party, member United Food and Commercial Workers Local 27. Sat., Aug. 3, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

NEBRASKA

Omaha

The Fight for Democratic Rights for GIs. Speakers: Andrew Pulley, Socialist Workers Party, former active duty anti-Vietnam War GI; Dan Cobos, former GI opposed to U.S. war against Nicaragua. Sat., Aug. 3, 7 p.m. 140 S 40th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (402) 553-0245.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

What the Cuban Revolution Has Achieved and Its Significance for Working People Today. Speaker: Doug Jenness, Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Aug. 3. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m.; Young Socialist fund-raising party to follow. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: Dinner, \$5, program \$3. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

Issues Facing Farmers in the United States and Europe. Speakers: Harry Hart, dairy farmer from Bolton, North Carolina, who will report back and show slides from visit with farmers in Europe; Robert Dees, Socialist Workers Party, textile worker. Sun., Aug. 4, 7 p.m. 2219 E Market. Donation: \$3. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

TEXAS

Houston

The U.S.-Mexico-Canada Free Trade Pact: What Stand Should Working People Take? Speaker: Steve Warren, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Houston city controller. Sat., Aug. 3, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$3. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

Aftermath of the Gulf War: Video Nowhere to Hide. Sat., Aug. 10, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$3. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

Defending Abortion Rights Panel Discussion. Speakers to be announced. Sat., Aug. 17, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$3. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

Do Working People Need an Independent Labor Party? Speaker: Willie Mae Reid, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Houston, member Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union Local 4-367. Sat., Aug. 24, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$3. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston

Resisting the Worldwide Capitalist Offensive ... Building the Revolutionary Party. Speakers: Linda Joyce, Socialist Workers Party; David Anshen, Young Socialist Alliance; Clay Dennison, Socialist Workers Party, member United Mine Workers of America Local 1499. Sun., Aug. 4, 4 p.m. 1586 E. Washington St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (304) 345-3040.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

Korea: The Fight for Unification. Speakers: representative, Korean Youth League; representative Communist League. Fri., Aug. 2, 7 p.m. 19 Terry St., Surry Hills. Donation: \$2. Tel: 02-281 3297.

BRITAIN

Manchester

Celebrate publication of New International no. 8 "Che Guevara, Cuba and the Road to Socialism." Speaker: Helen Warnock, Communist League. Fri., Aug. 2, 7:30 p.m. Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Donation: £1. Tel: 061-839 1766.

CANADA

Montréal

The 1945-46 Revolution in Yugoslavia and the Class Conflict There Today. Sat., Aug. 3, 7:30 p.m. 6566 boul. Saint-Laurent. Donation: \$4. Tel: (514) 273-2503.

Toronto

Québec Sovereignty and the Crisis of Canadian Capitalism. Speaker: Colin McKay, Young Socialists. Sat., Aug. 3, 7:30 p.m. 410 Adelaide St. W., Suite 400. Donation: \$3. Tel: (416) 861-1399.

Vancouver

Matewan. Film on opening battle of historic struggles by coal miners in Appalachian region of United States. Fri., Aug. 9, 7:30 p.m. 1053 Kingsway, Suite 102. Donation: \$3. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

San Francisco garment company closes down

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they will ask Smith to specifically investigate whether the Kongs defrauded workers by coaxing them to loan their own money — from \$3,000 to as much as \$50,000 — to the Kongs. In some cases, this was the workers' life savings.

"They said they would pay employees 20 percent interest if they loaned them money," said ILGWU representative Jeff Bauman. The couple's companies also had a worker health plan that was partly financed by deductions from employees paychecks. Earlier in July, according to Bauman, the workers found out they had been dropped from the plan because the Kongs had not been paying the premiums.

"This case of highway robbery puts a badly needed public spotlight on the sweatshop conditions common in the garment industry," said Sandra Lee, Socialist Workers Party candidate for district attorney in the city elections. Lee is a railroad worker and active member of the United Transportation Union. "The Kongs should be prosecuted, jailed, and forced to repay every penny to these workers," she added.

Margaret Jayko is a laid-off garment worker and member of ILGWU Local 101.

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SWEDEN

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

The government as role model — In 1989, women held 43 percent of federal jobs and 3 percent of top-level positions. They were



Harry Ring

85 percent of the clerical work force and averaged \$25,015 a year, compared to \$34,430 for men.

As long as the check clears — The Skin Cancer Foundation has endorsed 112 sunscreen products —

at \$10,000 a pop. It doesn't test the products, just checks the test results submitted by manufacturers. A foundation official concedes the results could be faked, but assures, "I don't think anyone would do that."

Not to worry — In Puerto Rico, a government study showed that 9.4 percent of the island's coastline is unfit for swimming because of industrial waste dumping and other pollution, but the public is not being warned of the danger. An official explained, "The study shows trends, not imminent dangers."

Nobody's perfect — In a Kansas City drug raid, cops smashed up a home and worked over the

occupant. It was the wrong address. The Associated Press described it as "the latest in a series of police errors."

As sensible as capitalism — In Utah, a hunter bid \$21,630 for the one-time right to bag a desert bighorn sheep. Another paid \$5,555 to hunt a Shiras Moose, and a third forked over \$5,000 to stalk a bison. According to one explanation we read, the money goes to help preserve endangered species.

Probably so — "One could more easily open a nuclear waste dump in Los Angeles" — A lawyer griping about the reported difficulty in getting a porn shop license.

Check with your bookie — We don't know if they have ties with the airline industry, but two scientists calculate that, during the next 50 years, your chance of being killed by an asteroid smashing into the earth is 1 in 6,000. Meanwhile, they assert, the odds on your dying in an airplane crash during that time is a relaxing 1 in 20,000.

Talk about cultural imperialism — A Southwest food company is offering oat bran tortillas—at 50 percent more than the regular price. The indicated amount of oat bran per tortilla suggests that if you eat a gross a day it might help lower your cholesterol.

Anyway, it's honest — A disclaimer on a plastic cutting board: "Manufacturer has made no affirmation of fact and has made no promise... which has created or amounted to an express or implied warranty... and disclaims any warranty of... fitness of this sheet for any particular purpose whatsoever."

Thought for the week — "Where would Christianity be if Jesus got 8 to 15 years, with time off for good behavior?" — New York State Sen. James Donovan speaking in support of capital punishment, as reported by Pittsburgh chapter, American Atheist Assn.

Gates' resignation: victory for working people

Continued from front page

already notorious for sanctioning such violence and inciting it with his inflammatory racist declarations.

He once said that Latinos in the police department were not promoted because they are "lazy."

He told a Senate committee that casual drug users should be "taken out and shot."

Defending police use of the chokehold, he stated that Blacks were more likely to die of such strangulation than "normal people."

In the wake of the King beating, he continued his racist declarations.

Messages sent back and forth on patrol car computers were made public, graphically depicting the racism, sexism and sadistic thirst for violence among the cops. Gates said the messages merely reflected the cops' "black humor."

From the outset, meetings, marches, rallies, and pickets demanded that Gates get out.

On April 6, protesters, 5,000 strong, marched through downtown Los Angeles to police headquarters.

The action was supported by a range of civil rights and civil liberties groups, unions, churches, and public figures.

A pre-march press conference was hosted by the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, with executive secretary William Robertson presiding.

On the eve of Mother's Day, a silent procession of 300 led by women in black, marched to police headquarters. At a rally, several dozen people held aloft large placards, each bearing the names of a dozen people killed or brutalized by police.

Meanwhile, Gates worked to rally right-wing support behind him, beginning with his substantial base in the police force. March 24, he addressed a support rally of 3,000 at the Police Academy. Other support meetings were held, and a legal defense fund was established.

But throughout, the strong, active opposition to police violence has kept the right-wingers on the defensive.

A bitter fight developed in City Hall, with Bradley and his civilian police commission arrayed against Gates and his supporters in the city council.

But finally it was the Gates' supporters in the council who negotiated the deal for him to step down.

The outcry provoked by the King videotape brought continuing media focus on the case and on the general issue of police brutality.

Previous instances of flagrant police brutality were recalled, ongoing fights around particular cases and issues were given renewed vigor, and additional brutality victims gained confidence to fight as well.

A former air force captain who is Black came forward to recount how in 1990 he had been hog-tied and beaten by cops who attacked him without explanation. He announced plans for a damage suit.

It was disclosed that a federal grand jury is now preparing to indict two cops who beat and kicked two Latino youth, fracturing one's skull. The assault occurred nearly five years ago.

Gay rights activists supported the Gates-must-go movement and were able to focus new attention on widespread police victimization of gays and lesbians.

The pressure was substantial enough for the LAPD to sanction a recruiting booth at the annual Gay Pride festival. (Previously Gates had said of gays, "Who'd

want to work with one?")

A coalition of civil liberties and civil rights groups announced a class-action suit against the LAPD to curb the use of police dogs. The animals maul hundreds of people — most of them Black and Latino — each year.

And, in a public demonstration coupled with guerrilla theater, Justice for Janitors

Success of 'Gates must go' forces puts working people in a stronger position.

announced a multimillion-dollar suit against the LAPD.

A year ago, police in riot gear attacked a Century City march of janitors, members of the Service Employees International Union, who were fighting for a union contract. More than 40 workers suffered injuries at the hands of the cops, ranging from fractured skulls to a miscarriage.

The janitors had been negotiating with the city for a damage settlement, but in the wake of the King events decided they could better defend their interests by going to court.

The mainly Latino Justice for Janitors participated regularly in the recent protest demonstrations.

The growing antipolice ferment and the inability of the politicians at City Hall to contain it led to a direct intervention by the big-business interests that control the city.

An article in the June 2 *Los Angeles Times* described a sentiment among business leaders that a "corporate elite" take the situation in hand.

The article quoted William Riordan, a multimillionaire lawyer and investor with strong political influence.

"The perception is of almost total lack of leadership coming out of City Hall right now," Riordan said. "The question is whether the private sector could get itself organized and play a pivotal role."

On July 16, Riordan met with Mayor Bradley and two pro-Gates members of the city council.

Emerging from the meeting, Riordan said, "I'm confident that in a few days things are going to be cleared up."

Six days later, Gates offered to retire. Big-business intervention in the crisis was not limited to arm-twisting by Riordan.

The Christopher Commission was created through the merger of a citizen panel named by Bradley and another selected by Gates. The aim, Bradley declared, must be to "restore the public's confidence in the cop on the street."

Headed by Warren Christopher, a former deputy attorney general and deputy secretary of state, the commission included corporate executives, prominent attorneys, and educators.

At public hearings of the commission in the Black and Latino communities, hundreds of people crowded in to vent their anger at the cops.

Witness after witness, the commission later reported, charged that violence and abuse by the cops was endemic, and that the LAPD's "complaint" system offered little redress.

The commission found that "excessive" force was indeed practiced by the cops and linked it to racism, sexism and homophobia. The commission argued though, that



Militant/Nelson Blackstock
Demonstrators demanding Police Chief Daryl Gates' resignation and an end to cop brutality marching through downtown Los Angeles April 6.

a minority of "bad guys" in the force were responsible for such violence and that officials of the LAPD had failed to control them.

The commission recommended a series of structural reforms which will, they assert, resolve the problem.

And, with the support of the members selected by Gates, the commission proposed that the chief step aside.

The commission's report does include use-

ful information, information which contradicts its thesis that the problem is a relative handful of rogue cops.

The evidence serves as a reminder that while Gates' days as chief are numbered, 8,450 cops remain in place. Their continuing function remains to intimidate, brutalize, and oppress working people.

But the success registered by the Gates-must-go forces puts working people in a stronger position to curb cop violence.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

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In recent weeks, the Johnson administration has been escalating the war at an unprecedented pace. On July 30, the U.S. further violated the 1954 Geneva accords by bombing the demilitarized zone between north and south Vietnam.

Casualty figures of American troops reached a new high in the week ending July 23: 136 soldiers were killed and 578 were wounded. The Defense Department stated on July 28 that 4,440 Americans had now been killed in the war since 1961, and noted that this was more than had been killed in the American Revolution.

THE MILITANT

Official Weekly Organ of the Socialist Workers Party

August 9, 1941

It was a blistering hot day in New York last week when members of the Socialist Workers Party marched out of the headquarters with long unsigned nominating petitions in their hands. The petitions were new and stiff and across the top of them, in bold type, were the words, "TROTSKYIST ANTI-

WAR PARTY" and "JAMES P. CANNON FOR MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK."

At the top of the nominating petition is a picture of a world in chains. The workers understand chains. They put their signatures to the fresh paper. They write haltingly, but with great concentration and determination.

An old man, a Pole, approaches. He is curious about the paper his friends are signing. Yes, he voted in the last election. Cannon? He never heard of Cannon, but if he's against the war and the people that make wars — then he's a good man.

"I have three brothers in the army," a young Negro says, looking at the petition. "They're good enough to march and fight, but when it comes time to eat they're not good enough to eat with white soldiers. And during rest time they can't even talk to a white soldier. Can't be any war for democracy if there isn't any democracy in the first place. I'll sign your paper."

Now they sign rapidly, one after another. Almost a hundred signatures in an hour's time.

In a shopping center we get signatures by standing on the sidewalk and shouting our slogans.

It is late and slowly the comrades trudge back to the headquarters. It has been hard work but it has been important work. Important and exciting and, above all, successful. Tomorrow they will go out again — and the next day and the next.

Sanctions: one year later

Washington opened its war against Iraq a year ago by imposing economic sanctions after Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait.

Since then, working people in Iraq have been subjected to massive bombing, an invasion that became a massacre, and, when they rose up against Hussein, backhanded support by Washington for the regime's bloody repression.

Tens of millions of toilers from Iraq, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia became refugees as the U.S. government squeezed Iraq, and prepared and carried out the carnage.

Today, even the prowar television news shows some of the results — wrenching photos of emaciated, starving infants and children in Iraqi hospitals — just a few of the victims of Washington and its allies' embargo.

The terrible devastation wrought in Iraq by international economic sanctions is now almost universally acknowledged because of a stream of reports by journalists and observers exposing conditions there. The reports have spotlighted imperialism's utter brutality and callousness when in pursuit of its goals.

Despite disclaimers by Washington and assertions that sanctions are aimed at Iraq's rulers, working people in Iraq are the main victims of the economic stranglehold.

The U.S. rulers remain intent on removing Hussein from power and replacing him with a more stable and pliant regime capable of doing imperialism's bidding in the region. Despite its military victory in Iraq Washington failed to achieve its central goal. Hussein still rules Iraq and there is no sign this will soon change.

The *New York Times* July 24 editorial — which cynically said it may be "tormenting" to accept human suffering as a "diplomatic lever" and forcefully insisted on maintaining sanctions — reveals the absolute contempt and disregard of the U.S. rulers for the working people of Iraq.

This "let 'em bleed" attitude is no different from the regard the ruling U.S. billionaire families have for working people here, shown in their draconian cutbacks in social services, union busting, rampant cop violence, and attacks on democratic rights.

Working people in the United States and around the world have no interest in imperialism's designs of conquest and domination in the Middle East.

We need to extend a hand of solidarity to the sisters and brothers in Iraq by demanding Washington lift the sanctions and end its blockade now.

Gates' resignation a victory

The announcement by Los Angeles Police Chief Daryl Gates that he plans to resign is a big victory for working people.

This blow will give further confidence to victims of police brutality and frame-ups to fight. It proves gains can be won if a struggle is waged.

By centering their fire on the demand 'Gates must go,' organizing protests in the streets, and raising the issue in union and community meetings, fighters against police brutality were able to build enough pressure to force the ruling class to bring Gates to heel.

Forcing Gates to resign was no easy task. The cops' commander had considerable political influence and is the head of an over 8,000-person police force which he did not hesitate to use in his own behalf. When demonstrations were organized to demand his resignation, his supporters, based among the cops, organized counterdemonstrations in his defense. When the Los Angeles Police Commission voted to suspend Gates for 60 days, almost the entire city council voted to overturn the suspension.

Before the uproar over the videotaped beating, Gates was touted by the ruling class as one of the country's top cops. He was praised by President George Bush. The well-equipped, ultra-modern Los Angeles police force — complete with helicopters, a tank-like battering ram, and sophisticated computers — was cited as an example to be followed by police departments around the country.

But the pro-cop and pro-Gates offensive could not extinguish the widespread outrage that working people felt as they watched the videotape of the beating.

The continuing protests helped to vividly expose the wider brutality of the cops and showed it to be routine, not out of the ordinary. In actions demanding Gates' ouster, victim after victim of arbitrary cop violence stepped forward

to tell their stories of vandalism, beatings, and murders to demand justice.

Working people, not just those in Los Angeles but nationwide, began to look at the cops in a new light. Many saw that their brush with the cops could not be chalked up to a personal experience with a "bad apple," but was a result of the endemic character of the police.

The Christopher Commission report, while attempting to limit the damage done to the image of the LAPD, nonetheless reveals a police department that is anti-working-class, racist, sexist, and violently abusive to the core — from the police chief to the officers on the street.

It shows clearly that, far from being condemned by top officials, the brutal behavior on the part of the cops was condoned and rewarded. As the struggle continued, the city's rulers decided Gates was simply a bigger liability than he was an effective enforcer for the ruling rich.

The character of the LAPD shows the kind of instrument that the ruling class needs to carry out its policies. The city of Los Angeles, which pays out millions to victims of police brutality, has not checked incidents of police brutality in the slightest. This fact alone shows that the rulers are intent on continuing to use police force to brutalize and victimize working people.

As the ruling class pushes more to grind down the standards of living of workers and farmers they need to not only punish those who stand up and fight back, go on strike, or march in a demonstration but will also act to intimidate the whole class through random sadistic acts of violence. This is what the cops in Los Angeles and throughout the capitalist world do—day in and day out.

The victory in Los Angeles points the way forward for working people as we fight against the brutality of capitalism's gun thugs.

The rail contract

Rail owners are celebrating a government-appointed review board's endorsement of their request that a massive concession contract be imposed on the nation's rail unions. The results will mean a lower standard of living, worsened working conditions, and increased safety risks for railroad workers. This severe antiunion attack should be widely condemned by unionists and all working people.

In their search for profits the billionaire owners of the major freight lines, like all employers, are driven to attack workers' living standards, weaken the unions, and deepen divisions inside the working class. These attacks increase as the economic crisis of capitalism deepens and the employers and their government try to make working people pay for the crisis of their system.

What the ruling rich have in mind for working people is more imperialist wars abroad, pauperization for layers of the working class, more union-busting, and broader assaults on democratic rights.

The rail owners had made it clear for some time what they wanted from the rail unions. But the trade union officialdom utterly failed to mobilize unionists to fight the concession demands. It serves as one of the best examples of the bankrupt course of class collaboration practiced by the union tops.

There was a real determination to fight among rail workers. They held rallies and demonstrated their unwillingness to give in to the demands of the employers. Their struggle would have been understood and supported by millions of working people.

The 235,000 U.S. rail workers involved also command real collective power in a decisive industry. Their short-lived 19-hour strike was quickly felt throughout the economy.

Rail unionists worked for three years under an expired

contract, facing mountains of red tape due to decades of retreat by the labor officialdom who combined cultivating "good labor-management relations" with backing of the two parties of the bosses.

After all deadlines had passed and every condition had been met, rail workers went on strike. But within hours the officialdom ordered them back to work under the pretext of Congress ruling the strike "illegal."

The union officials' treachery was based on their total refusal to organize any kind of struggle against their "friends" in Congress or the rail bosses.

Millions of working people in the United States have lived through concessions and union-busting. A stand against Congress' decision would have won wide backing throughout the country. The potential power of the labor movement, today demobilized and hamstrung by the labor officialdom, could have been brought to bear.

Instead, rail workers were told to take down their pickets, return to work, and put their faith in the government review board.

The road forward for rail workers and others is to rely on union power. The ranks of labor must be organized and mobilized to effectively oppose the employers' concession demands and government drive against the rights and living standard of working people.

This experience also clearly demonstrates that banking on the bosses' two parties will only result in continuing fiascos for the labor movement. Rather, working people need to chart a course away from the twin parties of capitalism. Increased solidarity and unity among working people along the road to independent working-class political action is the way forward.

Why fight against disclosure law is a rights issue

BY DOUG JENNESS

Iowa state officials have ordered the Socialist Workers Party to disclose the names of its financial contributors and recipients in the current Des Moines mayoral race. This challenges a series of conquests the SWP and other parties have won over the last two decades exempting them from disclosure requirements. The U.S. Supreme Court, federal district courts, state courts, and the Federal Election Commission have all recognized that exemptions should be granted where threats or harassment are the likely result of revealing names, addresses, and occupations.

The Iowa Campaign Finance Disclosure Commission is probing to test the extent to which socialists and others are able and willing to defend what we've conquered. Court rulings, in and of themselves, don't give or take away rights or protections. Favorable rulings only have value if we fight to use them as a tool in exercising our right to organize and

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

carry on political activity.

The SWP's battle to establish that it doesn't have to disclose the names of its contributors was not easy; it was long and difficult and had to overcome significant obstacles.

The disclosure requirements were first introduced as part of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971. Before that, political parties, including the SWP, were not compelled to reveal the names of contributors to their election campaigns. In response to the 1971 Act, the SWP refused to turn over any names and in 1974 filed a lawsuit challenging the disclosure provision.

The 1971 Act was presented by its supporters as a reform of the election process. Some even referred to it as a "sunshine" law because it would force into the open for public scrutiny the financial wheeling and dealing of candidates and the sources of their funds.

The problem, however, was that the provisions of this new "reform" were to be applied across the board. Many liberals and progressives who had campaigned for the law saw no distinction in the way the law should be enforced between Democratic and Republican candidates financed by big corporations and candidates of political parties, including the SWP, that oppose the capitalist government and have been subjected to harassment.

The most prominent force campaigning for application of the law to the SWP was Common Cause, a self-styled "citizen's lobby." It insisted that the rights of contributors to SWP campaigns must be subordinated to reforming the election laws. When the American Civil Liberties Union, on behalf of the SWP, filed suit against the disclosure provisions, Common Cause waged an energetic campaign to defend these measures. This outfit filed a request that it become a codefendant with the federal government against the SWP in the lawsuit.

In a letter to the Minnesota State Ethics Commission, Kenneth Guido, Jr., associate general counsel for Common Cause, asserted that an exemption for the SWP would create "a dangerous loophole that would destroy the compelling interest underlying the statute," which is to "cleanse the political process of the potentially corrupting influence of money."

The SWP waged a public drive to mobilize support for its lawsuit and to counter the scandalous campaign of Common Cause. The socialists won broad support from many fighters for democratic rights and received the endorsement of a wide range of civil libertarians, labor leaders, and other prominent figures.

An open letter was sent to John Gardner, national chairman of Common Cause, from former U.S. senator Eugene McCarthy, Congressman Ronald Dellums and John Conyers, Noam Chomsky, Philip Berrigan, the Alameda County, California, Central Labor Council, and others. They stated that the SWP campaign committees "have no connection whatsoever to the corrupting influence of the giant corporations who finance the campaigns of the Democrats and Republicans. Shielding contributors to the SWP from harassment and surveillance by the FBI, local police, or employers would in no way 'set a precedent' for keeping secret the contributions of the executives of ITT or the dairy lobby."

The fight against the disclosure laws went hand in hand with the campaign waged by the SWP and the Young Socialist Alliance in support of a lawsuit against FBI harassment and surveillance. The legal action, launched in 1973, forced the attorney general's office to release a great many boxes of files documenting decades of electronic eavesdropping, mail tampering, massive use of informants, illegal entries, job discrimination, and other violations of the SWP's right to privacy. This evidence substantially reinforced the SWP's case that financial contributors could be victimized.

The government agreed to a court-ordered consent decree in January 1979 that required an exemption for SWP candidates from the disclosure provisions of the federal election law. This set the pattern for similar rulings in relation to disclosure laws in many states.

In 1986 the federal district court ruled in the SWP's favor in the suit against the FBI.

'Rolling stoppage' wins gains at Australia plant

This column is dedicated to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standards, working conditions, and unions.

Working people around the world are involved in skirmishes over speedup, forced overtime, layoffs, or attacks on health and safety benefits. Some unionists faced with steep takeback demands, lockouts, and union-busting moves by the employers have gone on strike to force the bosses to back down.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn

impact of the stoppages on the company started to show.

This action was part of a nationwide campaign organized by the Metal Trades Federation of Unions (MTFU) to win a settlement in the wage round. Workers at more than 150 plants have been involved in some form of industrial action since the campaign was endorsed at a mass meeting May 8, including a national one-day strike by MTFU workers June 13.

One of the first plants to win the demand for a \$12 increase was Email, another domestic appliance plant, where more than 1,300 workers went out on strike for two weeks.

union members at Tamie's in many years. The union officials set up the meeting when they received a letter from Tamie's management claiming that it would be forced to shut down unless it received a six to nine month deferment on the contract's wage increase.

Tamie's is one of the largest shops in Local 23-25, and according to union officials it is the only one so far that has asked to get out of the agreement.

The meeting opened with the union officials asking if Tamie's workers had been getting the raise. To no one's surprise it came out that some workers were, while others weren't. It was the first open discussion about this situation, which had led to divisions within the workforce.

A few workers took the floor concerned about Tamie's threat to shut down. They pointed to the dozens of union shops that have closed in the area over the last few years. It's estimated that there are 90,000 unorganized garment workers in New York. In recent years the use of child labor and homework has been on the rise.

But the overwhelming sentiment in the meeting was to demand enforcement of the contract. Applause broke out when one worker declared, "If we give back the wage now, he'll just be back next year and the next. We have to say no now."

About 75 members and supporters of striking bakery workers fanned out to supermarkets across Phoenix July 6 to publicize and gather support for their strike against Holsum Bakery. They are asking the public not to buy Holsum products.

One hundred and eighty members of Local 232 of the Bakery, Confectionery, and Tobacco Workers Union (BCTU) have been on strike against Holsum Bakery since June 18.

The main issue is the company's demand to eliminate

the union-run pension plan and replace it with a company-sponsored plan. The union pension plan was established 70 years ago and all union bakeries in the area participate in it.

Holsum is the only company that has tried to break out of the pact.

The company proposes that the details for its plan be determined after the contract is signed.

The union leaflet distributed at the markets said, "Holsum has forced their employees to take to the streets to protect their future."

On July 3 the BCTU organized 150 area unionists to picket the plant at the day shift change. Teamsters, clerks, and office workers participated in the rally.

Frances Moreno, a 14-year veteran of the plant and a participant in the leafletting effort, said, "Sisters and brothers have been doing a real good job. The public has been supportive. We're letting the public know what the real meaning of the strike is. It's not about money."

Another issue of concern for strikers is the establishment of a three-tier wage structure that would result in new hires starting at a lower wage than those already working for the company. Moreno explained that this company proposal gives new hires "no possibility of catching up." A two-tier wage structure was first established in the last contract three years ago.

Picket lines are maintained at the plant 24 hours a day. About 100 scabs have been hired and 6 union members have crossed the line.

Joe Taylor, a member of the union's Hardship Committee, said, "People want to fight and as long as people see people fighting they are with you."

The union is planning further strike support activities.

A contract covering 2,200 Chicago meat-packing workers was approved by a 4-1 majority in July. The workers are members of Local 100A of the United Food and Com-

mercial Workers (UFCW) and are employed by 47 meat-packing companies and food distributors. The employers bargain together as the Chicago Midwest Meat Association (CMMA). Union officials say this is one of the last citywide agreements left in the meat-packing industry.

The contract, which takes effect October 31, provides changes in wages, pension, and health coverage. The \$500 annual bonus provided in the present contract was eliminated in favor of a 60-cent-per-hour wage increase to be implemented over three years. There are improvements in pensions, hospitalization coverage and weekly income benefits; a decrease in medical deductible; and the addition of a dependent life insurance plan.

The contract does not touch the existing three-tier wage system, provided in previous contracts, which established different wage structures based on the start date of an employee. This means lower pay and benefits for new hires, who will never attain the wage scale of older workers. Nor does the contract address contracting nonunion companies to replace union workers. This happened at Vienna Beef, one of the largest CMMA shops, where the entire sanitation department was replaced by a nonunion contractor.

Many older workers favored the contract because of the increases in the pension and health coverage. Some newer workers were indignant at the minimal pay increase and others felt that something could have been done to protect union work from outside contracting.

Linda Harris, an assembly worker at Hoover and member of the MEWU; Vivian Sanner, an ILGWU member who works at Tamie's; Karen Ray; and Max Monclair, a member of the UFCW Local 100A, contributed to this week's column.

ON THE PICKET LINE

from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines to let other *Militant* readers know about what is happening at your workplace or in your union. If there is an interesting political discussion going on at work, we would like to hear about that, too.

After six weeks of strike action, workers at Hoover, a domestic appliance assembly plant in Sydney, Australia, won a weekly wage increase of \$12 (Australian) July 10.

The majority of the 600 workers at Hoover are members of the Metal and Engineering Workers Union (MEWU) but there are five other unions in the plant covered by the award.

The MEWU initiated the fight at a plant meeting May 30. The meeting launched a campaign of rolling stoppages, with different departments stopping work for four hours at different times.

At the end of the fourth week the strike was strengthened when other unions backed the struggle. Workers began walking off the lines for 10 minutes each hour. This had the effect of stopping production for 30 minutes of every hour. By the sixth week the

Notices of their victory were posted up around Hoover, which made the workers there more determined to fight. A common comment was, "If they can get it, why can't we?"

When the settlement with Hoover was reached, some workers thought they should have gone for more because the company was just starting to hurt. But overall, the union at Hoover came out strengthened through the experience that workers can fight and win. As one worker summed it up: "You never get anything out of Hoover unless you fight for it!"

Members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union employed at Tamie's, a garment shop in Brooklyn, turned out for a special shop meeting July 16 at the ILGWU headquarters.

There had been mounting evidence in the previous weeks that the boss didn't want to pay the annual 4 percent wage increase won at the end of May in contract talks between ILGWU Local 23-25 and the blouse, skirt, and sportswear manufacturers.

It was the first shop meeting of

LETTERS

'No more Maravillas'

Three policemen in San Juan, Puerto Rico, have been charged with covering up the murder of Manuel Maldonado Izarry. The charges include second degree murder, perjury, weapons violation and cover-up.

Maldonado, 16, and a companion were in the process of burglarizing a store when they were surprised by the police. Maldonado was fatally shot in the back by patrolman Jose Colón Burgos.

Capt. Reinaldo Castillo Rodríguez arrived on the scene and "found" a pistol on the body of the victim. The police report stated that the youth was killed after he pointed the gun at Colón.

At a probable cause hearing earlier this month, forensic pathologist Lyvia Alvarez testified that the youth was shot in the back.

The police were unable to approach the body before store owner Miguel Cruz Esquilín arrived and unlocked the building. Cruz testified that when he entered the store he did not see a weapon on the body.

"No more little Maravillas," prosecutor Teddy Rodríguez Pérez told the daily *El Nuevo Dia*.

The reference was to the Cerro Maravilla case, the best known case of police brutality in Puerto Rico. In 1978 the police murdered two supporters of independence for this colony of the United States. The police claimed that they were killed in a shootout. After a massive investigation which still continues to this day, it was shown that the two independentistas had thrown down their

weapons and surrendered before they were beaten and killed. These revelations came in televised Senate hearings that were conducted in 1983.

The Cerro Maravilla case has opened up a political space for the victims of police brutality to gain a hearing before the public. Today people in Puerto Rico are much more willing to believe charges of murder against the police than before. In only months, instead of years, the killers of Maldonado are facing charges in court.

Ron Richards
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Inkatha

Billy Modise, the chief representative of the African National Congress in Sweden, spoke about the current political situation in South Africa at a Militant Labor Forum in Stockholm recently.

He charged the South African government and Inkatha with responsibility for the violence there. The police are the main instrument behind the violence, he said; they escort Inkatha members to funerals, weddings, and the hostels of ANC supporters where Inkatha men with spears and other weapons massacre unarmed people. The reporters then write "Black on Black violence."

Between 3,000 and 4,000 people who are mainly Zulus have died in Natal, as a result of Inkatha attacks with the help of the police.

Dechor Hien
Erik Dahlrot
Stockholm, Sweden

Students mistreated

I am a university student and I thought you might be interested to read how students are treated in New Zealand by the capitalist government. What do you suppose happens if we students dare to protest at the lack of future career prospects because of the vicious unemployment which has been inflicted on the work force by the capitalists' savage economic policies?

I am sure you will be astounded to learn that we get run over by government ministers in their public-funded limousines. This is exactly what happened here recently. A student who dared to lie down in front of a cabinet minister's limousine, as his protest against unemployment, was callously run over, even though eyewitnesses stated the vehicle was stationary before the student took his action and the driver was aware of what the student was doing.

To add insult to injury, after the student was taken to hospital by ambulance he was arrested by the cops and charged with disorderly behaviour. No action was taken against the driver or the cabinet minister.

Peter Addison
Auckland, New Zealand

Yugoslavia then and now

I attended a recent demonstration of Yugoslavians, from Slovenia and Croatia, in Stockholm. They were protesting attacks by the Yugoslav army.

One of the demonstrators, who



purchased a copy of the *Militant*, was very upset by the support to Belgrade from the Swedish government. He believed Stockholm wants to make money through arms sales to Belgrade.

He made a comparison between the repression and corruption of the Yugoslavian government today and the period of the 1945-46 Yugoslav revolution. He described solidarity of all nationalities during the struggle against the Nazis that led up to the revolution, and the reconstruction period after World War II.

He said the Belgrade military machine today acts out of self-interest, to preserve its privileges. This differed from the situation when he was a child, he said. He recalled taking part in voluntary work that was going on all over Yugoslavia, as part

of the revolution, to rebuild the country after the war.

Dag Tirsén
Stockholm, Sweden

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

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

New Zealand meat firm to lay off 1,400

BY JOAN SHIELDS

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — New Zealand's largest meat-packing company, Alliance Group Ltd., announced July 27 that it was closing two of its 10 meat-processing plants and laying off more than 1,400 workers.

The Ocean Beach plant at the southernmost tip of New Zealand, with 866 workers,

has been closed, along with the Kaiapoi plant near Christchurch. A third plant, at Nelson, has been put up for sale. Also closed was a small lamb-cutting plant near Christchurch that employed 21 workers.

With more than 250,000 workers in New Zealand already out of work — 15 percent of the work force — the laid-off meat workers face a bleak future. The plant closures

will also have a devastating economic effect on the small towns in which they are based. One Kaiapoi worker, when asked by a journalist if he was likely to get another job in the town, summed it up: "Not a hope in hell."

Speaking on July 26, Alliance chief executive Richard Bettel declared that the company's restructuring process would be ongoing. Productivity increases of 48 percent

were needed at the plants remaining open, he said. Alliance workers were told that "profit-improvement plans" would be implemented at every plant, and they were urged to be part of the Alliance "team" along with management and farmers.

Initial moves announced at the plants remaining open include staffing cuts and the slashing of some overtime payments. For workers at these plants, relief at hearing they still had jobs — for now, at least — was tempered by apprehension over the widely-expected further attacks on their wages and working conditions. Many have already faced such attacks. In January, meat workers at Alliance's Maitua plant, in face of a threat to close the plant, accepted pay cuts of up to 30 percent.

Workers at Ocean Beach have taken wage and staffing cuts over a period of years. The fact that this did not save their jobs is a lesson now being absorbed by meat workers.

Many workers — both at Alliance and elsewhere — feel the need to draw the line against the bosses' attacks but are uncertain about how to do it, or whether they are strong enough to do so.

The same week as Alliance's "restructuring" moves were announced, workers at a small meat-packing plant at Ngauranga, near Wellington, declared that they would resist their company's attempt to impose a 10 percent wage cut. In the past few years, these workers have taken several cuts when threatened with the plant's closure.

Brigid Rotherham, a mutton butcher at Alliance's Sockburn plant and 1990 Communist League candidate for Christchurch Central, released a statement on the layoffs. She pointed to mass protests held throughout the country in April to protest the antiunion Employment Contracts Bill and government welfare cuts. "These actions point to the kind of united, fighting response needed in face of Alliance's assault on our jobs," she said.

"Conceding to employer demands to make 'our' company profitable, or to pull together in the 'national interest,' only results in further weakening of the labor movement and even bigger setbacks to the already worst-off sections of the working class," Rotherham explained. "Only through the mobilization of all layers of working people — employed and out of work, wage workers, and working farmers on the land — in a fight against the rulers' rapacious demands, can a road forward be charted."

Joan Shields is a member of the New Zealand Meat Workers Union at Alliance's Sockburn plant.

Blockade's impact on Iraqi people forces Washington to consider easing embargo

BY PETER THIERJUNG

Stung by continuing reports on the scope of malnutrition, looming epidemics, and death among Iraqi working people and children, Washington and its imperialist allies have begun to say that they might allow Baghdad to sell some oil in order to import food.

Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, who recently headed a United Nations team to Iraq investigating food and medicine shortages, reported that the UN needs "to take action now" in order to avert the social catastrophe unfolding there.

Iraqi officials report that 11,000 people, mostly women and children, have died since the end of the imperialist-led war against Iraq. Among the causes of death have been malnutrition and disease stemming from the destruction of electric and water-purification plants in the allied bombing of Iraq.

U.S. President George Bush, shedding a few crocodile tears over the suffering civilians, suggested July 23 that the United Nations Security Council might alter sanctions imposed on Iraq a year ago after Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait.

On July 25 the United Nations Security Council began informal consultations on the issue, but some diplomats were quick to dampen any hopes that the council would act soon. U.S. and British representatives claimed they were not convinced that the sanctions needed to be lifted. They claimed the Iraqi government had sufficient foreign currency reserves and gold to buy food and other needed supplies.

Washington and London have also pressed linking any easing of sanctions with the Iraqi government's satisfying demands imposed on it by the formal ceasefire agreement signed by Baghdad and Washington. These demands include Iraq



Iraqi bridge destroyed during Gulf war. For Iraqi working people Washington's now one-year-old sanctions are bringing untold hardship, death, and disease.

fully disclosing its nuclear program and currency and gold reserves, providing compensation to the imperialist-led alliance for the costs of the war, covering the costs of destroying its weapons of mass destruction, repaying Kuwait for property taken during the occupation, and sharing the expenses of a commission to determine the Iraq-Kuwait border.

A UN Security Council-imposed deadline ordering Iraq to provide a detailed list of its weapons of mass destruction expired July 25 with the Bush administration charging that Baghdad had not fully complied.

Leading up to the deadline, both Bush and French President François Mitterand threatened Iraq with a resumption of bombing. U.S. military planners even made public a list of potential targets to be hit in Iraq.

"Yet the nations that made up the allied coalition in the gulf war seem to have little appetite for renewed warfare at this time," the July 26 *New York Times* said after the deadline had passed. This was particularly true, the *Times* explained, because Washington did not want to jeopardize its initiatives to get several Arab countries and Israel together for a "peace conference."

On July 28 Turkey's prime minister, Mesut Yilmaz, categorically ruled out use of Turkish airfields for U.S. air strikes against Iraq. Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak has voiced serious concern over any further U.S. bombing of Iraq.

Soviet Foreign Minister Vitaly Churkin told the press, "Any new resort to military force... would not be met with equally unanimous approval by the international community as was the case during the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait."

The threats, however, along with the continuation of sanctions are Washington's way of browbeating Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's regime to comply with its dictates short of military action. Thus, the prospect that Washington may be forced to consider easing the sanctions because of the spotlight on the social disaster in Iraq has stirred some discussion in U.S. ruling circles.

In a July 24 editorial titled, "Don't ease the squeeze on Iraq," the editors of the *New*

York Times wrote, "To accept human suffering as a diplomatic lever is tormenting — but preferable to leaving the Persian Gulf allies with no credible way to compel Iraqi compliance except resuming military attacks."

For Iraqi working people, sanctions are a continuation of the war by Washington and its allies. "We feel we cannot take more wars and deaths," a 25-year-old employee at a Baghdad hotel told a *Christian Science Monitor* correspondent. "But I do not see the difference between a resumption of the war and the continuation of the current conditions. . . . Both will lead to our death."

Restoration of Iraq's electrical generation has reached about one-third of prewar levels, but is expected to decline due to lack of spare parts. Sewage systems ruptured by the bombing are inoperable because electrical shortages have led to dumping and contamination of the Diyala and Tigris rivers.

The supply of chlorine, essential to Iraq's water purification system, will only last another month, according to an Iraqi chemical engineer. Before the war Baghdad's water system supplied about 20 gallons of pure water per person daily, but now pumps out less than 4 gallons per person a day.

Press reports indicate that the effects of the sanctions have fallen most heavily on working people and the poor in Iraq, while the rich hoard scarce goods and clear huge profits on items they manage to bring into the country and sell on the black market.

Shortages of basic foodstuffs, especially milk and baby formula, skyrocketing prices, and declining income for Iraqi working people have led to malnutrition. Growing numbers of working-class and poor women have sustained their infants on only sugar and water.

The price of meat has quadrupled, flour prices have risen 40-fold, and chicken and other food items have disappeared from markets. Government subsidized rations of foodstuffs provide only a third to a half of an individual's daily dietary requirements.

"The embargo doesn't touch Saddam or the people around him," a Baghdad shopkeeper told the *Wall Street Journal*. "All you are doing is starving us."

San Francisco garment company closes, owing workers \$500,000

BY MARGARET JAYKO

SAN FRANCISCO — One of the largest sewing and knitting subcontractors in this area abruptly closed the doors of nine shops July 16, owing more than \$500,000 in back wages to the almost 500 garment workers left without jobs.

Raymond and Yee Nor Kong also owe millions of dollars to banks and equipment leasing companies. Some 50 creditors from across the United States have filed several lawsuits in San Francisco Superior Court to try to collect as much as \$50 million owed them by Kong Enterprises.

The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) has held a series of meetings with the victimized workers to help them collect not only their back pay, but an additional \$500,000 in loans that the Kongs obtained from them through a phony credit union scheme.

Most of the workers are Chinese and Vietnamese women. None of the Kong Enterprises shops were organized by the union.

San Francisco District Attorney Arlo Smith announced his office will open a full-scale investigation of the case. Union officials said

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Vietnam official states supposed POW photo is cruel, inhuman hoax

BY PETER THIERJUNG

NEW YORK — Responding to a barrage of coverage in the U.S. media that claims some GIs listed as missing or killed in action during the Vietnam War are alive in Vietnam, Vietnam's ambassador to the United Nations, Trinh Xuan Lang, told a July 24 press conference here that the affair was a "cruel and inhuman" hoax perpetrated on the families of the U.S. GIs.

The furor was touched off by the public release in mid-July of a photo purportedly showing three middle-aged men identified as John Leighton Robertson, Albro Lynn Lundy Jr., and Larry James Stevens, GIs during the U.S. war against Vietnam. Family members who have seen the photo claim it proves the men are alive.

Trinh, speaking at the Vietnamese UN Mission, said, "Vietnam has more than once made definite statements that there are no live American POWs [prisoners of war] held in captivity in Vietnam nor are there any who choose to stay behind voluntarily."

He explained that all U.S. prisoners were

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