

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

The fight for Native and Quebec rights in Canada

International Socialist Review — PAGES 7-10

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Los Angeles cops begin new campaign of arrests

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — Staged as a media event, bordering on a circus, the arrest of the four young Black men charged in the beating of truck driver Reginald Denny will be the first in a series of arrests designed to curb the rights of working people, especially those who are Black and Latino.

Sporting a bullet-proof vest, Police Chief Daryl Gates participated in the predawn raids, personally arresting one of the youths.

Slated for arraignment May 21, the youths face a string of federal and local charges including attempted murder.

Officials said the four were identified from the widely televised videotape, which showed Denny being dragged from his truck and beaten. This occurred shortly after cops decided to leave the area. With the police ignoring calls for help, Denny lay in the street until four young Blacks took it on themselves to get him to a hospital.

According to officials, the four arrested are members of or "affiliated" with a local street gang.

Local FBI chief Charles Parsons said an investigation is under way to determine if street gangs played an organizing role in the eruption touched off by the whitewash of the cops who beat Rodney King.

The first of many arrests

"There is a connection between things that occurred during the riot and gangs," the FBI cop asserted. He said the arrests of the four were the first of many to come.

Noting the irony that, as in the King beating, the case against the four will rest largely on videotaped evidence, Parsons observed, "The significant difference between this incident and the King case is that this is not a matter of interpretation."

Criticism of the way the arrests were staged and concern that the four might be railroaded was quickly voiced.

Danny Bakewell, president of the Brotherhood Crusade, rapped Gates for his theatrical participation in the arrests and declared, "It's showboating; it's grandstanding."

Bakewell added, "We abhor what happened to Mr. Denny, but these young men deserve their day in court too."

Joseph Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, branded the predawn raids "a cheap dog and pony show emceed by Daryl Gates."

On May 15 Judge Stanley Weisberg ordered a new trial of Laurence Powell, one of the four cops who beat Rodney King. In the original trial, the jury cleared the other cops on all counts but were divided on one

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Tens of thousands marched in Washington, D.C., May 16 in the 'Save our cities! Save our children!' march called by the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Many participants carried signs calling for justice for Rodney King. 'They talk about gang violence in Los Angeles,' said marcher Alexandra Albert, 20. 'But the biggest gang is the police force.'

Drive for profits causes Canada mine disaster

BY ROGER ANNIS

MONTREAL — Twenty six coal miners are dead following a terrible methane gas explosion May 9 at the Westray Coal Inc. mine in Plymouth, Pictou County, Nova Scotia.

The explosion occurred at 5:00 a.m. as the miners were working at the coal face a mile and a half from the mine entrance. It

turned the mine tunnel into an inferno, destroying the ventilation and electrical systems, shifting huge mining equipment, and causing massive cave-ins.

Mine rescue workers were horrified by the destruction they witnessed in the mine. It was like "two miles on the other side of hell," said Roger McCabe of Pugwash, Nova Scotia.

"It was like a horror movie," said another. "Worse."

Wearing 25 kilograms of breathing equipment and tools, they clambered through heat and poisonous gases, amid a constant danger of new explosions and cave-ins, in a desperate search for survivors. "We couldn't wear electric watches," one rescue worker explained. "The current from the battery could have triggered another explosion."

After six days of heroic effort, conditions became too dangerous to continue. There were no survivors and only 16 bodies were recovered.

The miners and residents of Pictou County were in a state of shock as it became clear there would be no survivors. The shock is now giving way to anger at the company and the Nova Scotia government as the truth

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CANADA

You are invited to the

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\$12,000 PLEDGED TO CAMPAIGN FUND

Meetings of socialists who are members of the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers union and the United Steelworkers of America, held May 16-17, pledged to raise \$12,000 toward the \$75,000 fund for the 1992 Socialist Workers election campaign. See page 3 for information on how to make donations.

Socialist petitioning drive gains in Miami

ALYSON KENNEDY

MIAMI, Florida — Supporters of the 1992 Socialist Workers Campaign have collected 2,970 signatures in a petition drive to place the name of Laura Garza, socialist candidate for Congress, on the ballot in Florida. The goal is to collect 8,500 signatures by June 15.

Petitioners are getting a serious hearing from working people and youth here. Last week more than 1,000 signatures were collected and 115 copies of the *Militant*, the campaign newspaper, were sold.

Many people who signed the petition were outraged by the verdict in the Rodney King case. They liked the socialist campaign's explanation of why the cops got off and the idea of building an effective political movement to demand that the cops be indicted and thrown in jail for beating King.

Vice-presidential candidate Estelle DeBates visited Miami last week, to join the petitioning effort. She campaigned at college campuses and spoke at a campaign open house.

DeBates and supporters set up a campaign table at North Miami Beach High School. They had been invited there by a student and campaign supporter, Kervin Michels. Michels was introduced to the socialist campaign by his brother, Daniel, who attends Miami Dade Community College, North Campus. Daniel met socialists at a campaign table on campus, signed a petition, and volunteered to help.

More than 30 of the high school students signed up for more information on the campaign while Kervin helped introduce class-

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Stop the Drive to War, Racism, and Depression

The Socialist Alternative in the 1990s

Recent political events — from the explosion in Los Angeles in response to the Rodney King verdict, to the strike wave across Germany — show that the rulers' attacks are provoking resistance. From fights such as these an alternative to the drive toward war, racism, and depression can be built to replace the world disorder of capitalism.

Hear

Jack Barnes

National Secretary
U.S. Socialist Workers Party

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Why workers should back freedom for jailed unionist — page 4



Thai troops fire at civilians

Thailand's military-backed government declared a state of emergency in Bangkok, the country's capital, and surrounding provinces May 17 after police and the army attacked a demonstration of 100,000 people demanding the ouster of the prime minister who came to power after a 1991 military coup. On May 18 troops backed by armored vehicles fired on thousands of protesters. At least nine people have been killed and hundreds wounded.

Abortion under attack in Poland

Some hospitals stopped performing abortions in Poland May 11 under an ethics code adopted in December. It forbids abortions except to save a woman's life or in cases of rape. Although abortions are still legal, doctors who perform them risk being deprived of their licenses by their peers.

S. Africa cop sentenced to death

A white South African police captain was sentenced to death by hanging April 30 for ordering the 1988 massacre of 11 Blacks, including some children, at a home funeral vigil in Natal. The cop, Brian Mitchell, then attempted to cover up the murders with the aid of his police superiors. The judge also convicted four Black cops under Mitchell's command on 11 counts of murder, and each received a 15-year prison sentence.

Although the death penalty remains on the books in South Africa, hangings have been suspended pending the outcome of constitutional negotiations between the African National Congress (ANC) and the government. The ANC opposes the death penalty. In an April 30 statement the ANC said it "would have preferred a sentence of life imprisonment" for Mitchell.

Greece: economic crisis threat to European unification

Two years after the conservative New Democracy Party defeated the former social democratic government of Andreas Papandreu in parliamentary elections the economic crisis in Greece has continued to deepen. Inflation runs at 18 percent, the budget deficit equals 96 percent of the total value of goods and services produced, and the country's industry is "decrepit" and "underperforming," according to a May 11 *Wall Street Journal* article.

As a member of the European Community (EC), Greece gets about \$4 billion per year financial aid, 6 percent of its gross domestic product. Some EC officials com-



Judith Ward (center) celebrating her release from a British jail May 11. She was incarcerated for more than 18 years on frame-up charges of taking part in bombings by the Irish Republican Army in the 1970s. The Court of Appeals threw out her original admission of guilt as evidence because of the state of her mental health at the time. The court released Ward on bail and agreed to hear the rest of her appeal. To her left is Annie Maguire, who was cleared after spending 10 years in jail on similar charges. Ward was the last of 18 frame-up victims to be released, all falsely accused of various bombing charges, including the Guildford Four, the Birmingham Six, and the Maguire family.

plain that Greece's economic troubles could be too big a burden for the proposed European economic unification. "Greece is no longer one of those strategic outposts of the Cold War, where the West was ready to do almost anything to keep communism out and democracy alive," comments the *Journal*. "Its failure to change endangers the idea of a unified Europe."

Franco-German military corps is planned

The governments of France and Germany will finalize in May the concept and tasks of their planned European military defense corps. The joint force, to be established in 1995, is to include an independent command structure, which could run into strong objections by other NATO member states, according to the London *Financial Times*. German chancellor Helmut Kohl invited any other members of the Western European Union to join the unit, which will be built on an existing Franco-German brigade. France is not a member of NATO.

Russian gov't delays fixing ruble exchange rate

"The difficult and tremendous task" of fixing the ruble exchange rate within a 7.5 percent fluctuation band on either side of a central rate will not be attempted until "some time this autumn," according to Georgy Matiukhin, chairman of the Central Bank of Russia. The government had earlier indicated its intention to fix the rate by August 1. The first stage of an attempt to make the ruble convertible is supposed to take effect July 1 with the abolition of multiple exchange rates and the introduction of a unitary floating rate.

Russia sells rocket to India; Washington imposes sanctions

The U.S. government imposed a two-year ban on exports to a Russian arms agency and to the Indian Space Research Organization May 11 because of an agreement to sell Russian rocket technology to India. The Indian government says the technology, which involves an engine for a rocket booster, is for non-military satellite communications. Washington says it is concerned that the rockets could also be used to deliver bombs. The Indian government exploded a nuclear device in 1974, and U.S. nuclear experts say that it either has or is capable of making nuclear weapons.

Angola: old foes turn partners

The South African regime that repeatedly invaded Angola in the past to topple José Eduardo dos Santos's government has turned from adversary to a trading partner. Oil exports to Pretoria amount to more than 500,000 barrels a day and are rising along

with diamond sales.

One year ago Angolan president dos Santos and his rival Jonas Savimbi, head of the Unita guerilla group backed by Pretoria and Washington, signed a cease-fire agreement.

Close vote in Philippine election

Unofficial partial results of the May 11 presidential elections in the Philippines put Fidel Ramos, the former defense minister, and Miriam Defensor Santiago, a lawyer and former agrarian reform minister and immigration chief, neck-and-neck with 23 percent of the vote each. The country's Election Commission banned announcements in the media of unofficial counts May 14 and said results will take several days to compile.

President Corazon Aquino, who did not seek re-election, endorsed Ramos. Seven candidates took part in the race including Imelda Marcos, the widow of former dictator Ferdinand Marcos, and Eduardo Cojuangco, another ardent supporter of the Marcos dictatorship. Cojuangco is running third in the vote tally.

Montreal May Day march

About 12,000 people marked May Day in Montreal with a march against deteriorating living standards and swelling unemployment rates, called by the three major union federations in Quebec. Locked-out flight attendants at Canada's largest charter airline led the demonstration with chants calling for a boycott of Nationair. Hundreds of provincial government and hospital workers participated. They are fighting a government-imposed reduction of an earlier agreed-upon wage increase from three percent down to one percent.

U.S. unemployment rate drops

The unemployment rate in the United States dropped to 7.2 percent in April, down from 7.3 percent in February and March. It was the first drop in nine months. At the same time retail sales increased 0.9 percent in April, a reversal of the 1 percent drop in March. Consumer prices edged up slightly by 0.2 percent marking a slowing of previous price increases by 0.5 percent in March and 0.3 percent in February. A May 11 *Wall Street Journal* article predicts that there is little room for economic expansion with the "unusually weak recovery."

Benefits refused more often to disabled Blacks

For 30 years, workers with serious ailments who are Black have been much more likely to be rejected for benefits under social security disability programs, a U.S. congressional investigative agency has found. In 1988, the last year analyzed, whites had an 8 percent better chance of receiving benefits after being initially turned down for disability insurance. This type of insurance is the primary source of income for disabled U.S. workers covered by Social Security. Blacks have had a much harder time in the appeals process than in filing initial claims.

—ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

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The Militant

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Socialists appeal for help to get on ballot

Supporters of Warren and DeBates are needed for petitioning in 25 states

The following letter to campaign supporters of James Warren and Estelle DeBates, Socialist Workers Party candidates for U.S. president and vice-president, was issued May 8, 1992.

Dear campaign supporter,

Greetings from the campaign trail one month after launching the socialist alternative in 1992! We are writing to let you know how successful the campaign has been so far and what every supporter can do in the coming months to help spread an internationalist and working-class voice in the elections across the country and around the world.

We would like to appeal to all our supporters to join an important effort to put the Socialist Workers Party presidential ticket on the ballot in nearly 25 states. And, in order to fund the many campaign activities, we also encourage each and every one of you to contribute to a \$75,000 campaign fund. Funds are needed now and we aim to raise the full amount by July 1.

Unlike the Democrats and Republicans, undemocratic laws require our campaign to petition to appear on the ballot. In most states, tens of thousands of signatures must be collected in order for the socialist candidates to appear on the ballot. Most must be filed in July and August. Only youth and working people — the campaigners against the two parties of war, racism, and economic depression — can effectively mobilize to overcome these restrictions and turn them into an opportunity to campaign for the socialist ticket.

At the center of the petitioning effort will be supporters who volunteer their time for big mobilizations on the weekend, and before or after work, and who petition on the job or at school, and at political events and protest actions. Teams of full-time volunteers will also be needed in each state. Supporters organize teams to campuses, working-class communities, plant gates, and street corners; provide housing; and help cover expenses for food. As candidates, we will be traveling across the country, speaking and holding press events in states where petitioning efforts are under way. The socialist campaign in local areas will also host classes and other campaign activities during petitioning drives.

Since launching the campaign March 31, the reasons for fielding a socialist alternative have become more evident to youth and working people around the world. The political impact the campaign can have among fighters looking for a way to combat the increasingly reactionary policies of the Democratic and Republican parties has also been demonstrated.

We have spoken along with local and statewide socialist candidates at dozens of rallies, campus events, and meetings of trade unionists, receiving a tremendous response to our campaign:

In Minneapolis and St. Paul we joined supporters of Chris Nisan's campaign for U.S. Congress, rallying support to answer and protest the campaign effort by Patrick Buchanan;

In Peoria, Illinois, we walked the picket line, spoke with strikers, and extended our support to the fight against Caterpillar's assault on the United Auto Workers union;

At the massive April 5 march on Washington to defend abortion rights we met thousands of youth and other fighters who want to find out more about the campaign.

Our campaign tours in Los Angeles and San Francisco, which coincided with the criminal acquittal of the cops who beat Rodney King, played an important role in the continuing discussion on how to fight for justice and became the center of the demand that the federal government indict the four cops on civil rights charges. Dozens of youth and others signed up to support the campaign in both cities.

In a campaign that knows no borders, we have received the same response from fighting workers and youth in North Korea, Japan, New Zealand, and Australia.

We are confident that, in state after state, tens of thousands will sign up to help put the socialist alternative on the ballot. We ask all our supporters to volunteer to join in this exciting effort now. Petitioning is the best way we can get out and discuss the central issues in world politics, win new supporters, and join protests, strikes, and other fights. We urge student supporters to join the effort during their summer break and invite laid-off workers to take advantage of their situation to campaign for an alternative to the two parties of war, racism, and economic depression.



James Warren (center) and Estelle DeBates campaign at a New York plant gate. Militant/Selva Nebbia

Getting out on the streets to talk to as many people as possible is also the best way to build for the international youth and campaign conference at Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio, August 5-9. There, young people, workers, unionists, and other fighters will join together for five days of discussion, exchange of views, and classes on how to build an international working-class leadership and revolutionary movement.

Supporters in Florida are currently gathering 5,000 signatures for SWP congressional candidate Laura Garza. This will be the first time in many years a socialist will appear on the ballot in that state. The same number of signatures is required in Ohio, where the petition drive will begin in mid-May. Petition drives will begin in late May in Illinois and Michigan. Both states require at least 25,000 signatures.

Without your financial support the petitioning effort and all other campaign activities

would not be possible. Unlike our opponents who act in the interests of and are financed by the ruling rich, our campaign is one that seeks to advance the struggles of working people. You can help by making a contribution and by encouraging your friends and fellow activists to help out on the \$75,000 fund as well. Write a letter to those you think may want to support the campaign and ask for their contribution. Put out a bucket on campaign tables. Make a pitch for funds during media events, on radio shows, and at campaign meetings. Each of these will help bring in the many contributions needed to make the campaign a success.

To volunteer, or for more information, please contact the Socialist Workers 1992 National Campaign at 191 7th Ave., New York, NY, 10011 or call (212) 675-6740. Thank you. We hope to meet every one of you on the campaign trail in the coming months.

Meeting protests threats on Minnesota socialist candidate

BY DEREK BRACEY

A speak-out was held May 16 in St. Paul, Minnesota, to protest death threats made against Chris Nisan, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in the 5th District. Nisan, a central organizer of a May 2 march protesting the Rodney King verdict, received three death threats by phone May 7.

The panel at the speak-out included Curtis Herron, pastor at the Zion Baptist Church in Minneapolis; Alva Waller, vice-president of the Black Law Students Association at the University of Minnesota; Mahmoud El-Kati, a professor at Macalester College and an activist for Black rights in the Twin Cities; and Nisan.

Nisan said those making the threats "are scared of the potential that the working masses of the U.S. have when they come together in the struggle against oppression."

"Threats offer opportunities," he continued, "for those who want to struggle. We take those threats and we turn them against our enemies."

Statements condemning the death threats were read to the meeting. Messages came from U.S. Representative Martin Sabo, Nisan's Democratic Party opponent; Stephen Moriarty, his Republican opponent; St. Paul mayor James Scheibel; Donald Fraser, Mayor of Minneapolis; recording secretary of United Auto Workers Local 879, Tom Laney; and Brian Roberts, president of the Black Law Students Association.

A statement from James Warren, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. president, was also read at the meeting.

* * *

Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. president James Warren spoke with workers at a shopping center in the Auburn section of Sydney, Australia. Warren and a team of supporters set up a literature table there April 25.

Workers from around the world live in Auburn, like in much of Sydney. Many of these workers were keenly interested in hearing from a socialist running for U.S.

president to fight for the interests of working people throughout the world.

A worker from Somalia bought a subscription to Warren's campaign newspaper, the *Militant*, and urged his friends to buy it. Another worker from Turkey discussed Eastern Europe with those campaigning for Warren before getting a copy of the *Militant*. That evening 25 people attended the Militant Labor Forum to hear Warren.

The socialist candidate was interviewed on two national radio morning news programs as well as a television news program and the major Sydney daily newspaper, the *Telegraph Mirror*.

Tom O'Brien in St. Paul, Minnesota, and Bob Aiken in Sydney, Australia, contributed to this article.

'Publishers Weekly' features L.A. Pathfinder bookstore rebuilding

NEWS

ASSOCIATE EDITORS: CALVIN REID & MAUREEN O'BRIEN

Bookstores, Libraries Destroyed in L.A. Riot

But one store, helped by community donations, is already back in business



A community's bookstore reopened within four days. Two bookstores based in South Central Los Angeles—The Aquarian Bookshop and the retail outlet for

finder Press home office in New York City said the store was able to reopen almost immediately "because of the amazing generosity of the people who live in that community." In addition to offering "thousands of dollars worth of donations," Stuart said, "people from all over the area showed up to volunteer their time and labor to help get the new place up and running." More than 150 people attended the store's grand reopening, which also doubled as a fund-raising event.

"The irony of the whole thing," said Stuart, "is that, today, I believe there's an even greater need for people to read what we publish, particularly the teachings and speeches of Malcolm X." As testimony to that belief, Stuart told *PW* that the day after the riots began in Los Angeles, he received a rush order from Waldenbooks for 300 copies each of seven of his company's titles about Malcolm X.

In addition to the two bookstores, three libraries in Los Angeles were also damaged—and in the case of one, completely destroyed—by fire during the riot. The Junipero Serra Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library on S. Figueroa St., which was a temporary location for the city's historic central library building, closed after an earthquake in late 1987—was destroyed by fire around midnight on April 30; no injuries were reported.

Also damaged by fire were the John Muir branch of the Los Angeles Public Library on S. Vermont Ave. and the Felipe de Neve branch on S. Rampart Blvd.; the latter was also broken into and vandalized, say sources.

According to Gwen Feldman, president of the Southern California Booksellers Association, details at press time were "still sketchy." [Continued on page 12]

The prominent book trade magazine *Publishers Weekly* features an article in its May 11 issue on the destruction of bookstores and libraries during the recent antipolice riots in Los Angeles. The fire that gutted the Pathfinder Bookstore and the rebuilding effort are featured in the article along with a picture of volunteers working on the new bookstore.

Supporters of the Pathfinder Bookstore in Los Angeles are urging unionists, students and youth, and all defenders of democratic rights who want to see continued availability of speeches and writings of revolutionary leaders, to contribute to the reconstruction of the bookstore. Please send donations to: Pathfinder Bookstore, 2552-B W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90006. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

Socialist campaign button available

Federal indictments NOW of cops who beat Rodney King!

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Socialist Workers Campaign

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Why working people should join the fight to free framed-up union activist in Iowa

A reply to the right-wing, pro-cop slander campaign against Mark Curtis

BY PRISCILLA SCHENK

DES MOINES, Iowa — On January 31 union and political activist Mark Curtis won the first big legal victory in his four-year-long fight for justice. Federal judge Charles Wolle ruled that police officers Charles Wolf and Daniel Dusenberry used excessive force against Curtis and violated his constitutional rights when they beat him in the city jail on March 4, 1988. The city agreed to assume responsibility for the cops' action and pay an award of \$61,000 in damages and attorney fees to Curtis.

The victory was won both because of the ongoing defense campaign waged by Curtis and his supporters and because of an explosion of protest against cop brutality that rocked this city earlier this year. On December 28, Des Moines police brutally beat Larry Milton, a Black worker, causing wounds that required 22 surgical staples to close. Thousands of people, mainly Black working people and youth, attended protest meetings and spoke out at public hearings demanding that the cops who beat Milton be prosecuted.

Since Curtis's victory, right-wing, pro-cop forces here have stepped up their campaign to discredit the victory and slander this young union activist in his ongoing fight to overturn his frame-up conviction on rape and burglary charges and to win his freedom.

Among those in the forefront of defending the frame-up of Curtis by the cops and the government are Keith Morris, a Black businessman; his wife Denise Morris; and their daughter Demetria. Demetria Morris is the woman Curtis is falsely accused of raping. The three were recently featured on a two-and-a-half-hour Saturday morning call-in show on KUCB, a Black community oriented radio station.

Since Curtis's conviction, Keith Morris has collaborated with police and supporters of the police frame-up to attack Curtis and those who stand up in his defense. Among these is a provocative antilabor group called the Workers League.

Morris has tried to take the heat off the police and portray Curtis's fight as bogus. He paints the international effort to support the jailed packinghouse worker as a cynical attack on his family. He has aided parole officials in their refusal to grant Curtis freedom.

The Morrises were invited to appear on the radio program by its host, Sister Mary Hadishah, a vocal anticommunist. She assails the party to which Curtis belongs, the Socialist Workers Party, including for its promotion of the works of Malcolm X. She has picketed some Curtis defense activities.

A young coworker approached me at work after hearing the Morrises on the radio show, and asked whether Curtis was guilty and what the facts were. I was happy my coworker brought this up, because it gave me an opportunity to discuss the politics of the Curtis case and why it is so important for working people to join in Curtis's defense.

As I told my coworker, to understand why the police would go to so much trouble to pin a rape charge on Mark Curtis, you have to know something about him.

Curtis was 29 years old when he was arrested on March 4, 1988. He was active in building his union, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 431, at the Swift/Monfort meat-packing plant, where he worked. Curtis is a longtime activist in the struggle for Black and women's rights and against imperialist war. He was a central leader of the Young Socialist Alliance

Raid at Swift

At the time of his arrest Curtis was involved in an important fight in defense of immigrant workers.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service, working with Swift management and the local police, raided the plant during working hours and arrested 17 of Curtis's coworkers. They were from Mexico and El Salvador.

Protests erupted, including a work stoppage at the plant. Company and government officials agreed to hold a meeting March 4, where workers and community activists could speak out on the raid.

Curtis spoke in Spanish at the meeting,

calling on fellow union members to unite in bringing the force of the union to bear in order to win freedom for these fellow workers. He explained that the goal of the raid was to divide the workers, leaving the company free to cut wages and attack safety and working conditions even further. Curtis's remarks got a good hearing among his coworkers.

They know that wider resistance to their assaults, and broader mobilization and organization of working people through the trade unions, pose a threat to attempts to drive down wages, curtail democratic rights, and weaken organizations of the working class.

Following the meeting many workers went to a local bar, Los Compadres, to discuss what had happened and how to continue the fight.

Such actions by rank-and-file workers are what bosses, cops, and government officials fear. As Des Moines civil rights veteran Edna Griffin later explained, Curtis's actions made him "a dangerous man" to the super-rich families who run Des Moines.

After leaving the bar Curtis went home, picked up his wife's paycheck, called a couple of friends, and drove off to the grocery store. Curtis explains that he was stopped by a young Black woman who said she was in danger and who asked him to drive her to a nearby house. Within a couple of minutes he was arrested on the porch of the house.

Police officer Joseph Gonzalez dragged him into the house, handcuffed him, and began the frame-up of Curtis by pulling his pants down and charging him with sexual assault. He was taken to the police station, where cops beat him. There they shouted his real crime, calling him a "Mexican lover,

rulers and their cops and political supporters detest — a unionist who speaks Spanish and defends all workers, immigrant and native born alike; a socialist and outspoken political activist; and an opponent of all efforts to divide the working class because of race, sex, or national origin.

Cops look for allies

Once the authorities got their hands on Curtis, the cops and county prosecutors looked for allies in their efforts to make the charges appear credible. They began a slander campaign against Curtis, denied him his rights, and did everything possible to get a conviction.

Like most working people, Curtis found that it is hard to get justice in the courts. The judge granted a series of prosecution motions to deny him the right to present crucial evidence in his own defense. The judge refused to allow Curtis to cross-examine the main witness against him — arresting officer Joseph Gonzalez — about previous cases where Gonzalez had lied and fabricated evidence.

In September 1988 Curtis was convicted of third-degree sexual assault and burglary and sentenced to 25 years in prison. He has been in Iowa prisons for three-and-a-half years.

On the recent KUCB radio show, Keith Morris began with an attack on Curtis's victory over the cops who beat him. Morris claimed Curtis lied when he said police officers Daniel Dusenberry and Charles Wolf beat him at the police station. He said Curtis's supporters know he is lying and are covering up for him. "Yes, they claim they

Dusenberry twice kicked plaintiff in the groin. Plaintiff was rendered semi-conscious. A large wound opened beneath his left eye bled profusely. . . . He suffered pain, severe bruising of the abdomen and face, facial lacerations, and a blow-out type fracture of the orbital floor of the left eye."

Morris explained that he came to the cops' trial every day to back them. "I was at their trial in support of them and I'm still in support of them and I will always be in support of them, for the simple reason that the evidence presented against them was fabricated."

Morris's method is not new. Since the facts show that Curtis is the victim of a frame-up, Morris simply invents new facts or innuendos to justify keeping Curtis in prison and to attack his supporters.

In the radio show, his comments were designed to pretty up the cops and undercut an important victory over police brutality.

On the other hand, Curtis's supporters are helping use his victory over the cops to help advance the fight against police brutality and to expose even more the police and government frame-up against Curtis.

Morris and his wife also said on the radio show that they support the cops and the government in their efforts to keep Curtis in jail unless he breaks and gives up his fight. "Mark Curtis will be there to serve out his full term, without a question," Keith Morris declared. He said he and his relatives will go to every one of Curtis's parole hearings to press for him to be kept in jail. He would relent, he said, only if Curtis gave up the appeal of his conviction, confessed guilt to the crimes charged against him, and renounced his international defense campaign.

"He is charged with a sex offense," Morris said. "And one of the primary rules of parole is, in order to enter into sex therapy, to start a release program, you must admit your guilt. Now this he adamantly swears he'll never do, so therefore to our family's satisfaction, we've accomplished a heck of a lot. He's going to do 12 flat, no question about it."

This is the same approach as that of the Iowa State Board of Parole, which has told Curtis it will not give a serious hearing to his case for parole unless he enters the Iowa Sex Offenders Treatment Program.

Morris's statements, backing up the actions of the parole board and prison institution, are part of the ongoing campaign to force Curtis to stop acting like a politically-minded worker and a communist. They hope to force Curtis to submit and give up his fight for justice as a warning to others who also seek to advance the struggle of working people.

At the same time, Morris falsely claimed on the air that Curtis has no further legal appeal.

Morris used this charge to put a cloud over the political and fund-raising activities of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

"By the same token, since he has exhausted all avenues of legal litigation, the big question is arising as to why the Socialist Workers Party is continuing this Mark Curtis Defense Fund," Morris said.

Claiming that Curtis and his supporters only want to "intensify their harassment of our family," Morris adds that "the SWP is seizing upon the Larry Milton incident to try and refurbish or restart their campaign for Mark Curtis, enroll more members, and seek more money. It's quite a money-making business that they've had. They've made over, in excess of a million and a half dollars just off of this."

The funds are raised from coworkers, fighters against police brutality, defenders of women's rights, Black rights activists, union fighters and many others in this ongoing fight. Unfortunately for Curtis, the funds do not anywhere approach the one-and-a-half million dollars alleged by Morris. The funds are used to pay attorney fees, court costs, and printing and mailing costs.

When workers like Curtis are denied justice, they must turn to their supporters for financial and other support. Through many hours of voluntary labor, supporters set up tables, speak before union locals and political organizations, make phone calls, and



Militant/Chris Remple

February 1992 hearing on police brutality in Des Moines, Iowa. Keith Morris, father of young woman Mark Curtis is falsely accused of raping, is one of top promoters of the frame-up of Curtis by the cops. He aggressively defends cops who beat Curtis and red-baits militants in anti-police brutality fight in the city.

just like you love those coloreds."

Curtis was known as someone who stood up for workers' rights on the job. He became a target of the bosses, the police, and government.

The Swift company had tried to fire Curtis in 1988, not because he had done anything wrong but because he insisted on his right to medical attention when his back was injured on the job. His foreman claimed medical treatment was not necessary, so Curtis was fired. Curtis's coworkers and the union protested this action, and Curtis won his job back.

Curtis's activities were also well-known to the government. The FBI kept a file on him, spying on his political activities in solidarity with the people of El Salvador. Curtis had participated in a protest against police racism against Blacks a few weeks earlier in Clive, a suburb of Des Moines. He set up a literature table on the lawn of the police station at the antiracist march, promoting books by Malcolm X, V.I. Lenin, Nelson Mandela, Karl Marx, and others.

Curtis is an example of everything the

went to court and this is a major victory for everybody," Morris said, "well, they're lying, and they've lied through the whole process."

Claiming that the photographs showing the extent of Curtis's injuries were faked, Morris said, "The bruise on his chin moves approximately one inch. . . . Yes, the officers were found guilty through an oversight of evidence."

This attack on Curtis came after federal judge Wolle ruled in Curtis's favor against the cops. The cops and city attorney never challenged the evidence presented by Curtis. In fact, some of the most damaging photographs reviewed by the court were taken by the cops themselves and by hospital personnel. In fact, the police never argued that they were denied any opportunity to present their case in court and did not appeal the judge's ruling.

Judge Wolle found that Officer Wolf "forcefully brought his knee down on plaintiff's face. With all his weight behind each blow, he kneed plaintiff in the left eye three times in succession. At the same time

put out mailings to keep this fight going. It is in the tradition of the labor movement, and a fine example of what working people can do fighting together for justice.

The record of police lying about their beating of Curtis at the city jail raises more widespread questions about the conduct of the police during the entire course of Curtis's frame-up and conviction.

Curtis, his attorney William Kutmus, and his supporters are stepping up their efforts to prepare a constitutional challenge to his unjust conviction in federal court.

Morris, following his attack on Curtis's legal victory against police brutality, turned the microphone over to his daughter, Demetria Morris. Now a 19-year-old college student, she claims Curtis raped her on her front porch the night of March 4, 1988. She took more than ten minutes on the radio show to graphically describe a brutal attack, occasionally adding new charges to her account that were never made at the trial.

Facts don't connect Curtis

The facts show there is no evidence connecting Curtis to such a crime. Only charges by Demetria Morris, her younger brother, and the police officer who arrested Curtis were presented at the trial. All the physical evidence argues against Curtis's guilt.

Demetria Morris has always insisted the attack took place just as a favorite TV show began at 8:00 p.m. What she does not explain is that Mark Curtis was across town at the Los Compadres bar and restaurant with coworkers at that time. Unchallenged testimony at his trial placed Curtis at the Los

“Curtis is an example of everything the rulers hate: a unionist who defends all workers, immigrant and native born alike . . .”

Compadres bar until at least 8:30 p.m. Other witnesses testified at the trial that Curtis phoned them at about 8:45 p.m. after driving across town to his home.

Demetria Morris's description of her attacker and the details of the attack raise big questions about what happened that night. Everything she describes points away from Mark Curtis.

Her attacker, she says, was of her own height. Curtis is more than a half foot taller. Her attacker wore a belt, she insists. Curtis had no belt. Her attacker had smoke on his breath. Curtis does not smoke and never has. The attack itself, she insists, was long and violent. She claims she and her attacker fought and rolled around on the floor of her porch. She testified that the porch was dirty and covered with dog hair. A forensic expert's examination of Curtis and his clothing, however, produced neither hair, dirt from the porch, nor any physical evidence linking him to an attack on Morris.

The key prosecution witness against Curtis at the trial was not Demetria Morris. It was not her brother, who called the cops as Curtis stepped on the porch. The city prosecutor's case stood on the testimony of the arresting police officer, Joseph Gonzalez. Gonzalez said he caught Curtis in the act of raping Morris. He testified that Curtis tried to escape by running into the Morris house with his pants around his ankles. Curtis said that police officer Gonzalez began a frame-up against him when he invented evidence by dragging him into the Morris house and pulling his pants down.

Gonzalez has fabricated evidence before. He was suspended from the police force in an earlier case for lying and brutality. The jury was not permitted to know any of this. Curtis's lawyers were barred from seeing or presenting in court Gonzalez's police record.

Curtis also was denied the right to tell the jury that he had been beaten by the cops on



Mark Curtis (front center) with socialist youth leaders in 1986. Curtis is a longtime activist in the struggle for Black and women's rights and against imperialist war.

the night of his arrest. He was not permitted to explain that the cops knew he was a politically active person, as indicated when they called him a "Mexican lover" and a "colored lover" while they beat him.

Demetria Morris told a caller on the radio program that she has not sought and does not want counseling. Instead, she said, she relies totally on her family for support. "I do not wish to go to a counselor because I don't want, you know, they're supposed to be confidential but a lot of things go out in the street," she said. "I'd rather hold all my counseling to my family and let that be there with my family."

Each of the Morrisses in turn stated why they support the police. On the radio show, Demetria Morris raised a new charge that was never raised at the trial, that Curtis intended to kill her. Then she added that "as for the two police that saved my life, I'm on their side."

Keith Morris broadens this support for the cops to defend those found guilty of brutalizing Curtis at the police station. When pressed, Morris admits he supports the entire police department.

At the same time, Keith Morris has proclaimed himself a fighter against police brutality. When Larry Milton was beaten by police, Morris spoke publicly, explaining that Milton had been his employee. He attempted to use this relationship to give him standing as an opponent of police brutality.

However, in the same breath Morris has attacked Curtis in a similar fight against a police beating, saying he faked his injuries, and even showed up in court fraternizing with the cops and supporting them in their efforts to get away with their beating of Curtis.

Friendship with the cops

Morris tried to justify his pro-cop stance by saying, "I'm against police brutality, and I've stood firm on that, but I do not believe that every policeman walking the street is a maniac. . . . They have some problem people, we have some problem people. Everybody has problems. And the only way that this city is going to resolve this issue is, no matter what side you're on, no matter what race you are, we're going to have to at some point in time sit down and extend our hand across the board in friendship and say: 'Let's work this out in a sensible solution.'"

Even the host of the radio show took issue with this statement. "The police involved in that incident did act like maniacs, and need to be dealt with in that fashion, as they did show criminal behavior," she argued. "So we get into that type of dialogue, I think we are going to create a division," she said, trying to steer Morris back onto the safer ground of slandering Curtis.

In addition to letting his real position of political support for the cops show through, Morris also engaged in violence-baiting and red-baiting opponents of police brutality, calling them "disruptive" and "agitators." Referring to a hearing called by the city council where activists protested the beating of Milton, Morris said: "We had people walking up and down the aisles with signs, agitating signs, you know, let's fire this, let's do this and let's do that. At the Callahan school they got totally out of hand and we had to settle them down."

Morris then charged that "these people work for the SWP. It's not the Black people of this community who are trying to agitate this, this is your Socialist Workers Party."

This red-baiting smear of militants in the police brutality fight received an angry response from the call-in audience. Fred Narcisse is an activist whose organization, the Community Support Force, is the one Morris red-baited. The group helped organize picketing to protest the beating of Larry Milton. Narcisse said, "We should not be doing the work of the police department."

Morris repeated his red-baiting with the same slanders used by right-wingers for decades. He said that fighters for social justice are outside agitators with a secret agenda. Morris said he objects "to a group that intends to utilize a situation for their own, to further their own goals and means."

He again charged that "some of the people were members of the Socialist Workers Party carrying the signs. I definitely do know that some of them were. I have, my family has had to monitor this Socialist Workers Party for almost five years. We, I've got stacks and stacks and boxes and boxes of their literature. I have every piece of literature that they ever have printed."

Morris resorted to other classic red-baiting slanders to smear opponents of police brutality, the Socialist Workers Party, and supporters of Mark Curtis's fight for justice. "A lot of this agitation such as sign-carrying, and things of this nature, disruptive nature," he said, "is being provided by the SWP. And they're sitting back quietly in the background, not publicly saying who they are, just doing what they do."

Later on, in response to another call from an opponent of police brutality who objected to his red-baiting, Morris tried to paint a picture of the "red menace" right out of U.S. senator Joseph McCarthy's witch-

hunt hearings in the 1950s.

"As you stated," Morris told the caller, "you are not aware of members of the SWP being in your group. However, let me forewarn you, the SWP has their fingers in a lot of pots. And they are a very well-organized group. And what they attempt to do, and what they do, is place people in different various organizations. And they place them; this is an assignment. They're assigned to join this. They're assigned to work in the packing-houses. Let me cite you an example. Mark Curtis himself was assigned to work at Monfort packing plant. Mark Curtis is a straight-A student and he attended a university for two years. Why should a man do that?"

Morris uses this anticommunist method to try to scare people away from publicly protesting cop violence and to intimidate them from working with the SWP or defending Curtis. It's a method used by ultra-rightists who try to destroy unity in the workers' movement.

The cops cannot sustain a political frame-up on their own. They must turn to others who pose as activists to promote the frame-up through slander and intimidation. Individuals and groups who are drawn to the government and its cops, especially at times of economic depression and social crisis like today, volunteer for this dirty work. Keith Morris and some of his relatives signed on as founding members of the campaign against Mark Curtis.

They have recently stepped up their efforts, both to undercut Curtis's legal victory against cop violence, and to help derail the fight for justice for Larry Milton and the boost it received from Curtis's victory.

This radio show exposed some of Morris's right-wing, anticommunist views and showed his backing of the cops.

As for the thousands who have come out in defense of justice for Mark Curtis, they will be reaching for wider support, getting out the facts, and combating the attempts of pro-cop and progovernment forces to stop this defense campaign. Explaining the real right-wing character of the ongoing campaign aimed at Curtis helps unionists and political activists understand the stakes in this fight for justice.

A victory in Mark Curtis's fight will be not just for him but for the thousands of others who have been targeted by the cops, framed up on false charges, or otherwise victimized for being Black, young, or a worker fighting for justice.

Priscilla Schenk is a member of United Auto Workers Local 1672 and an activist in the Mark Curtis Defense Committee in Des Moines.

Literature available from the Mark Curtis Defense Committee

State of Iowa v. Mark Stanton Curtis. Transcript of September 1988 jury trial proceedings that found Curtis guilty of rape and burglary. 446 pp. \$30.

The Stakes in the Worldwide Political Campaign to Defend Mark Curtis by John Gaige. A pamphlet that explains the political background to Curtis's case, the frame-up, and unfair trial. 25 pp. \$1.

The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis, a VHS video produced by Hollywood director Nick Castle. This effective 49-minute documentary has clips from TV news broadcasts on Curtis's fight for justice; scenes from the trial; and interviews with Curtis, his wife Kate Kaku, and others. This video is available for the cost of reproduction and shipping. \$15.

Brief from Mark Curtis's successful lawsuit against Des Moines police. This document details the record of cop brutality in Des Moines over the past decade. 20pp. \$1. The judge's ruling in this suit is also available upon request.

For these and other materials (including in Spanish) write or call the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, IA 50311. Phone (515) 246-1695. Bulk quantities are available. Payments should accompany orders and checks can be made out to Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Please allow 2 weeks for delivery.

Socialist petitioning effort gains in Miami

Continued from front page
mates to DeBates.

At a reception that evening at the campaign office, DeBates talked about her most recent campaign trips to Korea, Japan, and California. She discussed the serious situation facing youth in Los Angeles and San Francisco with the large number of arrests following the acquittal of the cops who beat King.

Teams of supporters have set up campaign tables at high schools, college campuses, bus stops, grocery stores, and shopping centers throughout the Miami area. One team traveled to West Palm Beach to join a demonstration against the injustice done to Rodney King.

In the course of this effort many campaign interest cards have been signed. Supporters have been following up immediately on these cards, inviting signers to help at the campaign headquarters, petition, help out on campaign tables, or participate in any other way they can. Several young people who signed cards have visited the Pathfinder bookstore.

This week the petition drive will get a boost from a full-time team of six supporters from around the country, including four laid-off coal miners from West Virginia and Alabama.

Petitioning has also begun in Ohio and is about to start in Illinois. At the end of May it will get under way in Michigan. Massachusetts, New York, Alabama, and other states will follow. Socialist Workers national campaign director Greg McCartan said that volunteers were needed who could participate full time or on weekends in all these states.

"Fighting to get on the ballot and overcome the restrictive election laws is the way supporters of the socialist campaign can talk to thousands of people in the coming weeks and months about the socialist alternative to war, racism, and economic depression," he said.

McCartan said anyone wanting to help should call local campaign offices (listed on page 12) or the national campaign office in New York at (212) 675-6740.



Estelle Debates (right), Socialist Workers vice-presidential candidate, campaigning in Miami. Socialist petitioners collected almost 3,000 signatures to put SWP Congressional candidate Laura Garza on ballot in Florida.

Militant/Dan Fein

De Klerk regime stalls S. Africa talks

BY SETH GALINSKY

Meeting in Johannesburg, the second round of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa, known as Codesa II, ended May 16 without reaching agreement on a transitional government that would pave the way for elections to replace the apartheid regime.

"Despite all the hard preparatory work, nothing concrete has emerged," said African National Congress (ANC) president Nelson Mandela. "But we have been able to save the peace process. We are going back home full of strength and hope."

The talks stalled over several key ques-

tions. The government wants effective veto power over some parts of a new constitution, insisting that approval of the provisions that deal with certain regions of the country should require a 75 percent majority in the legislative body that will write the document. The other main questions are the apartheid rulers' attempts to delay the election of a new government and its proposal for the establishment of an upper house — based on regional representation, not one person, one vote — that could block legislation.

The ANC is willing to accept a 70 percent majority requirement to enact parts of the

constitution, a modification of its earlier proposal of a two-thirds majority. The ANC had already accepted a requirement for a 75 percent majority for approval of a bill of rights.

Made up of representatives of the government in Pretoria, the ANC, and 17 other political groups, Codesa is scheduled to meet again by the end of June.

During Codesa II's closing session Mandela criticized South African president F.W. de Klerk's position that implementation of a transition be delayed.

"From where can we claim the moral right to assert that we need to move with less speed?" asked Mandela. "Why do we put off till tomorrow the solutions that we can reach today? People cannot postpone their hunger. Similarly they do not want their freedom postponed."

Mandela warned the government on its stalling tactics. "Let none of us make the mistake of thinking that the people will do nothing to change their conditions," he said. "Not only do the masses have the right, they have the duty to engage in struggle to change their condition — change any government or leader they see as acting against their common good."

"The time has come that you truly cross the Rubicon," Mandela said as he turned toward de Klerk. "You must understand clearly that the days of white-minority domination are over."

Profit drive causes Canada mine disaster

Continued from front page

about unsafe conditions in the mine becomes known.

The Westray mine was opened last year amid considerable controversy over its safety. The coal seam on which the mine sits contains geological faults where large methane gas pockets can accumulate and which render it prone to cave-ins. Some 250 miners have died in this coal field in the last 150 years. The last active coal mine before Westray, at Stellarton, was closed in the 1960s.

The United Mine Workers union (UMWA) in the Cape Breton region of Nova Scotia argued against opening the mine ever since it was first proposed in the mid-1980s. As Robert Hoegg, a retired miner and rescue worker at Westray, explained following this latest disaster, the coal seam had "never been anything more than a graveyard."

But it was a potentially lucrative operation for its owners, Curragh Resources. The coal is low in sulfur content and burns much hotter than average coal, making it very attractive to electric power utilities.

Curragh lobbied successfully for a recommendation from the federal Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Resources and the necessary permits from the Nova Scotia government.

The company also received a \$12 million loan from the Nova Scotia government and \$85 million in loan guarantees from the federal government. Donald Cameron, the premier of Nova Scotia, lobbied hard for the project in his earlier capacity as minister of industry.

The company successfully fought an attempt by the miners to join the UMWA after the mine opened and was in the midst of fighting another organizing drive by the United Steelworkers of America when the disaster struck.

Reports by miners of horrendous safety conditions in the mine were common after it went into production. Only now are their concerns being widely reported.

Ken Evans worked at Westray and quit

in April. He told the Montreal *La Presse* that the company's claim that the mine was safe is a "tissue of lies." He said the inexperienced miners at Westray were not adequately trained and had to rely on experienced miners for their safety. He noted that there were close to 20 roof cave-ins in the mine's first year of operation, a figure confirmed by other miners who have spoken publicly.

In a CBC radio interview, Evans explained that miners made specific requests for methane gas detectors to be installed on six roof-bolting machines, at a cost to the company of \$5,000 each. They were turned down.

Provincial government mine inspectors said they were powerless to solve the safety violations because of the pressure by company and government officials to boost production and "make the mine a success."

CBC national television broadcast an interview with three Westray miners May 14. The miners explained that methane gas detectors in the mine were often out of order and that miners would nonetheless be told by the shift bosses to go in to work.

Curragh Resources chairman Clifford Frame announced May 15 that the company was pressing to reopen the mine as soon as the provincial government inquiry delivered its report.

Frame said a trust fund for the families of the dead miners would be established and funded by royalties from a "rehabilitated" Westray mine and the proposed Wimpey open-pit coal mine at Stellarton. Many local residents have reacted angrily to his proposal to link compensation payments to the reopening of the mine.

Prior to the Westray disaster, the Nova Scotia government was set to bypass an environmental review and grant a permit for the controversial Wimpey mine.

Brendon MacIntyre is a member of Local 2501 of the UMWA in Cape Breton. He said in an interview, "Like a lot of other miners in Cape Breton who knew about that mine, I consider that sending miners to

work under those conditions was nothing less than premeditated murder."

Randy Macdonald, vice-president of the New Glasgow and District Labour Council in Pictou County, told CBC Radio, "I believe that the operators of the Westray mine are the ones to blame; they should carry the full burden. In my personal opinion, they should be charged under the criminal code. The minimum charge that I can think of is manslaughter."

The Nova Scotia government has announced a public inquiry into the disaster.

Socialist candidate condemns 'criminal mining explosion'

The following statement was issued by James Warren, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. president on May 15.

Along with millions of working people in the United States and around the world, my campaign sends its solidarity and condolence to the coal miners and their families who have lost their workmates and loved ones in the criminal mining explosion in Plymouth, Nova Scotia.

Today, I learned that the 16th body was found and that the rescue effort was suspended, leaving 10 more miners trapped underground. From what I've seen on TV and read in the daily press this tragedy was unnecessary. Westray miners point out the management of the nonunion mine let safety problems develop and, following the explosion, had failed to carry out full-scale emergency procedures.

The mining disaster is another example of the employers' assault on working people as they seek to shift the burden of their economic crisis onto the backs of the working class. Just two months ago, four miners were killed and two seriously in-

jured at the production shaft of the Consolidated Coal Co. Blacksville No. 1 mine in West Virginia.

A full and swift investigation — independent of the mine owners and with the full involvement of the labor movement and the United Mine Workers of America — should be carried out immediately to determine the conditions that led up to the explosion. If the company — Curragh Resources Inc. — is found negligent, it should be fined to the fullest extent of the law. The mining families who lost members should receive full compensation to help mitigate the impact of their losses.

As the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. president I will be presenting the socialist alternative to the increasingly reactionary course of the two parties of big business in the U.S. — the Democrats and Republicans.

My campaign explains that the employers put profits before safety. This criminal action underscores the need for the labor movement to demand government legislation and strict enforcement of safety regulations in the mines.

The fight for national rights of Quebecois and Natives in Canada

Worst crisis of capitalism since 1930s sharpens debate

BY MICHEL DUGRÉ AND STEVE PENNER

MONTREAL — A heated debate, seemingly over proposals to reform Canada's constitution, has dominated politics in this country of 27 million over the past two years. In fact the central issues in dispute are about whether or not to recognize the democratic rights of Quebec's 6.7 million people, 80 percent of whom make up an oppressed French-speaking nationality; 1 million francophones (French speakers) outside of Quebec who also face systematic discrimination on the basis of the language they speak; and 1 million Natives, who face institutionalized racist discrimination.

The sharpness of the debate is a reflection of the political polarization among Canada's capitalist rulers. They are increasingly divided over how to respond to the worst crisis of the capitalist economy since the 1930s depression, to the continuing resistance of labor's ranks to the bosses' efforts to drive down wages and working conditions, and to the determined efforts of the oppressed to fight for their rights.

The ruling rich have also tried to turn this debate to their advantage by using it to divide working people of different languages, skin colors, and national origins against one another. The rulers claim the interests of Quebecois, Natives, "English Canadians," and francophone minorities outside Quebec are counterposed. Coming to grips with this self-serving lie is essential if workers and farmers are to unite to defend their common interests in the face of a devastating worldwide economic depression.

The June 1990 defeat of Ottawa's last effort at constitutional reform dramatically brought to the surface the sharp social tensions that underlie the polarization in capitalist politics. Thousands of Native people who had taken part in protests across the country against the government's Meech Lake constitutional accord were jubilant over their victory. The accord did not contain any recognition of Natives basic rights.

The defeat of the federal government in Ottawa was also the catalyst for over half a million Quebecois pouring into the streets to celebrate Quebec's national holiday. Many among them, especially youth, chanted slogans or carried banners defending Quebec's national rights.

'Sovereign' Quebec

In the wake of these developments there was a substantial rise in support by Quebecois for either winning greater powers for the Quebec government within Canada or establishing what has been called a "sovereign" Quebec.

In the weeks following the accord's defeat the capitalist rulers in Quebec and Ottawa launched a massive attack on Mohawk Indians, who had erected barricades just outside Montreal to block the expropriation of their lands.

The nearly three-month-long confrontation culminated in the deployment of 3,000 Canadian army troops and Quebec cops against the Mohawks. It also sparked protests by Native peoples and their supporters from one end of Canada to the other in which roads, highways, and railway tracks were blocked. These battles were strengthened by and helped reinforce a series of labor struggles involving tens of thousands of steelworkers, rail workers, coal miners, and auto workers.

At the same time anti-francophone and anti-Native forces organized mobilizations of thousands in a major assault on the democratic rights of the oppressed.

The Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada carried out a concerted campaign across Ontario, convincing more than 50 municipalities to declare themselves English-only and against recognition of the rights of the half million francophones in that province.

Several months later an ultrarightist and anti-francophone party — the Confederation of Regions (COR) — won substantial numbers of votes in several industrial centers — including 20 percent in Sault Ste. Marie — in the Ontario provincial elections. It had an even stronger showing on a provincewide level in the September 1991 elections in New Brunswick.

Like Patrick Buchanan, the rightist candidate in the Republican primaries in the United States, the COR utilizes reactionary demagoguery to win support from disoriented middle- and working-class layers for radical-sounding proposals to confront the economic and social crisis.

The group scapegoats immigrants and francophones, blaming them, not the capitalist system, for many of the ills in society such as unemployment. It opposes the "Frenchification" of Canada and calls for "One people,



A 1991 demonstration in Quebec in support of French language rights, which Quebec's Law 101 defends.

one language, one country."

In Quebec an equally reactionary outfit called Solidarity Chateauguay organized daily racist anti-Mohawk demonstrations of up to 10,000 people over several weeks in the summer of 1990. A cavalcade of cars carrying Mohawk women, children, and elderly people through the racist blockade was stoned after the police blocked its passage and allowed the racist mob to gather. One man was killed.

While public outrage forced the cops to later arrest several of the attackers, they were given suspended sentences by the courts on the basis that they planned to become cops or soldiers. In contrast Mohawk fighters have been sentenced to prison terms of up to four years.

The confrontation between the Mohawks and the capitalist rulers in Ottawa and Quebec was the first time troops had been used in Canada since 1974, when soldiers and cops were used against 400 Native protesters in Ottawa. Four years earlier, the War Measures Act — a form of martial law — was utilized to crush a rising movement for

the national and language rights of the Quebecois.

Stepped-up rulers' offensive

As the capitalist crisis has deepened the police have been increasingly used to brutalize and terrorize working people. At least 12 Blacks, Latinos, and Natives have been shot and killed by racist cops in Montreal, Toronto, and Winnipeg since 1986. Hundreds more have been beaten. Not one cop has ever been convicted. In Toronto and Montreal the police have also organized rallies, street demonstrations, and other actions to defend their racist murders.

At the same time as the capitalist rulers sent thousands of soldiers and cops against the Mohawks, Ottawa deployed an additional 2,000 troops to join the Washington-led imperialist assault against Iraq in which at least 150,000 people were slaughtered. It was the first war in which Canadian troops had been directly involved since the Korean War.

As Ottawa stepped up its attacks on the oppressed and exploited both at home and abroad, the Canadian capitalist economy entered its deepest and longest recession since 1938.

Since 1989 the sharp decline in industrial production has led to the elimination of 400,000 jobs, one-fifth of all the jobs in industry.

Scores of major companies stand on shaky financial foundations as a result of declining profit rates and sharpening international capitalist competition. Business bankruptcies are the highest they have been since the 1930s.

The sharpening trade wars among the world's capitalists, especially between those in Canada and the United States, place the Canadian rulers in a highly vulnerable position. More than 75 percent of all Canada's trade takes place with the United States.

This was the context in which Ottawa entered into the so-called free trade agreement with Washington in 1989, hoping to eliminate barriers to its trade with the United States. It has rapidly become clear, however, that these hopes were completely illusory.

A series of restrictions by Washington on the import of lumber and "Japanese" cars built in Canada have shown that the "free trade" pact between the two countries will do nothing to protect the Canadian capitalists from an escalating trade war in which they are by far the weaker party.

The Canada First or Quebec First rhetoric of organizations like the COR, the Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada, and Solidarity Chateauguay aims to divert working people's attention from the source of the problems they face — the capitalist system itself.

Sovereignty or autonomy?

Openly reactionary nationalism more and more characterizes all the capitalist parties in Canada today, including the other two major new parties that have emerged as a result of the deep divisions among the rulers — the Reform Party and the Bloc Québécois.

Like the Quebec Liberal government and the Parti Québécois, the main opposition party in Quebec, the Bloc Québécois, which is also a pro-capitalist, nationalist party, claims to be fighting for Quebec sovereignty.

This perspective is widely supported in Quebec as the form of the fight for the national rights of Quebecois today.

In reality, however, none of the major nationalist forces advocating Quebec "sovereignty" propose the formation

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of a politically and economically independent or sovereign state. None of them are calling for the establishment of a separate Quebec army. All agree that the Canadian dollar would be the currency of a "sovereign" Quebec and that the Bank of Canada and other key structures of the Canadian capitalist economy would remain in place.

Thus the call for Quebec sovereignty, as advanced by these forces, is vague and misleading.

What Quebec's bourgeois nationalists are all actually demanding is greater political autonomy and powers for the Quebec government within a more decentralized Canadian state. They seek these powers above all to utilize the Quebec government to strengthen their hand in the competition with capitalists in the rest of Canada as well as internationally. Even then the Quebec government has scaled down the scope of its demands in the hope of reaching a deal acceptable to Ottawa and the other provinces.

However, the demand for greater governmental powers is widely supported among working people in Quebec because they are seen as necessary to fight against the national oppression of Quebecois. Such demands deserve the support of working people in the rest of the country as well.

The fight for greater powers for the Quebec government goes back to the defeat of the 1837 revolution against British colonial rule. Ever since then, the systematic denial of the right of the Quebecois to self-determination has been at the heart of the rulers' efforts to maintain a system of institutionalized national oppression as a key pillar in the development of Canadian capitalism.

Quebecois face systematic discrimination on the basis of the language they speak. Their lower wages are utilized to drive down the wages of all working people and to divide the working class along national and language lines.

At the same time the capitalist rulers seek to convince English-speaking workers that they have a common interest with the rulers in defending "Canada" against "the threat of Quebec separatism."

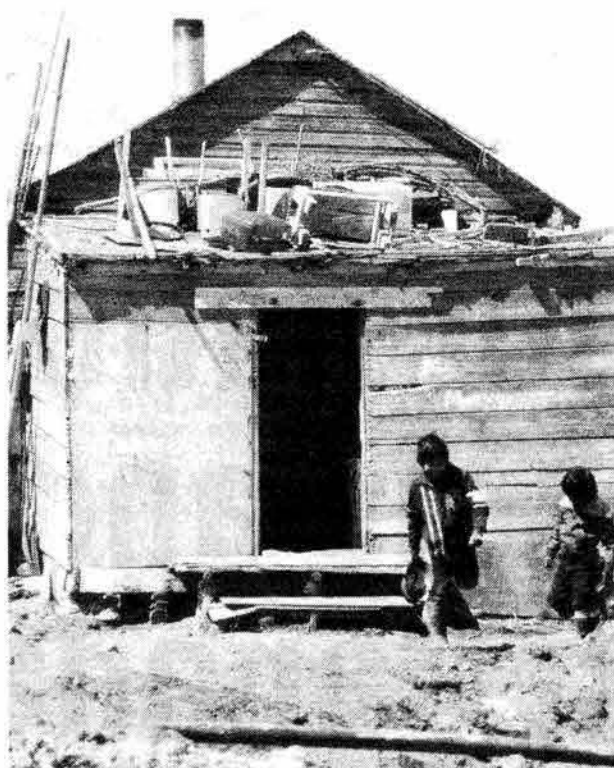
The rulers' national unity campaign covers up the reality that Canada is a class-divided society controlled by a tiny handful of billionaire families. Working people, who are exploited and oppressed by this ruling elite, share no common interests with the rulers simply because they have the same citizenship or speak the same language. To the contrary their fundamental interests lie in opposing the rulers' efforts to pit French- and English-speaking workers against one another and deny the demands of the Quebecois for their rights.

Systematic national oppression

The British North America Act, adopted with the formation of the Canadian capitalist state in 1867, denied Quebec the powers needed to eliminate the systematic oppression of its largely French-speaking population. For example, it imposed a religious school system which divides Quebec's schools into two completely separate Catholic and Protestant systems. The religious schools were subsequently further divided into separate French- and English-speaking schools.

This has institutionalized the division of the working class in Quebec along language lines and has resulted in one of the most backward educational systems of any major industrialized country.

Four out of five children in Quebec did not go beyond primary education until the early 1960s. Important gains were won through massive struggles for a more modern and public educational system. However, despite reforms in the early 1960s that established a provincewide curric-



Dwelling of Natives in northern Quebec. Some 40 percent of Native housing in Canada lacks central heating.

ulum and educational standards, the segregated structure of the schools remained largely untouched.

This segregation was further reinforced by the imposition of a new constitution and "Charter of Rights and Freedoms" on Quebec in 1982 which gave the courts new powers to defend the "rights" of Quebec's English-speaking minority, supposedly threatened by Quebec's affirmative action policies to overcome discrimination against francophones.

These measures were carried out over the overwhelming opposition of the Quebec government, the Quebec National Assembly, all major trade unions, farm groups, and other mass organizations.

This was only one of numerous occasions in Canadian history where the right to self-determination of the Quebecois was violated by Ottawa. In both imperialist world wars the Canadian army was sent into Quebec and martial law imposed to enforce conscription over the massive opposition of Quebecois. The federal government last imposed the War Measures Act in October 1970, sending troops into Quebec to crush a rising mass movement for national and language rights. Hundreds of nationalist fighters, trade unionists, and socialists were jailed without being charged with any offense.

Quebecois have waged a decades-long struggle with Ottawa over their right to self-determination and the governmental powers needed to combat national oppression. One of the arguments used against their demands is that if Quebec is given greater powers, so should the other provinces. But Quebec's demands have nothing to do with demands being put forward in this debate by the other provincial governments under the banner of "provincial rights."

The provinces are not oppressed. The demands put forward by their governments involve nothing more than attempts by one wing of the capitalist rulers to win more powers for itself. They do not deserve any support from the labor movement.

50-year resistance to national oppression

The fight against national oppression of Canada's 5 million Quebecois has been at the center of politics in this country for much of the period since 1942, when 85 percent of Quebecois voted against conscription in a referendum.

This fight was intertwined with the massive battles of Quebec workers to forge industrial unions as part of a North America-wide movement. In Quebec this fight was given a powerful additional stimulus by the fight to overcome the major wage inequality between workers in Quebec and the rest of Canada and in Quebec between French- and English-speaking workers.

In 1940 per capita income in Quebec was one-third less than that in the predominantly English-speaking province of Ontario. Moreover, within Quebec francophones earned substantially less than those who were English-speaking. Powerful battles for union recognition and for wage equality were waged by tens of thousands of garment and steelworkers, meat-packers and miners throughout the 1940s and 50s. Yet as late as 1961 francophones in Quebec earned, on average, 35 percent less than anglophones.

In the 1960s new battles to unionize health and education workers stimulated broader struggles against linguistic discrimination.

Several strikes took place where workers demanded an end to discrimination against workers who were French-speaking and insisted that union contracts be published and negotiations be conducted in French as well as in English. These fights were also reflected in the growing proportion

of Quebecois union officials in the Quebec labor movement and in the leadership of major national unions.

By 1978 the wage gap between francophones and anglophones in Quebec had been reduced to 19 percent.

Quebecois demanded to be served in French in restaurants and department stores like Eaton in downtown Montreal and fought for the educational rights of French-speaking students.

Many of these gains were codified in Law 101 in 1977. It compels all enterprises of 50 employees or more to carry out a series of concrete measures aimed at making French the main language of work. Despite the fact that the law's requirements are not very demanding, a third of the larger companies have not yet met Law 101's standards 15 years after its adoption.

Advances since 1960s

Nevertheless, the fact that two-thirds of such companies do meet these standards does reflect a big change from the period before the 1970s.

All union contracts must now be provided in French helping ensure that contract negotiations take place in French as well as English.

Law 101 requires students from immigrant families to attend the French school system. Prior to 1970, 85 percent of immigrant students whose native language was neither English nor French went to English schools. This policy was used to prevent the unification of the working class in Quebec around the use of a common language, French, which is the language of the large majority. By 1990, 73 percent of the children of immigrant families attended French schools.

The problem is that this half measure leaves the separate English language and religion-divided school system intact. The only truly democratic solution would be the creation of a single, unified, secular school system in which French is the main language of instruction but in which all second languages would be taught where there is sufficient demand.

Law 101 requires commercial signs in Quebec to be provided in French. Until the early 1970s many signs in Montreal, a city which is two-thirds francophone, were only in English.

Nonetheless, aspects of Law 101 and especially Law 178, which was introduced in 1988, are discriminatory and should be opposed by working people, particularly the ban against the use of languages other than French on public signs. Affirmative action measures to overcome systematic discrimination against francophones — which is the heart of Law 101 — cannot succeed in uniting working people in the fight for equality if they are linked to measures that discriminate against others.

Law 101 also leaves untouched the segregation of Quebec's social services along language lines. Like the universities, those services that serve anglophones, such as hospitals, are much better funded than those provided for francophones as a result of major financing by Quebec's wealthy English-speaking capitalists.

Affirmative action needed

Affirmative action proposals, aimed at overcoming the national and language divisions imposed on working people in Canada by the capitalist rulers, are an essential component of the working-class program. These demands should include:

- an end to all forms of language discrimination against francophones;
- stronger measures to ensure that French is established as the language of work in all companies regardless of size;
- the repeal of Law 178 and any other restrictions on the use of languages other than French;
- free, quality French and English language courses for all who want them;
- an end to the separate anglophone health and social services system and the establishment of an adequately funded, unified, multilingual system.

Affirmative action programs are also essential to overcome the systematic discrimination faced by the 1 million francophones outside Quebec. New Brunswick, one third of whose residents are French-speaking Acadians, is the only province outside Quebec that is officially bilingual. Everywhere else French-language public schools and social services are systematically denied. The francophone minorities outside Quebec — including in New Brunswick — are paid less, have higher unemployment rates, and much higher rates of illiteracy.

In addition to affirmative action programs, public French schools and services should be provided to all francophones across Canada. In Ontario many can only receive an education in their own language by attending Catholic schools.

The oppression of Quebecois today

Despite gains made over the last half century, Quebecois are still oppressed. Francophones across Canada still receive 10 percent less income than those who are English-speaking. In Quebec the difference is 15 percent. In 1985 a person speaking only French in Quebec earned \$3,043

New International no. 7

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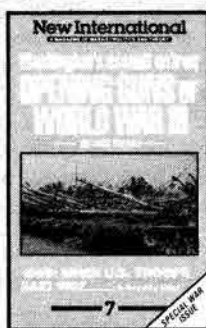
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less per year than a someone speaking only English..

Although Quebec contains 25 percent of the Canadian population, 32 percent of those living below the official poverty line and 37 percent of those on welfare in Canada in 1986 were in Quebec.

National oppression is deepening with the capitalist crisis.

From 1980 to 1988, Quebec's average family income dropped from 90 percent of Ontario's to 80 percent. In 1989 one in four people in Montreal lived below the poverty line; today the proportion is significantly higher.

In 1991, only half of the adult working population in the city of Montreal was employed. The rest included thousands on welfare, workers forced to retire prematurely on inadequate pensions, women seeking work but compelled to remain at home because they cannot find jobs, and students forced to continue taking courses for the same reason.

The rate of high school dropouts in Quebec rose from 27 percent in 1986 to 36 percent in 1989. The rate of functional illiteracy among francophones across Canada is almost double the rate among anglophones. In 1987 anglophones in Quebec were still twice as likely as francophones to obtain a university degree and three times as likely to obtain a postgraduate degree.

Thus, while anglophones are a minority in Quebec, it is the French-speaking majority, not they, who are oppressed.

Class differentiation

The resistance to national oppression by the Quebecois is taking place with a quite different class composition than in the major struggles that took place in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s.

As a result of the combination of the post-World War II capitalist expansion and the substantial gains won through the struggles of that period, a class of Quebecois capitalists emerged for the first time as one of the main forces controlling industry, finance, and communications in Quebec. In 1960 almost none of the largest capitalists in Quebec were Quebecois. Today they make up 19 of the top 50. They had also become an integral component of Canada's imperialist ruling class.

Along with these developments there has been the qualitative growth of middle-class layers of Quebecois business executives, financial brokers and managers, professionals, and trade union officials. The proportion of top management personnel who are Quebecois went from 30 percent in 1959 to 58 percent in 1988.

During the decades following the war a layer of Quebecois workers were hired in relatively substantial numbers for the first time in some of the higher-paid jobs from which they had previously been largely excluded, such as aerospace and rail.

While Quebecois workers and exploited farmers made substantial gains in the three decades following World War II, since the middle of the 1970s the majority have faced deepening exploitation and oppression as a consequence of the deterioration in economic and social conditions and the rulers' offensive.

As a result of the major changes in Quebec's class structure the social differentiation and polarization among Quebecois has sharpened substantially. Thus the coming battles for the rights of the Quebecois, which will be sparked by the deepening of national oppression and the rise of labor struggles in the context of a deep capitalist depression, will rapidly confront a much sharper polarization along class lines than the earlier national rights struggles. There will not be a multiclass nationalist movement like that of the 1960s under these conditions.

Quebecois and Canadian nationalism

The working class, in alliance with exploited farmers, is the only social class with an interest in waging the struggle against national oppression to the end. That is not only because workers and farmers suffer the most from national oppression; it is above all because the oppression of Quebecois is a product of the capitalist system of exploitation of the labor of working people.

The fight against national oppression can therefore only be carried through to the end as part of the overall struggle to overthrow capitalist rule and replace it with a government of workers and farmers. The working class can only wage such a fight to the extent that it breaks from the capitalist politicians and petty bourgeois misleaders who utilize nationalism to defend their own wealth and privileges and to block the development of working-class unity, consciousness, and class political independence.

Canadian nationalism, like the nationalism of all imperialist nations, is 100 percent reactionary.

Canadian nationalists deny that Canada is an imperialist

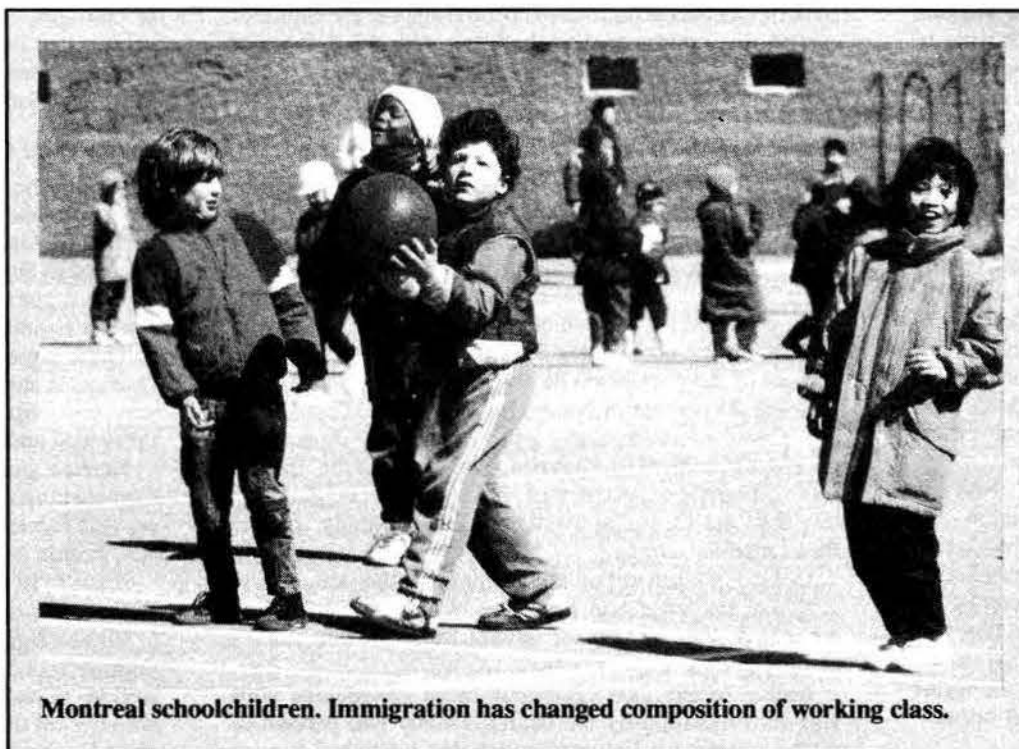
country and claim that it is somehow oppressed by the United States.

This is a completely false and reactionary idea. Canada is one of the most developed and wealthiest capitalist countries. Its major capitalist monopolies and banks, which are among the world's major imperialist concerns, export massive quantities of capital and play a key role in the exploitation of the semicolonial world, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean.

While Canada's rulers are junior partners of U.S. imperialism they head up a politically independent imperialist country, not a semicolonial state. They have participated in every major imperialist war in the 20th century, with the exception of the Vietnam War, in which they covertly backed Washington.. They have not followed this course because they were forced to by Britain or the United States, but because it was in their interests as an imperialist power.

English-speaking workers misled

By denying this reality the trade union bureaucracy, the union-based New Democratic Party (NDP), and formerly pro-Moscow Stalinist parties lead working people to de-



Montreal schoolchildren. Immigration has changed composition of working class.

fend Canada's rulers in their conflicts and trade wars with other imperialists, such as the United States and Japan, or with semicolonial countries such as Iraq and Mexico. These forces also raise the banner of "Canadian national unity" in their attempts to convince English-speaking workers that they should back Ottawa in its drive to deny the national rights of Quebecois.

Quebec nationalism is a much more complex phenomenon. The nationalism of oppressed nations like Quebec is neither progressive or reactionary as such. Its actual class content depends on what role it plays in the class struggle in a concrete set of circumstances.

When nationalist sentiment is the expression of the struggle against national oppression it can play a progressive role. However, with its multiclass framework, it can also serve as a bridge to the anti-working-class positions of the national bourgeoisie.

Bourgeois nationalists, such as the current Quebec Liberal government and the Parti Québécois — the previous governing party — claim to speak on behalf of the entire nation and to represent its interests. In reality they seek only to eliminate those aspects of national inequality which are an obstacle to their own wealth and privileges. They have no intention of leading a serious fight against national oppression since that would threaten capitalist profits and stability.

All wings of bourgeois nationalism from the Parti Québécois to the Quebec Liberal Party, share the goal of increasing the powers of the Quebec government as a weapon in the Quebec capitalists' efforts to win a greater share of the wealth produced by working people and appropriated by Canada's ruling class. They seek to defend national privilege — their own — not to win national equality for others.

Role of middle-class nationalists

The middle-class nationalists support the demand for greater powers for the Quebec government, not as a means of combating national oppression but to create the best possible conditions for themselves and other petty bourgeois layers in the midst of an economic crisis.

In fact, like both the English- and French-speaking capitalists, they too largely refuse to recognize Quebecois as an oppressed nationality. Instead they talk only about defending and promoting "Quebec," its language, and culture. They thus largely refuse to support the struggle for the rights of francophone minorities outside of Quebec, characterizing it as a lost cause.

As the capitalist crisis has deepened over the past 15

years Quebec's bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalists have evolved sharply to the right. Thus all the capitalist political parties in Quebec gave unconditional backing to Ottawa's involvement in the imperialist war in Iraq in contrast to World War II. They were in the forefront of those demanding that the Canadian army be sent into Quebec in order to put down the Mohawk struggle to defend their land.

The labor officialdom justified its support for the imposition of wage controls in 1991 in Quebec by arguing that it would help what it claims to be "our" economy. The officials support chauvinist and racist immigration restrictions promoted by Quebec's capitalist rulers under the pretext of limiting non-French-speaking immigrants who they argue threaten French language and culture.

The labor officials have also refused to support Native people in their struggles to defend their land and their rights from attacks by Ottawa and Quebec, accepting the Quebecois capitalists' claim that the Natives' demands are a threat to "Quebec." And they support the Quebec government's promotion of a reactionary "family" policy that calls on Quebecois women to produce more babies.

All varieties of reactionary nationalism, whether Quebecois or Canadian, effectively undermine any possibility of forging working-class unity either internationally or across Canada. They block the development of the labor movement's political independence from the capitalist rulers.

Quebec independence

The Canadian capitalist rulers try to win working people to support their "national unity" campaign on the basis that the establishment of an independent Quebec would be an economic disaster. The reality, however, is that a worldwide depression has already begun, with devastating consequences for working people. Capitalist politicians are attempting to scapegoat different peoples and layers of the oppressed as somehow responsible for this crisis — Japanese, immigrants, welfare recipients, Quebecois, Jews, and others.

Working people can only fight the consequences of the capitalist crisis by uniting in common struggles for their rights, not by being tied into supporting the capitalists' reactionary and divisive campaigns. That is why it is essential that the labor movement unconditionally support the right of oppressed peoples like Quebecois and Natives to self-determination, a fundamental democratic right.

However, whether or not the working-class vanguard should advocate the independence of an oppressed nation is a purely tactical question.

The working class is an international class that can only realize its aims by seeking to overcome national divisions and borders, to unite workers and farmers internationally in a common struggle against world imperialism, and to establish a world federation of socialist states. Its line of march does not point toward the establishment of new nation-states.

Under a concrete set of conditions in the class struggle, however, the fight for the independence of an oppressed nation can become necessary to advance the fight against national oppression and for working-class unity and struggle, for example, in the fight today for the independence of Puerto Rico from the United States.

By the late 1960s the fight for an independent Quebec had become the political perspective of the broadly based movement for Quebec's national rights. But there are no broad forces currently advocating Quebec's independence. While many working people have not rejected the possibility that Quebec independence might become necessary, only a minority have reached this conclusion today. Instead, the fight for Quebec's national rights is today centered on demands to strengthen the powers of the provincial government.

There is no political basis for communists or other vanguard fighters to call for an independent or sovereign Quebec under current conditions.

However, for many Quebecois working people, the call for sovereignty is simply a synonym for their national right to self-determination, including the demand that the Quebec government be granted all the powers needed to combat national oppression. The working-class vanguard should fully identify with the progressive aspirations of all those who use the term sovereignty in this sense. It should join all those who are prepared to fight for Quebec's rights, such as the Quebec Movement — the main umbrella organization of those demanding greater powers for Quebec and a referendum to win these demands — and the Regroupment of Quebec Youth for Sovereignty.

'English rights': a reactionary perspective

Working people also need to oppose all proposals to defend the supposed rights of "English-Canadians," in-

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cluding the call for a cross-Canada or "English-Canadian" referendum or constituent assembly. The Canadian nationalist group Action Canada Network — led by an alliance of Liberals, NDP leaders, trade union officials, and Stalinists — is campaigning for the recognition of "English Canada" as one of three nations in Canada with the right to self-determination along with Quebec and Native peoples. Despite its progressive-sounding character this is a reactionary perspective.

There is no English-Canadian nationality, nor is there an anglophone community in Quebec with common interests.

It is impossible to speak of an English-Canadian nationality without denying the multinational reality of the working-class in this country. Who are "English-Canadians?" Do they include immigrants and Native people who live outside of Quebec? What are the criteria for determining the composition of English-Canadians? People's national origins? Living in the part of Canada that is predominantly English-speaking? Having English as a first language? Not being Quebecois?

Nor is there an anglophone community in Quebec with common interests. This is a social category invented and promoted by the capitalists in order to divide working people and get them to side with one or another wing of the rulers. Apart from speaking the same language anglophones as such have nothing in common — they include different classes whose interests are totally counterposed. In contrast, anglophone and francophone workers have the same fundamental class interests, including the interest in fighting against both the English- and French-speaking rulers who oppress and exploit them.

Quebecois, Native people, and the French-speaking Acadians of the Atlantic provinces are oppressed nationalities and peoples who have forged a common national consciousness through their struggles against oppression. Unconditional support to the right of oppressed nationalities to self-determination is a precondition to forging working-class unity in the fight to sweep the capitalist exploiters from power and establish a workers' and farmers' government.

However, the idea that "English-Canadians," who are not oppressed, have the right to self-determination is a reactionary perspective whether it is advanced by Action Canada or the Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada. It denies the reality and the class character of the national oppression of Quebecois and Native people.

The concept of English-Canadian rights is similar to the reactionary notion that there is such a thing as the rights of "whites" or of males. Men are not oppressed because of their sex; women are.

Not only are whites not oppressed; the very concept of a social category of "whites" or any other "race" is a myth invented by the capitalists to divide working people and justify the superexploitation of Blacks. It has no scientific basis whatsoever. (See "Origins of the Myth of Race" by Doug Jenness in the February 1992 *International Socialist Review*. Copies are available for \$5.00 at all Pathfinder bookstores listed on page 12.)

On the other hand, Blacks are oppressed, just as are Quebecois and Native people, even if the specific forms of their oppression are quite different.

The myth of Canada's 'two founding peoples'

One of the reactionary myths used by Canada's capitalist rulers to justify national oppression is the notion that Canada was built by "its two founding peoples," the French and the English. This argument is dead wrong for several reasons.

Firstly, Canada was founded, not by its people, but by a small handful of ruling capitalist families who sought to transform several British colonies into a single independent country solely to create more favorable conditions for capitalist expansion.

One of the first acts of the new government was to send troops to seize the lands of the Indians and Métis in the

west on behalf of the Canadian Pacific Railway and to crush their resistance. Fifty thousand Quebecois marched in the streets of Montreal in 1885 to protest the hanging of Louis Riel — the leader of the resistance to these attacks — and eight Native fighters. Prime Minister John Macdonald had already explained his view of the massive opposition of Quebecois to Riel's execution: "He shall hang, though every dog in Quebec bark in his favor."

Secondly, the argument that "English-Canadians" and Quebecois were the "founding peoples" ignores the existence of Natives. (It also denies the reality that since then millions of working people have immigrated to Canada from around the world, transforming this country's completely multinational working-class and strengthening its international character and experience.)

This reactionary position continues to be advanced today — and not only by Canada's capitalist rulers. Thus, for example, Quebec Federation of Labour president Fernand Daoust has argued against "putting the Natives on the same level as the English-Canadian and Quebecois nations," on the pretext that the indigenous people do not have a common language or a culture.

Daoust's racist perspective begins not with the common fight of Quebecois and Native people against the capitalist system that oppresses them both but with the defense of "Quebec," a class-divided capitalist society, and the promotion of one culture and language over others.

'Poorest of the poor'

As Phil Fontaine, leader of the Assembly of First Nations in Manitoba, has pointed out, Natives are "the poorest of the poor." Unemployment among Natives is much higher than in the rest of the population. Around 24 percent of the adult Natives living on reserves in 1985 had no income. Almost 70 percent of adult Natives living on reserves who had an income earned less than \$10,000, compared to 40 percent of the population as a whole.

Some 40 percent of Native housing lacks central heating. Cases of tuberculosis and rickets, rare diseases in developed industrial countries, are frequent on the reserves. The life expectancy of Native people is eight years less than the Canadian average. Infant mortality is more than twice the average.

In 1981, 62 percent of adults whose mother tongue was a Native language had less than ninth grade schooling compared with 30 percent among francophones and 15 percent among anglophones.

Native people face systematic racist violence by cops and discrimination by the courts. Twenty-two percent of prison inmates are Native although they are only 4 percent of the population. Thirty-nine Native fighters are currently facing criminal trials for their role in defending Mohawk lands and rights against the attacks by the Canadian army and Quebec cops.

The recent battles for Native rights have centered on the fight for recognition of Native land claims; the constitutional recognition of Native rights; the need for strict environmental controls on projects that can potentially devastate Native lands and livelihoods such as the Great Whale electric power project in northern Quebec; for the right to benefit from the mineral wealth under Native lands; Native "self-government" — the right to self-determination and greater governmental powers for Native communities; and the demand that all charges against the Mohawks and their supporters be dropped.

Capitalist source of racist oppression

Native people are victims of the capitalist system, not of some classless "white" society. Working people who have white skins do not benefit from the oppression of Natives or any other people of color. To the contrary, racist oppression not only allows the capitalists to make more profits from the superexploitation of the lowest paid layers of the working-class; it is also used by the bosses to drive down the wages of all working people and to pit one layer of the oppressed and exploited against another.

Natives were subjugated as part of the drive by the rising capitalist class to establish its domination in North America. The new merchants and industrialists needed cheap labor. Native peoples' communal form of property was an obstacle to capitalism's need to impose private property on the land. To achieve this they drove the majority of Natives onto reserves on barren lands that were little suited for either agriculture or hunting. However, many of these lands turned out to contain valuable resources, minerals, lumber, and sources of electric power. These resources have been largely turned over to the capitalists for exploitation with little or no benefits to Native people, and often with the loss of their land or devastation of the environment.

To this day close to 300,000 Native people, more than 25 percent of the total number, continue to live on reservations in conditions of abject poverty under the terms and conditions established by the Indian Act and the federal government's colonial-like Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

The Native Council of Canada describes the reserves as the Canadian version of South African apartheid's bantustans for Blacks. It points out that Ottawa has created

"separate classes" of Native peoples by deciding who is legally an Indian and who is not.

Hundreds of thousands of Native people have been denied "status" and thus the right to live on reserves and receive limited government social benefits. "Denied aboriginal and treaty rights," the Native Council explains, "denied the vote [until 1960], denied even the most basic civil rights for most of Canadian history since Confederation, Aboriginal Peoples have been alternately confined to the bantustans of Indian reserves and forced away from those reserves."

Working people should support the Native Council's fight to abolish the Indian Act and the legal divisions imposed on Native people.

Canada's racist reserve system aims to segregate Native people from the rest of society, maintaining them as a pool of cheap labor while preventing their integration into the rest of the working-class. This institutionalized racist system was created and is maintained solely to serve the interests of Canada's capitalist rulers. This system of exploitation and oppression, not questions of "race" or culture, is at the root of the oppression of Native people in Canada today.

The reactionary myth that Natives are a distinct "race" of "savages," inferior to the so-called white "race," is still perpetuated in the movies, on television, and by a racist school system. It was invented by the capitalists to justify the oppression of Natives.

Natives and Quebecois: common fight

During the current constitutional debate the capitalist politicians and their supporters in the labor movement have been particularly insistent that the interests of Natives are opposed to those of Quebecois. Some middle-class Native leaders argue this as well from a different nationalist, but equally reactionary point of view.

These arguments are completely false. The Native and Quebecois struggles for equality and justice are not in any way counterposed. They are in the interests of all the oppressed and exploited.

Natives and Quebecois are fighting against the same capitalist rulers that oppress one another and exploit workers and farmers regardless of their nationality, language, sex, or skin color.

Their fight is part of the fight by all working people to defend their rights and common class interests.

While a significant minority of the Native population still depends on a combination of trapping, hunting, fishing, and welfare to eke out an existence the proportion of Natives who live off the reserves and are part of the urban working-class has increased substantially over the past several decades. Fourteen percent of the adult Native population that lives off the reserves are industrial workers, a proportion almost as high as for the population as a whole.

The growing incorporation of Natives into the working-class and into the unions has strengthened their economic independence, their self-confidence, and their capacity to fight, which are essential elements of their capacity to resist national oppression. It has also brought their rich experiences of struggle into the working-class movement.

All this gives much more weight to affirmative action measures to remove all racist and economic obstacles to the voluntary incorporation of greater numbers of Native people into the working-class and the labor movement. Such demands are not at all counterposed to those aimed at ensuring that those Natives who prefer to live off the land, or else who have no other choice, be able to do so.

Labor movement wins gains

In northern Saskatchewan the labor movement forced the Key Lake uranium mine owners to hire a predetermined percentage of Natives. Natives are now one third of the 300 miners who work there. Local 8914 of the United Steelworkers of America succeeded in getting an article in the collective agreement reserving half the openings for skilled trade jobs for Natives.

Yet, such programs still remain quite rare. Moreover, when they do find jobs, workers who are Native are most likely to work in the lowest-paid jobs and experience much higher rates of unemployment than most other workers. Affirmative action measures are also needed to ensure that Natives are not relegated to the lowest-paid jobs and laid off first on the basis that they were hired last as a result of racist hiring practices.

The fight for affirmative action and equality for all layers of the oppressed who face systematic discrimination — Natives, Blacks, Quebecois, and women — is essential to the fight for working-class unity. Such measures should be closely tied to the fight for a shorter workweek with no loss in pay. The fight to win jobs for all, especially in a period of massive unemployment, is essential to undercut the capacity of the rulers to divide working people against one another in the competition for scarce jobs.

Only by adopting such a course will the labor movement be able to start on a path that is independent of the bosses and their governments in the fight for working-class political power. This is the only possible working-class alternative to the reactionary nationalist demagoguery of the new ultrarightist forces emerging in North American politics today.

Come to Oberlin, Ohio

August 5-9

for an international youth and socialist campaign conference

Join young people, students, workers, and others who are campaigning for the socialist alternative in 1992. Participate in discussions on Buchananism, the fight to prevent World War III, lessons of the Caterpillar strike, defending abortion rights, and more. Hear and meet candidates for U.S. president and vice-president James Warren and Estelle DeBates.

[] Yes, I want to attend the conference. Send me some information.

Name _____
Address _____
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Send to: Socialist Workers Party 406 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Socialist campaigns draw readers to 'Militant'

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Campaigning with the *Militant* for the socialist alternative in the 1992 elections has proven successful in several places. Many students and workers express a special interest in wanting to read and discuss what the socialist candidates have to say about the recent events in Los Angeles.

Supporters in **Newark, New Jersey**, have been selling subscriptions and winning new volunteers for the socialist campaign at daily campaign tables they have begun setting up around Newark and at the busy Journal Square subway stop in **Jersey City**. **Nancy Boyasko** reports that, through these efforts, 35 people have signed up for more information and 5 new volunteers have already joined the campaign. In addition, 20 people have bought copies of *New International* at these tables.

In **Cleveland**, **Peter Thierjung**, a member of the United Auto Workers union and Socialist Workers candidate for Congress, says 8 coworkers purchased copies of the *Militant* after an article entitled "Socialist to Enter Congressional Race," appeared in Cleveland's daily paper, the *Plain Dealer*. One worker who borrowed a *Militant* overnight bought a subscription the following day. "The L.A. coverage is fantastic. There's a lot of stuff you don't get in the daily newspapers," he told Thierjung.

In **Morgantown, West Virginia**, supporters stepped up their sales and campaigning while petitioning to place the socialist candidates on the ballot. At Morgan Shirt, where SWP congressional candidate Maurice Scott Peret works, a campaign table set up outside the plant, combined with discussions with coworkers inside, resulted in 1 worker subscribing

and 5 buying copies of the paper.

Joe Swanson, a member of the United Transportation Union (UTU) in **Richmond, California**, has sold 5 *Militant* subscriptions and a copy of *New International* to coworkers during the past 10 days. "The articles in the paper on the antipolice riot in Los Angeles and the articles answering the right-wing UTU official who is part of the counter-campaign against Mark Curtis were very helpful in getting renewals and new subscribers," Swanson reports.

On a bus sent by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union to the May 16 Save Our Cities demonstration in Washington, D.C., *Militant* supporters met with a good response. **Cindy Jacquith of Newark, New Jersey**, reports "tremendous interest in communist literature in Spanish" from the mostly immigrant workers from Latin America on this bus. Workers from Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Nicaragua, and Colombia bought a combined total of 2 copies of *Nueva Internacional*, 1 of *New International*, 3 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions, and a copy each of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*.

In **Des Moines, Iowa**, supporters have had some successes in organizing Saturdays as big sales and campaigning days. **Ruth Nebbia** writes: "On May 9 we fanned out to seven Iowa cities, selling 6 *Militant* subscriptions and 1 to *Perspectiva Mundial*. We participated in a picket line against police brutality in the town of Albia called by the family of a man beaten by the police there. Two people renewed their subscriptions in Ft. Madison at a Labor Songs and Tribute to Pete Seeger. We sold a subscription to a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union on strike against Wilson



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

'Militant' table at May 16 'Save Our Cities' march in Washington, D.C.

Foods in Cherokee.

"Teams also went door-to-door in Iowa City, West Liberty, Ames, and Des Moines. A week earlier, 3,000 students in Ames had rallied against the acquittal of the cops who beat Rodney King."

Supporters of the paper in **Stockholm, Sweden**, have raised both their *Militant* and

New International goals, becoming the second city after Cincinnati to do so. In addition, members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union at Malden Mills in Lawrence, Massachusetts, raised their subscription goals substantially, from 19 to 45, after very successful sales over the past several weeks.

'L'internationaliste' stops publication

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE

MONTREAL — The editor of *L'internationaliste* announced May 11 that the French-language magazine will cease publication.

"The team of volunteers that produced the

magazine over the last years has come to the conclusion," said Michel Dugré, "that the best way to utilize our resources is to prioritize the publication of socialist and revolutionary documents of a more lasting character, like books and pamphlets."

He said that work has already begun on the publication by Pathfinder of the French version of the book *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism*.

Written by Cuban economist Carlos Tablada, the book is scheduled to be published in time for the 25th anniversary, in October, of the assassination of Guevara, a central leader of the Cuban revolution.

"We have also begun production of the fifth issue of the Marxist magazine *Nouvelle Internationale*, which will present a communist perspective on how working people can prevent the deep crisis of the capitalist world system from hurling humanity into a new period of war, depression, and reaction," said Dugré.

L'internationaliste, formerly *Lutte Ouvrière*, has been published in Montreal over a period of 15 years, first as a newspaper and, since 1988, as a magazine. It was a staunch defender of the Cuban, Nicaraguan, Grenadian, and Burkinabè revolutions.

It has also actively built solidarity with the major international labor battles of the last decade, such as those of the Polish workers, the British miners, and the meat-packers in North America.

The publication championed the rights of the nationally oppressed Québécois and Native people in Canada, as well as struggles for national liberation in other parts of the world.

A special offer will be made to readers whose subscriptions were not expired.

"Above all," said Dugré, "we will encourage all readers of *L'internationaliste* who can read English to get a subscription to the *Militant*."

As subscriptions to *L'internationaliste* are no longer being sold, sales of single copies of the magazine will count toward the goals listed on the scoreboard for the current circulation drive for socialist periodicals. Supporters should report their sales figures to the business office each week.

Selling the socialist press to unionists

Union	% Sold (Goal)	Sold	Goal	Sold
UNITED STATES				
ACTWU	24%	55	13	25
IAM	26%	110	29	19
ILGWU	50%	40	20	5
OCAW	38%	39	15	15
UFCW	39%	90	35	30
USWA	47%	85	40	20
UTU	76%	45	34	20
TOTAL	40%	464	186	134
SHOULD BE	54%		251	72
AUSTRALIA				
MTFU	80%	5	4	2
SHOULD BE	54%		2	0
BRITAIN				
AEU	0%	10	0	5
NUM	10%	10	1	0
RMT	71%	17	12	14
TGWU	20%	15	3	5
TOTAL	31%	52	16	24
SHOULD BE	54%		28	13
CANADA				
ACTWU	0%	8	0	3
CAW	0%	15	0	2
IAM	0%	5	0	0
USWA	6%	16	1	8
TOTAL	2%	44	1	15
SHOULD BE	54%		24	8
SWEDEN				
FOOD WORKERS	50%	4	2	0
METAL	67%	9	6	3
TOTAL	62%	13	8	3
SHOULD BE	54%		7	2

ACTWU — Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; AEU — Amalgamated Engineering Union; CAW — Canadian Auto Workers; IAM — International Association of Machinists; ILGWU — International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; MTFU — Metal Trades Federation of Unions; NUM — National Union of Mineworkers; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — Rail, Maritime & Transport Workers; TGWU — Transport and General Workers' Union; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; USWA — United Steelworkers of America.

* Also includes subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Sales Drive Scoreboard

Areas	The Militant			Perspectiva Mundial		L'inter-nationaliste		New International		Total	
	Goal	Total Sold	% Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
UNITED STATES											
Pittsburgh	90	49	54%	5	3	2	0	30	3	127	55
Des Moines, IA	130	70	54%	25	9	2	0	40	8	197	87
Salt Lake City	130	69	53%	20	5	2	0	30	5	182	79
Twin Cities, MN	140	67	48%	20	9	2	0	30	6	192	82
Greensboro, NC	80	36	45%	8	1	2	1	15	0	105	38
Chicago	150	67	45%	35	14	5	0	70	11	260	92
Seattle	120	52	43%	35	18	3	3	25	7	183	80
Los Angeles	180	77	43%	100	30	4	0	110	18	394	125
Houston	80	33	41%	20	4	2	0	20	6	122	43
St. Louis	100	38	38%	5	0	2	0	25	1	132	39
Washington DC	130	47	36%	20	17	10	0	55	10	215	74
Detroit	140	49	35%	10	2	2	0	30	16	182	67
Boston	135	46	34%	40	20	15	2	50	17	240	85
Birmingham, AL	80	27	34%	5	1	2	0	40	0	127	28
Morgantown, WV	80	25	31%	3	2	2	0	30	1	115	28
Cleveland	90	28	31%	10	1	2	1	20	8	122	38
San Francisco	150	45	30%	50	6	8	0	70	19	278	70
Baltimore	110	33	30%	12	4	3	1	30	2	155	40
Newark, NJ	160	47	29%	50	2	15	4	70	14	295	67
Atlanta	90	24	27%	8	5	2	1	30	4	130	34
Miami	110	29	26%	30	14	15	6	45	15	200	64
New York	250	60	24%	100	8	20	1	110	20	480	89
Cincinnati*	39	9	23%	3	0	0	0	5	1	47	10
Ft. Madison, IA	5	1	20%	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1
Philadelphia	85	17	20%	20	3	3	0	30	12	138	32
New Haven, CT	10	1	10%	2	1	0	0	3	0	15	2
U.S. TOTAL	2,864	1,046	37%	636	179	125	20	1,013	204	4,638	1,449
AUSTRALIA											
MTFU	45	21	47%	14	4	1	0	10	6	70	31
SHOULD BE	3	1	33%	1	0	12	1	8	2	24	4
BRITAIN											
Sheffield	50	25	50%	3	0	2	0	25	5	80	30
Manchester	50	18	36%	2	0	1	0	30	7	83	25
London	80	26	33%	6	0	2	0	40	9	128	35
BRITAIN TOTAL	180	69	38%	11	0	5	0	95	21	291	90
CANADA											
Vancouver	90	52	58%	15	3	5	1	30	10	140	66
Montreal	65	28	43%	20	11	30	12	50	24	165	75
Toronto	90	30	33%	20	7	5	2	45	8	160	47
CANADA TOTAL	245	110	45%	55	21	40	15	125	42	465	188
FRANCE											
ICELAND	5	0	0%	2	0	15	0	5	0	27	0
MEXICO	20	9	45%	1	0	1	0	5	0	27	9
NEW ZEALAND	0	0	0%	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
Wellington	40	28	70%	1	0	1	0	10	2	52	30
Auckland	55	34	62%	5	0	1	0	13	2	74	36
Christchurch	40	17	43%	1	0	1	0	10	0	52	17
Other N.Z.	4	3	75%	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3
N.Z. TOTAL	139	82	59%	7	0	3	0	33	4	182	86
PUERTO RICO											
SWEDEN*	1	0	0%	5	1	0	0	2	0	8	1
TOTAL	70	48	69%	30	14	3	0	15	9	118	71
SHOULD BE	3,572	1,385	40%	767	219	205	36	1,311	288	5,855	1,928
DRIVE GOALS		1890	54%		405		108		675		3,078
*raised goal	3,500			750		200		1,250		5,700	

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

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

ALABAMA

Birmingham

Victory for Women's Rights in Buffalo. Sun., May 31, 5:30 p.m. 111 21st St. S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Why is North Korea on Washington's Enemies List? Speaker: Albert Grigorian, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress District 27. Sun., May 24, 2:30 p.m. 2552-B W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

Proposition F: A Step Toward Curbing the Police? Speakers: Stephen Yagman, attorney who fought the LAPD's SIS unit; Thabo Ntweng, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress. Sun., May 31, 2:30 p.m. 2552-B W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

Conversations with Japanese Workers: A Report from Japan. Speakers: Joel Britton, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate, member Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 1547; Betsy Stone, member International Association of Machinists Local 1932. Sun., June 7, 2:30 p.m. 2552-B W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Socialist Workers Campaign Rally. Meet the socialist candidates for U.S. Senate and Congress. Sat., May 30, 7:30 p.m. 2905 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (410) 235-0013.

MISSOURI

St. Louis

Support the Socialist Workers 1992 Cam-

paign, the Internationalist Alternative to the Wars, Racism, and World Economic Crisis of Capitalism. Speaker: James Warren, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. president. Fri., May 22, 7:30 p.m. 1622 S Broadway. Donation: \$3. Tel: (314) 421-3808.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

What We Can Learn From Malcolm X. Speakers: Eugene Carson, Neighborhood Education and Economic Development; Derek Bracey, National Chairperson, 1992 Socialist Workers Campaign. Sat., May 23, 7:30 p.m. 191 7th Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (212) 675-6740.

OHIO

Cleveland

War Threats Against Libya, Iraq, and Korea. Washington's Policy Leads to World War III. Speaker: Estelle DeBates, Socialist Workers can-

didate for U.S. vice-president. Sat., May 23. Reception, 6 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. 1863 W 25th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (216) 861-6150.

TEXAS

Houston

Cuba in 1992: Challenges Facing the Revolution. Special video showing on the recent Tablada tour in the United States. Speaker: representative of Socialist Workers 1992 election campaign. Sat., May 30, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$3. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

Cuba: Challenges Facing the Revolution in a Changing World. Speaker: Raul Macías, director, Asia Department, Cuba Institute for Friendship with the Peoples. Sat., May 30, 6 p.m. 66

Albion St., Surry Hills. Donation: \$3. Tel: 02-281 3297.

CANADA

Toronto

Video: Malcolm X. Sat., May 23, 7:30 p.m. 827 Bloor St. West. Donation: \$3. Tel: (416) 861-1399.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Behind the Civil War in Yugoslavia. Speaker: Colin Parker, Communist League. Sat., May 23, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Rd. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

Wellington

Korea — The Struggle for Reunification and Peace. Sat., May 23, 7 p.m. 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Donation: \$3. Tel: (4) 384-4205.

New series of arrests begins in Los Angeles

Continued from front page

of the charges against Powell, assault "under color of authority" — that is, using his badge as justification for using illegal force.

Judge Weisberg, who had selected Simi Valley as the site of the first trial, was slated to decide May 22 where the retrial will be held. He indicated Los Angeles is not precluded.

President George Bush and the Justice Department announced a few days after the anticop riot that a federal grand jury was scrutinizing the situation with an eye to indicting the four cops who brutalized King.

Government focus shifts

But very soon the focus began to shift. Now less is heard from Washington about indicting the cops. Instead, there are ominous moves to use federal civil rights laws to victimize many of those who participated in the outbreaks, including those accused of beating Denny.

The FBI has begun collecting copies of the massive TV coverage of the events, as well as newspaper photos. Subpoenas have been issued to the TV stations, the *Los Angeles Times* and others.

In addition, the media has been told to expect added subpoenas for "outtake" material, that is, photographs and film not published or used for broadcast.

These moves by federal and local authorities are designed to strike fear into all those who vented their deep-going fury at the exoneration of the four cops.

Utilizing the state of emergency declared by Mayor Thomas Bradley, the Los Angeles Police Department prevented a legally authorized rally from taking place at City Hall May 9 — five days after the curfew ended.

Brushing aside the rally permit, a police officer pointed to the state of emergency and declared: "We're running the city."

Ten people were arrested as they were leaving the site.

According to Robin Toma, an attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union who was on the scene, a rally permit had been issued March 30. As the rally date approached, demonstration organizers asked the mayor's office to review the permit. It did so, checking with the police and other city agencies. The permit was revalidated.

Sponsored by a coalition of organizations, the rally was intended to protest plans for new cuts in state funding for welfare and other social needs.

Focus on those without papers

Mass arrests took place after the outbreak began to ebb April 30. Contrary to what is supposed to be official city policy, cops handed over victims of their sweeps who had no papers to Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) cops for detention and deportation.

At one police station, the INS set up a special substation to process those arrested and deemed to be "illegal."

City cops turned up at two street corners where Latinos gather looking for a day's work. Those arrested were taken directly to the federal building and turned over to the INS. Several who were able to prove they were legal residents were released; the others were held.

Lawyers trying to defend immigrants facing deportation are now forced to wait hours to see their clients. They are then allowed to meet with them for five minutes.

Labor news in the Militant

The *Militant* stays on top of the most important developments in the labor movement. You won't miss them if you subscribe. See the ad on page 2.

Anti-Curtis pickets fail to stop forum

BY GEOFF MIRELOWITZ

BOSTON — A picket line of eight people targeted the Militant Labor Forum and the Pathfinder Bookstore here May 16.

The Militant Labor Forum sponsored a panel discussion on the topic, "Indict the guilty cops now — justice for Rodney King." Outside the pickets chanted, "Racist, sexist SWP" and "Keep Mark Curtis in jail." The Socialist Workers Party and supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee occupy space in the same building as the bookstore.

Pickets also distributed a leaflet titled, "Stop Racism In Your Own Backyard." The leaflet states it was produced by "the Boston NAACP [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People], Men to End Sexual Assault (MESA), the Community Program Against Sexual Assault, the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center, the Mass. Coalition of Rape Crisis Services, and the National Organization for Women: Greater Lowell Chapter."

The leaflet promotes the police and prosecution frame-up of Mark Curtis, a former meat-packer in Iowa who has been framed on false charges of rape and burglary and is currently serving a 25-year sentence.

The leaflet claims that, "the Socialist Workers Party, under the name of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee . . . [t]hrough the use of misinformation and distortion of facts . . . has gathered endorsements from thousands of progressive, peace and justice, civil rights, labor, and feminist activists and organizations."

The flyer urges that supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee "Dis-endorse now." It features the names of 12 people in the Boston area who have withdrawn their support for the Curtis fight.

The picket line did not prevent the forum from occurring. A lively discussion took place on the verdict in the Rodney King trial, cop brutality, and how to continue the fight against police violence.

One of the leaders of the picket line was Mary Bertin, who identified herself to passersby and those coming to attend the forum as an "elected official of the NAACP" as she explained why the picket line was taking place.

Two months earlier Bertin addressed a letter on NAACP stationery to supporters of the Curtis defense campaign in the Boston area urging them to withdraw their support. Also signing the letter was Louis Elisa, president of the Boston NAACP branch.

At a May 8 demonstration here protesting the verdict in the trial of the cops who beat Rodney King, Bertin and her supporters used their time to circulate the same leaflet that was distributed at their May 16 picket line.

These events "are part of a rightist campaign against Mark Curtis, his supporters, and the SWP," Boston SWP chairperson Andrea Morell explained in an interview. "They seek to help the cops break Curtis if

they can and they hope to isolate his party and prevent it from participating in politics.

"Their object tonight was to shut down the forum," said Morell. "They failed in doing so but they may have succeeded in discouraging some people from coming in and participating. Whose interests are served by trying to disrupt a political discussion of how working people and youth can act politically to help win justice for Rodney King and punish the guilty cops? The rightist nature of this picket line was quite clear."

Morell said that a reply to the lies and false charges advanced by Bertin in her letter is being prepared.

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Where to find Pathfinder books and distributors of the Militant, Perspectiva Mundial, New International, Nouvelle Internationale, and Nueva Internacional.

UNITED STATES

ALABAMA: Birmingham: 111 21st St. South. Zip: 35233. Tel: (205) 323-3079, 328-3314.

CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles: 2552-B W. Pico Blvd. Zip: 90006. Tel: (213) 380-9460, 380-9640. **San Francisco:** 3284 23rd St. Zip: 94110. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

CONNECTICUT: New Haven: Mailing address: P.O. Box 16751, Baybrook Station, West Haven. Zip: 06516.

FLORIDA: Miami: 137 N.E. 54th St. Zip: 33137. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

GEORGIA: Atlanta: 172 Trinity Ave. Zip: 30303. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

ILLINOIS: Chicago: 545 W. Roosevelt Rd. Zip: 60607. Tel: (312) 829-6815, 829-7018.

IOWA: Des Moines: 2105 Forest Ave. Zip: 50311. Tel: (515) 246-8249.

KENTUCKY: Louisville: P.O. Box 4103. Zip: 40204-4103.

MARYLAND: Baltimore: 2905 Greenmount Ave. Zip: 21218. Tel: (410) 235-0013.

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston: 780 Tremont St. Zip: 02118. Tel: (607) 247-6772.

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

MINNESOTA: Twin Cities: 508 N. Snelling Ave., St. Paul. Zip: 55104. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

MISSOURI: St. Louis: 1622 S. Broadway. Zip: 63104. Tel: (314) 421-3808.

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

NEW YORK: New York: 191 7th Ave. Zip: 10011. Tel: (212) 727-8421.

NORTH CAROLINA: Greensboro: 2000-C S. Elm-Eugene St. Zip: 27406. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

OHIO: Cincinnati: P.O. Box 19484. Zip: 45219. Tel: (513) 221-2691. **Cleveland:** 1863 W. 25th St. Zip: 44113. Tel: (216) 861-6150.

PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia: 1906 South St. Zip: 19146. Tel: (215) 546-8196. **Pittsburgh:** 4905 Penn Ave. Zip: 15224. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

TEXAS: Houston: 4806 Alameda. Zip: 77004. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

UTAH: Salt Lake City: 147 E. 900 South. Zip: 84111. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 523 8th St. SE. Zip: 20003. Tel: (202) 547-7557.

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

WEST VIRGINIA: Morgantown: 242 Walnut. Mailing address: P.O. Box 203. Zip: 26507. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

AUSTRALIA

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

BRITAIN

London: 47 The Cut. Postal code: SE1 8LL. Tel: 071-928-7993.

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.

CANADA

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

Toronto: 827 Bloor St. West. Postal code: M6G 1M1. Tel: (416) 533-4324.

Vancouver: 3967 Main St. Postal code: V5V 3P3. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

ICELAND

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

MEXICO

Mexico City: Nevin Siders, Apdo. Postal 27-575, Col. Roma Sur. Mexico DF.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Postal Address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

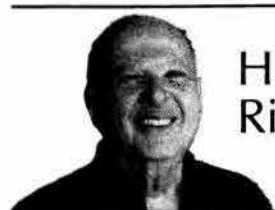
Christchurch: 593a Colombo St. (upstairs). Postal address: P.O. Box 22-530. Tel: (3) 656-055.

Wellington: 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Postal address: P.O. Box 9092. Tel: (4) 384-4205.

SWEDEN

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

Lucky she didn't feel his heart — "It was nice. But his hands were cold. They were just like a big old



Harry Ring

ice cube." — Lena Sewel, a fifth-grader who shook hands with the prez when he visited devastated areas of Los Angeles.

The fruit-cake squad — In the 1960s, reports the Canadian Press news agency, cops developed a "fruit machine" to help root homo-

sexuals out of government. It measured pupil size, palm sweat, etc., as sexually provocative images were shown. The machine was found unworkable, but meanwhile, the cops opened files on 8,200 people deemed to be homosexual and several hundred were purged from government jobs.

Colonial blessings — In Puerto Rico, most people spend more than they make. A consumers affairs official said a recent study showed that "83 percent of our families live by credit."

What a little money can do — Pondering Ross Perot's declared willingness to sink \$100 million into his presidential bid, the *New York*

Times asked some top ad folks what he should do with that kind of bread. Responded one: "It's not an easy job to make a billionaire a populist, but given the mood of the country, and \$100 million, it's certainly not impossible."

A creative huckster — Perot should hire the ad person who responded to the *Times*: "With more than \$100 million he can afford a campaign that doesn't look orchestrated or manipulative."

The enforcers — In a study of a recent mysterious outbreak of Vitamin D overdoses in the Boston area, researchers found that milk from one dairy contained up to 580 times the recommended dosage. Mean-

while, in a study of supermarkets in five other cities they found that 62 percent of milk samples contained less D than promised. The FDA requires that milk be tested twice a year — but leaves it up to the states to do so.

Puts stress on insurance rates? — A study by Northwestern National Life Insurance found that nearly half of U.S. workers worry about their jobs. "When you add the effects of the recession," a researcher said, "American companies have become pressure cookers."

Of the people, for the people — British Tory party chief Christopher Patten, who lost his seat in

parliament in the recent election, was appointed governor of Hong Kong. On ceremonial occasions, he'll don a cocked hat with ostrich plumes. Also, he'll pocket \$267,500 in tax-free wages. He says he's determined "to uphold the interests of all the people of Hong Kong."

Perked him up — San Diego's HomeFed Bank hired Thomas Wageman (that's no pun) to guide the bank to its likely demise. To help him relocate, the bank bought Wageman's Dallas mansion for more than \$1 million, double what he paid for it. Wageman took the cash and bought another house — in Dallas. Apparently he commutes to work.

Serbian militias seize control of most of Bosnia

BY SETH GALINSKY

Despite claims by the Yugoslav army that it was pulling forces out of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbian militias backed by the regime in Belgrade now control at least 60 percent of the area.

The Serbian militias have conducted a terror campaign against civilians. According to the head of one of the Bosnian defense units, snipers have been firing shots from high-powered rifles equipped with silencers into crowded streets in Sarajevo, Bosnia's capital.

Artillery, tanks, mortars, rocket-propelled grenades, machine guns, and Yugoslav army fighter-bombers have been used by the Belgrade-backed forces. The capital's supply of food and medicine is dangerously low due to blockaded roads.

Of Bosnia-Herzegovina's 4.3 million people, 1.9 million are Muslim Slavs, 1.4 million are Serbs, and 750,000 are Croats. Multiethnic militias of Muslims, Croats, and Serbs have attempted to defend the republic — which declared independence February 29 — against the Yugoslav army and all-Serbian militias, but are overwhelmingly outgunned. Belgrade claims the independence declaration threatens the rights of Bosnian Serbs.

"I have friends living 100 yards away from here, but I cannot visit them because of the snipers and I cannot call them because the phones are dead," said one resident of Sarajevo. "The greatest sadness of this city is that people have been cut off from one another."

At the beginning of May, Belgrade-backed Serbs from Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Bosnian Croats, backed by the regime in Croatia, announced that they had agreed to partition Bosnia.

The bureaucratic rulers in the various regions of the former federation, prior to the 1991 disintegration of Yugoslavia, launched nationalist struggles to maximize the amount of land and other resources they each control. This has led to massive bloodshed and destruction. Earlier fighting between Croatian and Serbian forces left 10,000 dead and half a million homeless.

Tensions along Serbo-Croatian border

Although fighting between Croatia and Serbia has died down, tensions there have continued with expulsions of people across the Serbian-Croatian border.

According to United Nations officials, at least 400 people, mostly Croats, have been forced from Serbia at gunpoint across a mined no-man's-land at the border. The Serbian nationalists call this "purification." Among the victims are Croats, Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Ruthenians, and Ukrainians whose families have lived in the region for centuries. Croats have also expelled Serbs from Croatian-controlled regions. At least 300,000 Serbs have fled Croatia.

But the aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina matches and could well surpass the earlier conflicts. More than 1,300 have been killed already and at least 670,000 — one out of seven people in this republic — have been left homeless in six weeks of fighting.

In an attempt to head off economic and diplomatic sanc-

tions by the United States and the European Community, Belgrade announced that it was withdrawing non-Bosnian troops of the Yugoslav army from Bosnia-Herzegovina and has claimed it has no intention of annexing the areas of the region that have been conquered by the Serbian militias.

Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic also retired almost a quarter of the army's officers of general rank, but it is not clear what this signals in terms of Belgrade's military activity in Bosnia.

But no one really believes Milosevic's partial pullout from Bosnia will end the fighting. It still leaves 80 percent of an estimated 35,000 to 100,000 heavily armed troops in place. The remaining troops — and their equipment — will become part of the Serbian militias.

Imperialist powers divided

The United States and governments of the European Community (EC) announced they were withdrawing their ambassadors to protest Serbia's war against Bosnia. EC foreign ministers also decided to impose a partial suspension of Yugoslavia from the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. In the words of the *New York Times*, the "ambassadors' withdrawal was about the least threatening measure the Western nations could take."

The imperialist powers have been heavily and bitterly divided over their attitude toward the conflict in Yugoslavia. Germany has been backing Croatia and successfully pressured the European Community and the United States to recognize Croatian and Slovenian independence.



— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

Published in the interest of the Working People
May 29, 1967 Price 10¢

Friday May 19 was Malcolm X's birthday. In Los Angeles several thousand black high school students declared that day a holiday and missed classes in honor of him.

In New York a memorial rally was held in Malcolm X Square. A crowd of around 300 listened to a series of speakers including Ella Collins, sister of Malcolm X and president of the Afro-American Unity Organization; Nana Odefumi, prime minister of the Harlem People's Parliament; and Joseph L. Overton of the Negro Labor Committee.

Paul Boutelle of the Black United Action Front was the moderator. Omar Abu-Talib told the audience about his discharge from the army resulting from his pro-Malcolm views. He said that he told other black GLs about the ideas of Malcolm X.

In Chicago an outdoor memorial rally was held on Sunday. It attracted a crowd of approximately 500.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

May 30, 1942

The peoples of Europe are subjected to a ferocious oppression by German imperial-

ism and we are entirely with them in their struggle against the Hitlerian satraps.

However, Hitler did not invent forced labor. He only follows the example of the good "democracies." From the Belgian Congo a dispatch of last March tells us:

"The Governor-General of the Belgian Congo, M. Rijckmans, has signed a decree which comes immediately into force, as long as hostilities last, and without prejudicing the obligations already laid down for native districts. All male adult able-bodied natives of the Belgian Congo can be obliged to devote their energies to the cultivation, harvesting and picking of agricultural products recognized by the Governor General as being necessary to the war efforts."

The "obligations already laid down" required the natives to do 60 days of unpaid forced labor per year. Now they can be subjected to complete slavery at the discretion of the Governor-General. And this slavery is justified by the interests of the "war for democracy." The strangest thing about this "democracy" that the African people are ordered to defend is that they themselves are not allowed to enjoy any of it.

Another great "democrat," the royalist General de Gaulle, recently delivered a grand speech on liberty. You can easily imagine the style, no need to give quotations. But where did he make this speech on the blessings of liberty? At Brazzaville, that is, in the center of the slave exploitation of the African native people by the "Free" French.

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Court upholds privacy rights, rules in favor of Freedom Socialist Party

BY SETH GALINSKY

In a victory for democratic rights, all charges in a harassment suit against the Freedom Socialist Party were dismissed April 27.

The lawsuit was filed in 1984 in Seattle, Washington, by former party member Richard Snedigar. He charged that his donation of \$22,500 to the Freedom Socialist Party (FSP) for obtaining a new headquarters was improperly used. He demanded the money's return.

In the course of the lawsuit Snedigar tried to force the FSP to turn over internal party minutes and financial records.

A lower court ruling that the FSP present the minutes was overturned by the Washington State Supreme Court in 1990. The court ruled at the time that the minutes did not have to be turned over as long as the FSP could show "some probability" of

harm to First Amendment rights, and ordered the case back to a local court in Seattle. The ruling broke new legal ground in privacy rights by specifically including minutes as constitutionally protected information.

On March 19 of this year, Washington State Superior Court judge Dale Ramerman, who was presiding over the trial, ruled that turning over the minutes would violate the FSP's right of association.

In his April 27 decision, Ramerman found that the monetary gift "was used in full for its intended purpose."

But Ramerman also dismissed the request by the FSP to declare Snedigar's suit "improper" and order him to pay the defendants' legal fees. Instead the judge ruled that Snedigar's "claims were filed and pursued in good faith with a reasonable basis in fact and law."

De Klerk's stalling tactics

The negotiations on the future of South Africa, taking place at the Conference for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa), have been stalled as a result of the intransigence of the South African regime of F.W. de Klerk.

De Klerk says negotiations must take their time, in order to work out "checks and balances" to protect minority rights after the end of apartheid. "No majority should ever be able to misuse its power to undermine the constitution, or to dominate or damage the interest of minorities," he claims.

In the name of protecting minorities from a ruling majority, he thus prolongs the existing rule of a small minority. Even though Blacks make up 80 percent of South Africa's people, they are still denied elementary democratic rights.

While de Klerk stalls the talks, violence fomented by the apartheid state continues unabated.

Since the beginning of this year more than 130 people have been killed in attacks occurring on commuter trains alone. Many believe these murderous assaults are instigated or organized by South African security forces.

A recent revelation disclosed that the current head of military intelligence in the South African Defense Force, Gen. C.P. van der Westhuizen, was responsible in 1985 for ordering the assassination of three anti-apartheid leaders. Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress have fought to win the broadest possible forces to participate in the process of negotiations on the country's future. Their call for a constituent assembly elected on the basis of one

person, one vote, would provide the most democratic means of achieving a new constitution.

All the traditional parties in South Africa have been shaken by the advance of the anti-apartheid movement. Even the right-wing Conservative Party has had defections from its members of parliament who have defied party discipline to back participation in Codesa.

But de Klerk continues to try to hold back the tide of history.

"From where can we claim the moral right to assert that we need to move with less speed?" said Mandela in his reply to de Klerk at the latest Codesa meeting. "Why do we put off till tomorrow the solutions that we can reach today? People cannot postpone their hunger. Similarly, they do not want their freedom postponed."

Every day that the apartheid system remains is a day of violence against the majority of South Africans. Every day of delay is a day of justice and freedom denied.

The dispute in Codesa is not primarily a dispute over percentages — whether it should take two-thirds or 70 percent or 75 percent agreement in an interim government to approve certain provisions of the new constitution. What is at stake is the right of the majority in South Africa to establish their rule.

Working people should back the people of South Africa in speeding the definitive end of apartheid. All possible pressure needs to be exerted to demand that de Klerk accede to the demands of the majority.

Electric chair murders continue

By the time our readers get this issue of the *Militant* Roger Coleman may have been executed. Unless one of his last desperate appeals is heard or Virginia governor Douglas Wilder grants him clemency, Coleman will be strapped to an electric chair and electrocuted on May 20.

Substantial evidence suggests that Coleman didn't receive a fair trial and may be innocent of the murder he was convicted of. Because of this, his case has received much more attention than the hundreds of other prisoners on death row. A feature article in the May 18 issue of *Time* magazine asks the question, "Must this man die?" So far the courts and the government have answered yes.

Coleman had six witnesses that vouched for him the night he was supposed to have raped and killed his sister-in-law, Wanda McCoy. Five witnesses have now come forward with testimony that another man confessed to committing the murder. The mother-in-law of the jailhouse snitch who said Coleman had confessed to the crime says her son-in-law made up the story. Blood and semen evidence used to convict Coleman could have come from someone else.

According to the police deputy assigned to trail Coleman after the murder, "The main reason for the arrest and trial was to reassure the community that a perpetrator had been

found." Such justice was not terribly reassuring to Roger Coleman.

Ten years ago Coleman was a Virginia coal miner with no spare money to hire a lawyer. Like many other poor working people he didn't get adequate legal help. His court-appointed attorney, two years out of law school, told the judge he would "prefer not to" handle the case.

The Supreme Court takes a dim view of death row inmates attempting to take their cases to the federal courts. They are unfazed by the fact that federal judges have found constitutional errors in 40 percent of the capital punishment cases they have reviewed since 1976.

A year ago the Supreme Court ruled against Coleman's petition for a hearing before a federal court because his lawyers filed papers a day late. Their ruling means the question of whether or not a person is innocent is less important than if the papers are on time and the dockets are cleared.

The U.S. government's rush to kill should be stopped. The death sentence against Roger Coleman and the 2,500 other prisoners on death row should be overturned and capital punishment outlawed.

Capital punishment is a cruel and barbaric punishment that the wealthy rulers of this country use against working people not to dispense justice but to terrorize and intimidate.

U.S. antinuke drive: step to war

After a Russian arms agency sold rocket technology to the Indian Space Research Organization the U.S. government imposed export sanctions on both enterprises, claiming the technology could be used by India to make rockets capable of delivering nuclear weapons.

This is yet another instance of Washington seeking to impose its dictates on other nations.

The United States is the only government in the world ever to use nuclear weapons in a war. It did so against the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, at the end of World War II when it was clear that the Japanese government was on the verge of surrender.

The U.S. government assumes the right to tell India, Libya, North Korea, and anyone it chooses that they cannot have nuclear weapons, while the Pentagon still keeps its nuclear missiles pointed at targets all over the world.

If the U.S. government really wanted to end nuclear proliferation and the dangers of nuclear weapons it would not have to look far. It could shut down all the U.S. nuclear weapons and reprocessing plants; close all its nuclear power plants, which threaten the world with environmental destruction; and eliminate all its nuclear weapons. It could begin a serious effort to figure out what to do with the 45,000 known radioactive contaminated sites in the United States, many of which are the result of nuclear weapons production.

The U.S. rulers were thrown a little off balance when the North Korean government agreed to inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). But that did not stop their anti-Korea campaign or end the threats of

war that lie behind that campaign. After a visit to North Korea by the IAEA, the *New York Times* wrote in a headline, "North Korean site has A-bomb hints: Potential for weapons is seen in laboratory inspection."

In the case of Libya, Washington succeeded in winning United Nations cover for economic sanctions against that country, including an air travel. It hopes to force Libyan leader Muammar el-Qaddafi to hand over two Libyan citizens that Washington claims are responsible for terrorism. Libya has refused, explaining it has no extradition treaty with the United States.

Underscoring the hypocrisy in Washington's claim to have the right to extradite the two alleged suspects, Robert Oakley, former head of the U.S. State Department's counterterrorism department, pointedly asked, "What happens if that is applied to other countries?"

"What if somebody says, 'We know somebody in the CIA assassinated somebody in our country and we want him?'" said Oakley.

Washington's accusations and threats against Libya, North Korea, Iraq, and others, and its readiness to wield economic sanctions to back them up, have nothing to do with eliminating the dangers of nuclear weapons or terrorism, both of which are part of Washington's own arsenal.

They are part of the attempt by the U.S. rulers and their nuclear-armed allies to maintain their overall dominance in an increasingly unstable world. These threats themselves accelerate the drive toward war.

Working people should oppose the U.S. war moves.

Reader Bill Sagel, in a letter printed in this issue, says he found the recent trips of the Socialist Workers Party candidates for U.S. president and vice-president to Korea, Japan, New Zealand, and Australia "an odd way by the SWP candidates to carry out their campaign."

But many working people whom James Warren and Estelle DeBates met on their visits to North Korea, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand saw it differently.

"We are avoiding the idea of an American-based campaign. It's backward and deadly," Warren told the *Christchurch Press*, one of New Zealand's major dailies, during his visit in April. The *Press* article accurately described the socialist candidate's visit to New Zealand as "an attempt to unite working people on a world scale."

Workers at picket lines and public forums in New

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

Zealand were interested to hear this message from Warren. While in Japan, DeBates met with many young people, including trade unionists. They discussed why "Japan-bashing" and the nationalism of both Japanese and U.S. rulers is against the interests of workers both in the United States and Japan (see article on opposite page).

From the beginning of their campaign the socialist candidates have explained that the central question in the debate in U.S. ruling circles this election year is how the capitalist class can respond to the new world disorder arising from the combined results of the war against Iraq, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the world depression that is affecting the Third World, Europe, North America, and Japan.

At a March 31 press conference kicking off the socialist presidential campaign at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., Warren explained that all his opponents in this election, Democrats and Republicans, "have a conspiracy of silence on the central issue in world politics. That is the fact that the imperialist war against Iraq was the opening guns of World War III."

The slaughter of thousands of Iraqis in the Gulf did not lead to more stability or expansion of the capitalist market system. It sharpened the conflicts between major imperialist powers like Japan, Germany, and the United States.

Drive toward war

For the capitalist classes the only solution is to attempt to break the resistance by working people to their assaults. If they succeed in dealing such defeats, the employers' blows will culminate in the unthinkable destruction of a massive world war, as Washington, Bonn, Tokyo, and other imperialist powers struggle to redistribute their domination over the world.

Warren and DeBates have been presenting a perspective for uniting working people worldwide to fight against imperialist war and for protection from the ravages of capitalism. While in North Korea and on their return, the socialist candidates campaigned against Washington's war threats against that country.

The socialist candidates present a program whose central themes are the fight for jobs for all by shortening the workweek with no cut in pay, enforcing affirmative action programs, and canceling the debt of the Third World countries.

Warren and DeBates presented the same perspective to working people in California on their return from Australia and Japan. They spoke to thousands of youth and working people in meetings in Los Angeles and San Francisco following the explosion of anger at the acquittal of the four cops who beat Rodney King. They have been campaigning in cities across the United States for the broadest possible mobilizations to put pressure on the U.S. government to indict the four police officers on civil rights charges.

The same fight

"Washington's moves toward war against Iraq, Korea, or Libya are not in our interests," Warren said in a May 3 speech. "The fight in Buffalo, New York, to defend abortion rights, the struggle by workers at Caterpillar against the company's concession demands, the fight here to get the cops indicted — are all the same fight."

DeBates took the same message to the thousands who took part in the May 16 "Save Our Cities" march in Washington, D.C.

It is precisely because U.S. workers are part of an international working class that many working people in the United States feel the need for information on struggles of other workers, whether in Japan, Korea, Australia, or elsewhere. The socialist candidates have been able to bring firsthand information about some of these struggles to workers and youth in this country.

"Every one of our opponents tries to get working people to think as 'we Americans,' or 'we the company' — against the world or against those residents of the United States whom they don't consider 'real Americans,'" Warren noted in his March 31 press conference.

"We begin and end with the defense of the working class on a world scale, not with what is good for 'America' or General Motors," he added. "The United States, like all countries today, is class-divided. We, the working people of the world, are the majority and have common interests against them, the owners of banking, industry, and large agricultural businesses."

This internationalist framework for the socialist campaign makes the candidates' speaking trips abroad an essential part of their campaign efforts.

U.S. socialist candidate visits Japan

Estelle DeBates is the vice-presidential candidate of the Socialist Workers Party. She visited North Korea and Japan in April.

BY ESTELLE DeBATES

HIROSHIMA, Japan — Campaigning for socialism knows no borders. Here in Japan, there is great interest among youth and workers in the Socialist Workers 1992 campaign, and a hunger for knowledge about politics in the United States. The Japan League of Socialist Youth organized various meetings for my one-week stay, beginning in Hiroshima.

Hiroshima is one of the two Japanese cities on which the United States dropped atomic bombs at the end of World War II, in August 1945. The city is a symbol of the horror of imperialist war and its devastating consequences for working people around the world. More than 200,000 were killed by the nuclear attack on Hiroshima.

At the train station, I was greeted by several youth who were keen to support a candidate from the United States who is campaigning among workers and youth against the ruling class drive to war. There is great concern here about the Japan-bashing that is rife in the United States, and the growing tensions that indicate a course toward war.

Our first stop here was the Hiroshima Memorial Peace Park, which is located at an area close to where the bomb exploded. At the center of the park is the Memorial cenotaph, which is dedicated to all those who perished in the atomic bombing. The memorial has a stone chest that holds the "Books of the Past," containing the names of all persons known to have been killed by the bomb.

I was also warmly greeted by Japanese citizens visiting the memorial park.

Horror of atomic bombing

Several monuments in the park mark the horror of the U.S. decision to use the atomic bomb. Beside the river that winds along the park stands the "Atomic Dome," the remains of what was once the Hiroshima Prefectural Building for the Promotion of Industry. Of the 76,000 buildings in Hiroshima, 92 percent were destroyed by the blast and fires. The

prefectural building has been preserved in the state that the bomb left it in and is a symbol for the peace movement here.

A walk across the river bridge brought us to a memorial in honor of the Korean victims of the bombing. At the time of World War II, Korea was a colony of Japan. Thousands of Koreans were forced to come to Hiroshima to work in the large munitions factories and other jobs. More than 30,000 Koreans were killed by the bombing, and an additional 48,000 exposed to the radioactive fallout. Koreans, who are discriminated against in Japan, had to launch a 25-year fight to get this monument built. The inscription on the monument points to the ongoing struggle of the Korean survivors for assistance: "We pray that the plight of the Korean survivors, poorly understood even today, will emerge into public awareness and that reasonable assistance for these survivors will be provided immediately."

Supporters accompanied me to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, which houses exhibits and displays — including film footage taken the day after the bombing.

After my tour through the park, Suzuko Numata was happy to greet me at the office of the Hiroshima City Atomic Bomb Survivors Organization. Numata, a 67-year-old survivor, helped organize this group only six years ago. The organization carries out work with survivors who live not only in Japan, but in many countries including North and South Korea, the former Soviet Union, Germany, China, and the United States.

Numata was delighted that representatives of the socialist campaign visited North Korea and also came to Japan, speaking against the drive towards war and for solidarity among working people to fight for a new world. She wished the campaign well, and said she hoped it would continue to be a force to counter the growing tensions between the United States and Japan, as well as all moves toward war by the United States throughout the world.

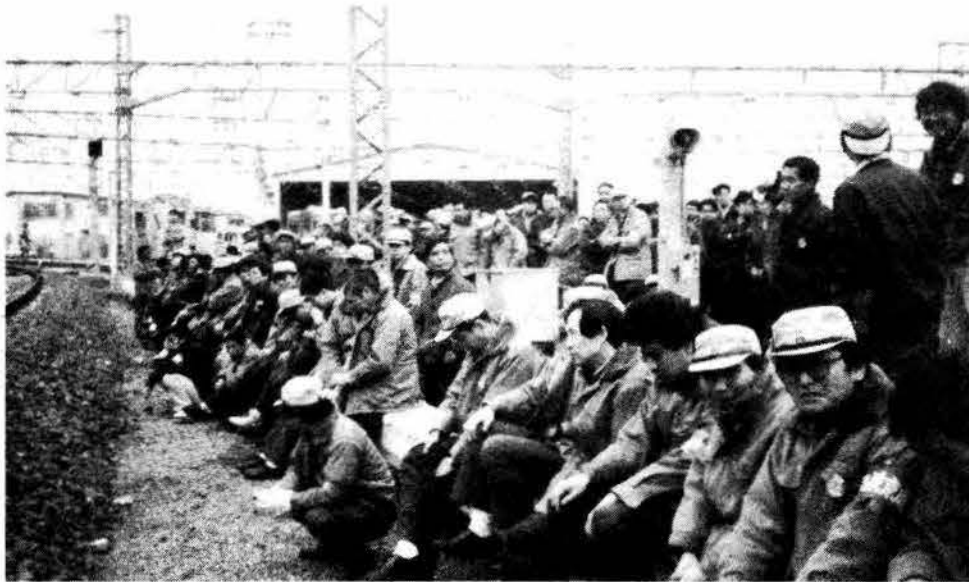
Meeting with group of young unionists

A dozen young trade unionists from Hiroshima welcomed the socialist campaign

for an evening of lively political discussion. These youth — rail, food, communication, and postal workers — were very excited to have their first ever opportunity to meet a worker from the United States and exchange information and experiences.

Mr. Naito, the Chairman of the Hiroshima Labor Unions Youth Department, opened the meeting, speaking on behalf of the delegation. "The reason the Japanese economy is so strong," said Naito, "is based on the increasing exploitation of labor — longer hours, worse conditions, and the fact that we're still not fighting hard enough. Young Japanese workers are always ordered by the capitalists to help keep the company profitable. The way we see it, we must not obey that order, but rather unite with all unions and exchange experiences."

At the center of their fight recently has been the struggle to reduce the number of hours worked. All the workers I spoke with here are paid a set monthly salary regardless of the hours worked in that month. They receive no extra pay for overtime.



Recent Japanese rail workers strike. 'The reason the Japanese economy is so strong is based on the increasing exploitation of labor — longer hours and worse conditions,' explained labor youth leader in Hiroshima.

LETTERS

Prisoners' Justice Day

August 10th of each year is commemorated by prisoners in Canada in memory of those who have died unnatural deaths in prisons. They stand together in a show of solidarity by fasting and general work stoppage for 24 hours. At the same time, community based support groups and individuals join in support of prisoners' efforts to raise consciousness of the brutality of prisons through demonstrations and services. Prisoners' Justice Day is the product of prisoners' organized political action in a show of solidarity and to present their concerns and demands. The overall focus is that, while people have been sent to prison as a punishment, they were not sent there to die.

The prison system is claiming more and more lives every day. In Ontario, during the month of February '92, there was one murder at Kingston, two suicides, one mysterious death at the Toronto Jail, and another murder at the Hamilton-Wentworth Detention Centre. Although there are mandatory inquests into prison deaths, neither the system nor any individual is ever held responsible, unless it is another prisoner. Recommendations at inquests are therefore disregarded, and the prison death rate continues to escalate.

The concerns and demands raised by prisoners on August 10th are not without reason. There is a general demand for the end of forced transfers. Solitary confinement must be stopped. So must 25-year and indefinite sentences. There is a call for education, prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS in prisons.

Prisoners' Justice Day was origi-

nally a commemoration of the death of Eddie Nalon, in a segregation cell at Millhaven Penitentiary in 1974. Through the years more and more people have shown solidarity on August 10th. But Canada is not the only country where prisoners are dying brutally and needlessly. It is time for international recognition for this special day. As more and more people become aware of the conditions of penal systems everywhere, the more support there will be for not only reform, but the de-incarceration of people and hopefully the abolition of prisons. Perhaps then, people will stop dying needlessly in those human warehouses.

Zoltan Lugosi
Ontario, Canada

500th anniversary

A recent newspaper editorial demonstrates how history can be distorted without actually lying. The article marks the 500th anniversary of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. For political reasons the article never mentions that the same royal edict that forbade the practice of the Jewish religion in Spain also outlawed the practice of the Islamic faith.

The editorial appeared in the April 4 edition of the *San Juan Star*, an English language daily that is published in Puerto Rico.

In the 15th century the Iberian peninsula consisted of a number of kingdoms ruled by Christian and Moslem kings and war lords. Jews lived throughout the region. The Moslem world was far more advanced in terms of culture and scholarship than medieval Europe.

Through a series of alliances and wars the country of Spain was born. The marriage of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella began as a po-

litical alliance and each ruled only on a portion of the peninsula. To unite the country they declared a Holy War against Granada, the last remaining kingdom ruled by a Moslem. The defeat of Granada in 1492 solidified their power. One of the terms of the surrender of the garrison at Granada was a guarantee of religious freedom in Spain.

The monarchy soon broke this promise of religious tolerance and ordered that the only religion in Spain would be the Catholic church and its beliefs as interpreted by the crown. It has been estimated that one million Moslems and 150,000 Jews were expelled from Spain.

In the months to come 1492 and Spain will be in the news a lot. The arrival of capitalism in the Americas changed the lives of every single person on the planet, for better or worse. Working people throughout the world will have a good opportunity to learn history and how the world of today came into being.

Ron Richards
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Grape boycott

Cesar Chavez, president of the United Farm Workers union, spoke at the University of California in Santa Barbara May 2. Chavez and the United Farm Workers (UFW) are celebrating the union's 30th anniversary and running its third national boycott of grapes.

Chavez presented a short video that explained the boycott and showed children who were born with birth defects, some extremely severe, because their mothers had been exposed to toxic pesticides while working in the fields.

Pesticides used on grapes, the video explained, are the strongest and most toxic of all, and even

when the grapes are in the supermarket, the toxins are still on them and are difficult to remove.

Children in the Central Valley of California, where many of the grapes are grown, have had a very high incidence of leukemia and cancer; miscarriages and birth defects are very high; and farm workers have the highest incidence of work-related injuries in California. For these reasons the UFW is asking consumers to boycott grapes.

Doris Peach
Santa Barbara, California

Candidates abroad

I find the trip to Korea, Japan, Australia and New Zealand by Warren and DeBates an odd way by the SWP candidates to carry out their campaign for President and Vice-President of the United States. Certainly all workers must develop an internationalist perspective, but this globe-trotting, while masquerading as the "socialist alternative" for U.S. workers, is a slap in our faces. Despite the rhetoric laden explanation for the trip in the May 1 edition of the *Militant*, I believe that the SWP tends to forget that the people who live within the U.S. borders are also members of the international working class. U.S. workers too are being exploited by the same bankers and corporations oppressing Korea et al.

Bill Sagel
Sharpsburg, Maryland

Communism in Russia

As it is now, communism in Russia will have to start all over again from scratch. To become politically important, or to even survive, they must reorganize and study their situation.

One young rail worker, who has had his job for 10 years, said he averages 100 hours of overtime a month. He took out his pay stub as he explained that after taxes, he takes home only 100,000 yen (\$760) a month. A young woman, who is a postal worker, brought out her pay stub to show that she is paid slightly more, while averaging a 40-hour workweek.

Younger workers tend to be paid less, as they are more likely to work for the smaller companies — where they also face much worse working conditions.

While many questions they had for me concerned the U.S. labor movement, there was also great interest in U.S. politics in general, and the socialist campaign. Questions were raised on the state of the fight for Black and women's rights, Japan-bashing, the presidential campaign of Patrick Buchanan, and the response to the socialist campaign by workers in the United States.

These young unionists offered best wishes for the SWP campaign, and said they would like to work on further exchanges between U.S. and Japanese workers.

They will have to analyze world trends, avoid mistakes of the past, steer clear of paranoid Stalin-like personalities as leaders.

It is vital that they redefine their movement and make a stand on historically proven principles and policies.

F. H.
Catlin, Illinois

'Militant' missed

We didn't receive our May 1st edition of the *Militant*, and I missed it sorely. It's like being a blind person because there is no other source that tells the facts and in-depth coverage necessary to be able to come to an educated opinion on today's issues.

I was especially interested in reading the *Militant's* perspective on the end of the Caterpillar strike and learning the details on how the fighting workers were once again betrayed by the bureaucratic leadership.

Ed Meredith
Caneyville, Kentucky

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.

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

German unions hold warning strikes

BY SETH GALINSKY

A strike by automobile, machine, and electrical workers in Germany was avoided May 17, when the IG Metall union and employers reached a wage agreement.

Flexing their muscles for a possible showdown, unionists had been staging brief warning strikes. Gesamtmetall, an employers' association that represents 8,000 companies, threatened to respond to the union actions with lockouts.

"Our preparedness for a strike is higher this year than it was last year," Gerhard Crome, chairman of Krupp AG, a large steel and engineering enterprise, told the *Wall Street Journal* days before the settlement.

Inspired by the success of the 11-day strike by public sector workers, which ended May 7, industrial workers had demanded a wage hike of no less than 6 percent. The bosses offered a maximum of 3.3 percent. But, facing IG Metall's May 25 strike deadline, the employers upped their offer to 5.4 percent for 1992.

German capitalists were shocked when the

public sector contract, which was agreed to by union leaders and the government to end the strike, was voted down by union members May 13. Only 44 percent of 470,000 public workers who belong to the ÖTV union approved the contract. Two smaller public workers unions approved the deal.

"We don't know why we must make sacrifices for unification when companies and banks are making some of their biggest profits ever," said a high school custodian in Berlin, referring to government arguments that wage increases are not possible due to the high cost of keeping eastern Germany afloat.

ÖTV president Monika Wulf-Mathies told a news conference in Stuttgart that she was surprised that lower-paid workers, who received a higher wage increase as part of the proposed settlement, had shown the most opposition to the contract.

In spite of the vote, ÖTV officials say they will not call another walkout. Instead, the union board will meet May 25 to decide what to propose next.

The impact of the public workers' strike in Germany and other labor battles are being closely watched around the world. The *Christian Science Monitor* gave its view in a May 11 headline: "Germans Worry Strike Settlement Sends Wrong Message to Metalworkers' Union."

According to the *Financial Times* of London, German auto companies plan to eliminate 100,000 jobs in the next few years; engineering firms, 150,000 jobs; and electronics corporations, 120,000 jobs in a drive to increase productivity and lower labor costs. A May 13 article in the paper complains that layoffs are rare in Germany and "the employers' threats of job losses have yet to make much impression on a work force determined not to see living standards undermined."

The strikes have further weakened the German government, already battered by the costs of unification with eastern Germany. The British *Economist* predicts that the government "is heading for a split" and says it is "paralyzed."



IG Metall unionists held warning strikes in fight for wage agreement.

'The New York Times is out to bust our union'

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

NEW ROCHELLE, New York — Chants of "Union! Union! Union!" rang out as dozens of angry *New York Times* truck drivers picketed the newspaper's wholesale distribution plant here to stop the delivery of the Sunday paper by newly hired scabs.

"The *Times* is out to bust our union," said Edward Ellis, a driver with 22 years of service.

By a resounding majority vote May 6, members of the Newspaper and Mail Deliverers' Union of New York and Vicinity (NMDU) rejected contracts that would have dealt a big blow to working conditions and reduced wages. The union's executive committee had recommended the contract proposal.

The *Times* owners claim they are not responsible for the dispute because they sold their wholesale distributor here, together with another one on Long Island, to Imperial Delivery Service (IDS), owned by businessman Arthur Imperatore. The day after the workers voted down the contract, IDS replaced all 220 with its own newly hired employees.

"The general manager came in that morning with a bunch of *Ninjas* [security cops]," driver John Schultz explained. "He said, 'Leave the building. You're no longer employed here.'"

Antonio Chicaiza said the cops then arrested him and several other workers for not leaving.

Kevin, another driver, added, "The *Times*

wants people to believe it's not involved because they sold it [the two wholesalers] to Imperatore. But all he bought were the 'assets' — the trucks, the tables, and chairs. The *Times* still owns the building. They're calling the shots."

"We were willing to take a pay cut. But the working conditions they wanted were just unacceptable," Schultz said.

The *Times* wants to shorten truck-delivery time limits, cut routes, and use bigger trucks carrying more papers, which would eliminate jobs and intensify the work load. The contract proposal would also gut the grievance procedure and get rid of light duty for workers hurt on the job.

Another big concession demand is the elimination of overtime pay, which would cut most drivers' wages in half.

The media giant has gone on a violence-baiting campaign against the union, accusing it of sabotage. Every day it ships scabs into the plants in chartered buses and sends out delivery trucks with private police escorts.

In spite of a court order restricting the number of pickets to 12 per entrance, the drivers have been able to stop delivery of a significant number of papers in the areas covered by the two wholesalers. Only 30 percent of the 342,000 Sunday papers for the area reached their destination May 10.

Another judge, labeling the drivers "terrorists," has ordered the union to pay the *Times* draconian fines of \$100,000 for every hour of interrupted weekday deliveries and \$500,000 per hour of blocked Sunday deliveries.

The *Times* has presented the battle as a conflict between two unions, saying Imperatore's replacement drivers are members of the Teamsters union. While IDS is under contract with Teamsters Local 917, Barry Feinstein, head of the Teamsters Joint Council in New York, said the replacement drivers were not in the union. He called them "scabs."

While the strike involves only the 220 *Times* drivers, the 2,900 members of the NMDU — who also deliver the *New York Post*, *Daily News*, *Newark Star Ledger*, and other newspapers in the region —

know a successful union-busting move would embolden the other media owners to follow suit. Workers from the *Daily News*, veterans of a militant strike themselves, have joined the picket lines together with other unionists.

Ed Warren, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate in New York, issued a statement urging other unionists to "join the drivers' fight, which deserves the support of all working people." Supporters of his campaign have gone to the picket lines.

A tentative settlement was announced May 17, to be voted on May 20.

Curtis fund gains support

BY RUTH NEBBIA

DES MOINES, Iowa — The Mark Curtis Defense Committee continues to receive funds toward the Mark Curtis Parole Now! Fund and support letters for Curtis from all over the world.

Priscilla Schenk, coordinator of the Parole Now! Fund, reports that as of May 12 more than \$40,000 has been received toward the \$75,000 goal. "This has been the defense committee's most successful fund drive to date," Schenk told supporters at a house meeting here. The fund drive is scheduled to end May 31.

Sandra Nelson noted in a letter from Cleveland that local contributors include Marjorie Townsend, president of the North American Farm Alliance, and Robert Begin, director of West Side Ecumenical Ministries.

Contributions of \$1,010 were received from supporters in Los Angeles who have sent more than \$5,700, surpassing their \$5,000 goal. In addition, film director Nick Castle recently hosted a \$100-a-plate dinner for the fund and collected a total of \$1,570.

Edwin Fruit writes that Baltimore supporters are planning a meeting with students at the University of Delaware for May 12, as well as a citywide meeting May 21. Supporters there sent in \$210 toward the fund.

Supporters in Auckland, New Zealand, sent in \$450. "A considerable part of this money has been raised by workers in Auckland through fund-raising activities in their workplaces," writes Helen Dee. "We have found many new supporters for the campaign in doing this and have been able to make contact with others who have supported the case in the past and in the process bring them up to date on devel-

opments. . . . Many whom we have talked to asked that the defense committee extend our solidarity to Mark and wish him and Kate all the best in the continuing struggle."

"Enclosed is a cheque for \$300 for the defense fund," writes Bea Bryant from Ontario, Canada. "It is my income tax return. Can't think of any other cause where it is needed more."

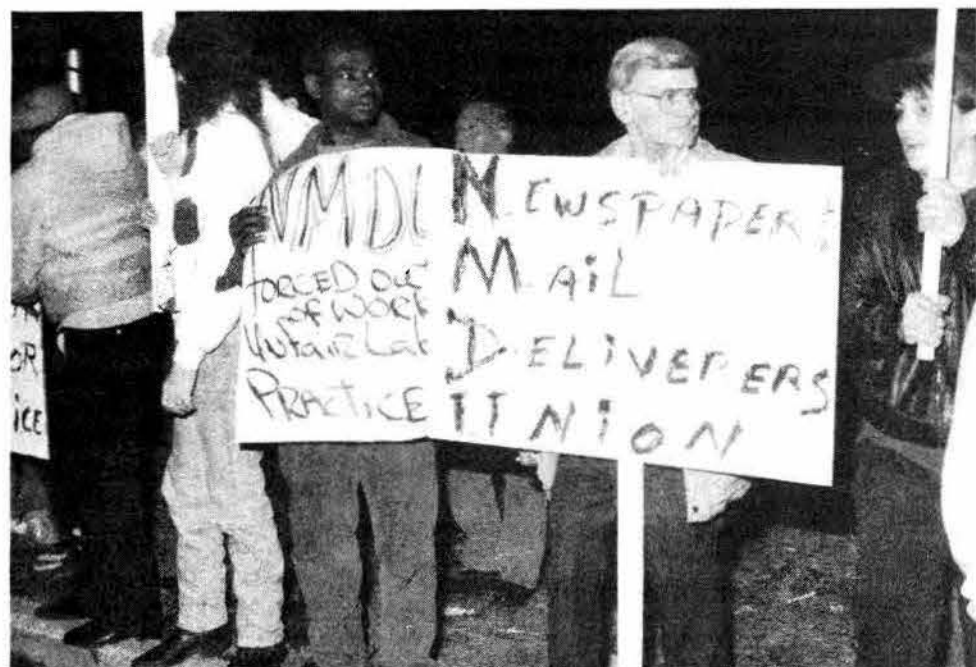
"We take this opportunity to express our solidarity with Mark Curtis, who continues fighting for his rights from prison," writes Pedro Ramón Gil, from the Exeario Sosa Lujan People's Education Center in Barquisimeto, Venezuela. "We also would like a photo and biography of Mark Curtis. These would be used to open a solidarity campaign in factories to let people know about this case."

"A greedy, grasping ruling class, whether British or American, will always try to victimize those who stand up for the rights of the oppressed," writes Alan Stanley, for the Leicester and District Trades Union Council in Britain.

Greetings from Britain also included a contribution and support letter from folk singer Peggy Seeger.

Many groups of supporters are planning fund-raising picnics and other activities. Des Moines area supporters will hold a picnic Memorial Day weekend. Houston supporters held a backyard social, video showing, and raffle May 2.

Those wishing to contribute to the Parole Now! Fund can send checks made out to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, IA 50311. Tax deductible contributions can be made out to the Political Rights Defense Fund, and earmarked for the Parole Now! Fund.



Militant/Meryl Lynn Farber

Members of Newspaper and Mail Deliverers' Union picket at distribution plant.