

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Youth brigade helps
produce food in Cuba

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 57/NO. 10 March 12, 1993

Washington steps closer to war in Yugoslavia

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The U.S. government's commencement of airdrops of food and medicine over Bosnia places Washington a step closer to military intervention in the Balkan conflict.

With arguments similar to those put forward to justify the invasion of Somalia, the Bosnia airdrop is described by the White House as nothing more than a humanitarian food aid effort.

Washington's announcement of this unilateral move has exposed rifts over the issue of military intervention in the former Yugoslavia between the U.S. government and the capitalist governments of Britain, France, and Spain, whose forces comprise the bulk of the 8,000 United Nations troops currently stationed in Bosnia.

Despite the difficulties inherent in its course of action, Washington is driven toward military intervention in the Balkans in order to assert itself among its imperialist rivals in that area of the world.

The Pentagon's airdrop plan involves flying three to five C-130 transport planes over Bosnia at a time, each of which will unload 15 or 16 one-ton pallets of supplies. The aircraft will fly round-trip out of the Rhein-Main U.S. air base in Germany. The plan is to carry out this operation mostly at night at altitudes of around 10,000 feet in order to be out of range of anti-aircraft fire from the ground.

While no armed air cover is being
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Somali youth demand U.S. forces leave

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In the biggest challenge to the presence of foreign troops in Somalia since the beginning of the U.S.-led occupation of the country in early December, thousands of Somalis carried out two days of street protests in the capital city of Mogadishu.

Thousands of youth, shouting for the U.S. troops to leave, set up roadblocks and pelted U.S. and United Nations forces with rocks and scattered gunfire. The fighting went on for most of February 24-25 as the U.S.-led forces failed to halt the protests.

U.S. troops killed at least nine people February 24, Reuters news service reported. "Troops shot dead protesters who tried to storm the U.S. embassy in Mogadishu," said the news agency.

These allegations were promptly denied by U.S. officials, who claimed that their soldiers hadn't killed anyone. However, U.S. Marine Col. Fred Peck estimated that casualties from the fighting on the first day amounted to 10 dead and 17 wounded. Other U.S. officials said this was probably only a partial count.

Nigerian soldiers patrolling parts of the city along with the U.S. troops reportedly unleashed massive firepower at suspected snipers. According to the *New York Times*, the Nigerian gunfire "was also hitting unintended targets, including the compound of the former United States Embassy, now a military headquarters."

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ANC leads debate over free S. Africa elections

BY STEVE CLARK

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — A wide-ranging debate is unfolding on proposals recently adopted by the African National Congress (ANC) leadership, aimed at organizing one-person, one-vote elections later this year or in early 1994. They would be the first such elections in South Africa's history.

In mid-February the ANC's National Executive Committee (NEC) issued a resolution, proposing the election of a constituent assembly to draft a new constitution of a united, nonracial, and nonsexist republic. Following the vote, an interim government would be formed while the assembly did its work, remaining in place until the first elections under the new constitution.

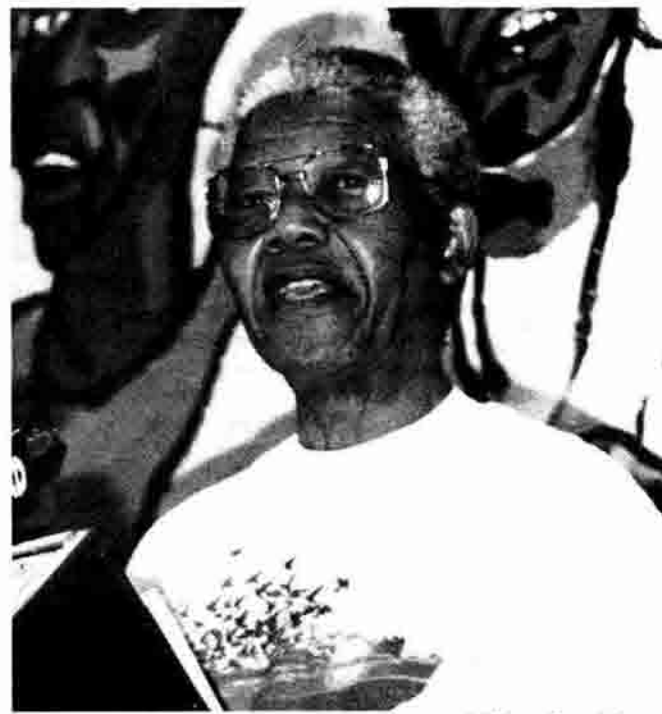
The NEC resolution proposes that the interim government be made up, on a proportional basis, of individuals from all parties that win at least 5 percent of the seats in the constituent assembly.

De Klerk government responds

After two days of talks with the ANC in late February, the National Party government of F. W. de Klerk reiterated its opposition to fundamental aspects of the ANC proposals. The ruling party wants a constitution that in practice entrenches ethnic divisions by enshrining functioning by consensus and minority veto rights, not majority rule, in a future government.

The National Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party, led by Mangosuthu Buthelezi, both want a weak central government. They advocate giving broad powers to regional administrations, including repackaged versions of the 10 so-called bantustans or "independent homelands" established by the apartheid regime to justify its disenfranchisement of the Black majority. Buthelezi heads the KwaZulu bantustan.

The ANC rejects this last-ditch effort to maintain one of the foundation stones of



ANC president Nelson Mandela at recent international solidarity conference in Johannesburg, South Africa.

apartheid, insisting on a unitary and nonracial South Africa. The exact relationship between the central government and various regional administrations should be decided by the constituent assembly, says the ANC.

Codesa relaunched

Despite these differences, the ANC and the National Party government have agreed to a multiparty planning conference March 5-6 to discuss how to negotiate final arrangements to organize elections. It will be held at the World Trade Centre just outside Johannesburg. The government has agreed to the ANC's proposal that the meeting be open to the press.

The conference will relaunch the Convention for a Democratic South Africa, which held its first session in December 1991 (Codesa 1) and a second round in May 1992

(Codesa 2). In early 1992 the National Party and Inkatha blew up progress toward democratic elections by escalating a campaign of violence against ANC supporters and others. As a result of this campaign, 1,800 people were killed and 3,000 injured during the first half of 1992.

ANC president Nelson Mandela told the United Nations Security Council in July 1992 that while all those who endorsed the December 1991 Codesa declaration "committed ourselves to set in motion the process whereby a democratic constitution would be drafted and adopted for a united, nonracial, and nonsexist South Africa, the process is deadlocked."

"The problem is that the ruling white-minority government continues to look for ways and means by which it can guarantee itself the continued exercise of power," he said. "The regime insists that the political majority, no matter how large, should be subjected to veto by minority political parties."

The ANC and its allies in the democratic movement responded with a campaign of mass strikes and demonstrations. "It is critical that practical steps are taken by the government to curb the violence which is ravaging the lives of our people in the townships," said Mandela to a rally of 70,000 people in Pretoria August 5. As part of the demonstration, which culminated a two-day general strike by more than 4 million workers, participants raised the ANC flag on the pole outside the government building housing de Klerk's offices.

"While pursuing negotiations," Mandela said at the Pretoria rally, the National Party "simultaneously sought to weaken the ANC and the democratic forces. . . . This has been one of the gravest mistakes it committed. . . . The time has arrived for

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Miners win support as Peabody brings in scabs

BY STU SINGER
AND MARK GILSDORF

BOONVILLE, Indiana — The strike by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) against Peabody Coal entered its fourth week with the company bringing busloads of scabs across UMWA picket lines at the Lynnvile and Squaw Creek mines here Monday, February 22. This action escalated the stakes in an already important strike.

"They've never done this before," said UMWA International Executive Board member Roger Myers. "They're going to try to take us out, do away with the UMWA. We're in for a long fight." Myers represents UMWA District 11, which covers Indiana.

News of the company bringing scabs into the mines was featured prominently on TV, radio, and local papers. "This is a bitter pill for union members to swallow," striker Dave Hadley from Squaw Creek said. But the well-publicized company attack on the strike has led to increased support for the miners.

UMWA members delivering a trainload of

coal to a power plant here were ordered to bring empty Squaw Creek railcars back to the struck mine. However, they refused to cross the UMWA picket lines and left the train outside the mine.

During an hour or so that we spent Tuesday morning in the UMWA district office, calls came in from other unions and working people in the community wanting to help.

Hadley, a welder at the mine before the strike and the spokesman for UMWA Local 1189 at the Squaw Creek mine, was juggling calls from the news media, other unions, and strikers.

One call while we were there was from a International Brotherhood of Teamsters union representative offering to help out the miners. Local carpenters' union members have already built two new picket shacks.

A woman from nearby Newburgh called and spoke with Glenn Forston, a truck driver from Local 9926 on strike at the Lynnvile mine. She asked if someone could bring her a UMWA strike support sign to put in her

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Trinidad workers demonstrate

About 12,000 government workers marched through the streets of Port of Spain February 12 to protest the delay by the government in paying more than \$470 million in arrears on a 2 percent wage increase and the layoff of 3,000 workers at three public utilities.

In full page advertisements in the daily newspapers, the Ministry of Finance claimed that the wages and salaries bill of each of the utilities exceeded its gross revenues, thereby requiring substantial government subsidies that the government was no longer able to provide.

International Monetary Fund demands fiscal shock for Brazil

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) wants the Brazilian government to implement a "fiscal shock treatment" to create a surplus of \$24 billion this year in the public accounts. The IMF instructed the administration of Itamar Franco to submit an economic plan to the IMF by April 30 in order to be able to negotiate a future agreement with it, notwithstanding the fact that Brazil did not meet the targets set by the IMF in 1992. The new agreement provides for the release of a \$2 billion loan to be used by Brazil as collateral for the debt rescheduling agreement with private creditors.

Vietnam workers strike

Workers in Vietnam have staged strikes and protests at South Korean-run factories. In the biggest wildcat strike since Vietnam opened to foreign investment five years ago, some 680 workers at a luggage-making joint venture in Ho Chi Minh City protested substandard wages, forced overtime, and brutal treatment by the bosses. South Korean investors in February announced 60 projects in Vietnam valued at \$450 million.

Haiti funeral mass turns into protest against government

A funeral mass in Port-Au-Prince for victims of a ferry disaster the previous week turned into a demonstration February 26 against the army-backed government.

About 2,500 people attended the service for the 600 to 900 people drowned or missing when the ferry *Neptune* sank on February 16. After the mass, a prominent bishop

and other demonstrators were beaten by armed men shouting support for the military.

The crowd had chanted "Aristide or death!" in support of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, deposed from the presidency in 1991. Bishop Willy Romelus, who is a well-known supporter of Aristide and spoke at the funeral, was also attacked when he left the service.

Soldiers in Zaire seize parliament

Hundreds of heavily armed soldiers seized control of the parliament building in Kinshasa, Zaire, and took hostage several hundred members of Zaire's parliament. The soldiers demanded that the government approve new bank notes as legal currency.

The bills with which the soldiers were being paid their monthly salaries were issued by Zaire's central bank, which is under the direct control of President Mobutu Sese Seko.

But most merchants, following the advice of Mobutu's main political opponent, Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, have refused to honor the notes.

Mobutu, who has ruled Zaire for 28 years, recently dismissed Tshisekedi as prime minister, blaming him for fighting at the beginning of February when soldiers attacked merchants and other civilians after they refused to accept the new currency.

Israeli soldiers raid Gaza

Some 200 Israeli soldiers and police carried out a raid that lasted 12 hours February 18 in the Khan Yunis refugee camp in the occupied Gaza Strip. Families were ordered from their homes, then soldiers opened fire on the houses, first with rocket-propelled grenades, then with antitank shells.

A statement from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which is responsible for Palestinian refugees, said the raid affected 26 families, totaling 179 people.

The agency said 68 homes have been damaged or destroyed since last November, when the army began shooting up houses in search of Palestinian suspects.

Cholera spreads in Argentina

Since January cholera has spread rapidly in northwestern Argentina and threatens to infect other parts of the country including the capital, Buenos Aires. Argentina has had more than 1,000 cases of cholera so far in 1993, with a death toll of 20.

Starting as an epidemic two years ago in Peru, cholera has spread to most countries in Latin America. It came to Argentina early last year from neighboring Bolivia, which had 21,567 confirmed cases of cholera in 1992 and 3,210 deaths.

U.S. and EC in sharp conflict over government contracts

A document leaked from the office of Mickey Kantor, the U.S. trade representative, declares that U.S. companies are being restricted from bidding on public contracts in Europe.

Washington has threatened to ban European Community (EC) companies from bidding for federal contracts in the United States if allegedly discriminatory EC bidding legislation is not abandoned before March 22.

U.S. officials claim that one of the EC laws — a directive covering the supply of equipment for utilities — favors EC manufacturers of telecommunication and electrical equipment. The European Community in turn has attacked "Buy America" legislation, which it says gives U.S. manufacturers still greater preferential treatment.

— SELVA NEBBIA

India government, in show of force, blocks rally by ultrarightist party



BJP member of parliament throws tear-gas shell back at cops in New Delhi protest

BY GREG ROSENBERG

The government of India, headed by Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao's Congress Party, used massive force to block a February 25 rally called by the rightist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP — Indian People's Party) in New Delhi, the country's capital. The BJP, the largest opposition party in Parliament, had claimed it would bring 1 million supporters to the rally from across India to demand the resignation of Rao's government and new elections.

The government banned the rally. It deployed 100,000 paramilitary troops throughout New Delhi and set up barbed wire and steel pipe barricades, sealing off the city. In the days before February 25 the regime arrested 100,000 people accused of planning to attend the demonstration. Tens of thousands were pulled from trains, buses, and cars.

On the day of the rally police battled half a dozen protests throughout the capital, the largest numbering 7,000 according to the *New York Times*. Using tear gas, water cannon, and clubs to disperse the rightists, the

troops arrested 1,000.

Most New Delhi residents, threatened with physical assaults by rightists or repression by police, stayed home that day.

Last December the BJP organized a political campaign that led to the destruction of a Muslim mosque, sparking rightist pogroms, rioting, and widespread shootings by police that killed 3,000, mostly working people who were Muslims.

Leaders of the BJP took advantage of the government's abrogation of the right to assemble February 25 to claim they were being unjustly repressed.

Government officials and the capitalist media portray the recent violence as a religious conflict. The BJP, however, despite its Hindu religious cloak, is an ultrarightist party that seeks to capitalize on the economic crisis in India by scapegoating certain sections of the working class and peasantry, promoting its reactionary slogan of a "Hindu India."

Greg Rosenberg is a member of United Auto Workers Local 879 in St. Paul, Minnesota.

THE MILITANT

On-the-scene reports of miners' strike against Peabody Coal

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The Militant

Closing news date: March 1, 1993

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Published weekly except for next to last week in December and biweekly from mid-June to mid-August by the Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Telephone: (212) 243-6392; Fax (212) 924-6040; Modem, 924-6048; Telex, 497-4278.

Pacific edition printed in Wanganui, New Zealand, by Wanganui Newspapers, Limited.

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The Militant Business Office, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Second-class postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Subscriptions: U.S., Latin America: for one-year subscription send \$45, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (air-mail), send \$80. Barbados: Send \$75Bds for

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant's* views. These are expressed in editorials.

Nationair strikers win contract after 15-month lockout

BY GRANT MILLER

MONTREAL—Flight attendants who are members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) have won an important victory against Nationair, the third-largest airline in Canada. Four hundred fifty workers, 80 percent of whom are women, were locked out 15 months ago. After a meeting to discuss the tentative agreement flight attendant Victor Pereira said, "It's a victory just going back with the CUPE."

Under the new contract the starting wage will go from \$15,600 per year to about \$23,000 and workers will receive a minimum of four hours pay per day worked. All workers who had finished their probation period before the lockout will return to their jobs. It has not yet been agreed how seniority will be decided between flight attendants who were on probation before the lockout and "replacement workers." The cases of 48 workers fired for picket line activities will go to binding arbitration. Union members anticipate the firings will be turned into suspensions.

Some concessions were made in working conditions. For example, the flight attendants will now have to share hotel rooms on layovers.

For 15 months these workers fought Nationair's attempt to break the union. The company continued flying with scab flight attendants. The federal government helped Nationair with a \$34 million contract to transport military personnel. In response to the government's strikebreaking help to the airline company, more than 100 flight attendants traveled to Ottawa, Ontario, in August 1992 and picketed the home of Canadian prime minister Brian Mulroney, the federal Parliament building, and the Department of National Defense.

The locked out workers demonstrated unity on their own picket lines and rallies and lent their solidarity to other workers on strike. Their determination transformed the lockout into an active strike. They reached out to other unions, speaking in front of many union meetings, and took part in the

International Women's Day demonstration in Toronto last year and the 1992 May Day demonstration in Montreal.

One of the strengths of the struggle was that it strengthened ties between workers in Quebec and the rest of Canada. Several times members of the union traveled from one city to the other to build united actions. A boycott of Nationair was used to widen support for the struggle.

Confronted with stiffening competition from other airlines who are also demanding concessions from their workers, Nationair has been forced to recognize that it has not succeeded in crushing the union, and that it must shelve plans to build a major non-union airline in Canada.

Other workers are in negotiations with Nationair. They have been without a contract since last June, and explain that the flight attendants' victory will strengthen their fight. It will lift the spirits of other fighters as well, such as miners on strike against Royal Oak mines in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.



Militant/Monica Jones

April 1992 Nationair picketline. Workers have won tentative agreement.

Australian workers and youth show interest in ideas of socialist campaign

BY DAVID ADAMS

SYDNEY, Australia—Communist League candidates Marnie Kennedy and Ron Poulsen and their supporters have been gaining a hearing through street and factory gate campaigning, public meetings, and the media. Meanwhile the electioneering of Labor Party prime minister Paul Keating and opposition Liberal Party leader John Hewson continues to dominate the news here as the March 13 federal election draws near.

Poulsen, a Food Preservers' Union member who is standing for the Senate from New South Wales explained that "both Keating

and Hewson bury the truth. The Labor Party and the Liberal Party are twins. Whichever heads the next capitalist government will step up the attacks on the living standards of workers and continue the rulers' course towards war."

Kennedy, 24, is a member of the National Union of Workers. She and Poulsen described their first two weeks of campaigning at a February 20 campaign forum entitled, "The Socialist Alternative to War, Racism and Depression." Poulsen reported that several media interviewers have asked the candidates, "Why are communists standing in

the elections after the fall of the Berlin Wall?" and "Why do you talk about war so much when the major parties are not talking about it at all?"

"The question of imperialist war is the central question facing working people everywhere in the world today," Poulsen told the gathering. He pointed to the unfolding conflicts in Yugoslavia, Somalia, Cambodia, and Iraq as examples that world politics is marked by expanding military and trade conflicts. "Australia has more expeditionary troops deployed abroad now than at any time since the Vietnam War," he said. "Imperialist competition engendered by the world depression is leading down the road to World War III. But to travel down this road, the rulers must deal historic blows to the working-class movement. Our class will have its chance to feel the power of the warmakers in the battles to come."

Those in attendance at the forum posed a variety of questions to the candidates concerning Australia's role in Asia, moves to privatize large government holdings, a new accord reached between the Keating government and trade union officials, and the response to the campaign from the candidates' workmates.

Poulsen said that the interest and discussion that his candidacy has sparked among workers at the Streets Ice Cream factory, where he is a machine operator, shows the greater openness to communist ideas in the working class today. "I took 60 copies of our new campaign brochure to work with me, but I quickly discovered that I needed a lot more than that. After I ran out, many workmates came by to find out why I had not given them one." One ice cream worker donated \$20 to the campaign, saying "workers have to support you communists now even if we don't fully agree with you. No one else is standing up for the working class." He later decided to pledge \$50 more.

At Newtown High School, students were pleased and surprised to find Kennedy and her supporters campaigning outside their school. Many stopped to talk with the socialist candidate and take a piece of campaign literature. "They were impressed that I thought it was important to talk to high school students," reported Kennedy.

On February 23 Kennedy campaigned at a mass meeting of metalworkers, which decided to participate in a one-day nationwide work stoppage to press for an adequate wage increase in the metal industry. Later that day she campaigned at the University of New South Wales.

St. Louis Board of Elections reverses decision, rules that socialist candidate will be on ballot

BY RICHARD SORRENTINO

ST. LOUIS—The St. Louis Board of Elections reversed a previous ruling February 17 and granted ballot status to James Garrison, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor. Earlier that day campaign supporters had presented evidence to the board that they had met election law requirements and were prepared to demand Garrison be on the ballot.

"Our victory in winning a spot on the ballot is a victory for the democratic rights of working people, youth, Blacks, women and others," Garrison said.

This was the board's first such reversal in at least 20 years, according to Democratic elections director Dorothy Cameron. She blamed "a multitude of errors by a multitude of people" for the initial ruling by her office. She claimed some of the signatures were misread and others invalidated because people used nicknames. "This is simply another example of undemocratic obstacles placed in the path of working-class candidates," Garrison explained.

The socialist candidate and his supporters had filed nearly 3,800 signatures to place him on the general election ballot. The Socialist Workers campaign was also forced to pay a \$900 filing fee, which was raised through small donations from workers. Despite this compliance with the law, the election board refused to certify Garrison, claiming he was 120 signatures short of the 1,443 required.

Campaign supporters and other defenders of democratic rights decided to fight back. A picket was organized outside the board to protest unfair ballot laws and demand Garrison be placed on the ballot. A photograph of the picket and an article appeared in the



Picket line protesting exclusion of James Garrison from ballot in St. Louis mayoral election. Board of Elections later granted Garrison ballot status.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch. Leonard Burst, a member of the board, received phone calls protesting the socialist candidate's exclusion. A speak-out was called for the next Saturday night.

Campaign supporters spent the next couple of days comparing petitions with voter registration rolls. They found 155 registered voters that the board had disqualified; 130 of these were subsequently ruled valid. Among those the board tried to disqualify was George McBride, one of the campaign chairpeople.

In a press statement made available before the board meeting Garrison stated, "We campaigned against the U.S. invasion of Somalia and the bombing of Iraq; for jobs for all; against police brutality; and for solidarity with working people around the world, from Haiti to South Africa to Marissa, Illinois," where miners are striking Peabody Coal. "We will continue this campaigning not just through the mayoral elections in April, but until workers and farmers in this country have our own government, that represents our interests, not those of the rich."

Striking miners like paper's truthful coverage

At the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) union hall in Shawneetown, Illinois, the new issue of the *Militant* reporting on the UMWA strike against Peabody Coal found a good response, reports Stu Singer. The approximately 15 miners in the office at the time were interested in the paper's coverage on

that's close to three union coal mines. On one street, about five blocks long, two *Militant* salespeople spoke to about 50 people on a Saturday afternoon. Seven of them bought subscriptions and another 10 bought single copies of the paper. The following afternoon, three *Militant* supporters sold 27 papers

in the same area. "Most of the people we talked with were very receptive. We were invited into living rooms to discuss the miners' strike and a number of other issues covered in the *Militant*." * * *

Another team of supporters traveling through southern West Virginia sold 56 *Militants* in three days through door-to-door sales in coal mining communities, shopping centers, and a local campus in Montgomery, West Virginia. Job security is the central issue in this strike. "The companies want to make more money with less men," explained one miner in a discussion with a *Militant* salesperson. * * *

The *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* subscription renewal drive, which runs from February 20-March 20, is aiming to win as long-term readers at least 10 percent of the 3,300 individuals who took out subscriptions to these two publications last fall. After the first week of this campaign, supporters in Newark, New Jersey, are off to a great start. Eric Simpson reports: "We made about 45 calls in the first week of this campaign. Eight subscribers agreed to renew. One of these subscriptions — a six-month renewal — has already been picked up and we have appointments to collect the others. We plan to go to these meetings with a selection of Pathfinder books and have political discussions about what's going on in the world and how these events are covered each week in the *Militant*."

Two *Perspectiva Mundial* subscribers in Newark also decided to renew this past week. Both of them are garment workers who got subscriptions from coworkers in their plant. * * *

An increased number of new subscriptions have been arriving in the *Militant* business office along with renewals. A number of these new readers have signed up for the paper after discussions with *Militant* supporters distributing the paper throughout the West Virginia, Kentucky, Illinois, and Indiana coalfields. * * *

— BRIAN WILLIAMS



Militant/Dag Tirsén
Demonstrator at January 30 rally in Berlin against anti-immigrant violence checks out the *Militant*.

The 'Militant' gets around

the coal strike. Several expressed appreciation for these articles, praising the *Militant* for its accurate, factual reporting on their fight.

This was one of a number of stops made by a team of *Militant* supporters who have been on the road visiting coal mining communities in southwestern Indiana, western Kentucky, and southern Illinois during the past two weeks. Singer filed the following report from Boonville, Indiana:

"In 10 days, this *Militant* sales and reporting team sold 12 *Militant* subscriptions and 109 single issues. More than half were to UMWA coal miners.

"The sales took place at picket lines and strike organizing centers, shift changes at working mines, and door-to-door in mining communities.

"The sales at mine entrances were usually early in the morning in very cold weather. Between 5 and 20 papers were sold each time and we sold subscriptions to the *Militant* at three of these portals.

"The largest number of sales came from going door-to-door in Boonville, a town of 6,300 people

Washington moves closer to war in Yugoslavia

Continued from front page

planned for the U.S. flights, Navy combat patrols will fly offshore from the aircraft carrier *John F. Kennedy*, which arrived in the Adriatic Sea together with a four-ship Marine amphibious force to monitor the operation. Pentagon spokesman Bob Hall made it clear the U.S. government is prepared to "take whatever measures we felt necessary" to protect the military cargo planes.

Pallets hurled from planes

The prospect of injuring or killing civilians and damaging buildings is quite high, as the one-ton pallets can reach a speed of 90 feet per second before their parachutes open. Washington plans to first drop 600,000 leaflets advising people to stay indoors for their own safety when the packages start flying through the air.

According to Gen. Michael Dugan, a former Air Force chief of staff, from an altitude of 10,000 feet many of the air-dropped pallets can be expected to land two or three miles away from their destination. "Dropping at anything over 5,000 feet," said an army officer to the *Washington Post*, "the best you can do is say you'll hit the earth."

The U.S. government claims UN authority for this action under a 1992 Security

Council resolution permitting member states to use "all necessary means" to deliver aid. U.S. pilots will be operating the flights and will be taking their orders directly from U.S. commanders.

No combat connotations?

This operation, which signifies Washington's deepest military intervention yet in Bosnia, is characterized by U.S. president Bill Clinton as having "no combat connotations," but simply being a means "to help anybody who needs the food and medicine."

Senator John Warner, a member of the Armed Services Committee and former Navy secretary, rejected the president's claims. "Anytime you fly a military aircraft into a hostile zone, no matter what the cargo might be, it has a military implication," stated the Republican legislator from Virginia.

Army general John Galvin, who retired last summer as top allied commander in Europe, called the airdrop a short-term measure. With no troops on the ground to retrieve equipment, the cargo planes lose their pallets, parachutes, belts, and buckles with every drop. For the time being, Washington has ruled out placing U.S. troops on the ground in Bosnia to coordinate the airlift or retrieve these items.

The problems associated with such airdrops was demonstrated in April 1991 when Washington participated in a similar type of mission aimed at delivering food to the Kurds in northern Iraq. "On several occasions the release gear failed to work, resulting in four half-ton bundles landing several miles off target," reports the British *Independent*. "On other occasions supplies hit refugees on the ground, killing them."

Initially, U.S. officials projected the airdrop as a way to deliver food to enclaves of Muslims under siege by Serbian forces in eastern Bosnia. President Clinton now promises to extend this service to Bosnian Serb and Croat villages as well.

The U.S. airdrop occurs as frustration over the ineffectiveness of the UN relief operation in Bosnia reached a new crisis stage. Bosnian president Alija Izetbegovic declared February 11 that his Muslim-led government would refuse to accept any further UN aid shipments in Sarajevo until UN convoys succeeded in reaching the besieged Muslim communities in eastern Bosnia.

The UN High Commissioner for Refu-

gees, Sadako Ogata, then proceeded to order a halt to all UN relief efforts throughout the country. UN secretary general Boutros Boutros-Ghali promptly rebuked her and ordered shipments resumed, stating, "I am supposed to direct this operation."

Clinton's plan was strongly condemned by Lt. Gen. Philippe Morillon of France, who commands the 8,000-member UN military force in Bosnia. "If the Americans start dropping supplies by parachute, there will be an explosion here," he said.

A Bosnian Serb general warned that airdrops to Muslim areas would lead to "the massive use of military force and an escalation of the conflict, with unforeseeable consequences."

The army general staff of Yugoslavia, which consists of the republics of Serbia and Montenegro, took an even harsher tone, warning they would take "appropriate steps" against "American interference," which they denounced as "becoming increasingly drastic and unbearable."

While the French and British foreign ministers called Clinton's announcement "good news," both governments made it clear they would not be participating in the airdrop mission despite Washington's requests.

Disagreements with Washington's course of action run deep among military and government officials in both Britain and France. The February 25 *Independent* reports, "Although under orders to say nothing disparaging about the U.S. plan, officials from the ministry of defence and RAF [Royal Air Force] officers are privately astonished by U.S. pronouncements that the risks are small and that this is a 'humanitarian' rather than a 'combat' mission."

The paper goes on to quote a defense ministry representative who predicts that the U.S. plan will simply result in "feeding the fighters, not the people."

British and French officials fear that the U.S. airdrops could place their governments' ground troops in Bosnia in the line of fire of an escalating military conflict. It could also lead to a de facto enforcement of the no-fly zone over Bosnia, which Washington has been demanding for some time but the British and French governments have been resisting.

Turkey, Pakistan, and Germany, all of whom line up in opposition to the Serbian forces, have volunteered to assist with the

aidrops. The Turkish government, which participated in U.S. military operations in both Somalia and Iraq, promised Washington access to Turkish bases for the Bosnian airdrops. Washington, however, has so far been reluctant to accept these offers.

The Clinton administration did ask Moscow to participate in the airdrops. While voicing support for the effort, the Russian government has yet to make a decision on its involvement. The Russian parliament voted almost unanimously February 18 to ask the United Nations to lift sanctions against Serbia and impose them on Croatia. According to a report on Russian television, several hundred Russian volunteers are also fighting alongside Serb forces in Bosnia against the Muslim-led government.

Bosnia partition plan

Clinton's latest military moves in the Balkans come a few weeks after his administration declared its support for a revised version of the plan being promoted by UN mediators Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen to partition Bosnia-Herzegovina into 10 autonomous regions along ethnic lines. The White House raised the prospect of sending as many as 10,000 U.S. troops to join a 40,000-member NATO force that would be deployed in Bosnia to enforce such a settlement. Talks among the warring factions, which had been moved from Geneva to the UN building in New York, broke off February 11.

The discussion on what military policy to apply in the Balkans remains a big debate within U.S. ruling circles. Several high-ranking former administration officials call for a much bigger U.S. intervention. Former UN delegate Jeane Kirkpatrick, for example, advocates unilateral U.S. military action such as air strikes against the Serbian forces. Former CIA director William Colby calls for Washington to send between 30,000 and 50,000 troops to lift the siege of Sarajevo.

Clinton, however, is moving cautiously — a step back from his statements during the election campaign that called for a more aggressive use of military force in Bosnia, including the bombing of Serbian airfields.

Despite Clinton's caution, the United States is now more deeply involved, and this intervention could be rapidly extended as pressures mount to be drawn in further.

In the March issue of 'Perspectiva Mundial' a socialist monthly in Spanish

- ANC leads debate on free elections in South Africa
- Clinton's austerity plans
- Behind attacks on immigrants
- U.S. rulers debate lifting embargo against Cuba

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Amid economic depression, British gov't aims to cut programs benefiting workers

BY IAN GRANT

LONDON — Under the impact of the world economic depression, the British government of Prime Minister John Major has launched a comprehensive and far-reaching review of public expenditures. The goal of the review, which began at the end of 1992, is to implement major cuts in social spending by the end of this year. Health, education, social security, and the Home Office will be targeted during a two- or three-year period.

This drastic round of public spending cuts that the government is preparing for represent an attempt to further erode the living standards of workers — both those with and those without jobs — by cutting the value of the social wage and driving down the value of labor.

Part of this course of action involves a direct challenge to workers' rights to financial support when they are out of a job. All workers in Britain contribute to a national insurance plan to which employers also must contribute. This plan, won by working people after World War II, was set up to provide "universal benefits" to which all contributors were entitled and to end the hated Means Test, which forced working people to prove they needed help.

In a February 3 speech, Major raised the question: "... whether paying unemployment benefit, without offering or requiring any activity in return, serves unemployed people or society well." Major's remarks made headlines in many national daily papers. "1m Jobless Face PM's Squeeze On Dole", was the page 2 heading in *The Sun*. "Work Or Be Fined," was how *Today* titled its front page lead story.

Employment minister Michael Forsythe writing in *Today* two days after the prime minister's speech, dismissed the suggestion that the government was planning a large scale "work for dole" scheme, and estimated that such a project would cost £10 billion. (State expenditure on the unemployment benefit is expected to amount to £1.5 billion annually by the mid 1990's.)

Starting in April, however, the government is proposing that workers unemployed longer than one year be interviewed and offered work in a voluntary plan for which they will receive £10 (\$14) per week in addition to their benefits. If this offer is refused they would be asked to attend a training course. Refusal to do this would lead to their benefits being cut for a period of one week.

The element of compulsion associated with these measures, extends that which already applies to those over two years without work. The targeting of workers ground down by long periods out of work forms part of the rulers' strategy of blaming workers themselves for unemployment. Those with work are being encouraged to consider fellow workers who are most demoralized by unemployment as "workshy" and "scroungers."

Unemployment soars

The attacks on the national insurance scheme come in the context of rising unemployment.

On February 18 the government announced that the number of workers out of work and claiming benefits has passed the 3

million mark for the first time in six years. One-third have been without a job for more than a year. Accelerated by large-scale redundancies (layoffs), around 40,000 workers are being added to the dole queues (unemployment rolls) each month, according to Department of Employment figures. More than 250,000 were thrown out of work in 1992.

The government figures show that more

Council of Ministers at half the national average wage. In spite of this, Wages Councils — bodies which set minimum legal pay rates for 2.5 million of the most poorly paid workers, 80 percent of whom are women — are set to be abolished in October this year.

The attacks on the social wage target other programs as well.

A tax on the child benefit, a universal

workers pay for the economic depression, in the face of growing working-class resistance.

Popular protests against the government's poll tax were widespread in 1990 and 1991. Plans to shut down the nationalized coal mines and deal a body blow to the powerful National Union of Mineworkers, announced at the end of last year, met with huge public protests and mobilizations of tens of thousands of workers. Despite government maneuvers to sidetrack this resistance through delaying the closure program, it remains a powerful factor in influencing the government's timetable for moving ahead with more frontal assaults on working people.

Attack on wealthy?

Convincing workers that planned cuts in social welfare provisions are fair and a legitimate attempt to redistribute limited resources more equally between those who really need them is vital if the rulers are to minimize the risk of widespread protest. This is why attacks on the social wage often masquerade as attacks on the wealthy.

In an article in the pro-Labour Party *Daily Mirror*, political editor Alister Campbell writes, "Should wives of bank directors who doubled their salaries to almost £500,000, while their banks drove small businesses to the wall, receive child benefit? Should they receive the same state pension as a pensioner with nothing but the pension to live on?"

Discontent with declining economic conditions and increasing hardship and uncertainty for growing numbers of working people has been reflected in a public debate on the future of the monarchy in Britain. As a result, steps have been taken to reform aspects of this massively state-funded institution to make it more acceptable to workers. For the first time, for example, the queen will be subject to income tax on her private income.



London hospital workers demonstrate in August 1992 against cuts in services. Major's government plans more cuts in health, social security, and education.

than one in ten workers cannot find a job. But even this underestimates the problem. The Unemployment Unit, a pressure group which has monitored more than 50 changes since 1979 to the way government unemployment figures are compiled, calculates that unemployment stands at 4.1 million.

Insurance inadequate

A report published by the Family Budget Unit of the Rowntree Foundation highlights the impact of the economic depression on workers who are forced to subsist on state unemployment insurance and other benefits. In a two-year study the unit found that a couple with two children were entitled to a total of £105 a week. A low-cost budget drawn up by the unit, which included "basic necessities" but excluded alcohol, tobacco, cosmetics, jewelry, and prescription dental and eye charges, calculated their cost of living at £141.40. According to the report, adults commonly survive by not replacing shoes or clothes. When a family needs to be fed and clothed, mothers often go short of food.

For those in factory work, pay raises averaged just 2.8 percent in the last quarter of 1992, the lowest recorded rise since 1980. According to the Confederation of British Industry, one in three employers has introduced a pay freeze since August.

Nearly 12 million adults are estimated to live on income that places them near the "low-cost budget" mark, putting them below the poverty line established by the European

entitlement for everyone with young children to support, is being considered. Old age pensions, which provide basic subsistence to women over 60 and men over 65, have been one of the first items of social security provision considered by the secretary of state for social security, Peter Lilley, for the reintroduction of means testing.

Conservative MP (member of Parliament) David Willets outlined his proposals in a paper published by the Social Market Foundation. Willets says, "The real problem is not that people live too long, it is that too many people stop working too soon." He advocates raising the retirement age from 60 to 65 for women and then raising the age for both men and women to 67. Raising women's retirement age would improve the "dependency ratio," and save more than £3 billion, he says, arguing that this saving could be used for poorer old people and those over 80 years old.

The government is considering privatizing, or in some other way separating, the invalidity benefit, which provides benefits for people who are disabled, and the unemployment benefit from the National Insurance scheme. Steps have already been taken to privatize pensions.

These steps are part of a campaign by the bosses to create divisions among workers, primarily between those who have a job and those who don't. Sharpening this division is a key part of government strategy to implement the cuts in social spending, and make

Somali youth demand U.S. forces leave

Continued from front page

After the firing stopped, 400-500 U.S. marines with Cobra attack helicopters overhead carried out house-to-house searches of nearby neighborhoods. A number of youths were dragged out of their apartments for interrogation by U.S. soldiers.

This latest outbreak of hostilities threatens to delay the U.S. government's plan to have the bulk of its troops out of Somalia by mid-April, when a 20,000-strong UN replacement force is expected to be in place.

"We will not turn it over [to UN troops] until we think that the situation is reasonably stable," commented Robert Oakley, U.S. special envoy to Somalia.

'Difficult to get out'

The Pentagon is now considering slowing

the withdrawal of U.S. forces and leaving a larger number of combat troops in Somalia than originally planned. About 17,000 U.S. soldiers are currently in the country along with 14,500 from 21 other countries. Washington had been planning to leave behind 5,000 troops to provide logistical support once the transition to a UN force was completed.

"I think recent events indicate that it is going to be a lot more difficult to get out of Somalia," an unnamed senior U.S. military officer told the *Washington Post*.

"We have an unstable situation in Mogadishu and in just about all the other towns," he continued. "I think what we're seeing now is what we were afraid was going to happen." The official also expressed fears that the gradual reduction of

U.S. troop strength in Somalia will create additional problems for the U.S. forces left behind.

The replacement of U.S. army units by Belgian forces in the southern port city of Kismayu was also put on hold with an outbreak of renewed conflict between forces backing Gen. Mohammed Aided and Gen. Mohammed Siad Hersi Morgan, the son-in-law of former Somali dictator Mohammed Siad Barre.

Morgan's troops succeeded in seizing control of sections of Kismayu February 22, upsetting the relationship of forces that was in place when U.S. troops first occupied the city in December. In response to an ultimatum from U.S. authorities threatening to attack his forces, Morgan subsequently withdrew from Kismayu.

—CALENDAR—

ALABAMA

Bessemer

March and Rally to Support the Striking Steelworkers at Trinity Industries. Sat., March 6, 11:30 a.m. Bessemer Civic Center (Powder Plant Rd. exit off Interstate 20/59). Sponsored by the United Steelworkers of America. For more information (205) 425-9226.

Socialist Workers Campaign Open House. Speakers: James Warren, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. president in the 1992 elections; Frances Farley, Socialist Workers candidate for Alabama State Senate. Sat., March 6, immediately following rally to support United Steelworkers of America Local 9226. Econo Lodge Hotel, 1021 9th Ave., S.W. Donation: \$3. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

TEXAS

Houston

Socialist Workers Campaign Barbecue Sat., March 6, 5 p.m. 5425 Val Verde (East of Chimney Rock, south of Westheimer). Donation: \$10. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

WASHINGTON

Olympia

A Day of Action and Community Organizing Workshops. Speakers: Baldemar Velásquez, Farm Labor Organizing Committee; representative, United Farm Workers of Washington; Ramón Ramírez, Pinceros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste; Helen Lee, Evergreen State College Labor Center; representative, Olympia Farm Workers' Justice Committee; Rosalinda Guillén, Whatcom County Chateau Ste. Michelle Boycott Committee. Sponsored by the Olympia Farm Workers' Justice Committee. Sat., March 13, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. United Churches, 110 E. 11th St.

CANADA

Vancouver

The Communist Manifesto — Its Meaning for Today's Economic Crisis. Sun., March 7 and Sun., March 14, 2 p.m. 3967 Main St. (between 23rd and 24th Aves.). Donation: \$2. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

Debate over free elections in South Africa

Continued from front page
it to abandon this path."

By late September the government was forced back to the negotiating table.

The Inkatha Freedom Party says it will attend the March multiparty conference. Inkatha opposes the ANC's proposal that a new constitution be drafted by a democratically elected constituent assembly. Instead, as one of Inkatha's delegates to Codesa 1 explained in a recent op-ed column for the Johannesburg paper *Business Day*, Inkatha thinks the basic elements of the constitution should be agreed on by the multiparty meeting, "leaving it to the experts to fill in the drafting detail."

Farewell to 'homelands'

Above all, Buthelezi and leaders of two other "homelands," Bophuthatswana and Ciskei, oppose the ANC's call for a unitary South Africa, since the bantustan administrations are the source of their wealth and privileges. Inkatha refused to sign the December 1991 Codesa declaration, which called for an "undivided South Africa."

By endorsing that Codesa statement, de Klerk's white minority regime agreed in principle to the ANC's demand that all South Africans, whether nominally "citizens" of a homeland or not, vote in elections for a constituent assembly. That will be the beginning of the end to apartheid's bantustan system.

During recent talks with the ANC, however, de Klerk's government continued to reject a clear commitment to reincorporating the homelands into a unitary South Africa. Moreover, the National Party is resisting the ANC's proposals for steps to ensure minimal democratic conditions to carry out the election campaign in these areas dominated by repressive regimes.

Two National Party cabinet ministers are

scheduled to address Inkatha's February 28 central committee meeting.

Inkatha announced February 24 that the government of the KwaZulu homeland will attend the March 5-6 multiparty planning conference separately from the Inkatha delegation, whether or not it is invited. Inkatha continues to demand that Zulu king Goodwill Zwelithini be represented at the talks as well.

Inkatha justifies its demand for such disproportionate representation — as a party, as the administration of KwaZulu, and through its influence on King Zwelithini — by claiming it is "the representative of the Zulu people." But the truth is that among South Africans of Zulu origin, the largest language group in the country, more support the ANC than Inkatha.

In July 1990, for example, some 3 million workers, many of them Zulu-speaking, responded to the call of the ANC and Congress of South African Trade Unions for a strike to protest Inkatha's violence. More recently, according to the February 23 Johannesburg *Star*, a survey by a leading South African pollster found that only 25 percent of those identifying themselves as Zulus would vote for Inkatha in upcoming elections, substantially fewer than those who said they would vote for the ANC.

The ANC opposes inviting the bantustan administrations to the upcoming multiparty meeting. "Those who are insisting that homeland administrations also be represented at the [March 5-6] Negotiations Planning Conference," a recent ANC statement said, "are displaying more zeal for point-scoring than for ensuring... the transition from apartheid to a united, nonracial, and nonsexist South Africa."

It is up to the de Klerk government to bring these "apartheid creations" into a new and democratic South Africa, the ANC insisted.

Inkatha, along with the Ciskei and Bophuthatswana regimes, has formed a bloc — the Concerned South Africans Group — with rightist, proapartheid forces such as the Conservative Party of Andries Treurnicht and the Afrikaner Volksunie (AV). All these bourgeois forces oppose a unitary nonracial South Africa (see accompanying box).

The Conservatives, who boycotted Codesa 1 and 2, said February 25 they will attend the upcoming multiparty planning meeting. "We do not negotiate with [the ANC] over our people's right to existence, our constitution, or the political rights of our people," said spokesman Tom Langley. "The party will in no way help give legitimacy to the ANC," Langley said, but "the party will not allow the presence of the ANC at certain gatherings to deprive [it] of its right to state its case."

'White homeland'

The Afrikaner Volksunie was formed last year by breakaway Conservatives who advocate participating in the multiparty talks with the aim of establishing an autonomous "white homeland" within a loose South African confederation. Moolman Mentz, an AV member of the apartheid Parliament, said February 22 he would introduce a "motion calling for a regional Afrikaner state to ensure the Afrikaner's self-determination and continued existence," according to *The Citizen* of Johannesburg. He "proposed 10 ethnically based regional states, with an Afrikaner state centered around Pretoria. Two more Afrikaner states could be established in the south after consultation with the Coloured people," the paper reported.

The *Citizen* also quoted Conservative member of Parliament Fanie Jacobs. "I

dare to say that if we in South Africa suppress and disregard the right of self-determination of nations such as the Afrikaner," Jacobs said, "we will have a destructive civil war."

Two ultraright white supremacist parties — the Afrikaner Resistance Movement, headed by Eugene Terre Blanche, and the Herstigte Nasionale Party — have refused to participate in Codesa and are not expected to attend the March 5-6 conference.

Pan Africanist Congress, Azapo

The ANC is reaching out to involve two smaller antiapartheid organizations, the Azanian People's Organization (Azapo) and Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), in the multiparty planning conference as well. On February 25 ANC leaders met with Azapo officials to discuss the talks; Azapo leaders subsequently sent out mixed signals as to whether they would participate. The PAC canceled a February 24 meeting with the ANC, rescheduling it for the following week.

Both Azapo and the PAC oppose the ANC's perspective of a nonracial, democratic South Africa. In answer to the ANC's call for one person, one vote, for example, the PAC has sometimes raised the slogan, "one settler, one bullet," referring to South Africans who are white.

Neither Azapo nor the PAC has participated in the previous multiparty meetings.

PAC leaders say they will attend the upcoming planning conference. The government, however, is hinting that its agreement to PAC participation is contingent on an end to armed operations by the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA), which is linked to the PAC. A meeting in the neighboring country of Botswana has been set for March 1 between law and order minister Hernus Kriel, top police and army officers, PAC secretary-general Benny Alexander, and APLA commanders.

The National Party government, which requested the meeting, had broken off talks with the PAC following APLA killings of several whites in Cape Province late last year. At the time, Mandela said, "we strongly condemn the killing of unarmed and defenseless civilians. . . . [T]he fact that the State security services, using certain black organisations, have been responsible for the death of no less than 15,000 people since 1984 is no excuse for anybody taking even one innocent life."

ANC leaders, however, say they will oppose moves to prevent PAC participation in the upcoming multiparty meeting.

ANC Youth League

Following a special meeting of its National Executive Committee on February 22, the ANC Youth League issued a statement expressing political reservations about the resolution adopted unanimously by the ANC NEC several days earlier.

"The Youth League NEC agreed with the overall proposals of the ANC NEC in relation to the need for the government of national unity," the statement said. "We however noted that the resolution of the NEC was a departure from the strategic positions the ANC had adopted in November 1992 in relation to negotiations and indeed a further compromise. The Youth League registered its opposition to a coalition government of national unity — which is what the ANC now proposes — after the adoption of the new constitution. This is more so if the government is to be based on proportional representation."

"The ANC Youth League is perturbed by the possible violation of the rule that the primary function of the winning majority party in any democracy is to implement the programme on which it has won the confidence of the electorate," the statement continued. "No minority or losing party can, simply because we want to achieve national unity, be allowed to block this from being attained. . . ."

"The ANCYL was also critical of the secrecy that surrounds deliberations, both in the bilaterals and preparations for the multiparty conference. In this regard, the ANCYL called for more transparency and the opening of all negotiations for public observation and scrutiny."

The Youth League's NEC statement said

Continued on next page

ANC international conference participants purchase books on Cuba and Malcolm X

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Pathfinder Press was among several vendors that set up literature tables at the International Solidarity Conference here February 19-21. The conference, called by the African National Congress (ANC) to rally support from antiapartheid forces across the globe, was a center for political discussion and debate.

The interest in revolutionary literature was high, as shown by the number of people who stopped by the Pathfinder and other literature tables. All told, participants at the conference purchased 70 Pathfinder books and pamphlets, as well as 19 copies of the *Militant* and two subscriptions to the paper.

Among the most popular titles were books of speeches by Malcolm X. Twelve were sold, including 3 copies of Pathfinder's newest publication, *February 1965: The Final Speeches* and 4 copies of *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*.

There was also considerable interest in the Cuban revolution. The pamphlet *Che Guevara and the Fight for Socialism Today* by Mary-Alice Waters sold well.

Also very popular — and among the first books picked up by those interested in Cuba — was *How Far We Slaves Have Come*. This book contains the speeches Fidel Castro and ANC leader Nelson Mandela gave at a July 26, 1991, rally in Cuba. They highlight the importance of Cuba's internationalist solidarity, including its decisive contribution to the African freedom struggle between 1975 and 1988, in helping to defeat the apartheid regime's invasion of Angola. The speeches also explain the weight of the South African revolution in the prospects for the oppressed and exploited world over.

A total of 17 books on Cuba were sold, including 2 copies of Carlos Tablada's *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism* and 3 copies of issue no. 8 of the magazine *New International*, entitled "Che Guevara, Cuba, and the Road to Socialism."

Collections of Nelson Mandela's speeches were hot items. Ten of these were sold. Also in demand were speeches and writings by Thomas Sankara, the leader of the revolution-



Pathfinder literature table at ANC solidarity conference in Johannesburg

ary government in the West African country of Burkina Faso from 1983 until his assassination in 1987. On the first day, the pamphlet *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* by Sankara sold out, and 2 copies of *Thomas Sankara Speaks* were sold.

A copy of the issue of *New International* with the article "The Coming Revolution in South Africa" was sold, as well as a copy of the issue featuring "The Opening Guns of World War III." A participant from Senegal bought a copy of the French-language *Nouvelle Internationale* devoted to the South African revolution.

The ANC's call for a nonsexist as well as nonracial South Africa is a reflection of the growing interest here in the fight for women's economic, social, and political equality. Two young women workers catering the conference stopped by the Pathfinder table and expressed interest in abortion rights — still a disputed and un-

resolved issue in the ANC and broader democratic movement here. The two women felt the choice of abortion should be a woman's democratic right and that abortions should be available to all who opt to have one. They purchased the pamphlets *Abortion: A Woman's Right to Choose* and *Is Biology Women's Destiny?* by Evelyn Reed.

Marxist classics also did well. Three copies of *The Communist Manifesto* were sold, as well as one copy of *The History of the Russian Revolution* by Leon Trotsky.

On the final afternoon of the conference, a group of elementary school youth who performed a political play on the situation of the people in South Africa surrounded the table chanting "Viva ANC," "Viva Nelson Mandela!" as they held up Pathfinder's *Nelson Mandela: Speeches 1990, The Struggle Is My Life*, and *How Far We Slaves Have Come!*



Scenes from ANC international solidarity conference held in Johannesburg February 19-21. Top and bottom left: conference participants. Top right: ANC national chairperson Oliver Tambo. Bottom right: Nelson Mandela with world heavyweight boxing champion Riddick Bowe, one of special conference guests.

Militant photos by Sam Manuel

Continued from previous page
the organization would "strive to engage the masses of our people and the youth in particular in struggle to further tilt the balance of forces in a way that may not warrant the depth of compromise as is proposed in the ANC resolution. The primary challenge is for the ANC to win the democratic election by a majority greater than 70 percent and heighten its mobilisation and organisation

ANC leader campaigns in Cape Town. See page 11.

among young security personnel, business communities, and the white youth and communities."

A February 22 statement issued by the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party (SACP) also expressed misgivings about the ANC leadership's resolution. "The Central Committee expressed general support for the transition package adopted by the ANC's NEC," the SACP statement said. It is important "to be honest with the people about this package, neither underestimating the significant advance its implementation will make, nor concealing the real limitations and potential dangers."

The SACP must "further elaborate, as a matter of urgency, a strategic... analysis on the transition period and beyond," the Central Committee statement said.

ANC rebuts 'cabal' charge

Amid this discussion on the ANC's course, the February 21 *Sunday Star* of Johannesburg featured a full-page article by Winnie Mandela alleging the existence of a "cabal" to oust Nelson Mandela from the ANC leadership, help the National Party maintain a hold on power, and "pull the wool over the eyes of the masses and negotiate a settlement which serves the ends of the cabal, not the people."

"The 'Strategic Perspective' [document] of the ANC is the cabal's crowning glory," Winnie Mandela says. This resolution was adopted last November by the ANC's National Executive Committee as a guide to its negotiations, in the document's opening words, for "the transfer of power from the white minority regime to the people as a whole." It was printed in full in the December 25 issue of the *Militant*.

The alleged members of the cabal — Winnie Mandela names only two, ANC sec-

retary-general Cyril Ramaphosa and NEC member Mohammed Valli Moosa — "want to infiltrate their own people into key positions on ANC negotiating teams, and then to use those positions to speed the ANC through the negotiations process in order to ensure their hold on a future government, regardless of the consequence of that government for the people."

Ramaphosa and Valli Moosa are currently the ANC leaders most central to its day-to-day negotiating team. Winnie Mandela charges that the "cabal" has slated Ramaphosa to replace Nelson Mandela as ANC president.

"I believe in [Nelson] Mandela," Winnie Mandela writes. "I always have, and I have devoted the major part of my adult life upholding and keeping alive his ideals. It pains me to see how he is being undermined by the self-serving men who plan and manipulate and take command."

A reply to the *Sunday Star* article was issued the following week by Oliver Tambo, national chairperson of the ANC; Joe Slovo, national chairperson of the South African Communist Party; and Chris Dlamini, deputy chairman of the Congress of South African Trade Unions. "The rehashing of tired, old allegations about a secret 'Cabal' in the leadership of the ANC would be laughable if the implications were not so serious," the statement said.

The allegations of "a conspiracy to 'de-throne' Nelson Mandela is a feeble attempt to breathe new life into a rumour that has done the rounds in the democratic movement for over a decade," the statement said. "The mischievous documents that form the basis of the story have been dismissed as crude forgeries on more than one occasion by the ANC.... On the last occasion that the ANC was called upon to respond to this issue, Comrade Nelson Mandela spearheaded the argument that the document in question was a plant, emanating from sources hostile to the ANC."

"The ANC repeats its earlier categorical rejection of these allegations," the statement underlined. "The authorship of the *Sunday Star* 'exclusive' does not in any way lend weight to the substance of the charges."

ANC election campaign

Meanwhile, the ANC is already making plans to launch an aggressive political campaign to win an overwhelming majority for the democratic movement in the elections for a constituent assembly.

In the Pretoria-Johannesburg area — the largest of the ANC's 14 regions, with 104 branches — the ANC has announced plans for rallies to begin door-to-door campaigning March 21, the anniversary of the 1960 massacre in Sharpeville of protesters demanding an end to the regime's internal passport laws for Blacks.

In a February 25 statement, ANC spokesperson Carl Niehaus rejected the assertion a day earlier by Dan Mofokeng, southern Transvaal regional secretary of the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO), that supporters of the anti-apartheid movement would block members of the National Party, Conservative Party, and Democratic Party from canvassing for votes in Black townships. "The People will use every tactic to prevent Political activity by those parties," Mofokeng was quoted as

saying at a Johannesburg area conference.

"The ANC endorses the right of all parties to operate throughout the country," replied Niehaus, "including KwaZulu, the Ciskei, and Bophuthatawana."

The Congress of South African Trade Unions announced that it was calling on its members and all working people to vote for the ANC in the constituent assembly elections and responded to the charge by the Pan Africanist Congress that it was "undemocratic" for a union federation to make such an endorsement.

"It is Cosatu's democratic right to call on workers to support those organisations and programmes which we believe will be most effective in addressing workers' interests," the union federation's statement said, "just as it is every worker's right to decline to do so."

Inkatha rally opens its arms to former National Party members

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — "People don't mind a Black leader as long as he looks after their interests," said former National Party member of Parliament Jurie Mentz at an Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) rally held in the northern Natal town of Vryheid February 27.

Mentz crossed the aisle in the apartheid Parliament recently to join the IFP. "Two-thirds of the business people [in Natal] support the IFP," he said. "People are starting to realize they must make a choice and the Black leader acceptable to them is Mangosuthu Buthelezi."

Buthelezi is "a strong Christian," Mentz said, and a supporter of the free market system.

The rally was held by the IFP to welcome Mentz and two other members of parliament from Natal who have recently joined its ranks. The gathering was attended by some 5,000 people — most of them Zulu-speaking — along with an estimated 300 whites, a first at an Inkatha rally.

In his speech to the rally, Buthelezi pointed to the issues Inkatha will emphasize at the March 5-6 multiparty planning conference. The African National Congress initiated the call for the conference in mid-February in order to re-

start negotiations for rapid elections to a constituent assembly to draft the constitution of a nonracial, democratic South Africa.

Buthelezi used the occasion to champion his goal of amalgamating the KwaZulu "homeland" and surrounding Natal province into a strong and autonomous "State of KwaZulu" with its own armed forces and police — within a weakly structured Federal Republic of South Africa.

"The main choice we will need to make in the next two weeks is for federalism," said Buthelezi. "The type of compromises we are going to make in the coming negotiations are most likely going to determine how the final constitution for South Africa is going to be structured." The ANC's aim in advocating that the constitution be drafted by an elected constituent assembly, he said, was to ensure it would end up in the leadership of a unitary state.

Buthelezi has formed a "federalist" bloc with various white supremacist opponents of a democratic South Africa who hope to carve one or more "sovereign Afrikaner states" out of the decomposing carcass of the apartheid regime. — S.C.

Youth brigade helps produce food in Cuba

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

EL PARAÍSO, Cuba — Salsa rhythms boom through the dormitories just before sunrise, rousing several dozen young people out of bed in this agricultural camp. By 7:30, after gulping down a breakfast of coffee, milk, and rolls, they have headed into the fields, organized into four work brigades.

This is how every morning began at El Paraíso. In mid-January two dozen young people from Argentina, Canada, and the United States joined 120 Cuban youths, mostly from Havana, at the camp. A week later another 20 people arrived from Brazil and Uruguay.

The international volunteers were part of the Ernesto Che Guevara Youth of the Americas Brigade in Solidarity with Cuba. It was organized at a meeting in Bogotá, Colombia, last September by youth organizations from North and South America affiliated with the World Federation of Democratic Youth.

El Paraíso, about 50 miles south of Havana, is organized by the Union of Young Communists (UJC). Hundreds of thousands of students and young workers are organized year-round by the UJC in volunteer work brigades throughout Cuba, most of them in the countryside, as part of the effort by the Cuban people to achieve food self-sufficiency.

"More than half a million youth participated in the food program in 1992," said Miguel Díaz Canel, a member of the national bureau of the UJC. "About 55,000 worked in brigades at 106 camps similar to El Paraíso."

The fight to produce enough food for all citizens was launched by the Cuban government in 1990 after trade with its former major trading partners — the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries — began to collapse.

Oxen replace tractors

Every morning brigade members were dispatched to fields of banana trees, potatoes, tomatoes, cabbage, and strawberries. A smaller group stayed behind to clean the camp and cook the day's meals.

The way to the fields was a bumpy drive on dirt roads aboard a flatbed trailer pulled by an old tractor. We usually passed by several horse-drawn carriages traveling to work. These "taxis," along with hundreds of thousands of bicycles, have replaced most cars throughout the country because of lack of fuel.

Farm workers cultivate several fields in the area with oxen, which to a large degree have replaced tractors. "There are now about 100,000 oxen in use across the country," said Agustín Cordero Valiente, who met us at the cabbage field every day. Cor-



Members of international brigade at camp near Havana, Cuba, came from five countries in the Americas.

Militant/Argiris Malapanis

dero, who has been a farm worker for more than 30 years, directed the work of volunteers in an area of several hundred acres.

A group of retirees started early, cutting enough cabbage to fill several trucks. "I became an expert cutter after I retired from a machine shop," Juan Sotomayor, a 67-year-old former machinist, said.

Sotomayor and the other cutters, most in their 60s or 70s, have been doing voluntary farm work for several years after leaving factory, teaching, or office jobs. They are among hundreds of thousands of Cuban workers, farmers, teachers, doctors, and others who are taking part in the voluntary work movement.

Our group, made up of 20 youths from Cuba, Argentina, and the United States, worked the cabbage field. We walked fast under the hot sun, throwing the cabbage onto a slowly moving flatbed truck. As soon as the truck was full, the driver took off for the market in Havana.

'Brigades have made a difference'

"We have made a big difference with the voluntary brigades," said Zoe Oquendo Williams, during our lunch of rice, beans, plantains, and canned fish. "Many of the food shortages have disappeared over the last year," she added, explaining the successes of collective efforts. Oquendo, a 25-year-old

elementary school teacher, was doing a one-month stint at the camp like the other UJC members.

Substantial quantities of fruits and vegetables are now available throughout the country. There are still severe shortages, however, of meat, dairy products, canned goods, and cooking oil, along with many industrial products like soap, detergent, paper, and fertilizers. Much of the meat shortage is caused by the lack of animal fodder, which used to be imported from the former Soviet Union.

In the nearby town of Güines many home vegetable gardens are evident. This is another way that many Cubans are growing food and overcoming the shortages.

Cordero and several of the UJC members on our brigade showed us with pride the new "microjet" irrigation system in the banana farms. This system efficiently sprays water on banana trees through plastic tubing that stretches for miles. "Productivity has tripled since we implemented this system," he said. Members of the Blas Roca Contingent invented the microjets about five years ago.

On the contingents, volunteers join up for a period of one or two years, unlike the shorter stints on the work brigades. Contingent members work 12- to 14-hour days and have made big gains in productivity and quality work in construction and agriculture.

Evening classes

After the lunch break, brigade members went back to the fields until 4:30 p.m. They then returned to the dormitories to clean up before evening classes. This is a feature of the El Paraíso camp, which has also served as a school for UJC cadres since the beginning of this year. National leaders of the UJC and the Communist Party, government representatives, trade union leaders, well-known journalists, and

others give presentations on different topics. Discussion follows, open to all those who work in the camp.

Isaac Delgado, a representative of the ministry of industry, gave a report on the challenges facing the Cuban economy one evening. "We were only able to import six and a half million tons of oil in 1992," he said. Cuba used to import 13 million tons of oil per year before 1989. Seventy percent of industry has been affected by the shortages in energy, he added.

With the aim of increasing hard currency earnings, the Cuban government is giving priority to investments in tourism, nickel production, and medical and pharmaceutical products, he said. "We are trying to resolve the problems of lack of capital by increased foreign investment," Delgado said, "in order to counter the pressure of the U.S. embargo."

During informal discussions many Cuban youth asked questions about politics in the United States. "Will the situation for workers improve under Clinton? Will relations between U.S. and Cuba get better?" were common questions.

After almost two weeks of hard work in the fields, the volunteers from Argentina, Canada, and the United States visited Havana for two days before returning to their countries. The group from Brazil and Uruguay moved to a camp in Matanzas for another week of voluntary labor. At a meeting in Havana, the internationalist youth decided to organize a similar brigade next year.

"The trip changed my life," said Matthew Quest, a student at Hunter College in New York. "It gave me my first perspective of Cuba outside U.S. propaganda. What I saw wasn't perfect but I was uplifted by the spirit of the Cuban people," he said. "We now have to tell the truth about reality in Cuba and win more people to the fight against the U.S. embargo and travel restrictions."

Cuban revolution is proving that ordinary people can change society

BY JON HILLSON

MINNEAPOLIS — Those who rule the United States "try to convince us every day, in every way, that this [society] is the last stage of human development. They say we can't evolve out of this level. But in Cuba, I learned this is not true," said Ramma Hersia, speaking at a public meeting here on his recent trip to Cuba.

"Ordinary Joes, just like yourself and myself," he said, "are changing society, proving we can move the government, that we don't need bureaucrats and technocrats to tell us what to do, that we can ascend to a much higher level. The Cuba revolution has taken

the first steps."

Hersia was the featured speaker at a January 28 "Welcome Back from Cuba" reception and dinner hosted by Uhuru Books, a prominent bookstore here. He had just returned from a trip to Cuba, where he was part of a volunteer work brigade made up of youth from the United States and several Latin American countries. (See article above.)

Hersia, 22, works as an assistant teacher in a Head Start program in this city's Black community. He was joined at the reception by Kari Sachs, 27, a member of the United

Continued on next page



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

International and Cuban volunteers worked at a variety of agricultural tasks

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Continued from previous page

Auto Workers union at a Ford truck plant in St. Paul who was also on the work brigade.

Both made brief presentations and answered a wide range of questions for more than an hour from a mostly Black audience, which included student, community, and union activists.

Hersia said the delegation felt the weight of Washington's 32-year economic embargo of Cuba within hours after arriving. "The bus transporting us broke down," he said, "and with the shortage of oil and spare parts no one was sure if we'd make it to the countryside."

Mechanics repaired the problem, however, and the youth were on their way to cultivate and harvest fruit and vegetables alongside Cuban youth and teachers.

This and other voluntary work brigades, Sachs explained, are a central aspect of the Cuban government's extraordinary effort to develop food self-sufficiency in the wake of collapsed trade between Havana and the former Soviet Union and Eastern European nations. Owing to this trade disruption, much food remains rationed, Sachs said, "but stores now have adequate supplies of fruit and vegetables for working people."

Hersia said labor with the dawn-to-dusk agricultural brigade, weeding fields and picking and transporting fruit and vegetables, was not easy. But its collective, voluntary nature "changes your concept of what work is, what compensation is."

"The work I was doing directly benefits the mass of humanity. There's nobody there to steal it, sell it, pocket the difference. You feel different about work."

The cooperation and solidarity that was evident between brigade members of all colors, reflective of Cuban society, had an impact on Hersia. "I could not fathom people of such different shades working together, in coalition, with no tension," he said.

"In our battles to crush racism in the United States," he continued, "we need an example of what people can do in the face of racism. And Cuba is that example."

This experience convinced him further, Hersia explained in answer to a question, of the need "to break from the theory of race [based] politics."

Cuba's example, he said, proves "you can't use race as a gauge of who are your friends, your comrades, your enemies if you want to be effective."

"It's only when, as Malcolm X taught, you begin with humanity as whole, when you engage in struggle, in real politics," Hersia continued, "you see that race theory leads nowhere."

This assertion became a sharp point of debate with several in the audience during the meeting and in informal discussion.

What relevance, one auto worker asked, does Cuba have "to us here, for real problems we face every day on the street?"

All the challenges facing working people, Hersia said, from health care to education to "so-called crime in the streets" are being faced in Cuba, and dealt with far more effectively than in the United States.

"Malcolm said you should study people around the world who have problems similar to ours and learn what they did, because 'once you see how they got theirs straight, then you can see how you can get yours straight.'"

Hersia and Sachs are speaking at a number of meetings on Minnesota college and university campuses on their recent experiences in Cuba.

Bulletins on fight for women's rights are a valuable resource

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Why are women oppressed? Why is there an offensive against the right to choose abortion and women's rights in general? How can women, and men, effectively fight to put an end to women's oppression?

These questions are of great interest to the thousands of young people who have taken to the streets to defend abortion rights. They are also important for working-class fighters, female and male, who are looking for ways to resist attacks on the rights and living standards of working people.

Youth, workers, and fighters for women's rights will find a valuable resource in a series of Education for Socialists bulletins published last year by Pathfinder Press. *Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women's Liberation* is a three-volume collection of documents of the Socialist Workers Party from the years 1971-86.

The articles, resolutions, and speeches reprinted in these volumes were a product of the struggles for women's liberation that unfolded in the early 1970s. These battles centered on the fight to legalize abortion and continued as women pushed into formerly all-male jobs, demanded affirmative action programs, and campaigned for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). Members of the SWP were deeply involved in these fights. The party worked to build the broadest possible actions around abortion rights, affirmative action, and the ERA, while seeking to win the most resolute fighters in these battles to a revolutionary working-class perspective.

"The Abortion Struggle: What Have We Accomplished; Where Should We Go from Here?", by Betsey Stone and Mary-Alice Waters, was a contribution to a discussion within the party in July 1973 — just months after *Roe v. Wade* legalized abortion in the United States. This document, reprinted in the third volume in the series, makes the lessons of how the right to abortion was won available to the young fighters of today. It delves into the development of the Women's National Abortion Action Coalition, and re-

views important debates within the women's liberation movement on strategy and mass action.

Other documents in the collection take up such issues as women and the military draft, why affirmative action benefits male workers as well as females, women and the leadership of a revolutionary party, and the ideological offensive of the capitalist rulers against women.

As it went through struggles together with other fighters, the SWP discussed the character of women's oppression as a function of class society and recognized the strategic importance of the women's liberation struggle in any fight against capitalism. The centerpiece of the first volume of this bulletin series, a 1979 resolution titled "Socialist Revolution and the Struggle for Women's Liberation," takes up these questions.

In "Feminism and the Marxist Movement," a 1972 article reprinted in the third volume, Mary-Alice Waters demonstrates that this is not a new perspective, and answers accusations that communists have ignored or belittled the fight for women's liberation. "Women's oppression and how to struggle against it has been an issue at every turning point in the history of the revolutionary movement," she says. Revolutionary Marxists "have led the fight against all those who refused to inscribe women's liberation on the banner of socialism, or who supported it in words but refused to fight for it in practice." Waters outlines the rich history of revolutionaries participating in and leading the fight for women's liberation since the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848.

The questions addressed in *Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women's Liberation*, and the history it contains, are as alive today as they were 20 years ago. During March, Women's History Month, the set is available at a special 25 percent discount to members of the Pathfinder Readers Club. Unionists, young people, and others who take advantage of this offer will find it a relevant and useful tool in today's struggles.

Miners win support against Peabody Coal

Company brings in strikebreakers against United Mine Workers in Indiana

Continued from front page

front yard. She said she works in a plastic factory in Evansville where they are trying to organize a union.

Forston, who is doing strike support work out of the district office, said the union has already gotten out 500 such signs and plans to get out 1,000 more. "There's a lot of support for our troops," he said.

Community backs the union

Support for the strike was already widespread and visible in Boonville. When you drive into this town of 6,300 people, about 15 miles east of Evansville in southwestern Indiana, you are met by dozens of signs posted in front yards reading: "We Support the UMWA," "Union Country," and "UMWA Forever." Most of the stores in town have the signs posted in their windows.

At the McDonald's restaurant mothers and their preschool kids dressed in the camouflage uniform of the strikers is a common sight.

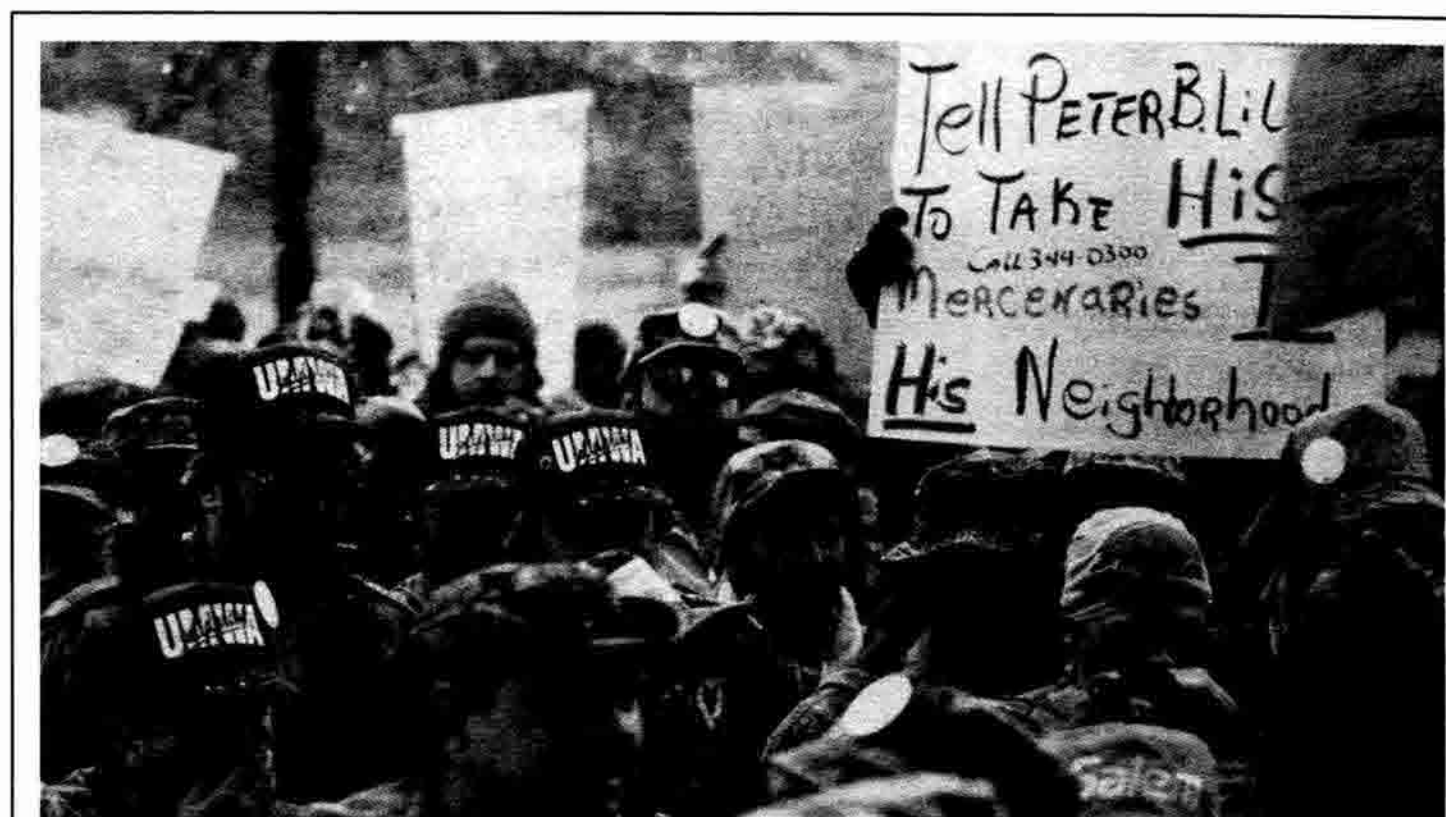
A caravan of about 30 cars and trucks of local Teamster union members drove by the Squaw Creek picket line last Friday afternoon to show their support. Union members at a nearby AMAX Coal Co. mine organized a dance to raise money for the strike on Saturday, which about 300 people attended. Aluminum Workers union Local 104, which represents the 2,800 hourly workers at Alcoa Aluminum Corp., erected a big miners support sign on the highway across from their union hall in Newburgh. The union contract with Alcoa expires May 31.

"The UMWA has always set the pace," commented miner Glenn Forston. "We should have started fighting when Reagan attacked the airport workers. But we are in a fight now." Forston, like a number of other miners, also farms some land. He is a second-generation Peabody miner and has worked at Lynnville 17 years.

"This is labor's first major conflict under a new Washington administration," Dave Hadley pointed out. "The more things change, the more they remain the same." Hadley, who at 42 is one of the younger miners on strike, has worked at Squaw Creek for 16 years.

Lessons from Pittston strike

In discussions with miners here — at the union office, on the picket line, and in their homes — the 1989 Pittston strike was frequently raised. Miners estimate that half of the UMWA members in this area went to Virginia to support that strike. Some went as many as six times. Ask these Indiana miners where they got some of the organizing ideas for this strike and the an-



More than 500 United Mine Workers of America members and supporters marched on Charleston, West Virginia, February 22. Striking miners were trying to draw attention to their fight against Peabody Holdings Co. and protest the move by Eastern Associated Coal Corp., a Peabody subsidiary, to hire Vance International security guards. Vance is a notorious union-busting outfit well-known for violent and provocative tactics against strikers.

swer will usually be "Pittston."

Squaw Creek and Lynnville are both surface mines. Before the strike, there were 109 miners at Squaw Creek, down from about 180 in the last year. About 150 miners work at Lynnville. Both mines are run by Peabody, but Squaw Creek is actually owned by Alcoa, and managed for them by Peabody.

Virtually all the coal mined at Squaw Creek is loaded onto railcars and sent 10 miles to the giant Alcoa Warrick operation where it fuels Alcoa's electrical generating plant. Aluminum production requires tremendous electrical resources.

The UMWA strike against Peabody began February 1. Peabody and the other coal companies in the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) refuse to give the union information on their coal properties. In violation of the existing union contract, BCOA companies have opened mines under different names and refused to offer jobs to UMWA miners laid off from their other mines.

The union decided to selectively strike Peabody although the union contract with

all BCOA companies expired February 1.

Union contracts with another group of coal companies, called the Independent Bituminous Coal Bargaining Alliance (IBCBA), also expired February 1. The union granted them a 60-day contract extension.

Peabody, with 7,000 UMWA miners, is the largest coal company in the United States. It is owned by the British holding company Hansen PLC. UMWA miners are on strike against Peabody in four states.

Peabody has been aggressive against the strike since it began. At several mines they immediately had foremen working to move previously mined coal. Although that has been done in previous strikes, union representatives we spoke with say the company did not bring in people to mine new coal in previous strikes.

UMWA Local 1189 spokesman Dave Hadley accompanied our *Militant* reporting team to the Squaw Creek picket lines last Friday, February 19. The situation was somewhat tense. Mine management was operating heavy trucks and front-end loaders, and moving trainloads of coal that had already been mined. The equipment was being operated a few hundred feet from the picket shacks.

Company guards harass pickets

Union pickets told us about being harassed by company guards spraying gravel against their picket shack and shining headlights on them at night. Friday morning they saw the company bring in a large tent and propane space heaters. They assumed, correctly it turned out, this was for housing scabs on mine property who would try to start up the mining operation.

The *Evansville Courier* ran an article February 21 headlined "Peabody chief says strike may end soon." Peabody Coal president George Shiflett told the paper negotiations might resume and the strike might end this week. "That's the best case scenario. There's no telling the worst case," Shiflett said.

The next morning at 7:30 two white school buses filled with scabs followed by a truck and a van tried to get through the UMWA picket line at the main entrance to the Lynnville mine. A company helicopter flew overhead. But about 50 miners on the picket line discouraged them. The buses then went to another entrance to the mine where the road had been bermed shut. There were no pickets there and a company tractor came out, leveled the berm, and they entered the mine property.

Around noon the same buses and truck went to the entrance of the Squaw Creek mine and drove nonstop through the picket line. One striker, Dan McKinney, a bulldozer operator, was hit by the bus. He was hospitalized in fair condition. A television news camera crew from Channel 7 in Evansville filmed the scab buses entering the mine and another miner being pushed aside by the moving bus.

The strikers have shown real discipline on the picket lines. Drugs, alcohol, and weapons are prohibited there. The miners have refused to be drawn into provocations by company guards.

A retired Lynnville miner interviewed on television recalled the battles in this area during the 111-day strike in 1977-78. The National Guard and state police were called out. UMWA strikers picketed nonunion mines and trucks carrying nonunion coal. In a shootout with company guards, UMWA striker John Hull was killed Feb. 3, 1978. No one was ever charged.

According to statements by the company to the local news media, the scabs are salaried Peabody employees from several mines and employees of vendors. Miners speculate that the vendor employees are skilled mechanics from mine equipment manufacturers. The company said they were resuming mining in order to fulfill coal contracts with customers.

In another development, management people have started moving coal from the Randolph prep plant in Marissa, Illinois.

The fight of Peabody miners deserves massive support from working people. As Local 1189 spokesperson Dave Hadley explained: "This battle is more than a United Mine Workers issue, more than a union/non-union issue. It is working people versus a giant corporation."

As we go to press . . .

The United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) expanded its strike March 1 by calling out 1,700 more coal miners at five companies to join 7,000 miners already on strike against Peabody Holdings Co.

The increased strike action is taking place at mines owned by Consolidation Coal, Ziegler Coal, Arch Mineral, Rochester and Pittsburgh Coal, and Freeman Energy Corp. in Illinois, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

"When this strike first began, we said that whether or not it expands depends entirely on the willingness of the coal industry to work with us and negotiate a fair contract," said Richard Trumka, president of the UMWA, announcing the failure of the companies to cooperate and the expansion of the strike. The coal operators refuse to provide information to the union about corporate structures and coal land ownership. This information is needed to ensure the job rights provisions of a contract.

Contract negotiations between the UMWA and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA), which represents 12 of the largest coal operators in the United States, remain at a standstill. The BCOA agreement sets the standard for most of the coal mining industry. —PAUL MAILHOT

After guilty plea Pyro is fined for mining deaths

BY STU SINGER

BOONVILLE, Indiana — The Pyro coal mine in Wheatcroft, Kentucky, has been ordered to pay \$3.75 million in fines.

Pyro, a large, nonunion underground mine notorious for safety violations, exploded Sept. 13, 1989, killing 10 people. Three and a half years after the blast a federal grand jury finally indicted Pyro, now known as Costain Coal Inc., for violating 32 safety rules, some of which are felony crimes under federal law.

Within days the company pleaded guilty to 29 charges and "no contest" to the other 3.

As the *Evansville Courier* pointed out, "The indictment and statements made in court by assistant U.S. attorney Tim Reardon paint a picture of profits taking precedence over safety and an intentional scheme on the part of three of the mine's top managers to disregard safety rules and deceive mine inspectors."

The article quotes U.S. Attorney Joe Whittle saying that his staff will go after almost everyone of the current and former Pyro employees who engaged in the acts listed in the indictment.

One former company official, acting mine foreman James Tichenor, was indicted earlier in February and pleaded guilty to falsifying records of methane lev-

els in July 1989.

Other mine officials who have left Pyro but may be indicted include managers at the recently organized Buck Creek mine, the largest underground mine in Indiana. United Mine Workers of America members there are preparing for a strike in order to win a contract.

The fine against Pyro is much higher than any previous one for a safety violation. But the guilty plea may be designed to shield the company and its officials from much larger court judgments coming from pending lawsuits by relatives of the miners killed.

A federal judge still has to rule on whether to accept the plea bargain or throw it out and hear the case. A government decision on which, if any, officials to indict is also still pending.

Safety violations by Pyro cited in the grand jury report include: fabricating records of fire drills; falsifying records and deceiving inspectors about hazardous conditions; setting off explosives illegally; making illegal ventilation changes in the mine; running two shearers on the longwall mining machine at the same time — doubling the amount of explosive coal dust; and altering ventilation near the longwall machine so that contaminated air came in.

Trinity strikers organize to build solidarity rally

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

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

the central issues are wages and the cost of health insurance. The union requested a modest wage increase and a reduction in the cost of insurance. Prior to the strike, workers were paying up to \$56 per week for family health coverage. Also, the company has fired 53 unionists for alleged strike violations since the fight began. The union is demand-

several local union meetings in the weeks before in order to promote the rally.

Strikers are also building the event in the community. They are distributing leaflets in the neighborhoods, at churches, and among community organizations. The Bessemer Baptist Ministers Conference is circulating a petition in support of the strike and is promoting the rally among its congregations. One striker spoke to a women's group of 300 members in Montgomery, Alabama, about the rally.

workers at Nortrak in Birmingham to sign up with the union and put all Nortrak workers in both the United States and Canada in a stronger position to defend themselves against the company.

Machinists protest United's job cuts

"Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Union-busting has to go!" rang through the air as over 200 workers rallied in front of the United Airlines flight kitchen in San Francisco February 24. The demonstration was called by International Association of Machinists (IAM) Lodge 1781 to protest the company's recent decision to sell its system of flight kitchens. Kitchen workers prepare over 125,000 meals every day at United Airlines. The company's plan means 5,800 workers would lose their jobs with United, including 850 in the San Francisco Bay Area. Most of these workers are members of the IAM.

Many U.S.-based airlines subcontract catering services and a wide range of other work, including ramp service, cleaning, and sky-caps. Workers for these subcontracting agents often earn little more than the minimum wage, and are seldom organized in unions. Pat O'Brien, United vice-president of catering, blamed the possible job losses on the unions, who refused company demands in January to reopen contracts and take wage and benefit reductions.

One ramp worker, who brought her two small children to the rally, said, "I wanted to come even if they sell the kitchen anyway. Solidarity

has to start somewhere."

Rick, a mechanic at the maintenance base, said, "This move doesn't affect me personally yet. But I figure the company is only beginning what they have in store for us."

Ray Perry, vice-president of IAM Lodge 1781, denounced United's latest threat as "corporate terrorism" against all workers. He received cheers when he pledged, "From day one, anyone who buys these kitchens will have an organizing drive on this property. There will be a union here no matter what!"

This latest attack from United follows a wave of layoffs system-wide in January, in which 445 mechanics and 71 food service workers in the San Francisco area alone lost their jobs. Most of those workers had just been hired to work at United's giant aircraft maintenance base. Some workers had moved from across the country. United also dismissed hundreds of sky-caps, most of them older workers, and began subcontracting the work.

"You know", said an older machinist, "it may be legal, what the company's doing, but I say it's criminal all the same."

The following people contributed to this column: Denise McInerney, member of United Steelworkers of America Local 9226 in Bessemer, Alabama; Paul Kouri, member of USWA Local 3495 in Vancouver, Canada; and Kathleen Denny, member of the International Association of Machinists in San Francisco.

ON THE PICKET LINE

struggles. Jot down a few lines to let other *Militant* readers know about what is happening at your workplace or in your union. Good photographs of picket lines and union rallies will also be appreciated by our readers. If there is an interesting political discussion going on at work, we would like to hear about that too.

"We want to make sure everyone knows about this rally, so we plan to leaflet this whole area. So far, we're getting a very good response from people," said Willie Daniels, member of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 9226. He was referring to a solidarity rally planned for March 6 in support of his local's strike against the Trinity Industries railcar plant in Bessemer, Alabama.

The rally is sponsored by USWA District 36 and will be held at the Bessemer Civic Center. A car caravan through town and past the plant is also planned.

The Steelworkers have been on strike since Sept. 19, 1992. Two of

ing amnesty for these members; the company has rejected it.

Private security guards employed by Trinity threw tear gas on a peaceful picket line October 12. Strikebreakers working at the plant have waved guns at pickets on numerous occasions. On January 4, a strikebreaker pistol-whipped one picket and shot another, wounding him in the head. Strikers have been arrested on frame-up charges and a number of them face trials and potential jail sentences.

Despite these attacks and many attempts by the company to violence-bait the strike, the unionists are determined to continue fighting. "We're together all the way," said striker Will Drake. "All trade unionists are welcome at our rally on March 6. We're all fighting for the same thing."

The rally is being publicized among unionists around the state by both USWA District 36 and the Alabama AFL-CIO. United Auto Workers Local 10 in Atlanta plans to bring a busload of workers. Strikers have been invited to speak to

Canada steelworkers back Trinity strikers

Members of United Steelworkers of America Local 3495 in Vancouver, British Columbia, voted to send \$100 in Canadian funds to their fellow unionists on strike at Trinity in Bessemer, Alabama.

Prior to the February 18 union meeting, some 20 workers at Nortrak Co., members of Local 3495, signed a petition calling for dropping charges against the Trinity strikers and for the prosecution of James Skinner, a scab who struck one striker and shot another on the picket line.

One of the workers from Nortrak who signed the petition is vice-president of the local. Motivating the importance of supporting these embattled workers, he pointed out that Nortrak, which manufactures switches and other equipment for the rail industry, has opened a factory in Birmingham, Alabama. A victory for the Trinity strikers, he said, would certainly encourage the

ANC leader campaigns in Cape Town region

BY PETER CLIFFORD AND JOHN STEELE

CAPE TOWN, South Africa — Cyril Ramaphosa, secretary general of the African National Congress (ANC), campaigned here February 25 to win support for the ANC in elections for a constituent assembly.

Ramaphosa began the day at an ANC Regional Executive meeting. That afternoon he spoke to a rally of 1,500 students at the University of Western Cape. Then he went to a special meeting of representatives from the 60 ANC branches in the Western Cape area.

Cape Town and the surrounding regions are the center of the "Coloured" population of South Africa — those of mixed white and African descent as classified by the racist apartheid state. While the regime denies Coloureds equality with the 15 percent of the population that is white, it has sought to maintain them in a caste position relatively more privileged than the African population in order to more effectively divide and rule.

Coloureds have been granted certain cosmetic political rights denied to Africans and on average have higher living standards. Africans make up some 73 percent of South Africa's population; Coloureds 9 percent.

Now that South Africa's first-ever one-person, one-vote election seems within grasp, the ruling National Party (NP) — whose ranks until October 1990 were open only to whites — is making a special effort to take advantage of these apartheid-created divisions. The NP hopes to win a large vote among the Coloured population. In mid-February, NP president F.W. de Klerk for the first time named two Coloureds to fill cabinet positions. Some opinion polls show substantial, even majority, support for an NP vote among Coloureds.

Negotiations an ANC initiative

Ramaphosa's rally at the University of Western Cape was indicative of the challenge before the ANC in Cape Province. The campus has a student population of 13,000. Originally a Coloured university, the student body now includes a large number of Africans, as well as some whites and Indians. About 80 percent of those attending the ANC meeting on campus were Africans.

In leading the negotiation process,



ANC leaders Cyril Ramaphosa (left) and Walter Sisulu

Ramaphosa told the students, the ANC is playing a "role no other party or organization can lay claim to."

The ANC initiated the current negotiations with the National Party government, he said. The process was started by ANC leader Nelson Mandela while he was still in prison. Mandela recognized the chance to reap the fruits of the mass struggles and increased organization by South African workers and youth since the Soweto uprising of 1976.

From his prison cell Mandela "advised the enemy that they would have to negotiate with the ANC," Ramaphosa said. "You can never imagine that de Klerk would have unbanned the ANC in 1990 without being propelled by the ANC." Since Mandela's release that same year, the negotiations have followed the ANC's "scenarios and perspectives," Ramaphosa said. "The negotiations

are a further terrain on which the struggle should be fought until final victory."

Acknowledging doubts and questions about the negotiations among some ANC members and supporters, Ramaphosa reviewed the ANC's achievements. Ramaphosa himself is a central leader of the ANC negotiating team.

Agreement has been reached on the election of a sovereign constituent assembly to draft a constitution for a nonracial democratic South Africa, he said. The government at first proposed a council of "wise men" to draw up the constitution. "We said that a body of elected men and women were wise enough to produce the kind of constitution many have died for," Ramaphosa explained. "The regime buckled under," he said. This was a "massive victory," a "revolutionary achievement" — one the ANC didn't sufficiently explain and celebrate, Ramaphosa

said.

It was the ANC that first put forward the proposal that the constituent assembly establish an Interim Government of National Unity as the governing body while the constitution is being drafted. De Klerk initially said the National Party should remain the government. "We won that demand too," said Ramaphosa.

Outstanding issues

We are "at the gateway of achieving democracy," he said, but "as we move the last mile there are many pitfalls."

The ANC has proposed that a Transitional Executive Council (TEC) be responsible for organizing all aspects of the elections. Its jobs would be to ensure that the "playing field is leveled," so that the long-disenfranchised majority has access to resources, skills, media time, and the political space to contest the election. The ANC proposes that the TEC also have the power to control the police and armed forces until the constituent assembly is elected.

The government remains opposed to this, Ramaphosa said. He reported that the regime has demanded that before the TEC is established, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) — the armed wing of the ANC — must hand over all its weapons, give the government a list of all its combatants, and disband. These demands were met with laughter and hisses from the audience.

The ANC responded by raising the question of the South African Defense Force (SADF), which is "the private army of the government," said Ramaphosa. The ANC demanded a list of all its weapons and the names of all its soldiers, including those who have assassinated ANC members. The government's negotiators "were speechless, at a loss for words," he said.

The ANC's position is that all armed forces in South Africa — the government's army and police, those of various bantustan administrations, the MK, the Azanian People's Liberation Army led by the Pan Africanist Congress, and others — should be placed under a joint command structure subordinate to the TEC.

The ANC is also at loggerheads with the government over the voting rights of mil-

Continued on Page 14

Boston rally in defense of Mark Curtis

Continued from back page

opinion, Mark Curtis is unusual in how clearly he sees that race need not separate one person from another. This is why I continue to support him."

Zimmerman also read letters from Harold Ruggless, vice-president of the United Auto Workers Local 270 in Des Moines, and from Chris Spotted Eagle, an artist and political activist in Minneapolis.

Angela Sanbrano, executive director of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), also sent a letter reaffirming her support for Curtis's fight. Zimmerman explained that Curtis had earlier been an activist in CISPES when he was living in Alabama.

Campaign for letters of support

"These are just the first of the letters that have begun to come into the defense office in Des Moines," said Zimmerman. "Over the next few weeks we are hoping to get many more." She invited those at the rally to become part of the effort to get more such letters and to win new supporters to the case.

A Boston supporter of the Mark Curtis case, Maria De Felice, read her letter reaffirming support for the case and described her experiences with those who are campaigning against the effort and for the prosecution. De Felice is a founder of the Metro North Coalition for Abortion Rights and a member of the National Organization for Women.

"For more than a year, those in the Boston area who seek to keep Mark Curtis in prison have used every means to convince supporters to disendorse and to get others to publicly condemn him. They have created an atmosphere hostile to democratic discourse. Their tactics have included lying, distortion of the facts, and outright intimidation."

They "accuse anyone who supports Curtis of being a sexist or a racist."

As a result "many supporters have disendorsed. Others are afraid to let their support be known," De Felice said.

"We call on the progressive community to denounce all forms of harassment and antidemocratic behavior."

Morell introduced Carol Thomas, a long-time human rights activist and supporter of the Curtis defense effort in Boston. Thomas read letters of support for the Curtis case sent by Brian Adams of the Washington D.C. Hands Off Cuba Committee; Venus Hannah of the Plainfield, New Jersey, Afro-American Association and mother of Santana Hannah, who was killed while in police custody in 1990; and from Margaret Winter, one of the attorneys in the landmark lawsuit won in 1986 by the Socialist Workers Party against harassment by the FBI and other government agencies.

"I want to reaffirm my commitment for Mark Curtis and I want to have him exonerated and liberated so that he can be back in our ranks," Thomas concluded.

On February 28 Kaku visited the Community Church to discuss the case with activists at a meeting held for Reverend Lucius Walker from Pastors for Peace.

Jason Coughlin from Boston contributed to this article.

from PATHFINDER The Frame-up of Mark Curtis by Margaret Jayko

This pamphlet tells the story of Mark Curtis, a unionist and fighter for immigrant rights, who is serving a 25-year sentence in an Iowa prison on trumped-up rape charges. 71 pp. \$5.00.

Available at Pathfinder bookstores listed on this page or by mail from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Add \$3.00 for postage and handling for first copy and \$.50 for each additional copy.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

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

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

The Politics of Hunger: How U.S. Forces Intervene Abroad. Speaker: Mark Friedman, member, International Association of Machinists. Sat., March 6, 7:30 p.m. 2546-C W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460. Translation to Spanish.

FLORIDA

Miami

Socialist Campaign Rally. Speaker: Dan Fein, Socialist Workers candidate for Dade County Commission District 3. Sat., March 6, 7 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

IOWA

Des Moines

Support the Miners Strike—A Reportback from the Coal Fields. Speaker: Shirley Peña, member, United Auto Workers Local 242. Sat., March 6, 7:30 p.m. 2105 Forest Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (515) 246-8249.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Police Brutality in Denton, Maryland: An Eyewitness Account. Sat., March 13, 7:30 p.m. 2905 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (410) 235-0013.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

Apartheid, the African National Congress, and the Struggle for Power. Speakers: August Nimtz, Socialist Workers Party, recently returned from South Africa; others. Sat., March 6, 7:30 p.m. 508 N. Snelling Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

MISSOURI

St. Louis

The Frame-up of Mark Curtis: The Stakes for Working People and Youth in his Fight for Justice and Freedom. Speakers: Hazel Zimmerman, Mark Curtis Defense Committee; Pat Hunt, Socialist Workers candidate for St. Louis Board of Education. Sat., March 6, 7:30 p.m. 1622 S. Broadway. Donation: \$3. Tel: (314) 421-3808.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Coal Miners on Strike against Peabody: Eyewitness Reports. Speakers: Steve Marshall, member United Transportation Union; Stu Singer, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., March 6, Dinner, 6 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: Dinner, \$4; program, \$3. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Revolutionary Cuba Today: An Eyewitness Report. Speakers: Barbara Graham and Matthew Quest, participants in the Ernesto Che Guevara Youth of the Americas Brigade in Solidarity with Cuba. Sat., March 6, 7:30 p.m. 191 7th Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (212) 727-8421. Translation to Spanish.

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

NEW JERSEY: Newark: 141 Halsey. Mailing address: 1188 Raymond Blvd., Suite 222. Zip: 07102. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

The Fight for Gay Rights Today. Sat., March 6, 7:30 p.m. 2000-C S. Elm-Eugene St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

OHIO

Cleveland

Behind the Debate on Gays and Lesbians in the Military. Speakers: Randy Fogle, Case Western Gay and Lesbian Law Alliance; Adrian Konstantatos-Tanaka, student, Oberlin College, president of ZAMI; Peter Theijung, Socialist Workers Party, member, United Auto Workers Local 538. Sun., March 7, 4 p.m. 1863 W. 25th St. Donation: \$3.50 Tel: (216) 861-6150.

The Fight against Racism in Germany: An Eyewitness Account. Speaker: John Cox, recently returned from reporting trip for the *Militant*. Sun., March 14, 4 p.m. 1863 W. 25th St. Donation: \$3.50 Tel: (216) 861-6150.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

Clinton's Economic Plan: The Fraud of "Shared Sacrifice." Speaker: John Cox, Socialist Workers Party, chairperson of the Joanne Kuniansky for Mayor campaign in Pittsburgh. Sun., March 7, 7 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

Why Refugees Flee Haiti: Firsthand Account on Conditions under Military Rule. Speakers: Joseph Dieucel, former student at Baracleres school in Haiti; Julien Renaud, former student at Jeremie school in Haiti; Linda Joyce, Socialist Workers Party, member of the International Union of Electrical Workers. Sun., March 14, 7 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

Clinton's Closed Door and the Rights of Haitians. Speaker: Harvey McArthur, *Militant* correspondent. Sat., March 6, 7 p.m. Special presentation on Guantánamo, 3 p.m. 147 E. 900 S. Donation: \$5. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

Abortion Rights Today. Panel discussion. Sat., March 13, 7 p.m. 147 E. 900 S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

The Famine in Africa: Who Is Responsible? What Can Be Done? Speakers: Francis Njubi, investigative reporter for the *Skanner*; Scott Breen, Socialist Workers Party, member International Association of Machinists Local 286; Mat Whasson, Campus Greens, University of Washington. Sat., March 6, 7:30 p.m. 1405 E. Madison. Donation: \$3. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Translation to Spanish.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Report from South Africa. Speaker: Sam Manuel, recently returned from *Militant* reporting trip to International Solidarity Conference in Johannesburg. Sat., March 6, Dinner, 6 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 523 8th St. SE. Donation: dinner, \$5; program \$5. Tel: (202) 547-7557.

WEST VIRGINIA

Morgantown

The Clinton Presidency: Challenges Facing Youth and Working People. Speakers: Elizabeth Lariscy, Socialist Workers candidate for Morgantown City Council; Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Pitts-

burgh. Sat., March 6, Dinner, 6 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. 242 Walnut St. Donation: dinner, \$4; program, \$4. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

Free Trade, Protectionism, or an Internationalist Perspective for Workers and Farmers. Speaker: Bob Aiken, Communist League campaign spokesperson. Call for location. Sat., March 6, 6 p.m. Donation: \$3. Tel: 02-281 3297.

BRITAIN

Sheffield

The ANC and the Fight for Power in South Africa. Speaker: Peter Clifford, Communist League, attended Feb. 19-21 African National Congress International Solidarity Conference in Johannesburg. Sun., March 7, 11 a.m. 1 Gower St., Spital Hill. Donation: £2. Tel: 0742-765070.

CANADA

Montréal

After 15 Months of Struggle, National Flight Attendants Win Victory. Sat., March 6, 7:30 p.m. 6566, boul. St-Laurent. Donation: \$4. Tel: (514) 273-2503.

Toronto

Israel's War on the Palestinians — Stop the Deportations. Speaker: Gary Watson, Communist League, member, Canadian Auto Workers Local 1285. Sat., March 6, 7:30 p.m. 827 Bloor St. West. Donation: \$4. Tel: (416) 533-4324.

ICELAND

Reykjavik

Che Guevara and the Fight for Socialism Today. Introduction to new pamphlet in Icelandic and a reportback from a work brigade to Cuba. Speakers: Sigurlaug Gunnlaugsdottir; Silvia Magnúsdottir. Sat., March 13, 2 p.m. Klappastíg 26. Tel: (91) 17513. Cosponsored by Internationalist Forums Association and Iceland-Cuba Friendship Society.

NEW ZEALAND

Wellington

Young People in the Philippines Discuss Changes in World Politics: Eyewitness Report. Speaker: Ruth Gray, recently returned from *Militant* reporting trip to the Philippines. Sat., March 6, Dinner, 6 p.m.; program 7 p.m. 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Donation \$5. Tel: (4) 384-4205.

Towards a Constituent Assembly: Progress in the Struggle against Apartheid. Sat., March 13, 7 p.m. 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Donation \$3. Tel: (4) 384-4205.

The Fight for the Social Security System, Yesterday and Today. Sat., March 20, 7 p.m. 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Donation \$3. Tel: (4) 384-4205.

SWEDEN

Stockholm

South Africa: Will There Be Democratic Elections This Year? Speakers: Lars Johansson, Communist League; Jonas Thunberg, Young Left. Sat., March 6, 4 p.m. Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

Tel: 071-928-7993.

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

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

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MEXICO

Mexico City: Apdo. Postal 27-575, Col. Roma Sur. Mexico D.F.

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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) 365-6055.

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

SWEDEN

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

Faithful foot soldier — Eric Lobb, head of a London shoemaking shop with such customers as Eliza-



Harry Ring

beth II, checked out at 85. But the handmade shoes will still be available at \$1,550 a pair. Established in 1866, the shop has in its basement 30,000 hand-carved wooden molds of its customers' feet.

Ease overcrowding too — Crispus Nix, warden of the Iowa penitentiary in Fort Madison said, "When you confine inmates for life without hope, it creates problems for an institution." Was he arguing against life terms? Nope. He was arguing that a death penalty would deter prison killings.

One for our side — The manager of a New Jersey J.C. Penney store said that as a result of public outcry, the store was reversing its dress code and rehiring Diane Carter, a hairdresser fired four days earlier for wearing pants to work. Carter, who also won back pay, ex-

pressed appreciation for the public support, declaring, "I thank them from the top of my head to the bottom of my pants."

'Figures don't lie...' — Responding to complaints of price-gouging by the drug companies, Roy Vagelos, top dog at Merck, the biggest of the gang, argued that the price of medicine is but a fraction of the national cost of health care. In 1991, that "small" share (reportedly 5.5 percent) totaled \$36.4 billion. Add on exports, and the take was \$100 billion — with a profit rate higher than any other U.S. industry.

'Small' reward — We haven't

seen a report on what he made last year, but in 1991, Merck's Roy Vagelos "earned" \$9.7 million.

Fringe benefit — Half the drugs marketed in the United States are produced in Puerto Rico. The drug companies operate plants in the colony because the profits on drugs manufactured there are tax-exempt.

A steal — When it was disclosed that Price Waterhouse had billed the feds 67 cents a sheet for xeroxing 10 million pages of records of a busted thrift, the accounting firm reconsidered and reduced the charge to a mere 37 cents a page.

Boost your morals and your cholesterol — The Iowa Pork Producers Assn. urged the National Pork Producers Council to withhold advertising from TV shows which have "excessive sex and violence, and which promote nontraditional family values." Such advertising, they declared, could mar the image of pork as a "wholesome, healthy product."

The Promised Land — A study found that some 40,000 families in the Los Angeles area are living in garages. The report cited the case of ten single men renting stalls in an East Los Angeles garage.

Cops display force on eve of Rodney King trial

BY SANDRA PUCCI

LOS ANGELES — The initial stage of the trial of four cops charged in the beating of Rodney King was accompanied by an orchestrated display of force by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), the National Guard, and other agencies.

Staged as a media event, the show of force aimed to intimidate the Black and Latino communities, which were engulfed by an antipolice riot after the stunning "not guilty" verdict in the state trial of the same cops last year.

The media was invited by the National Guard to cover an elaborate simulated riot mobilization, usually held in secret. The LAPD opened the doors of its training academy to report on its antiriot drills, and state emergency officials invited reporters to their operating center, offering detailed descrip-

tions of their preparations for an outbreak of protests.

Commenting on these moves, Joe Hicks, director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, declared, "It's not necessarily an act of provocation, but it certainly fuels the growing mood of confrontation that permeates the city." He added, "I think there needs to be, on the part of the LAPD and the National Guard and sheriff, a de-escalation of some of this public display because it could be counterproductive."

The police moves are also intended to shift the focus of this intensely observed case in order to implant the idea that it's the Black and Latino communities that are on trial, not the police.

As in the state trial, the federal prosecutors will limit their case to establishing that the four cops beat King with "unreasonable" force, in violation of what is claimed to be LAPD policy and practice.

Unlike the state trial, Blacks are not totally excluded from the federal jury. Of the 12 jurors, two are Black. One juror is Latino. The three alternates include a white, a Latino and a Black. The Latino said his father had been a policeman and the Black said his mother had worked in the sheriff's office.

Assertedly to ensure their safety, the identity of the jurors has been made a carefully guarded secret. Reports indicate they are mainly middle-class and middle-aged. Three are military veterans and one is a former security guard who acknowledges having used force on suspects.

Three of the jurors declared their sympathy for the cops. One felt that the police do "a good job" and that their work "can be stressful." Another declared he would give more weight to the testimony of a policeman

than that of a civilian.

Commenting on the outcome of the state trial, the former security guard said, "I don't think the verdicts were unjust. There are two sides to every story. The community felt the verdicts were unjust. I did not feel that way."

Meanwhile, the government dropped a slated witness, Lawrence Davis, a nurse who testified in the state trial. He had reported that in the hospital Officer Lawrence Powell had taunted King about how the cops had played "hardball" with him.

The government dropped Davis when his former girlfriend claimed he told her the hardball story was false. But his testimony was confirmed by King, and by a second nurse who testified at the state trial.

In a new development, a government document leaked to the *Los Angeles Times* contained the findings of a team of military doctors. They concluded that King had been struck in the face and head at least five times by a police club "or similar instrument." In the state trial, the defense argued that King suffered his facial and head wounds when he fell to the pavement.

Meanwhile, *USA Today* suspended a reporter who it held responsible for a photographic hoax featured on its front page. Together with a story about possible gang

violence if the cops are not convicted, the paper ran a photo of five Black youth posing with guns.

The young people had been told the photo would be used with a story about a local program to turn in guns in exchange for jobs.

One of the youths charged that the reporter "took us to get [the guns] so they could take a picture saying we wanted a riot."

"That's not what we wanted," he declared. "We want jobs."

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — Transporting the seriously injured Rodney King from one hospital to a second one, two of the cops who beat him made a two-hour detour to stop by at their station house and show off their victim to fellow cops.

To cover this, they falsified the time of departure from the first hospital. In their daily log report they did not mention the visit to the station.

This new evidence was presented by the prosecution in its opening statement to the jury.

A local official said this evidence was not presented in the state trial because the prosecution didn't know about it. He didn't say why they didn't know.



Rodney King after police beating

Cuban economist speaks in Sweden on challenges facing the revolution

BY INGE HINNEMO

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — "Without the revolution millions in Cuba would live in ignorance and poverty. Thanks to the revolution they live a dignified life," Cuban economist Carlos Tablada stated at a public meeting February 17 in Norrköping, Sweden.

"Compare this with the rest of Latin America," Tablada continued, "where governments cut back expenditures for education and health care. In Cuba while there is an economic crisis now, this has not affected the budget for education or health. No schools have been closed."

One participant asked Tablada if Cuba has an adult education system as in Sweden. "Yes," he responded, "there is something like it and it is free. There are many schools where you can learn languages. There are also courses for workers, who can make arrangements allowing up to a couple of hours from work each day to go to school."

Tablada told the audience that after the 1959 revolution there were two tendencies among Cuban revolutionaries. Fidel Castro and Ernesto Che Guevara were critical of the so-called Soviet economic model —

which relied on the use of capitalist economic methods — while others wanted to apply it in Cuba. During the early 1960s, Guevara was the main advocate of relying on initiative and leadership by working people rather than bureaucratic planning methods.

"For 10 years we followed the Soviet model and we almost lost the revolution," said Tablada. "However, the revolutionary vanguard was never corrupted."

"In Cuba a vanguard that was against the Soviet model was able to launch, together with the people, a rectification process," he stated.

Tablada also spoke to a meeting of 25 Swedish business representatives about prospects for investing in Cuba.

"In 34 years of revolution Cuba has gone through social and economic changes," said Tablada. "We developed new branches of industry and new human beings. Cuba today has more scientists in relation to the size of its population than France, Spain, or Italy."

"The U.S. is now escalating its blockade of Cuba," continued Tablada, "but the world has changed. More than 200 foreign companies are today functioning in Cuba. Countries like Mexico and Canada have not submitted to the blockade. Canada has increased its trade with Cuba by 200 percent in two years. And the European parliament recently renewed its condemnation of the blockade," stated Tablada.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



Over 700 demonstrators picketed the gala debut of boxing at the new Madison Square Garden tonight to protest the phony world heavyweight championship match between Joe Frazier and Buster Mathis.

Excluded from the fight was Muhammad Ali, the incontestable world heavyweight champion, barred from the ring because of his opposition to the racist war in Vietnam.

In below-freezing weather, the demonstrators marched to such chants as "Who's the champ? Muhammad Ali" and "He won't go, we won't go." They belonged to a number of organizations including various nationalist groups in Harlem, the National Black Anti-War Anti-Draft Union, the Black Caucus, the W.E.B. DuBois Clubs, the Young Socialist Alliance, and Youth Against War and Fascism.

Harry Edwards, chairman of the Olympic Boycott Committee, presented a petition to Frazier and Mathis urging them not to fight. [He] stated that Frazier and Mathis had given the petition a friendly reception.



March 13, 1943

The attack on the mailing rights of *The Militant*, initiated last November by Attorney General Biddle and the Post Office, was climaxed this week by an administrative decree of Postmaster General Frank C. Walker, revoking the second-class mailing privileges of this paper. Walker's ruling was the administration's first definitive denial of democratic rights to an anti-fascist labor

paper in World War II.

The Militant announced to the press that it was going to challenge the order in the courts and seek to regain its second class rights, the loss of which makes it exceedingly difficult for a nationally-distributed newspaper to operate.

The Post Office interference with *The Militant* began last November after the appearance of the Nov. 7 issue and simultaneously with the U.S. invasion of North Africa. After delays ranging up to two weeks, three of the November issues and one December issue were ordered destroyed. The others were finally delivered.

During the first week in January *The Militant* was notified by the Solicitor's Office of the Postmaster General in Washington to show cause why its second-class mailing privileges should not be revoked. Accompanying the show cause order were 27 excerpts from *The Militant* which were cited by the authorities as "objectionable." The excerpts attacked Big Business, criticized administration policies such as Jim Crowism and the Darlan deal, and advocated a Workers' and Farmers' Government as the only solution to the problems of war, fascism, unemployment, and racial discrimination.

Post Office Atty. O'Brien introduced an additional 78 excerpts from the paper as evidence and demanded the revocation of its mail rights on the ground that the effect of reading it might persuade some individual not to enlist [in the U.S. army].

Albert Goldman, attorney for *The Militant*, answered this argument by showing that it could be used to revoke the mail rights of every paper that criticized a government official, because all such criticism might have the effect of persuading someone not to enlist. Osmond K. Fraenkel, representing the American Civil Liberties Union at the hearing, declared that the moves against this paper constituted "the gravest threat to freedom of the press that has thus far arisen in this war."

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.

No to Yugoslavia intervention

Washington's food airdrops over Bosnia represent a further step toward U.S. military intervention in the Balkan conflict. As in Somalia, the U.S. government is seeking to win wider support for military action by pitching its plans as a humanitarian relief effort.

However, it is not concern for the well-being of Bosnia's working people that is driving Washington to act, but rather the need to reassert the U.S. government's political and military power in this area of the world.

Washington's move takes place in the context of sharpening conflicts with rival imperialist powers in Europe and Japan. Just this past week, for example, the Clinton administration began talking about taking retaliatory measures against the European governments of Britain, France, and Germany, charging them with unfairly subsidizing the Airbus jetliner. This comes on top of a threatened trade war over oilseeds last November.

The Clinton administration's airdrop operation fits in with broader military steps that Washington has discussed implementing in the Balkans. This includes the enforcement of a no-fly zone over Bosnia, which Britain and France—with troops on the ground as part of a United Nations force—have been resisting, and the participation of about 10,000 U.S. soldiers in a larger NATO effort to enforce a UN-mediated plan to partition Bosnia.

The U.S. rulers deeply fear getting involved in the military conflict in Bosnia as they proceed to do just that. Their planes dropping food and medicine operate 10,000 feet above the ground to avoid anti-aircraft fire, even though this makes these airdrops very inaccurate. At the same time

Washington is increasing its military presence in the Adriatic Sea off Bosnia's shores.

The U.S. rulers remain divided on what steps to take in Bosnia. Some, like former CIA director William Colby, call for sending tens of thousands of U.S. troops to halt the Serbian forces' siege of Sarajevo. Others, for example former U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger, contend that the massive use of U.S. ground troops could very likely lead not to a military victory but to a Vietnam-type quagmire.

The slaughter taking place in Bosnia is not an ethnic war of Serb versus Croat versus Muslim, but a mafia-style grab for territory and resources by the leftover pieces of the bureaucracy—each making use of nationalist demagoguery—that once held political power throughout the former Yugoslavia. Imperialist military intervention into the conflict would make conditions facing working people there even worse. This has been the effect of the current economic blockade, for example, which hurts working people while actually strengthening the hand of the gangster leaders.

By organizing themselves and forging a leadership committed to a perspective of unity across borders, and across "ethnic" and religious divisions, working people in the former Yugoslavia can defeat the warring gangs destroying their lives and ravaging their country. More than 45 years ago the workers and peasants of Yugoslavia successfully achieved this in a revolution against landlords, local capitalists, and imperialist occupiers. This path is the only road forward out of the Balkan conflict today.

Solidarity with the coal miners

As this issue of the *Militant* goes to press the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) has expanded its strike to include 1,700 miners working for five Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) companies in Illinois, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. This action strengthens the fight of some 7,000 union members on strike against Peabody Holdings Co. for the past month.

The UMWA's struggle against the U.S. coal barons is important for all working people. This battle should be followed closely and solidarity with the miners should be organized so that the coal operators know they are up against not only the mine workers union but also workers and farmers across the country who see the miners' fight as their own.

Peabody is the largest coal producer in the United States. It has shown no interest in reaching a decent contract with the union. To the contrary Peabody's recent moves to use strikebreakers at its operations in Indiana indicate a desire to club the union. And the decision by Peabody subsidiary Eastern Associated Coal in West Virginia to bring in the notorious union-busting outfit Vance International is a sure sign the company plans to put up a tough fight against the miners.

Coal bosses are like other capitalists around the world who are feeling the long-term effects of the economic depression. Their answer to increased competition for declining markets is lower wages and benefits for miners, speedup, and more unsafe working conditions. One of

the main ways coal companies in the United States do this is by opening nonunion mines to get around paying the relatively higher wages and observing the more stringent safety standards union miners have won through previous struggles. These nonunion operations also put pressure on miners in union mines to cut corners on safety and lower their demands for better wages and benefits. That is why the union's fight to halt the practice of "double breasting," in which unionized coal operators set up nonunion subsidiaries and shift production, is so important.

A good example of the kind of conditions the coal operators would like to see in place are those that existed at the Pyro mine in Wheatcroft, Kentucky. Management at Pyro was recently ordered to pay a \$3.75 million fine for disregarding safety rules and deceiving mine safety inspectors—acts that led to the deaths of 10 miners in an explosion in 1989.

A Peabody miner explained to *Militant* reporters last week, "This battle is more than a United Mine Workers issue, more than a union/nonunion issue. It is working people versus a giant corporation." Union members across the country should help publicize that battle. One way of getting solidarity going for the miners is to invite a UMWA member from a nearby striking local to speak to other union locals and get the truth out about their fight.

The struggles that miners have fought over the years helped establish better working conditions for all workers.

Rally advances Curtis's fight

This month marks the fifth year of the frame-up of trade union and political activist Mark Curtis. In March 1988, as Curtis participated in a battle to defend immigrant coworkers under attack by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, he was arrested by Des Moines police and charged with sexual abuse of a Black high school student. His conviction was based on the crucial testimony of a cop with an established record of lying.

The campaign to support Curtis's fight against this frame-up has won wide support among unionists and fighters for social justice in the United States and around the world. These supporters are striving to win Curtis's release on parole.

In Boston a group of people has waged a campaign in recent months to break down the worldwide support for Curtis. A leader of this effort is Mary Bertin, a local official in the Boston branch of the NAACP. Bertin and her fellow opponents of Curtis's fight embrace the prosecution's case.

Bertin has sought, with some success, to use intimidation and pressure against those interested in the case, by denouncing Curtis and those who seek justice for him as

racist and sexist. Bertin uses such charges to try to push people away from discussing the facts of the case and intimidate them into silence or withdrawal of support.

At a February 27 rally in Boston, a public meeting attended by 100 people, Curtis's supporters took the offensive against those who are slandering him. Basing themselves on the facts of the case, they have answered every point raised by Bertin and her fellow campaigners.

Several endorsers have considered and rejected Bertin's appeals and reaffirmed their endorsement of Mark Curtis's case. One of these is Alfredo Alvarez, former head of the Des Moines Human Rights Commission. He wrote to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, "Recently I read that supporters are being castigated for their support of Mark Curtis. Negative tactics will always fail; they may work for a time by clouding real issues, but they will always fade with the illumination of the truth and time."

The Boston rally in defense of Mark Curtis is an example of how to carry forward the fight. The supporters of Curtis's prosecution can be answered and support for his release broadened further.

ANC campaigns in Cape Town

Continued from Page 11

lions of South Africans who live in the so-called "independent homelands" of Transkei, Venda, Ciskei, and Bophuthatswana. "The regime says our people lost their South African citizenship" when these regions were set up as "independent" states in the 1970s, Ramaphosa said. "We told them they have the power to pass a law today restoring that citizenship, and we demand the government do this."

The biggest difference with the National Party regime is its demand for what it calls a power-sharing arrangement after a new constitution has been drawn up.

The NP wants all parties in the government to have equal weight, so that the cabinet can only act on consensus, Ramaphosa said. Action by the majority party could be vetoed by minority parties. "We can never accept this," he said.

The ANC is proposing an interim government made up of representatives from parties receiving at least 5 percent of the vote. This government would exist for a "limited period," until the first elections under the new constitution.

After looking at the existing balance of forces in the country, Ramaphosa said, the ANC leadership is convinced that such a transitional government is a necessary step towards "full majority rule. It doesn't postpone it," he said. "It brings it closer."

The interim government would begin a program of economic and social reconstruction, initiate steps to reorganize state structures, and start implementing affirmative action measures in the government and economy to advance equality for the Black majority.

Such a government, he said, can help isolate and weaken counterrevolutionary forces opposed to the transition from the apartheid structures to a democratic republic.

Discussion among Afrikaner students

Three hours later, at the University of Stellenbosch, about 100 students participated in a discussion of South Africa's future at a meeting organized by the Actuality Society (SAAK). Both the student body and faculty at the University of Stellenbosch are largely white and Afrikaans-speaking. A few Coloured and African students now attend. SAAK was the first Afrikaner campus organization to invite a Black to speak at the university.

The meeting was attended by about 70 white Afrikaner students, a few Coloured students, and about 30 members of the ANC Youth League. The panel was composed of representatives of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL); South African Communist Party; Pan Africanist Congress; Inkatha Freedom Party; Labour Party (a party based among Coloureds that participates in the regime's "tricameral parliament," which includes Coloureds and Indians but excludes Africans); Democratic Party (a small, largely white bourgeois liberal party); and Afrikaner Volksunie (a party demanding an independent white homeland).

The meeting, conducted in English and Afrikaans, began with short opening statements by each of the panelists. Twelve students participated in the discussion and many hands were in the air when time ran out.

One of the moderators of the panel, a professor, asked about the differences between the ANC and PAC.

Peter Mokaba, national president of the ANCYL, replied that the ANC's Freedom Charter, adopted in 1955, says that "South Africa belongs to all, Black and white."

"We define the enemy as the apartheid system," Mokaba said. "The PAC says the enemy are the white settlers."

Following the meeting participants continued the discussion informally at a wine and cheese party organized by SAAK. Peter, the Afrikaner student who chaired the meeting, said that SAAK intends to organize more such discussions. Although he had not yet read the ANC Freedom Charter he said he was considering voting for the ANC in the elections.

The issues raised at the two university meetings will be placed before millions of television viewers Sunday, February 28 in a panel discussion that will be broadcast over the SABC television network.

Allan Boesak, chairperson of the ANC's Western Cape Region, will join representatives of other political organizations.

At the conclusion of the meeting at the University of Western Cape, Tony Yengeni, regional ANC secretary, urged students to mobilize in front of the SABC building in Cape Town "with the ANC colors" to show the support that exists in the Cape for the ANC.

Corrections

A photo on page 4 of *Militant* issue no. 9 was incorrectly identified. The coal miners pictured were from Marissa, Illinois, not Shawneetown.

Also in issue no. 9, the article "Suicide rate rises for workers injured by Chernobyl cleanup" states that figures for cancers and other serious illnesses resulting from the accident are estimated "in the hundreds of millions." This should be "in the millions."

In issue no. 7, the article on page 11, "Union reaches agreement with Amoco that will set pattern in oil industry," contains an error. It was more than a year ago that Unocal workers at the Rodeo refinery in northern California organized informational picket lines demanding wage parity with workers at the Los Angeles area Unocal refinery. Also at that time Rodeo refinery workers rejected job combinations accepted in Los Angeles. The article incorrectly stated that these actions took place after the recent Amoco agreement.

Mass movement dismantled Jim Crow segregation

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

When I was a young girl, my mother used to take me to picket the local Woolworth store in my hometown of Vancouver in Canada. We were demonstrating our support for the boycott of segregated lunch counters in the South of the United States.

The civil rights movement had a big impact on me, like millions of people around the world, and for that reason I found all the accolades to the late Supreme Court justice Thurgood Marshall — touting him as Mr. Civil Rights — a bit obscene.

AS I SEE IT

For weeks the media was full of eulogies in newspapers, magazines, and on television. The funeral itself was televised.

Supreme Court chief justice William Rehnquist, not well known for his concern for the rights of the oppressed, spoke highly of Marshall. "As a result of his career as a lawyer and as a judge, Thurgood Marshall left an indelible mark not just upon the law but upon his country," stated Rehnquist.

"We've lost a true American hero," said Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

Of course not all who mourned Marshall were judges or politicians shedding crocodile tears. Thousands lined up to view his body. Many thought back beyond his two decades on the Supreme Court to his role as a lawyer for the NAACP when he argued cases against Jim Crow discrimination laws, such as the historic 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision ruling racial segregation of schools unconstitutional.

But the opinion molders try their best to reduce the whole civil rights movement to individuals like Marshall.

A *New York Times* review of two Marshall biographies bears the title, "Mr. Civil Rights." The article, by Laura Kalman, says Marshall "dismantled apartheid in the United States."

A February 8 *Newsweek* feature on Marshall quotes Eleanor Holmes Norton, congressional delegate from the District of Columbia, saying, "A lot of folks don't appreciate that Thurgood Marshall and his band of lawyers were the only civil rights movement there was until the late 1950s."

I'm one of those people. I don't appreciate it because it is not true. And I don't appreciate the whole attempt to rewrite this chapter of our history. The civil rights movement was in fact the opposite of what is portrayed by Washington and its media. It was a movement of masses of working people who rejected an oppressive racist system, put aside lifelong training to leave laws and politics to the experts, organized united action to defy and strike down unjust laws, and changed the

course of history.

The civil rights fighters revived many forms of struggle from earlier labor and democratic movements, and they created new forms. They organized boycotts, sit-ins, rallies, "freedom rides," marches, hunger strikes when thousands were jailed, and mass meetings. They were told by the politicians to wait, be patient, leave legislative change to the legislators. Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson all made these appeals. In civil rights battles throughout the South Blacks and many whites who supported them rejected this advice in favor of what was sometimes called "direct action," relying on their own strength, organizing united public actions.

In this struggle we got a glimpse of the future. People were not helpless objects of history. We were active agents.

There also was a movement before 1954. The book *Fighting Racism in World War II*, published by Pathfinder Press, describes the fight from 1939 to 1945 both inside the military, where legal segregation existed until 1948, and in the civilian population, especially in the war industries. The first movement for a national March on Washington against discrimination was launched in 1941. The following year this movement held mass rallies in New York and Chicago. In 1943 10,000 demonstrated against racism in Detroit. In 1947 the first freedom ride took place against segregated buses and trains. A boycott of segregated buses was carried out in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in 1953.

The 1954 decision that Marshall became famous for was a product of all pressure these struggles, as well as the impact of the struggles against colonialism that were erupting throughout Africa, Asia, and elsewhere.

There were many figures in the civil rights movement and many different views expressed. Some participants, like NAACP lawyer Marshall, became nervous as it became a mass movement in the streets. Marshall was suspicious of the militant youthful wing of the movement as



Struggles by tens of thousands of working people were force that overthrew segregation. Above, Blacks in Montgomery, Alabama, wait to car pool during the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955-56. Martin Luther King is in center.

he saw it begin to gain strength during the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott of 1955-56.

He referred to Martin Luther King as a "boy on a man's errand" who "wasn't worth diddly squat" as an organizer when veteran unionist and civil rights organizer E. D. Nixon convinced King to head up the boycott movement. The late Supreme Court justice said he also repeatedly told Malcolm X to "go to hell."

The victories of the civil rights movement expanded the confidence of Blacks, as well as the possibilities for increased united action of Black and white workers. Today, however, the vast majority of Blacks continue to be hit the hardest by the worsening economic and social conditions facing all working people.

By looking back at the real history of the civil rights movement we can learn a lot for our struggles today. We can get a glimpse at the possibilities to change the world when masses of people move into action.

Those who chalk up the gains of the civil rights movement to figures like Thurgood Marshall, are hiding the truth and attempting to rewrite history into a safer, more legislative mold.

LETTERS

Kurdistan hunger strike

In a world where in almost every country concern over human rights violations is being voiced, and ways sought to prevent these violations, in Kurdistan the inhuman measures which the Turkish state started at the beginning of 1992, and which it has now labeled an "internal operation," have reached hitherto unprecedented levels.

Towns are being bombed, villages burnt and demolished, people murdered in the streets and the civilian population forced to migrate. They want to depopulate our country.

Almost every day public servants, workers, writers, political activists and people from all walks of life are being slaughtered by paramilitary forces, in what the state calls "murders by unknown persons." It is well known in Turkey that these forces have state support and protection.

We are seriously concerned that in the event of Turkey being unable to depopulate Kurdistan it will take advantage of the silence of Western public opinion and the general lack of interest in massacres in our country to perpetrate a Kurdish genocide. The measures used so far by the coalition government serve to increase our fears.

We, the 15 members of the Kurdistan National Parliament elected from Europe, launched an indefinite hunger strike on January 24 to protest against the policies of the Turkish state, to make known to the world the tragedy of our people's situation and to make Western public opinion aware of the approaching genocide with a view to preventing it.

We call on governments, human rights organizations, trade unions, political parties, the international media and public opinion: To con-

demn the Turkish state's torture and slaughter of our civilian and defenseless people, and contra-guerilla murders of democratic, patriotic journalists and individuals.

15 members of
Kurdistan National Parliament
Brussels, Belgium

Official language

The Feb. 12, 1993 issue of the *Militant* had a photograph and a brief description of the recent march of 80,000 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, to demand that Spanish be the sole official language of this colony of the United States. The article also mentioned a recent poll where 95 percent of the people said they prefer Spanish remain the official language. This article gives the reader the impression that the action of making English an official language as well as Spanish had no popular support. It is important for readers of the *Militant* to understand that this is not the case.

In reality in Puerto Rico today there is not unanimous opposition to making both languages official languages. The population is deeply divided on the question. Gov. Pedro Rosselló of the pro-statehood New Progressive Party promised throughout his election campaign that the first law he would submit to the national legislature would declare both Spanish and English to be official languages. In November he was elected with the largest victory margin that his party had ever received. He took power January 2.

If 95 percent of the population was opposed to the move and after a march of 80,000 people the governor and the legislature had continued on this path they would have committed political suicide, which is clearly not the case.

The vast majority of the population in Puerto Rico cannot speak or read English well. About 90 percent of the daily newspapers sold on the island are in Spanish. I will give one example of how the use of English in Puerto Rico can endanger the health of the people. Recently in Yabucoa, an industrial town on the southeast coast, I was in a drug store. The store did not have enough demand to sell the English-language daily newspaper. The store did however have a legal notice, posted on the front door, informing customers of the recall of unsafe toys. The notice was in English even though it had been sent by a Puerto Rican toy wholesaler. The vast majority of the customers could not read the safety warning.

Ron Richards
Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico

Railroad lockout

A February 19 item, headlined "45-year low in major strikes," reported that two-thirds of those workers who struck in 1992 "were in the two-day national rail strike."

A thousand or so machinists struck the CSX railroad, a major carrier in the South and Midwest, but there was no national strike by rail workers in 1992. Instead, the carriers organized a two-day national lockout and blamed it on us.

The capitalist media promoted the companies' line, of course, but the *Militant* accurately explained this attack on rail labor.

Steve Marshall
Newark, New Jersey

Student of Malcolm X

I hope you receive this letter in the best of health and spirit. I am a 13-year-old student of Malcolm X's philosophy. He has mentioned your

newspaper as the best. I have found that it is very important for the *Militant* to get the recognition that it deserves and I will love to help you in any way. Thank you.

A.S.
Antioch, Tennessee

Prison slave labor

A few months ago an article appeared in the *Grayson County News-Gazette* announcing the creation of a new program where jail inmates would be used for labor on maintenance projects at public facilities. The pay for these laborers would be one dollar per day.

It was recently announced on National Public Radio in one of their features that South Carolina had taken this project one step further by using prisoners in private industry at a minimum wage pay scale, a certain percentage of which would be used to pay for court costs, fines, etc.

Both of these programs are being presented, of course, as being instituted to train prisoners for life outside of the walls, as well as to help the state maintain a burgeoning prison population.

Though the program is sugar-coated so as to get it into your mouth, the inside of the pill is a bitter one. What these programs will attempt to do is to drive another wedge into the fractured surface of working-class solidarity. By pitting unemployed workers on the outside against one-dollar-per-day, super-exploited prison labor, the bosses are attempting to further drive down the living standards of all of us.

We should all demand the immediate dismantling of these programs that super-exploit prison labor; while at the same time demand reforms in the operation of prison systems. We must demand

the immediate transfer of taxpayer money to be used to create a warmer, kinder environment for our children in public schools and training programs and a job at a living wage for everyone who seeks one.

But most of all we must begin to see that the economic system that holds all of us down, can and will never be reformed to serve the vast majority of people in this country.
Ed Meredith
Candyville, Kentucky

Economic recovery

Last week while I was driving to work at my new job in a small steel finishing plant, the business news on the radio was discussing the recession and the "recovery." They reported that many employers were working their employees more hours rather than hire new workers, until they had more confidence in the recovery.

They were talking about me and my coworkers. Much of the day shift in my plant works 64 hours a week — 4 twelves, 1 ten, and six hours on Saturday. The forced overtime is not the biggest issue in the plant, but most of the guys (I'm the first woman) aren't happy about it. Two other new employees said they can't complain, having recently been unemployed. One said, "You take it when you can get it."

Louise Halverson
Chicago, Illinois

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.

Boston rally wins new support for framed-up unionist Mark Curtis

Meeting repudiates campaign by pro-prosecution forces against defense effort

BY SELVA NEBBIA

BOSTON — Supporters of the effort to win justice for Mark Curtis attended a rally here on "The Frame-up of Mark Curtis: the stakes for working people and youth in his fight for justice and freedom." They came from Washington, D.C.; New York; Newark, New Jersey; St. Paul, Minnesota; New Haven, Connecticut; Des Moines, Iowa; Montreal; and the local area.

The meeting was held February 27 at Roxbury Community College and was sponsored by the New England Supporters of Mark Curtis.

"I've been interested in the Mark Curtis case for a long time and what happened to him is appalling to me," said Melanie, a mechanic for Northwest Airlines in Minneapolis who, along with a coworker, flew in for the meeting and helped staff a table with literature on the case. Julio, a young Guatemalan worker from a meat-packing plant in Washington, D.C., came "to hear Curtis's wife speak about his case. I like him because I like a person who fights for everybody's rights."

"This meeting is genuinely suggestive of the breadth of support for Mark Curtis since his arrest on March 4, 1988, when he was framed up by the Des Moines police on phony charges of rape and burglary," said Andrea Morell as she opened the meeting. Curtis is currently in the John Bennett Correctional Center in Fort Madison, Iowa, serving a 25-year sentence.

Morell, a supporter of the defense effort here, co-chaired the event with Maurice Williams, a leader of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee in Des Moines.

"The cops and the prosecution in Des Moines attempted to victimize Mark Curtis for his union and political activity," Morell said. "They wanted to make an example of



Speakers at Boston rally in support of framed-up unionist Mark Curtis. From left to right: Maurice Williams, Paula Frampton, Kate Kaku (at podium), Charles Rosenberg, and Hazel Zimmerman.

Curtis to all of us. To say to all of us that if you fight you may face something like this."

The speakers at the rally included Kate Kaku, a leader of the international defense campaign and Curtis's wife; Hazel Zimmerman, treasurer of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee in Des Moines, Iowa; Carol Thomas, a long-time Boston civil rights activist; Maria De Felice, a women's rights and antiwar activist; and Paula Frampton, a supporter of the Curtis defense effort in Canada. Cuba solidarity activist Charles Rosenberg made a fund appeal. The 100 people present contributed \$2,000 to the defense campaign.

Response to pro-prosecution campaign

"This meeting today has a double purpose," Morell explained. "One is to publicize and win new interest in and support for Mark Curtis and his cause. The second is to say no" to those who have launched a cam-

paign in favor of the prosecution's case against Curtis.

The campaign against the defense efforts to free Mark Curtis was launched even before the case went to trial, Morell noted. It is being pushed by the alleged victim's parents and the prosecution, as well as an organization called the Workers League. The Workers League has become known among unionists who enter into struggle for its divisive tactics in strike situations. It has a long history of attempting to smear the Socialist Workers Party in the labor movement.

In the Boston area these forces are spearheaded by Mary Bertin, civil rights committee chairperson of the Boston branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Together with others, Bertin has launched a campaign to get supporters of Curtis to "disendorse" from the defense effort by carrying out a smear campaign and intimidating those who support the case.

At a February 7 meeting held at the Community Church of Boston, which regularly holds open forums as part of its Sunday services, Bertin denounced the effort to win justice for Mark Curtis. She presented an emotional appeal for people to help her and others end what she called "this five-year nightmare" supposedly being suffered by the alleged victim and her family.

"Curtis faces what many labor defendants have faced. That is, he was framed up and convicted in court," Morell said. "He now must take his case to working people and others around the world in order to win support and exoneration and it is this above all that the pro-prosecution forces seek to prevent. They seek to make that impossible by smearing the case and slandering it and by stigmatizing anyone who will look at the facts objectively."

Maurice Williams, a meat-packer and member of the United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1149 at the Monfort packing plant in Des Moines, introduced Kate Kaku.

Context of worker resistance

"My husband, Mark Curtis, was an unknown paunch puller and a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers in Des Moines, Iowa. He is a political activist, trade unionist, and member of the Socialist Workers Party," said Kaku. To understand his case, it is important to understand the political context it took place in, she said.

"Mark, like many people, was inspired by the growing resistance among a whole

layer of packinghouse workers throughout the Midwest that was taking place in the mid-1980's. Thousands of these workers were involved in the fightback against the offensive by the packing bosses to roll back wages and working conditions, she said.

Kaku, herself a former meat-packer who is now a member of United Steel Workers of America Local 5488 in Chicago, described how the composition of the work force in the meat-packing industry and in the working class as a whole has changed over the last decade.

"There was a huge influx of immigrant workers from many Latin American countries and Asia," she said. Like others, many workers in the meat-packing industry fall prey to "the propaganda that immigrant workers take American jobs away," and the bosses use this to keep the

work force divided, she said.

Knowing Spanish, a language "he learned as a teenager living in New Mexico, Mark helped to play a role in unifying the workers at the Swift plant where he worked, and he utilized his Spanish to communicate with the majority of the workers there," Kaku explained. The bosses did not like this at all, she said.

"Here is a white guy who speaks Spanish, who talks about the unity of the working class, the rights of immigrant workers, the need for unions to get together and organize a real fightback against the boss."

Immigration raid

Three days before Curtis's arrest, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the company organized a raid at Swift and arrested 16 Mexican workers and one worker from El Salvador, explained Kaku. Curtis was involved in a fight for their defense the day he was framed up. Kaku described the details of his arrest and brutal beating by the cops, as well as the trial that followed.

"The trial was a travesty of justice," she said.

Hazel Zimmerman read a number of letters from long-time supporters of the Curtis case reaffirming their commitment to his fight for justice.

"Mark Curtis continues to have my support in this ongoing struggle to win his freedom," wrote Alfredo Alvarez, who was the head of the Des Moines Human Rights Commission at the time of Curtis's arrest.

"Recently, I read that supporters are being castigated for their support of Mark Curtis," continued Alvarez. "Negative tactics will always fail; they may work for a time by clouding real issues, but they will always fade with the illumination of truth and time."

"Divisive tactics like questioning supporters' racial sensitivity or political correctness serve only to divide the progressive communities. It leaves very little room for informed and educated discussion."

Zimmerman also read a letter sent by Edna Griffin. "Edna is 82 years old. She became famous in Des Moines as a young working woman because she sat down at a lunch counter that was for whites only and refused to move," said Zimmerman.

"It is clear in my mind that Mark Curtis's concern about the Mexican workers in the plant made him a dangerous man," wrote Griffin. "It is an example of his firm conviction that people are created equal. In my

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Mark Curtis: 'Working people's rights more important than ever'

The following is a transcript of a taped message sent to the February 27 rally in Boston by Mark Curtis, from the John Bennett Correctional Center in Fort Madison, Iowa.

The stakes in this case are about our rights to engage in politics without being jailed or beaten by the cops. These rights are more important than ever as we turn to political action in defense of working people against the attacks the Clinton administration is preparing.

The future holds more frame-up cases like mine. More working people will be passing through jail and subjected to treatment designed to take the fight out of them.

I find myself in prison with truck drivers, bricklayers, farmers, and John Deere tractor assemblers. There are a lot of former meat-packers like me here, and I've been surprised to meet three of the guys I used to work with at Swift, one an immigrant from Cambodia, another an immigrant from Mexico, and a third a Chicano worker. These men are interested in world politics just like everyone else.

Several weeks ago I helped organize a showing of a video on Malcolm X. More than 30 men came to the film and stayed

afterwards to discuss about the man and his ideas. I am constantly being asked by fellow inmates how they can get copies of Malcolm's speeches to read for themselves what he said and did.

An article that I recently wrote for the *Militant* newspaper defending immigrant workers was well received by those here who are trying to figure out how to improve their lives and working conditions when they are in jail.

This is not to say that everyone agrees with my socialist politics. I have lively debates about everything from Somalia to Iraq. In the course of discussing an article about the death penalty, I have heard everything from the "hang 'em high" sentiment to opposition to this form of state terrorism. One of the men here participating in this discussion remembers executions here in Fort Madison before the gallows were torn down.

To sum up, I am carrying out the same political activity that you are out there, and I am going to continue, no matter how long or whatever the circumstances will be.

I want to thank you all for your help and inspiration that makes it possible for me to continue. Thanks again; stay strong.