

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Perot continues to push  
right-wing agenda

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 57/NO. 13 April 5, 1993

## Political crisis in Russia alarms capitalist powers

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Russian president Boris Yeltsin's declaration that he is assuming virtually unlimited emergency powers has only deepened the political crisis in Russia.

Yeltsin announced March 20 that he was imposing a five-week period of "special rule," leading up to a nationwide referendum April 25 on a new constitution and a vote of confidence in the Russian president's increased executive powers.

U.S. president Bill Clinton cautiously supported Yeltsin's assumption of increased powers. "We were encouraged to hear him say that civil liberties will be respected," said Clinton in a March 20 statement. "What matters most is that Russia is and must remain a democratic country moving toward a market economy."

During a press conference three days later, Clinton was even more careful. He spoke of defending Washington's interests in Russia "with or without President Yeltsin in authority."

The *Wall Street Journal* described the Russian president as a "brave democrat." But the newspaper also termed Yeltsin's



Street vendor in Moscow, Russia is mired in serious economic and social crisis with inflation at 25 percent a month.

serious social and economic crisis. Industrial production dropped 20 percent last year, while inflation stands at 25 percent a month.

In early March, an emergency session of the Congress of People's Deputies voted to give itself the right to overrule the president's decrees, the method by which Yeltsin has been ruling for the past year.

In response to Yeltsin's decision to assume special powers, the Russian parliament, meeting in emergency session, voted 125-16 to ask Russia's Constitutional Court to rule on the legality of this act. Chief Justice Valery Zorkin declared the president's actions an attempt at a "state coup." The court, while declaring Yeltsin's action unconstitutional, did not mention impeachment of the president.

Many members of the Congress of People's Deputies, Russia's highest legislative body, have vowed to begin impeachment proceedings against Yeltsin. Vice-president Alexander Rutskoi, who some in the legislature see as a possible replacement for Yeltsin, has condemned the president's as-

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## Coal miners face contract fight ahead

BY JOHN HAWKINS

MARISSA, Illinois — At the Marissa Mine outside this southern Illinois coal town the sturdily constructed picket shack is still standing. Attached to it are several signs left from the month-long strike by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) against Peabody Holdings Co., which owns Marissa and several other mines in the area.

One sign reads, "Solidarity '93: This Establishment Supports UMWA." It is similar to dozens of others posted in windows of restaurants, grocery stores, gas stations, and other businesses here and in surrounding towns.

As one drives through the coalfields here, signs like these are a constant reminder of UMWA miners' determination to continue their fight until they win a decent contract from the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) and of the support they can count on from the surrounding community.

The BCOA represents 12 of the country's largest coal operators. More than 300 other coal companies sign identical contracts, known in the industry as "me-too" agreements.

Another sign attached to the picket shack stands out. In large blue letters against a yellow background it reads "Sam... the concession stand is closed." The message is directed at Peabody president George "Sam" Shiflet and his counterparts at other BCOA companies. Miners correctly suspect that Shiflet and other coal bosses have not given up on trying to make them give back hard-won union gains in this round of contract negotiations.

The miners who stopped and talked to the *Militant* reporting team March 24, on their way into work, reflected the same mood mixed with a sober realization that a big struggle was still ahead.

"We really appreciate your support," said

one miner who had talked with previous teams and read the *Militant's* coverage of the strike.

"We won this round. We'll see about the next one," said one of two women miners coming to work on the day shift.

The miners' assessment that a real fight lies ahead is well founded.

Less than two weeks after UMWA members here and at other Peabody mines ended their selective strike March 5, what many miners had suspected about the real forces arrayed against them was confirmed.

### Coal companies aided Peabody

According to an article in the March 12 issue of the *Wall Street Journal*, Ashland Coal Inc. — a member of the BCOA like Peabody — announced the previous day an anticipated decline in its first-quarter profits.

While that is nothing new in the coal mining business, Ashland's public acknowledgment of the reason for this loss is new.

The major cause of its loss, Ashland officials disclosed, was payments made to an industry strike fund to help Peabody and other strike targets weather the storm. The fund, which took the form of a cost-sharing arrangement, apparently required BCOA members that were not targeted for the selective strike to subsidize those that were.

Ashland reports that three of its subsidiaries made payments to Peabody and other BCOA companies during the month-long conflict, which began as a selective strike against Peabody February 1, when the union's 1988 contract with the BCOA expired.

After a month on strike and after Peabody began to move scabs into its Indiana mines, the strike was expanded March 1 to several of the lowest-cost, highest-production mines of several other BCOA companies.

After one day of this expanded fight, which drew another 1,700 miners into the strike in four states, the coal owners' group

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## Students in Cuba discuss world politics

BY SARA LOBMAN

MATANZAS, Cuba — When the power went off for an hour on a recent evening, plunging the university here into darkness and forcing the cancellation of a planned program, a dozen students and professors crowded into the reception lobby of the university's guest motel to continue discussions with representatives of Pathfinder Press from the United States.

"What are the conditions facing young people in the United States?" one student wanted to know. "Is it really possible for communist workers to discuss politics openly," another asked.

When the lights finally came back on, a young woman rushed out. She returned several minutes later with two friends in tow. "It's important that you're here," Nancy Montes de Oca earnestly explained. "We need to be able to talk about these things."

The discussion, held by battery-powered lamplight, was typical of activities during the week that visiting Pathfinder representatives spent at the University of Matanzas in mid-March. Pathfinder is a New York-based publishing house that publishes books and pamphlets that generalize the lessons learned in struggle by the modern working-class movement. The approximately 300 titles it keeps in print include speeches and writings of revolutionary leaders such as Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, and V.I. Lenin, as well as Ernesto Che Guevara, Nelson Mandela, Leon Trotsky, Fidel Castro, and Malcolm X.

Pathfinder president Mary-Alice Waters was invited by the rector of the University of Matanzas, Angel Vega, to take part in a student conference organized March 16-17 by the social sciences department. She also participated in a program of other activities that included an interview with the campus

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## The Militant Labor Forum presents

CHALLENGES FACING THE WORKING CLASS

### CUBA TODAY

Hear Mary-Alice Waters, editor, 'New International'

NEW YORK CITY  
Saturday, April 3  
6:30 p.m.

GREENSBORO,  
NORTH CAROLINA  
Friday, April 9  
7:00 p.m.

DES MOINES,  
IOWA  
Saturday, April 10  
6:30 p.m.

### SOUTH AFRICA: WHITE REGIME'S FINAL HOUR

Hear 'Militant' correspondents just returned from South Africa

NEW YORK CITY  
Steve Clark  
Sunday, April 4  
4:00 p.m.

GREENSBORO  
Sam Manuel  
Sunday, April 11  
10:00 a.m.

DES MOINES  
Wendy Lyons  
Saturday, April 10  
2:30 p.m.

### WORLD CAPITALIST DISORDER ACCELERATES

Hear Jack Barnes, national secretary, Socialist Workers Party

GREENSBORO  
Saturday, April 10  
6:30 p.m.

DES MOINES  
Sunday, April 11  
11:00 a.m.

The forums in Greensboro and Des Moines are part of socialist educational conferences taking place April 9-11. Classes on other topics will be offered as well.

For more information and locations, please call: (212) 727-8421 in New York; (919) 272-5996 in Greensboro; and (515) 246-8249 in Des Moines.

Free trade, protectionism, and the farm crisis — page 4





## Israel expands police force

The Israeli government announced March 21 that it was expanding the national police force from 18,000 to 20,000 and encouraged Israeli civilians to form so-called civil guard patrols after the recent deaths of 10 Israelis attributed to Palestinians. The cabinet of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin also announced there would be tighter security checks on Palestinians from the occupied territories who work in Israel.

Rabin also called on Israeli employers to stop hiring Palestinians. Claiming this would reduce attacks on Israeli citizens, Rabin said, "I would greatly welcome a decrease in the employment of Palestinians in Israel."

## Israeli settlements increase

Despite Rabin's pledge to curb Israeli settlements on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, Jewish settlements have expanded rapidly in these areas in the nine months since his government was elected. Up to 11,000 buildings are being currently completed, the largest single amount of construction since Israel captured the territories in 1967.

Rabin's government claims they are units begun by the previous government that need to be completed. After the units are filled, the Jewish population in the occupied territories will increase from 110,000 to 170,000.

## Polish national guard?

Polish president Lech Walesa has proposed the creation of a national guard under his control to confront unrest in the country. His plan would transform the elite Vistula Units, currently under the command of the interior ministry, into a 22,000-strong force to "restore order" in Poland within six months. Walesa said the troops would put down civil disturbances, aid victims of natural disasters, and bolster border controls.

## Poles oppose privatization move

The Polish parliament defeated a bill March 18 that would have converted 600 state companies into private enterprises. In a 203-181 vote, the body rejected the plan to create 20 investment funds to oversee the companies and hold controlling shares in them.

The shares would be available at a low cost to Polish citizens but would be run by managers from capitalist countries. Some of the deputies who voted against the bill said they opposed the idea of foreigners control-



French farmers throw potatoes at riot police in Pontivy, France. Some 800 farmers dumped 8,000 tons of potatoes on the road, cutting off traffic for several hours. They were demanding government compensation for a drop in potato prices. Growing unemployment and impoverishment of working farmers was at the heart of the electoral defeat of the governing Socialist Party during the first round of parliamentary elections, held March 21.

ling Polish companies and many expressed concern about the possible impact on jobs.

## Conservatives win in France

Two conservative parties running under the same banner won a large number of seats in the March 21 elections to France's National Assembly. The Rally for the Republic party, led by Jacques Chirac, and the Union for French Democracy, led by former president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, were projected to control more than 400 seats in the 577-seat parliament after the March 28 runoff elections.

President François Mitterrand's Socialist Party was expected to win between 75 and 100 seats, down from 260. The conservative coalition, called the Union for France, won 40 percent of the popular vote; the Socialist Party came in second with 20 percent. The far-right, anti-immigrant National Front, led by Jean-Marie Le Pen followed with 13 percent of the vote. The Communist Party received nearly 10 percent.

## Strike called in eastern Germany

The German metalworkers' union, IG

Metall, called a strike of its members in eastern Germany to protest the cancellation of their wage contract by employers in the east. The union announced that the action would begin April 1 at selected sites and that a vote on a full strike was being discussed.

The union wants to maintain the wage contract, which schedules workers in eastern Germany to have equal wages with their counterparts in the west by 1994.

## New U.S.-EC trade skirmish

Mickey Kantor, the U.S. government's trade representative, announced he would delay until March 30 the imposition of trade sanctions against the European Community (EC). The sanctions were a response to rules that allow public utilities to favor European companies in making purchasing decisions. Kantor said he would meet with EC trade officials in Brussels on March 29 to see if the dispute could be settled.

The squabble concerns an EC utilities directive, which came into force in January, offering EC companies an advantage in contract bidding. Kantor stated February 1 that it was unfair to U.S. companies and warned that Washington would retaliate by barring EC companies from bidding on nearly \$50 billion in contracts with the U.S. government.

## Nation of Islam, LaRouche group campaign against contraceptive

Alim Muhammad, national spokesperson for Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, and Debra Freeman, a spokesperson for the ultrarightist group headed by Lyndon LaRouche, have announced that they are joining forces to campaign against the contraceptive Norplant. The two spoke at a March 3 forum in Baltimore, where the city school system is offering the contraceptive in school clinics. At the meeting, sponsored by the LaRouche group, they charged that

Norplant was a "blueprint for genocide," as the forum's title stated, and said the distribution of the contraceptive represented a racist attack on Blacks. Reading from the Koran, Muhammad attempted to counter arguments by women's rights supporters that women should have a right to choose different methods of contraception or abortion. "It's not a question of whose body it is," he said, "but one of whose life it is, anyway. Allah, God, gives life."

## Incinerator trial burn in Ohio

A trial burn began March 9 at the hazardous waste incinerator in East Liverpool, Ohio. A federal judge cleared the way for the burn a week earlier but declined to give approval for commercial operation of the incinerator.

There have been a number of protests against running the incinerator, located 300 feet from a residential neighborhood and 1,100 feet from a school. It is intended to burn numerous toxic chemicals, including lead, mercury, cadmium, and chromium.

## Pretoria built nuclear bombs

The South African government built six nuclear bombs between 1974 and 1989, President F. W. de Klerk announced March 24, in the first public admission by Pretoria that it had such weapons. De Klerk also stated that the bombs and all weapons-grade nuclear material had since been destroyed. Another official said that the bombs were of the same power as those the United States dropped on Japan in World War II.

The apartheid regime has long been known to have been developing nuclear weapons. As early as 1977 U.S. satellites disclosed that there was a South African nuclear test site in the Kalahari Desert. But Pretoria never faced any pressure to abandon its weapons program, or even to open its sites for inspection, from the United States and other imperialist governments.

## U.S. might seize Mobutu's assets

The Clinton administration is considering the seizure of assets belonging to Zaire's president, Mobutu Sese Seko, in an attempt to force him from office. Washington is discussing with Belgium and France other economic sanctions to exert pressure and prompt Mobutu to leave office.

There has been an expanding breakdown of government structures in the country as Mobutu has engaged in a power struggle with opposition forces, led by the country's prime minister, Etienne Tshisekedi. Soldiers paid by Mobutu in currency that was declared worthless by Tshisekedi have been involved in several riots.

## Production declines in S. Korea

Industrial output fell 6.4 percent in South Korea in 1992, the largest annual drop since 1980. A report from the National Statistical Office further indicated that the month of February was the worst performance since September 1980. Some economists said the industrial output figures illustrated an economic malaise, the result of government austerity measures.

—DEREK BRACEY

## THE MILITANT

*News and analysis on the fight to defend abortion rights*

*The 'Militant' covers the discussion on and resistance to attempts by rightist groups to obstruct a woman's right to choose abortion. From the protests condemning the murder of Dr. David Gunn in Florida to the fight to keep clinic doors open in Minnesota, the 'Militant' brings you indispensable news and analysis of the battle to defend women's rights. Don't miss a single issue!*



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## The Militant

Closing news date: March 24, 1993

Editor: GEORGE FYSON

Labor Editor: PAUL MAILHOT

Business Manager: Brian Williams

Editorial Staff: Derek Bracey, Naomi Craine, Frank Forrester, Martin Koppel, Sara Lobman, Argiris Malapanis, Brian Williams.

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.

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

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on a U.S. bank to 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Canada: send Canadian \$75 for one-year subscription to Société d'Éditions AGPP, C.P. 340, succ. R, Montréal, Québec H2S 3M2. Britain, Ireland, Africa: £35 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution, 47 The Cut, London, SE1 8LL, England. Continental Europe: £50 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution at above address. Belgium: BF 2,600 for one year on account no. 000-1543112-36 of IMei Fonds/Fonds du 1 mai, 2140 Antwerp. Iceland: Send 4,400 Icelandic kronur for one-year subscription to Militant, P.O. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik. Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark: 500 Swedish kronor for one year. Pay to Militant Swedish giro no. 451-32-09-9. New Zealand: Send New Zealand \$90 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand. Australia: Send Australian \$75 to P.O. Box 79, Railway Square Post Office, Railway Square, Sydney 2000, Australia. Philippines, Pacific Islands: Send Australian \$75 or New Zealand \$100 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

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# Clinton's policy toward Haitians: a fiasco

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

SEATTLE—U.S. embassy officials in Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital, took William Corascelan to the airport March 12 for a flight to Miami. Corascelan had quit the Haitian navy and was one of a handful of refugees authorized by U.S. officials to come to the United States and apply for political asylum.

At the airport, however, Haitian security police seized Corascelan and imprisoned him, despite protests by U.S. officials.

This act was a slap in the face of the Clinton administration and a further indication of Washington's unwillingness to seek even stopgap measures to confront the social and political crisis wracking Haiti.

President Bill Clinton, like his predecessor George Bush, has claimed that Haitians could safely seek asylum through U.S. officials in Port-au-Prince. He used this allegation to justify his policy of stopping Haitian refugees at sea and forcibly returning them to Haiti.

The arrest of Corascelan was also a sign that the Haitian military rulers will continue to resist demands for the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, ousted in a bloody coup in 1991.

Washington had been hostile to Aristide prior to his election in December 1990. For years he won support from millions of impoverished Haitians for his outspoken opposition to the hated Duvalier dictatorship and the U.S.-backed military regimes that followed Duvalier's overthrow in 1986.

A succession of unstable military governments, however, had shown that the army was no longer able to restore and maintain stability in Haiti. Even in recent months, there have been student protests, public conferences against human rights abuses by the military and its death squads, and anti-government demonstrations.

Washington has responded by making feeble efforts to try to return Aristide to the island while seeking to impose conditions that would guarantee no significant change in the status quo.

The Bush administration quickly condemned the 1991 coup, suspended economic aid, and imposed an embargo on trade with Haiti that has not been enforced. U.S. government officials quietly allowed Aristide to draw on Haitian government funds held in U.S. banks to finance his activities in exile.

At the same time, Washington pressured Aristide, accusing him of inciting violence and human rights violations, and demanding concessions to his opponents among the military and wealthy businessmen in Haiti.

In negotiations last year, Aristide agreed to form a coalition government with Marc Bazin, a prominent U.S.-backed politician, as prime minister and to an amnesty for most participants in the 1991 coup. He also insisted on guarantees for his personal safety and removal of top coup leaders.

The military high command has so far rejected any agreement, fearing that Aristide's return under any conditions would inspire workers and peasants to renewed political organization and protest.

Describing the Clinton administration's proposal of an Aristide-Bazin government, an unnamed Latin American diplomat told the *New York Times* that it "seems like a Band-Aid that is tempting because it may keep things quiet as long as it sticks." He



February 7 Miami rally defending Haitian refugees  
Militant/ Seth Galinsky

added, "But like all Band-Aids, it seems destined to fall off."

Clinton was forced to act on the Haitian crisis even before inauguration day. Tens of thousands of Haitians took seriously his campaign pledge that he would allow refugees fleeing repression to seek asylum. They prepared to flee to the United States to escape the bloody regime at home. But Clinton repudiated his earlier promise and imposed a naval blockade around Haiti to force back the refugees.

"President-elect Clinton's position is consistent with the Bush administration's position regarding President Aristide," declared

a spokesperson of the new U.S. president in early January. "Clinton supports the return of Aristide as soon as conditions permit."

U.S. Marine Gen. John Sheehan went to Haiti January 8 to meet with the military high command of that country, urging it to accept Aristide and promising financial and technical support if it did so.

The United Nations also sent envoy Dante Caputo to Haiti in January to press Washington's proposal that UN observers be stationed on the island to "guarantee" any political settlement between Aristide and his opponents. Caputo won agreement only to send a few observers. On a second trip he was greeted by violent demonstrators organized by the regime.

Caputo publicly threatened unspecified "strong consequences" against the regime if an agreement was not reached. The *New York Times* followed with a

February 6 editorial arguing that the "international community may also need to consider military options."

Meanwhile, Clinton pressured Aristide to make further concessions and Washington cut off his access to Haitian government funds held in U.S. banks.

Clinton told the press February 5 that Aristide had "caused people in the military and others to fear for their personal safety in ways that are inconsistent with running a democracy." He added, "We have to restore democracy in [a] way that convinces everybody that their human rights will be respected."

Aristide reacted in early March by demanding Clinton do more than make "beautiful statements" about democracy and demanded Washington set a deadline for his return to Haiti.

Clinton met with Aristide March 16, shortly before sending a top-level U.S. delegation to talk with the military rulers in Haiti. He reiterated support for Aristide's return but pointedly refused to set a date.

The deposed Haitian president told the press, "I think that all Haitians can look with joy at the cooperation of myself and President Clinton working hand in hand." He also said he was "totally" happy with Clinton's policies. Aristide stated he would no longer insist that the coup leaders be jailed as a condition of his return.

Harvey McArthur is a rail worker and member of United Transportation Union Local 845 in Seattle.

## UN report points to Washington's cover-up in El Salvador killings

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

A mid-March report issued by a United Nations-sponsored commission on El Salvador admits that throughout the 1980s top Salvadoran military officers, along with rightist death squads, were responsible for killing tens of thousands of civilians, including the former archbishop of San Salvador, Oscar Romero, and several U.S. churchwomen.

These revelations point to Washington's complicity in covering up the truth about these crimes in order to minimize public opposition in the United States to the U.S. military aid that propped up the Salvadoran regime during the civil war in that country. The report confirms what opponents of U.S. policy toward El Salvador have been saying for years.

Between 1979 and 1992, the Carter, Reagan, and Bush administrations gave more than \$6 billion in military aid to a succession of Salvadoran governments. During the 12 years of civil war, 75,000 civilians were killed. El Salvador has a population of 5 million.

The UN-sponsored Commission on the Truth, as it was called, conducted an eight-month investigation under terms of the peace accords signed in January 1992 by the government and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), which effectively ended the Salvadoran civil war. The three who served on the UN commission are Thomas Buergenthal, a law professor at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.; Belisario Betancur, former president of Colombia; and Reinaldo Figueredo, a member of the Venezuelan congress.

"The Truth Commission report vindicates what groups like the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) have been saying for the past 12 years," said Mike Zielinski, political director of national CISPES, in a phone interview. "The U.S. government has been supporting a pack of murderers. The Reagan and Bush administration have consistently lied about the Salvadoran military's war crimes and have covered up U.S. complicity in the bloodshed."

Among the commission's main findings

were the following:

- On March 24, 1980, the day Archbishop Oscar Romero was assassinated, Roberto D'Aubuisson, the founder of the rightist Republican Nationalist Alliance party (ARENA), met with members of his security contingent, Capt. Eduardo Ayala, who attended the meeting, told D'Aubuisson that Romero would be saying mass that morning and "said he thought it would be a good opportunity to kill him," according to the commission's report. D'Aubuisson ordered the slaying and arranged for payment to the gunman.

- On Dec. 2, 1980, four U.S. churchwomen were murdered. Col. Carlos Vides Casanova, then head of the Salvadoran National Guard, helped cover up this crime. He knew the soldiers who carried out this act were operating "under higher orders."

- On Dec. 11, 1981, hundreds of civilians were massacred in the town of El Mozote. Soldiers from the U.S.-trained Atlacatl Battalion systematically killed everyone in the village—men, women, and children.

- On Nov. 16, 1989, six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and her daughter were murdered. Five top officers, led by Gen. René Emilio Ponce, who later became defense minister, gave the order to carry this out. Ponce resigned his government post three days prior to the release of the UN report.

Of the more than 22,000 cases of atrocities examined by the commission, 95 percent were found to have been carried out by members of the Salvadoran armed forces, police units, or right-wing death squads linked to the government.

The remaining 5 percent were attributed to the FMLN, which led the fight against the Salvadoran dictatorship. The FMLN was accused of kidnapping and killing some mayors of cities under government control, judges, and U.S. military personnel.

The commission recommended changes in El Salvador's justice system and the immediate dismissal of 40 military officers involved in these crimes. In addition, it recommended banning three prominent FMLN leaders from holding public office for 10 years.

Salvadoran president Alfredo Cristiani responded by calling for a rapid amnesty for

everyone named in the report. The country's National Assembly, which is controlled by the right-wing ARENA party, promptly heeded Cristiani's request and passed an amnesty bill.

In testimony before a congressional subcommittee on Western Hemisphere affairs, the three commission members cited the role played by the White House in covering up these atrocities.

"I would say that a number of acts were known or should have been known to U.S. officials in El Salvador," stated Buergenthal. "In some cases, there is a sense that they didn't want to know."

In 1980, after the four U.S. churchwomen were killed, former UN ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick asserted that the Salvadoran government was not responsible for their deaths. "The nuns were not just nuns," she said at the time. "The nuns were political activists."

Alexander Haig, U.S. secretary of state at the time, had testified before Congress that the churchwomen might have been killed when they attempted to run through a military roadblock.

The UN commission's report also stated that "Salvadoran exiles living in Miami helped administer death squad activities between 1980 and 1983, with apparently little attention from the U.S. government."

Shortly after the December 1981 massacre at the remote village of El Mozote, correspondents for the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* reported that they had seen the remains of dozens of peasants that nearby villagers said were killed by Salvadoran government soldiers. Then assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs Thomas Enders told Congress that there was "no evidence to confirm" a massacre. At the time, government officials launched a slander campaign questioning the accuracy of the reports by the U.S. journalists, Raymond Bonner of the *Times* and Alma Guillermoprieto of the *Post*.

As outrage over revelations in the report mounted, the Clinton administration announced it was holding back \$11 million in military aid until the Salvadoran government complied with the UN commission's recommendations.

## Haitians set D.C. march for April 2

BY JOANNE WALLADOR

NEW YORK—Haitian organizations and their supporters are gearing up for a demonstration April 2 in Washington, D.C., to demand the unconditional return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and temporary political asylum for Haitian refugees in the United States.

According to a leaflet publicizing the rally, this action will also "protest against the false promises made by the Clinton administration," and "reject all foreign military intervention under the guise of the UN."

The demonstration has been called by Haiti's Tenth Department—an organization of Haitian immigrants in 15 areas in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico.

In New York, 10,000 leaflets publicizing the demonstration have been printed, and 50 buses reserved. The demonstration is being announced on Haitian radio programs and publicized on local campuses. Participants are expected to attend from a number of other cities including Miami, Chicago, and Montreal.

Protesters will be gathering at 10:00 a.m. at Upper Senate Park, north of the Capitol. They will march down Constitution Avenue to a rally at the Ellipse.

Buses will leave New York at 5:00 a.m. To purchase tickets or for more information on the demonstration, call: (718) 434-8100.



# Free trade, protectionism, and the crisis facing working farmers in North America

A discussion on Pathfinder's pamphlet 'Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s'

The following article appeared in the November 1992 issue of the *Union Farmer*, monthly publication of the National Farmers Union, published in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. It is a review of the pamphlet *Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s*, by Doug Jenness; Pathfinder Press, 35 pp., \$3.00.

BY HOWARD BROWN

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

“**Opposition to free trade deals can contribute to an international alliance of producers . . .**”

So argues Doug Jenness in a recent pamphlet published by Pathfinder Press of New York, *Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s*.

Jenness's pamphlet is written with US readers in mind and its focus is US farm policy. But its assumption is that "working farmers," roughly defined as "exploited independent producers who employ little or no wage labor," are an international class with common interests. Farmers in Canada can judge for themselves the pertinence of Jenness's analysis to farmers' struggle for survival everywhere.

Farmers, Jenness argues, "are not a homogeneous economic and social class," but "a set of classes that include both exploited and exploiters, with sharply conflicting class interests." The latter, "capitalist farmers" as Jenness calls them, ally themselves naturally with the banks and agribusiness monopolies in exercising preponderant influence on US farm policy. The pamphlet discusses, for example, how the US Farm Bill and Farmers Home Administration practices disproportionately benefit capitalist farmers.

It is illusory, Jenness argues, to hope to unite "all farmers" in efforts to win lasting relief for exploited producers. Rather, he contends, working farmers should aim for unity with other working people in fighting the food trusts, the banks, and their parties



Planting in Maryland. "Farmers are not a homogenous economic and social class but a set of classes that include both exploited and exploiters, with sharply conflicting class interests," says Doug Jenness.

and government.

"What is needed," Jenness writes, "is for working farmers and wage workers to form an alliance to struggle for a government that implements a farm policy geared to the needs of the exploited, not the enrichment of the exploiters." Required, he says, is a "program of action that can unite exploited farmers internationally." The problems that farmers face cannot be resolved within narrow national frameworks.

Readers hoping for elaborate blueprints for new farm policies may be disappointed in this pamphlet. Jenness discusses US farmers' demand for "100 percent of parity." He opposes all government schemes to limit production as a means of boosting farm commodity prices. But he offers, for the most part, more general policy guidelines as a framework for mobilizing farmers in struggle.

Of special interest is Jenness's evaluation of the roots of the farm debt crisis in private land ownership or what he calls "the rents and mortgages system." Embracing the call for a moratorium on farm foreclosures and demanding the ready provision of low-interest farm credit by the government, he advances a series of proposals that taken together amount to nationalization of the land.

Security of land tenure for working farmers can only be won, he argues, through the

abolition of leasing agreements, sharecropping arrangements, and mortgages. The only land sales permitted, he maintains, should be transfers to the state.

Such measures "would take land off the auction block and out of the hands of banks and speculators . . . to guarantee its use to all who wish to farm," Jenness writes. "Loans . . . would no longer be guaranteed by land, and land would no longer be a means of making farmers into debt slaves."

A main focus of Jenness's pamphlet is the international trade war that rages today with a devastating impact on farmers. He analyzes what he labels Washington's "free trade" aggression in efforts to improve market share for US-based monopolies, including the US GATT [General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs] strategy and the Export Enhancement Program.

Export subsidies and dumping, Jenness argues, "pit farmers of one country against those of another and are especially devastating to farmers in semicolonial countries."

Jenness equally assails the US "fortress of protectionism," import quotas and tariffs aimed at defending the US home market as a private preserve of profit-taking for US big business interests and capitalist farmers. "Neither capitalist protectionism nor free trade offers a solution to the price-cost squeeze facing the big majority of working farmers," Jenness says. "Moreover, both perspectives draw working people into tying their fate to either the 'free trade' capitalists or 'protectionist' capitalists — all in the name of defending 'American' interests."

" . . . when workers and farmers are enlisted in either protectionist or free trade efforts, they end up acting against their own class interests," he generalizes, "as working people in each country are pitted against each other, instead of being united in a common fight against the employers and bankers."

Jenness's arguments on this score deserve attention, for they bear critically on important aspects of farm union policy in Canada — from the promotion of import quotas as a means of "supply control" to the nationalist stance adopted by the union in opposing the Canada-US and North American "Free Trade" Agreements.

For his part, Jenness, to my thinking, treats these "trade" accords too narrowly, viewing them solely as protectionist instruments of US and Canadian big business in their trade wars against overseas competitors. In reshaping the North American economies as more lucrative profit machines, they are weapons as well in capital's war against workers and farmers at home. Linked to anti-capitalist policies that address the general crisis of the market system, opposition to these "trade" deals can contribute to building an international alliance of producers.

The following is a letter to the editor of the *Union Farmer* by Doug Jenness commenting on the review by Howard Brown. It is due to appear in the publication's April issue.

BY DOUG JENNESS

I appreciate the review of *Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s* by Howard Brown that appeared in your November issue. This will encourage your many readers in both Canada and the United States to get hold of a copy and read it.

I am particularly pleased that your reviewer found the pamphlet relevant to many of the problems facing working farmers in Canada even though it primarily addresses the situation in the United States. A review last July in *An Phoblacht/Repub-*

“**Backhanded support to protectionist sections of capitalist class sets back such an alliance . . .**”

*lican News*, published by the Irish political organization Sinn Féin, made the same point. "Even though Jenness' analysis deals almost solely with U.S. farmers the links to the Irish situation are important. In the U.S. as in Ireland farmers demands are simple. 'Farmers must be allowed to make enough selling their commodities to meet their production costs and have enough to live.'"

Brown raises a point in relation to the U.S.-Canada trade accord and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) that prompts me to comment briefly. He writes that I treat "these 'trade' accords too narrowly, viewing them solely as protectionist instruments of U.S. and Canadian big business in their trade wars against overseas competitors. In reshaping the North American economies as more lucrative trade machines," Brown states, "they are weapons as well in capital's war against workers and farmers at home. Linked to anti-capitalist policies that address the general crisis of the market system, opposition to these 'trade' deals can contribute to building an international alliance of farmers."

I don't think there's any basis for intimating that the pamphlet plays down the way capitalists use their trade policies, including "free" trade agreements, to attack working people. In fact, that's one of my central points. "Far from benefiting working farmers," the pamphlet points out, "the grain monopolies' intensified drive to enhance their competitiveness through free trade makes them even more ruthless in forcing working farmers to take a lower price for their commodities."

Rather than the pamphlet approaching capitalist trade policies too narrowly, it is Brown who one-sidedly stresses the need to oppose NAFTA and other "free" trade deals. This can lead to giving critical support to nationalist campaigns against these pacts and sometimes even to favoring protectionist measures. This is what actually happened in Canada several years ago. Linking opposition to the U.S.-Canada "free" trade pact with "anticapitalist" policies, many progressive-minded groups joined the campaign of a protectionist wing of the capitalist class in Canada, most union officials, and many leaders of established farm organizations to try to defeat the trade deal.

A similar development is occurring now in the United States as many progressives in the labor and farm movements energetically join the campaign against NAFTA cloaked with expressions of concern for working people and the environment in Mexico.

These examples of backhanded support to protectionist sections of the capitalist class in their own countries unfortunately sets back, rather than advances, building an international alliance of producers.

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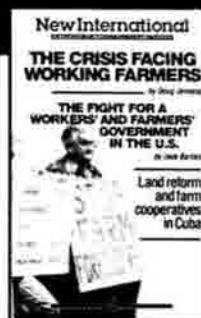
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# Supporters of framed-up unionist answer slanders

Below are reproduced some of the recent letters sent by supporters of Mark Curtis's fight for justice to his defense committee.

These letters answer attempts, made by those who claim Curtis is guilty, to pressure endorsers of his case to end their backing of the defense effort.

The messages are a result of a drive launched by the Mark Curtis Defense Committee based in Des Moines, Iowa, where Curtis was framed up. The campaign aims to get prominent endorsers of his defense committee to write letters explaining in their own words why they support Curtis's fight for justice.

A political activist and union fighter, Curtis was framed up on false charges of sexual assault and burglary in March 1988. He was convicted of those charges later that year and is now serving a 25-year prison sentence.

\* \* \*

## J. R. Evans

Assistant Secretary, Auckland and Tamoana Freezing Workers' Union, Auckland, New Zealand

I wish to reaffirm my strong support for the campaign to win justice for Mark Curtis.

I have been an elected official of the Auckland and Tamoana Freezing Workers' Union for 21 years representing workers in the meatpacking industry in New Zealand. This is the same industry in which Mark Curtis was an active unionist before his arrest and imprisonment on false charges of rape and burglary.

I have followed Mark's case for several years and have read both the prosecution evidence and the material produced by the Mark Curtis Defence Committee. After careful consideration of both sides in the case I am convinced of Mark's innocence.

I have been forced to consider this question closely because, unfortunately, I was induced to withdraw my support for the defence effort early on in the campaign. This occurred after the union president, Frank Barnard, and I received misleading propaganda in support of the frame-up. We made the mistake of writing a letter repudiating our support for Mark which has since been used widely by the supporters of the police frame-up.

I have since had the opportunity of reading further defence committee material, seeing the video, "The Frame Up of Mark Curtis," and meeting Mark's wife Kate Kaku. I have also been in receipt of a continuing stream of material promoting the frame-up of Mark.

The decision by both Frank Barnard and I to become endorsers of the defence effort again was taken with the utmost conviction that Mark has been the victim of a grave injustice that has to be overturned. I urge all other endorsers to remain firm and not repeat our mistake.

Working people and active unionists the world over have faced repression, intimidation and frame-ups in our fight for justice.

## Parole Now for Mark Curtis!

Des Moines, Iowa  
Friday, April 9, 7:00 p.m.

### HEAR

**Kate Kaku**, Curtis's wife and a leader of the international fight to win justice for Curtis

**William Kutmus**, Des Moines attorney representing Curtis in federal appeal of his conviction

**Edna Griffin**, long-time fighter for civil rights, member Iowa Women's Hall of Fame

**Andre Sledge**, member United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1149, Marshalltown, Iowa

Join the panel of speakers to discuss campaign to win freedom for framed-up unionist.

Best Western Starlite Village,  
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Sponsored by the Mark Curtis  
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For more information call (515) 246-1695

Mark's case is an opportunity for us to reaffirm our commitment to the union principle that "an injury to one is an injury to all."

## Peter Rachleff

Associate Professor of History, Macalester College, St. Paul, Minnesota

I am writing to reaffirm my support for Mark Curtis. Frankly, it is hard for me to believe that five whole years have gone by since Brother Curtis was arrested by the Des Moines police. While this time has flown by for me and my family, I am sure that every second has slowly ticked by for Curtis and his family. It is high time that he be released from prison.

I strongly support his application for parole. I have strong doubts about the evidence presented against him in the first place, and I can certainly understand his unwillingness to participate in any "program" that might be construed as an admission of guilt. Brother Curtis has continued to demonstrate by his behavior in prison that he is committed to the struggle against racism and sexism. It would be grossly unfair of the Iowa Board of Pardons to deem him recalcitrant or unrepentant as grounds for denying him parole.

I support your efforts to gain Brother Curtis his freedom.

## Sister M. Brendan Conlon

Director, Christian Help, Inc., Ursuline Sisters, Morgantown, West Virginia

At the time Mark Curtis was charged and brought to trial, I wrote in support of him because I believed that he was innocent of the charges against him and had been the victim of a set-up.

Recently I have been informed that some of those who, like myself, had supported Mark have withdrawn their support, after having received mailings from various

groups asking them to do so. I have read some of these letters suggesting that support be withdrawn, but I find nothing in them to change my original stance.

The NAACP letters which I have read stress the heinousness of rape of a 15-year-old girl. This is indeed a heinous act, but I have seen no medical evidence supporting the case against Mark Curtis; I do not believe he raped this 15-year-old girl.

The issue is indeed one of injustice, but it is not, I believe, an issue of racial injustice. I am keenly sensitive to racial issues; recently I received the Martin Luther King, Jr., Award from the Black Culture and Research Center of West Virginia University. But I believe that the issue here is a fabricated charge of rape against Mark Curtis. I do not believe Mark Curtis is a rapist, and I regret that a 15-year-old black girl was used to make the charge against him.

I am presently watching the development of a situation here in Morgantown where a black man is accused of raping a white woman. In spite of the complete lack of medical evidence against him, it is, I am afraid, likely that he will be found guilty of this crime, primarily on the verbal testimony of the woman, whom many of us know to be unreliable in matters of truth. Seeing this drama work out has made me realize once again how easy it would have been to frame Mark, and for some people at the time there was very good reason to want to see him framed.

Unless some new evidence comes forth, I will continue to believe in Mark's innocence and to support him and urge his release.



Alfredo Alvarez, former head of Human Rights Commission in Des Moines, Iowa. Alvarez is one of many who have spoken out denouncing slander campaign against Mark Curtis.

## Larry Solomon

President, United Auto Workers Local 751, in Decatur, Illinois

My name is Larry G. Solomon. I am the President of UAW Local 751. I have been aware of Mark's ongoing fight for justice for some time now. It is my belief that Mark was railroaded by a system that took the word of police that later were found to be unscrupulous protectors of the citizenry. On several occasions Mark's supporters have stopped by the union hall and discussed his plight with me. I have read a lot of information about Mark both pro and con and it is very obvious to me that the issue is no longer innocence or guilt but rather who he is and what he believes. I am asking now in the name of justice that Mark be released immediately.

\* \* \*

Letters in support of Mark Curtis's fight for justice should be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, IA 50311. Fax (515) 243-9869.

# New Zealand workers face more layoffs

BY CARMEN BAIN

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — Working people across New Zealand were angered and shocked when New Zealand's national phone company, Telecom, announced February 17 it was laying off 5,200 employees over the next four years.

The company's action was reported to be the biggest single layoff in New Zealand's history. The job losses were announced the same time that Telecom released its third-quarter result, a record NZ\$121 million (US\$64 million) profit, almost 10 percent higher than the same period last year.

The first redundancy (layoff) notices have gone out to 835 workers, who will lose their jobs at the end of March.

Another 2,000 workers are expected to be laid off by the end of the year. Over the past six years Telecom has slashed its staff by 13,000. In 1987 Telecom employed over 25,000 workers. By 1997 it projects employing only 7,500.

The Communications and Energy Workers Union has said that Telecom workers who survive the first round of redundancies will seek a pay increase to compensate for an increased workload. Their contract expires March 25.

"Workers have put up with no pay increase as a trade-off for job security," said union spokesperson Bob Brough. "In light of the company's latest announcement on layoffs, that doesn't apply."

Telecom says that the layoffs are an inevitable part of a long overdue rationalization and the introduction of new technology.

The layoffs come in the middle of what the big-business media terms a "jobless recovery."

Benefits for the unemployed, the sick, and others unable to work, have been cut. Working people pay more for health care and education.

The labor minister for the ruling National Party, Bill Birch, said the redundancies were "the regrettable but inevitable" result of changes in new technology and the cost of improving New Zealand's telecommunications system.

Many blame the layoffs on Telecom's ownership by U.S. corporations, Ameritech and Bell Atlantic. As national union spokesperson David Udy explained, "The cuts in jobs are simply aimed at improving the profit to the shareholders who are largely off-shore, and who obviously have no thought for New Zealand or the people."

Telecom, however, was shedding staff for three years before it was sold to Ameritech and Bell Atlantic in 1990. These redundancies follow a pattern of plant closures and layoffs across the country. According to the employment service, 1 out of 8 full-time jobs that existed six years ago has been eliminated. The statistics department estimates that more than a quarter of all existing jobs are part-time.

Official unemployment was 10.2 percent of the work force in December. Counting those who are not looking for work, however, joblessness exceeded 15 percent. According to a 1992 statistics department report, total employment in manufacturing, construction, transport, telecommunications, and electrical supply industries — comprising roughly one-third of workers in New Zealand — declined by 16 percent, or 95,000 workers, from 1987-1991.

### Layoffs not result of 'foreign ownership'

In a statement released immediately after the announced layoffs, Joan Shields, a member of the New Zealand Meat Workers Union, and Communist League candidate for mayor in Christchurch last year, explained that the layoffs are not a result of "foreign ownership."

"Capitalists everywhere operate the same way," she said. "Their goals are to make the highest profits by selling to the widest market with the lowest labor costs," whether the company owners are based in New Zealand, the United States, or Japan. This is occurring during an international depression of the capitalist economic system, Shields said.

"The bosses at Telecom, like bosses everywhere, want working people to pay for the crisis of their system," the communist worker explained. What is needed, she said, is for the labor movement to answer Telecom's demand for higher profits by organizing a fight alongside workers at Telecom to put the responsibility on the capitalists and the government to protect us from the crisis of their system.

"Our starting point," Shields continued, "is for the unions to launch a fight for jobs for all, by mobilizing in the streets to demand that the government reduce the work-week to 30 hours, without reducing our weekly wage." Combined with this labor should demand a "massive public-works program that could begin not only to tackle unemployment but to rebuild health and education programs as well." Such measures, she stated, would open jobs for hundreds of thousands of workers.

"This fight would strengthen unity among working people making us better able to stand up to wage cuts and speed-ups on the job. It would put the labor movement in a better position to fight for social programs to meet the needs of workers and farmers in New Zealand and around the world," Shields concluded.

Carmen Bain is a member of the Food and Beverage Workers Union at Independent Fisheries in Christchurch, New Zealand.



# 'Communist Manifesto' defends women's rights

*The Communist Manifesto*, by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, New York, Pathfinder, 47 pp., \$2.50. Also available in Spanish.

BY MAGGIE TROWE

The *Communist Manifesto* is one of the books Pathfinder Press is featuring during Women's History Month. The *Manifesto*, 145 years after it was written, remains a basic text for working-class fighters. One of the central struggles it champions is women's fight for equality, which the *Manifesto* explains, is directly linked to the struggle of the working class to unite in order to overturn the capitalist system.

The *Manifesto* is a relevant document today for those women and men who are part of the movement to defend abortion rights. It's important for workers who are discussing how to fight layoffs and attacks on seniority and, at the same time, help ensure that women, Blacks, and others who

burgeoning factories. Conditions in the cities were abysmal, as Engels described in his book, *The Condition of the Working Class in England* in 1844.

But the very same process, by concentrating workers in large factories in enormous cities, "rescued a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life," Marx said. Workers' cultural level rose as they learned reading and mathematics and met others who had immigrated from around the world to find jobs or were forced to emigrate themselves.

## Women thrust into factories

The effect of this process on women was revolutionary as well. Women were thrust into the factories because, as the *Manifesto* explains, with the development of modern industry, "differences of age and sex no longer have any distinctive social validity." The horizons of millions of women were transformed from the narrow realm of the rural field and kitchen under the control of father, husband, and feudal lord to life as a more economically independent factory worker in a metropolis.

These developments and the rise of the fight for women's rights were integrally connected. As women joined the industrial working class, the question of their participation in the growing union movement and in working-class parties was posed. Marx and Engels championed the increased participation of female workers in the International Workingmen's Association, which they helped found in 1864.

As women moved out of chattel status, democratic rights like the vote and full citizenship became burning issues. So did their right to control their reproductive lives.

## Family under capitalism

The *Manifesto* explains the difference between marriage for the capitalist class and marriage for the working class. Bourgeois marriage has a class content; it serves to cement alliances between capitalist families and to ensure that accumulations of capital amassed by the bosses through the exploitation of wage labor are passed from one generation to another.

Workers, on the other hand, have no property, and with the entry of women into the working class, marriage between workers becomes more and more the voluntary association of equal partners.

"On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois

family, based?" Marx and Engels write in the *Manifesto*. "On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form this family exists only among the bourgeoisie. But this state of things finds its complement in the practical absence of the family among the proletarians and in public prostitution."

Marx and Engels assert that prostitution is the complement of bourgeois marriage and that the pressure on women to engage in prostitution, where sex is sold as a commodity, cannot be eradicated until capitalist rule has been defeated.

The capitalist class has an interest in maintaining and promoting everything that weakens and divides the working class. So the commitment of working-class organizations to the fight for the full equality of women is a central question. This was true when the *Manifesto* was written and it is true today.

The *Communist Manifesto* explains that communists "have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole. They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mold the proletarian movement." The fight for the equality of women, like the working-class movement as a whole, can only succeed if its leaders see themselves as part of the class struggle.

The *Manifesto* insists that communists be part of all struggles "for the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class." For working-class fighters today, for example, it means we must be part of the fight to defend abortion clinics against right-wing terrorists who try to shut the clinics and physically attack clinic workers and women who go to the clinics.

At the same time, communists who are engaged in these fights must point to broader struggles and to the need for a movement that can lead workers and farmers to take power out of the hands of the capitalist class and begin the fight for a society based on human needs. They must "bring to the fore the property question," as the *Manifesto* states.

Fighters for women's rights need to know that the capitalist class and their government, not men as a sex, lead the attacks on women's rights. The second-class status of women is not in the interests of workers who are male, even though many are influenced by reactionary antiwoman ideas. These backward attitudes, however, have less of a hold today than ever on the working class.

As we celebrate Women's History Month we can find a valuable tool for the struggle today in the pages of the *Communist Manifesto*.

## IN REVIEW

suffer discrimination get access to jobs and training often denied them.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, both revolutionaries in their twenties in 1848, wrote the *Communist Manifesto*. Their aim was to explain the program of the Communist League at the beginning of the democratic revolutions against feudal tyranny that swept Europe that year.

The *Manifesto* explains the program of communists and dispels myths and slanders against the young movement that were being spread at the time by supporters of reaction — like the accusation that male communists advocated sexual access to all women. It also explains clearly and succinctly how the development of capitalism produces the "gravediggers" of the capitalist system: the working class or "proletariat."

As capitalism grew stronger in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, it swept away feudal social relations such as serfdom and the status of women as chattel, or property.

This social transformation was contradictory. While it was carried out with great brutality in order to serve the urgent needs of the rising capitalist class, it created and strengthened the working class.

Peasants were stripped of their land and tools and they were forced to go to the cities to seek wage work in the

# Rightists target abortion clinics in Minnesota

BY JON HILLSON

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — Operation Rescue, the anti-abortion-rights outfit, has targeted Minneapolis and St. Paul for a 12-week national "training session" from late June to early September to be highlighted by a "week of action" in early July.

The news, first announced in an advertisement in *World*, a right-wing journal, was featured in extensive media coverage here March 10. That day Dr. David Gunn was assassinated by Michael Griffin, a supporter of the antiabortion group Rescue America, in front of the Pensacola, Florida, clinic where he performed abortions.

The purpose of the announced right-wing training session was brought home March 20, when staff members at the Robbinsdale Clinic here discovered a hose funneling gas from a 20-pound tank of propane into a heating duct — placed with the intention of being ignited by a basement furnace. No damage was done.

A week earlier Jeri Rasmussen, director

of the Midwest Health Center for Women, returned home to find nails strewn in her driveway. She later received a death threat on her unlisted phone and a window in her home was shattered by a cement block with a death threat attached to it. Rasmussen's house is under protection by a local court order and a municipal "antistalking" ordinance, which prohibits harassment of clinic workers and clients.

"The summer event this year won't be anything like what you've seen in the past," stated Margeaux Farrar, an Operation Rescue spokesperson. "We'll be going toward a different tactic."

These tactics would be carried out by so-called IMPACT teams, which Operation Rescue founder Randall Terry terms "the Green Berets" of the antichoice forces. IMPACT stands for Institute of Mobilized Prophetic Activated Christian Training.

According to Farrar, IMPACT cadres will "place [their] bodies . . . between the murderers and their intended victims — the abor-

tionists and the babies they intend to abort."

Operation Rescue executive director Keith Tucci stated that the Twin Cities, Minnesota, training session would sanction trespassing violations and resisting arrest to thwart abortions.

"Because some person took a couple of hours to stand in the right place at the right time to persuade [a woman] otherwise," Tucci stated, "that's the ultimate success."

An estimated 50 participants are expected for the three-month training, with events expected to draw supporters from around the state and country.

An Operation Rescue IMPACT team training session involving 23 people had been underway since mid-January in Melbourne, in central Florida.

Two days after the murder of Gunn, Operation Rescue held a training session rally of 200 in Melbourne, where they celebrated the decision of two doctors who worked at a targeted abortion clinic to leave the facility.

Among those participating in the recent Florida Operation Rescue actions were leaders of a four-month campaign last year to cripple the functioning of the Robbinsdale Clinic in suburban Minneapolis, which provides abortion services to mostly working-class women.

## A mobile right-wing cadre

Also involved in the Melbourne training and the Robbinsdale skirmishes were several teenagers who have engaged in attacks on clinics elsewhere with the rightist groups "Missionaries to the Preborn" and the "Lambs of Christ."

These mobile cadres participated in major 1992 clinic sieges in Milwaukee and Baton Rouge, Louisiana. In the latter city, the central Lambs of Christ leader was a colonel in the Green Berets.

The two daily newspapers here editorially condemned the upcoming Operation Rescue summer scenario.

"There are no guarantees for peace," the Minneapolis *Star Tribune* stated March 12. "But planning and coordination should begin now between city and suburban governments and law enforcement agencies to safeguard abortion rights advocates, hospitals and family planning clinics."

Shortly thereafter, St. Paul mayor James

Scheibel held a highly publicized meeting with city and state police officials on the matter.

In June and August of last year, up to 400 pro-choice activists rebuffed threatened "rescues" of the Robbinsdale clinic. After this successful action, scores of predominantly youthful activists maintained five-hour Saturday escort services outside the clinic to counter the harassment of organized ultrarightists for about 16 weeks.

Such presence was required as local cops routinely turned a blind eye to abortion foes, who fraternized with police while violating the injunction sought by the clinic.

In November, a potentially deadly amount of gasoline was poured into the clinic — then under the protection of a court order — but failed to explode when a lit wick was extinguished by a nighttime breeze. Sustaining more than \$25,000 in damages, the facility reopened within two days after cleanup and repairs.

No arrests of the would-be killers have been made since the attempted bombing.

## Pro-choice mobilizations needed

Leaders of pro-choice organizations in the Twin Cities such as the National Abortion Rights Action League and Planned Parenthood have responded to the announcement of Operation Rescue plans by calling for increased police protection of abortion clinics and passage by the state legislature of laws to protect clinic staff.

Kari Sachs from the Socialist Workers Party said, "Operation Rescue's plans to come to Minneapolis represent a political challenge for labor and young people. We should look to the example that was set this past year in Boston and Houston where the mobilizations of thousands of supporters of a woman's right to choose pushed these forces back."

In a related development, supporters of abortion rights have organized to put pressure on the state legislature in Connecticut to pass a law making blockades of abortion clinics illegal. The bill is supported by the state's attorney general Richard Blumenthal. At a hearing on the proposed law in Hartford March 19 equal numbers of supporters and opponents of abortion rights gathered to present their arguments.

from Pathfinder



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BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The *Militant's* coverage of the fight by union coal miners for a decent contract and the paper's eyewitness reports on the latest developments in South Africa and Cuba are proving popular among many working people and youth.

An eight-week international drive is now under way to expand the circulation of the *Militant* and other socialist publications. Supporters of these valuable political tools are stepping up their visits to working-class communities and campuses to sign up new readers. The campaign, which runs from March 27 to May 22, aims to win 2,800 new *Militant* subscribers, 600 subscribers to the Spanish-language monthly magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 1,200 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International*. Subscriptions that have been sent to the *Militant* business office since March 13 count toward these goals.

### Success in the coalfields

Teams of *Militant* supporters visiting coal-mining areas throughout the United States report an excellent response. A four-day team traveling throughout the coalfields in Pennsylvania sold 46 *Militants* and one subscription.

"The highlight of the week," reports Joanne Kuniansky, "was when the team sold 24 *Militants* at a mine owned by Rochester and Pittsburgh [a coal company] near the town of Indiana, Pennsylvania. At the morning shift change where we sold 10 of these papers, one miner wanted to make sure it was a new issue because he said he had seen last week's paper underground." Another team sold 90 copies of the *Militant* in two days in coal-mining areas in southern Illinois March 23-24.

"Coal miners at Peabody's Black Mesa and Kayenta mines on the Navajo reservation in Arizona are keenly interested in the recently ended strike by Peabody coal miners, and their continuing contract fight," reports Mike Shur. "A *Militant* sales team visiting these two mines March 8 sold 49 single copies and one subscription. After running out of the current issue of the paper, the team also distributed 40 back issues, receiving donations from \$.50 to \$3.00."

A three-day team to coal-mining areas in the Birmingham, Alabama, area in early March sold 64 copies of the *Militant* and 6 subscriptions.

A team of *Militant* supporters visiting Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, in Canada sold 10 subscriptions to striking gold miners and their supporters over three days. Since last May, the 240 members of the Canadian Association of Smelter and Allied Workers Local 4 have been involved in a bitter battle against concessions and ef-

forts by the owners of the Royal Oak gold mine to break their union (see article on page 16).

We encourage all readers to join *Militant* sales and reporting teams in coal-mining areas. To do so contact *Militant* distributors listed on page 2.

### Packaginghouse sale

A team of *Militant* supporters from Cincinnati, Ohio, received a gratifying response during a March 22 plant-gate sale at the Fischer Packing plant in Louisville, Kentucky. They sold 45 *Militants* during an hour-and-a-half afternoon sale to the approximately 200 unionists who went by. These workers, mem-

bering of the Pathfinder pamphlet *Che Guevara and the Fight for Socialism Today*.

These successful sales experiences are examples of the big opportunities that exist to reach fighting workers and youth with the internationalist working-class political perspective presented each week in the pages of the *Militant*.

### Subscription renewal effort

The international circulation drive follows a *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* subscription renewal effort. During this one-month campaign 262 *Militant* and 23 *Perspectiva Mundial* readers decided to resubscribe. Supporters in



*Militant*/Richard Hazboun  
Militant sales table at Haiti protest in Washington, D.C., March 16.

bers of the United Food and Commercial Workers, struck for 19 weeks last year in a fight against company-demanded concessions. While back at work, they are continuing their fight for a new contract.

"Many of these workers were familiar with the *Militant*," said team member Brian Taylor. "They were interested in the latest developments with the miners' struggle and the coverage from South Africa."

In New Jersey, *Militant* supporters sold more than 30 copies of the paper at a March 20 rally of 600 outside a Jersey City mosque. The rally was called by Muslim groups to protest media and police efforts to smear Muslim and Arab immigrants as terrorists in the wake of the World Trade Center explosion.

In Reykjavik, Iceland, supporters have gotten a jump on their circulation goal, selling two introductory subscriptions at a meeting to celebrate the publication in Ice-

seal. Several areas report that through the renewal drive they also won a number of new subscribers.

New York City led the way in the renewal campaign, signing up 29 *Militant* and 5 *Perspectiva Mundial* renewals. In New Zealand 28 readers decided to resubscribe to the *Militant*.

Here's a final reminder about deadlines to get subscription totals recorded on the weekly sales scoreboard. All subscriptions received in the *Militant* business office by Monday at 5:00 p.m. (EST) will be included in the figures listed on the sales chart.

We urge all readers to join the *Militant* circulation drive in your area. If you would like to order a bundle or join a sales team call (212) 243-6392 or contact local distributors listed on page 12.

On to winning thousands of new readers!

nation in all forms."

The rally will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, April 25. It will be followed by a noon march and windup rally. Exact locations for the event are still being negotiated with the government, which says it is seeding grass on the mall in front of the Capitol building — the site chosen by march organizers for the afternoon rally. This means marchers will have to rally at the Washington Monument. One indication of the possible size of the march, which shows why the larger mall location is needed, is the local hotel bookings. Major hotel chains contacted by the *Washington Post* said they

have been booked for months and have turned down thousands looking for lodging.

Organizers of the massive march say the event is not intended as a protest against the Clinton administration, but as a means to speed approval of the federal legislation. Lobby days are projected both before and after the march, as are a host of political meetings and discussions, social events, and smaller actions.

Readers of the *Militant* are encouraged to participate in building and attending the march. For more information on the rally call (800) 832-2889.

# WHERE WE STAND

SOLD: 100

BEGINNING OF DRIVE

	The MILITANT	PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL	NEW INTERNATIONAL
	SOLD / GOAL	SOLD / GOAL	SOLD / GOAL
<b>UNITED STATES</b>			
Atlanta	2 75	1 10	0 20
Baltimore	1 75	0 10	0 25
Birmingham, AL	10 75	2 10	0 20
Boston	6 110	1 30	0 45
Chicago	3 110	0 25	0 35
Cincinnati	0 10	0 2	0 3
Cleveland	4 65	0 4	0 25
Denver	1 5	0 2	0 5
Des Moines, IA	3 85	0 30	0 40
Detroit	2 80	0 10	0 30
Greensboro, NC	1 65	0 7	0 30
Houston	3 75	0 20	0 30
Los Angeles	1 170	0 85	0 95
Miami	0 100	0 35	0 50
Morgantown, WV	1 65	0 5	0 20
New Haven, CT	0 10	0 2	0 5
New York	13 225	3 75	0 95
Newark, NJ	0 135	0 45	0 70
Philadelphia	3 85	0 20	0 25
Pittsburgh	1 80	0 5	0 25
Portland, OR	4 15	0 2	0 10
Salt Lake City	6 75	0 15	0 35
San Francisco	6 110	0 30	0 70
Santa Cruz, CA	0 8	0 5	0 5
Seattle	1 80	0 30	0 35
St. Louis	1 90	0 10	0 40
Twin Cities, MN	5 120	0 15	0 30
Washington, D.C.	8 75	1 25	0 40
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>86 2,273</b>	<b>8 564</b>	<b>0 958</b>
<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>0 30</b>	<b>0 10</b>	<b>0 20</b>
<b>BELGIUM</b>	<b>0 8</b>	<b>0 4</b>	<b>0 10</b>
<b>BRITAIN</b>			
London	0 60	0 5	0 25
Manchester	0 35	0 1	0 20
Sheffield	0 35	0 3	0 15
<b>Britain Total</b>	<b>0 130</b>	<b>0 9</b>	<b>0 60</b>
<b>CANADA</b>			
Montreal	7 65	1 12	0 60
Quebec City	0 5	0 0	0 2
Toronto	4 75	0 15	0 45
Vancouver	0 65	0 10	0 30
<b>Canada Total</b>	<b>11 210</b>	<b>1 37</b>	<b>0 137</b>
<b>FRANCE</b>	<b>0 10</b>	<b>0 3</b>	<b>0 10</b>
<b>ICELAND</b>	<b>3 10</b>	<b>0 1</b>	<b>0 3</b>
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>			
Auckland	0 45	0 1	0 10
Christchurch	0 25	0 1	0 8
Wellington	0 40	0 1	0 10
<b>N.Z. Total</b>	<b>0 110</b>	<b>0 3</b>	<b>0 28</b>
<b>PUERTO RICO</b>	<b>0 1</b>	<b>1 10</b>	<b>0 10</b>
<b>SWEDEN</b>	<b>0 65</b>	<b>0 20</b>	<b>0 20</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 2,839</b>	<b>10 661</b>	<b>0 1,256</b>

## IN THE UNIONS

	The MILITANT	PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL	NEW INTERNATIONAL
	SOLD / GOAL	SOLD / GOAL	SOLD / GOAL
<b>UNITED STATES</b>			
ACTWU	1 28	1 12	0 20
ILGWU	0	2	0
IAM	0	0	0
OCAW	1 50	0 4	0 18
UAW	8 85	0 5	0 25
UFCW	2 56	0 35	0 26
UMWA	1 15	0	0
USWA	4 85	0	0 25
UTU	7	0	0
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>24 319</b>	<b>3 56</b>	<b>0 114</b>
<b>BRITAIN</b>			
AEEU	6	—	6
NUM	2	—	2
RMT	12	—	6
TGWU	6	—	3
<b>Britain Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>CANADA</b>			
ACTWU	2	—	1
CAW	9	—	4
IAM	6	—	2
USWA	10	2	2
<b>Canada Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>			
EU	5	—	1
MWU	2	—	1
UFBGWU	8	—	2
<b>N.Z. Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>SWEDEN</b>			
Food workers	6	—	2
Metal workers	5	—	1
Transport workers	2	—	—
<b>Sweden Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>3</b>

ACTWU — Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; AEU — Amalgamated Engineering Union; CAW — Canadian Auto Workers; EU — Engineers Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; ILGWU — International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; MWU — Meat Workers Union; NUM — National Union of Mineworkers; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU — Transport and General Workers Union; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFBGWU — United Food, Beverage and General Workers Union; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA — United Mine Workers of America; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU — United Transportation Union

## Organizers of gay rights demonstration expect big turnout April 25 in capital

BY GREG McCARTAN

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Organizers of the national "March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation" say they expect up to a million people to converge here April 25.

Central demands of the march and rally include legislation enforcing "an end to discrimination by state and federal governments" on the basis of sexual orientation; an "increase in funding for AIDS research" and "universal access to health care"; "the right to reproductive freedom"; and an end to sexist discrimination; and "an end to racial and ethnic discrimi-



# Matanzas university student conference discusses Cuba, international politics

Continued from front page

press and numerous discussions and visits to places of interest in Matanzas.

The conference was organized around a series of student presentations on topics as diverse as "The theory and practice of human rights in Cuba;" "Nicaraguan youth and the struggle for national liberation;" "The working class in the developed capitalist countries;" "The place of physical education in the development of socialist life styles;" "Mythic-religious conceptions in Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*;" and "Cuba and its insertion in the world economy: challenges for the 1990s." Fifty-five students gave presentations on almost two dozen subjects.

Five thousand students attend the University of Matanzas. Half are full-time students and the others are workers and professionals continuing their education.

On the second day of the conference the Pathfinder delegation, which included Francisco Picado and Sara Lobman as well as Waters, was asked to give a special presentation and field questions on "The situation facing young people in the United States."

"If the working people of Cuba were isolated and fighting alone in the world, the revolution would not be able to survive," Waters explained when asked her opinion of how Cuba's vanguard could continue to defend the gains of the revolution under the pressures of the current economic crisis.

"But you are not alone," she emphasized. "The capitalist system is in a deep economic crisis. The imperialist rulers are marching humanity toward a third world war. Our class — the working class — is not going to be driven into another international slaughter without a fight. We will have our chance first, in the course of many battles, to take power away from the capitalist class in countries around the world."

"The future of the Cuban revolution is deeply intertwined with the future of working people in the United States and around the world," Waters explained to the intent audience. "In this world, in the struggles that are looming, the fighting vanguard of Cuban working people has a unique role to play. The Cuban revolution is a beacon, an example for all exploited and oppressed people. It shows us all that 'Yes, it is possible.'"

## Interest in U.S. politics

"Because of conditions like those facing workers in the meat-processing industry," Picado explained at another discussion, "U.S. workers are increasingly trying to resist the ruling-class offensive against our rights and standard of living." The discussion was on the frame-up of U.S. union and political activist Mark Curtis. Curtis is currently serving a 25-year sentence in an Iowa prison on false charges of raping a 15-year-old high school student.

A video on Curtis's fight for justice gave the Cuban youth and other conference par-

ticipants a clearer idea of what the capitalist economic crisis means for workers and farmers in the United States. Several of the youth rushed to write letters for the delegation to take back to Curtis. "It's really an inspiration for us to learn that there are people like Mark who are fighting inside the United States," a young woman stated.

Professors in the social sciences department organized time for a three-hour discussion with the Pathfinder representatives on

and were finding them useful in trying to understand what is happening today in the former Soviet Union.

"What do you think is the place of Trotsky in the continuity of the communist movement?" one professor asked. Another said he was impressed with *Revolution Betrayed*. "But I have to find out more about what Trotsky actually did," he said. "Did his deeds match his words?"

The challenge of continuing to move for-

ward had something to lose from a more confident and politically conscious working class to dig in their heels. The harsh shortages have meant fewer opportunities to win over those who could be convinced of the correctness of a proletarian course only as it moved forward in practice.

A significant layer of Cubans, including many young people, don't see themselves and their collective efforts as the solution to the challenges Cuba is facing today. A recent university graduate, herself a supporter of the revolution, said many of her contemporaries were apathetic, "simply waiting for the film to end." While they are not interested in organizing against the socialist course being charted by the government, she said, they assume it can't succeed and are simply waiting — arms crossed — for something to change.

The students and professors who were drawn to the Matanzas conference are among the most politically conscious. This was shown throughout the week by the political level of the discussions, the consciousness of the participants, their active interest in everything happening in the world, and the questions they asked as they sought to learn more about the development of class politics on a world scale. Through them, the *Militant* reporters here were able to get a clearer picture of the layer of youth and others in Cuba who are responding to the difficulties and challenges imposed by the economic crisis with creativity and enthusiasm and who are fighting to find ways to use the greatest resource Cuba has — its working people — to resolve the very real problems that exist.

## The fight for food production

Every Saturday morning, Montes de Oca and Amaury Jiménez explained, one or more buses take students, professors, and other workers from the university to one of the two farms that produce food for the school. These farms are worked largely by this voluntary labor. Charts, seen all over the school, keep track of participation in these brigades. One chart showed that some people had already contributed well over 100 hours this year, while others had chosen not to participate at all. "Tomorrow we'll work about four hours," Jiménez said one evening.

"We produce 80 percent of the potatoes, yucca, and other root crops that the students and staff consume, and all the vegetables," Juana Ortiz, director of the Karl Marx Vocational School for Exact Sciences, said during an afternoon visit to the school. Nearly 2,000 students attend the boarding school, which prepares students in grades 10-12 to enter the university to study sciences.

"Students spend 3 out of 11 days working on the farm," Yasser Perera told the *Militant*. "We spend 8 days in classes and we go home for 3 days." Perera, in the 11th grade, is the president of the Federation of High School Students (FEEM) at the school. In addition to the fields, the school is building facilities to raise pigs, chickens, and rabbits.

"We also do almost all the cleaning and maintenance work," FEEM vice-president Hassan Pérez added. Both youths and the director explained how the creativity of the students was essential to keep the school running under the current crisis conditions. This was true at the university as well. Almost all course work at the university and many classes at the high school are geared to enabling students to use what they learn in class to immediately pitch in on solving some of the problems confronting Cuba today. Clearly, there are many youth who accept this responsibility with enthusiasm.

## Cuban 'Franksteins'

Because of the lack of hard currency, schools and universities in Cuba face a tremendous challenge to provide the modern equipment and technology necessary today for science and computer laboratories. At the University of Matanzas, a member of the biotechnology teaching staff



Volunteers cut cabbage near Güines in Havana province, January 1993. Lack of many basic food items is most serious indication of Cuba's current economic crisis. Students at Matanzas conference, reflecting some of the most politically conscious youth in Cuba, were eager to discuss world political developments and how to meet challenges facing Cuba.

"Economic and social conditions in the United States today." Topics they were interested in discussing included an assessment of the domestic and foreign policies of the new Democratic Party administration, and what elements of anti-Cuban revolution propaganda had the most impact on U.S. workers.

There was particular interest in how the economic and social crisis in the United States has affected the Cuban-American community in Miami. Picado, who works in a garment factory in Miami with many Cuban and other Latin American workers, was able to explain the increasing polarization between the generation of Cubans who emigrated to the United States in the 1960s and early 1970s and a newer generation of Cuban immigrants, many of whom find themselves working in factories and other businesses owned by Cuban-Americans. Like other workers in the United States, Picado explained, the consciousness of these workers is affected by the economic crisis. Moreover, they are not afraid of taking on the reactionary forces that have long tried to monopolize the political life in the Cuban-American community.

"For the first time since the triumph of the Cuban revolution," Picado said, "last October a public meeting was organized in Miami for two communist youth leaders from Cuba."

One of the professors present asked about the many books by Leon Trotsky, the Russian communist leader, that are published by Pathfinder. Many young men and women now teaching in Cuba's universities lived and studied for years in the Soviet Union. Trotsky's writings were not available in either Cuba or the Soviet Union and he was generally portrayed as a counterrevolutionary opponent of Lenin.

Under the impact of the disintegration of the bureaucratic parties and regimes in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, there is great interest in reading Trotsky's writings — as well as rereading Lenin — and openness to reevaluating what had previously been taught as the history of the Russian revolution. Several professors told us they had just begun reading books like Trotsky's *Revolution Betrayed* and *My Life*

ward on a working-class course, while Cuba faces a deep economic crisis, was taken up in a presentation on "Aspects of the Development of Democracy in Cuba." Nancy Montes de Oca, Janny Rodríguez, Humberto Martínez, and Jorge Zamora said the rectification process was continuing even during what the Cubans call the "special period."

Rectification refers to the political reorientation in Cuba that began in 1984 and gained real momentum between 1986 and 1990. It entailed an explicit rejection of political and economic policies that had been copied from the Soviet Union and implemented in Cuba for more than a decade. That course had led to a significant demobilization and demoralization of Cuban workers, farmers, and youth.

At the heart of the rectification process was the reintroduction of voluntary labor on a mass scale to build new housing units, daycare centers, and doctors' offices. Rectification was, in fact, a class reorientation, mobilizing Cuban working people to rely on their own strength to resolve the economic and political challenges facing the revolution and combat the growing privileges and corruption of a burgeoning layer of administrators and technocrats.

At the time, Cuban president Fidel Castro pointed out that without this rectification process it would become impossible to advance and defend the gains — and even the existence — of the revolution.

With the rapid disintegration of the Stalinist regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in 1989, Cuba's vital supply line of oil, food, raw materials, and spare parts disappeared almost overnight. This, on top of the draconian U.S. trade embargo, plunged Cuba into the worst economic crisis since the 1959 revolution. The most serious indication of the scope of the crisis today is the unavailability of many basic food items. Industry has to a large extent been paralyzed by lack of fuel and raw materials, and production has dropped drastically in all areas.

This economic crisis has broken the momentum that the rectification process was developing prior to 1990. It has placed severe limitations on construction projects and is allowing the more privileged social layers

## Funds needed for Cuba, South Africa reporting trips

*Militant* staff writer Sara Lobman and *New Internationalist* editor Mary-Alice Waters are now in Cuba to report on important meetings and conferences taking place there. Several *Militant* reporters have just returned from a month-long trip to South Africa.

These reporting trips, which give our readers news and analysis of world political events that can be found nowhere else, are expensive. They are only possible through the generous contributions of our readers and supporters. Please send us a contribution to help cover some of our costs. Donations can be sent to the *Militant*, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.



proudly showed *Militant* reporters the equipment that had been patched together using computers and computer parts from around the world. This is a "Cuban Frankenstein," he told us. It functions with the same sensitivity as some of the best equipment in the world, he noted, yet it had been put together by students.

When the Karl Marx Vocational School could not pay to bring in technicians to care for the computer equipment, Ortiz said, a group of 10 young women teamed up with a physics teacher to keep the computers in top shape. The students in the 11th and 12th grades had come up with donations to build a discotheque, which they were doing with their own labor, we were told. They were planning a grand opening soon and saw it as a contribution they would leave behind for the younger classes. Students at the school have even invented their own shoe polish, another item that is in short supply.

Ortiz, who was elected to the country's National Assembly in the February 24 elections, explained that the lack of construction materials to build new child-care centers had become a big problem. To meet the needs, she explained, the school had decided to open its own center, on school grounds, for the children of teachers and staff. The center was inaugurated March 8, International Women's Day. Although they had planned to start with only 10 children, enrollment is now at 19.

This child-care center is part of a larger plan to create 10 new centers in Matanzas utilizing facilities that exist in schools and factories and can be adapted with relatively few resources. Four, including the one at the Karl Marx Vocational School, are already open. In every province, we were told, work is under way to resolve the child-care needs in a similar fashion and there are plans to open more offices for family doctors in this manner as well.

#### Breaking the information blockade

Even scientific journals are a problem. The library staff explained that it is impossible for them to subscribe to the journals the students and professors need for their research and to stay current with the latest scientific discoveries and discussions around the world. The Ministry of Higher Education in Havana subscribes to some journals and makes photocopies for schools and institutes around the country. To supplement this, the university library here sent out nearly 20,000 letters last year to journals and individual scientists around the world asking for reprints of articles that had appeared in various publications. Seventy percent responded by sending the requested material at no charge. Some sent

additional related material, including recently published books and even some unpublished research.

Olbeida Tam, director of the information center, as the university library is called, showed us the three-foot-high pile of reprints that had arrived in just one day as a result of this intensive work carried out by staff, students, and professors together.

#### Repercussions of tourism

The University of Matanzas is less than 30 miles from the Varadero beaches and tourist hotels that figure prominently in the government decision to accelerate the development of tourism in Cuba. This is one of the few ways, government leaders have concluded, to obtain the hard currency necessary to buy desperately needed products on the world market.

More than 17,000 workers, most drawn from the nearby city of Cárdenas, work in Varadero. A morning tour showed large-scale construction and renovation projects and several brand new, high-class hotels. Several of these hotels were built as joint ventures with Spanish and Mexican companies. Under varying agreements, the non-Cuban investors will keep a percentage of the profits for a limited number of years. In exchange, they provide the initial capital and participate in training a staff.

The growth of tourism has brought some noticeable social contradictions. Prostitution, largely eliminated in the early years of the revolution, is once again expanding rapidly around the tourist hotels.

The government recently decided to allow tourism workers in Varadero to keep most of the dollars they get in tips. Previously, they had been required to exchange any hard currency they received for Cuban pesos. Now they exchange their tips for vouchers for use in special stores stocked with imported items such as clothing, electrical appliances, and food not available to Cubans who have only pesos. For every dollar these workers deposit, they get a voucher worth 70 cents. The other 30 cents goes into a national fund to help finance priority social projects. It is widely expected that this policy will be extended to workers in the tourist industry in other parts of the country and many expect it will broaden further.

"How can I explain to my niece, who is in elementary school, why every day some of the children bring food to eat that she doesn't have," one young man asked. "Some have good shoes and clothes that she can't have," he added, pointing to the growing inequality between those who have family members working in tourism and those who don't. He was speaking during the discussion following a presentation at the student conference on "Tourism: An Alternative for Social and Economic Development in Cuba." "My niece is taught that everyone in Cuba has access to the same things," he said, "but if some people have dollars, that's not really true."

The possibility of individuals gaining access to dollars and the products they can buy has hit Cárdenas especially hard. A highly industrialized city of 90,000 less than 10 miles from Varadero, Cárdenas is having trouble maintaining its work force, the president of the municipal assembly said. Many workers, often highly trained, are leaving their jobs to work in the hotels and restaurants.

The university is also feeling the impact. On a tour of Varadero we met several university graduates and two professors who are working in entertainment and administration of hotels. The English department is being severely affected, since anyone who speaks English well is in high demand at Varadero.

A member of the Communist Party in Matanzas explained that with the announcement of each decision to accelerate development of tourism, and related steps such as legalizing the dollar tips held by Cuban workers, his initial reaction was, "That's a terrible move." He added, "I know these undermine collective solutions to our problems and push people to try to get dollars for themselves and their families." But, he said, he had thought about it a lot and had



Militant/Argiris Malapanis  
**Construction of luxury hotel in Havana. Growth of tourism industry in Cuba has brought noticeable social contradictions. Prostitution, eliminated in early years of revolution, is expanding around tourist hotels.**

no alternative solution to get the needed dollars.

"The situation is pretty desperate," he said. He explained that hospitals were now being forced to postpone nonemergency surgery because of a lack of anesthetics. His brother-in-law had been scheduled for a hernia operation. But when he showed up for his appointment, he was sent home. A car accident victim had needed immediate surgery and the supply of anesthetics left was too low to use it for the hernia operation. A growing backlog of noncritical surgery patients now exists.

The Communist Party member explained that even the supply of milk for children under seven years old was precarious. Cuba has been carefully rationing milk to ensure an adequate supply for children and those with special dietary needs. Initially, most milk and dairy products were reserved for children under 14 years old. This was later changed to children under the age of seven. For the next two weeks, according to this party leader, due to inadequate fodder available for the cows and the resulting drop in dairy production, fresh milk will not even be available for these children. Instead, powdered milk will be distributed.

The decision to legalize spending the dollars held by workers in tourism, he said, will bring into circulation several million dollars that individuals have been hoarding, thus increasing individual buying power as well as state funds. In the first three weeks after the new regulations were implemented in Varadero, nearly a half a million dollars were turned in for vouchers, equal to the total amount turned in by workers in tourism in all of 1992.

#### Plans for future conferences

International participation in gatherings like the student conference in Matanzas used to be organized very differently in Cuba. When funds to pay for such events came from a centralized state budget, invitations tended to be more centrally decided. This is now changing.

Given the economic crisis, Cubans said, the University of Matanzas is no longer allocated any hard currency from the state budget, whether for books, scientific equipment, or any other needs. The only exception is computers, which are purchased with a special centralized national budget and allocated according to national priorities.

Every school is being encouraged to organize "scientific tourism," which includes conferences and other gatherings that promote international participation, as well as soliciting students who want to enroll in special courses and postgraduate studies. Hard currency received through such activities is used by the university to finance equipment and materials the school would not otherwise be able to purchase. Several professors and students explained, however, that such activities bring a political as well as economic advantage. They are embracing the opportunities this offers

with enthusiasm because it helps open up the world to them in a way that would not otherwise be possible.

The Pathfinder delegation's participation in the student conference in Matanzas was the result of a year-long effort on the part of the director of the social sciences department, Gerardo Ramos. Ramos first met Pathfinder representatives at the Havana Book Fair in February 1992, where he enthusiastically solicited copies of a number of books for use by the department. At a library conference in the eastern city of Holguín in October, a Pathfinder delegation met and talked with the director of the University of Matanzas library as well as another librarian from the city sports center. This led to the invitation for representatives of the publishing house to come to Matanzas.

Ramos, who is working with other professors to revise the curriculum for teaching Marxism, asked if it would be possible for Pathfinder to donate to the library not only a selection of Pathfinder titles, but a set of the English-language edition of the collected works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, recently rescued by Pathfinder from a pulping factory in Moscow.

The collected works of these revolutionary leaders have never been published in their entirety in Spanish, and there is a real hunger among students and professors alike to read or reread Marx and Engels in light of recent developments in the world. Every student at the university studies English.

As part of its participation in the conference, the Pathfinder delegation presented the requested books to the university library. The conference organizers displayed some of the titles on a table outside each conference session and they quickly became a topic of many discussions.

Several students volunteered to prepare a display to let everyone at the university know the books were available. These students were also interested to hear of the Pathfinder Readers Club that students and professors in Holguín had set up to collectively study some of the books.

The University of Matanzas will be the site of several other international conferences in the coming year, including a June 9-11 scientific seminar on "The Thought of Ernesto Che Guevara and the Challenges of the End of the Century." Conference organizers invited the Pathfinder delegation to return for these gatherings and asked for help in spreading the word to students and other youth internationally.

Those interested in participating can communicate directly with Gerardo Ramos, Jefe del Departamento de Ciencias Sociales, Universidad de Matanzas, Autopista a Varadero km. 3, Matanzas, Cuba. Tel: 61013, ext. 239. Fax: 53-7-33-7036.

Francisco Picado and Mary-Alice Waters contributed to this article.

### Pathfinder launches Books for Cuba Fund

In the past year, Pathfinder Press has received many requests from Cuban libraries and schools for donations of books and pamphlets published and distributed by Pathfinder.

Because of the depth of the current economic crisis in Cuba, funds to purchase these books are virtually nonexistent. Yet there is a tremendous thirst for exactly the kind of material that Pathfinder produces on the history of the modern working-class movement and the struggles of working people around the world (see article above).

To meet these requests Pathfinder has launched a Books for Cuba Fund. The cost of the donation to the University of Matanzas library alone came to \$1,600.

Similar donations to the library at the Higher Technical Institute in Holguín in October 1992 and February 1993 cost \$1,500. This means funds are urgently needed. Send your donation to: Pathfinder Books for Cuba Fund, Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.



# Gov't presses anti-immigrant campaign using investigation of New York bombing

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

The federal government has arrested a third person and is pressing its harassment campaign against Arab immigrants on the pretext of investigating the February 26 World Trade Center explosion. Arab-American and Muslim organizations have protested the anti-immigrant campaign, which smears them as terrorists.

A heavily armed SWAT team of FBI agents swooped down on an apartment in Maplewood, New Jersey, and arrested Nidal Ayyad, a 25-year-old chemical engineer who works for Allied-Signal Corp. Ayyad, a recent Rutgers University graduate, is a Palestinian immigrant and a naturalized U.S. citizen.

Terrified neighbors said the federal agents arrived in the early morning of March 10 in 15 vehicles accompanied by a bomb squad truck. Wielding rifles, the helmeted cops cordoned off the street for almost five hours. They took Ayyad away and carried off several boxes of his belongings, including a video of his recent wedding. He was jailed and denied the right to bail.

The young man's family expressed outrage at the arrest and insisted he had nothing to do with the bombing. Ayyad shares the apartment with his wife Reem, 19, and his mother and mother-in-law.

## Guilt by association

Federal authorities charged Ayyad with aiding and participating in the bombing. They have presented no evidence linking him to the blast, only the fact that he is a friend of another young Palestinian immigrant, Mohammed Salameh.

Salameh, 25, was arrested earlier when he went to a Ryder truck rental agency in Jersey City, New Jersey, and requested a refund on his \$400 deposit for a rented Ford van, which he reported had been stolen the night before the explosion. FBI and police officials claim the van was traced to the bomb site below the World Trade Center. He too is in prison without bail.

If convicted, Salameh and Ayyad could face life imprisonment without parole.

Federal cops also arrested Ibrahim Elgabrowni, 42, after barging into his Brooklyn, New York, home and confiscating boxes of personal belongings. Although officials admit they have no evidence linking Elgabrowni to the explosion and charged him only with resisting arrest, he is being held without bail.

Meanwhile, an immigration judge denied Omar Abdel Rahman's appeal for asylum and ordered his deportation. Abdel Rahman, 54, is an Egyptian-born clergyman and outspoken opponent of the regime in that country.

## Demonstrators in New Jersey rally: 'Stop the harassment of Muslims'

BY JANE HARRIS AND STU SINGER

JERSEY CITY, New Jersey — Six hundred people, overwhelmingly Muslims from New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, demonstrated March 20 to protest attacks on a mosque here after concerted efforts by the FBI, big-business media, and capitalist politicians to link it to the World Trade Center bombing.

The mosque, located on the third floor of a building in the busy Journal Square shopping area, was attacked the week after the police charged a member of this mosque with taking part in the February 26 bombing. All windows of the mosque were broken.

A press release distributed at the demonstration by the Islamic Circle of North America said, "As representatives of the Muslim community in North America, we deplore the recent car bomb attack on the World Trade Center in New York. Reports now indicate that a Muslim has been implicated in that bombing. If, in fact, a Muslim individual or group had any role in the bombing, they acted on their own and against Islamic principles that assure the safety of civilians, even in times of war."

The speakers at the demonstration were all Muslim religious leaders from the metropolitan area. Following prayers and speeches, protesters marched around the



Militant/Stu Singer

Rally at Jersey City mosque, targeted by police in World Trade Center case.

U.S. officials admit they have no evidence to charge the cleric in connection with the New York explosion. But the big-business media and the cops have painted him as the leader of "a violent Islamic fundamentalist sect" who is somehow behind the bombing, ignoring the fact that he has publicly condemned it. Stating that Abdel Rahman frequently spoke at mosques in Jersey City and Brooklyn, FBI agents have interrogated and harassed Muslims in the area.

Lacking a real case against those arrested, the government has also attempted to associate them with Sayyid Nosair, an Egyptian immigrant whom U.S. authorities unsuccessfully prosecuted for the murder of Israeli rightist Meir Kahane in 1990. Nosair was acquitted of the murder charge but was convicted of gun possession and assault.

Numerous members of New Jersey and New York mosques attended rallies in defense of Nosair during his trial and have visited him in prison since, including Salameh and Elgabrowni, a fact that police officials portray as sinister. Authorities are now planning to bring new charges against Nosair, claiming Elgabrowni was plotting to help him escape to Nicaragua.

## Arab-Americans protest

Groups representing Arab-Americans and Muslims have protested media and police efforts to tar them as terrorists. About 600 people demonstrated March 20 in Jersey City to protest this anti-immigrant propaganda (see article below).

Albert Mokhiber, president of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee

block, from the parking lot where the rally was held to the front of the mosque.

The demonstrators carried placards reading, "Islam is not terrorism," "We shall not tolerate prejudice," "Stop vicious anti-Islamic campaign," and "Stop harassing Muslims."

One of the speakers told the crowd, "Whether you are Christian or Jewish, we stand with you if you're for peace. No terrorists can come and find sanctuary in our mosques. We will not allow them to be used for an alternative agenda."

New Jersey Socialist Workers gubernatorial candidate Mark Rahn participated in the demonstration along with a number of campaign supporters.

Rahn's Democratic Party opponent, incumbent New Jersey governor James Florio, has helped whip up hysteria around the explosion by calling for the death penalty against anyone convicted of involvement in it.

"First of all, I'm opposed to the death penalty altogether," Rahn said. "But the investigation of this explosion is being used to whip up fear against immigrant workers and against Muslims in particular. The arrests and charges so far have been conducted as a witch-hunt, with no pretense of respect for the presumption of innocence."

(ADC), said in a statement, "We find it highly irresponsible of the media and other sources to implicate Arabs and/or Muslims in this act when not a shred of evidence has materialized to substantiate such charges. Speculation of this nature can only reinforce negative stereotypes of Arabs and has the potential to stimulate a violent backlash against the Arab-American community."

The ADC cited a spate of anti-Muslim incidents since the New York explosion, including the smashing of windows at the Jersey City mosque, the vandalization of the home of an Iranian family in Los Angeles, and several telephoned threats against a mosque in San Diego, California.

## Anti-Arab prejudices are weaker

At the same time, the ADC noted that openly anti-Arab attacks have been "relatively limited," underlining the fact that, among wide layers of the U.S. population, racist prejudices against Arabs are weaker today than in past decades.

This fact is reflected in the careful public statements by top U.S. officials. FBI director

William Sessions, for example, declined to describe the World Trade Center blast as an act of international terrorism and said he opposed "speculation."

These comments came after testimony by New York FBI director James Fox at a March 9 congressional hearing on the New York explosion. Fox asserted that his "gut feeling" was that the February 26 blast was "a terrorist incident organized by a large, well-known terrorist group." Asked for facts, he replied, "I don't have a specific group in mind now. Thirty years of this stuff is what makes my gut feel it."

Such statements reflect the unsubstantiated character of the case against Salameh, Ayyad, and Elgabrowni. But the major media and government officials have used the case to push for greater restrictions on democratic rights, particularly against immigrants.

New York *Newsday* reported that Rep. Charles Schumer, who chaired the congressional hearing, "has proposed legislation to tighten the screening of foreigners seeking to enter the United States and to increase federal penalties for aiding terrorist activities." Schumer wants to see more immigration detention centers built.

Testifying at the same hearing, Thomas McNamara, the State Department's coordinator for counterterrorism, contended, "The vast majority of illegal immigrants, once they set foot on U.S. soil... need not fear expulsion." The government, he added, must "secure our borders."

FBI officials have complained they do not have enough leeway in carrying out spying against legal political and religious groups, and have used the New York bombing case to push for greater powers.

New Jersey governor James Florio has called for using the death penalty against "whoever is responsible for the terrorist actions at the World Trade Center," a spokesperson for the governor said. The right of the federal government to apply the death penalty in such a case remains in legal dispute.

## ANC youth visit Philadelphia

BY NANCY COLE

PHILADELPHIA — Three leaders of the African National Congress (ANC) Youth League completed a successful three-day tour here March 20.

The tour by Mlungisi Johnson, Thabo Mzilikazi, and Lundi Rasmeni focused on local campuses and high schools. They addressed more than 600 students.

The youth leaders answered a range of questions, from "What is apartheid like?" and "Do you have problems with drugs, too?" to questions seeking reassurance that the ANC's political course, which includes negotiations with the National Party regime, can lead to the overthrow of apartheid and the establishment of a democratic republic.

City Council president John Street welcomed the three youths to the city at a council meeting when the tour began. The session was broadcast live on radio and was included in two TV newscasts. The anti-apartheid activists spoke on several other radio shows.

On March 19, Rasmeni addressed the weekly meeting of the Committee for a Fair Contract of the Chevron unit of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 8-234. Forty unionists attended. The Chevron workers, who were successful in winning union representation last September, are now fighting for a contract.

The ANC youth leaders were the guests of honor at a reception, attended by 50 people, that included representatives of the groups sponsoring the tour's meetings. Council member David Cohen, who had initiated their official welcome from the City Council, also attended.

The tour culminated with a citywide meeting of 75 at the Church of the Advocate, which was chaired by Rosita Johnson and ANC representative Godfrey Sithole, both members of the Philadelphia Anti-Apartheid Committee. Father Paul Washington, a longtime civil rights activist, introduced the meeting.

"What can foreigners do to help?" asked

a student at the University of Pennsylvania meeting, which was sponsored by the Black Graduate and Professional Student Association. Johnson answered that students could put pressure on the U.S. government, help out with the voter education project in South Africa, and organize to get financial donations for the ANC.

Mzilikazi described his introduction to apartheid's brutality at the age of 13 when one of his friends left South Africa to join the armed wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe. The apartheid security forces threw Mzilikazi in jail and tortured him in an effort to learn how his friend had left the country.

At LaSalle University, a student commented, "There's a question I've always had. I've put it to my parents. At one point Americans were going through the same struggle for civil rights, although South Africa's was more brutal. But look at the numbers — several million whites opposed to the large majority of Blacks. Why didn't armed struggle succeed?"

To this and similar questions about the suspension of armed actions and the merits of negotiating with the enemy, the youths explained that the ANC was forced to take up arms in 1961. This, along with mass actions, international solidarity, and the underground political movement forced President F. W. de Klerk to the negotiating table. "He found out," Rasmeni said, "that if you kill me, another will come in my place."

"I have a question for you," Mzilikazi said to students at the University of Delaware meeting. "What do you think you should do to support our struggle?" A young woman answered, "The best thing is to become more informed about South Africa and then to inform others."

More than 200 students signed up during the tour for more information and to become active in the anti-apartheid struggle, according to representatives of the Philadelphia Anti-Apartheid Committee.



# Rightists assault picket line in Miami

Continued from back page

Cuban-American wife also joined the protest, said the embargo affects members of his family and is "causing misery and suffering for my Cuban brothers." Two men beat Tapia, one with a bicycle chain, leaving him with a large gash across his back.

Police arrested some of the right-wingers who were assaulting people, though many of the attackers were not detained.

This reporter saw two assaults. In one instance, a man walking with the aid of a cane was punched and kicked before he was able to get away. In the other, a woman who was attempting to leave the demonstration was punched by two men who pinned her against a building before others came to her aid. In neither case did the police intervene.

The antiembargo protesters remained, chanting and waving their signs. Meanwhile, rocks and eggs were being thrown and individual right-wing thugs continued their assaults, trying to pick off people on the edges of the picket line when they couldn't get through police. After about 40 minutes the police announced that the rally permit was voided and that anyone who didn't leave would be arrested.

As those protesting the embargo attempted to leave, the rightists broke through the police lines and attacked everyone they could. The conduct of the police, who ended the protest without providing enough security, encouraged the right-wing thugs, who also hit some of the police officers.

At one point Andrés Gómez, a leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade and a particular target of the rightists, was placed by police in a squad car and taken away from the area. He was later released after being arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, showing that the cops' main concern was not Gómez's safety.

The police also arrested another anti-embargo protester, a member of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, on felony charges.

## Rightists attempt to justify assaults

The cops arrested 15 right-wingers. Most of them were released within a few hours. Police charged most of them only with disorderly conduct.

The rightists who attacked the peaceful

protest have vigorously tried to justify their violent assaults. They claim they were provoked by the fact that a protest against the embargo occurred, contending that they



Rightists attack Miami pickets protesting U.S. embargo against Cuba

could not be expected to control their inflamed passions. This argument has been widely rejected, including by many Cuban-Americans in this city.

Eddie Levy Rodríguez, chair of the Cuban American Defense League, said, "What happened today was something shameful. Again, people are denied their civil liberties and the right to assembly. Even our elected officials were involved. I don't necessarily agree with the demonstrators, but this is a free country and they have a right to demonstrate."

Levy Rodríguez was referring to the fact that one city commissioner, Miriam Alonso, appeared on the scene shortly after the attacks on the antiembargo protest had begun and joined those on the side of Radio Mambí. She met in the radio station with chief of police Calvin Ross and demanded that the police stop arresting the right-wingers. She also called for the city to stop issuing permits to any groups like the ATC and the Antonio Maceo Brigade.

There is wide recognition here, however, that the assaults were carried out by ultrarightists like Alpha 66, and that the attacks constituted a violation of the right to

demonstrate and freely express ideas. This was reflected in the editorials run by the *Miami Herald*, the city's major daily.

## Herald deplores right-wing attack

Two days after the assault an editorial in the *Herald* stated, "How sad, then, that once more a group trying to express repugnant ideas has been violently attacked in Miami. This time those pummeled were Antonio Maceo Brigade supporters attacked while picketing in front of Spanish-language radio station WAQI-Radio Mambí to oppose the U.S. economic embargo of Cuba."

The editorial continued, "The pickets had a city permit to picket on a public sidewalk. They had a First Amendment right to express their opinions without being physically attacked."

"Anyone who assaults or exhorts others to assault someone for expressing an unpopular belief should be arrested and prosecuted. The First Amendment guarantees each of us the right to free expression."

The front page of the *Herald* the day after the incident ran a photo of a man punching a woman who held a sign opposing the embargo. Another photo inside the paper showed Claribel Mederos, who had been hit in the head by a rock thrown at those who were protesting the embargo. The *Herald* article quoted rightists who boasted of beating a protester, saying they would have killed him if he hadn't run.

Liz Balmaseda, a Cuban-American columnist for the *Miami Herald*, described the right-wing thugs as the "dinosaurs" of the Cuban-American community and called for rejecting their attacks on democratic rights.

The protest and ensuing discussion of the attack and the right to free speech reflect the changes that have taken place in the Cuban-American community in Miami. Those who attacked the picket line claim that opponents of the embargo and supporters of more open U.S. relations with Cuba are few and isolated. But in fact there is growing discussion of and opposition to Washington's policy toward Cuba in the Cuban-American community in Miami and throughout the United States.

On March 19 an opponent of the Cuban government, Eloy Gutiérrez Menoyo, who is among those who uses his time spent in jail in Cuba as his credentials, took out a full-page ad in *El Nuevo Herald*, the Spanish-language version of the *Miami Herald*, calling for a dialogue with the Cuban government.

## Radio Progreso

Francisco Aruca, director of Radio Progreso, a Spanish-language radio station, is an opponent of the embargo and his show has a wide audience. Aruca pointed out the fallacy of the excuse that a picket line in front of a radio station is a provocation and, therefore, an excuse for an attack on free speech. He noted that his station was frequently picketed by some of the same right-wing forces who were involved in the March 17 attack.

Aruca took calls from many people who were outraged at the attack, including some people who wanted to participate in the protest but were afraid because of the threats by Radio Mambí. Aruca noted that the attacks are aimed precisely at preventing a broad number of people from speaking out publicly.

The existence of Radio Progreso, which the right wing has tried to shut down, is part of the evidence that many Cuban-Americans are seeking to broaden the limits of the discussion within Miami's Cuban-American community.

One columnist in *Diario de Las Américas*, a paper that editorialized in support of the actions organized by the right wing, noted that the situation is becoming more unfavorable for the rightist opponents of free speech. Juan Abreu said the picket represented "a step-up in the fight for political space in the heart of the Cuban exile community." He ended his column, "But more important than all this... is to take note of the penetration, the depth of the advance into our territory by those emissaries of the enemy," referring to Cuban-American opponents of the embargo.

At a banquet a few days after the picket line, 400 ATC members and their supporters gathered and cheered Andrés Gómez as he explained, "We decided to go ahead to picket because we wanted to show them we are not afraid."

Gómez assured those present that there would be more events and asked that people be ready to participate. When he asked those who had participated in the picket line to stand, the audience greeted them with cheers and applause.

Dan Fein, who was the Socialist Workers candidate in last November's election for County Commission, made his call for ending the embargo against Cuba a key plank in his campaign. In an interview, he said, "The right wing is losing the ability to intimidate and terrorize people into silence. More and more people, including in Miami's Cuban-American community, are speaking out against U.S. policy toward Cuba and insist on the right to have a democratic discussion on this. All those who attempt to stop this with violence should be charged and prosecuted to the full extent of the law."

# Crisis in Russia alarms capitalist powers

Continued from front page

sumption of emergency powers.

Yeltsin, while not yet making an attempt to disperse the Congress, has stated that he will ignore any legislative effort to remove him from office. According to the *Washington Post*, among the presidential decrees already prepared are the banning of some anti-Yeltsin newspapers and "providing for unspecified legal action against [Ruslan] Khasbulatov," the chairman of the Russian legislature.

The central issue in dispute between Yeltsin and his opponents in parliament is over how fast to move in imposing capitalist market methods. Neither side offers any other answer to the deep social crisis.

## Roots of crisis

The roots of the current social and economic crisis lie in the counterrevolution carried out in the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin in the 1920s and 1930s.

In 1917 the workers and peasants in Russia made a revolution that swept away capitalist rule and opened the road to socialism. But beginning in the mid-1920s, the failure of the revolutionary struggles in other countries in Europe, growing international isolation of the Soviet state, and years of civil war and shortages led to the growth of a conservative bureaucracy, backed by a police apparatus that defended the privileges and social position of the rising petty-bourgeois layer.

This bureaucracy drove the working class and its communist vanguard out of political life through force and violence. It transformed the Communist Party from an organization of revolutionary workers into an instrument of repression, and extended its counterrevolutionary perspectives and practices internationally.

Consolidating its hold on the reins of government, the bureaucracy took the form

of what can best be described as a caste. The ruling stratum does not own industry and banking, either collectively or as individuals, and is thus not a new exploiting ruling class. Instead, its privileges as a social caste are derived from nationalized property relations — the central conquest of the 1917 revolution that remains despite the Stalinist regime's usurpation of political power from the working class.

This bureaucratic layer is a parasite on the body of the nationalized property. It acts as a brake on the economy and blocks the deepening of workers' political consciousness and the conquest of culture and technique.

Neither Yeltsin nor his opponents in Congress represent a qualitative break from their predecessors. They are just more openly procapitalist.

Shortly after the Russian president's March 20 declaration, several thousand pro- and anti-Yeltsin demonstrators rallied outside the parliamentary building in Moscow. Some youth expressed their growing impatience with both Yeltsin and his opponents within the bureaucracy.

"The whole thing is a mess," said Alexei Kochergin, 19, a crane operator. "It's already six years we've been restructuring ourselves, and nothing has come of it."

"I was for Yeltsin during the coup and afterward," said Vika Revazova, an 18-year-old art student. "I thought he would somehow improve our lives and this country. Now I've lost confidence."

Clinton plans to announce a new aid package for Russia at his April 3-4 meeting with Yeltsin in Vancouver, British Columbia. Foreign and finance ministers of the Group of Seven — the United States, Germany, France, Japan, Italy, Canada, and Britain — are also planning to meet a few days before Yeltsin's planned April 25 referendum to discuss providing Russia with

additional funds.

British, Canadian, French, German, and Japanese government officials have carefully expressed their support to Yeltsin in his power struggle with the Russian parliament. The Japanese rulers, who had been hesitant to provide much aid to Russia, are now suggesting that the Group of Seven create a \$10 billion fund of loans and grants, of which Tokyo would put up a third.

The leaders of the former Soviet republics in Latvia, Lithuania, and Ukraine are backing Yeltsin. Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze, former foreign minister of the Soviet Union, expressed support for Yeltsin but warned that Russia "now faces the danger of civil war."

The Georgian government announced March 19 that its forces had shot down a Russian air force plane flying over Abkhazia, which declared its sovereignty from Georgia last year.

Yeltsin's move is likely to prompt resistance from the numerous autonomous republics and regions that make up the Russian federation. "The political power struggle in Moscow could speed up the disintegration of the world's largest country," stated a March 23 *Washington Post* article, "as local officials seize on the opportunity to wrest even greater autonomy from the center."

According to the *Post*, 20 autonomous regions within Russia have already denounced Yeltsin's move as "unconstitutional."

"The major controversy concerns the pace, not the direction, of reform," wrote former U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger in a March 23 *Washington Post* column. "A referendum is an appeal to the people. But historically it has smoothed the way to dictatorship more frequently than to democracy." Kissinger urged Clinton to not stake U.S. policy toward Russia on solely supporting Yeltsin.



# Coal miners face contract fight ahead

Continued from front page

decided to give in to some of the UMWA's demands. In exchange the union agreed to a 60-day extension of the 1988 contract. Miners returned to work March 5.

For months prior to the February 1 expiration of the 1988 contract, negotiations between the union and the BCOA had been at a standstill.

The sticking point was BCOA members' refusal to provide union negotiators with a list of the full extent of their coal holdings.

As the deadline for the contract expiration approached, news reports indicated that Consolidation Coal, AMAX Industries, and Arch Minerals, which form the core of the BCOA along with Peabody, were ready to give the UMWA the information requested in exchange for a contract extension. But Peabody refused.

Ashland's disclosure, however, strongly suggests that the public appearance of disunity among these energy giants was in essence a cover for their private agreement to attempt to make further inroads on the strength of the union and to secretly bankroll the strikebreaking efforts of whichever among them was chosen as a selective strike target.

This disclosure also underscores just how important the BCOA members consider their ability to deepen inroads on the union's strength through the practice of double breasting.

Even though the companies have agreed to discuss the issue, just how much they will move on it without further action against them remains to be seen.

Negotiations between the UMWA and the BCOA were scheduled to begin the last week of March.

## IBCBA contract extended second time

On March 22 the UMWA announced it was extending for a second time its contract with four companies that form the Independent Bituminous Coal Bargaining Alliance (IBCBA), made up of Jim Walters Resources, Drummond Coal, Westmoreland Coal, and U.S. Steel Mining.

The new extension, which will expire June 30, "should be taken as an indication that progress is continuing to be made," said a statement issued by the union and the companies.

Miners who work at IBCBA mines expressed different opinions about the extension.

Several miners contacted for their reaction expressed approval of the 90-day extension. One miner from Alabama said the companies have it set up now so the foremen can go in and maintain production. Another miner said, "We should go along with the extension and see what we can get in negotiations."

Others expressed a different opinion. "The companies should give us a contract now or we should go out," said one miner who works at Jim Walters Resources Number 5 Mine near Brookwood, Alabama. "Nobody I've talked to likes it. The company gets to hold back our clothing allowance, our raise, and everything else. They've had since February 1 to come up with a contract and they should have one by now," she said. "The way I see it, we should tell them, 'Let's sit down and get a contract, or we're out of here.'"

Her sentiments were echoed by another miner who works at nearby Jim Walters Number 7 Mine. "The companies are trying to keep us in the dark. They want to try to get us to accept takebacks," he said. "I look for them to offer us a raise but try to take away vacation days, cut our health and retirement benefits, cut back the work force."

"I can't see what the purpose of a 90-day extension would be. They've already had five years and 60 days. Give them another three months and then where will we be? If we have to go to war with Jim Walters and the others, I'd rather go to war right now."

John Hawkins is a laid-off miner in Birmingham, Alabama, and a member of United Mine Workers of America Local 2328.

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

### IOWA

#### Des Moines

**The Struggle for Power in Russia Today.** Speaker: Chris Rempel, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 3, 7:30 p.m. 2105 Forest Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (515) 246-8249.

**Socialist Educational Conference.** Fri., April 9: South Africa: White Regime's Final Hour, 2:30 p.m.; Dinner, 5 p.m.; Sat., April 10: Cuba Today: Challenges and Realities Confronting the Working Class, 6:30 p.m.; Sun., April 11: World Capitalist Crisis Accelerates, 11 a.m. Classes also scheduled. Location: Des Moines Holiday Inn, 1050 6th Ave. Registration: to be announced. For more information: (515) 246-8249.

### PENNSYLVANIA

#### Pittsburgh

**WTI Spells Death. Community Fights to Stop Toxic Waste Incinerator.** Speakers: Alonzo Spencer, president, Save Our County, Inc., in East Liverpool, Ohio; Brad Zielinski, postal worker in Monaca, active against WTI incinerator; Gabriel Amersbach, Pittsburgh Against Incineration; Ar-

nold Weissberg, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., April 4, 7 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

### WEST VIRGINIA

#### Morgantown

**Washington's Dilemma in Russia.** Sat., April 3, 7:30 p.m. 242 Walnut St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

### CANADA

#### Montreal

**Eyewitness Report from Mexico: Free Trade, Protectionism, or an Internationalist Perspective for Workers and Farmers.** Speaker: Rosemary Ray, member, Canadian Auto Workers Local 1900. Sat., April 3, 7:30 p.m. 6566, boul. St-Laurent. Donation: \$4. Tel: (514) 273-2503.

#### Vancouver

**The Clinton-Yeltsin Summit: What's Behind the Crisis in Russia.** Speaker: Dan Grant, Communist League. Sat., April 3, 7:30 p.m. 3967

Main St. (between 23rd and 24th Ave). Donation: \$4. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Auckland

**U.S. Intervention in Bosnia: Will It Help End the Civil War?** Speaker: Brigid Rotherham, Communist League, member, Engineers Union. Sat., April 3, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Rd. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

#### Wellington

**Democratic Rights under Attack from Cops, Government.** Sat., April 3, 7 p.m. 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Donation: \$3. Tel: (4) 384-4205.

### SWEDEN

#### Stockholm

**German Steelworkers Protest Layoffs — Eyewitness Report.** Speaker: Hilding Eklund, member, Metalworkers Union. Sat., April 3, 4 p.m. Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

# Perot renews push for right-wing agenda

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Ross Perot, the billionaire who ran against the Democratic and Republican candidates in last year's election for U.S. president, bought a half hour of television time March 21 to promote his views and his organization, United We Stand America. In the \$500,000 self-described "town meeting," Perot reiterated his attacks on Congress and "the establishment" in Washington which he accused of corruption and low moral standards.

Perot uses these demagogic attacks to put forward a right-wing agenda of reducing the living standards and democratic rights of working people. During last year's election campaign, under the banner of cutting the federal budget deficit, he proposed an economic austerity package that included increasing taxes on Social Security benefits for the elderly and disabled and "containing" costs on the federal Medicaid and Medicare health programs.

The billionaire also suggested stiff taxes on gasoline and tobacco, while arguing for various tax breaks to major corporations in order to "provide the proper incentives to industry and to the market."

Now that President Bill Clinton is embracing many aspects of the billionaire's economic program, especially on Social Security, Medicaid, and taxes, Perot has become more vague about his concrete proposals for "reform." He is instead pushing the government to go farther on this course, while attempting to build a following and base of support around himself through United We Stand America.

Perot promotes his program, which aims to slash the social gains working people have won over the decades, with populist appeals to the "American people," whom he

describes as "the owners" of the country or, "the taxpayers." He blames government waste and corruption, lobbyists, the deficit, and foreign competitors for the economic crisis squeezing working people and middle-class layers in the United States.

"It's time to pick up a shovel and clean out the barn," was Perot's refrain in his March 21 television performance. He said "reform" should start from the top, and called on members of Congress to take a 10 percent pay cut and eliminate many perks.

The direction of this seeming attack on bureaucratic privilege became clearer when Perot said cost-of-living pay raises should be eliminated for all federal employees. This is the aim of Perot's demagoguery against the rich; he promotes "sacrifices" that invariably come back on working people the hardest.

Another aspect of Perot's program is "law and order." He has previously advocated giving police greater powers to carry out searches and arrests in Dallas, for example.

Perot hopes to create a stronger executive power, backed up by the military, police, and occasional popular vote, at the expense of the legislature and democratic rights. He argues that he can "get things done," bypassing elected representatives in Congress through his own autocratic rule backed up by periodic plebiscites. During his recent TV address, Perot insisted his motto is not what is "legal or illegal," but what is "right or wrong." Of course, Perot would be the ultimate arbiter of what is "right or wrong."

During the 1992 election campaign, the Texas businessman said that as president he would organize an "electronic town hall," where people would vote for or against his proposals on key issues by phone or computer link.

His March 21 television appearance was

a scaled-down version of Perot's electronic town hall. He paid to have surveys featuring 17 questions on issues raised in his speech inserted beforehand in the widely circulated TV Guide.

He urged viewers to mail in the questionnaires so he could tabulate the results and report the "opinions" to elected officials. Viewers could also call in their answers to a 900 telephone number — at 40 cents per call. The questions were carefully worded so as to bias the results toward agreement with Perot's positions.

The main reason for the 30-minute commercial was not to solicit opinions but rather to win support for Perot and United We Stand America, an organization he set up during the presidential election campaign.

Perot's speech was the latest step in his effort to remain a prominent figure in capitalist politics in the United States. Soon after Clinton's inauguration, Perot began traveling the country, speaking to rallies of supporters from Maine to Florida to California. Many of his audiences have numbered around 2,000 or more.

The former candidate is getting a hearing, especially among middle-class people who are resentful because they have been hard hit by the economic depression, as well as many workers who are disillusioned with the Democratic and Republican parties. Perot reportedly stands higher in opinion polls now than he did before the November election, in which he received almost 20 percent of the vote.

Perot's continued rise in bourgeois public opinion should be seen as an ominous sign by the labor movement and all supporters of democratic rights.

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Changing time — In Verwoerd, South Africa, the Hendrik Verwoerd Hospital,



Harry Ring

named after the architect of apartheid, is considering changing its name. A year ago, the hospital still had separate phone listings for "white" and "nonwhite" callers.

"Isn't that a Marxist government?" — Posing as a talk show host, a *Spy* magazine staffer asked incoming members of Congress, "Do you approve of what we're doing to stop ethnic cleansing in Freedonia?" There was general agreement, with the most thoughtful response from Rep. Steve Buyer: "Yeah, it's a different situation than the Middle East." Freedonia was the mythical setting for the 1933 Marx brothers movie, *Duck Soup*.

50-50 — Since they left the White House, George Bush confides, he and spouse Barbara are dividing up the housework just like

when they were first married. She cooks and he does the dishes. She makes the beds and he makes the coffee.

What a deal — The new Bugatti sports sedan (up to 186 MPH) is available for \$250,000. That may sound pricey, but it includes a three-year maintenance contract. "You only add gas," says a Bugatti spokesperson.

Great corpsewear — Buy 350 packs of Virginia Slims (about \$780) and receive a black leather biker jacket. You do have to sign a statement that you're 21 or over.

How will they know? If the handwriting looks childlike, they say, they'll check further.

All they do is kill people — RJR Nabisco (the cookie folks plus R.J. Reynolds Tobacco) will issue a separate class of stock tied to the performance of its food business. Key investors are reportedly disappointed with the sluggish performance of company stocks and attribute it to the stigma of owning shares in a tobacco company.

Talk about repression — Peddlers of expensive cigars report that despite the slump, their sales have

grown. And that, they note, is despite the "social pressures" on smokers. Confided one, "I have clients who are CEOs of Fortune 500 companies who can't smoke in their own homes."

40-hour retirees — Discussing the people leaving California for jobs in nearby states, the head of a Utah software company grouched: "The problem is that too many people are coming to retire. If you want people to work 40 hours it's great. But you don't have people who work 70-80 hours like you have in Silicon Valley."

## Cop testifies police did not use 'excessive' force during beating of Rodney King in Los Angeles

BY SANDRA PUCCI

LOS ANGELES — Testifying in defense of the four cops who beat Rodney King, a Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) "use-of-force expert" declared that the savage attack on King conformed completely to the department's policy.

Every single kick and blow delivered to King, said Sgt. Charles Duke, followed police guidelines for a "reasonable and necessary use of force."

Earlier, testifying for the prosecution, Sgt. Mark Conta told the court that the club blows that knocked King to the ground were justified. But once King was down, he added, the assault should have stopped.

Duke, however, told jurors every writhing movement King made while face down on the pavement could have been seen by the cops as attempts to get up. He commented, "They have the right to construe that as aggressive or combative behavior, so they have the right to use force even though they are not actually being attacked."

Duke praised defendants Timothy Wind and Laurence Powell, saying their beating of a prostrate King may have actually saved his life. He implied that the cops might have killed King if he had tried to stand up again.

Both the state trial last year and the federal case under way now have been limited to the issue of whether the cops used "excessive" force. The prosecution has completely avoided the fact that the actions of these cops were the product of institutional-

ized racism and violence of the LAPD.

For the prosecution, however, the issue has never been whether the cops had the right to beat King — only how much and what type of beating they were entitled to dish out under LAPD guidelines. But the police department's regulations themselves on the conduct of cops are at the heart of the problem.

While the defense presented its case, the Los Angeles City Council voted to make curfew laws more stringent and increase the power of police to arrest violators.

This attack on democratic rights accompanies the massive antiriot training by the Los Angeles Police Department and other agencies in preparation for a crackdown on possible unrest following a verdict in the federal trial.

Thousands were arrested after the anti-police riots that followed the "not guilty" verdict in the state trial of the four cops last year. The majority of those arrested were Black or Latino.

Acting on a legal challenge by the American Civil Liberties Union, an appeals court ruled that police had exceeded their authority. The court declared the city curfew ordinance only permitted the arrest of persons committing a crime or trying to impede police or fire crews.

The city council voted to eliminate those restrictions. As a result, any violation of a curfew, such as going to work or seeking medical care, is cause for arrest with a possible pen-

alty of six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

Although several council members voiced concern about possible civil liberties violations, the body voted unanimously to approve the repressive curfew measure.

Meanwhile, in trial testimony, Daniel Gonzalez, a cop called as a witness by the prosecution, used his time on the stand to deliver an inflammatory pro-cop justification for the two-hour detour to the police station taken by the cops who were moving King from a local hospital to the jail ward at the county hospital.

He told the court that defendant Laurence Powell was not trying to show King off. Gonzalez claimed he went out to the patrol car because he wanted to memorize the face of "anybody who tries to hurt another officer" so that "if I ever ran into him, I [could] be aware."

He then launched into a lurid tale about alleged victimization of cops.

Joseph Napolitano, another cop at the scene of King's beating, testified that defen-

dant Timothy Wind had told him he "didn't enjoy" using force.

Under cross-examination, it was revealed that although Napolitano had been standing about 10 feet from the beating scene, he hadn't reported any of the six kicks Wind gave to King. But on the videotape of the incident, he is seen watching as the kicks are delivered to King.

Separately, in the case of the four youths accused of beating trucker Reginald Denny during the riots, there was a report of a possible plea bargain. Prosecutors and attorneys are considering an agreement that would result in reduced charges and penalties for the youth.

In the Black community there is strong sentiment that the youths, charged with attempted murder, are victims of a racist double standard.

While the cops who assaulted King face a maximum of 10 years in jail, the youths charged in the Denny case could be sentenced to life in prison.

## Australia police raid homes, arrest immigrant workers

BY LINDA HARRIS AND MANUELE LASALO

SYDNEY, Australia — On the evening of February 24, the day immediately following a union meeting that voted to take strike action, immigration officials raided the homes of 43 workers from Hoover, a white goods (home appliance) factory here. Four people were arrested and taken to the Villawood detention center, where undocumented immigrants are held behind barbed-wire fences. Two more workers were picked up the following day during a raid at the same plant.

The company worked hand in glove with the immigration cops. Tawhia, a Samoan-born Australian resident, was one of those interrogated by immigration cops. She said they turned up at her house and demanded to see her passport. When they saw she was a permanent resident they said Hoover management must have given them the wrong name. That made her furious, she said.

The plant was buzzing with the news the next day. Discussion focused on whether workers with papers should support so-called illegal immigrants. Some workers said they thought it was not fair to the people who come here legally for others to come here illegally. There was overall outrage that so many workmates had been targeted by the immigration cops. Hoover has a work force of around 400, the majority of whom come from other countries.

Lucy, who is from Italy, said she thought young people should have the right to work here if they are living here but that older

people shouldn't be allowed to come here and get on social security. "But they're not criminals; they shouldn't be treated like that," she added.

One of the workers arrested was later released and allowed to remain in Australia, but without a work permit. He had been employed at Hoover for more than five years.

This was one of many raids — most of which are never reported in the press — that are being carried out as the government increases restrictions on immigrant workers coming to live in Australia. Workers from Asia and the Pacific are particularly targeted. Recently a number of refugees from Cambodia were forcibly returned to that country despite protests organized at the Villawood detention center, including a hunger strike by some of the Cambodian women there.

It is no coincidence that the raid came a day after a mass meeting of the Metal Trades Federation of Unions, to which workers at Hoover belong. This meeting decided to participate in a one-day national strike the following Monday to push for a 6 percent wage increase, to protest the attacks of the metal employers, and to extend solidarity to workers in Victoria, whose rights and living standards are under attack by the Liberal Party state government.

The attempt to intimidate immigrant workers is part of a campaign by the bosses to divide workers and weaken the unions.

Linda Harris is a member of the Metal and Engineering Workers Union at Hoover in Sydney.

## — 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

**THE MILITANT**  
Published in the interest of the Working People  
April 8, 1968 Price 10c

MEMPHIS — The fight of the Memphis sanitation workers for union recognition has become the focus of the struggle by the entire black community here for decent living conditions, jobs, schools and employment.

According to a recent survey made by the Memphis NAACP, in a city where black people are 40 percent of the population, they are employed in only 8 percent of city-controlled jobs, except those that are traditionally open to blacks — menial jobs that whites do not want.

The strike originated over a dispute [when] twenty-two black employees of the Memphis Department of Public Works who reported for work Jan. 31 were sent home because it was raining. White employees were not sent home. Local 1733, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, which is all black, called a meeting attended by more than 700 sanitation workers and voted to strike. The city refused to negotiate with them.

On Thursday, Feb. 22, 700 sanitation workers crowded into the City Council's chamber, and said they would remain there until they were heard. By this time, the entire black community was actively supporting the strikers. The Negro ministers had formed an organization called COME (Community on the Move for Equality). For the Feb. 23 City Council meeting, COME mobilized 2,000 people.

A march down Main Street was quickly organized. Police cars began crowding the marchers towards the curb. Then the cops made a vicious attack on the marchers with clubs and the chemical Mace.

On Feb. 25, the black ministers called from their pulpits for a boycott of all downtown stores. The 35,000-member Memphis AFL-CIO and the 103,000-member Tennessee AFL-CIO also endorsed the strike at this time.

Daily demonstrations continued, and on March 2, 500 high school and college students picketed downtown stores all day.

On Monday, March 18, Dr. Martin Luther King addressed 12,000 at Mason Temple and said that a day must be set aside for a general work stoppage in support of the sanitation men.

The strikers have remained solid. Morale is high, and a thousand strikers attend daily meetings at the Rubber Workers headquarters.

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

April 3, 1943

NEW YORK — Four hundred defenders of civil liberties gathered at Manhattan Center here last night to protest Postmaster General Walker's revocation of *The Militant's* second-class mailing privileges and to pledge support to this paper's fight in the courts to reverse Walker's order.

Greetings of solidarity were received by the meeting from Louis Nelson, manager of Knitgoods Local 155 of the ILGWU.

Laile Lane, member of the National Committee of the Negro March-On-Washington Movement and former vice-president of the American Federation of Teachers drew applause from the meeting when she charged that "the reason *The Militant* is under attack is because it indicates a better way of life for the masses."

Miss Lane briefly reviewed the "crimes" with which *The Militant* had been charged by Biddle and the Post Office — its articles exposing Big Business profiteering, the government's collaboration with the fascists, Washington's approval of Jim Crowism, etc. — and then she read excerpts from the capitalist press to corroborate the truth of the articles in *The Militant*.

Clifford Forster, speaking on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union, told why that organization was backing *The Militant's* fight in this case.



## Defend abortion rights

Recent terrorist attacks on abortion rights, including the murder of Dr. David Gunn in Florida, the attempted firebombing of a Minnesota clinic, and Operation Rescue's "training sessions" for antiabortion cadres in Minneapolis-St. Paul and Melbourne, Florida, present a serious challenge to supporters of women's right to choose abortion.

The leadership of established pro-choice organizations such as the National Abortion Rights Action League and Planned Parenthood has in a number of centers responded by calling for stepped-up police presence at the clinics and by lobbying for state and federal laws to protect abortion rights. This is not an effective defense, however. Some doctors threatened by rightists have reacted to the attacks by ending their abortion practices or buying larger handguns. But such a siege mentality does not help move the fight forward either.

The forces seeking to push back women's rights, including the right to abortion, are mobilizing their numbers to

physically take the streets and intimidate both doctors and women who choose to have an abortion. Only a perspective of mass action by youth, workers, farmers, and many others who support abortion rights can take on this challenge.

When Operation Rescue virtually took over the city of Wichita, Kansas, in August 1991 and shut down the clinics there for a brief period, police did nothing to stop them until pro-choice fighters began to stand up and defend the clinics. Since then, supporters of abortion rights have proven in Buffalo, New York; Houston; Robbinsdale, Minnesota; Boston; and many other places that by mobilizing large numbers they can keep the clinics open and win broader support for the right to safe, legal abortion. And in April 1992 half a million people demonstrated their support for abortion rights in Washington, D.C.

By boldly following these examples, pro-choice fighters can take on and defeat Operation Rescue and other opponents of the right to abortion.

## Clinton's criminal Haiti policy

At his much-heralded mid-March meeting at the White House with ousted Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide U.S. president Bill Clinton offered general expressions of support but little in the way of concrete assistance.

Aristide had demanded that a date be set for his return to power and that the U.S. government more aggressively enforce the economic embargo against Haiti. Clinton declined to back either of these steps. The U.S. president made vague statements about his support for the return of democracy to Haiti. Aristide for his part won praise from Clinton when he promised to drop his insistence that the military leaders responsible for his ouster be jailed.

However, Clinton continues to maintain the criminal policy of seizing on the high seas and forcibly returning all Haitian refugees fleeing military repression in their country. After condemning the Bush administration for implementing this policy, Clinton administration officials now defend it. Washington also continues to refuse entry

to the approximately 260 Haitian refugees who tested HIV positive and are being forced to rot in detention at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

Washington maintains its position that Haitians can only apply for asylum within their country. But many who do so are just singled out for further victimization by Haiti's military rulers. The seizure of William Corascelan by Haitian security in Port-au-Prince March 12, while he was being escorted to the airport for a flight to Miami with U.S. embassy officials, is a case in point.

Now more than ever it is important that opponents of Washington's policy toward Haiti remain vocal and in the streets. The April 2 demonstration called by Haiti solidarity organizations for Washington, D.C., deserves strong support. This action offers an important opportunity to demand that Clinton's forced repatriation policy be halted and the refugees still being detained at Guantánamo be allowed entry into the United States now.

## L.A. cops followed guidelines

The cops on trial in Los Angeles have insisted that they followed police department policies when they viciously beat construction worker Rodney King in March 1991. This week at the trial, a Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) "use of force expert," Sgt. Charles Duke, testified that every kick and every blow were within the guidelines for a "reasonable and necessary use of force." The cops are attempting to put this at the center of their defense and to dismiss the fact that they shouted racist slurs at King while beating him bloody.

There is no reason to doubt that Duke is telling the truth. The problem with what the cops did to Rodney King, and have done to countless other workers, is that such brutal, inhuman assaults are part and parcel of how the police functions. Further evidence that the beating was within guidelines was that it was witnessed by numerous other cops at the time, with almost no complaints.

It is important for working people to fight police harassment and abuse. The four cops on trial should be convicted and jailed for their crime. It is also necessary to have a clear understanding of what cops are and what is their role in capitalist society. Cops do not represent a special force,

separate from the rest of society, which seeks to ensure everyone abides by the law.

This society is divided into classes—a handful of exploiters who live off the wealth produced by an exploited majority. The capitalist rulers dominate the entire legal system with its codes of conduct, and the cops are hired to serve and protect the interests of the capitalist class.

Intimidation, harassment, brutal beatings, shootings, and torture are a necessary part of what cops are expected to do in pursuit of this goal. The cops' purpose is not to simply apprehend suspected wrong-doers and have them get a fair trial to verify their guilt, but to administer as much punishment themselves as they can get away with.

The cops in Los Angeles are on trial not because they did anything that cops around the United States don't do thousands of times each week. They are on trial because the LAPD standard operating procedures were exposed by videotape to millions of working people, who were angered and disgusted by what they saw. Working people must fight to take this power away from the cops and rid themselves of a society that requires a police force to carry out attacks like the one on Rodney King.

## For free speech in Miami

The most significant fact about the March 17 Miami picket line opposing the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba—a peaceful event that was assaulted by a group of right-wing thugs—was that it happened. The protest was sponsored by the Alliance of Workers in the Community and the Antonio Maceo Brigade, organizations of Cuban-Americans that advocate normalization of U.S. relations with Cuba.

A large and growing section of Cuban-Americans opposes the U.S. embargo. As a result, the right-wing minority that seeks to impose its views by intimidation and violence in the Cuban-American community is becoming more and more isolated.

After three decades of a cold-blooded embargo and other attacks, the U.S. rulers have failed to overthrow the Cuban revolution. Today Washington has less international support than ever for its effort to strangle Cuba, as seen last November in the overwhelming United Nations vote condemning the U.S. embargo of that country. In addition, the impact of the capitalist economic depression is making many working people in the United States raise questions about Washington's big-business policies at home and abroad.

The resulting isolation of the ultrarightists in the Cuban-American community was highlighted in the public reaction to the attack on the March 17 picket line. "What happened today was something shameful. Again, people are denied their civil liberties and the right to assembly," said the head of the Cuban American Defense League, Eddie Levy Rodríguez. His comments were echoed by many others, from the Spanish-language Radio Progreso to the *Miami Herald*.

Those who rallied against the embargo and stood up to right-wing intimidation performed a service for all those who defend free speech and assembly—a section of the population that includes the vast majority of working people. Supporters of democratic rights should demand that the authorities prosecute and jail the thugs who violently assaulted the picket line.

Now is a good time for opponents of the U.S. embargo of Cuba to organize more public actions and forums to promote broader discussion on this question. Such actions will win greater support for the fight to demand that Washington lift its criminal embargo and travel ban against Cuba.

## Oregon plan will ration health care for workers

The Clinton administration has given the green light to an Oregon plan to ration the medical care many working-class residents of that state receive. On March 19 Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala approved the scheme to reorganize Oregon's Medicaid system, which provides health coverage to 240,000 people. It will be the first large-scale implementation of government rationing of medical services and will serve as a test case for aspects of the health "reform" President Bill Clinton is planning.

The new system ranks 688 medical procedures according to their cost and supposed benefits. Oregon residents covered by Medicaid would be allowed to seek the first 568 procedures on the list; any treatment falling below that mark would not be provided.

The savings from providing fewer services would theoretically be used to extend the same coverage to 120,000 people living below the official poverty line but currently ineligible for Medicaid. Most of these would be placed in "managed" care programs.

Excluded procedures include treatments for infectious mononucleosis, acute viral hepatitis, chronic back disorders, and minor head injuries. Under the initial proposal, the state would further reduce the list of covered treatments if it ran short of money.

Shalala approved the proposal on condition that the state rewrite parts of the list that discriminate against people with disabilities. But Paige Sipes-Metzler, executive director of the Oregon Health Services Commission, which drew up the list, said the ordered review will produce "very minimal change" in the ranking of medical treatments.

The main congressional critics of the Oregon proposal quickly backed away from their opposition, after state officials made a few small promises.

For example, Henry Waxman, chairman of the House of Representatives subcommittee that oversees Medicaid, agreed March 12 not to block the plan. His decision was based on a promise by Oregon governor Barbara Roberts not to make additional cuts in the benefits available to women and children on Medicaid during the first five years of the program, unless the federal government approves the cutbacks.

A March 20 editorial in the *New York Times* welcomed the rationing. Health-care reform, according to the *Times*, "is about drawing lines and making choices. Some Americans will get more, others will wind up with less. Making choices is what Oregon has done for its poor; it's what Mr. Clinton will propose for everyone else when he releases his national reform plan this spring."

Sen. Bob Packwood from Oregon crowed, "We will be an absolute beacon for the nation," after the plan's approval was announced. "What we want to try is what the nation will come to. We cannot pay for every conceivable procedure that every conceivable person could conceivably want," said the legislator.

### A harbinger of Clinton's health program

Oregon's Medicaid reform is based on the assumption that only limited funds are available for health care for those who can't afford to pay astronomical fees for whatever medical treatment they need. Thus, providing a limited number of services to more people is counterposed to providing better care. It is a harbinger of what the working class can expect from the Clinton administration regarding medical care.

The president's task force on health-care reform, headed by Hillary Clinton, is preparing a package built on the same assumptions. It will propose some form of managed and rationed care for working people based on what is "cost effective" and "efficient." The plan is expected to establish a minimum benefits package. As in the Oregon plan, this would set a standard for employer-provided medical insurance. Additional benefits would presumably cost more, and might be subject to taxes.

Hillary Clinton personally met with Ron Wyden, a congressman from Oregon, before the plan was approved. "She was particularly interested in the relevance of Oregon's plan to a national health-care proposal," Wyden told reporters.

As part of the Democratic Party drive to cut health-care costs, which is at the center of the Clinton "reform," New York governor Mario Cuomo announced his proposal to cut Medicaid by limiting home care for elderly workers. Cuomo intends to cut \$794 million off the state's Medicaid budget by reducing the personal-care program covered by the state to 120 hours per month, from the average 224 hours of care now available. This will affect mostly working-class elderly people, many of whom will be forced to move to nursing homes or other institutions. Opponents of Cuomo's proposals have recently staged rallies against the cuts.

None of these proposals to ration health care or cut existing programs benefit working people. Under them, decent medical care continues to be a privilege for those who can afford it, not a right for all. Those who can't pay must compete for slots on a list of covered procedures.

The challenge before the labor movement, and all those who view health care as a basic human right, is to wage a fight for a medical system that will provide health care free of charge, an entitlement for all working people.

—NAOMI CRAINE



# Steelworkers battle company lockout in Ohio

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 struggles. Jot down a few lines to

cal's grievance committee, explained that there would be another rally in the weeks ahead. "We're going to have to keep showing John Anderson that we're still strong," she said, referring to the company chairman, Lazaro, a welder, is one of three women workers in the plant. She organizes the union office.

Steelworkers at the union office

## ON THE PICKET LINE

Let other *Militant* readers know about what is happening at your workplace or in your union. If there is an interesting political discussion going on at work, we would like to hear about that too.

"Lock Out, Look Out, Ravenswood North" is one of the signs in front of the trailer-turned-union-office of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 6529 in Warren, Ohio. These workers admire the strength of the 1,700 USWA members who struck the Ravenswood Aluminum Corp. in West Virginia for 20 months in 1991-92.

Since September 8, the 116 members of Local 6529 have been locked out by the Taylor-Winfield Corp. The company, a major producer of spot-welding equipment used in steel mills, does not claim to be losing money, but is demanding major medical insurance concessions — including copayments and larger deductibles — in order to gain an edge over competitors.

When union members rejected concessions, the company locked them out. Taylor-Winfield has not yet tried to bring in scabs and no union member has crossed the line. Trucks carrying the little production done by salaried employees are escorted out of the plant by police cars, although there have been no reports of violence. The company's sister plant in nearby Ravenna, Ohio, is continuing production.

Local 6529 members have been reaching out for support to their fight. Steelworkers from Warren had gone to Ravenswood, West Virginia, to bring solidarity to the unionists on strike there; in return, former Ravenswood strikers have come up to Warren to join the picket line. Last October, 600 workers turned out in front of the plant for an rally called by the local AFL-CIO to aid the locked-out Steelworkers.

Darlene Lazaro, chair of the lo-

were angry about Taylor-Winfield's latest offer — to bring back only 36 of the 116 union members. The company presented a list of the 36 it wanted, which included few union officers and was not based on seniority. A couple of workers at the union office, whose names were on the list, responded, "We wouldn't go back till everyone goes back." □

### Nursing home workers strike in Cincinnati

Five hundred people joined a demonstration March 11 to show support for members of District 1199 of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), who are on strike in Cincinnati, Ohio. The demonstration received wide support from labor and community organizations who are appalled at management's treatment of the workers and the hiring of scab replacements.

Workers at the Orthodox Jewish Home for the Aged walked off the job February 22 after efforts to settle their current contract failed. Management responded by hiring permanent replacement workers.

Among those on strike are licensed practical nurses, certified nursing assistants, and dietary, housekeeping, and maintenance workers. More than 90 percent of the workers are women; 80 percent are Black. Workers make barely \$5 an hour and pay \$150 a month for family health insurance. Many have been there 15-25 years and have no pension plan.

The striking workers are demanding affordable health insurance, a health and safety committee, a decent pension plan, more equitable sick leave policies, and a wage increase.

Brenda Smith, who has worked for the home for 24 years, said, "I'm only asking for what is right. I need bus fare to go to work. We need to pay for insurance and gas and electrical bills." She said she

was on strike for her daughter, who deserves to see her mother treated with dignity.

Jeanette Hillman, who has worked there for 25 years, spoke of workers' resolve. "If it's a year from now or whenever, I'm still going to be on the picket line."

The SEIU is currently organizing a food, clothing, and fund drive to support the striking workers. □

### British Columbia teachers fight cutbacks in education

The 3,000 members of the Surrey Teachers Association in British Columbia, Canada, ended six weeks of rotating strikes March 8. The strikes were organized to fight cutbacks in education.

The teachers received support from parents and other unionists. Janitors and secretaries organized by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) honored and walked the picket lines. At the end

(NDP) government has announced that to control the deficit it is considering reductions in spending for education.

According to Ray Worley, president of the BCTF, only 31 out of 75 school districts have ratified collective agreements with the teachers' union. Wage increases have been averaging 2.3 percent in the first year and 2.1 percent in the second.

David Chudnovsky, the Surrey teachers' strike coordinator stated, "The main problem we face in Surrey is underfunding. Out of 75 school districts in the province, Surrey is the lowest-funded. We are \$600 per student below the provincial average."

"If the government has financial problems it should not be taken out on the backs of children," he added. "Some people say the deficit is the key issue. We believe education is an investment. The NDP was elected because they made a commit-

Eighteen workers have been on the picket line for four months in a fight to win a decent contract and oppose unfair labor practices by the company.

The strike has generated support in the community and labor movement in the Hartford area. Members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, United Auto Workers, International Association of Machinists, American Federation of Teachers, Service Employees International Union, and a state employees' union participated in the March 6 rally. The biggest contingent was a group of a dozen students and several faculty members from Trinity College in Hartford.

Three other rallies have been held at the plant, including one in which 27 people were arrested for sitting down in and blocking the company driveway. Three Hartford city council members were among those arrested.

Students at Trinity have formed a campus strike support group, which recently held a public meeting. Two dozen students heard three of the strikers and ILGWU organizer Steve Thornton explain the issues in the strike. Many found it hard to believe that the conditions described by the strikers could still exist in 1993.

One worker said the temperature in the plant can reach 118 degrees in the summer. Workers at Plastonics coat metal parts with plastic.

Another striker explained that his father had been on strike for four years at the Colt firearms factory in Hartford several years ago. He had hoped he would never have to do something like that but, the striker said, if necessary he was willing to stay out for an equal length of time at Plastonics.

The week before the rally, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration fined Plastonics \$62,250 for more than 50 serious safety violations at the plant.

The following people contributed to this week's column: Michael Italie, member of United Steelworkers of America Local 14919, and Amy Husk, member of United Auto Workers Local 2000, in Cleveland; Melissa Tuckey in Cincinnati, Ohio; Ned Dmytryshyn, member of Teamsters Local 213 in Vancouver, British Columbia; Tony Prince, member of International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) Local 155 in Brooklyn, New York; and Mark Rahn, member of ILGWU Local 145 in North Bergen, New Jersey.



Supporters of striking nursing home workers rally in Cincinnati

of February, the New Westminster teachers launched rotating strikes and voted in favor of a full-scale strike following the March 15-22 spring break if significant progress in contract talks was not made.

The Langley teachers are also voting on rotating strike action. Surrey, New Westminster, and Langley are part of the greater Vancouver area. Teachers in Quesnel in north-central British Columbia have just ended a strike that started in mid-February.

Teachers organized in the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF), which represents 35,000 teachers, are gearing up to defend their collective agreements, which expired in June 1992. The main dispute involves class sizes and cutbacks in education spending. The provincial New Democratic Party

ment that education was the number one priority."

Surrey Teachers Association representatives reported that rotating strikes successfully highlighted the funding issue and forced the government to move a little, resulting in some progress in negotiations. The provincial government has now come up with \$9 million more. □

### Connecticut Plastonics workers win support

Fifty people picketed March 6 in front of the Plastonics plant in Hartford, Connecticut, in solidarity with the workers on strike there. The strikers, all Puerto Rican, are members of Local 151 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU).

## LETTERS

### Keep up good work

Keep up the good work. We need news like yours that is not slanted in favor of the ruling class. J.A.

Norwalk, California

### Trial of racists

Readers of the *Militant* will note that the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from California, Joel Britton, visited a migrant workers' camp that had been attacked by five racists in October. The attack occurred in Alpine, California, a rural community east of San Diego. The five attackers wielding baseball bats beat these workers as they slept last October. The reason given for this vicious attack was that one of the attackers' wives was reportedly raped.

The trial of the racists is set to begin March 16, 1993. The district attorney's office is asking for a 30-day delay because of Superior Court Judge May's dismissal of hate-crime charges. The five bigots

will be tried on charges of assault with a deadly weapon, battery, and conspiracy.

Gary Willhite  
Santee, California

### Women's oppression

I appreciated Michael Pennock's column "Child care — it depends on your social class" in the March 5 *Militant*. It was a pleasure to hear from a fellow worker speaking out against the barrage of attacks on us for so-called "neglect of the family."

I read two books recently that take on this attack. In the *Communist Manifesto* Karl Marx and Frederick Engels seem to be describing the same articles Pennock quotes when they write, "The bourgeois clap-trap about the family and education, about the hallowed co-relation of parent and child, becomes all the more disgusting, the more, by the action of modern industry, all family ties among the proletarians are torn asunder..."

Cosmetics, Fashions, and the

Exploitation of Women begins with an article by Mary-Alice Waters called "The Capitalist Ideological Offensive Against Women Today." Waters points out that this offensive is aimed at undermining confidence and deepening divisions to make women in particular more vulnerable to increased exploitation. "The capitalists want women to blame themselves, not the social relations of production, for the economic and social problems they confront every day. The goal is to make women feel guilty that their children are being permanently damaged by 'abandonment' in child care facilities (if they exist), or being turned into lonely 'latchkey delinquents.'"

I recommend these two books to any worker who suspects that he or she is not the cause of the big social problems of today and wants to figure out how to act to solve them. Jacquie Henderson  
New York, New York

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on sub-



"IT'S GOT SOMETHING TO DO WITH HEALTH CARE REFORM!"

jects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

The *Militant* special prisoner

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



## Rightists assault Miami protesters who oppose U.S. embargo of Cuba

BY LAURA GARZA

MIAMI — Right-wing Cuban-Americans attacked a picket line here March 17 to protest the U.S. embargo against Cuba. The picket line was sponsored by the Alliance of Workers in the Community (ATC) and the Antonio Maceo Brigade.

The ATC is a Cuban-American group that organizes public activities in opposition to the embargo. The Antonio Maceo Brigade (BAM) is a Cuban-American organization that supports the Cuban revolution.

The two groups obtained a city permit to picket on Coral Way in Little Havana, across the street from radio station Radio Mambi. Radio Mambi and its general manager Armando Pérez Roura are known for giving a voice to the most right-wing elements among opponents of the Cuban revolution and for initiating vitriolic campaigns against those who speak out for changing U.S. policy toward Cuba.

A report issued by the human rights group Americas Watch criticized the climate of threats and violence that right-wing forces have fostered to try to limit the right to free speech in Miami. The group cited several examples of campaigns launched on Radio Mambi that were followed by threats and acts of violence against those named in the broadcasts. Pérez Roura has openly called for terrorist attacks on Cuba.

The ATC and BAM have sponsored several public protests in the last few years against the U.S. embargo and the Torricelli Act — which tightens the embargo — at different sites including across from Radio Mambi without incident. But throughout the day, leading up to the 5:30 p.m. picket line, Pérez Roura broadcast an editorial encouraging right-wingers to go down to Radio

Mambi and be ready to take action when the antiembargo protest began.

Pérez Roura claimed those who would picket against the embargo are "a group of subjects paid by the Castro regime to come before our studio and offices with signs dictated from Havana. Let the traitors come to picket," he said. "Let them come and find an army of men and women who never betray the idea that brought them into exile."

By the scheduled time of the protest, several hundred right-wingers including members of paramilitary groups like Comandos L and Alpha 66, had gathered in front of Radio Mambi looking for a fight.

### Rightists beat picket bloody

A lone antiembargo protester who arrived early, at about 3:00 p.m., was spotted carrying a sign that read "Down with the embargo." He was immediately assaulted by several right-wingers who beat him bloody until he was able to flee. The man was treated by paramedics for head injuries and serious bleeding.

By the time the 150 or so opponents of the U.S. embargo had gathered, police had blocked off the street in front of the radio station. The protesters walked toward a spot across the street from the radio station, carrying their signs and chanting "Down with the embargo." As soon as they arrived, right-wingers dashed across the street and began tearing signs out of people's hands and hitting whoever they could pick out of the crowd.

One of those beaten was Ignacio Tapia, a 67-year-old Mexican immigrant. Tapia joined the protest because he considers the embargo "unjust and useless." Tapia, whose

Continued on Page 11



Militant/Joe Peterson

March 17 picket line in Miami demanding end to U.S. embargo against Cuba

## British rail workers vote for April strike action with miners

BY ROBERT HIGLEY

LONDON — Rail workers in the National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers (RMT) voted to take a 24-hour strike action April 2. The vote was 26,000 to 16,000 and involved two-thirds of the union members.

The National Union of Mineworkers had

previously voted for a one-day strike action to take place the same day.

The protest action had been called in response to a recent series of announced job losses on the railways. By the end of March 7,000 rail workers will have taken what management announced were voluntary redundancies (layoffs). The daily *Independent* recently reported that state-owned British Rail wants to shed another 4,000 jobs by the end of September. In the run-up to the planned privatization of British Rail, the union fears 20,000 jobs are at risk.

The vote and protest action centered on the demand for no compulsory redundancies. The union has also called for an end to the use of contractors and no erosion of the redundancy payment scheme. After the strike vote, Jimmy Knapp, general secretary of the RMT, said, "This ballot was a vote for jobs. Jobs today and jobs in the future. The message from railway staff is clear — enough is enough."

Many rail workers are very uncertain about the future. As part of its productivity drive, British Rail has eliminated jobs through the erosion and restructuring of many job categories. Some 50,000 rail jobs have been lost in the past 10 years.

At the same time, safety standards have been eroded. Deaths among track workers have tripled.

William Tuohy, a trainman at London Bridge who voted for strike action, expressed doubts about its usefulness. "At the end of the year, with driver-only operation, British Rail intends to get rid of our jobs anyway," he said. "Why doesn't the union fight now to protect the jobs we have?" Driver-only operation is an intensive productivity drive to reduce the train crew to one person — the driver (engineer).

Dave, a laid-off bus worker now working on the railways, pointed to two recent 24-hour bus strikes in London. He explained how his former workmates had developed confidence by taking a stand against the proposed wage cuts for bus workers. RMT members should use the opportunity to talk to other rail workers, bus workers, and miners to win solidarity for the fight for jobs, he said.

After the RMT ballot, the train drivers' union also called a vote for a 24-hour strike action.

Robert Higley works as a trainman at London Bridge and is a member of the RMT.

## Yellowknife miners expose frame-up effort

BY HEIDI ROSE AND ROGER ANNIS

YELLOWKNIFE, Northwest Territories — The effort to frame up striking miners at Royal Oak Mines here took an ominous new step when the federal police released its so-called psychological profile of those it claims deliberately killed nine scabs in a September 18 explosion at the mine. Some 240 members of the Canadian Association of Allied and Smelter Workers (CASAW) have been on strike at Royal Oak since May 1992.

The "profile" was prepared by Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in collaboration with the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation. Released March 18, it asserts, "The anger which perpetrated this offense is mostly depersonalized and is directed at 'scabs' generally and not toward individual persons."

It also declares that the individuals involved have "extensive knowledge of mining operations generally and long-standing experience and geographic familiarity with this mine in particular."

"There is an obvious accusation here that a union member was responsible," responded the miners' union local president Harry Seeton immediately following the RCMP statement. "Who else would be presumed to want to direct 'anger' at scabs?"

"Just as we were starting to win the public to our side of the strike issues, thanks to our success in getting out our story at labor board hearings the previous week," said Seeton, "out comes this statement."

"The same thing happened to us in September," Seeton continued. "Just as we were winning more public support for a settlement of the strike, the explosion occurred."

More than 350 miners and their supporters jammed a March 12 solidarity benefit, where they reaffirmed their determination to

win justice in their 10-month strike. It was the largest solidarity action for the striking Yellowknife miners in many months. The town of 15,000 has been deeply divided by police, company, and media accusations that some or all of the strikers were responsible for the September 18 tragedy.

Close to 100 striking miners and their families attended the rally. Jean-Claude Parrot, a vice-president of the Canadian Labour Congress, pledged the support of that labor body to the strike, as did New Democratic Party member of Parliament Svend Robinson on behalf of the party's parliamentary caucus.

Supporters donated \$17,000 to the union's strike fund at the benefit.

### Attempt to decertify union

Spirits at the event were high because it followed three days of public hearings of the Canada Labor Relations Board (CLRB) where the miners succeeded in getting out the truth of their story to a broader audience. The hearings were called in response to an application by scabs to decertify CASAW and recognize instead the "Giant Mine Employees Association." Royal Oak was previously called the Giant Mine.

One hundred miners and supporters crammed the hearing room each day, while the scab outfit never mustered more than six of its supporters at any one time.

Since the hearings, there have been signs of frustration and demoralization among the 180 replacement workers. The labor board will rule in the coming weeks on the association's application.

Commenting on the hearings, striker Bill Schram said in an interview, "We finally got to put questions to people in positions of responsibility about what is happening in the mine, the lack of safe conditions in there, and about the scab association being nothing

more than a front for the company.

"We've been saying all this for months. Now people in town will take us more seriously because they have seen the accusations proven true."

O'Neil's testimony shed important light on the poor safety conditions prevailing in the mine. Two days after the hearings, two replacement workers were hospitalized when the mine floor collapsed under their vehicles.

The miners went on strike last May to stop the erosion of safety conditions in the mine and the attempt by the company to weaken the union through harsh disciplinary procedures. From the beginning the miners confronted a provocative and well-planned strikebreaking operation, including a special squad of the RCMP that was sent into Yellowknife just days after the strike began.

The RCMP launched a frame-up criminal investigation of the union following the September explosion. The police and media frame-up campaign has disregarded evidence that points to criminal negligence in the operation of the mine by Royal Oak. And the Northwest Territories government quickly refused CASAW's demand for a public inquiry into the explosion.

The union is receiving tens of thousands of dollars of financial support each month and is reaching out for support across Canada and other countries. Two members are currently on a speaking tour in western Canada.

To send messages of support or contributions, write to CASAW Local 4, Box 1628, Yellowknife, NWT, Canada X1A 2P2. The telephone number is (403) 873-4528.

Heidi Rose is a member of International Association of Machinists Lodge 2754 in Toronto. Roger Annis is a member of Canadian Autoworkers Local 1900 in Montreal.