

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Mark Curtis's case against
Des Moines cop brutality

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The debate over 'right to die with dignity'

BY GREG McCARTAN

A series of books, a ballot initiative in Washington State, and an investigation into the practices of a Michigan doctor have all put the question of whether or not terminally ill people have the right to end their life at the center of a nationwide debate.

Dramatic advances in medical technology and medical practice have changed forever how, when, and where people in the United States die. Before the 1950s most patients died at home. Now many spend their last months — or sometimes years — under close medical supervision in nursing homes, hospitals, or other health-care centers. This can involve being attached to sophisticated machinery designed to keep a person alive under the most difficult conditions.

The growing number of people who have directly seen terminally ill family members or friends go through prolonged, painful, and emotionally draining final months of life has brought about a change in thinking about the "right to die with dignity."

A Gallup Poll conducted in 1975 found that only 41 percent thought that someone suffering tremendous pain with "no hope of improvement" had the moral right to end their life. By last year the figure had risen to 66 percent.

Advances in medical technique also allow doctors to keep persons in a vegetative state alive almost indefinitely. Machines can duplicate many disrupted functions, keeping what is in reality a mass of cells "alive." Such cases, plus those of individuals in irreversible comas, have led to "Living Wills." These documents stipulate what medical procedures should, or should not, be provided in case the person can no longer express his or her wishes.

Opposition to 'death with dignity'

Opposition to recognizing even limited rights of seriously ill individuals to decide to terminate their lives has come primarily from

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8,000 Caterpillar workers on strike or locked out

BY LUCILLE ROBBINS

MONTGOMERY, Illinois — Two thousand members of the United Auto Workers (UAW) began a selective strike against Caterpillar, Inc., plants in Illinois November 4. The strike action was centered at the Decatur plant, where 2,000 members of UAW Local 751 work, and in a division employing 400 members of UAW Local 947 in East Peoria. These workers produce some of Caterpillar's newest and most profitable products.

The selective strike was called by UAW officials in an attempt to force Caterpillar management back to the negotiating table. The UAW's contract with Caterpillar expired September 30. Since then, more than 15,000 Caterpillar workers have continued to work under a contract extension. Caterpillar has plants at four locations in Illinois — Decatur, East Peoria, Montgomery, and Pontiac — as well as in Denver, Memphis and York, Pennsylvania. Negotiations had

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South Africa shut down 2 days as millions strike

BY AUGUST NIMTZ

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — "Beyond our expectations." That's how Ahmed Kathrada, who directs the public relations department for the African National Congress (ANC), described the first day of the two-day nationwide general strike here.

More than 3.5 million workers participated in the stay-away that was called in opposition to the government's recently enacted value-added tax (VAT) system. The strike was called by the trade union ally of the ANC, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), along with another trade union federation, the National Council of Trade Unions (Nactu). A joint press statement at the end of the first day said it was "the largest ever mass general strike in the history of our country."

The strike received its greatest support in the most populous area of the country, the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging (PWV) area, which includes Johannesburg, where it is estimated that more than 90 percent of workers stayed away from work.

In addition to massive support in the other two major urban areas, Durban and Cape Town, "the general strike has also been effective in most small towns" according to the statement. And "for the first time in the history of general strikes, large numbers of workers on the mines and the farms have participated in the action."

The strike's success came in spite of efforts to undermine it by the Inkatha Freedom Party, headed by Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi. An Inkatha official offered to provide bosses in the Witwatersrand area with scab labor during the two-day protest. Inkatha also made it clear that its followers would not support the strike.

A cursory survey of the downtown streets here revealed that, in comparison to other workdays, they were almost empty. Residents of the very populous squatters camp in



Militant/Margrethe Siem

Welkom miners. ANC praised discipline of nationwide strike, and disputed allegations that strikers were responsible for clashes at Welkom in Orange Free State.

nearby Thokoza township pointed out the large number of people at home who would otherwise be at work.

Big-business media in scare campaign

In the days leading up to the strike, the big-business media went on a campaign to violence-bait the protest, suggesting its supporters would use intimidation in order to obtain compliance. The headline of the *Sunday Times* blared, "Spectre of thuggery looms as confusion grips SA's townships: STRIKE JITTERS".

The *Citizen*, which reflects the views of the governing Nationalist Party, in an edito-

rial on the first day of the strike charged that "Cosatu has ignored appeals to cancel the strike. . . . The scene is set, unless appeals for peace are heeded, for a massive confrontation, especially in the townships of the Witwatersrand. If confrontation comes about, the blame will rest squarely with Cosatu."

Hernus Kriel, minister of law and order, charged that the marches that the Cosatuled Coordinating Committee on VAT (CCV) had organized to coincide with the two-day strike meant that "they're looking for confrontation."

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AIDS announcement by Magic Johnson underscores gov't failure to provide care

BY GREG McCARTAN

The announcement by basketball star Magic Johnson that he was retiring from the sport because he is infected with the virus that causes AIDS has put a new spotlight on the fatal disease.

Thirty-two-year-old Johnson had played with the Los Angeles Lakers for 12 years. One of the most accomplished players in the history of the sport, he has been featured on numerous television advertisements. Johnson said he would use his celebrity status as a way to help educate about AIDS and to let young people know "that safe sex is the way to go."

Since the announcement many big-business newspapers have printed statistics on the extent of the spread of the human immunodeficiency virus and those who are most likely to get it. Johnson said he was infected through heterosexual contact. Most who test positive for the virus, called HIV, begin showing symptoms of AIDS within 10.5 years on the average.

So far the government has failed to provide adequate health care for those who contract the disease or to mobilize the necessary resources

to find a cure. The reason for this is that nearly all who become infected are impoverished intravenous drug users and gay men.

Recognizing the facts on who gets AIDS and how it is transmitted is essential for all those who want to combat government inaction on finding a cure and providing health care for those afflicted with the disease.

The Federal Centers for Disease Control says that, as of the end of September, 195,718 people in the United States have been diagnosed with AIDS. Since 1981, 126,159 have died from AIDS-related illnesses. The center has estimated that another 1 million Americans have contracted HIV.

Although AIDS was originally concentrated among gay men, more than one-third of those infected today are intravenous drug users who share needles; nearly half are members of oppressed nationalities. Eighty percent of children born with AIDS are Black or Latino, as are the majority of women with AIDS. Those drug addicts with the disease are not evenly spread across the socioeconomic spectrum: the vast majority are among the poorest layers of the working

class. Because a growing percentage of working people have no medical coverage, the percentage of those with the disease who

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Political polarization and rising class tensions in North America

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socialism

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Circulation drive goes over the top! — page 5

Abortion rights activists run Operation Rescue out of Boston and Rhode Island

BY ESTELLE DeBATES

CRANSTON, Rhode Island — "We ran 'em out of Boston and we ran 'em out of here!" chanted 800 pro-choice demonstrators as Operation Rescue walked away from the Women's Medical Center of Rhode Island. As cops escorted the antiabortion forces to their cars, the hundreds of defenders of women's rights rallied at the clinic, hearing from leaders of the National Organization for Women and 2 to 1, a group that organizes escorts for three Rhode Island clinics providing abortion. The speakers were greeted with shouts of "Who will? We will, keep the clinics open!"

Police reported that the action was the largest such demonstration ever at the clinic, and probably the largest in Rhode Island history.

Members of Operation Rescue showed up at the Rhode Island clinic at 5:30 a.m. on Saturday November 2. They charged the building and fastened bicycle locks around each other. One man wrapped a lock around his neck and fastened it to the clinic door. Cops began to make arrests. By 5:45 a.m. 100 more rightists had arrived and began to blockade the door. The cops later announced they arrested 98.

Kelly, an escort at the clinic for the past year, said the scene at 6:00 a.m. was somewhat frightening with and only 30 people defending the clinic against 150 Operation Rescue supporters. But it wasn't too long before reinforcements arrived by the hundreds, she said.

The new forces came from 2,500 who had gathered at dawn that day at four clinics in the Boston area, in response to an announcement by Operation Rescue that it planned to target the clinics. When the news came that Operation Rescue had hit Cranston, 800 made the 45-minute drive to defend the



Eight-hundred youth at November 2 rally in Cranston, Rhode Island, defend clinic against foes of abortion rights.

Militant/Karen Ray

clinic. Others stayed to defend Boston clinics from the threatened assaults that never occurred.

When the pro-choice activists arrived they went into the street directly in front of the clinic that was being picketed by 100 rightists. Hundreds more kept pouring in, and at

10:15 a.m. the cops ordered the pro-choice forces to the other side of the street. A line of police vehicles and officers stretching 100 yards was set up between the Operation Rescue forces and the countermobilization. Cops came from half a dozen communities. Demonstrators began to shout, "You couldn't block the clinic without police protection!"

'America is pro-choice!'

The rightists then turned toward the demonstration to sing "America the Beautiful" but were drowned out with chants of "America is pro-choice!"

The demonstrators in Rhode Island were overwhelmingly students from Boston University, Harvard, Yale, University of Massachusetts, and many other colleges and high schools in the Massachusetts area. Many students explained this was the first political action they had ever attended.

On some campuses, pro-choice groups had organized buses and car pools to bring students to the action planned in Boston. Students from Mount Holyoke College said they had been organized into car pools by a group on their campus, Physical Integrity Now, which came together to counter an antiabortion organization on campus. Many students were from the five schools in the area surrounding the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, where students aggressively built the action.

Others said they were not in any group or did not have a group on their campus, but had seen a leaflet or read about the threats by Operation Rescue in the paper.

Anna Kuperman and Nura Osman are pro-choice activists from Brown University in Rhode Island. They were among the initial 30 defending the clinic at dawn. Brown students divided their forces between Boston and Cranston after hearing a rumor that

Cranston was going to be a target. "The women's movement just sat back too long after 1973," said Osman, in reference to the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. "All the profamily rhetoric is about blaming women for the problems in society."

Operation Rescue leaves

At 11:00 a.m. Operation Rescue decided to leave. After a brief prochoice rally outside the clinic, many stayed to ensure the safety of the clinic and to discuss how to continue to defend abortion rights.

Many drove back to Boston to attend a press conference at the offices of the National Organization for Women. Ellen Convisser, the president of Massachusetts NOW, was the featured speaker. "Today was an important victory for pro-choice forces. Boston was to be the kickoff for Operation Rescue's national campaign," she said. "We have set an example for the rest of the nation." Operation Rescue has called for four "Days of Rescue" November 17-23 in 50 to 70 cities.

Convisser said that in addition to the 2,500 who came out to defend abortion rights that day, a recent court decision against Operation Rescue helped drive the rightist group out of Boston and into the state of Rhode Island. In October a Massachusetts court made permanent an injunction banning Operation Rescue from blockading clinics in the state. The ruling states that Operation Rescue's actions to "physically impede, obstruct, prohibit and preclude women from exercising their guaranteed rights" are not protected under the First Amendment.

Convisser said NOW is organizing for an April action in Washington, D.C., called, "We Won't Go Back!"

Farm workers picket pesticide use

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — More than 400 farm workers and supporters demonstrated at a state courthouse in Pasadena November 1 and then picketed a nearby Vons supermarket. The Vons chain is the target of a boycott by the United Farm Workers of America.

The UFW has been campaigning to curb the use of pesticides in California agriculture, particularly by grape growers.

These pesticides have taken a heavy toll on the health and lives of farm workers. The union points to the danger of contaminated grapes to consumers as well.

To press its campaign, the farm workers union targeted Vons, one of the biggest chains in the area. For 10 months, UFW members and supporters picketed at the markets. Last April, Vons agreed it would not promote or advertise pesticide-contaminated grapes.

The growers responded through the California Table Grape Commission. A state agency funded by taxpayers, the commission is, in fact, a creature of the growers.

The boycott has provoked a series of continuing court actions. In June, acting in collusion with Vons, the commission sued Vons for its agreement with the UFW, claiming it

violates the state anti-trust law. A court injunction was issued barring Vons from living up to the agreement.

In August the UFW filed suit and won a ruling that the union's constitutional rights to boycott were violated and the injunction was dissolved. The UFW is also suing the grape commission for conflict of interest for using public funds to finance their anti-boycott actions.

Meanwhile, Vons is once again advertising grapes, using the ongoing litigation as a pretext for not honoring its agreement with the union.

The courthouse rally was addressed by UFW president Cesar Chavez and by representatives of several unions supporting the Vons boycott.

For more than a decade, the UFW has been the target of an unrelenting union-busting drive by California growers and their allies in government. On October 8, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a lower court decision requiring the UFW to pay \$2.3 million to Maggio, Inc., for "damages" it suffered from the 1979 UFW strike. The union has suffered losses in contracts and membership.

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'Capitalism, not socialism, is in crisis'

Cuban economist Tablada discusses gains, challenges of revolution

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

WASHINGTON, D.C. — "It's not socialism that is in crisis in the world today. What is in crisis is the capitalist system, as well as the Soviet model of socialism."

Cuban economist Carlos Tablada made this point to an overflow audience at Howard University here November 8, during the first week of his speaking tour in the United States. He will speak at more than 20 universities during his one-month visit, which is being coordinated by the Faculty Ad Hoc Committee for the Tablada Tour. The committee is made up of several prominent academic figures. Tablada teaches at the University of Havana and is the author of the award-winning book *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism*. This is his second U.S. visit.

At Howard University he was sponsored by four departments: Political Science, Economics, Romance Languages, and Sociology/Anthropology, as well as the Caribbean Student Association.

Well-known journalist William Worthly introduced Tablada.

Different from Eastern Europe

"Why is it that in Cuba you don't witness the same events that are occurring today in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union?" Tablada asked the 130 people present, most of them students.

"In Cuba we had a genuinely popular revolution carried out by the Cuban people themselves." In addition, "socialism in Cuba didn't restrict the rights of citizens," unlike the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

"There have been two currents of thought among revolutionaries in Cuba," Tablada noted. "One group of revolutionaries, led by Che Guevara and Fidel Castro, understood that Cuba should not apply the Soviet model of socialism, which stressed fundamentally economic development."

The Soviet leaders "determined whether socialism had been achieved in that country by the level of steel production, textile production, production of machinery. Che Guevara saw that the Soviet Union was promoting more selfishness than solidarity" among working people.

The political current in Cuba led by Guevara and Castro "understood that, besides developing the economy, it was necessary to develop a new human consciousness.



Carlos Tablada speaking at Howard University meeting in Washington, D.C. Militant/Charles Ostrofsky

"There was a second current of revolutionaries in Cuba that believed in applying the Soviet model of socialism. This current of thought became dominant in my country in the mid-70s. We made the serious error of copying the Soviet model, and copying it badly," Tablada stated.

As a result, "the bureaucracy and technocracy grew by 240,000 people. The solidarity that existed among workers began to break down because only material incentives, such as bonuses, were being used. The trade union, administrative, and even some national leaders were being corrupted. This nightmare lasted around 10 years."

But "the historic revolutionary vanguard, together with the Cuban people, began to rectify" the course of the revolution in 1984. "Therefore, a bureaucratic caste was not able to establish itself, as it had in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. And our people began to recover the ground that had been lost during those ten years of bureaucratism."

Tablada described some of the steps that

have been taken during the rectification process, as it is known in Cuba, such as the replacement of the majority of company administrators and trade union leaders by meetings of workers throughout the country.

He pointed to the experience of 160,000 Cuban doctors, teachers, engineers, and other internationalist volunteers who have served in Africa and other areas of the Third World with no financial reward. "When Africa called, Cuba answered," he said, to applause from the audience.

Students stayed for more than an hour of back-and-forth discussion with Tablada. They asked questions such as: What is the social impact of foreign tourism in Cuba? Are there political prisoners? What are Cuba's relations with China? What is the status of Blacks in Cuba?

Food shortages

At American University, where Tablada addressed a group of 70 people the day before, he was asked about current food shortages. "It's true, there are some shortages," he responded, describing the hardships caused by the disruption of trade with the Soviet Union, Cuba's main trading partner. "For example, all our soap comes from the USSR, but we haven't received a shipment since September. Every day I stand in line one-and-a-half hours to get food for my family."

"But there is a big difference between Cuba and most of Latin America. I do obtain food. But in Venezuela, the stores are full of food yet 10 million people can't afford to buy it. Remember the mass rebellion that took place in that country" last year, Tablada pointed out. He described steps Cuba was taking to become more self-sufficient in food production.

A Cuban-American man questioned Tablada's assertion that Cuba's economic policies during a decade had been opposed by Castro. How could this be true if he was the country's central leader, he asked.

"Fidel's opinions on these questions in the early and mid-70s were in a minority," Tablada explained. "However, we have a collective leadership and decisions are made collectively by voting."

A Cuban-American student said he recognized the Cuban revolution's social achievements such as free medical care and an increased standard of living. "That makes me feel pride as a Cuban." But there is no democracy in Cuba, unlike the United States, which has more than one political party, he said.

"Within the Communist Party of Cuba there are more differences of opinion than there are between the Democratic and Republican parties in the United States, which are both the same thing," Tablada responded, to laughter in the audience. The Cuban leadership has fought to increase mass participation in the revolution, he explained. "Socialism, if it increases the alienation of the people, will not triumph."

"Capitalism, in 500 years of existence, hasn't been able to solve the problems of

humanity," he stressed. "Forty thousand children die of curable diseases every day in capitalist countries. In the United States, 13.5 percent of the people live in poverty, and 32 percent of poor people are Black. A woman worker in the United States makes 59 cents for every dollar a man earns. That's not a humane society. Not only you, but the peoples of Latin America, Asia, and Africa, as well as Eastern Europe, have to seek an alternative to capitalism."

Tablada was also interviewed on Channel 32 television.

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

KALAMAZOO, Michigan — One hundred students, faculty members, and others turned out at Western Michigan University (WMU) to hear Carlos Tablada, on the first stop of his 1991 U.S. tour.

Questions posed by developments in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and whether the Cuban revolution will survive dominated the meeting. Tablada explained that in contrast to the Soviet Union, communism is advancing in Cuba today.

In Eastern Europe, he said, workers faced, on the one hand, "reactionary bureaucrats of the party and state who had alienated the power of the people, and who after decades of corruption asked the people to believe in them." On the other hand they face "politicians who promise a utopian capitalism that does not exist anywhere in the world."

Tablada also addressed 30 students at Kalamazoo College.

At the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, 115 people heard Tablada November 6 at a meeting cosponsored by the Department of Latin American Studies, La Casa Cultural Latina, and La Raza Movement.

After the meeting, almost fifty of the participants jammed La Casa Cultural Latina to continue discussions with the Cuban economist.

MEETINGS FOR CARLOS TABLADA

IOWA

Ames

Iowa State University. Mon., Nov. 18, 12 p.m. Gallery of the Memorial Union. Sponsor: Lectures Program.

Des Moines

Drake University. Mon., Nov. 18, 7 p.m. Meredith Hall, Rm. 101. Sponsors: Dr. John Torgerson, chair, Dept. of Philosophy and Religion; Prof. Fred Adams, chair, Dept. of History.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Rutgers University. Thurs., Nov. 21, 7 p.m. Paul Robeson Campus Center, Student Union Bldg., Rm. 224. Sponsors: Program Board; Prof. Harold Weicker, chair, Political Science Dept.

NEW YORK

Albany

State University of New York. Wed., Nov. 20, 7:30 p.m. Lecture Center 1. Sponsors: History Dept., Fuerza Latina, ASUBA.

New Paltz

State University of New York. Wed., Nov. 20, 1 p.m. College Hall, Recital Hall. Sponsors: Dean of College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Student Government Association.

New York

Borough of Manhattan Community College. Thurs., Nov. 21, 12 p.m. Triplex Theater, Student Activities Area. Sponsors: Ethnic Studies Dept., Social Sciences Dept., Haitian Student Association.

Public School 41. Fri., Nov. 22, 7:30 p.m. 116 W. 11th St. Sponsors: Graduate Faculty Student Union Fee Board, Faculty Ad Hoc Committee for the Tablada Tour; G.F. Union of Political Science Students; Jane Rothenberg Program in Latin American Studies; Dept. of Economics of New School for Social Research.

Government AIDS inaction

Continued from front page

are able to seek medical care has declined.

In New York City there are 35,392 people with AIDS. The city's health department found that only 12 of the 29,992 adult men who have AIDS were infected through heterosexual intercourse with a woman at risk of AIDS. Nearly 14,000 of the total contracted the virus through sharing needles without sterilizing them. Gay men are at risk because of infected semen or blood entering the bloodstream during anal intercourse. While AIDS can be transmitted through vaginal intercourse, it is much less common for this to occur.

This pattern of how the disease is transmitted flows from the fact that the AIDS virus is fragile, dying quickly outside the body. It can only be transmitted through infected blood and semen being brought into direct contact with the bloodstream.

Responding to Johnson's announcement, Ronald Johnson, executive director of the Minority Task Force on AIDS, a private organization based in New York, said he hopes the basketball star can "convince people in our community that when it comes to this disease we are all very much at risk."

But every statistic shows that not all layers of the population are equally at risk. Saying that they are, or that AIDS is transmitted simply through sexual intercourse, goes in the opposite direction needed to take the issue head on; the government barely lifts a finger over AIDS precisely because its main victims are gays and poor people.

Are needle-exchanges the answer?

Some politicians in the Democratic and Republican parties are pushing for cities such as New York to set up programs where

intravenous drug users can exchange used needles for new ones.

The New York State Health Department's AIDS Institute is seeking funds for such a program. State Sen. David Paterson said of the program that "this disease is such a menace that drastic steps must be taken" to combat it.

The administration of Mayor David Dinkins, who scrapped an earlier program when he came into office, is now giving his endorsement to a pilot needle-exchange project in the city. Dinkins cancelled the earlier project because he said it would encourage drug use. At a press conference where he came out in support of the new plan, Dinkins said city officials — presumably cops — would "monitor these centers closely."

These cynical attempts to show that the city is trying to do something about the spread of AIDS assumes nothing can be done about drug addiction among the poorest layers of the society.

New York's program shows how little is done: for the 200,000 intravenous drug users there are only 45,000 drug treatment slots. The program is underfunded and there is a monthslong waiting list.

While wealthy and ruling-class figures can go to fancy rehab centers, Dinkins and the state government say that those in poverty should merely get a few spare needles.

Only by taking the profits out of the drug trade by decriminalizing possession of drugs and drug paraphernalia as part of a massive, government-financed rehabilitation program, can the scourge of drug addiction among working people be addressed.

Cuban Communist Party holds congress

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Communist Party of Cuba held its fourth congress October 10-14 in the city of Santiago. The meeting made decisions to restructure party leadership bodies, allow religious believers into membership, and change how representatives are elected to the country's National Assembly. The third party congress was held in 1986.

The congress was not open to the international press.

Cuban president Fidel Castro said at the opening session that this was a historic event. "We are not only fighting for ourselves, we are not only fighting for our ideals," he stated. "We are also fighting for the ideals of all the exploited, looted, and subjugated peoples, for the hungry people of this world. Our responsibility is much greater."

In a departure from previous congresses, Castro did not present a written report to guide the proceedings. Instead, the Cuban president said, "I chose to come here with fresh ideas, removing myself from the traditional way of doing things to ensure the most democratic discussion."

"We are interested in hearing the delegates express themselves freely on the issues and resolutions that are going to be presented," Castro stated at the opening session. "Everyone's views on the matters broached will be heard."

The party membership elected 1,800 delegates to the congress. Five hundred guests attended the sessions. A third of the delegates, Castro noted, were elected at their work sites: from livestock and agricultural centers, sugar refineries and basic industry, and construction. The rest were elected by regional assemblies. Sixty percent were less than 45 years old. Young people and workers were prominent in many of the congress debates.

In the months leading up to the event, the Cuban leader noted, millions of people participated in assemblies to raise ideas and suggestions for the delegates to consider.

Trade drop with the Soviet Union

In his opening report, Castro gave detailed information on the impact of the steep drop in trade with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe over the last two years. The drop in trade comes on top of the legacy of underdevelopment and the 30-year U.S. economic blockade of the island.

About 85 percent of Cuba's trade has been with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, most of it with the Soviet Union.

In the first five months of 1991, Castro said, there were no shipments of key imports from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe including fertilizers, many food items, lumber and a whole range of other products and spare parts necessary for the functioning of the Cuban economy.

As a result of these drops the Cuban government began to take drastic measures, cutting unessential imports, increasing rationing of basic food items, and decreasing use of fuel.

To meet the demands of what Cubans call the "special period," the fourth congress projected continuing three main areas of development: tourism to bring in hard currency; biotechnology, which has resulted in the production and sale of vaccines for meningitis and hepatitis; and furthering Cuba's food program, based primarily on mobilizing volunteers to work in agriculture in the countryside.

Castro pointed out that 60 camps have been built in the Havana region for the more than 200,000 Havana residents who have

participated in volunteer agricultural work over the last year.

Leadership transition

The congress adopted proposals to change the structure of the leadership bodies of the Communist Party. Delegates also elected a new Central Committee, the average age of which dropped from 52 to 47. Of 225 members, 126 were elected to serve on the committee for the first time. One reflection of this infusion of younger members onto the central leadership body is the 20 percent increase of members who have been in the party for 15 years or less. The number of founding party members

Federation of Cuban Women; Jorge Risquet; and Pedro Miret.

Among the new members of the committee are Abel Prieto, president of the National Union of Writers and Artists, and Cándido Palmero, head of a brigade of volunteer construction workers.

Roberto Robaina, head of the Union of Young Communists (UJC), chaired one of the main sessions.

To encourage bringing younger layers of leadership into the party, UJC members may now be nominated to full membership in the party after belonging to the youth organization for two years. Prior to the congress a minimum of three years was required.



Fidel Castro. Fourth party congress discussed economic situation, party structure.

Militant/José Pérez

on the committee now stands at 29 percent.

The Political Bureau was expanded from 14 to 25 and the category of alternate members was eliminated. Fourteen delegates to the Political Bureau are new members.

As part of a transition in leadership many long-time leaders and founding members of the party were not reelected to the Political Bureau, including Minister of Culture Armando Hart; Vilma Espín, head of the

commenting on the changes in the party's leading bodies, Castro said, "The important thing is that there is renewal in our party. Each generation will be called on to do different things. Each generation will have new and difficult challenges. That is why the men and women will change, but the principles must always remain."

One congress decision that received attention in newspapers around the world was the

decision to allow religious believers to join the Communist Party. Since the party's founding in 1965, as part of the process that began with the fusion of the July 26 Movement, the Revolutionary Directorate, and the Popular Socialist Party, religious believers were excluded from membership. The delegates approved the change by majority vote. "The Party should continue to depend, first and foremost, on the exemplary nature of those who absolutely voluntarily aspire to join its ranks," the congress resolution reads. "It continues to advocate the selection of Party members through mass and public methods in workplaces and among revolutionaries and vanguard patriots, without distinction of sex or skin color and without considering religious beliefs as an obstacle."

Elections to National Assembly

Several suggestions for changes in the method of election to Cuba's National Assembly were approved. Currently representatives are elected by direct secret ballot to local assemblies of People's Power. The local assemblies name representatives to the regional assemblies, which in turn name the representatives to the National Assembly.

The congress recommended making election both to the regional and national assemblies based on direct elections by popular vote. This was one of the most debated points at the meeting.

For the first time since 1968, the delegates to the party congress decided to propose legalizing "self-employment" for services such as bicycle and appliance repair.

Among other topics taken up by the congress were tourism, the need to combat black market activities and theft from state enterprises and cooperatives, and foreign policy.

The new Central Committee was assigned to draw up a revised platform of the Communist Party taking into account the changes in the Soviet Union and developments in Cuba since the start of rectification. Begun in 1986, rectification seeks to overcome problems that resulted from copying bureaucratic methods from the Soviet Union.

In the midst of the difficulties, Castro noted that Washington maintains its 30-year economic blockade of the island.

"They hate us because of our people's capability of accepting the challenge and maintaining their ideals and their willingness to defend those ideals," Castro said.

But in spite of the present difficulties, Castro was confident that the Cuban people were up to the challenge. The socialist ideals of the revolution, he said, "are the most just and humane ideals that have existed in the history of man."

Minneapolis rally to protest violent assault on campus activists by White Student Union

BY GREG ROSENBERG

MINNEAPOLIS — Following a violent assault on students protesting the White Student Union at the University of Minnesota, activists on campus are planning a November 21 rally against racist attacks.

On October 17, thugs connected with the White Student Union attacked a peaceful protest outside campus radio station WMMR. Protesters were opposing the presence of White Student Union founder Tom

David, who was being interviewed on the station. Armed with pipes, nunchaku, tear gas, and an attack dog, the thugs inflicted serious wounds on three people who were hospitalized.

Tom David, a 20-year-old history major at the university, has links to the American Nazi Party and Ku Klux Klan. He and his group have focused on attacking affirmative action and immigrants' rights.

In an article in the student paper, *Minneapolis Daily*, David wrote, "As thousands of Third Worlders pour into this country both legally and illegally, White Americans sit idly by and watch the destruction of their nation. America is quickly becoming a Third World slum and the cowardly White 'sheep' do little, if anything, to stop the mud slide." Immigrant workers, wrote David, "come here to suck the blood of hardworking White people, who are forced to pay higher taxes to support these Third Worlders."

In literature and public appearances, David also singles out Jews and homosexuals for attack.

Garmez Parks, a student and leader of the Young Socialist Alliance, said that the Coalition Against White Supremacy (CAWS), which was formed to oppose the White Student Union, "decided to support the antiracist students who were attacked. The violent attempt to intimidate students from exercising their democratic right to speak out and organize protests against the

racist venom coming from David and his gang must be met with a vigorous response. We urge that all those who oppose this attack join together to demand that the thugs responsible be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law."

"To this end," continued Parks, "the YSA joins with the Progressive Student Organization, the Antiracist Action Group, members of the Asian Student Cultural Association, La Raza Student Union, Africana Student Cultural Center, and dozens of concerned students to build the November 21 rally." Hundreds of people have attended CAWS meetings during the past few weeks.

A leaflet issued by the Young Socialist Alliance gave its answer to David's "fascist-like proposals." The statement explained, "The massive Third World debt — the vehicle for sucking massive amounts of wealth out of Africa, Asia, and Latin America — should be cancelled. We should fight to defend and extend affirmative action in employment and education for Blacks, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans, and women. These are some steps that can help unify the only force that can defeat racism once and for all — the working class."

"With growing economic crises and class polarization, wars and threats of wars, these kinds of rightist probes and assaults will become more common unless they are fought and defeated," said the leaflet.

Books on Cuba from Pathfinder

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Over the top! 6,474 new readers to socialist press

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

We're over the top! The final sales scoreboard printed below shows the success of the international circulation campaign. In nine weeks supporters sold 3,931 *Militant* subscriptions — 107 percent of the projected goal — and also exceeded the goals for *Perspectiva Mundial* and *L'Internationale*. A full report evaluating the sales drive will appear in next week's issue.

Militant goals were met or exceeded by supporters in 26 cities in the United States and in Britain, Canada, France, New Zealand, Sweden, and Australia.

Overall, 6,474 items were sold, surpassing the international goal by 274!

The drive ended with a real campaign effort undertaken by *Militant* supporters around the world. In the final week since the last scoreboard was printed 1,276 items were sold. This included 632 subscriptions to the *Militant*, 182 to *Perspectiva Mundial*, 37 to *L'Internationale*, and 425 copies of *New International*.

The one area where the drive fell slightly short was in sales of *New International*. Supporters came within 54 of meeting the 1,600 goal. However, the large number of *New Internationals* sold during the last week of the drive illustrates the interest in the Marxist political magazine by a growing number of working people and students.

Sales of the socialist publications to union-

ists also saw some successes. Supporters who are members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM), United Auto Workers (UAW), United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), United Steelworkers of America (USWA), and the United Transportation Union (UTU) topped their *Militant* circulation goals.

Tony Prince, a member of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) in Eden, North Carolina, reports that at the Fieldcrest Cannon plant there 8 workers subscribed to the *Militant* — 5 of them renewing — and 2 copies of *New International* no. 5 on South Africa were sold.

John Sarge reports that socialist unionists sold 5 *Militant* subscriptions and 1 *New International* to members of the United Auto Workers attending a meeting of the New Directions caucus outside of Detroit.

Members of the Young Socialist Alliance played an active role in making this drive a success. The Twin Cities YSA chapter met their goal of selling 100 units during the course of the campaign. The Houston YSA exceeded their *Militant* goal of 20, signing up 14 students at the University of Houston alone. The Washington, D.C., chapter signed up 25 students at the University of Maryland as subscribers to the *Militant* and four of these students decided to join the Young Socialist Alliance.



Militant/Karen Ray

Sales tables such as this one at Boston abortion rights action were one important way supporters reached out to win new subscribers to the 'Militant.'

Caterpillar locks out workers

Continued from front page

been deadlocked for five weeks.

Three days later Caterpillar countered the selective strike by locking out almost 6,000 workers at the Montgomery and East Peoria plants. About 8,000 workers are now locked out or on strike, out of Caterpillar's total UAW work force of 15,700.

Caterpillar spokespeople said that it had "selected facilities [to shut down] that will put maximum pressure on the union with minimal additional harm to Caterpillar and the majority of our employees."

Workers on the informational picket line at the Montgomery plant explained that while they hadn't seen details of the company's latest offer, union officials had informed

them that "there were so many takebacks that they couldn't bring it back to the membership."

The main question involved in this fight is Caterpillar's attempt to break from the tradition of pattern bargaining between the UAW and Caterpillar and John Deere & Co., the other major manufacturer of heavy earthmoving equipment. The UAW ratified a contract with John Deere last month. As Montgomery workers explained, Caterpillar is trying to "force us to negotiate singly, so we wouldn't have solidarity with our brothers and sisters."

Caterpillar has insisted on a separate contract that would include union concessions in many areas, including a two-tier wage system; elimination or reduction of the cost-of-living allowance (COLA); differential wages based on job classification, which would widen existing gaps between different classifications of workers and includes no pay increase for the lowest-paid workers; and a lower wage package than that accepted by Deere. In addition, Caterpillar is insisting that its workers pay about 1 percent of their average annual salary for health insurance. For family coverage, this would cost each worker \$1,300 in the first year. Other disputed issues concern outsourcing, premium pay for weekend work, and holiday benefits.

'There is no job security'

In "compensation," Caterpillar workers — who have suffered layoffs through the past year — were offered a "job security guarantee" for the next six years. However, in addition to other loopholes, the company's guarantee can be voided if it proves too costly. As one Decatur union member put it: "There is no job security."

Caterpillar officials have justified their insistence on breaking from pattern bargaining on the grounds that they are a major exporter and face intense foreign competition. They say that they need "an agreement that makes sense for Caterpillar." However, Caterpillar reported profits of \$210 million in 1990.

When asked about Caterpillar's motives in locking out its employees in Montgomery and Decatur, several Montgomery pickets pointed to the back lot. "They've been preparing for this by stockpiling. We'll be out for a while." One 25-year veteran of the plant likened the situation to 1982, when the UAW struck against Caterpillar for 206 days.

Strikers on the line in Decatur expressed little enthusiasm for a limited strike strategy. "We should all go out together," said one striker arguing that Caterpillar's tactics were designed to create divisions among union members, especially between those striking or locked out and those still working. Caterpillar has already declared it will fight unemployment compensation for those locked out.

Selling the socialist press to unionists

Union	% Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
UNITED STATES					
ACTWU	88%	34	30	10	12
IAM	107%	127	136	44	13
ILGWU	84%	25	21	8	2
IUE	69%	65	45	18	6
OCAW	84%	38	32	25	6
UAW	107%	82	88	28	28
UFCW	117%	100	117	25	22
UMWA	108%	25	27	9	2
USWA	116%	91	106	25	10
UTU	113%	105	119	45	14
TOTAL	104%	692	721	237	115
SHOULD BE	100%		692		237
AUSTRALIA					
MFTU	71%	7	5	3	1
SHOULD BE	100%		7		3
BRITAIN					
AEU	50%	10	5	6	0
NUM	57%	14	8	9	2
RMT	96%	26	25	13	16
TGWU	60%	20	12	8	3
TOTAL	71%	70	50	36	21
SHOULD BE	100%		70		36
CANADA					
ACTWU	29%	7	2	2	4
CAW	130%	10	13	3	3
IAM	70%	10	7	4	5
USWA	88%	16	14	8	3
TOTAL	84%	43	36	17	15
SHOULD BE	100%		43		17
NEW ZEALAND					
NZEU	33%	6	2	1	1
NZMWU	89%	9	8	3	2
FTWU	60%	5	3	1	3
UFCW	100%	7	7	2	1
TOTAL	74%	27	20	7	7
SHOULD BE	100%		27		7
SWEDEN					
FOOD WORKERS	50%	6	3	3	2
METAL	167%	9	15	3	7
TOTAL	120%	15	18	6	9
SHOULD BE	100%		15		6

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

OVER THE TOP!

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											
Denver	6	14	233%	3	4	2	1	0	0	11	19
Portland	15	18	120%	0	0	10	7	0	0	25	25
Washington, DC	100	116	116%	18	24	55	58	2	5	175	203
Greensboro, NC	55	63	115%	10	5	14	8	1	1	80	77
Omaha, Neb.	86	98	114%	12	12	25	21	2	1	125	132
Los Angeles *	170	192	113%	100	101	107	119	3	2	380	414
Baltimore	85	95	112%	12	13	40	43	3	3	140	154
Detroit *	122	135	111%	10	10	30	36	2	2	164	183
Houston	75	82	109%	20	16	30	17	2	1	127	116
Chicago	163	175	107%	40	33	70	71	2	2	275	281
Pittsburgh	75	80	107%	3	4	35	33	2	1	115	118
Des Moines, Iowa *	136	145	107%	25	30	40	50	2	2	203	227
Miami *	100	106	106%	30	31	44	45	5	11	179	193
Seattle *	95	100	105%	35	39	27	33	3	4	160	176
New York *	250	262	105%	100	104	110	113	15	19	475	498
Morgantown, WV *	90	94	104%	3	3	30	31	2	3	125	131
Philadelphia *	70	73	104%	20	19	35	38	2	1	127	131
Boston *	125	130	104%	40	40	53	55	7	12	225	237
Birmingham, Ala.	110	114	104%	5	4	43	48	2	0	160	166
St. Louis	115	119	103%	5	1	30	11	2	0	152	131
Newark, NJ *	150	155	103%	50	54	70	71	5	6	275	286
San Francisco	160	165	103%	65	48	72	77	3	6	300	296
Twin Cities, Minn. *	165	170	103%	18	17	55	58	2	2	240	247
Atlanta *	121	124	102%	12	13	56	33	2	0	191	170
Salt Lake City *	170	174	102%	24	22	54	54	2	2	250	252
Cleveland	85	85	100%	10	5	25	16	2	1	122	107
Cincinnati	17	15	88%	2	2	6	3	0	0	25	20
Wichita	10	8	80%	0	1	0	0	0	0	10	9
Anamosa	10	6	60%	2	0	2	0	0	0	14	6
New Haven, Conn.	18	8	44%	2	2	5	0	0	0	25	10
Louisville	6	2	33%	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	2
National teams	25	21	84%	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	21
U.S. TOTAL	2,980	3,144	106%	676	657	1,175	1,150	75	87	4,906	5,038
AUSTRALIA *											
	27	28	104%	7	10	15	26	1	0	50	64
BELGIUM											
	4	1	25%	1	1	7	5	10	8	22	15
BRITAIN											
London	100	114	114%	7	11	70	81	3	3	180	209
Manchester	60	66	110%	3	5	40	40	2	1	105	112
Sheffield	60	44	73%	3	4	40	6	2	1	105	55
Other Britain	10	9	90%	0	2	0	0	0	0	10	11
BRITAIN TOTAL	230	233	101%	13	22	150	127	7	5	400	387
CANADA											
Vancouver	80	91	114%	15	16	30	35	5	5	130	147
Montreal *	65	72	111%	20	23	50	60	30	44	165	199
Toronto *	80	83	104%	20	22	45	46	5	5	150	156
CANADA TOTAL	225	246	109%	55	61	125	141	40	54	445	502
FRANCE *											
	5	6	120%	5	3	20	20	15	17	45	46
ICELAND											
	20	13	65%	0	1	4	3	0	0	24	17
MEXICO											
	0	1	0%	15	14	5	4	0	0	20	19
NEW ZEALAND											
Christchurch	53	64	121%	2	3	12	9	1	0	68	76
Wellington	50	59	118%	3	1	14	14	1	0	68	74
Auckland	75	75	100%	9	9	25	16	1	0	110	100
Other New Zealand	4	8	200%	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	8
N. Z. TOTAL	182	206	113%	14	13	51	39	3	0	250	258
PUERTO RICO *											
	2	0	0%	6	6	8	8	0	0	16	14
SWEDEN											
	45	53	118%	20	34	15	23	3	4	83	114
TOTAL	3,720	3,931	107%	812	822	1,575	1,546	154	175	6,261	6,474
SHOULD BE		3,660	100%		800		1,600		140		6,200
DRIVE GOALS		3,600			800		1,600		140		6,200

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

90 antiapartheid groups form Patriotic Front in S. Africa

BY GREG McCARTAN

In a significant step toward uniting the democratic movement in South Africa, nearly 90 organizations formed a Patriotic Front at a three-day meeting in the coastal city of Durban.

Included in the political, trade union, civic, and religious organizations making up the broad antiapartheid united front are the African National Congress, the Pan Africanist Congress, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, and the National Congress of Trade Unions. Some parties in the Bantustans, rural areas the regime forced Blacks to move to, also participated.

The October 25-27 meeting marked "the beginning of a greater battle," said Walter Sisulu, the African National Congress's (ANC) deputy president, in "the real fight for a democratically elected constituent assembly." The ANC has been working for some time to reverse the fragmentation of the antiapartheid organizations and forge a basis around which to wage common campaigns and press demands on the government.

Sisulu said the regime was not happy about the progress registered at the conference. He explained that the measure of unity achieved was "beyond expectations."

"We know," he said, that "those in power do everything in their power to weaken and undermine the liberation forces."

Dikgang Mosenke, Sisulu's counterpart in the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), said that the Inkatha Freedom Party, which did not participate in the meeting, would be encouraged to join the Patriotic Front.

A declaration at the end of the meeting stated the organizations' "commitment to the establishment of a nonracial, nonsexist, democratic, unfragmented and unitary country." South Africa has "reached a point where transfer of power from the white minority regime to the people as a whole now is the most urgent necessity of struggle," the statement said.

The meeting noted that the government of President F.W. de Klerk "is not the agent of democratic change" and the conference called on the regime to participate in an "all party congress" that would be the first formal step towards the popular election of a constituent assembly. Blacks are still denied the right to vote in South Africa.

These political positions mark a major shift for the PAC, which had opposed talks with the government prior to the convening of a constituent assembly. The PAC was formed in 1959 by ANC members opposed to the course of fighting for a nonracial South African republic, with

equal rights for all, Black and white, who will live and work there. Unlike the ANC they rejected collaboration with white revolutionaries and other South African whites who could be won to support the revolutionary democratic goals of the anti-apartheid struggle.

Government: no to constituent assembly

Although the government has so far opposed the election of a constituent assembly, it has agreed to hold talks between all political organizations in the country. ANC secretary general Cyril Ramaphosa told the press that such a meeting could convene by the end of November.

In a television interview reported in the U.S. government's Federal Broadcast Information Service bulletin, Patriotic Front spokesperson Murphy Morobe said the meeting was the "culmination of many years of efforts and attempts to bring together the various political organizations, coming back to 1912 when the ANC was formed. I think what we have achieved... is yet another milestone in ongoing attempts to actually unite our people."

The government's deputy constitutional development minister, Tertius Delpot, was also a guest on the show.

After briefly stating he hoped a multi-party conference could be quickly convened, Delpot said that with the Patriotic Front, "to a certain extent, we have here a ganging-up against the government."

He called "emotional" the conference declaration that the violence in the country has been "initiated and sponsored by the apartheid state."

"What is perturbing," the government spokesperson said, "is the fact that we get the impression now that the PF [Patriotic Front] has taken up certain positions, and that they are now calling for sanctions, and calling for mass mobilization, and mass action, in order not to promote change but to promote change on the conditions set by the PF. If that is not ganging-up, I don't know what it is."

Morobe responded, saying it has been the apartheid regime that "has been trying to deny the Black people in this country that space to organize themselves, to have themselves operate and organize and challenge the government as a unit."

"I think today we have come to a point where that strategy of the government has been defeated," the antiapartheid leader said. "Our people have confidence in their future."

The importance of the formation of the front was registered within several days. One of the actions all the participating organizations endorsed was the November 4-5 countrywide strike. The final declaration called on "all our people to support and participate" in the job action and "all other forms of united action on this and other issues."

The two-day action was held to protest



Militant/Ruth Haswell

ANC leader Cyril Ramaphosa

the introduction of new taxes that hit working people particularly hard. More important, union organizers stressed, was their determination not to let the regime simply implement new economic measures without even the pretense of consulting those it refused to extend basic democratic rights to. The strike shut the country down for 48 hours.

Strikes shut down South Africa for 2 days

Continued from front page

Contrary to such expectations, the strike was relatively peaceful, given the massive violence that most Black people have been subjected to in recent years. Strike organizers called repeatedly on their supporters to ensure a peaceful stay-away, including respect for workers who did not support the actions. In a nationwide TV address, ANC deputy-president Walter Sisulu said, "We all want this stay-at-home to go off without any incidents. We all want this protest to be dignified and peaceful."

ANC leaders were on all-day alert to take appropriate measures in case of problems. "We have gone out of our way to get maximum discipline — to see that we do not give a chance and opportunity to the other side to come down with force. And on the whole [at the end of the first day] it has been enormously successful," said Ahmed Kathrada,

a member of the ANC National Executive Committee.

The only significant incident occurred at an Anglo-American-owned mine in the Orange Free State where it was reported that 15 miners were killed, allegedly for not supporting the strike. Cosatu and the ANC dispute the allegation and Cosatu is carrying out its own investigation.

Cops attack demonstration

At the same time the police, as they had threatened, attacked and broke up a peaceful demonstration on the first day of the strike in downtown Johannesburg. Their pretext for disrupting the demonstration, characterized by organizers as a "moving picket line," was that a permit to march had not been obtained.

While the call for the general strike centered initially on the new VAT tax, which Cosatu estimates will increase the cost of living for working people by more than 5 percent, the focus of the protest shifted in the process of building for the November 4-5 actions. Given the new political situation in South Africa, at issue is the right of the white minority government in power to make fundamental decisions that affect the welfare of the majority.

Jay Naidoo, secretary general of Cosatu, explained to a Voice of America reporter two days after the successful strike, "What the government is doing [by implementing the VAT] is unilaterally restructuring the economy to perpetuate white minority domination of the economy even if we have a democratic government [in the future]. So the strike was a demonstration and a signal that we sent to the government that the majority of people are opposed to the unilateral restructuring... and support the program demands by Cosatu, the ANC, and the democratic movement which says we are in a transitional period. The white government has no right to unilaterally change anything on its own. It should step down and put in place an interim government of national unity that can have the legitimacy to oversee the political and economic transition to a new South Africa."

The strike's success was due in large part to the broad support and unity that was forged. Almost a hundred organizations were represented on the Coordinating Committee on VAT. In preceding weeks hundreds of marches, rallies and demonstrations were held to build support for the general strike.

A significant aspect of the strike is that it took place in the context of growing unity among antiapartheid forces. It came in the wake of the historic Patriotic Front confer-

ence held in Durban, October 25-27.

In discussing the gains of the conference, Kathrada noted that "the strike... is the first time in our history where we have the support of all our liberation organizations — the PAC [Pan-Africanist Congress], AZAPO [Azanian People's Organization], Nactu and others."

While the strike began around an economic issue, Kathrada said it was also a "political" strike because "it will help a great deal when we reach the negotiating table where we will be able to speak with the force of the people behind us."

As for future negotiations with the government, Cosatu leader Naidoo said, "We will continue to pursue negotiations in a bonafide way. If the government refuses or becomes intransigent in according to the demands of the majority, we will have no alternative but to resort to the type of mass action we saw over the last two days."

Students: end racism at U. of Alabama

BY PAT HUNT

TUSCALOOSA, Alabama — Fifteen hundred students, mostly Black, marched here in a silent candlelight vigil October 23 to protest racist incidents at the University of Alabama (UA). The vigil was called in response to a racist mockery of Blacks at an October 3 fraternity-sorority "swap" party. Some prospective members painted their faces black, wore Afro wigs, and stuck basketballs under their shirts to appear pregnant.

March organizers reported that racist incidents have taken place over the last five years at UA. In 1986 a cross was burned in front of the first Black sorority to move onto Sorority Row. In 1987 a Confederate flag was displayed during "Old South" activities. Earlier this year white fraternity members vandalized two Black fraternity houses.

In addition, the 1989 homecoming queen Kim Ashley, who is Black, was booed and greeted with racist slurs during half-time festivities at a football game. Her car was vandalized and her parents received threatening phone calls. Subsequently, the Student Government Association changed homecoming queen election procedures in a way which Black students feel will make it virtually impossible for a Black to be elected.

The university administration declined to punish the students involved in the racist incident at the fraternity-sorority party, saying that to do so would be a violation of the right to free expression. At the same time, the administration temporarily banned such fraternity-sorority "swap" parties.

In addition to the vigil, students signed a petition to protest the party and other past incidents of racism and asked the Student Government Association to pass a resolution condemning the incident.

Carrying a sign saying, "We all need to see the Light," students marched to Foster Auditorium. Speakers reminded the crowd that it was at Foster Auditorium in 1963 that then-Alabama governor George Wallace stood in the doorway to prevent Black students from attending UA, saying, "Segregation today, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever." A member of the Afro-American Association (AAA) said, "We shouldn't be subjected to racism and ridicule. Blacks come here fighting from day one for their rights as students."

While some white students charged that the march would make students more separate, march organizers responded that this was not an issue of Black versus white. Valencia Belle told the *Birmingham News*, "It's a matter of dignity and respect for others."

As the march proceeded silently through the campus, many watched and some applauded. Hundreds of white students and faculty participated.

A statement issued by the AAA called on students to "visually, mentally, and physically discern the biased, discriminatory, and racist actions with which we have been faced." Students should work together, "realizing that we will not tolerate this type behavior at this institution."

How Far We Slaves Have Come!



Speeches by Mandela and Castro at July 26, 1991, celebration in Cuba explain the links between the battle to uproot the apartheid system and the fight to strengthen the internationalism and communist direction of the Cuban revolution. 83 pp. \$7.95.

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Curtis wins pretrial victory against cops

BY CHRIS REMPLE

DES MOINES, Iowa — At a November 5 hearing in the U.S. District Court, Judge Charles Wolle ruled against a motion filed by lawyers for the City of Des Moines asking that the city be dismissed from a federal civil rights lawsuit brought by union and political activist Mark Curtis. Wolle set 9:00 a.m., November 25, for opening arguments in the trial of the lawsuit.

"This was an important victory," John Studer, coordinator of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, told a weekly meeting of defense activists that night after the hearing. "The court has ruled that we have a shot to prove that the cops are guilty of beating Curtis, and, if we are successful, can take our case against the city."

"This is big political fight — a big political opportunity to advance the fight against police brutality here in Des Moines. We can get out the truth about what they did to Mark Curtis, and what they do to working people every day, and embolden others to fight back," Studer said.

Mark Curtis is a former packinghouse worker and unionist who was framed by the Des Moines police on false charges of rape and burglary. Curtis's real "crime" was his efforts to unite members of his union, the United Food and Commercial Workers Local 431, in defense of 17 immigrant workers victimized by the company and immigration police in a 1988 raid at the Swift/Monfort meat-packing plant here.

After his arrest, Curtis was beaten by several Des Moines cops in a room off the booking area. The cops called Curtis "a Mexican-lover, just like you love those coloreds" as they began to hit him. The beating is the basis for Curtis's lawsuit against the police and the city of Des Moines.

On September 3, City Solicitor Bruce Bergman and assistant city attorney Susan Low filed a motion with Judge Wolle asking that the city of Des Moines be dismissed as a defendant from Curtis's lawsuit. "Plaintiff has failed to come forward with any evidence to support the claims... and has not and cannot establish a genuine issue of material fact," the city attorneys argued.

Record of cop brutality

On October 28 Curtis's attorneys George Eichhorn and William Kutmus responded, drawing extensively on the rich public record of police brutality and violations of constitutional rights in Des Moines. Major excerpts from this response are reprinted on pages 8-9 of this issue.

At the November 5 hearing, Judge Wolle explained that after reviewing the materials filed with the court, he found that there was extensive evidence indicating police brutality in Des Moines. "Can't one infer from the bulk of this evidence that there have been a number of times officers have been out of control?" he said.

Wolle ruled against the city's motion to be dismissed from the suit. He announced that Curtis's lawsuit would be heard by the court in two parts. First, a trial will be held on Curtis's charge that the cops beat him improperly in the city jail. If Curtis wins on this charge, then a second trial will be convened to hear his charge that the police department's



Mark Curtis showing scar from cop beating. At right is Martín Castillo, one of Swift 17 who were victims of immigration raid at Des Moines meat-packing plant.

record of brutality led the cops to feel they could beat Curtis and get away with it.

Judge Wolle reserved ruling on one part of the city's motion. Curtis's attorneys have asked that they be furnished with all police "Use of Force" reports issued since 1983 in order to get evidence to strengthen his case that they systematically practice brutality. The city has refused, arguing that these files are "privileged."

The judge reserved ruling on this dispute, saying that he would take it up if Curtis wins the first trial and gets to try and prove that the city is liable as well.

Since Curtis's lawsuit was filed in 1989,

the city has refused to provide key files concerning the beating of Curtis, including the specific "Use of Force" reports written by the cops who beat him. The city argues that all files on police violence are sent to the cops' Internal Affairs Department "in anticipation of litigation." Therefore, the cops claim, the files are "privileged" and will not be produced. This setup makes it more difficult for victims of police brutality to challenge the cops in court.

City must turn over reports

The judge ruled that the city must turn over the "Use of Force" reports on the beating

of Curtis to his lawyer. The judge also ordered the city to produce the internal affairs files to him. He will review these documents himself and then decide whether they will be provided to Curtis.

City attorneys Bergman and Low filed a number of motions aimed at weakening Curtis's case.

They wanted the medical records from the hospitals where Curtis was treated excluded from the trial. The city attorneys also asked the judge to exclude the testimony of the doctor who treated Curtis, since he was on medical assignment out of the country in October and unavailable to be questioned by the city before the discovery period ended. Discovery is the period allotted for the purpose of each side gathering evidence in support of its case. Lastly, the defendants wanted the judge to deny Curtis's lawyer the opportunity to take a deposition from one of the defendants in the case, Des Moines police officer Charles Wolf, since he had been on vacation in October and unavailable to testify during the discovery period. Wolf along with Daniel Dusenberry were the officers who beat Curtis the night of his arrest.

Judge Wolle ordered the city to make Officer Wolf available to be deposed. He also ruled that Curtis could use the doctor who treated him and the medical records in the trial.

"Between now and the beginning of the trial we want to do everything we can to get information out about this lawsuit against cop brutality and to win new support," John Studer told defense committee supporters. "We want to organize teams to go to the campuses all over Iowa, to plant gates, to discuss the fight Mark is carrying out."

"We are scheduling a public meeting on the eve of the trial, November 23, at the Best Western Motel in downtown Des Moines, as a focal point for this campaign," Studer said. The committee is calling on supporters around the country to come to Iowa over the next two weeks to help on these teams and to attend the trial.

For more information, or to volunteer to come to Des Moines, contact the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311.

Attention needed to get fund drive on schedule

BY ESTELLE DeBATES

Supporters of the Socialist Workers 1991 Party-Building Fund missed out on their goal of getting the \$150,000 drive right up to schedule by the first week of November. The amount sent in for week 12 was \$7,200 — \$1,600 less than what was needed for the fund collection to be up to date. With a month to go until the December 15 deadline, supporters in every city need to meet and map out a plan to collect on all pledges and get the drive on schedule.

Joel Britton in Los Angeles reports that supporters there discussed and organized a campaign to get their drive on schedule. While they have plans to continue reaching out for new contributors, their effort is based on winning a greater number of those who have already made pledges to catch up on payments and to stay on time. Everyone who has pledged is being asked to join the fight to overcome the lag of 20 percent that Los Angeles has. Supporters there are confident that they can quickly turn the situation around.

Supporters in San Francisco and Twin Cities raised their goals this week, bringing the total pledges to the fund to \$163,480. There remains \$65,700 outstanding to collect. If this is paid up the fund will raise \$13,000 more than the original national goal.

The widespread positive response to the new Pathfinder publication, *How Far We Slaves Have Come! South Africa and Cuba in Today's World*, illustrates the impact the communist movement can have in the world today if it reaches out boldly and has the finances to do so. The book features the speeches of Nelson Mandela and Fidel Castro at a rally in Cuba on July 26 this year.

Thirteen U.S. newspapers — community, Black, and campus — have run articles on the book. Some featured it on their front page. The articles quote excerpts from the book, and explain how it can be ordered from

Pathfinder.

"Soul of Mandela, Castro in new book," says the headline in the *Trinidad Guardian*. With a circulation of 52,000, this paper's coverage of the book will reach thousands throughout the Caribbean. The *Daily Nation* from Barbados, also a widely read newspaper, ran a large article on the book in the world section of its October 21 issue.

The speeches by Mandela and Castro contained in the book were first covered by a *Militant* reporting team attending the July 26 celebration in Matanzas, Cuba. Mary-Alice Waters, a leader of the SWP, was part of the team and has since then been speaking on Cuba around the world. She spoke at several meetings hosted by the Party-Building Fund

1991 Party-Building Fund

Collected: \$97,760 Goal: \$150,000



and is currently in Australia to speak at the book's launching there.

Pathfinder staff member Mike Baumann said sales of the book are going well and that the Pathfinder sales team on its way to South Africa expects many bookstores to pick up the book in their orders. Baumann reports the book is also now available in a Spanish edition, entitled, *¡Que Lejos Hemos Llegado los Esclavos!* Pathfinder plans to take this along with its other Spanish-language titles to the largest bookfair in Latin America, being held in Guadalajara, Mexico, at the end of November.

Contributions to the fund go toward helping to pay for reporting trips like the one that made this book possible. This work is essential in the fight to build the international leadership the working class needs to bring an end to the ravages of capitalist society.

Socialist Workers 1991 Party-Building Fund

Area	Goal	Paid	% of Total
Atlanta	5,500	4,457	81%
Baltimore	3,000	2,408	80%
St. Louis	5,500	4,385	80%
Greensboro*	2,350	1,790	76%
Miami	2,400	1,788	74%
Detroit	8,500	6,040	71%
Seattle	5,000	3,551	71%
New York	16,300	11,384	70%
Newark	9,700	6,830	70%
San Diego	2,000	1,390	69%
Omaha	3,000	1,970	67%
Boston*	5,500	3,500	64%
San Francisco*	12,000	7,440	62%
Morgantown	2,800	1,719	61%
Houston	4,800	2,800	58%
Pittsburgh	5,500	3,210	58%
Twin Cities*	9,160	5,001	55%
Chicago	8,000	4,040	50%
Los Angeles	15,000	7,443	50%
Washington, D.C.	6,000	2,605	43%
Philadelphia	5,000	2,034	41%
Des Moines	3,525	1,335	38%
Salt Lake City	6,500	2,295	35%
Cleveland	3,000	1,005	33%
Birmingham*	6,500	2,089	32%
Other U.S.	4,815	4,808	99%
International	2,130	440	21%
Total	163,480	97,760	65%
Should be		105,882	71%

*Indicates raised goal



Militant/Margrethe Siem

John Studer, coordinator of Mark Curtis Defense Committee, said committee planned to send teams to campuses and plant gates across Iowa to get out word about Curtis's lawsuit against cops.

Jailed unionist's court brief details record of Des Moines cop brutality

Answer to city's move to dismiss Curtis's lawsuit against cop beating

Printed below are major excerpts from a legal brief submitted as part of the lawsuit brought by Mark Curtis against the City of Des Moines and the police officers who beat him.

This suit was originally filed in May 1989. It stems from the brutal beating inflicted on Curtis in the Des Moines police station March 4, 1988, the evening he was arrested, and his frame-up on false charges of rape and burglary began.

The cops shattered Curtis's cheek bone, opening a wound that required 15 stitches to close. He was bruised all over his body. As they beat Curtis, they called him a "Mexican lover, just like you love those coloreds."

After Curtis was stitched up at the hospital, the cops threw him naked into a specially stripped cell for the night, without toilet, bed, or clothes.

The trial in this suit is scheduled to open November 25. In September 1991 the city of Des Moines moved to have essential parts of Curtis's lawsuit against the cops dismissed. They claim there is no evidence to prove a pattern of brutality by the Des Moines police. The brief printed below answers these charges.

This document details the record of cop brutality in Des Moines during the past decade. It includes excerpts from reports by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Des Moines Civil Service Commission that condemn various aspects of police activity.

The full text of the brief is available in pamphlet form for \$1. To order, contact the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311 or telephone (515) 246-1695.

* * *

Statement of facts

Mark Curtis is a union and political activist. He is a member of the Socialist Workers Party and was active in the United Food and Commercial Workers Union.

In the days leading up to March 4, 1988, Mark Curtis was involved in political protests concerning the arrest of seventeen alleged unregistered aliens at the Des Moines Swift Meat Processing Plant. That arrest involved some Mexican and Salvadoran workers at Swift.

On March 4, 1988, he attended a rally for these arrested workers. That night he went to the United Mexican American Community Center and Los Compadres to discuss the recent occurrences. Shortly after, he was arrested and taken to the Des Moines Jail.

After booking, Mark Curtis was taken to a small room off the booking room by Defendants [police officers] Wolf and Dusenberry. They interrogated him. They had him disrobe. One officer said, "You're one of those Mexican lovers, just like you love those coloreds." Then Curtis was severely beaten. Other officers came into the room during this occurrence. These officers don't have very specific recalls of who was there or what happened.

The Des Moines Police Department has policies on use of excessive force. As an integral part of that policy, "use of force" reports are immediately taken from the officers whenever force is used. These are maintained by the City as confidential and labeled documents gathered in anticipation of litigation. The Internal Affairs Unit investigates these occurrences and their investigation is labeled as produced in anticipation of litigation. This practice has been condemned by independent investigations, but the Des Moines Police have not changed the policies.

There have been citizen complaints and independent investigations into use of excessive force, racism and sexism at the Des Moines Police Department. The findings indicate that problems exist, policies are not enforced and training is not effective. The City of Des Moines denies the problem and does not support remedial action.

BRIEF POINT ONE

The City of Des Moines has a custom or practice which fosters, tolerates, con-

done, authorizes, ratifies and/or permits the use of excessive force.

The City of Des Moines has a history of citizen complaints, independent investigation and official denial. A summary of part of that history is important and demonstrates the City's policy and custom.

On August 15, 1982, Des Moines police officer James Harkin shot and killed a young Black man, John Monroe Branch. In response to widespread public criticism of the shooting, and of the internal police review of the shooting, Mayor Pete Crivaro formed the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Community Relations to investigate the killing and make recommendations to the Mayor.

The Advisory committee issued its report and recommendations on May 25, 1983. The Advisory Committee found the public perception was that Police Department practices, including regarding use of force as well as the department's method of conducting internal reviews of complaints against itself, were discriminatory and self-serving.

In 1984, Chief Judge Louis Lavorato ruled that the Des Moines Police Department regularly violated the law by holding arrested individuals without bond and without being under any charges. The department had the practice, Judge Lavorato found, of holding individuals for hours and sometimes days by assigning them to a status the department entitled "assigned to detectives." In 1987 former county prosecutor Ronald Wheeler and Polk County Public Defender John Wellman publicly alleged that the Des Moines police were violating the Judge's order and



Facial wounds inflicted on unionist Mark Curtis by cops who beat him

Militant/Stu Singer

had utilized the illegal arrest procedure in hundreds of additional cases.

In December, 1988, Polk County District Judge Michael Streit ruled that over a seven-month period in 1984-85 Des Moines police officer Deborah Lynch was subjected to abusive verbal attacks from male officers intended to harass and humiliate her.

In the course of the Lynch trial, it was revealed that Des Moines police officers had donned Ku Klux Klan robes and carried out racist acts against Black officers.

Judge Streit ruled that the police department and the city were fully liable for "ignorant," "disgusting," "intensely degrading," "crude," and "reprehensible, harassing conduct" against Officer Lynch. "The city is directly liable for its failure to take prompt, effective, remedial action in response to its knowledge of the situation given Lynch's repeated complaints of sexual harassment," the judge found.

Judge Streit took the unusual step of ordering the department to return to the court within 90 days with a plan for new training procedures for all Police Department employees in the "prevention, detection and correction of sexual harassment."

Again, the response of police officials to a critical finding was to denounce it. Police Chief William Moulder wrote a letter to Lt. Jack Rose, an officer who was found to have

engaged in stepped up victimization of Ms. Lynch when she lodged complaints of sexual harassment. Moulder released the letter to the news media.

In an article entitled "Judge wrong, D.M. chief tells officer" the January 19, 1989, Des Moines Register reported:

"There was no substance for me to believe that your [Lt. Rose's] conduct was anything other than thoroughly professional and appropriate," said Moulder in the letter dated Dec. 16. "You will not be subject to any criticism or sanction."

"I believe I am in a better position to make that judgement than the judge was, based on the evidence," the chief said.

The city challenged the judge's ruling and attempted to prevent the new training program from being implemented. They failed.

In 1988, Charlie Smith, an African-American Police cadet who had been fired, filed a complaint with the Des Moines Civil Service Commission, seeking to win back her job, back pay and benefits. Smith charged that her firing was discriminatory.

On November 17, 1988, the Commission issued "Findings of Fact in the Matter of the Appeal of Charlie Smith" ordering her reinstatement. Based on the results of their investigation, the Commission also issued an accompanying general report, the "Des Moines Civil Service Commission Report on the Des Moines Police Department to the Des Moines City Council."

The Commission found that regardless of the Des Moines Police Department's formal policies against discriminatory behavior, the

nate to clear the supervisor and not to determine whether the allegation by the subordinate occurred.

The Civil Service Commission concluded:

But 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?

In its "Findings" ordering Cadet Smith's reinstatement, the Commission also addressed the functioning of the Internal Affairs Unit again:

The Commission finds that the Internal Affairs Unit in its investigation of Ms. Smith's complaint, used suggestive approaches to interview witnesses, had a predetermined opinion as to the desired outcome, and was either unaware of or ignored the failures of witnesses appearing before it to clearly define or confirm the use of the word attributed to Lieutenant Mullins.

The Civil Service Commission added that police officers who appeared before the Com-

"The record shows that the police encourage and tolerate use of force . . ."

mission to counter Smith's complaint "were generally not credible as their testimony was generally evasive, their recall of the significant event was selective and not clear and persuasive, most of who testified that they either did not recall what was said, did not hear what was said, or simply did not know what happened." Instead of remedial action, the police and certain city officials launched an attack against the Civil Service report.

City Manager Cy Carney and Police Chief William Moulder denied that racism or sexism are common in the department. They said the city will appeal the ruling reinstating Smith and awarding her back pay and benefits. Smith remains off the force while the legal fight continues.

* * *

"Racially and sexually offensive remarks are not common language in the department," Moulder said. "I do not believe the officers use that language as a normal part of business."

One month later, the Des Moines Register noted in an editorial that police reaction to the Civil Service Commission report was, at the least, "intemperate":

Police Chief William Moulder, for one, has become almost shrill in his criticism of the Des Moines Civil Service Commission, accusing it variously of having it in for the Police Department to playing fast and loose with the facts.

Chief Moulder was joined by other police representatives in attacking the report and its findings. "Des Moines police lashed out Friday at a city Civil Service Commission report they say brands the entire department 'liars, bigots and male chauvinists,'" the November 19, 1988, Des Moines Register reported.

"We feel the commission has overextended their responsibilities, thus demoralizing personnel of this department. We are professionals and have conducted ourselves accordingly," he [Dennis Westover, the president of the Des Moines Police Burial Association and vice chairman of the Police Bargaining Unit Association] said.

Westover also called the report "an irresponsible attack designed to drive a wedge between the department and the community."

A statement signed by Bargaining Unit Association chairman Rich Host, chief steward David Murillo, treasurer Bradley Wells and Westover said the group's members were "insulted and outraged by these undeserved insinuations and accusations."

The practical effect of this response by police officials was to prevent the correction

* * *

The length of interviews and number of questions asked even before Cadet Smith was interviewed raises concern with the Commission: it appears the Internal Affairs Unit "investigated" an allegation against a superior by a subordi-

of improper police practices and to negate the effect of any training for police officers to the contrary.

Police Chief Moulder and City Manager Carney invited representatives of the U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service, based in Kansas City, Missouri, to come to Des Moines to investigate the findings of the Des Moines Civil Service Commission.

On June 19, 1989, the Justice Department study was completed and released. This report reached the same general conclusions as had the Des Moines Civil Service Commission. The Justice Department representatives found that racist and sexist language was rife in the police department.

The Justice Department specifically scored the police department for the dichotomy between its proclaimed standards and its actual day to day practice. This same division had been highlighted by the Civil Service Commission. The Justice Department report said:

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

The Justice Department noted that the formal training procedures in place in the Department had no effect in curbing continued violations in practice.

Des Moines police officers have received and continue to receive training in the prevention of discrimination based on race, color, national origin and gender. However, the training has had little effect in preventing the practice of derogatory name calling and racial, ethnic and sexual jokes from occurring as evidence[d] by the interview results of police personnel.

The Department of Justice Community Relations Service also concurred with the Civil Service Commission in its evaluation of the Des Moines Police Department Internal Affairs Unit.

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.

In a June 21, 1989, editorial entitled "Act on police report," the Des Moines Register stated:

While the Justice Department was not as harsh as some of the department's critics, city officials can no longer make excuses for the department's internal problems. The city needs no more evidence. The report comes on top of a successful sexual-harassment lawsuit, a reversal on the firing of a black police cadet and a damning report by the city's Civil Service Commission.

While sensitivity training sessions were instituted in response to the department's problems [this had been ordered by Judge Streit], City Manager Cy Carney and Police Chief William Moulder insisted there really weren't major problems, leaving the impression among department employees that the sensitivity training was just for show. That was confirmed by the Justice Department report.

This response by police officials — to deny all findings against them and to back officers who were found to have committed improper acts — is a consistent pattern over the last eight years.

The State of Iowa Citizen's Aide/Ombudsman is a state agency which receives thousands of citizen complaints annually. It investigates and attempts to mediate these complaints. The office also has authority to make legislative recommendations. In 1988 the Ombudsman's office investigated 216 complaints concerning city and county police and jails, 282 in 1989, and 280 in 1990. Since 1989, the Ombudsman has proposed legislation "to create a civilian law enforcement



Militant/Linda Marcus

Curtis (second from right) at 1988 rally protesting his frame-up and beating.

oversight authority to review the actions of state and local law enforcement agencies and personnel."

The police department has responded to plaintiff Mark Curtis' challenge to his brutal treatment at police hands with a similar blanket denial of wrong-doing. In a Sunday, November 27, "OP ED" column entitled "D.M. police circle wagons," James Flansburg, editor of the Des Moines Register editorial pages, wrote:

Quite naturally, I suppose, the Curtis case led Bill Moulder and his troops to circle their wagons. Their only defense, they seem to have concluded, is to pretend that they're perfect, that everything is hunky-dory.

This history of governmental agencies' critical review of police practice, answered by police refusal to take remedial action, is corroborated by additional evidence of the

use of unnecessary and/or excessive use of force by Des Moines police personnel.

In a sworn affidavit in this case, Randall Wilson, Legal Director of the Iowa Civil Liberties Union, testifies to the fact that their office regularly receives "many requests for assistance or advice in regard to abuse by police." He adds that "a sizeable majority of our police brutality or excessive force complaints" come from Des Moines. Wilson testifies:

We are convinced that even we are not seeing the total extent of the problem: After the much publicized televised beating of a subject by Los Angeles Police earlier this year we experienced about a three-fold increase in police brutality complaints. Despite the increase, the overall "quality" or merit of the complaints was actually higher. This increase has since subsided back to more typical levels of complaint. We think it unlikely

Messages support parole for Mark Curtis

Printed below are excerpts from some of the more than 400 letters urging parole for Mark Curtis that were delivered to the Iowa State Board of Parole October 31.

Mark has already served more time than certain hardened criminals. Surely, in your deliberations, the Board of Parole can find it in their hearts to reunite him with his wife and community. We need men like him working in our cities and towns, all across this land to present a proper role model for us all in [the] area of social and economic justice. Nathan Head
International Representative
United Auto Workers Civil Rights Department

As a unionist and political activist, Mark Curtis has worked selflessly for social justice, equality and a decent standard of living for all working people. In this endeavor he shares the goals of the entire union movement. We are inspired to learn that he continues to strive for these goals while in prison. We are convinced that he will continue to do so once he is released. Edgar H. Townsend
Secretary-Treasurer
Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers
District 8 Council

His [Curtis's] denial of basic rights under the constitution of the United States of America makes a mockery of that country's claim to be a haven for the oppressed and a champion of the freedoms embodied in the United Nations Charter.

We express our solidarity with the campaign to secure Mark's release from prison and for an official inquiry into the unjust treatment accorded to him.

R. Potroz
National President
New Zealand Food and Textile
Workers Union

I am familiar with Mr. Curtis' case, and regardless of his disputed guilt or innocence, he has served more than the average time for the charge on which he was convicted.

Mr. Curtis has no previous criminal record and has, I understand, a good work and behavior record while in prison. He also has a strong network of support across the coun-

try. Given these factors, I hope you will agree that Mr. Curtis deserves parole.

Joan Suarez
International Vice-President
Amalgamated Clothing and Textile
Workers Union

We in the United Farm Workers of Washington State have followed Mr. Curtis' defense case since 1988 and have repeatedly called for his release. We noted that he was involved in efforts to defend immigrant workers — just like most of our members — from injustices committed by the INS at the time of his arrest.

We hope you will make the right decision and that Mark Curtis will soon be free and able to visit us in the Yakima Valley to share his experiences with us.

Manuel Cortés
Vice-President, United Farm Workers of
Washington State

Last November, I joined with many others from around the country in urging the parole of Mark Curtis.

As I understand it, Mr. Curtis has been an exemplary inmate. Further, as my previous letter indicated, Mr. Curtis seems to pose no threat to society and has a strong support system of family and friends. Given these facts, he seems an excellent candidate for parole.

Coleman Young
Mayor, City of Detroit

It is important that you follow your own procedures and guidelines concerning parole requests. This country is built on the guarantee of certain rights for all people. Unfortunately, there are many groups like mine that are needed to monitor the actions of groups like yours.

Please do the right thing and give Mark Curtis the parole that he deserves.

Rebecca Elliott
Executive Coordinator
Utah National Organization for Women

I write you as a successful film producer in Hollywood asking for the immediate parole of Mark Curtis. You may not be able to overturn the unjust actions of the police and courts, but you can give this innocent man a chance to rejoin the society he rightfully

that police were involved in increased numbers of questionable encounters immediately after the incident in L.A. and more likely that even we do not see the full extent of what is actually happening on the street.

In addition, police practice over the past decade, as reflected in the Des Moines Register, demonstrates use of force and negligence in the City Jail, lawsuits and settlements concerning police use of force, examples of police racism, sexism and political discrimination, and community complaints against the police.

This record shows that the Des Moines Police Department has institutionalized practices which tolerate and/or encourage use of force and the violation of constitutional rights. The numerous citizen complaints, the independent reviews and suggested changes demonstrate the problem. Instead of addressing the problem, the City of Des Moines denies the problem, and relies on its confidentiality rules to foreclose accountability. These same responses are present in this case. A policy or custom has been shown and Defendant Motion for Summary Judgment should be denied.

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIAM KUTMUS
Kutmus & Pennington

GEORGE S. EICHHORN
Eichhorn, Elverson & Vasey

deserves to be a part of.
Gary S. Foster
Culver City, California

The Committee for Justice has been working over the last several years since its inception to press for the due process rights of immigrants. For almost five years, we have been defending seven Palestinians and one Kenyan who themselves have been targeted by the government for their political beliefs. This is why we are especially sensitive to widespread charges of unfairness in Mr. Curtis' case. Noted civil and human rights advocates from around the world have called for the release of Mark Curtis. I call on your board to grant Mr. Curtis parole now.

Ahmed Nassef
Project Coordinator
Committee for Justice To Stop The
McCarran-Walter Act Deportations

In November 1990, in the name of my organization, the CGT of France, I asked that you grant parole to Mark Curtis.

His imprisonment still remains unjust and we cannot understand why he should be kept in prison insofar as in relation to the practices and customs of the State of Iowa he has already completed a longer time than average for cases like his.

Therefore we repeat our demand, for today nothing can be said against it, except to believe that in reality Mark Curtis is in prison for his union activities.

Hélène Duberos
In charge of American affairs, General
Confederation of Labor (CGT) of France

In Mexico, we recognize the United States as a democratic country where there is social justice with equality for all. We are confident that when you review the case of Mark Curtis, justice will be done and he will be granted his freedom immediately.

Our federation, which represents more than 20 labor organizations in Latin America, will carefully follow the case of our union brother Mark Curtis.

Jorge Sánchez García, President
Antonio Durán Aguirre, General Secretary
Federation of Electrical Workers' Unions of
Latin America and the Caribbean (Fosielca)

Soviet workers' 1920 win in civil war

(Third in a series)

Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite!, recently published by Pathfinder, contains the full record of the Second Congress of the Communist International, held in Soviet Russia in 1920.

The *Militant* is serializing the introduction to the book written by its editor, John Riddell.

The section printed last week described the revolutionary struggles by German workers in 1919 and 1920, and the strike wave and peasant revolt that broke out in Italy at the same time. These excerpts are copyright © 1991 by the Anchor Foundation and reprinted by permission of Pathfinder Press.

The main cause for optimism among Second Congress delegates lay not in the events in central Europe but in the success of Russia's toilers in beating back the White Guard forces and the interventionist armies of the imperialist powers.

In mid-1919, the White Guard armies had controlled most of the territory of the

old tsarist empire and had been poised to move against Moscow and Leningrad from three different directions. Imperialist armies and navies attacked Soviet forces from every side during 1918 and 1919. In contrast, by early 1920 most of the interventionist forces had been compelled to withdraw. Although fighting continued in many areas, the only major White Guard army remaining in the field was that of Baron Wrangel in Crimea.

Soviet victory in the civil war was made possible in large measure by the capacity of the vanguard of the Soviet working class to hold the support of the great majority of peasants, who resisted White Guard attempts to reinstall the landlords and give them back their estates. Moreover, as the Red Army advanced into the territory of nationalities oppressed under tsarist rule, the Russian Soviet Republic's support in deeds for the right to national self-determination enabled revolutionaries in these territories to lead victorious struggles that established governments of the toilers.

In beating back the Entente-organized in-

vasion, Soviet Russia received vital help from within the imperialist countries, where solidarity actions included refusals to load shipments for the White Guard and interventionist armies. Mutinies broke out in several of the imperialist armed forces. Capitalist regimes had to abandon plans to use these forces on a scale sufficient to overthrow the Soviet regime and thus make possible capitalist restoration in Russia.

Imperialist blockade

The imperialist powers did not, however, cease their efforts to harass Soviet Russia, isolate it politically, and deal it heavy economic blows. Their blockade and intervention against the Soviet republics wreaked havoc, contributing greatly to economic collapse. By 1920 industrial production in Soviet Russia had fallen to a mere 20 percent and grain production to only 40 percent of pre-war levels. Hunger stalked both city and countryside.

The hopes of Soviet toilers for a breathing spell in which to begin reconstruction were dashed by the invasion of the soviet Ukraine launched April 25, 1920, by the Polish government under Joseph Pilsudski. Although backed by French arms and diplomatic support, the Polish armies were soon beaten back.

Soviet forces now advanced deep into Poland. Communists in Poland expanded their revolutionary activity, organizing many strikes. Midway through the Second Congress, at the beginning of August, Communists in Soviet-occupied Polish territory established a Provisional Polish Revolutionary Committee in Bialystok. Julian Marchlewski (Karski), a leader of the Communists from Poland, left Moscow after the first few sessions of the congress in order to head this provisional government.

The Red Army was swiftly approaching Warsaw. Among working people across Europe, the Pilsudski government's attack had aroused a powerful wave of support for Soviet Russia, and arms shipments to the Pilsudski regime were blocked by workers in Britain, Germany, and other countries. "All Germany began to seethe when our forces approached Warsaw," Lenin commented. The prospect that the Red Army advance would enable the toilers of Poland to take power inspired hopes that the Soviet proletariat could link its power directly with that of the workers of Germany in a new revolutionary offensive advancing westward across Europe.

Ferment in Europe and North America

The Polish war led to a major class confrontation in Britain, which broke out while the second Comintern congress was in session. The trade union movement announced plans for a general strike if the British government intervened in Poland against the Red Army. This challenge brought to a head the severe social crisis that had shaken Britain since 1918, a crisis marked not only by powerful waves of strikes but by major unrest in the army. The government concluded that it did not command sufficient "reliable" troops to quell possible workers' protests against military intervention into Poland and declared that no such action would take place.

The British rulers' problems were compounded by mass protests in India against British rule, unrest elsewhere in their colonial empire, and a revolutionary uprising in Ireland. The majority of the representatives elected to the British Parliament from Ireland had met in January 1919 as an Irish national assembly and declared national independence. By 1920 a guerrilla struggle organized by the Irish Republican Army against the British occupation forces was spreading across Ireland.

A wave of meetings and demonstrations against government intervention in Poland also swept France. There, however, the workers' movement had recently suffered a significant setback. In May 1920 hundreds of thousands of workers had waged a strike in solidarity with embattled railway unionists. The rail strike went down to defeat, in part because of the vacillation of leaders of the French union federation and Socialist Party. This experience led many workers to turn against these officials and seek a road to building a communist movement. Significant numbers of peasants in France were also turning toward the revolutionary movement, and they were soon to become a bulwark of

strength for the Communist Party.

In the United States the postwar strike wave peaked late in 1919 with walkouts of more than 400,000 coal miners, who won wage gains, and some 350,000 steelworkers, whose struggle for union recognition ended in defeat. In November 1919 the federal government launched a campaign of repression against the labor movement. In the name of "combating communism," thousands were arrested, and many immigrant workers were rounded up and deported or threatened with deportation. This witch-hunt was the opening salvo in an onslaught by U.S. capital against labor during 1920 that headed off any renewal of militant actions by workers on the scale of the previous year.

In most smaller capitalist states of Europe, the labor upsurge continued into 1920 but did not reach the heights of militancy of the preceding two years. In some countries, such as Norway and Sweden, labor scored limited but significant gains. Peasant struggles were spreading across eastern Europe, and land reform measures were enacted by several imperiled capitalist governments, notably in Poland, Romania, the three Baltic states (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia), and in Bulgaria, which was governed by a peasant-based, petty-bourgeois party.

Latin America had not been drawn into the great social crisis created in Europe by the war. Nonetheless, the small but militant working classes there took part in the international labor upsurge of 1918-20. In Mexico, shaken during the preceding decade by a great peasant revolution, the overthrow of the Carranza regime in 1920 showed that the possessing classes had yet to stabilize their rule.

Asian national liberation struggles

Across Asia there were many signs in the year preceding the Second Congress of a rising struggle for national liberation. In April 1920 Turkish bourgeois-nationalist forces led by Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) established an insurgent government in Ankara that swept aside the Ottoman sultanate. The Kemal regime set out to drive from Turkish soil the occupying armies of the Allied powers and to lay the basis for capitalist modernization of Turkey. In the Gilan district in northern Iran, a soviet republic was established in early June 1920, just as the first delegates who were to attend the Second Congress began to arrive in Moscow.

The working class in India rose up between late 1918 and 1920 in a great strike wave. The Indian National Congress, a mass proindependence organization, was expanding its activity. Midway through the Second Congress its main leader, Mohandas Gandhi, launched a campaign of nonviolent resistance to British rule, which soon took on massive proportions.

A demonstration of Chinese students in Beijing on May 4, 1919, protesting the denial of China's national rights by the Paris conference of Allied powers, opened a period of anti-imperialist and antigovernment action embracing almost all strata of the urban population. The Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) was shaken after 1917 by agitation for national freedom and worker militancy. In Korea the year 1919 saw a revival of mass resistance to Japanese rule.

An organization of Black workers was formed in Johannesburg in July 1917, and two years later Black workers in South Africa conducted their first mass strike action. Outside South Africa, the years following the Russian revolution saw the foundation of the first African political organizations for struggle against colonial rule.

The Comintern leadership looked to the liberation movement of Eastern peoples, that is, the oppressed peoples whose leading contingents at that time were in Asia, as an indispensable force in the overthrow of the world imperialist system. A few months after the congress Lenin raised the slogan "Workers of the world and oppressed peoples, unite!" On July 3 the Comintern Executive Committee called a conference of the oppressed peoples of Asia; the call was cosigned by Communist leaders of Russia, the United States, and nine capitalist countries of Europe. Three weeks after the Second Congress ended, nearly two thousand representatives of some thirty Asian peoples convened at the Congress of the Peoples of the East in the city of Baku in soviet Azerbaijan.

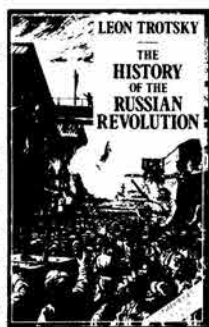
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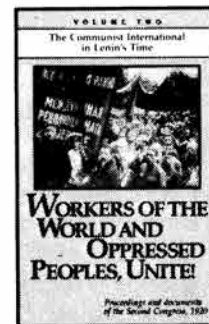
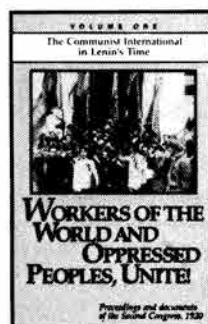
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OFFER EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 1991

Should terminally ill have right to decide to end their lives?

Continued from front page

the religious hierarchy, organizations opposed to abortion rights, and sections of the medical profession.

These forces mounted a fierce campaign against Initiative 119, a measure on the Washington State ballot November 5. The "Death With Dignity Act" attracted international attention because it would have made the state of Washington the only governmental jurisdiction in which terminally ill people could exercise their right to end their life through a medical procedure called "aid-in-dying."

Sponsored by Washington Citizens for Death with Dignity, Initiative 119 addressed two aspects of this issue.

First, the bill would allow for the "withdrawal of life-sustaining procedures" from adult patients in an irreversible coma or a

rect taking of a life, as an appropriate means for dealing with dying people."

Signed by four Catholic bishops, the statement said their opposition "flows from our conviction that life is sacred and that God alone is the true sovereign over life. Our dignity and worth are simply innate to our relationship with God and not dependent on our social usefulness."

Many elderly and infirm people would feel they had an "obligation" to remove themselves from this life," the statement said.

Catholic archbishop of New York, John O'Connor, went a step further during a service at St. Patrick's Cathedral when he called the ballot measure "an incredible drive to destroy life." He compared it to "the small beginnings" of mass murders under the Nazi regime in Germany.

Others in the Human Life of Washington coalition opposing the measure also called the law "legal homicide." Coalition leader Eileen Brown said, "The eyes of the world are here because Washington State will consider making a killing class." Human Life is also the state's chapter of the National Right to Life Committee, a group that is virulently opposed to a woman's right to choose abortion.

In a phone interview from Seattle, Ralph Mero, president of the Hemlock Society of Washington State, said the most effective argument used by those wanting to stop the initiative was that "doctors could not be trusted with this responsibility" because they would "conspire with the elderly's relatives to kill them in order to get them out of the way."

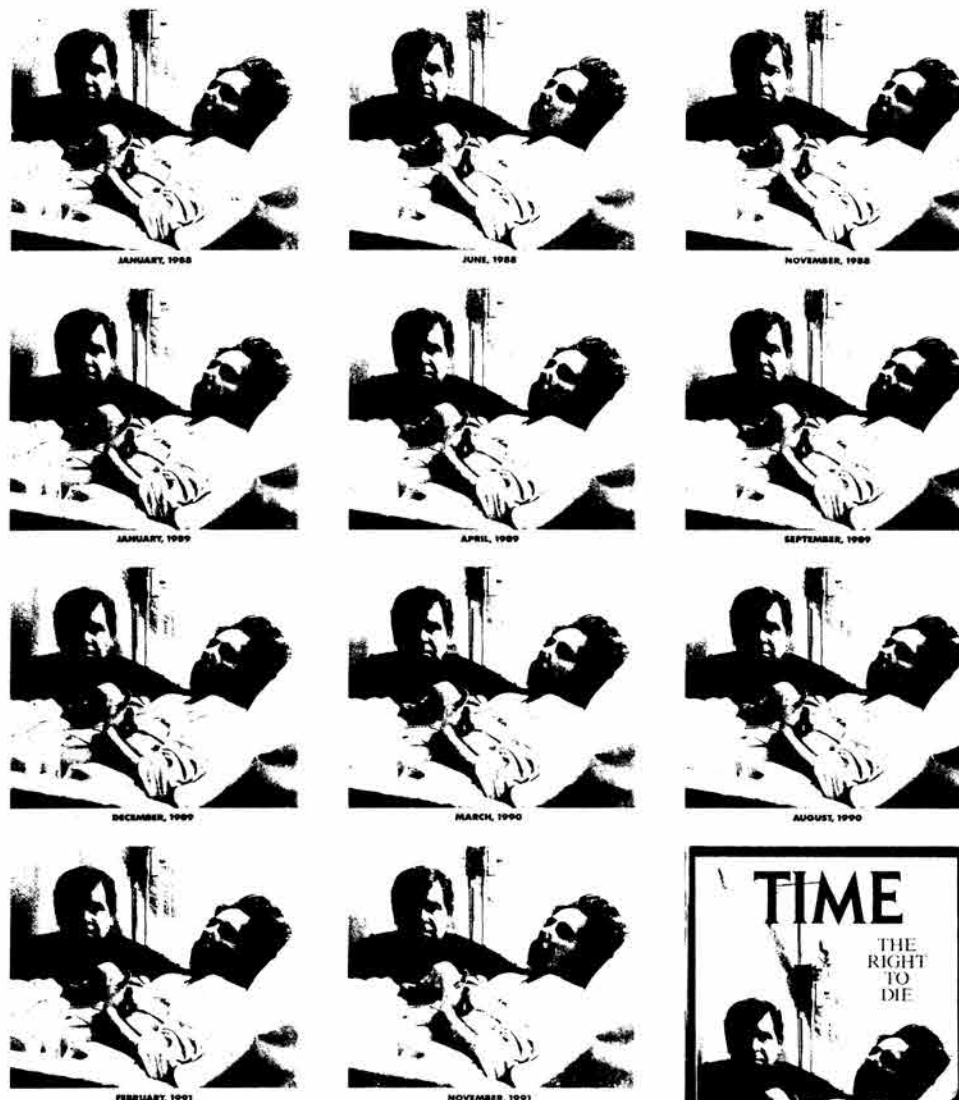
One of the endorsers of the "Death With Dignity Act," the Hemlock Society campaigns in several states for measures similar to the one advanced in Washington. Mero is a Unitarian minister.

Mero said supporters of Lyndon LaRouche's campaign for U.S. president in the 1992 elections also jumped into the middle of those opposing the initiative. LaRouche, who heads a fascist organization, is running as a Democrat.

His supporters distributed 50,000 copies of an article run in the organization's newspaper, the *New Federalist*.

The outfit focused right in on the main line of argument in the debate, calling the measure "Nazi-style genocide aimed against the sick, elderly, or infirm — and anyone else seen as a 'burden to society.'"

The article appeals to those who oppose government cutbacks in medical care and social services, saying the Bush administration has "created a powerful economic disincentive against medical care for the elderly, disabled, and poor." It said the



WHEN LIFE IS A FATE WORSE THAN DEATH. What would you do? Don't look to current ethics, morals or the law for answers. They haven't kept pace. But TIME readers have. Because TIME engages them on a personal level and makes them think. It's what they want. It's why they're willing to pay more for TIME. And it's why TIME gives your clients more for their advertising dollar.

Full page ad in 'New York Times'. One example of discussion on 'right to die'.

Washington initiative on right to 'death with dignity' highlights debate.

persistent vegetative state. The life-support mechanisms could only be ended if the person had requested such a step be taken in a Living Will or through an attorney invested with such powers.

The initiative also provided for a new medical procedure called "aid-in-dying." Terminally ill patients who had been diagnosed by two doctors as having six months to live could request their life be ended. The patient would have to be conscious and mentally competent and make the request in writing in the presence of two witnesses.

Portions of the proposed law safeguarded the rights of those who do not request to have their lives ended with the medical procedure. "Nothing is this chapter shall be construed to condone, authorize, or approve mercy killing, or to permit any affirmative or deliberate act or omission to end life," it read.

Endorsing the measure were a range of gay rights and AIDS support groups, organizations of social workers and advocates of the rights of the elderly, and county Democratic Party units.

Vote totals released November 6 showed the initiative failed by a vote of 54 percent to 46 percent.

'Direct taking of life'

The Washington State Catholic Conference said in a statement that "the real issue at hand is whether we, as a society, will endorse suicide, assisted-suicide and the di-

bill's supporters want "your vote for this Nazi crime of euthanasia."

Euthanasia, according to the dictionary, is "the act or practice of permitting the death of hopelessly sick or injured individuals in a relatively painless way for reasons of mercy."

Conservative and rightist forces often misconstrue the word to mean a government policy aimed at eliminating sections of the population for economic and political reasons. Some in the debate called the initiative "voluntary euthanasia." Most proponents preferred the "right to die with dignity" designation.

Answering critics

Advocates of the initiative did not shirk the issues raised by the array of right-wing and religious groups when arguing for the bill.

Seattle lawyer Kathryn Tucker, coauthor of the initiative, told the *New York Times* the measure seeks to expand, not limit, a person's freedom of choice.

Mero said his organization "wholeheartedly supports access to health care for everyone, regardless of income. Even if we achieve this goal "there will still be terminally ill people who want to die."

He pointed to the example of a man in a veterans hospital who has no chance of recovery from his illness. "That man called us to find out about his rights not because he was poor or denied medical care, but because he did not want to go on in his condition."

Individuals take many things into consideration "when making their own decisions about when their life should come to an end — ethical, moral, and financial," Mero said.

Although the Catholic church issued a statement focusing on the belief that a person

who commits suicide will go to hell, Mero said this argument was not used much in the public debate over the bill. "The religious implications were ignored," he said. "They know these arguments are not the most persuasive."

Mero pointed to the many experiences people with family members near death have had. This has led to the growth in support for measures such as Initiative 119. Because assisting others to die is currently illegal in most states, no figures are available on how widespread the practice is today.

Kathy Wheeler, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Seattle City Council, said of her support to the measure: "Allowing individuals to make the decision, and to carry it out in the most humane way possible, would also lift the threat of criminal sanctions hanging over those who consider assisting those near death in ending their lives."

"Having the right to decide how and when to die in such a situation," she said, "gives greater value to human consciousness and the ability of a person to control the decisions regarding their life."

"The many organizations supporting the initiative also back demands for decent health care for all. This does not negate the fact that those who decide they do not want to go through the final months of a debilitating disease should not be denied the right to end their lives," the socialist said.

She stated that religious pronouncements by the Catholic church hierarchy should never be used to deny rights to individuals, whether it be a woman's right to choose abortion or the right to die with dignity.

—CALENDAR—

ALABAMA

Birmingham

Help Fight Police Brutality: Free Mark Curtis! Speakers: Eddie Carthan, former frame-up victim, first Black mayor of Tchula, Mississippi; Eula McGill, retired staffperson Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; Rev. Carter Gaston, pastor Central Missionary Baptist Church; Michele Wilson, vice-president for action, National Organization for Women; Susan Battles, activist against death penalty and supporter of political prisoner Gary Tyler; Albert Carson, president Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics and Allied Workers Local 255; Pat Hunt, Socialist Workers Party. Sun. Nov. 17, 5:30 p.m. Parliament House Hotel, Palm Beach/New Orleans Room, 420 S 20th St. Sponsor: Birmingham Supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Donation: \$5. Tel: 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 nonmembers. Co-sponsors: World Affairs Council, Commonwealth Club of California. Sat., Nov. 16. First Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin St., 7 p.m. Donation: \$5-\$10 sliding scale. Co-sponsors: Hands Off Cuba Coalition, Venceremos Brigade. Tel: Global Exchange. (415) 255-7296.

NEBRASKA

Omaha

Free Mark Curtis. Fight Police Brutality. Speakers: John Studer, coordinator Mark Curtis Defense Committee; Dorothy Walker, Rice-Poindexter Defense Committee; Jason Coughlin, GI being harassed by Air Force. Fri. Nov. 22, 7 p.m. Reception with video on frame-up, 6:30 p.m. Business and Technology Center, 24th and Lake Streets. Translation into Spanish. Donation: \$3. Omaha Supporters of Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Tel: (402) 553-0245.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Free Mark Curtis. Fight Police Brutality. Speaker: Representative Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Video: *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis*. Fri., Nov. 15, 7 p.m. AFSCME DC 47, 1606 Walnut St. Sponsor: Philadelphia Supporters of Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

WEST VIRGINIA

Morgantown

Justice for Mark Curtis. Fight Police Brutality. Speakers: Mindy Brudno, graduate student, foreign languages; Chris Rayson, Socialist Workers Party. Sat. Nov. 16, 7 p.m. West Virginia Univ. Mountain Lair, Monongahela Room, 2nd Floor. Sponsor: Morgantown Supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Campaign. Tel: (304) 292-4570.

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Saturday, November 23, 7.30 p.m.
Best Western Starlight Inn

929 3rd St., Des Moines, Iowa

Speakers: **John Studer**, coordinator, Mark Curtis Defense Committee; **Dorothy Walker**, spokesperson for Rice-Poindexter Defense Committee; **Gary Tell**, steward, UFCW Local 1149; and others.

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Celebrate the 74th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution: Its Accomplishments and Lessons for Working People Today. Speaker: Pete Seidman, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

The Politics of AIDS. Speaker: Roger Bland, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Nov. 23, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

The Russian Revolution. Speaker: Susan Lamont, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m. 172 Trinity Ave. SW. Donation: \$3. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

The Lessons of Wichita and the Fight for Abortion Rights Today. Speaker: Pat Smith,

chairperson, Chicago Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., Nov. 16, 5 p.m. Open House 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. following march and rally for abortion rights. 545 W Roosevelt Rd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (312) 829-6815 or 829-7018.

Celebrate the 74th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution: Prospects for Communism Today. Speaker: Don Davis, Socialist Workers Party, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 100-A. Sat., Nov. 23, 7 p.m. 545 W Roosevelt Rd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (312) 829-6815 or 829-7018.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

1917 Russian Revolution: Its Impact on the Worldwide Struggle for Liberation and Socialism. Speaker: representative Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

Women's Oppression: From Its Historic Roots to the Struggle for Equality Today. Panel discussion. Sat., Nov. 23. Reception, 7 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

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Celebrate the Life of Richard Cahalane, Socialist Fighter for the Interests of the Working Class. Speaker: Andrea Morell, chairperson, Boston Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m. 605 Massachusetts Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

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The 1917 Russian Revolution: Its Contribution for the Forward March of Working People. Sat., Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m. 1622 S Broadway. Donation: \$3. Tel: (314) 421-3808.

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Celebrate the 74th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution: Prospects for Communism Today. Speakers: Greg Preston, Socialist Workers Party; Melanie Williams, Young Socialist Alliance. Preforum chili feed, 6 p.m., program, 7 p.m. 140 S 40th St. Donation: chili feed \$3; program, \$3. Tel: (402) 296-0045

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The Fight for Palestinian Rights. Will the Mideast Peace Conference Bring Peace? Speaker: Dave Marshall, Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m. 191 7th Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (212) 675-6740.

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Greensboro

David Duke and U.S. Politics Today. Sat., Nov. 23, 7:30 p.m. 2000-C South Elm-Eugene Street. Donation: \$3. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

Ann Snipper: lifetime in fight for socialism

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — Ann Snipper, a lifelong socialist, died here October 3, a victim of cancer. She was 77.

Born in New York, Snipper grew up in Los Angeles. Her father was a house painter, her mother a garment worker. Both were socialists.

In 1930, at age 16, Snipper joined the Young People's Socialist League, youth organization of the Socialist Party. In 1936, she joined the Appeal Caucus, a revolutionary Marxist grouping that opposed the reformist politics of the Socialist Party leadership.

In 1937, the members of the Appeal Caucus were bureaucratically expelled from the Socialist Party and, at the beginning of 1938, founded the Socialist Workers Party. Snipper was a charter member of the party.

In 1940, a faction led by James Burnham and Max Shachtman broke from the SWP, most immediately because they rejected the SWP's policy in relation to the Soviet Union. The party held that despite the Stalinist degeneration, the Soviet Union remained a workers state that should be defended against imperialism.

Snipper left the SWP with the Burnham/Shachtman group, but she soon reconsidered and rejoined the party.

She remained a member until 1983 when a grouping left the SWP in disagreement on a series of political issues. Snipper was a supporter of the breakaway faction.

Some of Snipper's political activity over the years were recounted by her daughter, Bitsy Myers. Now living in Pittsburgh, Myers has been an SWP activist since the mid-1960s.



Ann Snipper in 1983

In an interview, she recalled her mother and described their family life.

Her father, Milton, who died in 1984, was also a party member, as was her brother Julius, who died more recently.

From childhood, Myers said, she remembers her home as the scene of ongoing political activity. With a comfortable-sized house and spacious back yard, major social and fund-raising events were often held there.

In the 1950s, she added, classes in Marxism were held regularly in their living room.

During the late '50s and early '60s, there were yearly summer encampments called the West Coast Vacation School. Featuring lectures, classes, and relaxation, they were organized primarily by the Los Angeles SWP.

At these encampments, Myers said, her mother played a central administrative role.

In 1960, Snipper was among the SWP and YSA members who were active in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, a nationwide organization that opposed U.S. aggression against Cuba. The Fair Play committee did important work in getting out the truth about the Cuban revolution.

In Los Angeles, the committee functioned in a particularly tense situation. There was a sizeable Cuban emigré com-

munity, including groups of counterrevolutionary thugs.

These thugs attacked at least one Fair Play rally with clubs and chains. They also targeted the headquarters of groups that stood in solidarity with the Cuban revolution. In 1970 they invaded the SWP hall, held several members at gun point, and started a gasoline fire.

Earlier, on New Year's eve of 1969, a party was organized at the Snipper home to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Cuban revolution. As the family prepared for the arrival of guests, several armed counterrevolutionaries entered the house. Holding the Snippers at gun point, they set off a smoke bomb that did substantial damage, but the celebration went ahead as scheduled.

As the years went by, Myers said, her mother became less active politically. For more than a decade, she added, Snipper's strongest interest was the abortion rights movement.

"Years back," she said, "my mother was out there defending clinics from attempts to shut them down, and organizing others to join the defense."

"She was an ardent feminist," Myers said. "This was always very important for her."

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Stop the Toxic Waste Incinerator! Speaker: Kate Daher, Socialist Workers Party, member Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 8-74. Sat., Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Fight for Palestinian Rights. Will the Mideast Peace Conference Bring Peace? Speaker: Richard Hazboun, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Nov. 16. Dinner, 5:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 523 8th St. SE. Donation: dinner, \$5; program, \$3. Tel: (202) 547-7557.

BRITAIN

London

The Middle East Talks and the Palestinians' Fight for Liberation. Speaker: Bob Buchan, Communist League. Sat., Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m. 47 The Cut, SE 1. Donation: £1. Tel: 71-928-7993.

Sheffield

Sexual Harassment: an Issue for Working People. Speaker: representative, Communist League. Sat., Nov. 16, 6 p.m. 1 Gower St., Spital Hill. Donation: £1. Tel: 0742-765070.

CANADA

Vancouver

Farmers Mobilize Against the Farm Crisis. Speakers: Tom Leys and Lynda Little, recent participants in protest rallies of farmers in Alberta and Saskatchewan. Sat., Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m. 1053 Kingsway, Suite 102. Donation: \$3. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

SWEDEN

Stockholm

Cuba: Challenges Facing the Cuban Revolution in a Changing World. Speaker: Inge Hinnemo, Communist League. Sat., Nov. 16, 3 p.m. Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

By Malcolm X

Malcolm X Talks to Young People \$9.95

By Any Means Necessary \$13.95

Malcolm X on Afro-American History \$7.95

Malcolm X Speaks (cloth) \$16.95

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

Sheffield: 1 Gower St., Spital Hill, Postal code: S47HA. Tel: 0742-765070.

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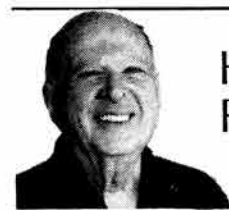
Christchurch: 593a Colombo St. (upstairs). Postal address: P.O. Box 22-530. Tel: (3) 656-055.

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SWEDEN

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

Isn't it a great society?—In High Point, North Carolina, Candi Williams was sentenced to 30 days in jail. She was caught working at



Harry Ring

her Pizza Hut job after calling in sick on jury duty. Jurors get \$12 a day. Williams supports her mother and her two-year-old son.

No blindfold?—“The circus atmosphere could have been avoided with a tightly circumscribed closed-door hearing . . . dissemination by transcript instead of gavel-to-gavel TV coverage would have confined the American public to its proper spectator role.”—An editorial on the Clarence Thomas hearings in the Greensboro, North Carolina, *News & Record*.

The rest were spectators—In the recent Greensboro mayoral primary election, a solid 6.8 percent of the registered voters went to the polls.

Hard Times—In prison, junk bond swindler Michael Milken is working for 30 cents an hour. But when he's sprung, he'll have a nest egg waiting for him of \$700 million.

The investigators—A citizens panel was created to probe the violence of the Los Angeles County sheriff's department. Members of the panel were selected by the sheriff, who attends its meetings. Voting to stay behind closed doors, the panel assured that the differences among its members “constitute sufficient public input for our task.”

It's just a temporary dip—“Business economists are plagued with a new round of anxiety about the standing of our profession and, to be frank about it, new concerns about job security.”—Richard Rippe, president, National Association of Business Economists.

Now there's a vote-catcher—Saluting the Puerto Rico Tax Collectors Assn., the island's treasury secretary declared a Tax Collectors Day.

The sporting life—In England, there was a shakeup in the leadership of the Master of Foxhounds

Assn. after a secretly filmed video showed a fox cub being dug out of its hole so that it could be torn apart by a pack of baying hounds. The rules provide that when a fox goes to ground it's to be “humanely killed” before being tossed to the dogs.

Creative—The University of Puerto Rico petitioned the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to scratch a \$6,250 fine for violating nuclear safety regulations. The prez said most of the violations were “stupid” mistakes and the fine money could be used to address more serious violations.

UN to administer Cambodia for next two years

BY ESTELLE DeBATES

A United Nations Security Council plan for Cambodia went into effect October 23 when the government of that country and three opposition groups signed a treaty in Paris.

The agreement is the culmination of continued violations of Cambodian sovereignty and national rights by the major imperialist powers over recent decades. The permanent members of the UN Security Council—Britain, China, France, the Soviet Union, and the United States—brokered the agreement, which gives the United Nations power to administer the country until elections are held in 1993.

Last year the Cambodian government and opposition forces agreed to the UN Security Council's proposal to set up the Supreme National Council (SNC), which was established as a body to negotiate the UN peace proposal. The SNC is made up of six representatives from the Phnom Penh government, plus two representatives from each of the three counterrevolutionary factions that have waged a war against the government for the last 12 years.

These three groups have worked in tandem with Washington. They include the followers of Prince Sihanouk, Cambodia's former monarch; the Khmer People's National Liberation Front, a right-wing political formation headed by Son Sann; and the Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, which organized the deaths of at least 1 million Cambodians in a reign of terror from 1975–1979. Cambodia is a country of 8.5 million.

The Sihanouk-led SNC will assume the powers of government. A clause in the agreement recognizes Cambodia's independence and sovereignty, but it is the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), with as many as 20,000 soldiers and administrators, that will run the country. The body has power to run government ministries, including defense, foreign affairs, finance and communication.

The Cambodian government and the three opposition factions agreed to an immediate cease-fire and the demobilization of 70 percent of their troops, with the remaining forces to be under UN supervision. All foreign military aid is to be suspended. UNTAC will be in charge of the repatriation of the 350,000 Cambodians living in refugee camps along the Thai border, as well as organizing elections in 1993.

The Khmer Rouge control parts of both Cambodia and Thailand with 40,000 well-armed troops deeply entrenched in the mountains. It runs gem mining and timber operations in these areas with annual revenues estimated to top \$80 million a year.

The Khmer Rouge also runs border camps of 70,000 refugees of the border with Thailand, with the assistance of the United Nations. There have recently been numerous reports of attempts by the Khmer Rouge to move refugees into the areas it controls in Cambodia so they cannot be repatriated by the UN.

At the largest camp, Site 8, elected leaders have been detained and replaced with Khmer Rouge military officers.

Relief workers report widespread fear among refugees of being forced to move into areas with no food, a high rate of malaria and other diseases, and numerous land mines. Cambodia has the highest percentage of physically disabled people in the world due to these mines.

Diplomats of the 18 other countries signing the accord made statements warning of the need to insure that the genocide of the

Khmer Rouge not be repeated. In the recent period Washington has put some distance between itself and the Khmer Rouge. “None was more scathing than Mr. Baker (U.S. Secretary of State) in condemning the Khmer Rouge for violence against its own people” said the *New York Times*. Washington is reacting to the reality that any new government closely identified with the Khmer Rouge, given its history, would not be the stable regime that imperialism seeks. Washington has also been pressured by the international condemnation and hesitations expressed by other governments in having included the Khmer Rouge in the SNC.

The United States has been centrally responsible for the war that has raged in Cambodia for the last 21 years. U.S. incursions into Cambodia began in 1970, the same year a U.S.-backed general, Lon Nol, was in-

stalled in a military coup. The United States carried out massive bombing in Cambodia during the early 1970s.

Vietnamese troops helped oust Pol Pot from power in 1979 after four murderous years of Khmer Rouge rule. Washington, as part of its policy against Vietnam, led the charge in the UN to deny the new Cambodian government recognition there. As a result, the seat for Cambodia was held by opposition forces including Pol Pot, until July of this year.

Vietnam withdrew its troops from Cambodia in 1989. It has backed the agreement on Cambodia as part of an attempt to gain diplomatic relations and economic aid from Washington. After the signing of the Cambodian treaty, the United States government announced it was prepared to begin talks to normalize relations with Vietnam within the next month.



Eddie Hatcher assaulted, stabbed in prison

BY DIANE SHUR

GREENSBORO, North Carolina—Indian activist and political prisoner Eddie Hatcher was brutally assaulted in the yard of the prison where he is incarcerated. His assailant subsequently made a statement to the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) that he was told to “take care of Eddie Hatcher” by a prison superintendent in return for a reduction in his life-long prison sentence.

On September 18 in the recreation yard of the Southern Correctional Institute in Troy, North Carolina, Hatcher was stabbed four times in the back by Rodney Lovell. He suffered a collapsed lung from the effects of the eleven-inch spike that was used. After three days in the hospital, Hatcher was transferred to Central Prison in Raleigh.

Eddie Hatcher was given an 18-year sentence for attempting to expose police corruption and violence in Robeson County. In early 1988 there were a number of violent attacks against and murders of Indians and Blacks. The role of law enforcement and other public officials in drug trafficking was also exposed. In February of that year threats were made on Hatcher's life. He took the desperate step, along with Timothy Jacobs, of seizing and holding the offices of *The Robesonian* newspaper in an attempt to bring the situation to public attention.

Hatcher was tried in federal court on charges of hostage taking and acquitted. The state immediately reindicted him, and he received an 18-year sentence.

Hatcher has remained politically active inside prison. He recently gave his support to thousands of North Carolina residents protesting the existence of hazardous waste dumps and incinerators in the state. Hatcher filed a claim against the Northhampton County Commissioners for placing a hazardous waste treatment plant near Odum and Caledonia prisons. These prisons, according to Hatcher, are located on about 75,000 acres of farmland that is used to grow food for prisoners and school children.

Hatcher's mother, Thelma Clark told the media the day after her son's stabbing that the North Carolina Commission on Indian Affairs must take immediate action “to protect my son's life.”

“We have evidence to support the belief that the stabbing was planned and set up. I humbly ask that my son not die within the North Carolina prison system,” she said at a press conference in front of the commission's

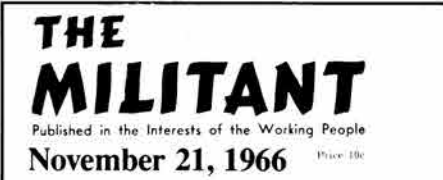
office in Raleigh. Clark is the founder of the Robeson Defense Committee and general manager of the *North Carolina Prison News*.

The *Raleigh News and Observer* reported in October on inmate Lovell's statement to the SBI. After the article appeared Clark was informed that Hatcher would be transferred to Odum prison, a facility near the Virginia border for long-term prisoners. According to Hatcher's attorneys at the Christic Institute South, the move fur-

ther isolates him from family and community in southeast Robeson County.

Supporters of Hatcher's fight are being asked to send letters protesting this prison transfer to North Carolina governor Jim Martin and the state director of prisons. Letters can be sent to: Joseph L. Hamilton, Director of Prisons, 831 W. Morgan St., Raleigh, NC 27603 and to: Governor Jim Martin, Office of the Governor, Raleigh, NC 27603.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



LOWNDES COUNTY, Ala.—On Nov. 8, the Lowndes County Freedom Organization (LCFO) became a recognized political party by polling 41 percent of the vote for county offices. Twenty percent is needed to achieve recognition as a political party. The LCFO is widely-known as the Black Panther Party because of its symbol.

Negroes in Lowndes have not voted for nearly 100 years. They came to vote against years and years of oppression at the hands of the racist Democratic Party.

Coalition politics dominates in the rest of the country. The labor bureaucrats and most of the Negro leadership support coalitionism within the Democratic Party. Martin Luther King and other Negro coalitionists campaigned in Alabama against the example of Lowndes and urged Negroes to work within the Democratic Party.

But Lowndes has shown that it is possible to build a party based on and responsible to the black masses. The magnitude of the victory can only be understood in this light.

As Frank Miles, Jr., Black Panther candidate for tax collector said, “You don't have a chance in the Democratic Party, unless you're a powerful man. If you are going to stand up for what is right and what is in the interests of the people, you will be kicked out of the party.”

The Lowndes County Freedom Party deserves the support of everyone who

stands on the side of the Negro struggle for equality.



November 22, 1941

The full support being given to the 28 working men and women now on trial in Minneapolis was shown last week when the San Francisco Industrial Union Council, CIO, passed a vigorous resolution of endorsement and voted a donation to the defense.

Local 595 of the United Auto Workers, which just settled a strike at the Linden General Motors plants this week, passed a motion protesting against the prosecution.

The first printing of 10,000 copies of “Witch Hunt in Minnesota”, the pamphlet published by the Civil Rights Defense Committee, was so rapidly exhausted that a second printing of 5,000 was run off this week.

Showing their active support of the defense of the 28, ten well-known liberals and labor leaders last week joined the National Committee of the Civil Rights Defense Committee [including] Mark Starr, educational director of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; Margaret Marshall, editor of *The Nation*; John Chamberlain, editor of *Fortune*; Mary W. Hillyer, secretary, Keep America Out of War Committee.

A large and enthusiastic audience in Minneapolis on Nov. 13 heard Roger N. Baldwin, National Director of the American Civil Liberties Union, denounce the Federal prosecution of the 28 defendants in the “sedition” trial. Baldwin declared, “For the first time in our history they are trying men and women for the ideas in the 93-year-old *Communist Manifesto*.”

Cambodia needs massive aid

A contingent of 37 Australian soldiers arrived in Cambodia November 10, the first of the United Nations' troops that will run the country for the next two years. They will be joined by military and administrative forces from 22 other countries. Billed as a "peacekeeping" force, the United Nations Security Council takeover of Cambodia is simply another form of imperialist intervention in the country. It is the continuation of the imperialist domination under which the country has suffered for generations.

The nature of the recently signed Cambodia agreement has also led to international concern about the return to power of the Khmer Rouge, which was responsible for the deaths of at least one million Cambodians. The Khmer Rouge is a part of the new coalition government that will rule under UN supervision, and is widely believed to have large numbers of troops and weapons hidden and ready for possible resumption of the civil war.

Washington was the main architect and promoter of the agreement for the UN takeover. Using its economic clout, the U.S. pressured Vietnam and the Cambodian government to submit to the agreement or pay the consequences of continued trade embargoes.

In an attempt to veil U.S. responsibility for the desperate situation in Cambodia, Secretary of State James Baker has lately voiced concern about the prospects of the Khmer Rouge regaining power, condemning it for violence against its own people "that has few parallels in history."

The history of U.S. intervention in Indochina during the past several decades indicates that the Cambodian people's interests will not be served by this U.S.-sponsored takeover by the United Nations.

The civil war that has been raging in Cambodia for the past 21 years is one of the horrific results of Washington's war against Vietnam. In 1970, U.S. troops made regular incursions into the country, and U.S.-backed general Lon

Nol seized power in a coup. Washington carried out massive bombing of Cambodia until 1973. When the U.S. was driven out of Vietnam in 1975, its puppet government in Cambodia was overthrown by the Khmer Rouge.

The Cambodian people suffered a holocaust for the next four years until Vietnamese troops in 1979 helped drive out the Pol Pot regime. The new government inherited a country devastated by war and Khmer Rouge rule. But as a part of its continuing policy of punishing Vietnam, Washington did its utmost to isolate and further weaken Cambodia. It imposed a trade embargo and aided guerrilla attacks by opposition forces, including the Khmer Rouge, against the new government for more than 12 years. The United States and its allies used their leverage to preserve a United Nations seat for the opposition forces in Cambodia, including Pol Pot, in place of the Cambodian government itself.

Thailand, a country with friendly ties to the United States, has provided a haven to the Khmer Rouge. The Khmer Rouge is allowed to run several refugee camps, with the aid of the UN.

The United States has also provided land mines to the guerrilla opposition, which British special forces trained them to lay. The country is now carpeted with these bombs, for which no records have been kept. Partly as a result of this, Cambodia has the highest proportion of physically disabled people of any country in the world today. The UN troops plan to repatriate 350,000 refugees from the war under these conditions.

U.S. imperialism and its allies, who gathered under the UN flag in taking control of Cambodia, as they did in the war against Iraq, do not have the interests of the Cambodian people at heart.

What the people of Cambodia need is massive aid to rebuild their society and the right to determine their own form of government free from the dictates of imperialism.

Devote resources to AIDS fight!

Considerable discussion is taking place as a result of Magic Johnson's announcement that he was infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Many of those fighting for AIDS treatment are saying that Johnson's announcement will help more people understand that "we are all very much at risk," as one AIDS activist put it.

At the same time there is a push by some forces for more mandatory testing for AIDS. Proclaiming the possibility of patients being infected by their doctors and dentists, some lawmakers are leading discussions in Congress on requirements for compulsory testing of those who perform "invasive medical procedures."

These arguments lead away from the main fight needed to begin dealing with AIDS — the demand for more government responsibility and resources in AIDS research and treatment.

AIDS does not affect everyone equally. It is precisely because it disproportionately affects gay men and the poorest of the working class that the government has refused to take serious measures to slow the spread of AIDS.

To wage an effective fight for more action to combat AIDS, it is important to draw on the facts about the disease. Those who engage in anal intercourse and impoverished intravenous drug users who share dirty needles are at the most risk. People with poor health, for example those with untreated venereal diseases, are more likely to contract the disease. Because of the poverty levels and drug abuse in poorer working-class communities, Blacks and Latinos have higher rates of HIV infection.

Though AIDS can be transmitted through other means, including vaginal intercourse, this occurs far less often. A survey of adult men who have AIDS in New York showed that those infected through heterosexual intercourse amounted to 1 out of every 2,500 cases.

The government has let itself off the hook in the fight against AIDS because it dismisses the disease as one that concerns only gay men and drug users.

But the fight against AIDS is a concern for all working people which the labor movement should take up. What is needed is a massive allocation of resources to assist all victims and speed new discoveries that can lead toward a cure for AIDS.

- All medical care for AIDS victims, including necessary drugs, should be free, financed by the government.
- AIDS care and research should be carried out on a non-profit basis.
- Drug rehabilitation programs, that can be used without fear of criminal prosecution, should be provided for all who want them.
- Health care should be available to everyone. No one should be denied care for lack of funds.
- There should be massive government funding for AIDS research, with efforts centralized and knowledge pooled to take best advantage of breakthroughs in fighting the disease.

These steps are necessary to save the maximum number of human lives and care for all those who have been stricken with HIV and AIDS.

Welcome to our new readers

The *Militant* welcomes the thousands of new readers who recently signed up for an introductory subscription.

You will find that the *Militant* is a unique paper. It provides a working-class perspective on the important political developments occurring in the United States and throughout the world.

First published in November 1928, the *Militant* has a proud record of telling the truth about the struggles waged by working people against capitalist oppression and exploitation. The paper has worker-correspondents in many parts of the world covering important battles by workers, from auto workers in France to steelworkers in the United States.

The *Militant* provides invaluable news analysis of the fight against apartheid in South Africa. In coming weeks it will expand this coverage with on-the-scene reporting from the African National Congress Youth League conference scheduled for early December.

The paper will continue its articles on Cuba, analyzing the important discussions unfolding on how best to defend and deepen the socialist revolution there.

Above all, the *Militant* is for fighters seeking to chart a course forward against mounting government and employer attacks on their rights. The paper helps generalize the experiences of the working class and the lessons of struggles through history and from all parts of the globe. It presents a political perspective aimed toward working people chal-

lenging the political power of the capitalist class.

Today there is a sharpening class polarization in U.S. politics. This is reflected in the David Duke campaign for governor of Louisiana and the rightist actions by Operation Rescue against a woman's right to choose abortion. The *Militant* poses the need for the working class and its allies to mobilize independently of the institutions of capitalism — its courts, its congress, its political parties — as the strategy to make progress in countering these attacks.

Articles on the historical continuity of the communist movement, like the current series the *Militant* is running on the discussions and debates that occurred at the 1920 Second Congress of the Communist International, draw upon the lessons learned from history in the fight for a workers' and farmers' government to replace capitalist political rule.

Your suggestions and ideas on how to make the *Militant* a better paper are welcomed as are your views on politics, which can be shared with other readers. Send in your comments for the letters page; questions you have may also be taken up in the weekly "Discussion with our readers" column.

As your introductory subscription comes to an end, you should consider taking out a longer-term subscription so that you don't miss out on the unmatched coverage the *Militant* provides.

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 of the paper.

With this issue supporters of the *Militant* are celebrating the successful completion of a nine-week circulation campaign. Industrial workers, students, youth involved in protests against police brutality and in defense of abortion rights, and others won more than 6,400 new readers to the socialist press.

These supporters not only knocked on doors, participated in strikes and protest actions, set up literature tables on college campuses, and talked to their coworkers about subscribing to the *Militant*; they also contribute many of the articles carried in the paper every week: on farmers' protests in Canada, instances of corporate greed such as the conditions that led to the killing of 25 workers in a fire at a North Carolina chicken plant, and demonstrations against cop violence in Britain, to name a few issues. These worker-correspondents provide the material necessary for readers to get accurate information of the class struggle around the world, the setbacks and steps forward by the workers' movement, and the level of resistance to the assaults by the

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

employers and their government.

For those who for the first time purchased a single copy or an introductory subscription during the last two months, we think you will want to join in this effort. Contributions to the letters column, short items on struggles or political events in your area, or important discussions at your workplace all give the *Militant* a breadth and scope it could not otherwise have.

The *Militant* is your paper. We hope you'll decide to join the many others who become long-term readers, contributors, and supporters of the *Militant*.

Reader Dan Fein in Miami writes that the October 18 editorial, "Defend Haitian people!" came up short because it failed to explain that the government of Jean-Bertrand Aristide was not a workers' and farmers' government. Aristide, the first popularly-elected president in Haitian history, was overthrown by a military coup September 30. He remains in exile.

"Tens of thousands of Haitians living in Miami, New York, and Boston have taken to the streets to demand that Aristide be returned to power," Fein writes. "However, almost all of the demonstrators believe that the Aristide government was the solution for the toilers of Haiti."

"Today, when many are thinking about the lessons of the recent coup and the experiences of the month-long government, an explanation of why the Aristide government was not a workers' and farmers' government would be helpful for militant Haitians fighting against the coup."

As does Fein, the *Militant* staunchly sides with protests and marches demanding that the coup leaders step down and that Aristide be allowed to return unconditionally. Aristide has wide support among the country's working people because he stood up to a succession of dictatorial regimes.

These struggles by working people against their social and economic ruin and for political space and rights have been at the center of the political struggle in the country. The battles waged by Haitian toilers are a precondition for gaining the experience and organization necessary to widen the organization and politicization of broader numbers of workers and peasants.

Being able to read the writings and speeches of revolutionary leaders of the working-class movement, from Karl Marx to Malcolm X; learning about how workers and peasants of other countries fought to establish governments of their own; and coming in contact with revolutionaries and communists from other countries today — those in South Africa, Cuba, the United States, and elsewhere — are all essential elements for the Haitian working class to be able to defend the gains it has made and take new steps forward in its struggle.

A workers' and peasants' government is one that the *Militant* recognizes as the first form of government arising out of a successful anticapitalist revolution. Such a deep-going revolution will sweep aside the old capitalist state apparatus, establish a new state power based on the armed might of working people, and open the fight for socialism.

Few working people in Haiti, if any, believe this is the kind of government that was in place before the coup. Instead, the Aristide government registered the successes they had made and wanted to defend. Working people won greater political space to speak out, pushed back the ability of the secret police to harass and assassinate opponents, and were in a better position to press social and economic demands on the employers and the government.

Millions inside and outside Haiti see the coup and the military-backed government now in power as a real threat to these hard-won gains.

It is with this starting point, rather than what the Aristide government was not, that the *Militant* participates in the fight against the coup. Supporters of the *Militant* can be most effective by winning their coworkers and fellow fighters to solidarity with the struggle of the Haitian people.

This includes getting revolutionary newspapers, books, and pamphlets into the hands of fighters in and from Haiti. In addition to the *Militant*, the French-language quarterly *L'internationaliste* and Pathfinder books are irreplaceable tools for fighters everywhere. They are the kind of weapons that help fighters become revolutionaries and communists.

Textile workers in South fight for higher wages

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

Working people around the world are involved in skirmishes

ON THE PICKET LINE

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

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines to let other *Militant* readers know about what is happening at your workplace or in your union. If there is an interesting political discussion going on at work, we would like to hear about that too.

Workers at Fieldcrest Cannon textile mills in Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama are fighting the company for a wage increase. These mills are organized by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU).

In September the company gave office personnel and others who are not a part of the bargaining unit a 5.5 percent raise. It offered the production workers a 4 percent raise and after more negotiations in late September raised that to 4.25 percent. Workers were insulted by this proposal and voted it down in meetings September 29.

Workers were especially angry because this comes at a time when the company is once again making a profit. In several plants there is a lot of forced overtime. At the Decorative Bedding mill in Eden, North Carolina, for example, the workers have been working seven days a week since June. At the same time, workers at other Fieldcrest Cannon

mills have been laid off.

There has been discussion in the meetings and in the mills that the company purposely offered a lower raise to the production workers to try to convince them that they would be better off without the union and to try to get

out the union. Workers there got raises ranging from 2 percent to 7 percent, depending on the job and the department.

After rejecting the company's wage proposal, unionists have been campaigning to pressure the company to change its position.

In Eden, where Fieldcrest Cannon has five mills, meetings were held after all three shifts October 4 to plan out what to do. Out of these meetings mass leafleting was organized one week later. Many workers participated, waiting until the last minute to go into the plant.

That week, a petition was circulated in the mills demanding that top company officials meet with the workers and justify why they are worth "less" than office workers. On October 15, more than 250 workers

at the Towel Mill in Columbus, Georgia, walked off the job to present their petition to a personnel director. Forty workers in Fieldale, Virginia, presented their petitions to area personnel director Robert Moore. On October 16, 80-100 workers in Eden went to the company offices to present petitions to Moore with 1,500 signatures. The workers were told that he had suddenly "gone out of town." The next day 40 Eden workers attended the negotiating session to put additional pressure on the company.

Some workers at the Decorative Bedding mill initially hoped that these actions would force the company to offer the same raise that they gave to office workers. But it is clear that more action is needed. The company is threatening disciplinary ac-

tion against those involved in stoppages. Another union meeting is scheduled to discuss what to do next.

At Decorative Bedding, this activity has sparked more interest in the union and in political discussion in general. Several more workers have joined the union.

Pennsylvania Steelworkers face company use of scabs

Some 900 people participated in an October 21 solidarity march through Coatesville in southeastern Pennsylvania to support a strike against Lukens Steel. The members of United Steelworkers of America Local 1165, their families, and supporters demonstrated their unity in the face of Lukens Steel's threat to permanently replace all strikers if Steelworkers did not accept the company's contract offer. On October 25, workers voted 842-302 to reject the offer.

The strike, the first in 23 years, began October 1 when the contract expired. Lukens Steel immediately showed its intentions by canceling strikers' health and life insurance and keeping one shift operating with 200 salaried workers and as many as 140 scabs brought in from outside the area. The bosses mailed several letters to the 1,300 strikers attempting to get them to resign from the union and cross the picket line. Few, if any, have accepted the offer.

After nine years without a pay raise Lukens is offering only 15 percent over three years. This union's goals in this strike include bringing wages up to the level common in basic steel, increased pensions and profit sharing, and ending the contracting-out of work.

Unlike other major steel manufacturers, this Fortune 500 company, described by the October 20 *Philadelphia Inquirer* as "a favorite of Wall Street," has been making a profit for the last four years.

Tony Prince in Greensboro, North Carolina; Tom Nichols in Morgantown, West Virginia; and Henry Hillenbrand in Philadelphia contributed to this week's column.



Militant/Linda Joyce

Michigan steel and auto workers formed a 300-car convoy in solidarity with United Steelworkers of America members at Ravenswood Aluminum Corp. in West Virginia who have been locked out for a year. The October 26 convoy brought a check for \$92,000 for the strikers. A further \$8,000 was collected at a rally and picnic that followed. Paul Sapienza, a United Auto Workers member from General Motors in Detroit, described how "along the way, the big trucks blew their horns in support and people waved from overhead bridges. But the biggest thrill was when we came upon all the people greeting us in front of the union hall. There wasn't a dry eye anywhere. We came to show them that they are not alone."

LETTERS

A political victory

A small victory was won here on the local level with the recent gaining of privileges to post political flyers on the bulletin board at the public library.

Back in February and March, at the height of the pro-war hysteria, we were repeatedly denied access to the bulletin board in our requests to post flyers announcing antiwar and political events. The situation was particularly offensive to us in light of the fact that pro-war displays and even religious notices were openly displayed.

After attending several meetings of the library board and explaining our position on political issues, the board agreed upon a new policy that made space available on the bulletin board for notices of any and all political persuasions.

Though the victory that was won in this instance was a small one, it showed what potential victories are available to all of us if we will but have the patience and determination to see them through. There are no rights or privileges which we today enjoy which were given to us as a gift from the powers that dictate policy.

The only way to reverse the present political offensive of the bosses and forces of "Big Money" is to stand up and fight: to intervene in areas that we have abandoned in the past and make our presence known in the political arena. There are only two forces on the political stage of world events. There are the bosses and

those who share a like mentality with them and there are the working class and those who share their interests of self-preservation. As evidence proves time and again: to attempt to collaborate with and win through concessions the amicable feelings of the representatives of big business is viewed by them as a sign of weakness, and a potential opening for further concessions.

The only force that big business and their associates understand and respect is a more powerful force than they can muster and a united front. This is the only way to win.

Ed Meredith
Caneyville, Kentucky

Anti-immigrant attacks

The same week that the *Militant* printed the article about the attacks on immigrant workers in Germany (issue #38), bomb attacks were carried out in two Swedish cities — Göteborg and Oskarshamn.

On October 21 a bomb placed in the corridor of a former hotel building in Göteborg, which now houses immigrants, exploded at 3:00 a.m. One of the immigrants living there, Baffour Kojo Nyaekye from Ghana, said that just before he went to bed he watched TV news on the earthquake in northern India. When he awoke from the sound of the explosion, he thought an earthquake was happening.

Morina Brahim from Iraq, who has a four-month-old baby, said that

she heard about anti-immigrant attacks but didn't think it was as serious as this. I fled from Saddam Hussein to find this, she said.

In Oskarshamn a petrol bomb was thrown into a room of an immigrant family's apartment. This family has two children, one of them only two months old. To save their lives they had to jump from the balcony on the second floor to the first floor.

The *Militant* article pointed out the facts about these attacks. The ones responsible are the capitalist ruling classes with their anti-immigrant policies in time of economic crisis. The media carries articles every day blaming these problems on the immigrants.

In the 1950s and 60s the capitalists in Germany and Sweden brought in workers from Turkey and Yugoslavia respectively. They didn't care about their origin nor the color of their skin and hair, all they wanted was cheap labor.

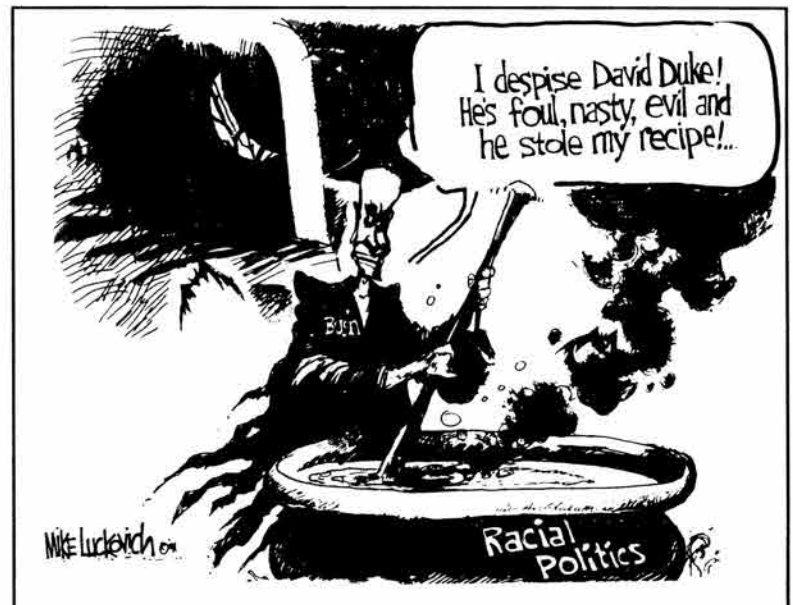
Dechor Hien
Stockholm, Sweden

Wants metric

Now that the *Militant* is international, how about using metric measurements along with miles, pounds, acres, etc.

After 20 years of reading it, I think the *Militant* is the best it's ever been — more proletarian, more analytical, less dogmatic-sounding, more educational.

T.O.
St. Paul, Minnesota



Haiti coup

The Oct. 18, 1991, *Militant's* lead editorial was entitled, "Defend Haitian people!" The last paragraph pointed the way forward: "for a workers' and peasants' government." But nowhere in the editorial did it explain that Jean-Bertrand Aristide's 7-month government was not a workers' and peasants' government.

Tens of thousands of Haitians living in Miami, New York and Boston have taken to the streets to demand that Aristide be returned to power. However, almost all of the demonstrators believe that the Aristide government was the solution for the toilers of Haiti.

Today, when many are think-

ing about the lessons of the recent coup and the experience of Aristide's 7-month-long government, an explanation in the *Militant* of why Aristide's government was not a workers' and farmers' government would be helpful for militant Haitians fighting against the coup.

Dan Fein
Miami, Florida

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.

France: report from Renault picket as thousands of strikers close plant

BY NAT LONDON
AND JEAN-LOUIS SALFATI

CLEON, France — The Renault car plant here has been completely shut down for more than two weeks. Massive strike pickets block the nine factory gates 24 hours a day. Tires are permanently burning to prevent any attempt by the factory management to open a way through.

There are often more than a thousand workers on the picket line, sometimes two to three thousand. The factory employs 5,500.

At every shift change, bosses and some of the skilled workers stand in front of the

Late news: French police storm auto factory, union officials end strike

November 8 — Hundreds of armed police stormed the Cléon Renault plant at 3:00 a.m. November 5, removing strike pickets from the gates. Two days later, following a narrow vote to stay out on strike, the CGT leadership signed a deal with management to end the strike.

factory entrance to push a campaign for "freedom" to work, which they say is denied to them by the strike. On October 28 some 400 people, most of them foremen, other management personnel, and a few skilled workers demonstrated. Instead of attacking the non-strikers, those on the picket lines went to the demonstration and tried to convince their fellow workers to join the strike, which half of them did on the spot. The next day only 150 demonstrated against the stoppage.

Tension has been building up at Renault plants for months. Last spring, Renault director Raymond Levy announced that reductions in the work force scheduled for the end of the year would have to be accomplished by August 31. A series of work stoppages at Renault's factory in Le Mans forced the company management to back off.

In September, Levy announced that Renault would reduce its work force by 40 percent in the next seven years. Over the last eight years, Renault Automobile has been reduced from 105,000 workers to 65,000 in France. The new reductions would bring the work force down to 40,000.

Struggle spreads

Stoppages spread throughout many Renault plants following Levy's announcement. In addition to the strike at Cléon, work stoppages took place at Renault plants in Sandouville, Douai, Le Mans, Choisy-le-roi, Orléans, and Flins. The Renault strike occurs at the same time as several other protests in France. Two hundred thousand farmers demonstrated in Paris on September 29. Nurses launched a strike October 23 and started camping out in tents in front of the Health Ministry. Other strikes and demonstrations have been organized by actors, fishermen, and dock workers in recent weeks.

The action at Cléon began in September with walkouts called by the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) and the French Democratic Confederation of Labor (CFDT). Most workers at Renault belong to the CGT.

On October 16, faced with management's refusal to open negotiations on their demands, night-shift workers decided to block the gates, preventing trucks from delivering gearboxes to the other factories in the group. Management immediately replied by locking out the workers at other Renault factories in France and

Belgium. A Volvo factory in Holland was also closed. Some 50,000 Renault workers have been deprived of work by the lockout. The lockout has, at least temporarily, stopped the advance of the strike movement in the other factories, leaving the Cléon workers as the only ones able to organize a total strike. The federation of French employers announced that an additional 5,000 workers in plants sub-contracted to Renault would soon be laid off as well.

"These past 10 years, in addition to 40,000 lost jobs at Renault, wages have lost more than 17 percent of their purchasing power," said a leaflet signed by the CGT and CFDT. That represents a drop in pay of 1,500 francs per month. [1,500 francs = \$268.] That is why we demand 1,500 francs more per month and 3,300 francs bonus at the end of the year."

"I get 5,700 francs a month and I have 13 years seniority," said one worker. "What is my future?" Wages at Renault are the lowest of all auto workers in France. A young worker signing on in auto gets the legal minimum wage, which is 5,000 francs a month.

Bosses call on cops

The bosses won a court order declaring the organization of strike pickets illegal. The factory management then demanded that the government use the cops to remove the pickets. On October 30, Labor Minister Martine Aubry declared that "the Renault Cléon conflict should be settled through negotiation." Addressing the unionists, she set a deadline for November 1 for the "simultaneous establishment of freedom to work and beginning negotiations."

"If we give up the strike pickets, we will lose," replied a striker. Many strikers say they are ready to take whatever time will be needed to win their demands. "We must have courage," said one. "If we don't come to the pickets, if we go home, our strike will be broken and this is a magnificent strike."

A mass assembly of strikers held one hour before the government's deadline voted to defy the labor minister.

"We are not terrorists, loafers, or irresponsible," said one of the strikers. "They want to terrorize us into continuing to work for such low wages." He was referring to a letter from Raymond Lévy, sent to all Renault personnel, denouncing the strike and accusing the strikers of being "terrorists," "hostage-takers," and "extremists."

Farmer support

The most spectacular support for the strike came October 25, at the end of the first week of the strike. Twenty small farmers who are fighting against the dramatic drop in their income came to the factory to bring solidarity. They also gave three tons of potatoes to the strike kitchen.

The farmers are members of the Peasant Federation of l'Eure, just south of the Cléon factory. Some of its members work at Renault.

The farmers opened a market on the picket line at which a variety of agricultural products were sold at cost. This attracted hundreds of striking workers and their families. Television stations have devoted extensive news coverage to the farmers market and to its support of the strike.

The union at the Renault factory in Brazil sent a message of solidarity to the strikers. At the same time, the Cléon strikers learned that a Renault factory in Bolivia was on strike.

Support activity has been picking up in other Renault plants as well. Several hundred workers from the Le Mans and Sandouville plants came to express their solidarity with those of Cléon.

Since the vote to defy the government ultimatum, the strikers have been increasingly concerned about the possibility of police action to open the plant gates. The key to prolonging the strike, they feel, is solidarity, reaching out to the hundreds of shop-floor

militants who helped spark off the wave of strikes in other Renault plants that were cut off by the company lockout.

Nat London is a CGT member at Renault's Choisy-le-Roi plant.



Nurses demonstrate in Paris, November 7. A wave of strikes and protests, by auto workers at Renault, truckers, nurses, and farmers has swept France in reaction to the intensifying attacks on working people.

Framed-up Steelworker vows continued fight against firing

BY RICH GAETA

CHICAGO — Supporters of union and political activist Maria Barahona are circulating a protest statement in her defense at Precision Scientific, where Barahona worked for four years before being framed. Precision Scientific is organized by United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 5488.

Barahona, 23, was known as a defender of workers' rights on the job and was elected union recording secretary last April.

Barahona was first accused of having splashed acid in the face of a coworker August 21. Five of Barahona's coworkers verified that they were with her on break outside the plant at the time of the alleged incident. The company then held an investigation and charged Barahona with throwing hot water in the worker's face.

The union activist was denied union representation because the company said it was a "police matter." Two cops who questioned Barahona threatened criminal charges. But the police department has told Barahona's attorney that there is no record of any such incident at Precision Scientific that day.

The union's district representative, Lenny Moore, held two hearings as part of the grievance procedure and determined that the case would go to arbitration. The union had 30 days to arbitrate the case. Moore said he wanted to wait until October 4, the 29th day, to inform the company of the union's intention to fight the case through arbitration, arguing that the union

would catch the company off guard.

Barahona submitted a three-page statement of facts that she wanted circulated in the plant. The union officers refused. During these 30 days Barahona repeatedly phoned local union officials and her district representative to discuss her defense, but received no response. She then contacted the union's subdistrict director, R.L. Pace, to discuss steps to continue her fight.

Pace said the union had held a hearing about the case October 4, and had sent two letters to the activist about her hearing. Barahona never received the letters or an answer from Pace as to why the letters were not sent to her home address, where she received all other union mail.

The union officials did not take Barahona's case to arbitration. Instead, Pace states in a letter sent to Barahona October 10 that due to "a lack of interest shown by you in the pursuit of your grievance, the union has decided not to pursue your grievance beyond the third step."

Barahona stated, "It is my belief that if this can happen to a union officer, it can happen to anyone. The union would be stronger if it fought on my behalf because it would prove that you can fight and win when you stick together. I am not giving up. I am going to take my fight to the district and the international leadership if necessary."

Rich Gaeta is a member of USWA Local 5488.