

Thomas attacks right to raise sexual harassment

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

The virtually assured confirmation of Clarence Thomas for a seat on the Supreme Court was thrown up for grabs after accusations that he had sexually harassed a former employee were made public.

Thomas categorically denied the accusations October 11 and condemned the fact that sexual harassment charges against him could be aired publicly and televised during hearings by the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee. The Supreme Court nominee said with outrage that the hearings went "far beyond McCarthyism," and constituted a "high-tech lynching."

Anita Hill, a law professor who is Black, worked as an aide to Thomas at the Department of Education and later at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), from 1981 to 1983. She accused Thomas of repeated and unwanted sexual advances while at work.

Hill said Thomas badgered her for dates. After she repeatedly turned him down Thomas proceeded to talk to her about pornography, Hill asserted. "He spoke about acts that he had seen in pornographic films involving such matters as women having sex with animals... or rape scenes," she said in her testimony October 11.

These accusations were known by members of the Judiciary Committee well before they voted on Thomas's nomination, September 27. They only received wide publicity after an FBI report on the allegations was leaked to the press. The FBI report was compiled from interviews of Thomas's associates prior to the confirmation hearings.

President George Bush had nominated Thomas because of his well-known anti-working-class views. The Judiciary Committee deadlocked 7-to-7 on his nomination after five days of hearings. Nonetheless, moments after its vote the committee sent the nomination to the Senate for consideration.

During this earlier testimony Thomas had sought to downplay his right-wing views by dodging and evading questions.

"With Judge Thomas's confirmation likely tomorrow, everything is nearly on schedule for the Court with an agenda," concluded an October 7 *New York Times* editorial. The next day the senate voted to postpone the confirmation vote after the accusations against Thomas filled the front pages of major dailies.

Working people have been riveted in front of television sets during the hearings on the charges. Portrayed in some media as a typical Washington "sex scandal," the hearings have attracted wide interest because it is an issue affecting tens of millions of women on a daily basis.

The public discussion that erupted underlines how pervasive sexual harassment is

against women in capitalist society. Millions of women who work are subjected to this demeaning form of intimidation on the job by their bosses. Each incident of harassment holds an implicit (sometimes explicit) threat of demotion or loss of job. By the same token many working people see sexual harassment by an employer as unacceptable, because of the social advances that have been made through the growing numbers of women in the work force and the fight for women's rights.

In 1950, 33.9 percent of women 16 years of age and over were in the labor force. By 1983, more than half of all working-age women — 52.9 percent — were working jobs away from home. Today women account for 45 percent of the work force as compared to 29 percent in 1950.

While many women have been hired in clerical, commercial, and other nonindustrial jobs, there has also been a greater incorporation of women into the industrial work force. Moreover, since the 1970s women have fought their way into many types of jobs from which they had previously been excluded, from welders and truck drivers to mechanics and underground miners.

For the employing class, however, increasing economic independence and social equality for women is incompatible with their drive to shore up declining profit rates. The employers practice and encourage widespread discrimination, prejudice, and sexual harassment on the job to ensure women can be superexploited and to uphold divisions among the work force.

Survey after survey shows that 40 to 70 percent of all working women have experienced some form of sexual harassment. In most cases women do not report such inci-

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60,000 march in New York against Haiti coup



Militant/Janet Post

October 11 protest in New York was one of many around the country.

BY JANET POST

NEW YORK — "Nous voulons... Aristide!" "We want... Aristide!" shouted more than 60,000 demonstrators as they spanned the length of the Brooklyn Bridge in an October 11 march from Brooklyn to Manhattan. Adamant in their support of ousted Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the marchers turned out on two days' notice.

Gathering at sunrise on the edge of Prospect Park in Brooklyn, workers and youth engaged in intense discussions about the role of Aristide. "We will march until Aristide's back in power; not until they say he's going back, but until he is there in Port-au-Prince," said a domestic worker from Brooklyn.

A barber from Brooklyn said that Aristide
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Wichita pro-choice activists to mobilize against rightists

BY DANA BURROUGHS

WICHITA, Kansas — The battle to defend a woman's right to choose abortion continues here with new provocations by the rightist forces.

Pro-choice forces providing escorts for women going to the city's three clinics were confronted by 100 supporters of the Wichita Rescue Movement, which is planning a major action against abortion rights for October 19, called the "Gideon 300 Rescue."

The Pro-Choice Action League (PCAL), which organizes escorts for the clinics, is planning to mobilize against the October 19 action. PCAL says they seek to organize as many pro-choice supporters as possible through phone calls and word of mouth. Their goal is to have 500 abortion rights supporters at each of the three clinics and to keep them open.

Another pro-choice organization, the Freedom of Choice Action League (FOCAL), is joining the effort, distributing a flyer on the campuses calling on students and faculty to come out and "help us keep the clinics open, prevent blockades, and show your support."

Wichita Rescue Movement is building for their action with a letter addressed to "Friends of our Unborn Brothers and Sisters." It promises the October 19 "Gideon 300 Rescue" will involve large numbers of volunteers blockading a clinic.

The local rightists have been encouraged by national Operation Rescue leaders who are returning to Wichita. Joe Slovenec, for example, participated in the October 12 action at the clinics. He had been released from the Sedgewick County Jail the previous day

after being arrested October 4 for returning here in violation of federal judge Patrick Kelly's court order.

The order prohibited several national Operation Rescue leaders from returning to Wichita without signing a "peace bond," requiring them to pay \$100,000 to cover potential damages incurred from their activities. On October 11 a federal court temporarily stayed Judge Kelly's order and freed Slovenec.

Reverend Pat Mahoney of Boca Raton, Florida, says he also plans to come to Wichita for the October 19 "rescue." Mahoney played a central role in Operation Rescue's "Summer of Mercy" campaign in which thousands of ultraright forces laid siege to the city.

'Militant' urges 'all out' Oct. 19-26 for subscription drive target week

BY RONI McCANN

In the final 19 days of the international drive to win 6,200 new readers to the socialist press, *Militant* supporters are doubling their efforts to expand the subscription base of the paper. With each goal in reach, every *Militant* reader can join in by talking to coworkers, students and other youth, and those involved in protest actions or strikes.

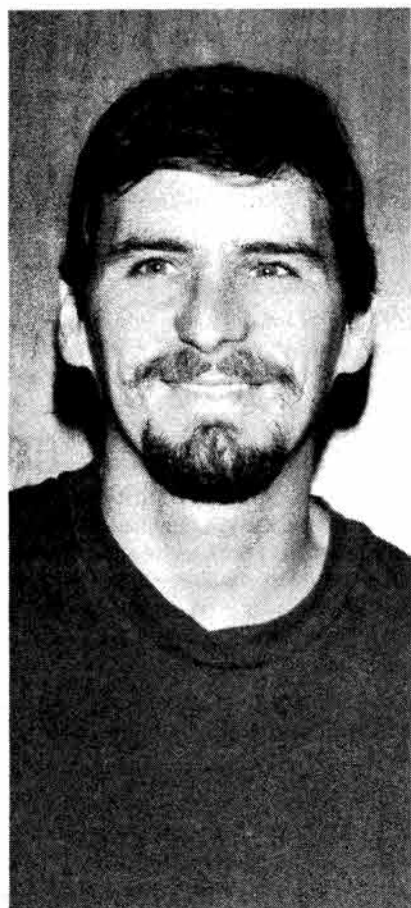
The best opportunity to do this is during the all-out eight-day sales blitz that begins October 19. By October 28 *Militant* readers in every city plan to be on schedule, ready for the last week of the sales campaign and going over the top in every goal for the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *L'interna-*

tionaliste, and *New International*.

By reading over this week's *Militant* it is easy to see why fighters need a socialist paper that tells the truth about the struggles of working people around the world. That's why at socialist literature tables on university campuses, abortion rights actions, meetings of leaders of the struggle to bring down the apartheid regime in South Africa, and throughout working-class communities new readers are signing up to get a subscription to one of the publications.

Supporters of the paper are finding that there is no better way to discuss the big issues in world politics than by putting its circula-

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Militant/Brian Williams

Framed-up unionist Mark Curtis at Anamosa prison. For news on his parole fight and cop brutality lawsuit see pp. 8-9.

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Students protest fascist group

700 in Twin Cities rally to oppose 'White Student Union'.

BY MAREA HIMELGRIN

MINNEAPOLIS — Nearly 700 people filled the plaza in front of Northrop Auditorium at the University of Minnesota here for a "No Room for Racism" rally October 9.

The broadly sponsored mobilization was a response to the call for the formation of a "White Student Union" on campus. White supremacist Tom David, the student who put out the call, has ties to the American Nazi Party.

Garnez Parks, cochair of the rally, read off the demands of the action to cheers from the crowd:

- 1) Stop racist attacks;
- 2) No room for racism on campus;
- 3) Defend the rights of immigrants;

- 4) Defend and extend affirmative action;
- 5) Mandatory classes at the university on classism, racism, sexism, and homophobia; and

6) For the campus administration and other student organizations to issue statements on the White Student Union.

Writing as the "founder of the White Student Union," Tom David stated in *Minnesota Daily*, the campus newspaper, "These are harsh times and harsh solutions are required if America is to be saved."

Claiming that immigrants "come here to suck the blood of hard-working white people who are forced to pay higher taxes to support these Third Worlders," David calls for "separation of the races."

David, who also claims that nonwhites cause disease and increase crime, proposes that "after the races have been separated in America," National Guardsmen should patrol the southern border of the United States with the order, "If it ain't white waste it!"

David and six supporters waving a large U.S. flag came early to the rally and provocatively took up a position on the steps above the plaza.

Outnumbering the white supremacists nearly 100-to-1, antiracist demonstrators chanted, "Racist, sexist, anti-queer, nazi scum get out of here!"

Eager for an opportunity to express their outrage at David's reactionary ideas, more than a dozen representatives of Black, Native American, Asian, Chicano, and gay rights student organizations, other political organizations; and faculty and campus workers' unions spoke. State Representative Karen Clark and Tom Laney, an official of United Auto Workers Local 1864 at the Ford plant in St. Paul, also spoke.

A half dozen auto workers wearing their union jackets helped provide security at the demonstration. Together with student monitors they succeeded in physically isolating the right-wingers from the rally. Part way through the action, when David and his supporters decided to leave, the monitors prevented them from causing a disruption by keeping them separated from the crowd. Walking behind the monitors, some 75 people escorted David off the university grounds chanting, "On the campus, in the streets, fascists face defeat!"

More than a dozen students from St. Cloud, Minnesota, who are organizing protests against a series of racist attacks there came to the Minneapolis demonstration. They received a pledge of support for any future actions they organize.

Chris Nisan, speaking for the Young Socialist Alliance, told the rally, "I want to talk about racism in the context of the world, because that's the only way we can understand what is happening here at the University of Minnesota."

Nisan said to loud applause, "What we're



Militant

Student rally responds to racist group

talking about is a worldwide racist system — the capitalist system. We have to recognize like Malcolm X did that the government is responsible for racism, the same government that murdered over 150,000 Iraqis using racist justifications."

Holding up a copy of the new book issued by Pathfinder Press, *How Far We Slaves Have Come!*, containing two speeches by Nelson Mandela and Fidel Castro, the YSA leader urged rally participants to purchase a copy of the book. "The Cuban people and the Cuban revolution understand how to fight racism. They weakened the defenses of their own country to send volunteers to Africa to defeat the South African apartheid army in Angola."

Becky Levin, cochair of the rally, expressed the enthusiasm that many participants in the action felt at the large turnout. She said, "I think this was just great, it was a big success."

Vancouver socialists on ballot

BY TERRY STEVENSON

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — "The British Columbia election rules and procedures discriminate and put obstacles in the way of working class candidates and parties that want to run for public office. This denies the right of working people and youth to vote for the candidate of their choice," said Colleen Levis, Communist League candidate in Vancouver-Kingsway in the current provincial elections.

Levis, a member of the International Association of Machinists, was addressing a press conference here October 3. The Communist League slate also includes steelworker Ned Dmytryshyn and metal worker Robert Demorest.

In British Columbia each candidate must be nominated by fifty registered voters in each riding [district]. Levis explained to CBC television that nearly 100 nominations were submitted for each of the three candidates September 30.

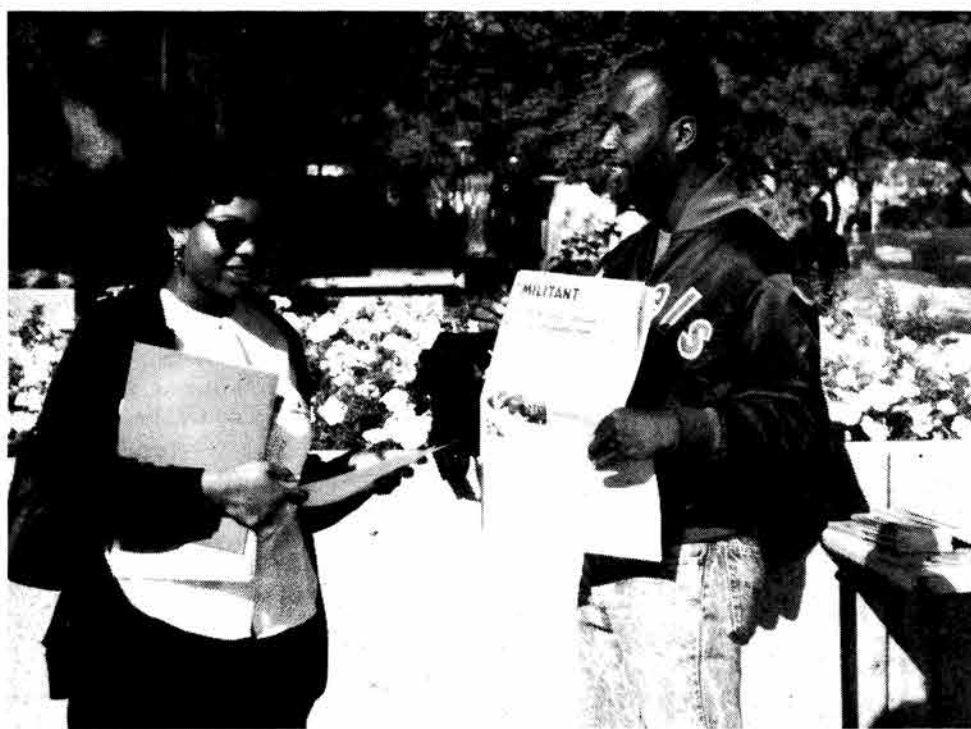
The next day the electoral clerks claimed the candidates hadn't submitted enough valid signatures. Levis explained the voters list is outdated and many who recently registered had not yet been added to the rolls.

Lynda Little, a trade unionist and a worker at Canadian Airlines explained that she had signed the nomination papers of Levis. Although she's a registered voter, her name was not accepted by the clerks.

Lawyer Harry Rankin, a Vancouver Alderman, aided the Communist League candidates at the electoral registrar and spoke at the press conference. He condemned the electoral procedures and supported the Communist League's democratic right to run in the elections.

After this protest and the submission of a hundred more signatures, the three candidates' nominations were accepted October 4. The candidates will be identified on the ballot by their party's name.

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March says free Tottenham Three

BY IAN GRANT

LONDON — Six hundred marched here in heavy rain October 5 to demand the release of the Tottenham Three.

The three, Winston Silcott, Engin Raghip, and Mark Braithwaite, were framed for the death of police constable Keith Blakelock six years ago. Blakelock was killed during an uprising in the Broadwater Farm housing estate [project] in this city which erupted after Cynthia Jarrett died of a heart attack during a police raid on her house.

The only evidence presented against the three was statements signed by two of the accused after days of isolation and interrogation by the police. Silcott refused to sign any statement, and police notes of incriminating remarks supposedly made by him at the time of his interrogation were the basis of his conviction. These "confessions" have since been discredited. New forensic evidence has shown that crucial sections were later added to the police notes of Silcott's interrogation.

Graham Melvin, the detective in charge of the murder inquiry, has been suspended from duty and the convictions of the three men were referred to a court of appeals. But despite the collapse of the case against them the men remain in jail.

Marchers found wide support for their demand to free the Tottenham Three among the crowds of people in the busy shopping streets along their route.

Protesters chanted, "Kenneth Baker, hear our plea, the Tottenham Three are not guilty!" Kenneth Baker is the minister in the Tory government responsible for the police and criminal justice system.

At a rally after the march members of the jailed men's families spoke, as well as relatives and friends of the Bridgewater Four, Cardiff Three, and Dessie Ellis — other victims of police frame-ups who are campaigning for justice.

Addressing the marchers, Richard Adams, whose son Rolan was stabbed to death by a racist gang last February, attacked the justice system that kept the Tottenham Three behind bars while Rolan's murderers walked free. Police have taken seven months to bring Rolan's attackers to trial.

Billy Power and Gerry Hunter of the Birmingham Six walked at the head of the march. The Birmingham Six won their release last March after serving 16 years in jail on frame-up charges. The six Irishmen were arrested and framed after a series of bomb attacks on bars in 1974. Charges against the Guilford Four, and Maguire Seven, framed in similar cases and imprisoned for many years, have also been discredited.

"The press have been asking me what I'm doing here," Power said at the end of the march. "I told them, how could I stay at home when there are innocent people in jail? Where else could I be?"

The Militant

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Students discuss environment and justice

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

BOULDER, Colorado — Common Ground drew some 2,000 students from across the country for the third annual student conference on the environment October 4-6.

Participants discussed how or whether traditional demands of environmental groups — such as preservation of forests, ending water and air pollution, and opposition to nuclear power — should be linked to broader social issues.

"When we talk about environmental destruction, whether it comes from acid rain or dumping toxic waste, we have to also address social injustices like increased poverty rates, racism, and attacks on women's rights," said Miya Yoshitani, one of the conference organizers, in an interview.

Yoshitani and other student leaders said they would accomplish this goal by collaborating with community organizations, working for better housing and health care, and reaching out to Black rights and Native American groups.

Yoshitani is the National Council Coordinator of the Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC), the group that sponsored Common Ground. A nationwide student network with 30,000 members on 1,500 college campuses, SEAC organized a similar conference last year that drew 7,600 students.

"Poor housing is an environmental issue," said Randolph Viscio, a leader of SEAC. "We need to build coalitions with labor and minority groups," he added. Conference speakers included Ward Churchill, Colorado director of the American Indian Movement, and Pat Bryant, founder of the Gulf Coast Tenants Leadership Association, a New Orleans-based organization that has been working to defend Blacks in working-class communities in the South against chemical pollution.

"Fighting to make education a right, not a privilege, insuring that every woman has access and the right to choose abortion, and defending affirmative action are all things we need to work together for," said Tajel Shah in an address to the conference. Shah, a student at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, is the president of the United States Student Association.

A spectrum of groups

A spectrum of environmental groups participated in the meeting. Banners calling for an end to production of nuclear weapons, promoting the use of solar power, and appealing to save the diminishing wolf population could be seen along the exhibition hall. Leaflets calling for a demonstration in Nevada against testing of nuclear bombs were passed around.

Some groups focus their activities on lobbying Congress to enact stiffer environmental regulations. Others organize educational activities and publish newsletters with information on chemical pollution and radioactive waste. A group of students took off during the conference for Sand Bench in southwest Colorado. There they were to attempt to prevent the cutting of old growth trees by Stone Container, a major paper company.

While most participants at the conference came from the United States, a few students attended from Germany, Kenya, South Africa, Burma, the Netherlands and New Zealand.

Youth at conference interested in YSA

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

"If you don't fight against the system that's causing the oppression and exploitation of workers you can't go anywhere," said Jenny Boyce. "You certainly can't fight to stop the destruction of the environment." Boyce, a college student from Columbia, Missouri, joined the YSA at a conference sponsored by the Student Environmental Action Coalition in Boulder, Colorado.

Boyce joined after attending a YSA workshop at the conference on "The environmental catastrophe, the capitalist economic crisis, and why youth should fight for socialism." Aaron Ruby, a YSA National Committee member, gave the presentation.

"The capitalist system is marked by competition between capitalists who each attempt to maximize their profits," said Ruby. "As part of this profit drive the rulers attempt to squeeze out of us as much as possible. They have no concern for the wear and tear on workers — erosion of health, contamination

"All of Africa's environmental problems are connected with the legacy of colonialism and the skyrocketing foreign debt," said Wagaki Mwangi during the opening night of the conference.

A student from Kenya, Mwangi said many African countries were becoming dumping grounds for toxic and nuclear waste from multinational corporations in exchange for having small portions of their foreign debt written off. "Kenya accepted five million tons of nuclear waste for \$1.6 million," she said, calling for cancelling Africa's \$270 billion foreign debt.

Noel Brown, one of the keynote speakers and the North America director of the United Nations environmental program, presented a different view. "We talk about the third world debt but we must repay the earth debt," Noel said. Eliminating toxic waste sites, reforestation, and different energy policies is what is needed, he added. He pointed to the "Earth Summit," a UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) that will be held in Brazil next year, as the way forward.

"Many toxic waste sites are created by the military," continued Noel. "Think of the military going green," he said. "They could become our allies. You should advocate this," he added. Noel said this was possible because of "improved relations between the superpowers," meaning the United States and the Soviet Union. Noel said that while he disagreed with aspects of the UN decision-making process he found the "outcome of the Gulf war positive."

Noel's remark did not sit well with many students. Before he finished his speech two students unfurled a hand-made banner in the auditorium saying: "The UN okayed Bush's destruction of the Iraqi people and environment. Let's talk!"

Amidst applause, several students blasted Noel's prowar stance during a question and answer period. "How can we as students trust the UN that supported such a massacre?" asked one.

More than 150,000 Iraqis were slaughtered in the U.S.-led assault against Iraq. Many of the students at the conference had participated in or helped to organize protests against the war.

At an open mike session during a conference rally, the debate continued. Brent Hoare, a student from New Zealand, objected to Noel's call for focusing in on the UN environmental conference in Brazil. "Policy setting meetings among high government officials do little to save forests or cut pollution levels," he said.

How to fight environmental destruction?

While many students supported the conference organizers' projections of being involved in broader social issues, some presented a different view. "One of our front lines is in front of the bulldozers in the woods, the other in front of Congress," said Chris Van Daalen, co-director of Save America's Forests.

Some put forth reactionary views. "I don't want to be callous, but children always starved and will continue to starve. We need to worry about the trees," said Naomi Racker, from a group called Ancient Forest Rescue.

of our bodies, pollution of the workplace, and injuries — any more than they do for the environment as a whole."

Besides YSA members another seven conference participants attended. A lively discussion took place on the Cuban revolution and the U.S.-led war against Iraq.

Boyce plans to invite other YSA members to give classes at the school she attends in Missouri. She is part of a group called Active Students Advocating Peace. "We organized a teach-in against the Gulf war last winter and we've been studying the *Communist Manifesto*, *Malcolm X Speaks*, and a book by Michael Harrington on socialism since then," she said. She heard about the YSA workshop after buying a subscription to the *Militant*.

YSA members set up a literature table and participated in other workshops. Conference participants bought 19 *Militant* subscriptions and two copies of the *New International*.



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

2,000 youth attended meeting in Boulder, Colorado, on defending environment.

"We can't fight to protect the environment without concern for human life," responded Aaron Ruby. "It is capitalism that is responsible for the poisonous chemicals that confront us on the job, our homes, on our farms, for the elimination of virgin forests, and for the deteriorating conditions facing working people," he said. Ruby, a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union in Washington, D.C., is a national committee member of the Young Socialist Alliance.

Ruby said that working people, as part of their struggle against the employers, can and have forced the adoption of safety measures on the job, as well as steps to curb pollution. "The better working people are organized the greater is our power," he said. But as long as basic industry is dominated by a handful of

capitalist families locked in a drive to maximize profits they determine the use of science and technology and resist measures to curb pollution, he added.

"Only by working people getting rid of capitalist rule and establishing our own government can we begin to take serious steps toward ending environmental destruction," said Ruby.

Dozens of workshops were held at the conference on themes such as the depletion of the ozone layer in the atmosphere, connections between environmental issues, and the plight of working farmers. Many local fights that students are involved in, such as preventing the reopening of the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant in Colorado, were discussed in the workshops.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS IN ACTION

The Young Socialist Alliance is a revolutionary organization of students and young workers across the United States. The YSA seeks to organize young people in the fights against the wars, economic devastation, racism, and sexism bred by the capitalist system.

We encourage members of the YSA and members of the Young Socialists in Canada and New Zealand to contribute to this column.

For more information on joining the Young Socialist Alliance, contact the YSA National Office, P.O. Box 211, New York, NY 10011, or get in touch with the YSA chapter nearest you (see directory on page 16).

Anti-Bush protest in Oregon

Six hundred people protested President George Bush's September 19 visit to Portland, Oregon. Protesters carried signs supporting a woman's right to choose abortion, gay rights, and environmental protection and objecting to Bush's AIDS policy. Many expressed anger over the U.S. war against the Iraqi people.

Bush was in town to attend a fund-raising breakfast for Republican senator Robert Packwood.

Young members of Peace Workers, a group in the city of Eugene, came to the demonstration with donated food to give out free breakfasts to contrast with the \$250-a-plate Bush/Packwood event. But the police confiscated the Peace Workers' food, claiming that protesters might throw it at Bush.

Members of the Young Socialist Alliance participating in the action witnessed the police use of cayenne-pepper mace and batons against peaceful demonstrators. Police arrested 38 people.

Eyewitness report from Wichita

The Young Socialist Alliance held a meeting September 25 at the Newark campus of Rutgers University. The discussion on "The rightist assault in Wichita, Kansas: An eyewitness report" featured Estelle DeBates, national cochairperson of the YSA,

and James Brash, a member of the Newark YSA. Both visited Wichita during the Operation Rescue assault on abortion clinics there.

DeBates noted that "Operation Rescue comes out of Wichita with wind in their sails" because of the lack of serious mobilizations by defenders of a woman's right to choose. "We need to countermobilize and reach out broadly" for support, DeBates said.

"We must answer the rightists' lies, such as 'abortion exploits women,'" added Brash. "Going to Wichita taught me anew that a revolutionary youth organization is necessary."

One student said she came to the forum because "this is my body they are trying to control. I feel it is important to get active around this issue."

DeBates and other YSA members are available to speak on high school and college campuses about Wichita and the fight to defend abortion rights. Contact the YSA to request a speaker.

New Zealand YS sells 'Militant'

New Zealand Young Socialists have been active in the international campaign to sell the *Militant* and other socialist publications.

At a meeting in Auckland, Young Socialists national secretary Ruth Gray explained that one of the most effective ways to be part of the fight against capitalism's drive to war and depression is to distribute the *Militant*, *New International* magazine, and Pathfinder books.

"In this way we can link up with real struggles that are going on in the world," she said.

YS members helped sell *Militant* subscriptions to 13 students at a university in Dunedin and held classes there on the Soviet Union and the state of the New Zealand labor movement.

Jennifer Hansen in Portland, Oregon; Marty Pettit in Newark, New Jersey; and Dean Hazlewood, in Auckland, New Zealand, contributed to this week's column.

Lessons of rightists' actions in Wichita

BY ESTELLE DeBATES

The ultrarightist mobilizations this summer in Wichita, Kansas, have widened the discussion on defending abortion rights, prompted picket lines and protests in defense of a woman's right to choose abortion across the country, and opened a debate on how best to respond to the kind of assault seen in the Operation Rescue—organized "Summer of Mercy" campaign.

The political significance and character of the rightist assault in Wichita was unlike numerous actions over the years by antiabortion forces at clinics that perform abortions. In their aggressive street mobilizations, the

NEWS ANALYSIS

rightists in Wichita showed a face of incipient American fascism.

In the coming years economic crises, class polarization, imperialist war, and widespread class battles will more and more place their stamp on world politics. The stakes in these struggles will rise as working people begin to transform their unions into instruments capable of standing up to the employer-government assault on their standard of living and rights.

This same crisis and class polarization will also engender fascist movements. These forces will pose "radical" solutions to the crises of the day and use the streets to try to shift the relationship of forces against, and deal blows to, the workers' movement and others and who seek to resist the employers' offensive. They will act not solely against abortion rights but against broader democratic rights that aid workers in their struggles. They will seek to shut down political space for working-class action and mobilizations.

The events in Wichita hold special importance for working people because they are an early sign of what fighters will face in the future. This is a new development in U.S. politics.

The inability of the current women's rights, civil rights, and trade union leaderships to respond through broad countermobilizations is also an important lesson that, if recognized, can help advance the discussion among fighters on the strategy needed to defend our rights.

Operation Rescue was founded in 1987 by Randall Terry of Binghamton, New York. Terry lists the reasons he began the organization: "One is to save children who are scheduled to die. Two, to save women from being exploited by the abortionist, and to call the church to repentance for having allowed child-killing to flourish."

It was in 1988, during the Democratic Party National Convention in Atlanta, that Operation Rescue first received national attention while carrying out actions against clinics throughout the city. Between July and October more than 1,200 arrests were made.

A radical group

Unlike its predecessor, Right to Life, Operation Rescue is a radical group. Addressing the "peaceful" pickets held over the years at

clinics, Operation Rescue director Reverend Keith Tucci said, "I think people realized that the political process was not going to offer these children any hope." Operation Rescue became the organization of "action"—blocking access to abortion clinics and confronting women who attempt to exercise their right to enter the facilities. More than 50,000 arrests have been made at Operation Rescue clinic actions in the past four years. In four weeks, 2,657 arrests were made in Wichita.

Many of the arrests have led to court cases in which Operation Rescue seeks to obtain favorable rulings with the aim of getting the Supreme Court to review the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion. In fact,

the city from across the country to take part in the mobilizations. For the next month and a half, the city became the center of political attention in the United States.

What was it about the Wichita events that gave them a different character from the usual actions of Operation Rescue? What attracted these ultraright forces to join the "Summer of Mercy"?

The character of the action itself and the clear possibility to take some ground in politics drew a broader spectrum of rightist forces—veterans of numerous clinic protests; a number of former police officers, including a one-time boss in the Wichita police department; and cadre of fascist-type

they sought to escort women into clinics. Others related how they were followed home, had their property damaged, or were directly threatened by those involved in the clinic blockades. Judge Kelly and his family received several death threats. Kelly soon donned a bullet proof vest as a precautionary measure.

Operation Rescue organized nightly rallies that drew around 500 people. These events were organized so the leadership could give a political orientation and map out plans for the following day. Through these meetings Operation Rescue was able to consolidate new forces from Wichita into the movement.

• Speeches by Operation Rescue leaders were full of "Christian" and "American" demagoguery. They consciously appealed to the real concerns working people have about the economic crisis and their uncertainties about the future. Women were scapegoated for many of society's problems. For example, they claimed that by women going back to their "traditional" role in the home, unemployment, child abuse, drug abuse, and other societal ills would be substantially alleviated. Wearing the veil of "Christianity," they put forward rightist solutions—all of which weaken the working class's ability to fight, beginning with taking away the right to abortion.

'A biblical mandate'

In word and in deed, these rightists did not recognize the law. "We think we have a biblical mandate," Tucci was quoted as saying. This type of statement was common in the speeches and interviews of the leaders of the "Summer of Mercy."

Operation Rescue is not itself a fascist or incipient fascist organization. The characteristics of the Wichita events—the sustained street battles, the support of the state apparatus, the threats and violence, the demagoguery, the militancy, and the rightist cadre involved—give a glimpse at what a future American fascist movement will look like.

Far from fascist movements in this country growing out of Ku Klux Klan-type organizations, the assault by the ultrarightists in Wichita show more accurately how such developments will occur. For these reasons the mobilizations posed a broader threat and send a serious signal to the workers' movement. In Wichita, the street battles carried out for five weeks went largely unanswered. This emboldens rightist forces to move out more broadly in politics to take aim at those demanding an end to cop brutality, workers engaged in strikes, and youth and others involved in social protest actions.

The strategy of the current leaderships of women's rights, trade union, and civil rights organizations left working people disarmed and unable to counter this attack. The unions and the established women's and civil rights organizations today are not structured or led in such a way as to be able to go into combat—either against the employers' assault or ultrarightist offensives. Instead the officials look to and rely on the courts, cops, and bourgeois electoralism, and they encourage those who want to fight to do the same.

In the years ahead, working people will go into action to defend their interests and transform the unions into the kind of combat instruments that can mobilize against and push back company, cop, and rightist assaults.

The rightists won political ground in their assaults. A Wichita Operation Rescue has been established and continues to carry out actions against the clinics there. In numerous cities there are signs of increased boldness on the part of these forces, which are probing for new arenas of action like they found in Wichita.

Broad countermobilizations of the labor movement and its allies must be built to defeat further attacks. The continuing majority support for abortion rights indicates the potential to do so. Such action can draw far larger numbers than the rightists are capable of mobilizing, thus politically isolating them. It would also send a message to the cops and the government that they face a battle if their assault on these and other rights continues.

Charting such a course weakens the ultrarightists' ability to win new adherents and is part of forging a fighting workers' movement.



Militant/Linda Joyce

Operation Rescue was able to leave behind an organized antiabortion group. Wichita supporters of a woman's right to choose, above, hold October clinic defense picket.

on October 16, the Supreme Court will hear a case involving Operation Rescue, which will argue that the Ku Klux Klan Act—which gives the federal court jurisdiction over cases involving conspiracy, motivated by discrimination, to violate someone's civil rights—does not apply to their blockades and other actions at clinics under the justification of "saving babies."

In 1990 Operation Rescue disbanded after federal authorities seized its payroll account because of several court judgments against the organization. Terry later set up shop in South Carolina as Operation Rescue-National. "Rescues" began again in late 1990. The organization now claims to have 100,000 supporters.

Operation Rescue grasped a particular opportunity coming out of developments in Wichita this past spring. City council members proposed an ordinance that would prohibit the use of city money for abortion counseling, require doctors to notify parents when a minor was seeking an abortion, and declare that legally, "life begins at conception." The mayor of the city, Robert Knight, supported the proposal. Antiabortion forces including Operation Rescue organized to back the legislation. In July the initiative was defeated in a 4-3 vote.

A week later, Operation Rescue announced the "Summer of Mercy," originally slated as a six-day campaign. Operation Rescue director Tucci announced they anticipated about 700 people would join the action.

What happened from then on was not the norm of Operation Rescue activities over the last several years.

Shut down clinics

On July 16, the first day into the campaign, the rightist forces successfully shut down all three of the city's clinics. Tucci said they were surprised by the lack of opposition from abortion rights advocates and later made the announcement to extend the protest at least another week. "This is going to be a testing ground for taking back every state in the nation," he said at a rally that evening. "We're going to have to dig in deep." The following day Operation Rescue announced their stay was "indefinite." By the end of the week hundreds of rightist cadre had streamed into

organizations, such as followers of Lyndon LaRouche, who sought to recruit from the mobilizations.

• Operation Rescue led militant street battles involving hundreds. They faced no real opposition from pro-choice forces, and the leadership was willing to organize to take more ground. They soon announced they would stay and make Wichita "America's first abortion-free city."

Government support

• These street battles were intertwined with the support of the state apparatus. Local and state officials aided the efforts of Operation Rescue and President George Bush publicly commended their actions.

Mayor Knight supported the actions from the very beginning. A few days into the campaign, the rightists began to rush the police lines in an attempt to get into the clinics. The mayor and the city police met, and later assured the rightists that they would be treated fairly. The cops took their time to arrest the "rescuers," put them on air-conditioned city buses, and provide them with Gatorade drinks. These methods allowed the clinics to remain blocked for hours.

Federal judge Patrick Kelly called in federal marshalls on July 29, after a restraining order he issued a week earlier was ignored. The city cops did little to keep the clinics open. The mayor blasted the actions of Kelly, saying that the city's role was to enforce the law, not to guarantee access to the clinics.

On August 2—following more than 1,500 arrests—Kansas governor Joan Finney spoke at an Operation Rescue support rally.

"I commend you for the orderly manner in which you have conducted the demonstration," she said. Encouraged by this support, an Operation Rescue leader later said to the press, "If you think this is going to go away, you're mistaken. It's going to increase, and it's going to get worse."

Violent intimidation

• The rightists employed violence and threats of violence to advance their aims. Several clinic supporters were harmed as

For further reading

Education for Socialists Series

Countermobilization: A Strategy to Fight Racist and Fascist Attacks, by Farrell Dobbs. \$5.

What is American Fascism? Writings on Father Coughlin, Mayor Frank Hague, and Sen. Joseph McCarthy, by James P. Cannon and Joseph Hansen. \$6.

Fight Against Fascism in the U.S.A.: Forty Years of Struggle Described by Participants, by James P. Cannon et al. \$7.

By Leon Trotsky

Fascism: What It Is and How to Fight It. 31 pp. \$2.

The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany. 479 pp. \$27.95.

Available from bookstores listed on page 16 or from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, New York 10014. Please add \$3 for postage and handling for first title; \$.50 each additional title.

National pro-choice meeting debates abortion rights fight

BY BETSY FARLEY

ATLANTA — Representatives of pro-choice coalitions, family planning providers, and abortion rights activists from 45 states, Puerto Rico, and Guam gathered in Norcross, Georgia, September 27-29 for "A Mosaic for Choice: a National Conference for State Pro-Choice Coalitions."

The conference drew 300 participants and was organized to discuss statewide coordination of pro-choice legislative, electoral, and legal strategies. Because of the attacks on abortion rights, though, defense volunteers at clinics that perform abortions and other activists discussed and debated how to fight to defend abortion clinics from assaults by Operation Rescue and other ultra-rightist groups.

In the workshop "Keeping Our Doors Open" Ann Baker, president of a New Jersey abortion rights group, argued that the street actions by Operation Rescue cadres in Wichita, Kansas, in August and September had in fact widened support of the prochoice position. Baker said ignoring clinic blockades was the best tactic, so as not to add to the publicity they garner.

Another view was presented by Carol Wayman of the Washington, D.C. Area Clinic Defense Task Force. Wayman described how 500-800 volunteers are organized to defend area clinics from weekly attempts to blockade them.

Clinic defenders have involved growing numbers of young people in the defense against these assaults.

Another point of discussion was the future of the *Roe v. Wade* decision, the 1973 Su-

preme Court ruling that legalized a woman's right to choose abortion.

Is Roe decision lost?

In the workshop, "How the Supreme Court is Turning Back the Clock," one viewpoint was put forward by panelist Kitty Kolbert, of the American Civil Liberties Union's (ACLU) Reproductive Freedom Project. Kolbert said *Roe v. Wade* will be lost, with or without the appointment of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court. During the discussion period several participants explained that the fight to defend legalized abortion was far from over. Abortion rights can be defended by mobilizing against government and right-wing assaults, they said.

What emerged from the workshops and the conference as a whole was the extent of attacks on clinics from Chicago to Washington, D.C., and Fargo, North Dakota, to Mobile, Alabama. Operation Rescue and their ilk have been emboldened by their success in Wichita and are on the prod around the country.

The conference provided an opportunity to learn about struggles in other parts of the country and around the world as well. In Guam, for instance, a law banning almost all abortions and also banning any speech about abortion was passed in the spring of 1990 in this U.S. territory. The law became effective for two days but was enjoined by the U.S. District Court of Guam.

The case is scheduled to be heard November 4 by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the



Militant/Chris Remple

September pro-choice action in Iowa City. Although no protests were called at Georgia conference, many participants were interested in discussing a perspective that could mobilize majority support for abortion rights.

Ninth Circuit. Sylvia DeLong, vice-president of People for Choice and a union activist in Guam, announced a pro-choice demonstration on that day in Honolulu, Hawaii, where the Ninth District Court is based.

Alice Cohan, Political Director of the National Organization for Women (NOW), announced plans for a national mobilization in early April around the theme "We will not go back." The mobilization will focus on abortion rights and a range of other issues.

During a panel discussion Luz Alvarez-Martinez, director of the National Latina Health Organization, said that choice for Latinas means not only abortion rights, but freedom from sterilization abuse. Bilingual consent forms are one important step toward dealing with the problem of sterilization abuse.

Another, she said, is a waiting period between the signing of a consent form and the procedure. Latinas are often given a consent form to sign when they are in pain or under the influence of drugs. The waiting period helps ensure this does not happen. Although there are guidelines for Medicaid patients, she said, there is no federal legislation protecting women from sterilization abuse.

The conference also highlighted the growing restrictions on young women's right to abortion. In 1991, four states — Michigan, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, and Georgia — have enacted parental notification or consent laws, bringing the total to 38.

Although there was no presentation or workshop on Wichita, the rightist siege of abortion clinics there was widely discussed. Clinic volunteers and staff members from around the country brought stories of the

aggressive street tactics of ultra-rightists and the kid-glove treatment accorded them by the cops. Differing opinions on how to respond to these attacks were raised in a general session September 27. Marie Wilson, executive director of the MS Foundation, encouraged women to talk to the ultra-rightists and try to win them over to a pro-choice position. Others felt the cops or courts could be relied on to protect the clinics.

During the open mike session at the end of the conference, a number of participants explained their views on the various political discussions during the three-day meeting. Salm Kolis, a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union and the Socialist Workers Party, said she thought supporters of abortion rights can win broad support among working people — especially young and working women who are the main target of the government and right-wing offensive against a woman's right to choose abortion.

"Mobilizing the broadest numbers possible against each new law or street action aimed at limiting access to abortions, and politically countering anti-abortion propaganda is the way forward in defending our rights," she said.

One woman from Connecticut urged participants "not to trade off the rights of young women thinking it will protect our rights, because it won't. We can't reduce our struggle to the lowest common denominator."

Although no protests were called out of the meeting, many participants were interested in discussing an action perspective to mobilize the majority support for a woman's right to choose abortion.

500 picket Right to Life convention

BY MARK GILSDORF AND DON MACKLE

CINCINNATI — Responding to the opening of a Right to Life convention, 500 pro-choice demonstrators held a spirited picketline here, October 5.

Despite cold, rainy weather the enthusiastic demonstrators marched for an hour, chanting and carrying signs defending a woman's right to safe and legal abortion.

The demonstration was organized by the Cincinnati chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW). The large majority of those at the action were young women. Many came from local campuses including the University of Cincinnati, Ohio University, Ohio State University, University of Miami (Ohio), and Northern Kentucky University.

A number of high school students were also at the action, many attending their first picketline. "I don't know what I'd do personally," said Melissa Morley, a high school student from Wyoming, Ohio, "But I want the right to choose."

Popular chants included "Right to life, that's a lie, you don't care if women die"; "Racist, sexist, antigay, born-again bigots go away"; "What do we want? Pro-choice! When do we want it? Always!"

"We must make it clear that Operation Rescue is not welcome in Cincinnati," said Cincinnati NOW president Kate Curry. She announced that NOW is calling for a demonstration outside the church where Operation Rescue is holding a revival meeting October 17, the first of three days of actions in the city.

After the picketline, about 30 people came to an open house sponsored by Cincinnati members of the Young Socialist Alliance. "It's important that we forge the greatest unity in order to build the largest counter-mobilization possible to confront Operation Rescue," said Paco Sanchez, a Socialist Workers Party member from Cleveland who spoke at the open house.

Two youth at the open house expressed interest in joining the YSA.



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

RICH STUART

Pathfinder Press, 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 16.

How Far We Slaves Have Come! is now on the shelves of bookstores around the world. This new book contains the speeches delivered by Nelson Mandela and Fidel Castro this past July in Matanzas, Cuba. Their words, combined with a dramatic cover and photographs, make this book a powerful example of Pathfinder's motto "The truth must not just be the truth, it must be told."

Walter Sisulu, the deputy president of the African National Congress of South Africa, was presented with a complimentary copy of *How Far We Slaves Have Come!* before his speech at Canaan Baptist Church in Harlem, New York, September 29, two days after the book's publication. Fifteen of the books were sold at the Harlem meeting, along with several copies of Pathfinder's *The Struggle Is My Life*, ANC President Nelson Mandela's autobiography.

How Far We Slaves Have Come! was also well received by Haitians in New York who gathered at the United Nations Building to protest the coup against Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Many people at the Sisulu meeting and the Haitian protest were not aware that Nelson Mandela had visited Cuba, reflecting the virtual blackout of news on Mandela's trip by the U.S. media. One woman at the Harlem meeting even thought the cover photo of Mandela and Castro standing together was a fake, arguing that the two leaders had nothing in common. But seeing the book's photos of Mandela and Castro in Cuba caused her to think again.

Pathfinder bookstores around the world have begun to devise creative ways of promoting this new book. The London Pathfinder bookshop made a color copy of the book's cover and had it blown up to poster size for display.

* * *

Che Guevara, Cuba y el camino al socialismo (Che Guevara, Cuba, and the Road to Socialism), the second in the *Nueva Internacional* series will be available in October. Distributed by Pathfinder, *Nueva Internacional* is a magazine of Marxist politics and theory. *Nueva Internacional* No. 1, *Los canoñazos iniciales de la tercera guerra mundial* (The Opening Guns of World War III) has recently been purchased on the job by four workers at the Saab Scania automobile plant outside Stockholm, Sweden, and by three workers at the Iowa Beef Processors meat-packing plant in Perry, Iowa.

* * *

The Boston and Washington, D.C., Pathfinder bookstores have expanded their hours. The San Francisco Pathfinder Bookstore sent a mailing to area members of the Pathfinder Readers Club announcing the October Book-of-the-Month, *The History of the Russian Revolution* by Leon Trotsky. The bookstore made the book available to Readers Club members for 25 percent off.

Pathfinder distributors worldwide are organizing to place advance orders for the two-volume set *Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite!* The Stockholm Pathfinder Bookstore ordered 8 sets, the Atlanta Pathfinder Bookstore 13 sets, and Pathfinder New Zealand has ordered 28 sets. This new addition to the series *The Communist International in Lenin's Time* is available to Pathfinder Readers Club members at a 25 percent discount of \$45 until December 15 (December 31 in Britain).

'Militant' urges 'all out' for sales target week



The 'Militant' is receiving a great response at protest demonstrations

Militant/Angel Lariscy

Sales Drive Scoreboard

Areas	The Militant			Perspectiva Mundial		New Int'l*		L'inter**		Total	
	Goal	Total Sold	% Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
UNITED STATES											
Salt Lake City *	150	108	72%	24	12	54	5	2	0	230	125
Newark, NJ *	150	103	69%	50	25	70	12	5	5	275	145
Seattle *	95	64	67%	35	30	27	12	3	0	160	106
Greensboro, NC	55	37	67%	10	2	14	4	1	0	80	43
Twin Cities, Minn. *	165	109	66%	18	13	55	23	2	0	240	145
New York *	250	164	66%	100	62	110	41	15	8	475	275
Pittsburgh	75	48	64%	3	4	30	7	2	0	110	59
Cleveland	85	51	60%	10	3	25	16	2	0	122	70
Miami *	100	60	60%	30	17	44	25	5	6	179	108
Philadelphia *	70	42	60%	20	8	35	13	2	0	127	63
Anamosa	10	6	60%	2	0	2	0	0	0	14	6
Baltimore	85	50	59%	12	3	40	11	3	1	140	65
Birmingham, Ala.	110	64	58%	5	0	43	8	2	0	160	72
Washington, DC	100	58	58%	18	16	55	30	2	4	175	108
Atlanta *	121	70	58%	12	2	56	10	2	0	191	82
Chicago	163	94	58%	40	19	70	8	2	0	275	121
St. Louis	115	64	56%	5	1	30	11	2	0	152	76
Los Angeles *	170	94	55%	100	54	107	31	3	0	380	179
Boston *	125	67	54%	40	17	53	30	7	7	225	121
Morgantown, WV *	90	48	53%	3	2	30	6	2	0	125	56
Portland	15	8	53%	0	0	10	6	0	0	25	14
Cincinnati	17	9	53%	2	0	6	0	0	0	25	9
San Francisco	160	82	51%	65	22	72	33	3	1	300	138
Detroit *	122	62	51%	10	4	30	20	2	0	164	86
Denver	6	3	50%	3	0	2	0	0	0	11	3
Omaha, Neb.	86	37	43%	12	5	25	10	2	0	125	52
Des Moines, Iowa *	136	55	40%	25	10	40	6	2	0	203	71
Wichita	10	4	40%	0	1	0	0	0	0	10	5
Houston	75	29	39%	20	7	30	8	2	0	127	44
Louisville	6	2	33%	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	2
New Haven, Conn.	18	3	17%	2	0	5	0	0	0	25	3
National teams	25	21	84%	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	21
U.S. TOTAL	2,935	1,695	58%	676	339	1,170	370	75	32	4,856	2,436
AUSTRALIA *	27	14	52%	7	5	15	9	1	0	50	28
BELGIUM	4	1	25%	1	0	7	1	10	1	22	3
BRITAIN											
London	100	53	53%	7	9	70	35	3	1	180	98
Manchester	60	26	43%	3	2	40	6	2	0	105	34
Sheffield	60	16	27%	3	3	40	1	2	0	105	20
Other Britain	10	3	30%	0	2	0	0	0	0	10	5
BRITAIN TOTAL	230	98	43%	13	16	150	42	7	1	400	157
CANADA											
Vancouver	80	51	64%	15	12	30	11	5	1	130	75
Montreal *	65	38	58%	20	12	50	23	30	23	165	96
Toronto *	80	45	56%	20	13	45	34	5	3	150	95
CANADA TOTAL	225	134	60%	55	37	125	68	40	27	445	266
FRANCE *	5	3	60%	5	2	20	18	15	9	45	32
ICELAND	20	7	35%	0	1	4	1	0	0	24	9
MEXICO	0	0	0%	15	0	5	0	0	0	20	0
NEW ZEALAND											
Christchurch	53	42	79%	2	0	12	6	1	0	68	48
Auckland	75	49	65%	9	2	25	8	1	0	110	59
Wellington	50	29	58%	3	0	14	10	1	0	68	39
Other N. Zealand	4	7	175%	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	7
N. Z. TOTAL	182	127	70%	14	2	51	24	3	0	250	153
PUERTO RICO	2	0	0%	6	4	6	5	0	0	14	9
SWEDEN	45	27	60%	20	25	15	11	3	2	83	65
TOTAL	3,675	2,106	57%	812	431	1,568	549	154	72	6,209	3,158
SHOULD BE		2,220	60%		475		941		89		3,725
DRIVE GOALS	3,660			800		1,600		140		6,200	

* Raised goals.

** Single copies of *New International*, *Nueva Internacional*, and *Nouvelle Internationale*; Subscriptions to *L'Internationaliste*.

Continued from front page

tion at the center of their political activity. It is the best way to expand the influence of the communist movement within the working class and among young people coming into political activity.

Readers can see from the scoreboard that we fell behind a little this week. Supporters sold 277 *Militant* subscriptions in the United States as compared to 344 the previous week. This underscores the importance of gearing up right away to take advantage of the sales target week. Supporters in every city waging a determined fight to make 100 percent of the goals by November 2 is crucial for making the overall drive.

Houston comeback

The big highlight of the week is the comeback made by *Militant* readers in Houston. On October 10 supporters there mapped out a two-week action plan to sell 20 *Militant* subscriptions per week and catch up. After the first weekend they had sold 9 subscriptions to the *Militant*! This was by far their best weekend in the drive. Our scoreboard shows subscriptions received at the *Militant* as of October 11. But a sneak preview of next week: as of October 14 supporters in Houston stood at 51 percent!

Miners get the 'Militant'

Alyson Kennedy reports the *Militant* got a warm response at a gathering of 300 union miners and other workers in Castlewood, Virginia. The event was an anniversary celebration of the 1989 strike by United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) members against Pittston Coal. Speakers at the event included UMWA vice-president Cecil Roberts and James Gibbs, a UMWA miner and leader of the Pittston fight.

Sisulu: 'Our struggle is at crucial time'

Continued from page 20

highlight the need to immediately establish an "interim government of national unity to supervise the transition" in the South African republic, Sisulu said.

He outlined the ANC's central demand that such an interim body's central goal be the "election of a constituent assembly on the basis of one person, one vote. The constituent assembly would be mandated to adopt a new constitution. On that basis a parliament would be elected and a new government formed."

What the regime and its apologists around the world call "Black-on-Black violence" is "caused by the apartheid system," he said. "Extremely oppressive societies cause their victims to turn their rage inward. The violence is but one aspect of the 'divide and rule' strategy of the regime and is a direct indictment of and caused by apartheid."

As the ANC pursued various peace initiatives it became clear there was "also an invisible 'third hand' involved in the violence. The perpetrators were beyond the hand of the law and we concluded that the regime headed by de Klerk," he said, "was not above being involved in the violence. It also did the minimum to end the attacks."

The ANC leader pointed to the progress made in exposing the government role in the violence and drawing the Inkatha Freedom Party into negotiations to de-escalate the attacks. He hailed the September 14 accord signed by de Klerk, ANC president Nelson Mandela, and Inkatha head Mangosuthu Buthelezi as a step toward a "binding commitment to search for peace."

Sisulu emphasized that the struggle by millions in South Africa was part of a "momentous tide in favor of human rights that is sweeping through the African continent."

"South Africa is a graveyard of human rights," he said. "We are therefore more determined to reinforce this tide by hastening the demise of apartheid."

In Boston 100 people turned out for a \$50-a-plate fundraiser, where Sisulu asked Boston mayor Raymond Flynn and members of the city council to maintain sanctions against the apartheid regime.

In addition to meeting with Congressional leaders, the Sisulus spoke to public meetings and fundraisers attended by 250-300 people in Atlanta, New York, and Washington, D.C.

Among those who decided to subscribe to the *Militant* were miners from Ermine, Kentucky, and Duff, Tennessee, where fights for the union are being waged. A union president from a carpenters local in Marion, Virginia, recently on strike against company attacks on seniority, bought a *Militant* subscription for his local. He liked the *Militant* coverage on the battle to defend abortion rights in Wichita, Kansas, and said Operation Rescue doesn't have the right to tell someone else how to think or what to do with their lives.

Students in Iowa like the 'Militant'

Militant supporters in Des Moines, Iowa, recently spent two days on the University of Northern Iowa campus in Cedar Falls. At a literature table sponsored by a student group there two students subscribed the first day. One had read a copy of the *Militant* from a friend. Later four more students subscribed after meeting supporters of the paper who were going door-to-door near the campus.

That evening *Militant* supporters attended a meeting of the Students for Peace on campus. Like many other groups, with the end of the Persian Gulf war they decided to organize around other issues and had a public meeting planned on racism and police brutality. *Militant* supporters were invited to make a presentation about the paper. Two participants subscribed.

At a literature table at the student center the next day three more new readers signed up to get the paper. "All right! The YSA! You people gave a good talk here last year," one student said.

'New International'

Many *Militant* subscribers and other politically-minded workers and young people will be interested in buying a copy of the Marxist magazine *New International*, *Nouvelle Internationale* in French, or the two issues of *Nueva Internacional* in Spanish. Supporters are making plans to reach out more widely with the magazines during the upcoming sales target week. Both *New International* No. 8 and *Nueva Internacional* No. 2 feature articles on the battle to deepen the communist and internationalist course of the Cuban revolution. Supporters of the publications can take advantage of increased interest in Cuba today to win fighters to read these important magazines.

Selling the socialist press to unionists

Union	Militant*		New Int'l	
	% Sold (Goal)	Sold	(Goal)	Sold
UNITED STATES				
ACTWU	32%	34	11	0
IAM	46%	127	59	4
ILGWU	48%	25	12	0
IUE	51%	65	33	18
OCAW	29%	38	11	25
UAW	44%	82	36	28
UFCW	43%	100	43	25
UMWA	68%	25	17	9
USWA	55%	91	50	25
UTU	43%	105	45	13
TOTAL	46%	692	317	237
SHOULD BE	60%		416	119
AUSTRALIA				
MFTU	29%	7	2	3
SHOULD BE	60%		4	2
BRITAIN				
AEU	10%	10	1	6
NUM	36%	14	5	9
RMT	31%	26	8	13
TGWU	30%	20	6	8
TOTAL	29%	70	20	36
SHOULD BE	60%		42	18
CANADA				
ACTWU	0%	6	0	2
CAW	70%	10	7	3
IAM	8%	12	1	4
USWA	13%	16	2	8
TOTAL	23%	44	10	17
SHOULD BE	60%		27	9
NEW ZEALAND				
NZEU	0%	6	0	1
NZMWU	44%	9	4	3
FTWU	40%	5	2	1
UFCW	71%	7	5	2
TOTAL	41%	27	11	7
SHOULD BE	60%		16	4
SWEDEN				
FOOD WORKERS	17%	6	1	3
METAL	89%	9	8	3
TOTAL	60%	15	9	6
SHOULD BE	60%		9	3

* Also includes subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial* and *L'Internationaliste*.

Hundreds killed by Haitian military

BY SETH GALINSKY

In flagrant defiance of the interests of working people, the Haitian National Assembly replaced Jean-Bertrand Aristide as president on October 8. The appointment of a Supreme Court judge as provisional president is an attempt to consolidate the military coup that forced Aristide to flee the country.

As army forces continued to terrorize working-class neighborhoods, the new president, Joseph Nerette, proclaimed that Haiti "does not belong to one man, or a small group of men. This country belongs to all its sons, whether rich or poor."

While reports indicate the military's threats and violence have kept down many protest actions in Haiti, daily demonstrations continue in the United States. Up to 20,000 have turned out in Boston, 60,000 in New York City, and 15,000 in Miami in the largest of such marches and rallies.

Hundreds of Haitian working people have been killed by the military. In one neighborhood alone in Port-Au-Prince, Haiti's capital, as many as 200 dead were reported. There have been almost no reports from the countryside, where even before the coup there had been violent clashes between large landowners and poor peasants.

Washington and the Organization of American States (OAS) initially condemned the September 30 coup, but rapidly shifted their focus. In their view, Aristide brought the coup on himself by encouraging "mob violence."

While both the OAS and Washington have threatened economic sanctions against the new government, they have sought a compromise that would meet the concerns of the coup leaders. They succeeded in winning Aristide's acceptance of conditions for his return: that he would stop statements that were interpreted as supporting the independent action of working people, and that in effect he would be a figurehead with no power. But even this was not sufficient for the Haitian capitalists, who believe that Aristide's return would encourage Haitian working people to continue struggling for their rights.

The swearing-in of Nerette came after two votes in the National assembly electing him president. The first was taken under a hail of bullets, as the army made sure the rump body would do its bidding. The following day the vote was taken again in an attempt to make it appear to be a more independent action on the part of the legislature.

Workers, peasants, and students took advantage of Aristide's inauguration in February 1991 to press their fight for more democratic space, land, and union rights.

- In August thousands of peasants from Jérémie, on the western end of the island, held a demonstration. They demanded land reform, distribution of hogs, price controls, and the construction and repair of roads necessary for getting their produce to market.

- *Haiti Progrès*, a French-language

Cuban government condemns coup, opposes OAS, UN military intervention

The Cuban government has condemned the September 30 military coup that overthrew President Jean-Bertrand Aristide of Haiti.

"The government of the Republic of Cuba expresses its most emphatic condemnation and calls for the reinstatement of the legitimate government of President Aristide," Cuba's foreign ministry declared October 2. The statement explained that Aristide's elected government enjoyed unquestionably broad support in Haiti.

Radio Rebelde, a major radio station in Cuba, broadcast an editorial stating Cuba's opposition to any military intervention by the Organization of American States (OAS) under the pretext of restoring the Haitian government. Such an intervention would undoubtedly be sponsored by the United States, it said.

"The creation of a multinational force under the flag of the OAS or the UN would mean placing an international helmet on Yankee marines and setting a dangerous precedent for future actions, under different conditions and with radically different objectives, which could be manipulated by Washington," the editorial concluded.

weekly published in New York, reported in its August 21-27 edition that 550 employees at the National Serious Disease Office had just announced the formation of a union. There have been at least eight strikes at the government-run industrial park since February.

- Hundreds of people from rural areas joined an August 16 conference on promoting a literacy movement in the countryside. Eighty-five percent of Haitians are illiterate.

- A series of activities to celebrate the anniversary of the 1791 slave rebellion in Santo Domingo was organized by students from the Faculty of Social Sciences August 22. The students marched to the U.S. consulate and denounced IMF and foreign interference in Haiti's internal affairs.

- Military and police repression continued during this whole period. But working people organized to protest these attacks. At the August 13 funeral for four young people assassinated by an army officer, mourners carried signs demanding, "Justice for the children" and "Shed light on the conditions surrounding their deaths."

The overthrow of Aristide was directed at pushing back these struggles.

Haiti's economic crisis had deepened since Aristide was elected by a landslide with two-thirds of the vote. Aristide had acquired a reputation as a defender of the downtrodden due to his outspoken opposition to the Duvalier dictatorship, which was overthrown in 1986. Haiti, with a population of 6.5 million, is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

More than 8,000 factory workers in Port-au-Prince — nearly 20 percent of the industrial work force of 40,000 — have been fired since late last year, *Haiti Insight* reported. First quarter exports to the United States dropped \$6.6 million.

Aristide implements austerity

Aristide sought increased aid from the United States, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank to ameliorate Haiti's economic difficulties.

After taking office, he began implementing austerity measures to win the confidence of the capitalist banks and governments. He slashed 2,000 jobs from the government payroll of 42,000 workers, increased taxes, and cut government spending.

Aristide also took some measures to respond to popular pressure. In August he asked the Senate to pass legislation that would increase the official minimum wage.

The Haitian bourgeoisie became increasingly upset with the continuing struggle of working people during the Aristide administration.

When Aristide returned to Haiti on September 27, after speaking before the United Nations, he gave a speech which fueled the fears of the rich even more.

"Whenever you are hungry, turn your eyes in the direction of those who aren't hungry," he told a crowd of thousands. "Whenever you are out of work, turn your eyes in the direction of those who can put people to work. Ask them, 'Why not?'"

In interviews with the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*, wealthy and middle class Haitians — who overwhelming backed and financed the coup — let loose the class hatred they feel toward working people.

"They think because you have a nice car, because you're not as black as them, that you're the enemy," complained one woman, the owner of a gift and jewelry shop.

"Aristide is popular in the slums, but the slums don't make the country work," said an insurance executive. "It doesn't give the president the right to burn people who have worked hard for their money or have an external appearance of wealth."

"When you have people who are illiterate, they are like children," the executive added. "They are not well educated, so they have a tendency to believe in fairy tales."

In total indifference to the continuing slaughter, another wealthy supporter of the coup stated, "We cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs. Now that they're broken, we're going to have a democracy omelette."

The first weeks after the coup indicate the kind of "democracy" the Haitian capitalist and landlord families have in mind for the toiling majority of the country.



Since Aristide's election, peasants have pressed the fight for land reform.

60,000 protest Haitian coup

Continued from front page

was "making ways for working people to come up as a class — a class that has been suffering for many decades.

"This is a way forward socially and economically. We want the world to know that we are willing to fight for democracy, and we need the help of the people in the United States."

"It is important to march here in the United States because the U.S. government is supporting the coup. This government cannot tell us what to do. Haiti was the first Black independent country — we are an example," said a factory worker from New Jersey.

The demonstration was organized by the Ad Hoc Committee for the Restoration of Democracy. The stated demands were: "unconditional return of Aristide to the presidency; removal of the military junta; restoration of constitutional rule; respect of the choice of 70 percent of the people; and an end to the killing."

As the march rolled down Flatbush Avenue toward the bridge, organized neighborhood contingents entered from side streets swelling the crowd. Students led the marchers in singing in Creole, "Hallelujah Aristide. We want Aristide back in power."

Students attended from several area schools including Brooklyn College, Long Island University, New York City College, Morrisville (SUNY) campus, Medgar Evers College, and many high schools. A medical student from Brooklyn, originally from Cap-Haitien, said he spoke with family members in Haiti after the coup. "People feel they must stay indoors or they will be shot by the army or police."

By the time the march headed toward New York's city hall, much of the financial district in lower Manhattan was closed off to traffic. A sea of signs carried by the marchers read, "No puppet government for Haiti"; "No Aristide, no peace"; "Democracy or death"; "Aristide elected, not selected"; "Malcolm [Malcolm X] said 'By any means necessary'"; and "Democracy is not a word but a deed."

When demonstrators were asked how they heard about the protest most said the news reached them by word of mouth. Workers from an airplane parts factory in Westbury took the day off after hearing of the march on a radio broadcast. They said that half of the workers in that factory are from Haiti.

Protesters were eager to talk about conditions in Haiti. "There's blood in the streets," said a hotel worker from Queens. "There's no food for the people. They say there will be no electricity in three weeks. Yesterday the news reported the price of gasoline had been increased by one dollar. We don't even know the number of people dead."

A dressmaker from Brooklyn said she had not been able to call Haiti as her family's telephone on the island had been cut off for a week. She described the increasing poverty

in the country: "It is so bad that people buy water for 40 cents a bucket and even eat green mangoes.

"Humanity there is so driven down that even the church — people like Aristide — had to do something. When you are poor in Haiti you are just supposed to 'be with God.'"

In Manhattan rallies took place at city hall and the New York Stock Exchange. Speakers included Haiti's consul-general in New York, Philippe Wilson Desir; Mayor David Dinkins; and Haitian ambassador Benjamin Dupuy, who announced that earlier in the day the UN unanimously voted for a resolution calling for the immediate restoration of the Aristide administration.

Marchers expressed their determination to continue the fight. "We will march every day if we have to," stated a nurse's aide from New Jersey.

Bush vetoes bill extending unemployment benefits for 20 weeks

BY SETH GALINSKY

President George Bush vetoed a \$6.5 billion bill October 11 that would have provided as many as 20 additional weeks of benefits for the unemployed. The veto came one day after the U.S. Labor Department announced a new rise in unemployment.

With the ink still drying, Bush said he was "deeply concerned about the needs of the unemployed and their families." He claimed that signing the bill "would signal the failure of budget discipline."

The bill to lengthen the weeks for unemployment checks would have aided 3 million people who have been out of work more than half a year. It was passed 300-to-118 in the House of Representatives and 65-to-35 in the Senate, two votes short of the two-thirds majority needed to override a veto.

Official unemployment stood at 6.7 percent nationally in September. Although close to \$8 billion is in a special U.S. trust fund set up to pay extended benefits for up to 13 weeks and 300,000 workers exhaust their benefits each month, the rules for using these funds to pay benefits are so restrictive that no workers in any state have been found eligible.

According to the Labor Department report, new claims for jobless pay rose to a seasonally adjusted 435,000 as of September 28, an increase of 5,000 from the previous week. Some 3.3 million people are now collecting unemployment benefits.

Meanwhile, the rich are doing fine. According to an article in *Forbes* magazine, telecommunications baron John Kluge is one of the richest individuals in the United States. The magazine estimates that his fortune went up by \$300 million this year to \$5.9 billion.

Jailed unionist fights city's moves against cop brutality suit

BY JOHN STUDER

DES MOINES, Iowa — Supporters of Mark Curtis are pressing ahead with a police brutality lawsuit in face of a motion by the City of Des Moines to have most of the civil rights case thrown out of court.

Curtis' suit, filed by his attorneys George Eichhorn and William Kutmus, charges the cops and the city violated his fundamental constitutional rights to due process of law, against unlawful search and seizure, and against cruel and unusual punishment. The suit was filed in 1989.

In the new court papers filed by the cops September 3, their attorneys demand that the court summarily rule in favor of the city on the majority of Curtis' charges. They argue that Curtis has no evidence to back up his constitutional claims. If the motion is successful, it would leave only a simple assault charge for trial. The case is scheduled to go to trial November 25.

Curtis' legal action lists the City of Des Moines, police officers Daniel Dusenberry

and Charles Wolf — the cops Curtis could identify who took part in beating him while in the Des Moines City Jail, and other unnamed cops who were involved.

Curtis' charges are based on the brutal physical assault on him after his arrest on frame-up rape charges as well as the harassment and discrimination against him. He also charges the city with negligence for allowing the vicious attack to take place in the jail.

The suit explains that Curtis' beating was an example of the regular practice of the Des Moines police department. He is seeking \$300,000 in actual monetary damages for medical expenses and lost wages, and punitive damages, to act as a deterrent to future cop violence.

Since the case was filed, the lawyers for the city have dragged their feet and refused to provide essential files and information concerning the beating and who was involved.

Police chief affidavit

As backing for their September 3 motion, the city submitted an affidavit from William Moulder, Des Moines police chief. Moulder states that the cops' Internal Affairs Unit already investigated Curtis' charges against Wolf and Dusenberry and ruled that any force they used against Curtis was "justified, lawful and proper."

At the same time city attorneys filed for summary judgment against Curtis' constitutional claims, they handed over answers to a series of questions Curtis' attorneys had filed nine months earlier.

In the statement the cops give a capsule version of how they claim Curtis was injured: "Curtis lunged toward Officer Dusenberry. Curtis was taken to the floor and as Officer Wolf was attempting to maintain control of the upper half of Curtis' body, Curtis attempted to bite Officer Wolf on hands and legs; Curtis was struck by officer Wolf's knee along the left eye."

Two and a half years after the lawsuit was filed, the police finally provided the names of four cops they say were involved in making the decision to toss Curtis naked into a bare cell after he was returned from the hospital: Sergeant Gary Moon, Officer John Wade, Officer Mel Ferguson, and Sergeant Bruce Elrod.

The city failed to provide the names of the cops who accompanied Curtis to the hospital, slandered him to hospital personnel, and



Militant/Stu Singer

Facial wounds show some of Curtis' injuries after beating by cops

abused him by making him walk out of the hospital until he fell sick from his injuries.

Seeking full disclosure

Eichhorn and Kutmus, Curtis' attorneys, responded to the city's move to narrow the lawsuit by urging Judge Wolle to grant an extension of time to seek full disclosure from the city in the case. They pointed out the city demanded summary judgment the same day as they finally provided the officers' names. These witnesses still have to be questioned. The lawyers also argued that the continual refusal of city attorneys to release any files on Curtis in the custody of the Internal Affairs Unit justified the extension.

Judge Wolle granted Curtis' attorneys' request, extending discovery in the case through October 18. He ruled that Eichhorn and Kutmus would have until October 25 to file an answer to the city's motion to eliminate Curtis' constitutional claims. A November 5 hearing is set to hear arguments on the motion.

A fight now looms over the city's refusal to turn over the Internal Affairs files on Curtis. These files contain virtually all of the cops' written record of how they dealt with Curtis.

The city claims that these files are protected from disclosure by legal privilege.

Their attorneys argue that the Des Moines cops' Internal Affairs Unit has a dual mission. On the one hand, it is charged with investigating complaints of misconduct by police officers. On the other hand, it is charged with performing duties as an investigative arm of the city's legal department in case the cops are sued.

Because of this second duty, the cops argue, any files they create during a brutality investigation are legally protected from disclosure. They might be needed in future legal defense, the cops say.

Both the Des Moines Civil Service Commission and the Community Relations Service of the U.S. Justice Department have conducted investigations of the city's police department over the past several years and addressed this self-serving set up. The Justice Department concluded it was a "definite conflict of interest."

"This is a precarious position for a unit responsible for the integrity and credibility of the Des Moines Police Department," the Justice Department wrote. "If the Internal Affairs Unit is expected to function in a manner which would allow a citizen, or one of its own members, to lodge a complaint and have faith that it will be dealt with fairly, impartially and independently, steps must be taken to change its present system of operations."

Curtis' lawyers are preparing to ask Judge Wolle to order the city to hand over the files.

In the context of the international public exposure and outcry against police brutality following the near-killing of Rodney King in Los Angeles, Curtis' lawsuit has a significance far beyond seeking some justice for his treatment at the hands of the Des Moines cops.

It is a battleground for the rights of all. At stake is an opportunity to deal a blow to arbitrary police violence and intimidation.

To get copies of the lawsuit and additional material on Curtis' fight against police brutality, contact the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa, 50311.

Facts on Curtis' beating in jail

DES MOINES—Mark Curtis was a packinghouse worker, a union and political activist, who was framed by Des Moines authorities on false charges of rape and burglary. He was sentenced to 25 years in state prison. He has appealed the conviction and is fighting for release on parole.

Curtis was arrested on March 4, 1988, hours after speaking out in Spanish at a public protest meeting called to defend 17 of his coworkers from Mexico and El Salvador. These workers had been seized in an illegal immigration raid coordinated by the company, the Swift Independent Meat Packing Co., and the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

At the meeting Curtis urged his union, Local 431 of the United Food and Commercial Workers, step up its efforts in defense of the detained packinghouse workers as a means to strengthen the unity of the workers against company attacks.

Police officers Daniel Dusenberry and Charles Wolf were dispatched to bring Curtis to the Des Moines City Jail after his arrest. They took Curtis, handcuffed, into a small, windowless room in the jail the cops called the "ASAP" room. Refusing to allow Curtis to contact an attorney, Dusenberry and Wolf, along with other cops whose names Curtis did not learn, attempted to harass him. They brought in a tape recorder to attempt to interrogate him. They called him a "Mexican lover, just like you love those coloreds."

After removing all Curtis' clothes, the cops beat him severely, causing a "blow-out" fracture to his cheek. He was clubbed unconscious, and woke up covered with bruises.

Curtis was injured badly enough that the cops decided to take him to the hospital. It took 15 stitches to close the gash on his face. In violation of hospital policy, the cops forced him to walk from the emergency room where he had been treated out to the ambulance to return to jail. On the way, Curtis fell to the floor, vomiting from the effects of the beating.

When he was taken back to the jail, Curtis was thrown naked into a special bare cell, containing no furniture, no bed, and no toilet. He was left there for the night. The authorities refused to allow Curtis' friends and relatives to bail him out until the next afternoon. — J.S.

Gov't agencies discredit unit that 'investigates' police

BY JOHN STUDER

DES MOINES — The cops' attempt to whitewash Mark Curtis' police brutality claims is based on a report issued by their own in-house Internal Affairs Unit. The credibility of the police investigative arm is undermined by a number of recent government reports.

Over the last three years, both the Des Moines Civil Service Commission and the Community Relations Service of the U.S. Justice Department conducted investigations of the Des Moines police following extensive reports of racism and sexism inside the department. These investigations paid particular attention to the Internal Affairs Unit.

In ordering the reinstatement of Charlie Smith, a Black female police cadet who was fired after filing a charge of racist behavior against a lieutenant, the Civil Service Commission issued what the Des Moines Register termed "a stinging report accusing the police department of widespread racism and sexism." The report branded the Internal Affairs Unit as being primarily concerned with covering up for the department. Referring to the Smith case, the commission found that "the Internal Affairs Unit 'investigated' an allegation against a superior by a subordinate to clear the supervisor and not determine whether the allegation by the subordinate occurred."

It concluded that "when the Internal Affairs Unit functions as it did in this case, how can a citizen who lodges a complaint have

any faith that it will be dealt with fairly, impartially and independently?"

Des Moines police chief William Moulder's affidavit defending the city against Curtis' claims argues that the City cannot be held liable for any damages because the cops' written policies prohibit unauthorized excessive use of force.

Moulder attaches the Des Moines Police Uniform Division Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the use of force to show that officers Daniel Dusenberry and Charles Wolf acted by the book when interrogating Curtis after his arrest. The SOP reads like a manual for combat training. Stating "The best defense is a good offense," it instructs cops how to attack "Vital Body Points."

It advises: (a) Temple of head — strike inwards; (b) Eyes — gouge, throw items; (c) Ears — slap ears, gouge mastoids; (d) Nose — strike upwards at base, near lip; (e) Point of chin — strike upwards; (f) Neck — nearly all neck vital for strike, pinch or choking; (g) Collar bones — strike downwards near neck or shoulder; (h) Floating ribs — strike in; (i) Solar plexus and stomach — strike upwards; (j) Kidneys — strike inwards; (k) Small of back — strike or kick inwards; (l) Tailbone and buttocks bones — strike or kick upwards; (m) Groin — strike or kick; (n) Shin bone — strike, kick, or scrape vertical; (o) Knee cap — kick; (p) Top of foot — stomp; (q) Achilles tendon (behind ankles) — kick or scrape; (r) Armpit — gouge; (s) Hand — back of hand, between knuckles — strike or

pressure; (t) Biceps and triceps (upper arm muscles) — strike or pinch; (u) Fingers — twist or bend."

In a section that is intended for public consumption to show that the cops' respect those they seize, the SOP manual actually gives a revealing picture of what Des Moines cops think of working people:

"Always remember the dignity of a person and never violate that dignity in the presence of another," the manual advises, "though that person might be a common drunk, a tramp, a vagrant, a confirmed or dangerous criminal, or a wayward or defenseless child."

These policies are standard operating procedure in police departments across the country, the Des Moines cops argue, and therefore the city should be dismissed from the lawsuit.

However, both the Civil Service Commission and Justice Department noted that the existence of standard policies does not mean much if they are systematically ignored. Both government agencies found that while the police department did have written policies to discourage racist and sexist behavior, the cops' actual practice was to wantonly violate those policies.

"A professional, public organization dedicated to law enforcement cannot have two sets of standards by displaying a laxity in enforcing even its own policies," the Justice Department investigation concluded. "Such disregard allows the department's integrity to be diminished and creates the possibility of further judicial reprimand."

New support can be won for jailed activist by answering opponents of his freedom

BY JOEL BRITTON

LOS ANGELES — New backing has been won in the labor movement in the United States for parole for Mark Curtis. At the same time, opponents of the effort to free this union and political activist have stepped up their countercampaign, dealing several blows to the fight.

The setbacks can be temporary if supporters squarely answer the arguments advanced by forces opposed to the Curtis fight. An accurate appraisal of the political stakes in the case and an assessment of the current stage of the long-term defense campaign can also help arm those who seek to win new backing.

On November 6 or 7 the Iowa State Board of Parole will conduct its third annual review of Curtis' parole. Curtis was convicted in 1988 on trumped-up rape and burglary charges. At the time of his arrest Curtis was involved in a fight to win his union's support for immigrant coworkers victimized by a raid at the Swift meat-packing plant in Des Moines by immigration cops.

Curtis' request for parole is backed by thousands of individuals and organizations. More than 40 letters that have been written supporting parole will be presented to the board by the Mark Curtis Defense Committee prior to the November hearing.

Union members and officers have joined elected officials, immigrant rights activists, civil rights and women's rights fighters, and others in urging freedom for Curtis, a member of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance.

Many calling for Curtis' release refer to the vicious beating he suffered at the hands of the Des Moines police, reflecting a heightened awareness of rampant cop brutality in the wake of the much-publicized assault on Rodney King by Los Angeles officers.

'In interest of human rights'

For example, William Jennings, president of Detroit Lodge No. 82 of the International Association of Machinists, writes, "I have been following his case for more than three years and feel that his conviction was very questionable at best. Certainly his treatment after arrest was deplorable. . . . For the interests of the justice system, human rights and human compassion, I urge you to approve Mark's parole."

Thomas Deary, an international representative for the International Union of Electronic Workers (IUE), writes, "Unfortunately we live in a nation where the citizens are slowly becoming afraid of their own police force. In the case of Brother Curtis the beating he received during his arrest was yet another saga of brutality by those we have trained to protect us. . . . Many of us that have watched this case from the beginning feel that the members of the parole board have an opportunity to correct an injustice, even if it is late in coming, by giving Mark his freedom on parole."

Supporters of parole for Curtis are aware that he has served more time than the average prisoner does for third degree sexual assault, the main frame-up charge. A "burglary" charge was added some months after his arrest in order to lengthen the sentence.

Johnny McGraw, shop steward of local 271 of Curtis' union, the United Food and Commercial Workers, writes, "Curtis should have been given parole a long time ago. His behavior as a prisoner has been good. Not giving him parole at this time is just a continuation of the political, rather than the criminal, basis for his imprisonment."

Many of the parole letters note the extensive backing Curtis has won. Thousands have become endorsers of his defense committee. Thomas O'Connor, shop steward at UFCW Local 9 in Austin, Minnesota, writes of Curtis, "He has also received community support statewide, plus worldwide support. That alone should open your hearts and minds and let freedom ring for Mark Curtis."

Support for Curtis' parole in the U.S. labor movement ranges far and wide in many different unions. Ron Ramsey, business manager of Florida Local 32 of the Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers writes, "How long will he remain in jail? He has suffered physical abuse, loss of reputation,

loss of dignity, loss of freedom and his losses continue to mount. In the name of all that is fair we request that he be released from jail immediately."

Countercampaign

As with many cases of union and political activists framed up over past decades on criminal charges, forces have been rallied to the side of the prosecutors and cops and their big-business sponsors.

Mounted from the day Curtis was arrested, and beaten, and thrown naked into a cold cell, this pro-prosecution campaign seeks to counter the Curtis defense effort. It has been spearheaded by capitalist media arms like the *Des Moines Register*. Joining in this reactionary effort has been the Workers League, a group calling itself "socialist," and its *Bulletin* newspaper.

This outfit specializes in attacks on unions during strikes, especially long and bitter ones, where they orient to a layer of workers demoralized by the employer's strikebreaking attacks and the default or inadequate leadership on the part of the union officialdom.

But the countercampaign is not limited to these forces. Those who advance the state's frame-up line include union officials, individuals in rape crisis clinics, and others. This highlights the extent to which Curtis' fight is a political issue in the labor movement and elsewhere. As Iowa authorities refuse to let Curtis out on parole, and the framed unionist won't buckle to attempts to break him of his views, the stakes in the case rise.

The opposition to the fight for justice for Curtis finds adherents from the top echelons of the privileged bureaucracy of full-time officials and functionaries who oversee the unions and from those local officials whose corruption makes them unfit for leading any kind of struggle. These backers of the employers' and government's domestic and foreign policy aren't looking to unite workers in defense of their rights and past gains as Curtis attempted to do at Swift in Des Moines.

Far from rallying union support for the rights of immigrant workers, which is what Curtis proposed at a meeting to protest the Immigration and Naturalization Service raid and arrest of his Mexican and Salvadoran coworkers, these union officials commonly pit native born workers against those they scorn as "illegal aliens."

One recent example of elements within the union bureaucracy moving to back up the Iowa rulers' efforts to keep Curtis in prison occurred at an August meeting of the Iowa State Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO.

A resolution was passed "exposing the Mark Curtis campaign" and urging "the national AFL-CIO and all state and central labor bodies and affiliated unions to refuse any support to the Mark Curtis defense campaign and to rescind support where it has already been given."

This scurrilous and damaging resolution was spearheaded by Perry Chapin, president of the South Central Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, and a long-time supporter of the countercampaign. It takes as good coin the cop and prosecution frame-up of Curtis. "There is overwhelming evidence of Curtis' guilt," reads the resolution.

Another section says, "Curtis was not arrested because of any activities related to or supported by the Iowa AFL-CIO and there is no connection between Curtis' case and the Iowa Labor Movement."

"There is no association between this campaign and the trade union movement in Iowa," the resolution states. Contrary to these charges, it is precisely the growing support for the parole of Curtis in Iowa unions and elsewhere that prompted Chapin to move against this fighter.

Last spring, the Mark Curtis Defense Committee was invited to attend and speak at the fifth Midwest Labor Jam held in Fort Madison, Iowa. The event is organized by locals of the United Food and Commercial Workers and United Steelworkers. A number of union officials there agreed to write letters on behalf of Curtis to the parole board and some agreed that defense committee spokespeople could address labor bodies they were part of.

This new support and interest in the case was an important step forward in winning

broader backing from the labor movement. Supporters of parole for Curtis overreached themselves, though, when a proposal was made last June for the Iowa City AFL-CIO Labor Council to send a parole letter. The motion was blocked after a council member noted that Curtis is a communist and proposed that the South Central Federation be consulted with before any action is taken. A vote was again deferred in July, and in August the pro-prosecution resolution was adopted by the state federation.

Because there is no sustained forward motion by the ranks defending themselves against the employers' offensive, the officialdom retains its hold on the unions. Although a three-year defense campaign effort has been conducted among Iowa unionists — with some success — support among rank-and-file workers is insufficient to compel and sustain action on the part of official labor bodies. Both of these factors show the relationship of forces is such that attempts to go beyond individual unionists and union officials endorsing the defense committee and writing letters for parole of Curtis — based on a careful reading and discussion of defense committee materials including those refuting the countercam-

bers generally do not attend the conventions or similar gatherings on a district level. Delegations are composed of elected officials.

The convention resolutions committee proposed to the delegates that they vote "nonconcurrence" on the Curtis parole resolutions, citing as their justification that Curtis' union, the UFCW, was not officially backing his fight.

Some officials cited other reasons for not backing the fight. Before the resolutions reached the convention floor for discussion, one asked a Curtis supporter, if Curtis was such a good unionist, what was he doing supporting "illegals"? Some officials argued that it was one thing to back Curtis before his trial, but since he was "found guilty by a jury" this meant his guilt was "proven." And, wasn't this simply a "criminal" case anyway?

Curtis supporters reminded these delegates that many frame-up cases aimed at class struggle militants over the years have involved criminal, not political charges. Kentucky coal miners remain jailed to this day on false criminal charges stemming from the 1984 strike at the Massey mines. British coal miner union leaders recently had to mount a campaign to defend them-



Militant/Brian Williams
Hector Marroquin (in dark shirt) passing out leaflets in support of Mark Curtis to workers at Swift Monfort plant in Des Moines, Iowa.

paign — will at this stage set up the defense effort for setbacks and defeats.

Convention tables Curtis resolution

Such a setback occurred at the August convention of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union.

Curtis supporters in the OCAW had mounted a campaign to win convention action on behalf of his parole. Several locals adopted resolutions proposing that the convention put the union on record for parole. Top OCAW officials had implied that they would favor convention action to back Curtis' release from prison.

Ever since the frame-up, a defense campaign has been waged in the OCAW. Many union members and officials were informed of the fight and came to solidarize with Curtis. The 1988 OCAW convention welcomed Curtis as he was preparing for his trial and about one-third of the convention delegates signed a petition condemning his frame-up.

Over these three years, many rank-and-file OCAW members educated themselves on the case, reading defense committee materials, watching the videos available on the frame-up trial, discussing the defense efforts, and in many cases, the countercampaign. Numerous oil and chemical workers endorsed the defense committee, along with a good number of OCAW officials.

But support among the ranks was not sufficient to ensure that the union officialdom would take convention action on behalf of Curtis. As in other unions, rank-and-file mem-

selves from trumped-up criminal charges of embezzlement in the aftermath of their 1984-85 strike.

Others, including some who had signed letters on parole for Curtis, said the case had become "too controversial" and that the OCAW should not be the first union to officially back parole for Curtis.

"Too controversial" was a way for these officials to defer to the pro-cop and pro-prosecution countercampaign. During the convention a top staff member made a scurrilous article backing the frame-up of Curtis available to the resolutions committee.

A detailed answer to this attack was circulated at the convention by Curtis supporters but it was clear that a great deal more support for Curtis' parole among rank-and-file OCAW members, and some forward movement by the ranks in their struggles, would have to be won before official convention action would follow. A motion to table was made by a pro-Curtis delegate and that motion was adopted.

Some officials in the OCAW now are justifying their opposition to the Curtis parole effort by referring to the "nonconcurrence" stance of the resolutions committee.

Countercampaign in rail union

Curtis supporters in the United Transportation Union report that a 29-page letter to "fellow UTU members" entitled "The case against Mark Curtis" is circulating in their union.

The UTU official who authored this tract

Continued on Page 16

Anti-immigrant attacks rise in Germany

BY GEORGE BUCHANAN

A wave of racist attacks against immigrants has broken out across Germany. This occurs at a time of massive economic dislocation in the eastern part of the country and amid calls by leaders of the major bourgeois parties for curbs on immigration.

These assaults pose big political stakes for the labor movement as the German ruling class drive against the standard of living of workers, especially those in the eastern part of the country.

The attacks on immigrants reached a peak on the weekend of September 28-29, when rightist thugs in 20 towns attacked apartment buildings where immigrants live. For nearly a week in mid-September in the eastern town of Hoyerswerda, gangs of youths supported by hundreds of jeering residents laid siege to two apartment complexes where immigrant workers resided. After the 230 residents — including Africans and Vietnamese — were bused away, jubilant rightists appeared on television proclaiming their town "foreigner-free."

Four hundred such assaults have been recorded this year, 220 in eastern Germany and 180 in the west. In some incidents immigrants' houses and cars have been stoned or burned. In others, thugs have smashed up apartment buildings and injured the occupants.

Immigrants killed

Some immigrants have been killed. A Ghanaian man died when his apartment building in Saarlouis, western Germany, was torched September 19. A Mozambican was killed March 31 when a racist gang threw him from a streetcar in the eastern city of Dresden.

There are about five million immigrants and refugees living in Germany, which has an overall population of 80 million. The immigrants have come mainly from the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and semicolonial countries from central Africa to southern Asia. In 1990 almost 400,000 ethnic Germans from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe arrived in Germany, and 150,000 more have entered the country this year.

Since the 1960s large numbers of immigrants have worked in western Germany. They are given residence permits but are denied citizenship rights, as are their children and grandchildren who are born and brought up in Germany. The former Stalinist East German regime brought 200,000 workers, mainly Vietnamese and Mozambicans, to work under labor contracts.

Leaders of Germany's major political parties, while condemning the violent attacks, have fueled anti-immigrant sentiment by calling for an end to the influx of refugees. They seek to deepen divisions within the working class, make immigrants scapegoats for the economic difficulties, and reinforce the pariah status foreign-born workers have as a result of policies practiced by both the German capitalist class and the former Stalinist regime in the east.

After the latest series of attacks Interior Minister Wolfgang Schäuble explained that "large parts of the population are concerned about the massive influx of asylum-seekers."



Berlin march against attacks. Sign reads: 'Stale German hate of foreigners: Stop it!'

He said the government would work to check the "uncontrollable flow" of foreigners.

One far-right party is campaigning against immigration with the slogan "The boat is full." Chancellor Helmut Kohl's own party, the Christian Democratic Union, advertised a public forum titled "Is the Boat Full?" Social Democratic Party (SDP) leader Björn Engholm described the level of immigration as "totally unacceptable."

East Germany isolated immigrants

The Stalinist regime in former East Germany housed immigrants in isolation from the local population. At the same time racist, right-wing currents were nurtured within the bureaucratic caste that ruled there. This shows that capitalism and the anti-working class political currents it engenders are not the only source of fascists, but that in fact the ruling stratum in the Eastern European and Soviet workers' states is a breeding ground for fascist elements.

For example, police and authorities in Hoyerswerda allowed the siege of immigrants' homes to continue for days before evacuating the victims to an army base. The interior minister in the state of Saxony, known for his former connections with the East German secret police, resigned after being accused of letting the situation in Hoyerswerda worsen. According to the Paris newspaper *Le Monde*, sections of the police in Saxony are suspected of working closely with rightist thugs.

In response to the wave of racist attacks, groups of citizens have sprung up in several German cities demanding authorities provide more protection for immigrants. Some have rallied outside immigrants' homes, physically defending them from the racist attacks.

Several hundred gathered around a home for asylum-seekers in the town of Wenden, near Cologne, linking arms to protect it against about 30 jeering rightists. Residents in Detmold began visiting immigrants' homes to offer help. As a gesture of solidarity, sponsors of a basketball team in Iserlohn announced that all foreigners would be admitted free to the team's next home game, and urged other sports clubs to do likewise.

A statement issued by novelist Gunter Grass and other writers and academics October 8 stated, "The vast majority of citizens are ashamed that people once again fear pogroms in Germany."

Few signs of economic recovery

Economic production and employment in former East Germany have plummeted since the country was unified one year ago. The region's economic output fell by 50 percent in the year following September 1989, and was expected to have fallen by fully two-thirds in the last year.

Out of a total labor force of 8.3 million in the east, there are now more than 1 million unemployed. In addition, 1.6 million are on short-time work, paid part of their wages by the government although they do not work; half a million have been forced into early retirement; and 261,000 are working temporary public jobs. Even optimistic government officials expect the unemployment figure to hit 1.5 million by the end of the year.

At least 10,000 workers a month continue to move to western Germany in search of jobs. Working people in the east are also

being hit by rent increases of 400-500 percent that took effect October 1. A *Washington Post* article described the mood in the east as "depression-like hopelessness."

Other articles in the big-business press have portrayed the situation in eastern Germany as being on the verge of great improvement. "East Germans, Nurtured by Bonn, Take Heart and Begin to Prosper," said a *New York Times* headline last month. "The medicine seems to be working," said the *London Economist*, citing a slight drop in unemployment during August.

Huge costs for Bonn

The German government has poured massive amounts of money into the east, to cover unemployment benefits, welfare payments, and new construction projects — mainly new freeways, railroads, and telephone networks. It projects spending \$83 billion for 1991 — well over a quarter of the federal budget — and a similar amount in 1992. Government-sponsored jobs — in areas such as tourism, environmental clean-up, and forestry — now account for 23 percent of all new jobs in eastern Germany.

Bonn's "costs of unification" are expected to run as high as \$1 trillion over the decade. Politicians and economists warn that what was once one of the world's strongest capitalist economies is becoming weaker. They cite the fact that the public debt now accounts for more than 5 percent of Germany's gross national product and that the country now has a trade deficit.

The large-scale construction projects in the east have provided a cushion against still greater drops in employment. These projects

New Zealand forums by SWP leader: big audiences, lively discussion

BY FRANK EVANS

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Evidence of the interest in the big events unfolding in the world was shown by the response to a visit to New Zealand by Jack Barnes, the national secretary of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party. Barnes spoke at Militant Labour Forums in Auckland attended by 75 people, and in Wellington and Christchurch where the attendance was 40 and 32 respectively.

Speaking on "The world capitalist crisis, Stalinism, and the fight for socialism," Barnes's talk provoked a lengthy discussion period at each of the meetings.

In Auckland a number of those attending were from some of the political currents in the city who came to engage in debate on several issues, including Cuba's role in the world and whether or not events in the Soviet Union represented an advance for working people.

Others attending described the increasing attacks on the social wage and democratic and union rights that working people in New Zealand face. Barnes explained this situation was not unique to New Zealand. Two unionists attending the forum are members of the Seafarers Union, currently waging a fight against attempts to crew ships with non-union labor.

At the Wellington meeting Barnes fielded questions on the state of the North American

— together with the infusion of West German funds at the time of reunification, when one West German mark was exchanged for one East mark — led to a boom in consumer spending in the east, money that was spent mainly on goods made in western Germany. This has temporarily helped sustain employment levels in the west.

Small businesses

The other growth area of the eastern economy is small businesses. But these are often short-lived. An economist for the SDP noted that "you see a lot of new banks and snack stands and video stores [in the east]. But the number of bankruptcies is very high, and many of the small businesses fail quickly." SDP leaders predicted that many of the 2.4 million jobs the government claims to have created since reunification will vanish.

The German government took over the entire nationalized economy of the east and is trying to sell it off as separate enterprises through its agency known as the Treuhand. Most of the small businesses taken over by the Treuhand — shops, cinemas, restaurants, hotels — have already been sold. The industrial sector, the backbone of the former East German economy, is "farthest from recovery," noted the *Christian Science Monitor*. Some \$7 billion worth of the larger industries have been sold, involving 500,000 jobs.

The "medicine" the buyers of these industries use is the layoff of hundreds of workers in the name of "efficiency" and "cutting costs." When and if all the sales are completed, the Treuhand is expected to have fired a majority of the 3 million workers employed at the enterprises it is unloading.

Treuhand executives are visiting Japan and the United States in an attempt to find buyers for the bulk of the remaining industries. So far no Japanese capitalists have shown interest. Only eight sales have been made to U.S. firms, mostly to companies that already have subsidiaries in western Germany.

A major problem confronting capitalists who wish to profit by buying up industries in eastern Germany is the struggles by working people there for steadily higher wages through strikes and other actions. While the average wage of workers in the east at the end of 1990 stood at 37 percent of wage levels in the west, by mid-1991 this figure had risen to between 40-50 percent. Unions in former West Germany won an agreement by the bosses that projected a gradual equalization of salaries between east and west. In the metal industry, for example, it was to be achieved by 1994.

"We are still far away from capitalism," said Treuhand president Birgit Breuel. She complained of the difficulties of the task "because the eastern people expected a western standard of living overnight."

labor movement and the rightist attacks on abortion rights in Wichita.

Most people, however, wanted to discuss the broad historical questions posed by the attempted coup and its defeat in the Soviet Union.

In Christchurch, many of those who attended were young people who had heard of the forum at literature tables featuring Pathfinder books and the *Militant* on the university campus. A number of meat packers, along with an official from the New Zealand Meat Workers Union, also came to hear Barnes.

Barnes's tour stop in Christchurch included appearing on the local television channel and radio. Interviews with him appeared in both daily newspapers. After the interview with the *Star*, the journalist bought a subscription to the *Militant*.

The ongoing interest around the political questions that Barnes raised was shown in a phone call to the Pathfinder Press bookstore in Wellington. The caller had read Barnes's comments in one of the Christchurch papers. Previously unaware of the Militant Labour Forums and the bookshop, he promised to check out both in the near future, to discuss the ideas that had deeply interested him.

Joan Phillips and Brigid Rotherham also contributed to this report.



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Officials lead retreat of union in face of rail bosses' offensive

Report from Hawaii convention of United Transportation Union

BY NELS J'ANTHONY
AND JOE SWANSON

HONOLULU — Delegates to the United Transportation Union's (UTU) sixth convention met here September 9-20. According to the union's August *UTU News* the meeting was held at the Hilton Hawaiian Hotel because it is 100 percent union and U.S.-owned.

The UTU organizes close to 110,000 rail workers — conductors, yard and road brakemen, and engineers — and bus drivers in the United States and Canada.

On the first day of the convention UTU president Fred Hardin was voted out of office after 12 years. Tom DuBose, who had been elected assistant president in 1987 defeated Hardin for the union's top post.

Delegate Brian Lewis, a yard brakeman on the Union Pacific Railroad from UTU Local 1730 in Richmond, California, said the rank-and-file membership has "paid for the devousness" of the last six years and with the election of DuBose there is a chance to get some "unity" in the union. "Unity" was the central theme of the speeches of the UTU officials to the convention. Lewis acknowledged that there are no fundamental policy differences between DuBose and Hardin in leading the UTU.

Hardin is the third incumbent president defeated at recent international conventions of railworkers' unions. Robert Scardelletti defeated Richard Kilroy at the July meeting of the Transportation Communication Union (TCU). The TCU organizes clerical and rail car repair workers. In August, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (BLE) president Larry McFather lost his post to Ron McLaughlin. A recall campaign was mounted this past summer against Mac Fleming, international president of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees (BMWE), the union that organizes track repair workers. Less than 10 percent of the BMWE locals seconded the campaign.

Articles in the big-business media portray these votes as rank-and-file rail unionists sweeping in new "leaders." A September 2 *New York Times* piece, entitled "Unions at a Loss to Reverse Falling Fortunes of Workers," argues that rank-and-file members are challenging the established leadership and that the presidents of two transportation unions went down to defeat because of their role in settling the April 17 one-day railroad strike. At that time the officials ordered the union membership back to work after Congress declared the walkout illegal.

The fact is that rank-and-file union mem-

bers were not part of any wide discussions or any movement for the election of these posts. Rail worker unions had elected their delegates many months before the national strike. The recall campaign in the BMWE was mainly organized by a few local and middle-level officials following the April strike.

A small number of rail unionists did organize some discussions, meetings, and rallies in a few areas of the country leading up to the strike, demanding an end to concessions to the rail bosses around wages and on-the-job conditions. This was the most visible expression of the determination of rail workers to wage a fight. This kind of pressure, combined with workers' experiences on the job since a concession contract was imposed in 1985, was one factor in the top union officials decision to call a nationwide strike.

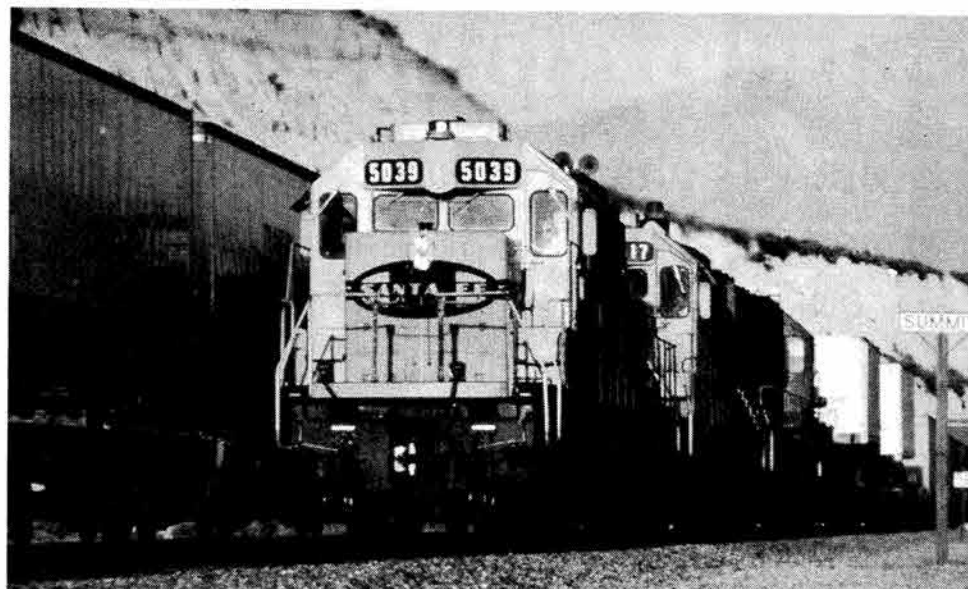
More importantly, the employers' offensive has put the officials in a tight spot. Rather than organizing even the pretense of a real fight, the officials hoped the job action would encourage the rail bosses to back off, if only a little.

Writing on the outcome of the walkout, Gus Welty, who has a monthly column in the rail industry magazine *Railway Age*, says it has been a long time since the railroads and unions went to the "mat." He points to the 1982 nationwide BLE strike, which lasted four days before things got back to "normal" after Congressional action. In the 1991 strike, Welty writes, "the speed of Congressional action was mind-blowing."

But for rail union members, who have been the target of bipartisan Congressional legislation to end rail strikes since World War II, it was not "mind-blowing" at all.

Congressional legislation last spring included establishing a three-person "special board" to settle matters in dispute between the union and the companies. The board issued its report July 18 and said it would take effect July 29 at 12:01 a.m. Instead of organizing any actions against their "friends" in Congress or the rail bosses between April 17 and July 29, union officials simply submitted some 40 requests "for modification changes" to the January 15 report of Presidential Emergency Board (PEB) 219. The PEB backed most company concession demands. Welty points out in the August issue of *Railway Age*, that the special board denied each union request.

In his August "Lines on Labor" column, under the title, "Will management's PEB 219 victory prove to be Pyrrhic?" Welty says the



Rail owners' offensive has increased safety hazards, reduced train crews, weakened union organization, and forced a decline in rail workers' standard of living.

"industrial peace" touted in some quarters may prove elusive. He reports that many rail workers are angry over the settlement and adds that "for all concerned, including the nation as a whole, it had better not turn out to be a Pyrrhic victory."

Price paid by unionists

The "victory" for the rail owners includes UTU and BLE members paying more for health insurance, work rule changes that allow over-the-road crews to do more of the industrial and yard switching, and a substantial increase in the mileage that crews must travel to receive a day's pay.

For BMWE track repair workers, rail owners now have the authority to set new workplaces that put them hundreds of miles away from their homes and where limited facilities for meals and lodging are available; new starting times that have a seven-hour span, an increase from two hours; and eliminating the historic Monday-thru-Friday workweek to start the workweek on weekends.

For the TCU clerical workers, wages will be determined by a "jobs evaluation system" and the rail owners will have the authority under a national salary plan to put in place a wage rate with 15 grades that bring the rates in line with workers "outside the industry."

New concession demands

The ink was barely dry on the "special board" ruling of July 18 when the rail bosses called in the UTU officialdom to demand new concessions. Railroads such as the Burlington Northern, Norfolk and Southern, Santa Fe, Union Pacific, and others want further "crew consist" agreements to run more trains with two-person crews that would allow more stops to pick up and set out cars. The length of trains would be even longer than under the present contract.

Union Pacific announced in July it would eliminate up to 1,600 workers on train crews. In August Burlington Northern and the UTU tentatively agreed to reduce the size of train crews. This brings home the fact that the more concessions given the bolder the employers become.

As the rail union officialdom continues its course of collaboration with the rail bosses, safety and working conditions worsen.

Almost every month the *UTU News* prints an article announcing that one or more UTU or BLE member is killed on the job. Engineers, conductors, and brakemen have been killed on the Union Pacific, Burlington Northern, Norfolk and Southern, and Southern Pacific in Texas, Montana, Indiana, and Colorado. Workers died from being run over, from head-on and rear-end collisions, and derailments.

Rail bosses and the government try to blame rail workers for these so-called accidents and use safety as a way to attack worker's rights. The July 1991 *UTU News* points out that the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled that random drug testing of railroad workers in safety-sensitive positions does not violate the Fourth Amendment's prohibition against unreasonable searches. This is a clear assault on the right to privacy.

One cause of the accidents are changes in training procedures. Historically, training to become an engineer included working a number of years as an assistant engineer — called a "fireman" — with an engineer with many years experience. Today, rail owners put workers through a few months of classroom training on train handling simulators and a few months more of on-the-job training with a qualified engineer. They often are then told to run a ten-thousand-ton train by themselves.

Another way the employers erode safety in their drive for profits is by leaving over-the-road train crews stranded for hours on sidings after their 12 hours of work. Rail workers who operate the trains are on call 24 hours. The Hours of Service Act (HSA) requires 10 hours of rest before working another shift after a rail worker has been on duty for 12 hours. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has interpreted the HSA to mean that time waiting for return transportation to be relieved of duty is "limbo time," time that is neither on- nor off-duty.

Death on the job

These conditions lead to injuries and deaths on the job. Recently on the Santa Fe, a company official explained to some UTU and BLE workers that there were 50 accidents in 1990 on the Santa Fe Railroad in California. Four workers died in these incidents.

Rail workers report on the Chicago Northwestern that when a worker injured on the job files a personal injury report, he or she must then meet with company officials, who attempt to intimidate the worker into withdrawing the report. If the company does not "convince" the employee, the worker is then put into the PAL program. PAL stands for "Personal Attention List," which means a "company pal" will follow the worker around at work. This includes the use of infrared binoculars at night to catch a worker breaking some company rule which could lead to being fired.

The September/October 1990 issue of the
Continued on Page 15

800 Boston school bus drivers strike

BY RUSSELL DAVIS

BOSTON — Almost 800 Boston school bus drivers went on strike here September 23. They are members of United Steelworkers Local 8751, which is made up of the drivers and 250 school bus monitors.

The drivers walked out in the face of concession demands by their employer, In-City Boston Management (ICBM), which runs Boston's school bus system under a \$30 million contract with the city.

The city government, ICBM, and the big-business media have waged a vicious campaign against the drivers. They have portrayed them as a greedy group of workers who make \$13 an hour, want a 14 percent raise, and are willing to jeopardize the safety and education of students, especially the handicapped, to get it.

The drivers on the picketline and at the union hall paint a far different picture. They point out that, while drivers make from \$10 to over \$13 an hour, most only work 28 hours a week. They are not paid for the time between their morning and afternoon routes, three months of school vacations, or snow days. As a result many make between \$12,000 and \$15,000 annually. Many drivers are themselves parents of school-age children. The majority are Black or Hispanic.

The union demanded a two-year contract with a 7 percent raise each year to make up in part for cuts in hours the company began imposing last year. ICBM refused any pay raise and offered a 10-month contract that would expire at the start of summer vacation, reducing the union's ability to bargain.

As part of the "strike contingency plan" regular city buses have been used to transport students, a move the union points out is a violation of federal law. About 80 percent of students have been going to school each day.

Workers on the picketline seem determined to fight the assault by the city government and the company. One driver pointed out that this is the third strike in the past few years and that everything they have now they had to fight for.

Another worker pointed with pride to the role drivers played in the battle to desegregate Boston's schools in the 1970s. Each morning, he said, drivers were issued flak jackets to protect them from the racist mobs armed with bricks and baseball bats used to attack buses full of children. One of the leaders of the racist mobs was Raymond Flynn, now mayor of Boston.

The state AFL-CIO adjourned its convention October 3 to rally in support of the drivers.

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Land dispute divides Nicaraguan rulers

Capitalists charge that president moves too slowly against revolution's legacy

BY SETH GALINSKY

Divisions are widening within the ruling coalition of Nicaraguan president Violeta Chamorro, which defeated the Sandinista National Liberation Front at the polls a year and a half ago.

Conflicts between Chamorro and the National Opposition Union (UNO), the uneasy alliance of 14 parties that promoted her successful electoral bid last year, come in the midst of a deep economic crisis.

On September 12, President Chamorro vetoed legislation approved with the vote of all 52 deputies from UNO. The proposed laws would invalidate land and housing titles granted by the FSLN after it lost the February 1990 elections and prior to Chamorro taking office in April 1990.

UNO had pushed the legislation through on August 23, over the bitter opposition of Sandinista deputies who walked out of the National Assembly. The assembly has 30 days to consider overriding the veto.

The massive distribution of land and housing titles, cars, and money by the FSLN government after the election loss is popularly known by both Sandinista supporters and anti-FSLNers alike as the "piñata." A piñata is a game where small children take turns trying to break open a candy and gift-filled globe, hung from a ceiling.

Former Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega defended his government's actions in a May interview with *Envío*, a monthly magazine published in Managua.

"We gave away as many houses as we could. We gave vehicles to the cooperatives, to the transport workers, to our functionaries, to the popular sectors," Ortega said. "We gave all the money we could to the families of war casualties and veterans."

"We gave away everything we could, and in that way protected an important sector of the population and an important sector of the Sandinista membership."

Through the measures thousands of working-class families received small plots of land

or title to their homes. Many Sandinista officials, though, received large amounts of land, automobiles, and monies from the piñata.

UNO seeks to reverse revolution's gains

The UNO coalition helped make the giveaway into a scandal, concentrating on the haul made by top members of the FSLN. They hoped to force a more rapid pace in reversing the gains made by workers and peasants during the course of the Sandinista-led revolution, which overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza in 1979. Many capitalists feel Chamorro is moving too slowly, charging that the president has formed a "co-government" with the FSLN.

These capitalists are especially concerned with obtaining the return of land that was confiscated from them as part of an extensive land-reform program during the revolution.

The confiscations benefited hundreds of thousands of landless peasants who received land and credit. Many urban dwellers received title or de facto title to homes they had been renting from real estate millionaires or the Somoza government. A substantial number of factories were also nationalized.

Undermining these conquests of working people poses a substantial challenge to the government. Chamorro aims to defend the interests of the Nicaraguan capitalist class without provoking a social explosion. To do that she still needs the aid of the FSLN, which maintains substantial support among working people. The Sandinista Front sees itself as a loyal opposition to Chamorro.

A government commission set up by Chamorro had received 6,500 claims from owners asking for the return of confiscated property. About 1,000 owners have received certificates authorizing return of properties; but as of June 1991 only 300 have been able to take possession.

"Often you go to get your property and



Militant/Ana Perero

Rally in 1990. Nicaraguan capitalists hope to push back gains won by working people.

you find a cooperative there or a group of armed men," complained former landowner Arjes Sequiera to the *Christian Science Monitor*. "Or if you do get it, the next day people come and try to take it over."

Violence in the countryside

Violent fights over land have continued in the countryside. Even with the revolutionary agrarian reform, at the time of the 1990 elections some 60,000 peasant families were still landless. The demand for land has increased with the return to civilian life of former members of the U.S.-backed and financed contra forces, mostly of peasant origin, and reductions in the size of the Nicaraguan army. In the first five months of 1991, 50 FSLN supporters and 60 former contras were killed in land disputes.

The land issue has been used by some contra leaders to mobilize former soldiers of the mercenary army as part of a political movement that seeks to push the government to the right. Many UNO deputies support this strategy. Other former contra leaders have been given posts in the government.

One sign of the depth of the divisions is the emergence of a small group of 500-1,000 contras who have once again taken up arms. Known as "re-contras" they attacked a police station in Quilali in northern Nicaragua July 26. They are demanding the breakup of the army; a general purging of the police; the removal of Antonio Lacayo, Chamorro's chief minister; and the ouster of Humberto Ortega, head of the army since 1979. Ortega remains as army chief as part of agreements reached last year between the FSLN and Chamorro to ensure a "peaceful transition" to the new government.

Lacayo complained to the press in September that the U.S. government "has been reticent" to aid the Nicaraguan government in disarming the re-contras.

FSLN proposes more ex-contra police

The FSLN has proposed defusing the conflicts by integrating more former contras into the police force.

Both the FSLN and the Chamorro forces have called for disarming Sandinista supporters and former contras to bring "stability" to the countryside. *Barricada*, a daily paper run by the FSLN, has given prominent play to former contras who back the call for stability and disarmament.

In a further concession, FSLN-led unions agreed to accept the return of state-owned coffee farms and cotton plantations to private owners as long as union rights and workers' "participation" are guaranteed.

General Ortega, in an interview with the pro-FSLN daily *El Nuevo Diario*, pledged continued army backing for the Chamorro regime. The army is the "main pillar" of the regime running the government, Ortega said, "regardless of what kind of governments may follow — center, left-wing, or right-wing."

According to Ortega, the Nicaraguan army is now the smallest in Central America, with 21,000 troops, down from 75,000. This reduction, he said, will allow the pay of professional soldiers to be substantially increased.

While Washington backed Chamorro's election, it has been slow in providing substantial economic aid.

In early September the Chamorro regime said it would pay \$320 million in back debt owed to the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IAD). The funds for the payment came from donations and loans by more than 15 countries including the United States. But this clears the way for access to new loans of only \$440 million from the World Bank, IAD, and the International Monetary Fund.

On September 25, Washington "forgave" \$259.5 million of Nicaragua's debt. This still leaves the country with a foreign debt of about \$9 billion, most of it accumulated during the Somoza era.

Socialists run oil worker for Houston mayor

BY JERRY FREIWIRTH

HOUSTON — The Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Houston, Willie Mae Reid, filed nomination petitions containing more than 2,300 signatures September 19, well over the 1,400 required to appear on the ballot.

Her filing gathered considerable media attention. An article in the *Houston Chronicle* began: "The 'other' candidate in the Houston mayor's race is a socialist refinery worker who says creating jobs for the working class is the No. 1 issue — not crime."

"Willie Mae Reid, 52, was the only candidate to file on the Nov. 5 ballot Monday besides the better known contenders: incumbent Kathy Whitmire, attorney and state lawmaker Sylvester Turner and real estate developer Bob Lanier.

"While the others paid \$1,250 fees, Reid chose to present the signatures of more than 2,000 voters on a candidacy petition."

Reid's campaign was also covered on the major radio stations and campus newspapers. The *Houston Post*, the other major daily, scheduled an interview with Reid and requests for speaking engagements are pouring into her campaign headquarters.

At the time of filing her petitions, Reid explained that the signatures had been collected in half the time originally expected. "That's because the response to the Socialist Workers campaign, to a worker running for mayor, was so positive. Everywhere we went — shopping centers, parks, factories, and college campuses — campaign volunteers found widespread willingness to place a socialist worker on the ballot and a desire to talk about the issues being raised in this campaign."

Despite the supposed economic recovery, layoffs have begun to hit hard in Houston. Major oil and electronics companies have slashed jobs. Tottering Continental Airlines, whose headquarters is in Houston, just announced a new round of drastic job cuts. Reid has called for the union movement to mount a campaign for a shorter workweek with no cut in pay as the most effective way to fight for jobs for all.

Reid has campaigned to defend and extend affirmative action. "As long as the bosses can deny jobs to some workers because we are Black, Chicano, Asian-American, foreign-born or female, they can keep us divided and weaken our ability to protect jobs, wages, and working conditions for all workers," she explains.

Crime and big business

The big-business media of Houston has been filled in recent weeks with stories about a crime "epidemic." The other three candidates for mayor have made increased spending for police their central campaign plank. Reid and her supporters take on this question as they campaign throughout the city. Crime is quite real in Houston, Reid explains, but most of it is connected to and fostered by organized crime, which is just one component of big-business operations in Houston. The Houston police are no solution to this problem; in fact, they are an integral part of the problem, her cam-

paign says. "More police will only mean more beatings and more shootings of working-class youth. That's the last thing we need."

Willie Mae Reid and her running mate, Steve Warren, Socialist Workers candidate for city controller, made available to the press a fact sheet outlining a significant attack on their right to campaign. A campaign volunteer petitioning to place Reid on the ballot was cited by the police for "distribution of commercial handbills" and "blocking" a city sidewalk with a table.

The fact sheet explains that this attack on free speech by the police, if allowed to stand, threatens the rights of all, not only those of the Socialist Workers campaign.

The local chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union has agreed to provide legal representation. Messages of protest can be sent to: Police Chief Elizabeth Watson, 61 Riesner St., Houston, TX, 77002; send copies to the Socialist Workers campaign, 4806 Alameda, Houston, TX 77004.



Militant/Dave Wulp

Willie Mae Reid, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Houston.

Imperialist powers discuss Soviet crisis

BY GREG McCARTAN

The economic and political crisis in the Soviet Union dominated the Group of Seven meeting held in Bangkok, Thailand, October 13.

Representatives of the seven biggest imperialist powers heard Soviet officials explain they could not meet \$5 billion in foreign debt obligations by the end of the year. Also, they said, the country's gold reserves stand at \$3 billion, one-fifth of what Washington and others had estimated.

Described as "extraordinary" in the big-business media, the meeting reflected the fact that, rather than a boon, the crisis of the Stalinist regime in Moscow is becoming an economic burden for imperialism.

The seven powers — Britain, Canada, Germany, France, Italy, Japan, and the United States — said they came to agreement on some form of debt relief and discussed other possible short-term aid.

One example of how the Soviet crisis has sharpened conflicts between the major imperialist governments is a blunt statement prior to the Group of Seven meeting by European Community officials. They told the governments of Canada, Japan, and the United States to contribute more funds to a \$7 billion Soviet food aid package. "Burden sharing is important," said the EC's top finance official, Henning Christophersen.

A dispute has also erupted over Soviet membership in the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The German government has pressed for admitting the Soviets because banks in that country have extended massive loans to Moscow. They hope new loans from the IMF will be used to pay off the German credits. Washington, on the other hand, backed only "associate" membership, making only technical assistance available to Moscow through the IMF.

Washington won out, and the Soviets were admitted with special association status October 5. Under the agreement IMF officials will "advise" the Soviets on combating high inflation, setting up a private banking system, and gathering economic data.

IMF and World Bank officials advising Moscow say the government should privatize industry and farms, cut an estimated 300-billion-ruble budget deficit in order to curb

inflation, and lift most price controls.

The officials admit, though, that the explosive social protests engendered by such moves would prevent taking many steps in that direction.

Economic treaty

The Bangkok meeting came as the heads of various Soviet republics and Moscow tried to fashion a new union preserving the privileged social position and economic well-being of the bureaucratic stratum that runs the country while trying to keep independent action by working people in check. Putting together such a new setup out of the old Soviet Union is proving a tall order, because no wing of the bureaucracy has a solution to the downward economic spiral. Instead they compete for control of the largest share of the wealth produced by working people.

The regime dominated by Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin, president of the Russian republic, are pressing the republics to adopt an economic treaty and refurbish the police apparatus in order to quell social protests.

Top officials of most republics announced October 11 they would sign such a pact, but many — including in Russia — are dragging their feet to try to get the best bargain in the deal. Some in less powerful republics fear the treaty might give Russia a dominant position in a new union.

Yeltsin's own cabinet and parliament have been debating how much benefit the treaty would bring the bureaucratic rulers situated in Russia. Their Russian chauvinism has not calmed the worries of their counterparts in other republics.

Grigory Yavlinsky, deputy chairman of the Soviet economic management committee, told the Russian parliament not to worry because the republic's size and economic resources would insure it would always dominate the rest of the country.

Russian state secretary Gennadi Burbulis warned parliament that the republic is the rightful successor to the central regime in Moscow and should be the negotiator of any new agreements. One legislator said other republics were pursuing "banditry" and "milking" Russia.

One example of the frictions and economic warfare between the republics is the Ukraine's decision to stop sending coal to Russia. Ukrainian officials claim supplies might run short for what is needed in that republic. In retaliation the Russian government stopped sending the Ukraine the wooden studs miners need underground to expand the mines.

Protests and military battles erupted in the Georgian republic in late September. Rebel national guardsmen, siding with mass protests, clashed with units loyal to President Zviad Gamsakhurdia.

Elected by a big majority last spring by posing as a champion of Georgian national rights, Gamsakhurdia quickly turned his fire against the population. He declared only those who could trace their ancestry in Georgia back two centuries would be eligible for

citizenship.

After the attempted coup in the Kremlin last August, a series of demonstrations broke out in Georgia. Georgian police opened fire on demonstrators and the government, fearing more widespread protests, indefinitely postponed university terms.

Gamsakhurdia imposed a state of emergency September 25 but admitted he could do little to stop the demonstrations calling for an end to his authoritarian rule.

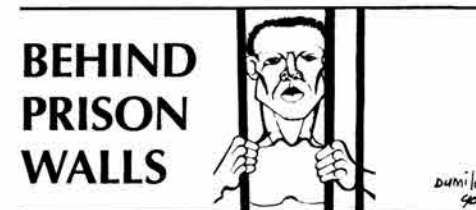
In the republic of Tadzhikistan, thousands have set up camp in the capital, demanding the resignation of the parliament. Protests following the coup forced out President Kakhhar Makhamov because of his delay in condemning the attempted takeover.

But the Stalinist government there remained largely intact and ousted the new president on September 23.

Living conditions deteriorate at Anamosa prison in Iowa

BY MARK CURTIS

ANAMOSA — I've been back at the Iowa Men's Reformatory in Anamosa for several months now. I previously spent a year and a half here before being sent to the John Bennett Correctional Center in Fort Madison, Iowa. Since coming back to Anamosa, I couldn't



help but notice some of the changes that have taken place here at Iowa's largest prison.

The prison population continues to grow, currently exceeding 1,300 inmates. The majority live in overcrowded conditions with two men living in cells designed for one.

Iowa is no different from other state and federal prisons as far as overcrowding goes.

Even though Blacks make up a small fraction of Iowa's population, nearly half the prisoners are Black. I've also noticed a big increase in the number of prisoners who are Native American, Latino, and Asian.

At a recent meeting of the Iowa Board of Corrections, Warden John Thalacker said he is preparing to cut half a million dollars from next year's prison budget as part of helping to solve the state's fiscal crisis. The warden called his proposal a "bare bones" budget and said that the cuts would come from meals, equipment, and repair materials.

As the prison population increases, living conditions here deteriorate. In response to overcrowding at the prison, the administration implemented a policy placing all new prisoners in an "on-call" status for at least 30 days. These inmates are locked in their cells most of the time and not allowed to work. Prisoners must find a prison job in order to get out of this restrictive setup.

But the jobs here are scarce and hard to find. Many prisoners are now working only part-time, receiving only half the pay of full-time workers.

I recently started working in the kitchen delivering food to inmates who are locked in their cells because of disciplinary reports.

Some things here haven't changed very much. The prison administration continues to narrow our elbow room when it comes to democratic rights. Almost three years ago, hundreds of supporters of democratic rights joined me in successfully fighting the prison officials' decision to prevent me from receiving a Spanish-English dictionary and other books and materials in Spanish.

However, just a few weeks ago, a friend was denied a German-English dictionary on the grounds that it was a foreign language book. Only after he protested to Department of Corrections' officials and signed up for an educational program in German was he allowed to have the book.

A friend of mine who is Native American also recently returned to the Anamosa Reformatory. When he was here before he took part in the fight to get a sweat lodge for religious worship. He is currently fighting a life sentence on murder charges. Since coming back, he has been banned from the sweat lodge by the administration who claims that the Native American religion denies this right to those who "have blood on their hands." Other Native American men here reject this argument and say that the administration has no right to make such a decision.

None of these restrictions, however, are stopping prisoners from discussing the big political issues of the day. I recently spoke with some friends about the actions taking place against women's right to choose abortion. Two of them agreed that abortion should be legal and that it must be up to the woman to decide. One of them told me that he recently argued this issue with his mother who had changed her position to that of opposing abortion rights after seeing an anti-abortion film while at work.

Discussions like these, and others about South Africa, the Soviet Union, and Cuba have increased interest in political newspapers like the *Militant*. Several guys here recently subscribed or resubscribed to the *Militant*, and are considering getting some of Pathfinder's books and pamphlets.

Sexual harassment and Thomas nomination

Continued from front page

dents for fear of losing their jobs.

An October 9 *New York Times*/CBS poll revealed that only 10 percent of women sexually harassed by supervisors reported the incident at the time.

When complaints are filed it is rare that anything is done about them. The EEOC filed suit in only 50 of 5,694 sexual harassment complaints it received in 1990.

As the hearings drew to a close, Thomas's backers attempted to discredit Hill's integrity. Sen. Orrin Hatch accused Hill of concocting her story with details borrowed from a sexual harassment case in federal court and from *The Exorcist*, a novel about satanic possession.

Hatch said that Hill's accusations were "crude" and "outrageous" and that she was in collusion with Thomas's opponents who cooked up a scheme to discredit him. Sen. Arlen Specter accused Hill of perjury.

Four witnesses, though, including some former associates of Hill's at the EEOC, testified that she had told them of the sexual harassment long before Thomas was nominated to the Supreme Court. Hill had explained in 1987 that harassment by Thomas was the reason she quit the EEOC, said Joel Paul, one of the witnesses.

From the beginning of the hearings, Thomas strongly objected to discussing in public the accusations of sexual harassment on the job. He said he had been "drawn and dragged" into a national forum to debate charges that "should have been discussed in a confidential way." Thomas directed his fire at the Senate for deciding to hold the hearings. "You are ruining the country," he told the Judiciary Committee October 11.

This is consistent with the rest of Thomas's right-wing views. As head of the EEOC Thomas had campaigned against affirmative action. In the past the Supreme Court nominee had expressed criticisms of the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court case, a ruling which provided the legal basis for desegregation. He had also taken a stance in



Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas with U.S. president George Bush

favor of requiring prayer in public schools, and had praised an article casting abortion as immoral. Thomas is a firm supporter of the death penalty.

Many in the ruling class share Thomas's view that the public debate on sexual harassment, which has gripped working people's attention, is against their interests.

"It has been a good week for Washington's reputation assassins," said an October 9 *Wall Street Journal* editorial. "Clarence Thomas, on the doorstep of the Supreme Court, has been pulled down by a Washington establishment determined to make him understand that conservatism in that town carries a cost," it continued.

Thomas and his supporters also sought to portray the accusations against him as racist. Hill's charges played "into the most bigoted, racist stereotypes that any Black man will face," Thomas said. His supporters have used the hype around his background and the fact that he is Black to help him gain wider legitimacy in bourgeois public opinion.

The October 9 *Wall Street Journal* editorial

accused Thomas's opponents of "trying to defeat a distinguished black American from sitting on the Supreme Court."

The Bush administration has stood firmly behind Thomas.

"Judge Thomas has once again demonstrated the qualities of determination, sensitivity and leadership that make him an outstanding nominee for the Supreme Court," declared a White House statement October 13.

In fact, both Democratic and Republican politicians attempted initially to shove Hill's accusations under the rug. Opponents and supporters of Thomas in the Judiciary Committee refused to even hint at Hill's charges until they were made public. The task proved beyond their reach.

The debate on sexual harassment that erupted around Thomas's nomination shows that the fight for women's rights is alive. The Democratic and Republican party politicians, who tried to sweep this issue under the rug, have found that tens of millions don't want women's rights to be pushed back.

Palestinian union details repression

Information in this article is based on a report by the General Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU) submitted in August to a conference of the nongovernmental organizations at the United Nations.

It was sent in a letter to the *Militant* by Sami Samaan, a GFTU leader from Ramallah, West Bank. The GFTU, based in Nablus, organizes about 120,000 Palestinian workers, mostly in the West Bank.

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

"We would like to remind our friends that we are struggling against the most fierce and dangerous form of colonialism," says the GFTU report. "Its strategic aim is to uproot us from our beloved national homeland."

Some 1.7 million Palestinians live in the West Bank and Gaza strip, territories seized by Israel in the 1967 war.

The number of Palestinian workers from the West Bank and Gaza with jobs in Israel grew from about 5,000 in 1968 to more than 180,000 in 1990. These workers were used as a cheap labor force for Israeli capitalists.

The union's document details the severe blows dealt to Palestinians living in these

areas during the U.S.-led war against Iraq.

"A total curfew was imposed on all occupied Palestine for forty days" during the war, the GFTU report says, "thus our workers lost their source of living." Most of the 120,000 workers from the West Bank, who used to work in Israel before the war, were prohibited from going to their jobs. While some have regained employment since the war ended last spring, attacks on the Palestinian workers have continued.

Unemployment among the Palestinian labor force stands at 59 percent according to the report.

Since the beginning of the Palestinian revolt known as the *intifada* in 1987, many in the Israeli ruling class have been calling for replacing Palestinians with immigrant workers. The recent influx of Soviet Jews into Israel opened the possibility of reversing the trend of reliance on Palestinian labor.

Workers who lost their jobs in Israel cannot find new jobs in the occupied territories because "numerous military orders and a very strict taxation policy" have forced many Palestinian-owned businesses to close down.

The few Palestinians who have kept their



Palestinians in the occupied territories continue to face harassment and arrest by Israeli soldiers. Active unionists have recently been deported or assassinated.

jobs in Israel face severe discrimination from "the Israeli employers and the Histadrut," the report says. Histadrut, the only trade union federation in Israel, is also one of the country's largest employers.

These workers get the hardest jobs and are paid the lowest wages. In addition, 32 to 40 percent of their slim income is withheld by the government for various taxes.

While most Israeli citizens pay a similar percentage in taxes, Palestinian workers are not entitled to unemployment insurance, vacation pay, or retirement benefits.

Individuals in the GFTU are "exposed to harassment like administrative arrests and jailing for long terms," the report says. Sami Samaan spent eight years in Israeli jails for union activities. Many active unionists have been recently deported or assassinated.

Palestinians in the occupied territories are subjected to harassment and arrests under a complicated system of identity cards.

According to the GFTU report, 53 percent of the land in the West Bank, and 42 percent in Gaza, has been confiscated by Israeli authorities since 1967.

"Our peasants are prohibited from planting trees on their land without permission from the military governor," the report continues. These permits are most often denied. Israeli authorities control water resources as well. Meters are installed on water pumps which are checked regularly. "They give each water meter one hour weekly... which leads to the destruction of thousands of acres of agricultural land," report the Palestinian unionists.

Palestinian workers have no choice but to resist the occupation. "We insist on an independent Palestinian state," the report concludes.

Party-Building Fund rallies to boost drive

BY ESTELLE DeBATES

Supporters in several cities are moving closer to being on schedule in the \$150,000 Socialist Workers 1991 Party-Building Fund drive. The funds are needed now to help finance the activities carried out by the communist movement. The Party-Building Fund rallies in more than a dozen cities over the next two weekends provide a target date for supporters in each area to get on schedule, closing the 13 percent lag in the drive. While contributions rose slightly this week they are far from what is needed to be current by early November.

Fund contributors in each city are encouraged to figure out how they can be a part of this ambitious goal: \$15,400 needs

to be sent to the fund in each of the next three weeks to be on schedule by November 1. This is an average weekly increase of \$3,400 over the amount received last week.

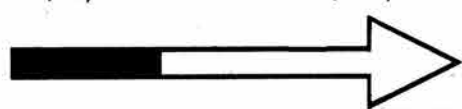
Supporters in Greensboro took a big step forward this week, providing an example as to what can be done around the country. Marty Boyers, the local fund director, reports a campaign to collect all outstanding pledges is well under way, and that supporters there decided to raise their goal. They are also looking to the opportunities to win new contributors by building for a fund rally on October 26. A mailing for the meeting included a cover letter explaining what the fund is used for and a promotion for the *New Internationalist* magazine. (Next week's chart will reflect new figures for cities that have decided to raise their goals.)

Contributions to the fund come from supporters in many cities that are not listed on the chart. The fund has received two contributions from a retired railworker in Hutchinson, Kansas. "I have always been active in union activities," he writes. "I can't do much any more... but I pass the *Militant* around and talk up the need for a change." Supporters in San Diego decided to join the scoreboard this week, adopting a goal of \$2,000.

Getting revolutionary literature into the hands of fighters around the world today is a central purpose of the fund and an essential contribution to building the communist movement worldwide. The books and pamphlets produced by Pathfinder Press provide

1991 Party-Building Fund

Collected: **\$50,955.86** Goal: **\$150,000**



the history of working-class struggle, including the writings and speeches of its leaders.

The response to Pathfinder's latest publication, *How Far We Slaves Have Come!*, indicates the hunger workers and youth have for such literature. Pathfinder editorial director Steve Clark, reports that the staff at Pathfinder is busy with several projects that will soon be added to the working-class arsenal of books and pamphlets.

Next spring, the first volume of the collected works of Malcolm X will be published. It will feature speeches from February 1965, the last month of Malcolm's life.

Pathfinder has ambitious plans to expand the publications it offers in the Spanish language.

For a few years now, the publisher has made works by Malcolm X available in a Spanish pamphlet *Habla Malcolm X* (Mal-

colm X Speaks). A new edition, in book form with expanded contents, is now in the works.

Work is also under way to publish a new edition, also as a book, of Ernesto Che Guevara's *Socialism and Man in Cuba*. This edition will include an article by Che on the budgetary finance system and a 1964 speech to trade unionists on voluntary labor.

Clark reports that Pathfinder will also publish in Spanish Leon Trotsky's *The Revolution Betrayed*, which has been out of print for the past decade. The work is a study of the Soviet Union's bureaucratic degeneration under Joseph Stalin and describes the roots of the social and political crisis shaking the Soviet Union today.

Contributions to the Party-Building Fund help get these kinds of materials into the hands of revolutionary-minded workers and youth around the world. Send your contributions in today to help get the drive on schedule and over the top by December 15!

Report shows deep U.S. health crisis

BY DEREK BRACEY

Millions of children's ability to study and learn in school is impaired by their lack of adequate health care. Across the United States, children have their access to health care denied by poverty.

Nearly one fourth of pregnant women in the United States and almost 40 percent of Black women get no prenatal care in the first three months of pregnancy. These figures by the Children's Defense Fund reveal a situation that results in serious health and educational complications for the very young.

In addition to infant mortality, a result of this lack of health care is a high incidence of low birth-weight babies. The United States ranks 26th in the world, behind countries like Bulgaria, in the percentage of babies weighing less than 5.5 pounds.

Nearly 7 percent of all U.S. children, and 13 percent of Black children, are born underweight. These low-weight babies are much more likely to develop learning problems, the study says.

Many other children have learning problems not caused by prenatal damage but by conditions occurring in early childhood, like lead poisoning or untreated ear infections.

Professor Lucile Newman of Brown University says that approximately 12 percent of U.S. children suffer from problems that hamper learning by the time they are ready to start school.

Newman estimates that 14 million children are affected by lead poisoning, which lowers intelligence, causes speech and hearing problems, and behavior disorders. Lead is commonly found in poor neighborhoods where older dwellings are more likely to have lead paint.

The Children's Defense Fund points out that Medicaid does not provide enough money for preventive care. While a basic baby checkup costs a pediatrician \$35, most Medicaid programs only reimburse \$15.

The National Center on Health Statistics states that 12 percent of U.S. children have no routine medical care.

— CALENDAR —

ALABAMA

Birmingham

Photo Show of the Pathfinder Mural. In cooperation with Operation New Birmingham's October Artwalk. Video and live music. Fri., Oct. 18, 6:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m. 111 21st St. S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Cuba at a Crossroads. Speaker: José Antonio Arbesú, Chief of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C. Thurs., Nov. 14. World Affairs Council, 312 Sutter St. Reception, 5 p.m.; program, 5:45 p.m. Donation: \$6 for members, \$9 for non-members. Sat., Nov. 16. First Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin St. 7 p.m. Donation: \$5-\$10 sliding scale. Sponsor: Global Exchange. Co-sponsors: World Affairs Council, Commonwealth Club of California; Hands Off Cuba Coalition, Venceremos Brigade.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Ansar. A play about one man's struggle to survive the conditions of a military detention camp in the Israeli Negev desert. Wed. and Thurs., Oct. 23, 24, 8 p.m. The Triplex Theater 2, Borough of Manhattan Community College, 199 Chambers St. Tickets: \$20, \$10 (student/low income).

Socialist Workers 1991 Party-Building Fund

Area	Goal	Paid	% of Total
Greensboro	2,100	1,135	54%
New York	16,300	8,391	52%
Houston	4,800	2,305	48%
San Francisco	10,000	4,469	45%
Detroit	8,500	3,773	44%
Atlanta	5,500	2,325	42%
Omaha	3,000	1,265	42%
Pittsburgh	5,500	2,265	41%
Boston	4,100	1,605	39%
Salt Lake City	6,500	2,150	33%
Newark	9,700	3,100	32%
St. Louis	5,500	1,760	32%
Philadelphia	5,000	1,395	28%
Miami	2,400	646	27%
Birmingham	5,500	1,480	27%
Twin Cities	8,300	1,996	24%
Morgantown	2,800	645	23%
Chicago	8,000	1,657	21%
Los Angeles	15,000	2,790	19%
San Diego	2,000	340	17%
Baltimore	3,000	355	12%
Washington, D.C.	6,000	690	11%
Des Moines	3,525	400	11%
Seattle	5,000	395	8%
Cleveland	3,000	195	6%
Other U.S.	4,815	3,228	67%
International	2,130	240	11%
Total	155,970	50,955	34%
Should be		70,588	47%

I pledge: \$1000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$ Other to the Socialist Workers Party-Building Fund. Send checks or money orders to Socialist Workers 1991 Party-Building Fund, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

UN extends violation of Iraq sovereignty

BY SETH GALINSKY

A resolution before the United Nations Security Council would impose new restrictions requiring the Iraqi government to report on a range of scientific and industrial activity and provide detailed lists of machinery, chemicals, and other materials that could be used to develop weapons.

The latest move in the Security Council, at the insistence of Washington and its allies, comes on top of flagrant violations of Iraqi sovereignty by a team of UN inspectors who are investigating Iraq's attempts to develop nuclear weapons. The UN team removed documents from a building in Baghdad, including the personnel files of Iraqi scientists.

After a four-day standoff in late September, when the team was detained by Iraqi soldiers in the building's parking lot, Baghdad gave in and allowed the UN inspectors to remove the documents. The United Nations agreed to provide copies of the documentation they removed to the Iraqi government.

The council has also insisted that it has the right to use helicopters to travel anywhere in Iraq to investigate weapons sites. When Baghdad balked at allowing the unrestricted



Malnourished child in Baghdad hospital, one victim of continued embargo of country.

flights, U.S. president George Bush threatened to send in warplanes to protect the helicopters.

A July 17 report by Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, executive delegate of the secretary-

general, after a mission to Iraq, noted that the aftermath of the war against Iraq was "the untold loss of life and destruction . . . compounded by massive displacements of ill-prepared populations, by ecological disasters of

unprecedented magnitude, by the collapse of the structures that sustain life in today's human societies."

In his report, Sadruddin said that the "insidious effects" of the war and the embargo "are leading to the gradual but inexorable collapse of essential services, leading to the risk of a humanitarian crisis whose eventual dimensions would dwarf today's difficulties."

The sanctions are taking "an unfortunately harmful toll upon" the Kurdish people, the report noted. The British *Guardian* wrote September 11 that there are still an estimated 600,000 Kurds camped in the mountainous borders with Turkey and Iran.

Sadruddin recommended that some of the restrictions on Iraq be loosened to avoid a health catastrophe.

But ignoring the July report, the UN Security Council continues to insist that Iraq may not sell oil, unless it deposits all the money from the sales into a UN account, and even then most of the money would be off-limits to the Iraqis. All purchases of food, medicine, and other basic necessities would have to be approved by a Security Council committee.

In a related development, renewed fighting broke out between Kurdish guerrillas and the Iraqi army. Hundreds of casualties were reported in the first week of October after the Iraqi army launched a surprise attack on Sulaimaniya, which is under the control of Kurdish groups.

Sixty unarmed Iraqi soldiers who were captured during the fighting were shot point-blank and killed by the guerrillas. Massoud Barzani, leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party, later condemned the killings.

Thousands of Iraqi troops have surrendered to the Kurdish forces during the last week, many of whom say they fear retribution by Saddam Hussein if they go home.

The Kurds have also faced attacks at the hands of the Turkish army. Claiming they were moving against bases of the Kurdish Workers Party, a group fighting for an independent Kurdistan in southeast Turkey, the Turkish military conducted 92 raids with fighter bombers and helicopter gunships against refugee camps inside northern Iraq in August.

Neither Washington or its allies have condemned the Turkish or Iraqi military actions against the Kurds.

County sheriffs under court scrutiny

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — With the spotlight on four recent killings by Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies, a federal judge issued an injunction requiring that each month the sheriff's department provide the court with copies of all citizens' complaints of brutality by deputies.

The injunction, issued by U.S. district judge Terry Hatter, also stipulated that the sheriff's department follow its own rules on the use of "excessive" force.

A federal appeals court quickly issued a temporary restraining order blocking enforcement of the injunction until it holds a formal hearing on the issue in early December.

Meanwhile, Los Angeles County district attorney Ira Reiner said a grand jury would probe the four recent killings by deputies. He stopped short of saying he would ask for indictments. But it was unexpected that Reiner even asked the grand jury to probe the killings of two Blacks and two Latinos. The district attorney's office collaborates closely with the city police and the county sheriff's department, and has shown no inclination to prosecute killer cops.

The injunction against the sheriff's department, now on hold, stemmed from a class action suit filed by more than 70 people in Lynwood, a Los Angeles County town policed by the sheriff's department. Lynwood's population is mainly Black and Latino.

The plaintiffs charged "systematic acts of shooting, killing, brutality, terrorism, house-trashing and other acts of lawlessness" by the cops.

At the time the suit was filed, Darren Thomas, one of the plaintiffs, showed the media a photo taken after deputies kicked two of his teeth out. He said he and three members of his family were jailed for drinking beer in their front yard.

When he questioned the cops, Thomas was choked unconscious, then revived with a stun gun and brutally beaten.

Sergio Sanchez, a Lynwood factory worker, charged that deputies clubbed him from behind while he attended a wedding and then smashed his face against a curb.

Marianne English, whose 15-year-old son was killed by deputies, displayed a photo showing the bullet wounds in his back.

The suit's request for an injunction had

specified the Lynwood station. But after reviewing the evidence submitted, Judge Hatter ruled the entire sheriff's department should be enjoined.

Separately, Police Chief Daryl Gates won what may prove to be a thorny court victory. In 1986, six cops smashed into the home of Jessie Larez. They claimed they suspected Larez's son was a gang member and that a gun used in a killing might be found in the house.

The cops brutalized the entire family and trashed the house. Jessie Larez was badly beaten, suffering knee and neck injuries and a broken nose.

Outraged by what he and his family suffered, Larez sued the police. A jury issued a \$90,000 damage award against the six cops and added \$170,000 in punitive damages against Police Chief Gates.

After the initial judgment against the cops, Gates had told reporters that Larez was "probably lucky" he only suffered a broken

nose. He added that the jury was sympathetic to the Larez family because they were "all cleaned up" for the trial. He repeated the slander about family's alleged gang ties.

Now, the federal appeals court has upheld the \$90,000 award against the six cops but ordered a new trial for Gates.

The court held that from a legal point of view, the trial judge had erred in his handling of Gates' press statements, but upheld the right of the plaintiffs to use these statements in a new trial.

Stephen Yagman, attorney for the Larez family, predicted that in a new trial, held in the wake of the Rodney King beating, an even bigger damage award could be won against the police chief.

Meanwhile, a team of investigators from Amnesty International, the London-based human rights organization, spent a week here investigating brutality charges against both the police and sheriff's department.

Officials lead union retreat in face of boss offensive

Continued from Page 11

BMWE Journal reports the General Accounting Office (GAO) concluded that the FRA rail safety inspection program is so flawed that the government cannot guarantee the safety of the nation's rail system.

The GAO study is the third in a series of reports that has found severe defects in the FRA's safety inspection, hazardous material transportation, and reporting of accident data. Of the nation's 500 railroads the GAO reported that in 1989, 6 percent had no safety inspection at all; 15 percent had no track inspection; 30 percent had no equipment inspection; and 34 percent had no inspection of operating practices.

In July, two railroad disasters resulting from derailments on the Southern Pacific in California did incalculable damage to the environment and threatened the lives of hundreds of people. The rail unions pointed out that these disasters could have been avoided if the trains had had the equipment they needed, such as a caboose and helper engines and full crews staffing them.

Larry Hatfield, a reporter from the *San Francisco Examiner*, said on a cable TV talk show called "Labor on the Job" that the

number of accidents involving hazardous material has increased by 62 percent in the last 10 years. Jones added that not all these accidents have been reported by the carriers and that the railroads have closed down most repair shops that maintain the equipment for purely economic reasons.

A big majority of the time spent in session by delegates to the UTU convention was focused on the election of the union's top 45 officers. Only in the last few hours of the convention was there any motion or discussion from the delegates in relation to advancing some democracy in the interests of the rank and file. A proposal was made that the membership have a referendum vote to elect the top officials, including the president. Brian Lewis explained that some delegates spoke against it, arguing in effect that the rank and file were unable to really know who is the best choice to lead the union. The measure was voted down by a big majority.

From the convention proceedings and the overall course of the officials, it is clear they have no intention of using the power of the union to fight the offensive by the rail bosses and the government. They continue to tell

the ranks that more phone calls and letters to Congress and voting for "friends of labor" in the Democratic and Republican parties is the only way to be politically active and defend the interests of working people. In 1987 the UTU convention adopted a number of resolutions on the need for manned cabooses when hazardous materials were in the train, for prevention of harassment of members who report safety violations, and for calling whatever action is necessary, including strikes against the rail companies, to back up rail workers who refuse to endanger themselves on the job. But no steps were taken by the officials toward these goals.

Rank-and-file rail union members have a big responsibility and a number of challenges ahead to be able to transform our unions into fighting instruments that can advance the struggles of rail workers and champion the interests of all working people.

Nels J'Anthony is an Amtrak passenger brakeman and member of UTU Local 1416 based in Salt Lake City, Utah. Joe Swanson is a switchperson on the Santa Fe and member of UTU Local 1730 in Richmond, California.

U.S. POSTAL SERVICE STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION (Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)

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11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

(signed)
Greg McCartan
Editor

The Militant Labor Forum is a weekly free-speech meeting for workers, farmers, youth, and others. All those seeking to advance the fight against injustice and exploitation should attend and participate in these discussions on issues of importance to working people.

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

The Fight to Defend Abortion Rights Today. Speakers: Heidi Malmquist, president Greater Birmingham NOW; Denise McInerney, Young Socialist Alliance. Sun., Oct. 20, 5:30 p.m. 111 21st St. S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

The Struggle for Democracy in Haiti. A panel discussion, including a representative of the Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Oct. 19, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

Speakout Against Police Brutality from Los Angeles to Baltimore! Sat., Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

An Action Program for Workers and Farmers to Confront the Deepening Economic Crisis. Sat., Nov. 2, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

Crisis in the Middle East: What is the Road Forward for the Palestinian People. Sat., Nov. 9, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

Winning new support to Mark Curtis defense campaign

Continued from Page 9

admits in it that he "spent several hours on the phone with Mrs. Kathy Thune, a prosecuting attorney in this case." He refers to countercampaign materials from the Workers League.

"As a result of all this digging," writes this UTU official, "I have come to the conclusion that Mark Curtis was given a fair trial and was in fact guilty of the crimes he was charged with. He was not persecuted, nor framed, nor is he now being denied parole, for his political or union activities."

For page after page this official tries to plug up all the holes in the prosecution frame-up, which failed to prove that Curtis was guilty. To top it off, he refers to the vicious beating the cops inflicted on Curtis as "getting yourself beat up."

This official cynically dismisses Curtis' efforts to help win union backing for his arrested immigrant coworkers as an attempt to "enhance your activism to the point you fall just short of being Eugene Debs reborn." Debs was a rail union leader and socialist of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Between now and the November 6 or 7 parole hearing, Curtis supporters can step up our efforts to win workers, some union officials, and others to write letters urging that Curtis be released.

As the recent events in the labor movement demonstrate, each person asked to write such a letter should be informed of the countercampaign and read and discuss with a Curtis supporter materials answering the countercampaign on the case. Curtis needs supporters, not just signatures.

Next month Curtis' police brutality suit will come to trial. Curtis is suing the Des Moines cops who beat him and said he was a "Mexican lover, just like you love those coloreds."

This will be a new opportunity to take the Curtis case to workers and others who have seen in recent months new evidence of the racist, anti-working-class cop violence meted out daily all over the country — from Los Angeles to Newark.

Winning support in this way helps lay the solid political basis needed to expand the numbers of workers, prominent individuals, union officials, and organizations who become endorsers of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

Joel Britton is an oil worker and member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

Free Trade and Protectionism: Dead Ends for Working People. Sat., Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

NEBRASKA

Omaha

The Fight Against Apartheid: South Africa Today. Speakers: Makoala Marake, UNL African Students Association; Lee Oleson, member United Food and Commercial Workers union, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Oct. 19, 7 p.m. 140 S 40th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (402) 553-0245.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Protest the Coup in Haiti! Speakers: Faustin Beaufrevers, president Haitian Students Association, Borough of Manhattan Community College; representative Haiti Progrès; Brian Williams, reporter *Militant*. Sat., Oct. 19, 7:30 p.m. 191 7th Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (212) 727-8421.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

Free Mark Curtis! Video: *Frame-Up of Mark Curtis*; report on the international campaign for his parole. Sat., Oct. 19, 7:30 p.m. 2000-C S Elm-Eugene St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Cops, Courts, and Political Prisoners. A panel discussion. Representatives of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Socialist Workers Party, and other victims of police frame-ups. Sat., Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

Pittsburgh

Cuba at the Crossroads. Speaker: Diana Cantú, Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., Oct. 19, 7:30 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

BRITAIN

Sheffield

The Cuban Revolution Today: Eyewitness Report. Speaker: Jane Austin, Communist League. Sat., Oct. 19, 6 p.m. 1 Gower St., Spital Hill. Donation: £1. Tel: 0742-765070.

CANADA

Montreal

How Can the Fight Against the Coup in Haiti be Won? Speakers: Guy Romer, journalist at Haiti Progrès; Serge Bouchereau, coordinator of the Comité de Coordination de la Solidarité au Canada avec le Peuple Haïtien; Marjorie Temple, Communist League. Sat., Oct. 19, 7:30 p.m. 6566, boul. Saint-Laurent. Donation: \$4. Sponsor: Forum ouvrier militant. Tel: (514) 273-2503.

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

Toronto

Defend Quebec and Native Sovereignty. Speaker: Colin McKay, Communist League. Sat., Oct. 19, 7:30 p.m. 410 Adelaide St. W., Suite 400. Donation: \$4. Tel: (416) 861-1399.

Economic Crisis: How Working People Can Fight Back. Sat., Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m.

Socialist Workers 1991 Fund Meetings

ALABAMA

Birmingham

The Battle to Defeat Apartheid: African National Congress Fighters Face the Coming Challenges. Speaker: Derek Bracey, *Militant* staff writer. Sun., Oct. 27, 5:30 p.m. 111 21st St. S. Donation: \$5. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Cuba: Challenges Facing the Revolution in a Changing World. Speaker: Mary-Alice Waters, editor *New International*. Sat., Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$5. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

San Francisco

Cuba: Challenges Facing the Revolution in a Changing World. Speaker: Mary-Alice Waters, editor *New International*. Sun., Oct. 27, Reception, 2 p.m.; presentation, 3 p.m. SEIU Local 87 Hall, 240 Golden Gate Ave. Donation: \$5. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

The World Capitalist Crisis, Stalinism, and the Fight for Socialism. Speaker: Luis Madrid, editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*. Sat., Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m. 172 Trinity Ave. SW. Donation: \$5. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

The World Capitalist Crisis, Stalinism, and the Fight for Socialism. Speaker: Steve Clark, National Committee member Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Oct. 19. Reception, 6 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. 545 W Roosevelt Rd. Donation: \$7. Tel: (312) 829-6815 or 829-7018.

IOWA

Des Moines

The World Capitalist Crisis, Stalinism, and the Fight for Socialism. Speaker: George Buchanan, *Militant* staff writer. Sat., Oct. 19, 7:30 p.m. 2105 Forest Ave. Donation: \$5. Tel: (515) 246-8249.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

The Battle to Defeat Apartheid: African National Congress Fighters Face the Coming Challenges. Speaker: Derek Bracey, *Militant* staff writer. Sat., Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m. 605 Massachusetts Ave. Donation: \$5. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

The World Capitalist Crisis, Stalinism,

410 Adelaide St. W., Suite 400. Donation: \$4. Tel: (416) 861-1399.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Protest Immigration Bill Attacks on Migrant Workers Rights. A panel discussion. Sat., Oct. 19, 7 p.m. 157 Symonds St. Donation: \$2. Tel: (9) 793-075.

and the Fight for Socialism. Speaker:

Argiris Malapanis, staff writer for the *Militant*. Sat., Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m. 5019½ Woodward Ave. Donation: \$5. Tel: (313) 831-1177.

MINNESOTA

Twin Cities

The World Capitalist Crisis, Stalinism, and the Fight for Socialism. Speaker: Roni McCann, national secretary Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., Oct. 19, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave, St. Paul. Donation: \$5. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

The Capitalist Crisis and the Fight for Independent Labor Political Action. Speaker: James Mac Warren, Socialist Workers 1991 candidate for mayor of Chicago; member United Steelworkers of America Local 3247. Sat., Oct. 19. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$5. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

The World Capitalist Crisis, Stalinism, and the Fight for Socialism. Speaker: Estelle DeBates, *Militant* staff writer. Sat., Oct. 26. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; presentation, 7:30 p.m. 2000-C South Elm-Eugene Street. Donation: \$5. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

The World Capitalist Crisis, Stalinism, and the Fight for Socialism Today. Speaker: Greg McCartan, *Militant* editor. Sat., Oct. 26, Reception, 7 p.m.; presentation, 7:30 p.m. International House (2nd floor, Africa room), 3701 Chesnut St. Donation \$5. Tel: (215) 546-8196.

Pittsburgh

The World Capitalist Crisis, Stalinism, and the Fight for Socialism Today. Speaker: Greg McCartan, *Militant* editor. Sat., Oct. 19. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; presentation, 7:30 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$5. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

The World Capitalist Crisis, Stalinism, and the Fight for Socialism. Speaker: Chris Hoepfner, National Committee member, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m. 1405 E Madison. Donation: \$3. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

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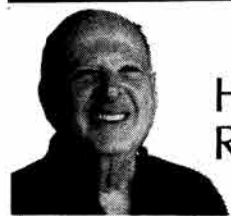
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SWEDEN

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

Movie fans — In Long Beach, California, Daniel Olivas, 16, was critically wounded by cops who shot him in the back as he fled from them. The cops said they fired because, as



Harry Ring

he ran, the youth pointed a weapon at them over his shoulder, like "in a cowboy movie."

New World Order — For the first time since the end of World War II, the total production and income

of all countries combined will decline. In previous years, a United Nations report said, declines in some countries were offset by gains in others. The world drop in gross national product will be 0.5 percent. A UN official added that most forecasters predict that in 1992 the world economy will remain "anemic."

See, the system does work — Despite the recession, the net "worth" of the 400 richest U.S. capitalists totalled a record \$288 billion. That's according to *Forbes* magazine ("The capitalist tool"). Its annual survey noted that the current 400 included 71 billionaires, up from 66 last year.

Didn't find a bigger fool — Frank Lorenzo, who tried to break

the Eastern airline strike but instead led the company down the tube, was interviewed recently by the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Looking back, he said his big mistake came when the strike forced the company into bankruptcy. At that point, he should have "worked harder trying to sell Eastern."

Who's laughing? — Some Congress members seemed perturbed by the disclosure that, in a one-year period, 8,331 checks were bounced at their taxpayer-provided free banking service. One House member fretted that if they didn't do something, they would become a "laughing-stock."

Write'em a check — It was also disclosed that some 300 pres-

ent and former members of Congress owe the House restaurant (publicly subsidized reduced-price meals) more than \$300,000 in unpaid bills.

In that order, we presume — In Alpharetta, Georgia, the police chief quit over charges that he left police badges and city-owned guns in strip joints to cover bar tabs and tips for dancers. The mayor said it was (a) "an embarrassment," (b) "a shock," and (c) "a surprise."

Wanna bet? — New on the market, a robot bartender programmed to mix more than 100 drinks. Cost, about \$175,000. A spokesperson says the robot can "measure the perfect dryness in a

martini and keep it uniform. That's not something people can do."

Let the good times roll — What with mounting bank failures, the FDIC, which insures deposits, says it expects to be broke by the end of the year. Meanwhile, it spent \$177,000 to brighten a new office complex with art works, plus \$31,274 to have various brass statues rubbed down with oil.

Sorry, wrong number — We hope none of our readers were disappointed as the result of the mistake in last week's item about Neiman-Marcus offering a "his and hers" set of Hummers, the Gulf war all-terrain vehicle. The correct price, of course, is \$50,000 each, not \$5,000.

Cambodian leader discusses UN 'peace' plan

BY ESTELLE DeBATES

UNITED NATIONS — Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen addressed over 100 people, primarily Cambodian-Americans, here September 21. The meeting was called to discuss recent developments on a UN "peace" plan for Cambodia being forced on the government of that country.

Han Bun Chan of the Khmer Humanitarian Association of USA, the host of the reception, opened the meeting. "They speak of a New World Order today," he said. "Is this what Bush and Baker have in mind? To bring back the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia? My family and friends disappeared, sharing the same fate as a million who perished. The Prime Minister has a challenge in this chapter of Cambodian history, to achieve peace, and at the same time achieve justice."

The Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, held power in Cambodia from 1975 until 1979 when Vietnamese troops helped liberate the country from their rule. In what is often referred to as the "killing fields" the Khmer Rouge was responsible for the deaths of over 1 million Cambodians, with some estimates ranging as high as 2 million dead. Vietnam kept military forces there until 1989 to prevent the return of Pol Pot to power. Since their withdrawal attacks by the Khmer Rouge have increased dramatically. The war has left some 340,000 Cambodians in refugee camps along the border of Thailand.

Since the 1979 liberation, the government of Cambodia has had no voice in the United Nations. At the urging of the United States, the seat was maintained until July this year by the forces in opposition to the government, including Pol Pot.

In a blow to the sovereignty of Cambodia, the UN Security Council brokered the creation of the Supreme National Council (SNC) last year. The SNC consists of six representatives of the Phnom Penh government, including Hun Sen, and two represen-



Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen

tatives from each of the three counterrevolutionary factions that constitute the opposition coalition.

The three factions are the "Sihanoukists" — followers of Prince Sihanouk, former monarch of the country; the Khmer People's National Liberation Front, a rightist political formation headed by Son Sann; and the Khmer Rouge, which dominates the coalition. A delegation headed by Prince Sihanouk and including representatives of the government and the Khmer Rouge now holds Cambodia's UN seat.

The SNC was established as a body to facilitate the UN playing a major role in the running of the country until elections are

held. Talks held over the last year were oriented to getting an agreement, mostly at the expense of the current government, to the UN Security Council's proposed plan.

'Standoff' in war

Prime Minister Hun Sen explained he participated in the talks since the establishment of the SNC. "There has been a standoff between the three factions versus Phnom Penh," he said of the war. "We can't win. We must end the war politically. We have to prevent the Khmer Rouge from taking power again and make them negotiate. War and peace is the main issue." The Phnom Penh government has made many concessions in the process of the negotiations.

In August, all four parties agreed to disband 70 percent of their military and leave the remaining forces in temporary quarters under UN supervision. The Prime Minister described this as the "most difficult" decision, because the Khmer Rouge guerrilla army is entrenched in the mountains and will not easily be disarmed. The original, and unprecedented, UN proposal was for total disarmament and for the UN to take over much of the administration of the country.

Hun Sen explained that in the negotiations little progress was made on the issue of the human rights violations of the Pol Pot regime. The Prime Minister said he had hoped the accord would include an agreement guaranteeing the prevention of "genocide," but settled for vaguer language promoting human rights after the

U.S. accused him of using the issue as an obstacle to peace negotiations.

Meetings of the Cambodian government and the three rebel factions have continued here as the UN General Assembly meets. An agreement on plans for elections was announced September 20. The plan adopted provides for a system of proportional representation where each party would be represented in a national assembly according to its share of the popular vote. Again, the Phnom Penh government conceded on its demand for a system in which the candidate with the most votes in a district would get the national assembly seat.

Hun Sen explained the difficulties facing Cambodia today as the government faces a sharp decrease in Soviet aid, tries "to advance the free market economy," and gives concessions in order to advance the UN negotiations. He vowed to form an opposition party if a peace plan that allows for the return of the Khmer Rouge is forced on Cambodia.

The peace accord is expected to be signed in Paris October 31 with elections taking place in 1993.

The agreement will keep anywhere from 10,000-20,000 UN troops and administrators in Cambodia until the elections, with cost estimates as high as \$1.5 million. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* reports that Japan might pay as much as 25 percent of the costs, and that "Japanese Foreign Ministry officials are eager for Japan to play a major role, financially and in manpower terms."

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

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Joseph Johnson, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senator from Minnesota, [was asked by a reporter if he thought] he could win the election.

"I will win people for the antiwar movement. I will organize people to act against the war in Vietnam. My campaign will extend and deepen the antiwar feeling in Minnesota. Will I get a job with the U.S. government? I don't think so."

Johnson is currently fighting an attempt by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service to force him to deport himself. The government has declared Johnson a "stateless" person, and has ordered him to find a country to be deported to. This bizarre persecution is being directed against Johnson in spite of the fact that he is a native-born American citizen.

When he was a young man, Johnson went to Canada to escape McCarthyism and racism he experienced in the U.S. While in Canada, he became a convinced socialist. Upon learning that the FBI was looking for him, he went back to the U.S. in 1959. He was placed under arrest on charges of failing to notify his draft board of his whereabouts, was convicted, and served a two-year sentence — a sentence only a citizen need serve.

Five years after his return in 1964, the government, in an obvious case of political

persecution, charged that he had given up his citizenship while in Canada by voting in an election. The case is being appealed.

THE MILITANT
Official Weekly Organ of the Socialist Workers Party

October 25, 1941

The nation's capitalist press expressed considerable approval of the political revolution down in Panama.

Contrary to their usual tone, the boss papers did not greet this revolution with preachments about 'orderly processes,' 'democratic procedure,' 'violence and bloodshed.'

This revolution was simply the forceful deposition of the duly-elected president by an opponent political clique. The people did not vote him out. The people did not participate in the revolution in any way.

Still the boss press loudly applauded it.

It seems that Arias, the deposed president, had banned the arming of American merchant ships under Panamanian registry. His successor, de la Guardia, has revoked this ban, an act manifestly in the interests of American imperialism and its war preparations.

So we see the ruling class is really not against all revolutions. It is only against those revolutions in the interests of the workers and common people.

Some revolutions, like the one in Panama, are approved by the bosses. The decisive question for them, in all cases, is: Whose ox is gored?

Striking miners in Fiji win support

BY JANET EDWARDS

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — Jone Dakuvula, secretary of the Fiji Labour Party, visited here in September to gain support for workers at the Vatukoula gold mine. The miners are in the eighth month of a strike for union recognition.

The employers have fired the 440 strikers and refuse to meet with the Fiji Mine Workers Union (FMWU).

The drive by miners to form a union began a few years ago when a new system of contract work was introduced. Under the system workers are paid according to productivity, rather than the set wage they previously received. Deductions are made from their pay packets for work-related expenses such as gelignite, overalls, boots, and helmets. For many miners this practice has meant a cut in pay, Dakuvula explained in an interview.

Sixty-three percent of the miners belong to the union. Strikers hold daily meetings and maintain 24-hour pickets, which have closed two of the mine's three main shafts, Dakuvula said. A court order prevents them from picketing at the third shaft. The pickets range from 60 to 100 workers.

The mine's production is estimated at 30 percent below its prestrike output. Gold is

Fiji's third largest export industry, after sugar and garments.

"Miners tell me that their health is much better since they stopped working," Dakuvula said, "because before they were thin and dehydrated."

With the strike into its eighth month, donations of food and money have been essential for its survival. "There is a lot of sympathy for the strike in Fiji, mainly from the villages and from cane farmers," said Dakuvula.

Among those backing the strike are the general secretary of the International Miners Federation, Peter Michalzik, and miners from South Africa, Australia, and the United States.

While in New Zealand, Dakuvula received financial contributions for the strike from a number of union executive bodies. He also addressed the monthly meeting of the Seafarers Union in Wellington, which voted to send a regular donation to the strike.

Dakuvula emphasized the need for international solidarity. "This strike is very important. If we can win it will be a major victory," he summed up.

Messages and other support can be sent to: Fiji Mine Workers Union, GPO Box 2162, Government Buildings, Suva, Fiji.

Fight against sexual harassment

George Bush's nomination of Clarence Thomas for the Supreme Court was aimed at strengthening the ability of the ruling class to deepen its offensive against workers' rights. Throughout the nomination hearings Thomas downplayed his anti-working-class views, including his opposition to abortion rights. Bush and Congress hoped that the inroads that have been made in attacking workers' and women's rights were an assured sign that the nomination would be approved with little opposition.

Their hopes have been set back by the sexual harassment charges against Thomas that have prompted a national debate on the issue.

Because of the pervasiveness of the problem the ruling class and its government were unable to maintain their cover-up of the charges. Recent surveys show that anywhere from 40 to 70 percent of working women say they have experienced incidents of sexual harassment. Making no formal complaint is the norm. Rather than being swept under the rug, the current discussion on sexual harassment should be embraced and extended in workplaces and especially in the labor movement.

Today women make up 45 percent of the labor force in the United States. Millions of working women face sexual harassment by their bosses. This kind of abuse is part of the general discrimination against women by the employers, who seek to undermine working-class women's consciousness of themselves as workers, as part of the working class. Instead, they seek to heighten their consciousness as women with a second-class status.

The billionaire ruling families profit from the oppression

of women. They perpetuate this condition so women will accept lower pay under worse conditions, and so they will think they have no role in their unions or in political life. They hope women, as a section of the working class, will not fight and assert their rights, but rather see their job as "temporary."

The bosses not only make superprofits through the discrimination against women but divide the working class as a result. The attack on women's rights is essential to the success of the overall capitalist offensive against workers' rights and standard of living.

Acceptance of and participation in sexual harassment of women by male coworkers is equally damaging. It helps bosses keep the unions shackled to a narrow trade union perspective rather than thinking in broader social terms and acting politically to advance the interests of the entire class. Rather than accepting, tolerating, or participating in such acts, working people need to fight against sexual harassment and all other forms of the oppression of women.

President Bush and Congress — both the Democratic and Republican parties — attempted to cover up the charges against Thomas and have questioned the relevancy of public hearings on the issue. The nationwide discussion now taking place is exactly what they sought to avoid. This is a clear indication that we cannot rely on them to defend the rights of women.

The perpetuation of women's second-class status is one of the obstacles on the road to independent working-class political action, the only road forward for the labor movement in confronting the ruling-class offensive.

Gay rights and working people

Protests against the veto of a California bill outlawing discrimination against gay men and lesbians deserve the support of working people.

The Republican Party called this proposed law "anti-family" and an "insult to legitimate minorities." Governor Peter Wilson said that defending the democratic rights of gay men and lesbians would be bad for business. In a speech shortly after he vetoed the bill, Wilson called for a return to the values of the 1950s when the family was "a sacred union born from romantic love." The governor worried "that in recent years, we have stressed the rights of the individual while ignoring his or her duties."

These are the same types of arguments that have been used to attack a woman's right to choose abortion, unions, and the democratic rights of working people as a whole. If being against job discrimination based on sexual preference is bad for business and anti-family, then what about discrimination based on race, religion, or political beliefs? Their arguments are just a new version of the time-worn cliché that "what is good for General Motors, is good for America."

The September 29 veto by Wilson of this anti-discrimination bill came just four days after the National Commission on AIDS issued its report on the spread of the AIDS virus: Some 120,000 people have already died. In the United States this disease disproportionately affects gay men, especially Blacks and Latinos.

The thousands of young people who turned out for the

protests were outraged not just about the veto, but at the fact that the U.S. government has "not done well" on helping those with AIDS, as the national commission put it in a classic understatement. Inadequate funding for AIDS research and sub-standard health care for AIDS victims is a national scandal. For working people in the United States, to be without a job, is to be without medical insurance; job discrimination for those with AIDS can be a matter of life or death.

Discrimination against any part of the population on the basis of sex, nationality, or sexual preference weakens the unity of the working class. Any time the employers and the government can politically justify and blatantly uphold their "right" to deny employment to one group, it widens their ability to do so to others.

Progress made in combating antigay prejudice has helped push back the ability of the ruling rich to justify the less-than-equal treatment of gays. Protests demanding passage of the law show a real determination to press forward the fight.

Wilson's veto is not just a betrayal of his earlier promise to pass antidiscrimination legislation. It encourages backward ideas toward gay men and lesbians and gives a go-ahead to gay-bashing violence. It opens the door to attacks on the democratic rights of all working people.

Gay rights is an issue the working class has a real stake in. The protests against the veto by militant youth and others deserve the support of the labor movement.

End the embargo against Iraq!

Washington's continuing military threats against Iraq and the unjustifiable actions on the part of the United Nations Security Council in continuing the embargo should be condemned by all working people.

Moreover, some of the brutality of the imperialist onslaught is coming to the light of day. The burying alive of Iraqi soldiers in the opening hours of the ground offensive by U.S. tanks equipped as bulldozers when the U.S. command knew that the Iraqis were unable to fight, is just the latest of the revelations. They show what the U.S. rulers are willing to do to defend their interests, if they think they can get away with it.

When Washington pushed through the embargo at the United Nations Security Council and launched its war against Iraq, it claimed that this was necessary to force the Iraqi army out of Kuwait. That pretext is gone, but the embargo, the violations of Iraqi sovereignty, and the continued military threats remain.

In an early July report, UN delegate Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan noted that the effects of the war and the embargo are leading to a crisis in Iraq "whose eventual dimensions would dwarf today's difficulties."

One example of the imperialist cynicism and brutality is the plight of the Kurdish people. The Kurds have been attacked by the Turkish army, shot at by the Iraqi army, and if that were not enough, the U.S./UN embargo is taking "an

unfortunately harmful toll upon" them, Sadruddin admits.

The war in the Arab-Persian Gulf resulted in "untold loss of life and destruction," millions of refugees, ecological disaster, and the "collapse of the structures that sustain life in today's human societies," Sadruddin notes.

But the human suffering means nothing to those who seek to maximize profit and power at the expense of the working people of Iraq and of the world.

While the Iraqi people face malnutrition and deteriorating health conditions as a result of the war and the continuing blockade, the UN Security Council spends hundreds of thousands of dollars to spearhead continued harassment. The UN inspectors parade around as if they were the owners of Iraq, invading buildings, stealing personal files, and doing their best to take away another chunk of Iraqi sovereignty.

The threats against Iraq have nothing to do with trying to eliminate the threat of nuclear war or getting rid of a dictator. Instead, they are aimed at expanding U.S. domination of the region.

But Washington has not achieved its goal of stability and the creation of a pro-U.S. regime in Baghdad. Instead there will be more instability, more destruction, and more wars in Iraq and the Middle East until working people around the world succeed in taking power away from the warmakers.

The U.S. and UN threats against Iraq should be protested. End the embargo against Iraq!

This column is devoted to a discussion with our readers — printing remarks, questions, suggestions, and other comments sent to the *Militant*. Where possible we will take up issues raised in notes and letters as a way to help clarify and expand on the coverage in the paper.

The letter "Soviet coup" from Gary Boyers in Detroit, printed on the opposite page, asks for clarification on the *Militant's* stance toward the suspension of activities of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union and the seizure of its massive assets by the state.

Our approach to the propaganda organs of the Stalinist regime — *Pravda* and Progress Publishers — is similar to that outlined in the *Militant* articles and explained at length in our September *International Socialist Review* supplement.

Boyers agrees the CP was not a political party, never mind a communist party — a voluntary association of the vanguard of a social class organized for participation in political life.

Instead, it was a machine for the defense and advance of the petty-bourgeois social caste that usurped political power from the working class through a bloody counterrevolution in the 1920s and 1930s. Although it wrapped itself in the

FROM OUR READERS

mantle of the October 1917 revolution and spoke in the name of the struggle of working people, the CP was not a "conservative" or "bureaucratic" workers' party. It was a job trust of the privileged middle-class layers in the bureaucratic apparatuses of the state, economic enterprises, trade unions, the party itself, writers' associations, and other institutions.

Working people in the Soviet Union hated the CP because of its brutal and repressive actions. Millions were killed, imprisoned, sent to insane asylums, or labor camps. The party of V.I. Lenin that led tens of millions of workers and peasants to establish the first workers' state was exterminated.

Through this terror, freedom of expression and assembly and the ability to organize and practice politics were all denied working people. The CP was seen as a den of thieves and the bureaucracy's central organizer of the massive skimming off of the wealth created by working people. It was a state slush fund for the privileged ruling stratum.

Pravda and Progress Publishers were simply the propaganda arm of that repressive apparatus, whose goal was to keep working people out of political life.

Why protest the closing of the CP and the central newspaper identified with it and not the restructuring of the KGB and its newspaper? Both are thoroughly hated by working people.

Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev and Russian president Boris Yeltsin closed down the CP and its newspaper and transferred their property to the state because these were no longer effective instruments of rule. The regime faces a working class that is fighting its way back into political life in its own interests. Working people massively rallied to oppose the August 19 coup and its attempt to close up their political space.

At this point, however, there exists no independent working-class leadership in the Soviet Union that is consciously spearheading a fight to get rid of the bureaucracy and establish a workers' and farmers' government. This is why workers in Moscow and elsewhere were unable in August to go beyond defense of their rights to take action themselves to dismantle all the institutions of bureaucratic rule.

As part of the machinery of state repression the CP and *Pravda* are not even comparable to a corrupt trade union under capitalism.

Any moves by Washington, for example, against a corrupt union officialdom in, say, Michigan would be opposed by communists and all fighting workers. Attempts by the state to seize or close down the union's newspaper would be condemned by unionists everywhere. This would be true even though there is no rank-and-file control over the paper and it is merely an instrument to justify the political course and serve the interests of the reactionary bureaucrats who sit on top of the union.

But let's say that same union officialdom took state power in Michigan, carried out a bloody massacre of tens of thousands of workers, sent thousands more to prison camps, collaborated with the bosses in betraying workers' struggles elsewhere, and brought economic, social, and environmental devastation to the people of the state.

When working people rose up to say "no more" the bureaucrats might shelve some of their discredited machinery in order to retain their grip on power. Would workers in Michigan protest if the paper of that "union" was then suspended by the bureaucracy?

Boyers points out that there are many cases of denial of democratic rights in the Soviet Union today. This is true, and the Gorbachev-Yeltsin regime will target these rights as they defend the interests of the stratum they represent.

From all indications former members of the CP are not subject to persecution for simply "belonging" to the "party." In Eastern Europe many have formed other parties and there is little indication of purges, jailings, or other moves against them. As our articles indicate, steps by any of these regimes in this direction should be seen as an attack on democratic rights and protested.

Similarly for the former *Pravda* and other such papers. Most simply reopened under another name a few days after they were suspended.

Grenada death penalty debate

Should the assassins of Maurice Bishop be executed?

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

A debate has swept through the English-speaking Caribbean since the August 14 decision by the Grenadian government to commute the death sentences of 14 people convicted of the 1983 murders of Maurice Bishop and other central leaders of the Grenada revolution.

The sentences were the outcome of a trial designed to discredit the example of the revolution and legitimize the capitalist government imposed by U.S. invading forces eight years ago.

In October 1983, a Stalinist faction of the governing New Jewel Movement and of the army officer corps in Grenada carried out a counterrevolutionary coup. They overthrew the workers' and farmers' government that had come to power in the revolution of 1979.

Coard's gang assassinated Prime Minister Bishop and other revolutionary leaders. They killed and wounded dozens of the 30,000 Grenadians who rose up in an attempt to restore the revolutionary government. Coard crushed the uprising and imposed martial law.

This gave Washington a giant opening to invade the island. Aided by the U.S. occupation forces, Grenada's capitalist class pushed back many of the social and political rights that working people had won during the revolution.

Washington, working through the regime it installed, put Coard and other coup leaders on trial. Throughout the trial they portrayed the Coard faction as "hard-line" Marxists, attempting to identify the popularly backed workers' and farmers' government — led by Bishop — with Coard's bloody actions. The aim was to undermine the political legacy of Maurice Bishop, the most outstanding communist leader in the history of the English-speaking Caribbean.

The political message surrounding the entire eight-year-long trial and appeal proceed-

ings has been that anti-imperialist struggles and anticapitalist revolutions inevitably end up in tyranny and terror.

Following the commutation of the death sentences, leaders of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM) in Grenada organized a series of demonstrations to protest the government's decision. MBPM president Kendrick Radix told a rally of 250 on August 26, "The court said they must hang and that is the law of the land; they must hang." He called for Prime Minister Nicholas Brathwaite to resign.

Deputy MBPM leader Einstein Louison, calling it "a sad day" for Grenada, said Brathwaite's party had retreated from its election campaign promise by not carrying out the executions.

Weapon of ruling class

Don Rojas, former press secretary to Bishop and now editor of the *Amsterdam News* in New York, said in an interview, "I agree with the commutation of the death sentences, without agreeing with the motivations of the Grenada government. I oppose the death penalty on principle, because it is a weapon of the ruling class to intimidate the toilers through state terrorism. The death penalty has been used historically in the Caribbean against working people.

"It is not enough to argue that the death penalty is the law of the land and should be obeyed. Not all laws — especially those passed during the period of colonial and neocolonial rule — are just or are in the interests of working people.

"However," Rojas added, "my support for the commutation based on opposition to the death penalty should not be construed as forgiveness for the crimes committed by Coard and his gang, not only against Bishop but against the masses of Grenada. I condemn their crimes."

Amnesty International and other human

rights organizations welcomed the commutation. Caribbean Rights, a Barbados-based network of eight human rights groups in the region, called on Caribbean governments to suspend all death sentences and abolish the death penalty.

There are nearly 450 prisoners on death row in the 12 English-speaking countries in the Caribbean. These nations have a total population of less than 5 million. The state of Florida, with 13 million, has 318 on death row.

Jamaica, with 2.2 million people, has 250 on death row, one of the highest per capita figures in the world. Trinidad and Tobago also has a high proportion of persons awaiting execution.

Government officials and capitalist politicians in Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica have campaigned for stepped-up use of the death penalty. Trinidad police commissioner Jules Bernard called for the "popping of the necks" of those on death row as the way to reduce violence in that country.

On August 16, two days after the Grenada decision was announced, St. Vincent carried out its first hanging since 1987.

Dominica prime minister Eugenia Charles and Trinidad's Chamber of Commerce, among others, decried Grenada's commutation of the death sentences.

Michael Douglas, leader of the opposition Dominica Labour Party, stated that the Grenadian government should have carried out the executions.

Robert "Bobby" Clarke, a Barbadian lawyer and former advisor to Maurice Bishop, said he generally abhorred the death penalty but "in this particular case, I am against commuting the sentences." He added, "I think if they had been executed, it would have been a cleansing for Grenada and the Caribbean."

Steve Clark, National Committee member of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States and author of the article "The Second



Maurice Bishop

Assassination of Maurice Bishop," published in *New Internationalist* magazine, told the *Militant* that he welcomed the fact that the Grenadian government had backed down from carrying out the death sentences.

"The Socialist Workers Party condemned the Coard group and its counterrevolutionary actions from the outset in October 1983. But justice cannot be achieved in the courts of the U.S.-installed government in Grenada.

"The trial was designed to help institutionalize the courts, cops, and prisons of this neocolonial regime imposed on Grenada by Washington's troops. The defendants were beaten in jail and denied basic rights during the trial such as the right to cross-examine witnesses and present evidence.

"No one was happier than the current capitalist rulers of Grenada to see Bishop murdered and the revolution destroyed," Clark added. "The precedent of this political trial will be used against anti-imperialist fighters and militant workers and farmers throughout Grenada and the Caribbean.

"The capitalist governments in the region have used the calls for the death penalty to try to push back opposition to this barbaric punishment and terrorize working people."

LETTERS

Cops above law

Billy Pearce "died in custody of the Louisville, Ky. police last week." The cause of death was described as "positional asphyxia."

In lieu of an explanation or charges being filed against those responsible for the man's death, those responsible were exonerated in advance and the death attributed to "accidental negligence on behalf of police and a nurse." The fact that Mr. Pearce was confined to the back seat of a police cruiser for 30 minutes was described as "common procedure."

"Forty witnesses were heard" by the examining body. "No explanation on behalf of the cops for the man's condition not having been discovered. No criminal charges expected to be filed."

None of this comes as any surprise. After all Louisville is a part of the United States of America where it is common knowledge that a cop is above the law.

Ed Meredith
Caneyville, Kentucky

Soviet coup

I enjoyed Argiris Malapanis' article in the September 27 *Militant* which answered the claim that the coup in the Soviet Union was an attempt to halt a movement toward capitalist restoration. I was puzzled, however, by the last sentence of the second-to-the-last paragraph. This stated that "Any moves against current or former members of the CP" or measures "that restrict the right to form political parties should be protested by working people." I believe George Buchanan used a similar formulation in an article a few issues earlier. By posing the question in such an abstract and hypothetical way, *Militant* readers might be led to believe that there are no clear-cut, well-publicized cases of anti-democratic regulations which have been imposed.

Does the *Militant* consider the

banning of *Pravda* and other CPSU publications in Russia and a number of other republics by the Gorbachev-Yeltsin wing of the Stalinist bureaucracy an advance for working people, or is it political censorship? Would the *Militant's* view be different if the ban was initiated from below rather than from above (if instead of a Red Army soldier with a gun standing in front of a padlocked building, it was a group of trade unionists and youth with picket signs)?

I have a second, similar question. I would assume (I don't know for sure) that among the CPSU properties seized was Progress Publishers. Besides its central mission of publishing apologies and justifications for Stalinist crimes in the Soviet Union and throughout the world, Progress is also one of the biggest publishers of the works of Marx, Engels, and Lenin in the world. For many people, especially in the underdeveloped world, the low-priced (through subsidies) Progress titles are the only source of communist literature. Does the closing of Progress represent a gain for working people? I have consciously omitted raising the question of the banning of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union, because I think this is a more complex question. I agree with the *Militant* that the CPSU "is not a political party but part of the repressive apparatus."

Keep up the good work.
Gary Boyers
Detroit, Michigan

Cuban tourism

Ten years have passed since I last visited Cuba when I went as a member of the Antonio Maceo Brigade. This time I went as a tourist with my Mexican wife and our four year old boy on a one week vacation.

Having lived in a central Mexican province for the last four years, I was given a different insight on Cuba.

Cuba, undoubtedly, is passing



through a difficult period with the loss of its preferential trading status with the countries of eastern Europe and belt-tightening on the part of the Soviet Union.

In response to the changed commercial situation Cuba has been deepening trade relationships with more capitalist countries despite U.S. opposition. An important aspect of this process has been the development of the tourist industry on the island which provides much needed dollars.

It is very much in the interest of the Cuban revolution to develop tourism but it does create a contradiction. In the period ahead the Cuban people are facing austere times with more rationing of essential goods which allows for an equitable distribution of what's available. The tourist on the other hand with dollars has access to a variety of consumer goods not available to the Cuban.

This reality contributes to the existence of the black market as well as prostitution.

Within the context of the profound gains of the Cuban revolution in the areas of health care, education, eradication of racial oppression, etc. one puts everything in proper per-

spective. The defects of the revolutionary process are greatly outweighed by the advances.

For me the Cuban revolution is a great inspiration and example for humanity. My compliments to the *Militant* for keeping us so well informed.

Nicolas Rosner Fuentes
San Francisco Del Rincon
Guanajuato, Mexico

AIDS protest attacked

On September 12, over 3,500 people congregated on Broad Street to protest the policies of George Bush. While the action was initially called by the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT-UP), the protest included pro-choice forces, union workers, and groups representing the homeless and the unemployed.

Some members of ACT-UP decided to initiate a peaceful act of civil disobedience, deliberating crossing police barricades. Wearing rubber gloves on their hands, cops picked up the barricades and pushed the crowd off the street and back to the sidewalk. When AIDS protesters attempted to stage a "die-in" on the street, the cops began brutally beating protesters. While the nightsticks

were flying and the cops were throwing protesters in police vans like sacks of grain, the crowd chanted loudly, "the whole world's watching," and "shame, shame, shame." By the time the smoke cleared, 10 people had been arrested.

There are now 3 members of Philadelphia ACT-UP facing major felony charges stemming from the protest. We have launched a defense committee and will be faced with the challenge of raising close to \$15,000 in legal expenses. Any donations, letters of support or requests for further information can be sent to ACT-UP, P.O. Box 15919, Middle City Station, Philadelphia, PA 19103-0919.

Fight Back, Fight AIDS!

Craig McKissic
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Denounces blackmail

Our greetings to you all. We regularly receive the *Militant* with the envelope already opened by the Censorship.

I have read the good and encouraging news concerning the New York City election campaign represented by Derek [Bracey] and Meryl Lynn [Farber]. I wish you good luck.

As a federation we denounce the blackmail of our colleague Mr. Mark Curtis by the United States authorities. We hope he will obtain his freedom soon.

Sami Samaan
General Federation of Trade Unions
Ramallah, West Bank

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.

Thousands protest gay rights bill veto

BY JIM ALTENBERG
AND ALBERT GRIGORIAN

SACRAMENTO, California — Carrying hand made signs proclaiming "Wilson is a liar" and "Gay and Lesbian rights Now" thousands of supporters of lesbian and gay rights marched and rallied outside the state capitol building here October 11.

Demonstrators gathered to protest Governor Peter Wilson's veto of a bill that would have outlawed job discrimination against lesbians and gay men. Protests against Wilson's action have taken place throughout California.

The rally included speakers from ACT-UP, an organization fighting around issues related to AIDS; Queer Nation; and a number of civil liberties and lesbian and gay community organizations. Participants came from many California cities and as far away as Canada.

Although Wilson had promised to support gay rights legislation while running for governor in 1990, he turned a bill down when it came to his desk in late September, citing opposition from business interests.

Speakers and demonstrators alike expressed a deep sense that the governor had betrayed them. "Wilson does not understand the importance of lesbian and gay rights except when he is a candidate" one speaker told the rally. Petitions calling for Wilson's recall were circulated in the crowd, and many speakers urged people to vote for Democrats or politicians who are gay.

Bill Wilson of the Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum said simple human justice demanded anti-discrimination laws be enacted. "The governor said fairness in employment is bad for business. They deny us the right to marry. They deny us the right to get health care. Now they deny us the right to work free from discrimination and we're not going to



Marchers denounced governor's veto of bill outlawing discrimination against gays. Protests have taken place throughout California.

walk blindly into the night."

For working people in this country, access to health care depends on having insurance through one's employer. Gay rights activists have pointed out that employment discrimination will cause people infected with the AIDS virus to be unable to receive badly needed medical care. At the same time, government cutbacks in public health have led to a terrible crisis in the public hospital and health care system.

"We know what it means to be trivialized by politicians who will not recognize our oppression," said Rev. Smith of the Sacramento Lesbian and Gay Council.

The thousands who died of AIDS died of government neglect, he said. "They died because the government will not spend money for research, medicine and education."

Many involved in protests across the state say they are particularly angered because the governor's veto came just two weeks after the release of a stinging government report on AIDS.

The National Commission on AIDS issued a report after two years of study September 25, the first such comprehensive study conducted. "Our nation's leaders have not done well" responding to the AIDS crisis, the

report says. "In the past decade, the White House has rarely broken its silence on the topic of AIDS," and Congress has "often failed to provide adequate funding for AIDS programs" it approves.

Some 1 million Americans are infected with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus, according to the commission, and 120,000 are estimated to have died of AIDS.

Among the commission's recommendations are a single plan by the government to combat AIDS, treatment for drug abuse to all who need it, elimination of laws preventing drug users from getting clean needles, and adoption of a system providing medical coverage for all citizens.

Other rally speakers pointed out that expanding gay rights helps defend all democratic rights. "Lesbians and gays are only the first on a list of regression. Next will be the reproductive rights of women," another speaker said.

"It's us now," John Muskovich, a demonstrator, said in an interview. "It will be attacks on others on different issues. The whole system is discriminatory."

Many welcomed the opportunity to join a protest action. "It's about time," one man said "Being a Black gay man I know what this government's about. I'm glad to see us get together out in the streets."

Prior to the rally some demonstrators blocked streets near the Capitol. They blew shrill whistles as cops on foot and horseback tried to drive them off the street. Large numbers of cops stood at steel barricades surrounding the Capitol throughout the day to keep supporters of gay rights out of the building.

After the rally, a spirited march of 5,000 took place through downtown Sacramento.

Walter Sisulu: Struggle is at 'most crucial time'

BY GREG McCARTAN

NEW YORK — "This is the most crucial time in our struggle, a struggle that is not only for the liberation of South Africa but of all peoples and the oppressed the world over," said Walter Sisulu to a meeting of apartheid opponents at Riverside Church here.

Sisulu, African National Congress deputy president, and ANC Women's League leader Albertina Sisulu completed a two-week tour of the United States October 12.

At meetings here and in Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Boston, and Philadelphia the ANC leaders explained the current stage of the revolutionary struggle for a nonracial, democratic South Africa and appealed for continued solidarity with the fight to end the scourge of apartheid. The tour was sponsored by the Africa Fund, an organization that has helped build solidarity with liberation movements across the African continent.

Walter Sisulu said in his keynote address to the event that the "reforms by [South African president F.W.] de Klerk have given rise to confusions about South Africa. This has led to the lifting of sanctions" against the regime, he said.

"Thousands of political prisoners have gained their release and thousands of exiles are returning home," the ANC deputy president said. "Many of the fundamental laws of apartheid have been repealed and the ANC and other organizations have been unbanned."

"These concessions," he said, "are a direct consequence of our struggle and your contributions to it. It is clear that the old-style apartheid is passing away. But this is far from what is needed in South Africa. The fact is that we remain voteless and marginal to the economy of our country."

Sisulu said the real purpose of the ruling National Party's policy of apartheid "was to secure an exclusive position of political and economic privileges." This was based on the

"extreme exploitation and oppression of Blacks," who were pushed off the land into segregated townships and remote "homelands" where they became a vast pool of cheap labor for mining companies and other industries.

"Even if all the laws of apartheid were removed, whites collectively would maintain their illicitly acquired and massively concentrated wealth — wealth that brings them political power and control of the economy," he said, noting that "many whites are not

personally wealthy and many have taken a stand against racism."

Violent attacks on Black townships, leaders and members of the ANC, and anti-apartheid political events over the past year

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Iowa meat-packers suspended in contract fight

BY MITCHEL ROSENBERG

OTTUMWA, Iowa — Members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) Local 230 marched to the Excel Corporation's plant gate here before daybreak October 10, demanding the company reverse the suspension of large numbers of workers and sign a new contract with the union.

Management at the packinghouse suspended the unionists after they refused to work in unsafe conditions.

Workers rejected Excel's contract proposal October 6 by a vote of 767 to 19. Local 230's membership voted 770 to 8 to strike the plant, but the local's leadership convinced them to work day by day without a contract while an attempt was made to negotiate improvements.

The issue most workers find hardest to swallow is the company proposal to go from a Monday through Friday schedule to one of Tuesday through Saturday.

Dennis Renfrow, who works in the carcass cooler, explained, "We've got to make a stand. Even if we lose, we've got to make it known we don't approve. I don't know where Excel gets off. How are we supposed to spend time with our families?"

Other problems cited with the contract proposal include higher insurance co-payments, higher costs for drug prescriptions, a wage increase of only \$1 an hour over the three-and-one-half-year agreement, and the length and expiration date of the contract. UFCW Local 431 members at the Beardstown, Illinois, Excel plant just ratified a sim-



Workers protest Excel's safety violations

ilar contract, with a different expiration date than that sought by the company here.

The Ottumwa Excel plant was bought from the Hormel corporation in 1988. Previously organized by UFCW 431, hundreds of union members honored picket lines set up by UFCW P-9 during their strike against Hormel in Austin, Minnesota. A number of former Hormel workers still work at the plant.

As they returned to the job October 7, the day after rejecting the contract, most workers

did not know what the company's response would be. Many did not approve of working without a contract.

By October 8, workers found safety conditions on the job unsatisfactory. Workers demanded bare wires on one of the lines on the cut floor be repaired before they would work. Company representatives said unless the unionists got to work they would be suspended. When they refused, the company sent 150 out the door.

The same morning workers on the ham bone line demanded replacement of the skin-ner blades, which were not working properly. Once again, the company would not comply and suspended the 80 affected workers.

With no one to cut up the carcasses killed the previous day, foremen gave kill floor workers a choice of working on the cut floor or going home. All but one worker left the plant.

On October 9, 120 more workers were suspended for refusing to work unsafe equipment. About 830 workers are employed at the plant; 600 work day shift.

Meanwhile, Local 230 officials have attempted to bargain for a new agreement with Excel, and a membership meeting is scheduled for October 13 to discuss company proposals.

Mitchel Rosenberg is a member of UFCW Local 1149 and works at the IBP packing-house in Perry, Iowa.