

# THE MILITANT

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—PAGE 7

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## Support striking coal miners!

Now is the time for working people and youth, in the United States and around the world, to throw their weight behind the striking coal miners. The United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) fight against the Bituminous Coal Operators Association is one of the most important labor battles taking place today. The stakes are high for all working people.

The decision by the UMWA to call an-

### Editorial

other 2,200 coal miners out on strike May 24 has propelled this battle to a new stage. The UMWA plans to continue escalating strike action until the companies decide to meet the union's demands. There are now 6,700 miners on strike in four states. The latest expansion of the fight involves miners in West Virginia and Pennsylvania working at Consol Energy Inc., the second-largest producer of coal in the United States.

The coal miners are well prepared for this fight. They start with a victory against Pea-

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### East German steelworkers make gains in 3-week strike

BY LUKO WILLMS

FRANKFURT, Germany — Steelworkers in eastern Germany, on strike for three weeks, voted May 24-25 to accept an agreement that includes an extra bonus payment and a time schedule to reach wage equality with workers in western Germany.

The steel agreement is slightly better than a pact signed the week before by metalworkers. Both the steelworkers and the metalworkers are members of the same union, IG Metall.

The three-week strike by 40,000 workers in eastern Germany followed a March 26 rally of 70,000 workers in Bonn and demonstrations and warning strikes of more than 300,000 in both the eastern and western regions.

The strike was a response to the employers' unilateral decision to scrap a 1991 agreement that promised a 26 percent pay increase, effective April 1, 1993, and full equalization of wages with the west by 1994. Before the strike began, workers in the metal industry in eastern Germany only earned 50-70 percent of the wages of their counterparts in the west.

In some plants in the Berlin area there are actually two wage rates within the same factory. Workers coming from west Berlin are under the western German contract, while workers living in east Berlin and the surrounding area are paid by the eastern contract.

This was the first strike by workers in eastern Germany in 60 years. The negotiations with the steel bosses resumed May 22, and several hundred workers from the EKO steel plant demonstrated during this last day of talks. Horst Wagner, the secretary for the IG Metall Berlin-Brandenburg district, announced the agreement early the next morning.

Under the new pact, the steelworkers' pay will go from 60 percent to 80 percent of western German steelworkers' wages by June 1, 1993; 90 percent by October 1994.

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### UMWA strike expands in W. Virginia, Pennsylvania

BY STU SINGER

The United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) further expanded this year's second round of coal mine strikes, which began May 10, by calling out another 2,200 miners at midnight May 24. The miners joined the 4,500 already on strike in Illinois, Indiana, and southern West Virginia. The strike is winning significant support from other unionists.

The expansion of the strike for the third week in a row now involves miners from Pennsylvania and northern West Virginia for the first time, and begins to target Consol Energy Inc. This company, owned jointly by Du Pont Co. and Rheinbraun A.G. of Germany, is the second-largest U.S. coal producer. Peabody Holdings Co., which is owned by the British multinational company Hanson PLC and is the nation's largest coal producer, was struck in February during the first round of the miners' battle for a contract.

Consol chief executive officer B. R. Brown is the chief negotiator for the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA), the main coal-industry bargaining group, which includes 12 companies employing 60,000 UMWA miners. The BCOA contract sets the pattern for many other union contracts with smaller employers.

The new strikers work at Consol mines as well as mines owned by Rochester and Pittsburgh Coal Co. and CLI Corp.

In the first week of the strike, miners walked out at eight mines in Illinois and two in Indiana owned by Zeigler Coal Holding Co., Arch Mineral Corp., and Amax Coal Industries, Inc.

The following week the strike expanded to another Zeigler mine and maintenance shop in Illinois and to 18 other mines owned by Arch Mineral and Ashland Coal Inc. in southern West Virginia.

In an important example of solidarity, three strikers from southern Illinois were



UMWA picket shack at Arch Minerals's Ruffner mine in southern West Virginia May 22. The company is threatening to remove the picket shack, but the miners are determined to hold their ground.

Militant/Yvonne Hayes

invited to speak at two United Steelworkers of America (USWA) local union meetings in St. Louis. The miners urged steelworkers to come and join the picket lines to show their support for the strike.

Three UMWA strikers from the Arch Minerals Captain mine and the Old Ben Spartan mine also spoke at two USWA Local 9014 meetings in Bridgeton, Missouri. This local represents about 1,500 workers at Hussmann Refrigeration.

The miners explained how they had won previous fights against Pittston Coal in Virginia and Arch in Illinois. And they described how the miners had set up Camp Solidarity, first in Virginia around the Pittston strike, and then in Illinois, in order to help draw others into their fight.

A rally to support the UMWA strike will be held Sunday, May 30, in Coulterville, Illinois, at the Jaycees Park beginning at 1:00 p.m. A van with United Auto Workers (UAW) members from the Ford plant in St. Paul, Minnesota, is going to Illinois for Memorial Day weekend. The auto workers will join the miners' picket lines and participate in the Coulterville rally as well.

Solidarity activities are being held throughout the coalfields and in other areas.

A rally to support the strike took place in Osage, West Virginia, May 26. More than 400 miners attended. UMWA president Richard Trumka addressed the assembled workers.

"We have a few miners out now," Trumka said. "If the operators don't come to their senses, before this is over every coal miner will be on the picket line," he added to loud cheers from the crowd. "We did everything possible to avoid this strike. But if it's a fight they want, it's a fight they'll get."

Trumka said the UAW has provided a \$15 million line of credit to the miners' strike fund and other unions are following suit. The UMWA has the full backing of the AFL-CIO, he added. Miners announced at a rally that the union will hold a solidarity picnic on May 29 in Masontown, Pennsylvania.

Harold Ruggless, vice-president of United Auto Workers Local 270 in Des Moines, Iowa, reported that his local passed a motion to invite a UMWA speaker to Des Moines. UAW members are organizing collections for the striking miners.

International solidarity is also beginning to mount. The International Miners Organ-

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## Conflict with rivals in Europe slows U.S. drive to intervene in Yugoslavia

BY GEORGE FYSON

Backing away from its preferred plan for taking the initiative on military intervention in Bosnia, the U.S. government has reluctantly endorsed proposals by Paris and London to increase the size of "peacekeeping" forces under United Nations command in the former Yugoslav republic.

The proposals, adopted in Washington May 22, maintain tight economic sanctions against Serbia, threaten similar measures against Croatia, and endorse the concept of UN-enforced "safe havens."

These "safe areas" are zones around six cities in Bosnia where most inhabitants are Muslims in the midst of wider areas now held by the rightist Serb forces. Washington declared it was prepared to use its air power in response to attacks on French, British, and Canadian forces operating in these areas

under the UN banner.

The new plan, announced by Secretary of State Warren Christopher, stresses that its signers "will keep open options for new and tougher measures, none of which is pre-judged or excluded from consideration."

The revised intervention plan was designed to smooth over some of the sharp divisions between Washington and its European rivals, which came to the fore after President Bill Clinton approved a plan for bombing the Serb nationalist forces' guns and economic infrastructure. Following the latest announcement, French foreign minister Alain Juppé again reminded Washington, "I haven't agreed with the so-called division of labor between those who are in the sky and those who are on the ground," referring to U.S. forces and French and British troops, respectively.

The UN troops must in effect have war-

making powers, said Juppé, proposing a major change from the supposedly neutral role of protecting shipments of food and medicine that these forces have had so far. He urged Washington to use its air power in direct defense of the "safe areas," and not just to protect UN troops.

These areas include the cities of Sarajevo, Srebrenica, Gorazde, Zepa, Tuzla, and Bihac. About 1.2 million people, including tens of thousands of refugees, are now living in these towns.

The Clinton administration's retreat from its earlier plan has drawn criticism from those who are concerned that Washington must retain the ability to wield its influence in Europe. Senate Republican leader Robert Dole said the new approach amounts to "writing off Bosnia as a state."

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## Polish union threatens strike

Workers in Poland are fighting austerity measures the government is trying to implement in an attempt to integrate the country's economy into the world capitalist market. Solidarity, the main union federation, is threatening to expand a strike by teachers and health-care workers into a general strike if their demands for wage increases are not met. Rail workers are also discussing strikes.

Solidarity representatives say they will couple the strike with a parliamentary vote of no confidence in the coalition government headed by Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka. Suchocka said the government cannot meet workers' demands because of strict budgetary restraints imposed on it by the International Monetary Fund.

## Romanian steelworkers strike

An estimated 30,000 Romanian steelworkers are striking for an increase in wages to match the rise in prices. Metarom trade union officials said all 90,000 members are prepared to strike if no agreement is reached. The union organizes 70 percent of the country's steelworkers. The workers are asking employers for a minimum monthly wage of 50,000 lei (US\$80) for skilled workers, up from the current average of 34,000 lei. In early May, 6 million public sector workers won pay raises from the Romanian government after threatening a strike. Their wages rose from 17,600 lei to 30,000.

Prices for necessities like heat, bread, milk, water, and public transportation are expected to rise 800 percent since price controls were lifted May 1. Bread prices have already risen by 450 percent in the first half of May.

## Denmark cops attack protesters

Police in Copenhagen shot and wounded 11 young demonstrators May 18 as nearly 500 people protested the approval of the Maastricht Treaty in a referendum earlier that day. Cops shot tear gas and charged the crowd with riot shields and dogs. The treaty had previously been rejected in a referendum last June. This time the government introduced an opt-out clause from the Maastricht agreement and offered tax breaks, especially to the middle class, in order to win a yes vote. After the vote the



Militant/Marty Anderson

The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo (May Square) launched an international campaign May 6 to free 25 political prisoners. The activists were jailed after attempting to prevent the failed military coup by rightist officers in 1989 at the La Tablada military base in Argentina. The banner in the picture above, taken at a meeting in the headquarters of the organization May 6, reads: "Amnesty now for the 25 Argentinian political prisoners."

government announced that the income-tax cuts would be paid for by taxes on gasoline, electricity, and heating, among other things.

## Guildford Four cops acquitted

The three former British police detectives who invented evidence to convict Patrick Armstrong of a 1974 alleged IRA bombing were acquitted of conspiring to pervert the course of justice. Armstrong was said to have confessed to the Guildford pub bombing, which killed five and wounded more than 50. He was jailed with three others, known as the Guildford Four, for 14 years. The four were released in 1989 after public pressure forced recognition of the fact that the cops altered notes from the interrogation, suppressed significant evidence, and gave false testimony at the trial.

## Clinton recognizes Angolan gov't

The Clinton administration recognized

the Angolan government led by José Eduardo dos Santos May 19. For years Washington had financially and politically backed efforts by the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) to topple the Angolan government. The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) has been the governing party in Angola since 1975, after successfully leading a popular armed struggle against Portuguese colonial rule. From 1975-91, UNITA waged a bloody war with the help of Washington and the apartheid regime in Pretoria.

Angolan troops and Cuban volunteers fought against these attacks for 16 years. A turning point in this battle was the 1988 defeat of the invading South African army at Cuito Cuanavale. The Angolan government reached agreement with UNITA for a cease-fire in May 1991. Elections were held in September 1992. After the MPLA won the elections UNITA renewed its fighting, killing more than 20,000 people. Both parties began UN-sponsored peace talks last October, which recently collapsed for the third time.

## U.S. Navy urged to leave Vieques

The Committee to Rescue and Develop Vieques is sending a delegation to Washington to demand the closure of the U.S. naval base on this Puerto Rican island. For decades, residents have fought against the continued bombing and destruction of their island as a result of U.S. military exercises there. The navy took over the island during World War II, placing fishing waters off limits, and forcing residents off two-thirds of the land. U.S. forces have used installations in Vieques to practice for invasions of Grenada, Cuba, and other Caribbean islands.

## Cuban court gives 15-year sentence to former manager

The First Criminal Chamber of the provincial People's Court in Havana province has sentenced Heberto López Morales, former general manager of the electronic equipment exporting company, Caribbean Audiovisuals, to 15 years in prison. The prosecutor had requested a 20-year term for embezzling state funds, fraud, and falsifying documents. The court also confiscated properties and documents found in López's possession at the time of his arrest, including seven cars, 17,000 Japanese yen, \$1,317, and cash in a fixed-rate account in the International Financial Bank, which was fed by funds taken from the Cuban state.

Cuban Television Rebelde reported that several Communist Party officials, with no criminal guilt, were implicated in the events that led to the trial. They were removed from their posts and expelled from the party.

## Venezuelan president on trial

Venezuelan president Carlos Andrés Pérez, a social democrat and survivor of two coup attempts in 1992, stepped down to face a Supreme Court trial on corruption charges. Octavio Lepage, the head of Venezuela's Senate, will be acting president for the next 30 days until Congress elects an interim president to serve until Pérez's term expires in February 1994.

Venezuela has the largest known oil reserve in the Americas and is second only to Saudi Arabia as an exporter of crude oil to the United States. When Pérez took office for his second term in 1989, he opened the nation's state-controlled oil industry to foreign investment. Many Venezuelans have protested this privatization move and other government austerity measures.

Prosecutors charge that Pérez and two former ministers made about \$10 million by changing a secret discretionary fund into dollars at a preferential rate. After an 88 percent devaluation of Venezuela's currency, the bolívar, the dollars were changed back into bolívares. Despite a government ban on public demonstrations, the streets of Caracas were filled with cheerful crowds banging pots and pans after charges against Pérez were announced. Police shot tear gas into the crowd to disperse it.

## Tokyo attacks immigrants

Following several months of a neo-Nazi leaflet and poster campaign targeting Japan's growing population of immigrant workers, the Tokyo metropolitan government closed a section of Yoyogi Park in the city. The park has been a common meeting place for immigrants, mostly Iranians, to relax on Sundays, earning it the nickname "Little Tehran."

The following week police arrested 102 immigrant workers who had gathered in the park. The authorities claimed that all those taken into custody had overstayed their visas and would be deported. —PAT SMITH

Bob Miller in Birmingham, Alabama, and Marty Anderson in New York contributed to this week's column.

## THE MILITANT

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to employers' attacks

With reporting teams throughout U.S. coalfields, the 'Militant' provides on-the-scene coverage of the battle by the United Mine Workers of America for a contract. The 'Militant' has unique coverage of workers fighting against company attacks, from Poland to Australia. It tells the truth and presents a working-class point of view. Don't miss a single issue!



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# Michigan ruling defends 'right to die with dignity'

BY SARA LOBMAN

On May 20, Michigan judge Cynthia Stephens overturned a state law making it illegal for one individual to assist another in committing suicide. The state of Michigan passed the law in February as a direct challenge to Dr. Jack Kevorkian, who since 1990 has helped 16 terminally ill people die.

The debate in Michigan over Kevorkian's practices, however, echo a much larger national debate over whether

of a debilitating disease.

Advances in medical technology, which have led to treatment and cures for many diseases, also enable doctors to keep terminally ill patients, or those in a vegetative state or an irreversible coma, alive for months or even years. Machines can duplicate many functions that the body is no longer able to carry out — breathing, circulating blood, disposing of waste products.

As a result of these advances, a growing number of people have seen terminally ill family members or friends go through prolonged, painful, and emotionally draining final months of life. This has brought about a change of thinking about the right of seriously ill individuals to "die with dignity" at the time and place of their choosing.

In many states, "Living Wills" are accepted as legal documents that stipulate what medical procedures should, or should not, be provided in case the signer can no longer express his or her opinion. These documents allow someone facing a long and painful death to choose to have certain life-sustaining medications and treatments withheld.

In 1975, only 41 percent of those surveyed for a Gallup poll thought that someone suffering tremendous pain with "no hope of improvement" had the moral right to end their life. Today the figure is 66 percent.

Opposition to recognizing the right of seriously ill individuals to choose to terminate their lives has primarily come from the right-wing, the Catholic church hierarchy, as well as sections of the medical profession. In 1991, these forces helped spearhead a vicious campaign in Washington state against a ballot initiative that would

have allowed terminally ill people, diagnosed by at least two doctors as having only six months to live, to request that their life be ended. The measure was defeated. The following year, a similar measure was voted down in California.

Newspaper columnist and right-wing activist Patrick Buchanan argues against the right to die with dignity. Buchanan ties together his opposition to the rights of the terminally ill and his opposition to a woman's right to choose abortion. "If a woman and her doctor can end the life of an unborn child, who are these 'religious fanatics' to tell her she cannot end a life too painful to live?" he says. "Whose life is it anyway?" Just to make clear that his view that life is sacred does not extend to opposition to the death penalty, Buchanan goes on to say, "No man is permitted to play God, and take innocent life" (emphasis added).

When Judge Stephens overturned the Michigan law, she did so on the narrowest technical grounds, arguing that the law had unconstitutionally been added as an amendment to another law. But Stephens then went on to point out that "the right of self-determination, rooted in the 14th amendment of the Federal Constitution and of the Michigan Constitution, includes the right to choose to cease living."

Howard Simon, the executive director of the Michigan chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, which brought the court challenge to the law, is correct to hail Stephens's ruling as "a defense of the right of every competent adult to make decisions for themselves when facing a terminal illness."

## AS I SEE IT

or not terminally ill consenting adults have the right to decide to end their lives.

In this debate working people, and all those who defend democratic rights, should stand for giving individuals the greatest latitude to make decisions that intimately affect their lives. Having the right to decide how and when to die, in a situation of severe illness, does not devalue human life. Rather, it gives the greatest value possible to human consciousness and human dignity.

The demand for this right also has nothing to do with opening the door to killing mentally ill people or others, as many argue. Defenders of the democratic right of severely ill individuals to make decisions of life and death for themselves also demand decent health care for all. But even when this demand is won, there will be people who decide that they do not want to go through the final months

# Los Angeles students fight for Chicano studies

BY SHERRIE LOVE  
AND KEN RILEY

LOS ANGELES — At the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), students are waging a determined struggle against a recent university decision not to give Chicano studies full departmental status. Students, faculty, and others have pressed for establishing such a department for the last 25 years.

The UCLA protests began with a march of several hundred on the faculty center May 11. When they were denied entrance, about 90 students made their way inside and began a sit-in.

Some 200 Los Angeles Police Department

(LAPD) officers in full riot gear were called in to back up the university police. The cops arrested 83 protesters on felony vandalism charges and carted them off to the county jail. Bail was set at \$10,000 each. Later these charges were dropped to misdemeanor trespassing for all but one, although campus officials are planning to file additional charges.

Windows were broken and furniture damaged at the faculty center during the protests. School officials claim that the cost of the destruction was more than \$50,000. While students admit that there was some damage, most say that the administration is exaggerating.

There have been a number of protests

against budget cuts in the California university system over the last six months. A demonstration organized for the next day to protest the cuts in education funding also became a protest for demanding a Chicano studies department. One thousand students and their supporters turned out. There was sizable support from Black, Asian, and white students.

A contingent of 150 members of Justice for Janitors, unionists who are currently on strike and in contract negotiations, marched their way through the campus to join the rally. Students greeted the strikers with loud cheers.

Justice for Janitors organizer Rocio Saez said, "Wherever we see something unjust

we have a responsibility to fight it, not only in the workplace, but for students too." Chants went up of "Drop the charges" and "Sí se puede!" ("We can do it!")

Chicano studies at UCLA is an "interdepartmental" program, in which faculty members from various departments teach classes on a volunteer basis. A full-fledged department would have its own faculty and its own budget. Asian- and African-American studies are also kept in the same second-class status.

On May 13 about 250 students marched to the chancellor's office and entered in groups of three to present leaflets with their demands, which included: no cuts in ethnic and women's studies programs; immediate implementation of a Chicano studies department; a central role for students in making decisions about their own education; dropping the charges against those arrested; and resignation of the vice-chancellor who called in the LAPD.

Students have held several meetings to discuss what has happened. During the first meeting one student said that because of the problems caused by the damages during the May 11 march they should keep the protests low-key and on campus. Several other students raised objections to this, arguing that the best way to counter the violence-baiting of the university administration and media was to invite participation of students from other campuses and from their communities.

The students have found several lawyers who are volunteering their services to defend those facing charges. State Senator Art Torres, who supports the establishment of a Chicano studies department, persuaded a legislative subcommittee to temporarily hold up an allocation of \$838,000 earmarked for a UCLA law school building. Students are planning further demonstrations.

## Corrections

An article by Sara Ullman, titled "United Airlines workers resist concession demands," which appeared in the May 10 issue of the *Militant*, incorrectly reported that International Association of Machinists (IAM) vice-president John Peterpaul addressed a February rally of 300 workers at the San Francisco airport. IAM Local 1781 vice-president Ray Perry addressed that rally, not Peterpaul.

An editorial titled "German strike: gain for labor," which appeared in the May 31 issue of the *Militant*, said that steelworkers in eastern Germany won raises of 26 percent in 1993 through a strike. That is incorrect. Metalworkers, who work in auto, machine, and related industries, won that raise and began returning to work. Steelworkers still remained on strike, as their contracts were not yet settled as of the *Militant's* closing news date for that issue.

# New York college ordered to pay damages to professor disciplined for anti-Semitic speech

BY TONY PRINCE

NEW YORK — A federal jury in New York recently ordered officials of the City University of New York (CUNY) to pay Prof. Leonard Jeffries \$400,000 in damages for removing him as chairman of the Black Studies Department at the City College of New York (CCNY) in March 1992.

Jeffries became the center of controversy after he made anti-Semitic remarks in a July 1991 speech. Several capitalist politicians, including New York governor Mario Cuomo, used the speech as a pretext to call for firing him.

While Jeffries has argued for the inclusion of the contributions of Africans and Blacks in U.S. history courses, his presentations have portrayed Jews as the main progenitors of slavery and bias against Blacks. He points to Jewish slave traders and says that Russian Jews conspired with the Mafia to create a negative image of Blacks.

"I grew up as a youngster just like you did, going to movies where the African peoples were completely denigrated," Jeffries said in his July 1991 speech. "That was a conspiracy planned and plotted and programmed out of Hollywood, where people called Greenberg and Weisberg and Trigliani and whatnot — it's not anti-Semitic to mention who developed Hollywood. Their names are there: MGM — Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Adolph Zukor, Fox."

The teaching of Black and African history is something that working people should support because it helps break down racist attitudes and stereotypes. But backing this demand is not the same as supporting Jeffries's historical viewpoint.

Jeffries's stance, in fact, deepens the divisions among working people. He has distributed booklets that say the skin pigment melanin gives Blacks intellectual superiority. He has called people of European descent "ice people" who are greedy and materialistic as opposed to "sun people" —

those of African descent who he calls humanistic and communal.

Pointing to Jews as the perpetrators of the slave trade, the main proponents of films with racist content, and as responsible for any of the other atrocities that Blacks have been victims of blocks the gaining of a materialist and scientific understanding of history and the root cause of racism. The only logical conclusion of such anti-Semitic comments is that Blacks need to mount a fight against Jews as a people, instead of



City College professor Leonard Jeffries

taking on the wealthy few who run the United States and the capitalist system that enriches them.

By singling out Jews, Jeffries reinforces scapegoating, which is a classic tactic of right-wing forces. Historically, such groups have used anti-Semitism in periods of economic and social crisis to divide the working class and pave the road for fascism. This is why anti-Semitism poses such a threat to

working people and why it must be answered.

CUNY officials, however, did not explain that their steps to discipline Jeffries were necessary to strongly indicate that it is unacceptable for professors and administrators in the educational system to promote racist or anti-Semitic ideas.

Rather, they sidestepped the issue of Jeffries's anti-Semitism. They insisted they had not demoted Jeffries because of his 1991 speech but because he was an incompetent department chairman. He had not published his work in 20 years, they claimed. Officials alleged his department was lax in grading papers and keeping track of students.

As Jeffries had not received a negative evaluation in 20 years as chairman, and was unanimously reelected to the post only a month before his July 1991 speech, CUNY's position was not credible to the jurors. It allowed Jeffries to claim the real issue in the case was freedom of speech.

CUNY's decision to remove Jeffries as department chairman was a relatively mild action. It did not affect his position as a tenured professor and did not involve any loss of his \$70,110 annual salary. It did not even affect his right or ability to promote his ideas.

CCNY had previously isolated Prof. Michael Levin from the general philosophy course curriculum after he said Blacks are intellectually deficient and criminal-minded. They established separate sections of his courses for students who were offended by his views. The same judge who presided over the Jeffries case overturned CCNY's action in the Levin case.

The judge has not yet ruled whether Jeffries should be reinstated as department chairman at the City College of New York.

Tony Prince is a member of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union Local 155 in New York.



# Judge excluded key evidence from trial of framed-up activist

BY NAOMI CRAINE

(Fourth in a series)

"Mark Curtis will not get a fair trial," said Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, at a rally in Des Moines, Iowa, three days before the trial of the young union activist. "The courtroom on [Sept. 7, 1988,] is not where innocence and guilt will be decided and it is not where justice will be found."

Curtis, a worker at the Swift meat-packing plant in Des Moines, had been framed up by the cops on charges of sexually assaulting a Black teenager in March of that year. At the time, he was involved in a fight to defend 17 of his coworkers who had been arrested in a raid by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The night of his arrest the police beat Curtis at the jail and then charged him with assault.

## 'No one is obligated to prove innocence'

At the defense rally on the eve of Curtis's trial, Barnes discussed some of the key issues in the case with the more than 400 people present.

"No one in the world is obligated to prove Mark Curtis's innocence," he said. "The presumption of innocence has taken hundreds of years for working people to win. It is not a legal fiction. It is not something that you have the right to pick or choose, depending on what you like, what you identify with, the individual involved."

"This is very recent in human history," Barnes continued. "We shouldn't take it for granted, because the Des Moines police department, Polk County prosecutor, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the liberal newspapers, all are trying to take it away. Not only from Mark, but from everyone."

"It's the presumption of guilt which dominates in the 'democratic' United States," he explained. "Saturday night is open season on any young Black man in the United States. For every young Puerto Rican. It's open season for women much of the time. The presumption is not the presumption of innocence, it's the horror of guilt."

Curtis in fact did not receive a fair trial. The court demanded that he prove his innocence, not that the prosecution prove him guilty. On top of this, the judge prevented most of the key evidence in Curtis's defense from ever reaching the jury.

## Relevant testimony excluded

At the prosecutor's request, Judge Harry Perkins ruled before the trial that any testimony about the fact that Curtis was beaten by the Des Moines police was "irrelevant and immaterial," and could not be presented in court. Prosecutor Catherine Thune claimed that, because the two cops who assaulted him at the police station were not the ones who made the arrest, the beating had nothing to do with the rape charges.

But what happened at the Des Moines

City Jail on March 4, 1988, in the hours after Curtis's arrest is key to understanding the fact that he was framed up and why.

During the pretrial motions defense lawyer Mark Pennington explained why testimony regarding the beating was important. "Certainly we have a right to present evidence for the defense," he said, "and the defense in this case is certainly that Mark Curtis is going to testify that he was placed in an incriminating position by a Des Moines police officer. . . .

"Even though the fight and the beating that took place at the Des Moines Police Department was by officers other than [arresting] Officer [Joseph] Gonzalez," Pennington went on, "I still think it is relevant to show the institutional bias towards Mark Curtis. If the jury is going to have to deliberate and weigh whether or not there was any chance that a Des Moines police officer may have deliberately placed Mr. Curtis in an incriminating position, shouldn't they then have the opportunity to listen to other evidence of institutional bias against Mr. Curtis, and the fact that he was beaten up at the police station afterward?"

It was actually while they were hitting him with their nightsticks that the cops told Curtis the real reason for his arrest. They accused him of being a "Mexican-lover" and a "colored lover." This statement made it clear the cops knew about Curtis's political activities and were victimizing him because of it.

After shattering his cheekbone and beating him bloody, the cops charged the political activist with two counts of assaulting a police officer. This issue was scheduled to be tried separately a month after the rape and burglary charges, a fact that Thune pointed to in arguing that the beating was irrelevant.

In fact, the second trial never took place because the government dropped the charges. In 1992 Curtis won a civil rights lawsuit against the cops who beat him, including monetary damages. That victory will be the topic of a later article in this series.

## FBI files not allowed as evidence

Another key piece of evidence withheld from the jury was the fact that Mark Curtis's name appeared in FBI files compiled during a spying and disruption operation against the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES). Curtis was listed by the FBI as one of three people "acting in the leadership roles in the Birmingham," Alabama, chapter of CISPES in the early 1980s.

Pennington argued in the pretrial hearing that the jury should "have the right to know that in fact in the past the FBI has felt that Mark Curtis is important enough to spend time, energy, and effort to track his whereabouts, to include him within their FBI surveillance and, in fact, have received documents under the Freedom of Information Act



Des Moines cop Joseph Gonzalez (left) testified against Mark Curtis Sept. 8, 1988. Judge Harry Perkins (right) refused to allow evidence that Gonzalez had been suspended from the police force for brutalizing suspects and lying to cover up his actions.

from the FBI which indicate that Mark Curtis was certainly known to them because of his activities for CISPES and others? Shouldn't the jury be allowed to hear that evidence, your Honor?"

Judge Perkins responded, "We're going to try an assault upon a person that says he committed it, and a burglary, and I think that's the trial we're having. We're not going to be trying the FBI or Mark Curtis for other things that he may or may not have done."

Throughout the trial Perkins stood by his policy of ruling out evidence demonstrating that a frame-up by the Des Moines police was possible.

During cross-examination, Pennington asked police officer Gonzalez, who claimed he caught Curtis with his pants down in the middle of assaulting the 15-year-old woman, if he had once been suspended for "lying about the details of that incident that occurred while you were a police officer for the City of Des Moines."

Before the cop could answer, Thune objected and asked to discuss the matter in the judge's chambers. Outside the presence of the jury, Perkins decided to "sustain the objection on the grounds of relevancy. I think it just opens up a whole Pandora's box of evidence."

## Cop suspended for lying

At Pennington's request, Gonzalez was questioned in the judge's chambers for appeal purposes. He confirmed that he had been suspended for lying 10 years earlier, but claimed he had lied "to protect an informant."

Actually, according to a report in the May 24, 1978, *Des Moines Register*, Gonzalez "was suspended for four days for using unnecessary force and 10 days for 'lying' about the details of the incident."

In the "incident," Gonzalez and his partner brutalized two youths — one of whom was arrested merely for an expired traffic warrant — and then lied to cover up what they had done. The case did not become public until one of the youths won an out-of-court damages settlement two months later.

Before the trial Perkins had refused to order the State of Iowa to produce Gonzalez's personnel files so the defense could see what other "incidents" were on his record.

As Pennington pointed out in the judge's chambers, the fact that Gonzalez "has been suspended for lying about an incident as a police officer . . . goes to his credibility and to his bias." The jury, however, was not allowed to consider this fact.

Many other aspects of Curtis's trial were not fair.

For example, one of the things he was tried for was burglary in the first degree. That charge, which carries a 25-year mandatory sentence, was added a month after his arrest to raise the stakes in the case. The other charge against him, sexual abuse in the third degree, carries only a 10-year penalty. No one claimed he stole anything; his mere presence at the home of the alleged victim was considered "burglary."

## Not a jury of his peers

Opponents of his defense campaign argue that because Curtis, who is white, was convicted by twelve white jurors he had a jury of his peers. But that is not the case. The real question is one of class, not race.

Workers, especially those that are Black or Hispanic, have a very different set of

experiences than the middle-class whites who composed the big majority of the jury in Curtis's trial. Working people are much more likely to have personal knowledge of police brutality and frame-ups; they are less likely to simply take the word of a cop over that of a worker without question.

A few years after Curtis's trial, the Iowa Court of Appeals found that Polk County, which includes Des Moines, selects jurors by methods that "exclude the poor and therefore minorities." On June 26, 1992, the *Des Moines Register* reported that according to the Iowa Court of Appeals, "Polk County's practice of picking juries discriminates against blacks and systematically excludes them from the jury process."

The jury that reached a verdict of "guilty" against Curtis was not made up of his peers — there were no Blacks on the jury, and only one union member.

In addition, the one Hispanic juror was removed by Perkins despite defense objections just before the deliberations began. Juror James Garcia said at that point that he didn't think he could be fair because he was familiar with two locations referred to in the trial — the United Mexican-American Community Center and Los Compadres bar.

A motion for a new trial filed after Curtis's conviction pointed out, "Such knowledge in no way disqualified Mr. Garcia from service upon the jury, nor could it constitute bias or prejudice to either the State of Iowa or the Defendant. The removal of James Garcia was without cause, and the removal of the only juror with a Mexican-American background denied Defendant of a fair cross-section of the community and denied his right to a fair and impartial trial."

## 'Curtis is not guilty'

In an affidavit filed several weeks after the verdict, Blanche Stockbauer stated that as a juror in the case, she had not been convinced Curtis was guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. "Although I eventually voted guilty," she said, "it is my belief that Mark Curtis is not guilty of the crime charged. I did not know that, if I continued my vote of not guilty, a mistrial would occur, which would result in a new trial for Mr. Curtis."

Stockbauer continued, "One juror expressed, during deliberations, that he had made his mind up about Mr. Curtis's guilt before the defense presented any evidence in this case."

A second report of possible jury misconduct was never investigated.

Despite all of the facts that were not allowed into the courtroom, many of those who attended the trial were convinced that the government did not have any credible evidence against Curtis.

"I was surprised by the verdict" of guilty on both counts, Nellie Berry told *Militant* reporter Margaret Jayko soon after the trial. She said she had tried to listen to the evidence presented as if she knew nothing of the case beforehand, and had concluded that, given the number of gaps in the prosecution's case, a guilty verdict "was almost impossible."

Robert Berry, Nellie's husband, said he wasn't surprised. "I know the judicial system," he said. "Innocent people are even executed." Both Robert and Nellie Berry were long-time antiwar and political activists in Des Moines who first heard of Cur-

Continued on next page

## Literature available from the Mark Curtis Defense Committee

**The Frame-up of Mark Curtis** by Margaret Jayko. This pamphlet tells the story of Mark Curtis, a unionist and fighter for immigrant rights, who is serving a 25-year sentence in an Iowa prison on trumped-up rape charges. 71 pp., \$4.95. Order from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. (Please include \$3 for postage and handling.)

**Why Working People Should Join the Fight to Free Mark Curtis** by Harvey McArthur. Presents clear and convincing answers to the campaign of slanders that aim to justify the frame-up of Mark Curtis. 24 pp. \$2.

**State of Iowa v. Mark Stanton Curtis**. Transcript of September 1988 trial that found Curtis guilty of sexual assault and burglary. 446 pp. \$35.

**The Stakes in the Worldwide Political Campaign to Defend Mark Curtis** by John Gaige. A pamphlet that explains the political background to Curtis's case, the frame-up, and unfair trial. 25 pp. \$2.

**Freedom and Justice for Mark Curtis — An Answer to a Slander Campaign against Jailed Unionist and Political Activist Mark Curtis**, by Andrea Morell and Geoff Mirelowitz. \$2.

**The Frame-up of Mark Curtis**, a VHS video produced by Hollywood director Nick Castle. This effective 49-minute documentary has clips from TV news broadcasts on Curtis's fight for justice; scenes from the trial; and interviews with Curtis, his wife Kate Kaku, and others. This video is available for the cost of reproduction and shipping. \$20 Beta or PAL; \$15 VHS.

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



# FBI is mortal enemy of democratic rights

**Spying on America** by James Davis. 193 pp. Praeger Press, 1992.

BY MARK CURTIS

FORT MADISON, Iowa — The image projected in the media of the Federal Bureau of Investigation is that of an agency combating violence, organized crime, and terrorism. News accounts of the FBI investigating the World Trade Center bombing or tracking a serial killer have tried to rehabilitate the agency's image. This rehabilitation is necessary exactly because that image was tarnished in the eyes of working people during the 1970s and 80s when the truth was uncovered about the FBI's gigantic operations to spy on people and disrupt their political activity.

Beginning in the 1950s, these operations were carried out under the code name Cointelpro, for Counterintelligence Program. Some of these cases have received quite a bit of publicity, like the harassment of Martin Luther King Jr. or more recently of those who protested against the U.S. war in Central America. The FBI's goal was to

tional by the Supreme Court in 1956.

One disruptive technique that the FBI used again and again was the "snitch jacket." In 1964 the FBI manufactured a document implicating leading Communist Party member William Albertson as an FBI informant. The fake document was then placed in a car the man had been riding in so that other party members could find it. Albertson was immediately expelled as a police agent. Framed up by the cops and abandoned by his party, he continued to be harassed by the FBI through crank calls and other methods until his death in 1972.

## Martin Luther King targeted

Cointelpro also targeted Martin Luther King Jr. In 1963 King was placed on the FBI Reserve Index, a list of those to be arrested in the event of a national emergency. The same year the huge civil rights March on Washington took place. Soon after, Attorney General Robert Kennedy approved the use of wiretaps against King. More than 5,000 of his calls were intercepted and hidden microphones were placed around him. Some of these tapes, claiming to show proof of King's extramarital affairs, were put together and mailed to King. A letter was also sent implying that if King would kill himself the tapes would not be made public.

Although this attempt at blackmail wasn't successful, the FBI did pressure the National Council of Churches to withhold financial support to King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Trying to ruin the personal lives of people engaged in legal political activity was the trademark of all the Cointelpro operations. Baldly labeled "SWP Disruption Program" the Socialist Workers Party Cointelpro began in 1961. Members of the party were smeared by journalist "friends" of the FBI in newspapers. Their employers were contacted, often by anonymous "concerned citizens" and encouraged to fire them.

Along with wiretaps and "bugs," the FBI perfected its technique of the "black bag job." The term "black bag" refers to the case agents carried their burglary tools in during break-ins and searches at political offices. Between 1958 and 1965, there were more than 173 break-ins at SWP and Young Socialist Alliance offices.

## Youth radicalization

By 1968 millions of youth were radicalizing under the impact of the civil rights movement, the bloody U.S. war on Vietnam, and the worldwide youth revolt. Large numbers had been influenced by the leadership and revolutionary perspective of Malcolm X.

Washington once again turned to its spy operations in an attempt to diffuse these struggles.

The FBI used snitch jackets and anonymous letters to disrupt groups like the Black Panther Party and to sow disunity and suspicion among them.

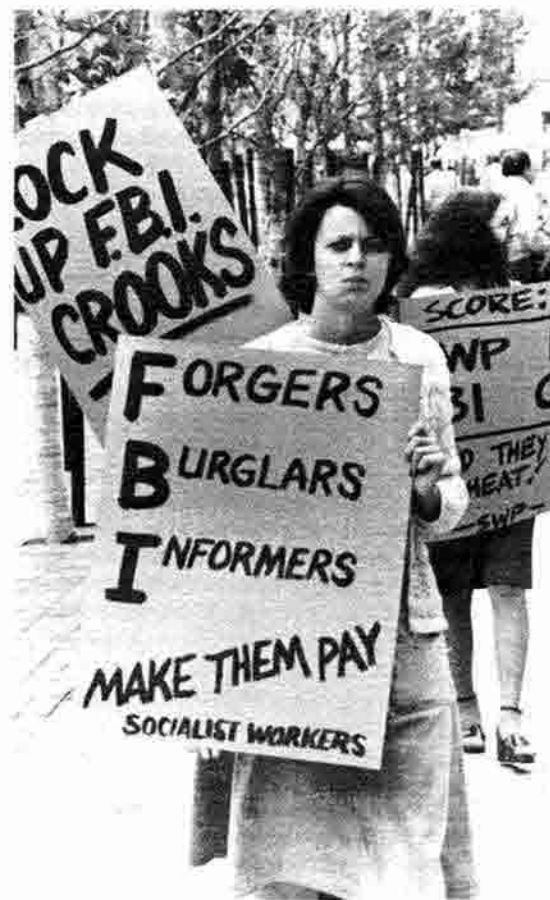
The cop agency also went after opponents of Washington's war in Vietnam. Hoover made several suggestions to his agents around the country about ways of harassing antiwar and radical political groups referred to as the "New Left." Some of these included "having members arrested on marijuana charges," "sending anonymous letters" to employers and family, "using cooperative press contacts" to slander antiwar activists in the media, and "exploiting the hostility among" different and sometimes competitive organizations fighting the Vietnam War.

## Spying on CISPES

The final chapter of *Spying on America* is appropriately titled "The End of Cointelpro?" The crimes of the FBI that came to light in the early 1970s, along with the crimes of President Nixon in the Watergate scandal, shook public confidence in the U.S. government. In an attempt to control the damage, Congress held public hearings. Attorney General William Saxbe declared, "The dirty tricks are over. Law enforcement at every level must operate within the letter of the law."

All the programs had now been canceled, he claimed.

However, Davis's *Spying on America* points out, "It has not necessarily ended." On March 30, 1983, a memo from FBI headquarters instructed agents to investigate the Committee In Solidarity with the People of El Salvador for alleged links with "international terrorism." Undercover informants were used, individuals and their car license plates were photographed at



Militant/Glenn Campbell  
Picket in Cleveland in 1976 against FBI spying. Revelations about Cointelpro changed the way many view the government's political police.

demonstrations, files were opened on thousands of people.

The Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) worked to educate the public about, and demonstrate against the U.S. government's support to the dictatorship and death squads in El Salvador. The FBI's anti-CISPES operation targeted groups from the Maryknoll Sisters and United Auto Workers union to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. I myself came under scrutiny by the FBI as a leader of the CISPES chapter in Birmingham, Alabama. The file I eventually got from the FBI with the help of the Center for Constitutional Rights was full of blacked-out sections, but one part that was readable said that we were targeted because we advocated "peace — not just the absence of war, but nurturing of human life." It also charged, "while this group does not favor civil disobedience, they will ally themselves with any group, violent and nonviolent, in order to further their goals."

The FBI has denied it still uses the

"black bag" jobs but from 1980–1985 numerous offices of CISPES and groups working with CISPES were broken into and files stolen.

## SWP lawsuit victory

In August 1986 the Socialist Workers Party won what Davis calls "the most significant judicial decision on the FBI's practices." In a lawsuit against several government agencies the SWP demonstrated decades of secret police harassment, break-ins and disruption, including the use of informers and wire taps. During court hearings on the case, SWP members took the stand to explain their solidarity with the Cuban revolution, and opposition to imperialist wars against Vietnam, Korea, and El Salvador. In contrast to the dirty tricks planned and executed behind closed doors, the SWP publicly explained its program and activities. In fact years of close FBI scrutiny were not able to unearth any criminal activities by the party.

The revelations about Cointelpro changed the way many people view the FBI. The gross violations of our rights and repulsive tactics of this cop agency have educated millions of working people about the role of police in this capitalist society. A number of books exposing some aspect of the FBI's Cointelpro have been written and I found two books similar to *Spying on America* in this prison's small library.

Most of them suffer from the same weaknesses as James Davis's does. They claim that the abuses committed were an aberration, a result of an "overzealous" anti-crime unit trying to justify its inflated budget. *Spying on America* for example claims that "rebellious activities were making the FBI's presence on campuses and in the streets necessary in the first place," and blames a lack of "accountability" for the agency's crimes "designed with all the good intentions in the world." This view is wrong. A much better account, without these errors, can be found by reading *Cointelpro* by Nelson Blackstock and *FBI on Trial* by Margaret Jayko, both available from Pathfinder Press.

The FBI is fundamentally a political police completely hostile to the democratic rights of this country's workers and farmers. The agency is the eyes and ears of the government planted in our unions and political organizations. It is designed to discipline the working class and administer punishment to opponents of the capitalist system. Its role is to spread confusion, sow distrust, dissension, and self-destructive ideas and methods among working people. To see the FBI as anything but a mortal enemy to our democratic rights is to make a fatal mistake.

What kinds of new directives are being issued from FBI headquarters right now — in the wake of the bombing of the World Trade Center and the massacre of the Davidian sect in Waco, Texas? What files will be set up, what groups and organizations will be infiltrated in the name of fighting terrorism? From past history as revealed in books like *Spying on America*, we must assume the target will be working people fighting to defend our interests.

## IN REVIEW

silence opponents of the U.S. government by subversive, illegal, and even murderous methods.

*Spying on America*, by James Davis, deals with five of these operations, known in the FBI's files as Communist Party Cointelpro, Socialist Workers Party Cointelpro, White Hate Group Cointelpro, Black Nationalist Hate Group Cointelpro, and New Left Cointelpro.

Davis's book details what these operations did, the types of illegal techniques used, and how the lid was blown off the FBI's spy operation.

The first Cointelpro began in 1956 and was directed against the Communist Party. But FBI spying on labor and political organizations began much earlier.

In 1936 President Roosevelt, his Secretary of State Cordell Hull, and J. Edgar Hoover met in the White House to put the domestic spy machine into motion. The funding was secret, and the authorization was by presidential directive rather than by statute. No one in Congress or in the judicial branch of government was informed about it. In 1941 the federal police prosecuted and jailed 18 leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and the Teamsters Union in Minneapolis for violation of the Smith Act. This act made it a crime to advocate certain political ideas.

The Communist Party (CP), at that time a fervent backer of the government's war effort, supported the use of this reactionary law against the SWP. This stance by the CP greatly hampered its ability to defend itself from attack in the post war years.

Later, in 1948, the government turned on the Communist Party itself. Several of its leaders were jailed on charges of conspiring to "teach and advocate the overthrow and destruction of the government of the United States by force and violence," the very same charges used in 1941 against the SWP.

The first Cointelpro was put into motion when the Smith Act was ruled unconstitutional.

## Frame-up trial

Continued from previous page  
tis's case at a demonstration against U.S. war moves in Central America.

Julia Terrell was Curtis's neighbor. "My first reaction," after hearing he had been arrested on rape charges was "What do we have across the street from us?" she said. Then she saw how badly he had been beaten by the cops, and "knew something was terribly wrong."

"I thought he was innocent by the time the trial started," she said. "By the time the trial was over I knew he was innocent."

The next article in this series will review the evidence presented in the trial.

(To be continued)

The first three parts of this series appeared in the April 19, May 3, and May 17 issues of the *Militant*. They can be ordered for \$1.50 each from the Militant, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.

FROM *Pathfinder*

## COINTELPRO

THE FBI'S SECRET WAR ON POLITICAL FREEDOM

by Nelson Blackstock The FBI's spying and disruption against socialists and activists in the Black and antiwar movements. Includes FBI documents. \$14.95

## FBI on Trial

THE VICTORY IN THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY SUIT AGAINST GOVERNMENT SPYING

Edited by Margaret Jayko The historic 1986 federal court ruling, trial testimony, and commentary tracing 50 years of government spying. \$16.95

## Washington's 50-Year Domestic Contra Operation

by Larry Seigle Origins and continuity of the FBI's covert war against the Socialist Workers Party. In *New Internationalist* no. 6. \$10.00

Available from bookstores listed on page 12 or from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. To cover postage and handling, please add \$3.00 for the first book and \$0.50 for each additional title.





## 1993 SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY-BUILDING FUND

City	Goal	Paid	Percent
Philadelphia*	\$3,090	\$2,575	83%
Salt Lake City	\$3,000	\$1,995	65%
Detroit*	\$3,300	\$1,895	57%
Twin Cities	\$5,000	\$2,548	51%
Newark	\$4,000	\$1,842	46%
Houston	\$3,500	\$1,500	43%
Greensboro	\$1,950	\$760	39%
Miami	\$1,500	\$480	32%
San Francisco	\$6,500	\$2,032	31%
Atlanta	\$2,500	\$760	30%
New York	\$8,000	\$2,340	29%
Chicago	\$3,000	\$859	29%
Baltimore	\$2,500	\$710	28%
Los Angeles	\$6,500	\$1,537	24%
Cleveland	\$2,000	\$440	22%
Birmingham*	\$2,000	\$400	20%
Seattle	\$2,500	\$495	20%
St. Louis	\$3,350	\$645	19%
Washington, D.C.	\$2,800	\$460	19%
Boston	\$3,000	\$365	12%
Des Moines*	\$1,750	\$180	10%
New Haven	\$500	\$50	10%
Morgantown	\$1,500	\$100	7%
Albany	\$200	\$0	0%
Albuquerque	\$200	\$0	0%
Cincinnati	\$300	\$0	0%
Denver	\$200	\$0	0%
Pittsburgh	\$2,000	\$0	0%
Portland	\$200	\$0	0%
San Diego	\$500	\$0	0%
Other		\$50	
TOTALS	\$76,430	\$24,978	33%
Should be	\$75,000	\$37,500	50%

\*raised goal

\$75,000

\$24,978

# Drive gains momentum from fund-raising events

BY MAGGIE TROWE

At a meeting in Birmingham, Alabama, May 22, supporters collected \$610 for the Socialist Workers Party-Building Fund. This puts Birmingham over the halfway mark toward their goal of raising \$2,000! Participants at the meeting made new pledges and increased old pledges by nearly \$300 in response to a talk by Brian Taylor and an appeal for funds by Denise McInerney. McInerney is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 9226 on strike against Trinity Industries in Bessemer, Alabama.

Taylor, 19, a laid-off garment worker from New York, spoke about his recent trip to South Africa as a reporter for the *Militant* newspaper.

Participants at the Birmingham meeting included young people active in defending local abortion clinics against attacks by right-wing thugs.

Party-Building Fund forums also took place over the May 22-23 weekend in Houston; Twin Cities, Minnesota; Salt Lake City, Utah; Philadelphia; and Newark, New Jersey. In Newark, *Militant* staff member Sara Lobman spoke about challenges and opportunities confronting working people in Cuba today. Lobman visited Cuba in March to participate in an international conference at the Federation of Cuban Women and a student conference at the University of Matanzas. Fund supporters raised a total of \$1,100 from the collection at the meeting, a

preforum roast-beef dinner, and a raffle and auction after the forum.

Participants in the Newark meeting included a Kenyan student activist who is touring the United States, and a construction worker who first heard about the fund meeting while attending an East Coast conference of the 10th Department, a group fighting for democratic rights in Haiti.

In Salt Lake City, where Francisco Picado spoke, supporters collected \$950. Picado, who attended the student conference in Cuba along with Lobman, is a garment worker in Miami. A number of young activists from the Student Anti-Apartheid Coalition, who had just returned from a Navajo Nation meeting in Arizona for two African National Congress Youth League leaders, attended the forum.

One of the ANC Youth League leaders came to the fund-raising meeting as well and spoke on how important a victory in South Africa will be in bringing solidarity to the people of Cuba.

The total collected to date across the country is \$24,978, nearly double where it stood a week ago. At 33 percent of the goal, the drive is about a week behind the halfway mark — where it should be three weeks into the drive.

Fund supporters across the country report progress. Four cities have raised their goals: Birmingham, Des Moines, Iowa, Detroit, and Philadelphia. And several cities are well ahead of schedule.

More fund-raising meetings are planned over the next few weeks. Socialist Workers Party leader Joanne Kuniansky will give a talk in New York June 5 entitled "The New World Disorder Accelerates." San Francisco fund supporters, who already held a successful meeting, will host a fund-raising barbecue over the Memorial Day weekend.

With the momentum gained from these and other meetings we can pick up the pace of fund collection and reach the \$75,000 goal in full by the June 15 deadline.

*I pledge* \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$other

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Send to Socialist Workers Party, 406 West Street, New York, NY 10014

## Miners expand strike in Pennsylvania, W. Virginia

Continued from front page

zation, which represents miners in 72 countries, sent a letter expressing full backing to the UMWA strike. The International Coalition of Free Trade Unions, with members in 110 countries, is sending a delegation to find out the facts about the strike.

The *Charleston Gazette* ran counterposed articles from UMWA president Trumka and BCOA head Brown May 21. Trumka explained that the companies had violated the 1988 contract with the UMWA. "They have engaged in 'double breasting' — creating nonunion subsidiaries to deny union members jobs that should rightfully be ours," he stated.

Brown defended the coal company's strategy of setting up nonunion affiliates. "Today's modern corporation," he said, "exist[s] as a network of affiliated but often independent businesses."

Brown also claimed that the BCOA's proposal would provide "job opportunities" that were "considerably more than under the old contract." The 1988 agreement required coal companies to offer laid-off union miners three out of every five job openings. This was never implemented.

*Gazette* reporter Ken Ward explained in a May 24 article, "What Brown didn't say in his commentary is that under the BCOA proposal, the three of five formula would kick in only after the company filled 40 percent of its new jobs."

In the midst of this contract battle, there are business consolidations going on that will have an impact on union contracts. Consol is in the process of buying from Occidental Petroleum the Island Creek Coal mines in Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky. Island Creek is a major coal producer whose contract with the UMWA generally follows the BCOA pattern.

Amax, one of the BCOA companies with mines now on strike, is being bought by Cyprus Minerals, which also has UMWA contracts. The *Wall Street Journal* estimates the new company, to be called Cyprus-Amax, will be the second-largest producer of both coal and copper in the United States.

Rafael Villagran, a Wall Street analyst who specializes in the coal industry, estimates the strike is costing Ashland Coal \$500,000-\$900,000 a week. In a statement to shareholders, Ashland officials had earlier revealed the existence of a coal-industry

strike fund to assist Peabody during the miners' strike last February.

*Militant* readers who want to contact the UMWA to invite speakers to their cities or find out information about sending contributions to the strikers or visiting their picket lines can call the Illinois District 12 office in Springfield at (217) 529-8301, or the Region 3 office in Boonville, Indiana, at (812) 897-0126. The union has also set up a national information toll-free line called Project Solidarity '93. The number is (800) 334-UMWA.

BY DENNIS RICHTER AND YVONNE HAYES

LOGAN, West Virginia — Two thousand coal miners in Boone and Logan counties joined the picket lines May 24 as the strike against the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) expanded into southern West Virginia. Pickett shacks went up outside mines operated by Arch Minerals and Ashland Oil companies.

"This is the strike of all strikes," explained a picket at the Sharples mine complex. "The companies are out to bust the UMWA. This strike is about your life or not."

At every picket shack, miners indicated that they expect this to be a long fight and explained their determination to see it through. "Things are going to heat up," said Danny Grimes, a fourth-generation coal miner and vice-president of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 2935 at the Sharples mines. "We're going to need all the support we can get."

Already, Grimes reported, four members of the United Steelworkers of America at Ravenswood Aluminum had visited the miners picket line, sharing experiences. The Ravenswood unionists invited the strikers to send representatives to one of their union meetings to explain their fight and indicated they would discuss raising funds for the strike.

Miners report that people from the local community are lending support as well. As these reporters toured the picket lines, one man dropped by an Arch Minerals mine with a load of firewood for the strikers and another dropped off a cooler of sodas at a struck coal loading facility, saying he'd be back later for the cooler.

Many strikers think a focal point of the

fight will be the picket shack at Rum Creek, outside Arch Mineral's Ruffner mine. The structure is built from lumber donated by a local company and has solid doors, pre-fab windows, and a large porch. Arch claims the union has built the structure on company property, while the miners maintain it's on public access. Company spokespeople say they will remove the building if state police do not, but the miners are determined to stand their ground.

While the only coal that has left the Sharples complex this week is coal mined before the strike began, Rum Creek mine has 120 management and clerical personnel permanently housed within the complex and the company continues to move coal. "They've got the secretaries driving trucks!" said one picket.

At the Fanco loading facility in

Amherstdale, pickets reported a 100-car train, driven by railroad supervisors, had left the facility on Friday.

At the Rum Creek portal, private guards employed by a division of Vance Security were on duty. Picket captain Roger Spence reported that on the first day of the strike the guards turned up in full riot gear. Guards bringing in supplies carry mace and pistols on the seats of their cars as they ride past the pickets. One subcontractor bumped a picket with his vehicle. But the miners have remained disciplined in the face of company provocations.

Many strikers expect the union will expand the strike to additional mines and other BCOA companies. And some believe they will need to picket at nonunion mines operated by BCOA companies. "It's going to take all the miners going out to get an agreement," said Spence.

## Union vote held at Marrowbone

BY DENNIS RICHTER AND YVONNE HAYES

LENORE, West Virginia — Three hundred fifty miners, their families, and supporters rallied at Laurel Lake in Mingo County to organize for the final push in the Marrowbone coal miners' organizing drive. A union recognition election is scheduled May 25-27.

The Marrowbone miners' Women's Auxiliary spent two days preparing food for the Sunday afternoon picnic and a local band donated its time and equipment for the event. Speakers included miners involved in the local organizing effort and Cecil Roberts, vice-president of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

Joe Stanley, a central leader of the Marrowbone miners, explained to the crowd that the organizing drive began three years ago when the mine was taken over by Shell Oil Corp. The effort got an extra push a year ago when Zeigler bought the mine. Zeigler implemented major cuts in the miners' benefits and in March the workers responded with a 10-day strike.

During the strike, the union garnered signatures from 400 of the 435 hourly employees and won the union representation election.

Twenty miners and their families from

Wolf Creek Collieries, also operated by Zeigler, came to the picnic. On May 28 Wolf Creek miners will also file for a union election with the National Labor Relations Board. Speaking for the Wolf Creek miners, William "Bubbles" Chapman announced that they were ending their three-week strike against Zeigler over cuts in retirees' benefits. Despite the company's refusal to resolve the issues in the strike, Chapman said, the miners had decided to return to work and continue to win support for the union from inside the mine. "It's time to go back to work and drive forward to victory in the union organizing drive," he stated.

A victory at Marrowbone will be a big boost for the Wolf Creek miners and for the entire UMWA. Strikers from Ashland Oil's Hobet Old 7 mine in Omar, West Virginia, who attended the picnic, said going after the nonunion operations in Mingo County and in Kentucky were key to the future of the UMWA.

"I used to think of these [nonunion] miners as scabs," said one of the Hobet strikers. "But we can't afford to think that way anymore."

Yvonne Hayes is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 7886 in Frederick, Maryland.



# Circulation drive is in striking distance of goals

BY NAOMI CRAINE

"The *Militant* is like a window to the world," said a new subscriber in Greece, one of almost 2,500 around the world who have already signed up to receive the socialist paper during the international circulation drive.

Supporters of the *Militant* are well within striking distance of making their goals. As of the closing news date of this issue, the drive is short of reaching its targets by 327 *Militant* subscriptions, 57 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions, as well as 383 copies of *New International*. With a final push supporters can surpass all the goals of the international circulation campaign.

As members of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) expanded their strike against the coal bosses to involve some 6,700 workers, another 20 miners subscribed to the *Militant*.

A team of three supporters from Greensboro, North Carolina, sold 11 subscriptions to miners in two days of sales at mine portals in southwestern Virginia. "Many of the miners we met had been to Camp Solidarity to support the Pittston Coal strike three years ago," wrote team member Marcus Royal. "They were ready to apply the lessons of that battle and were waiting to be called out. Most of the discussion centered around the South Mountain Coal Co. No. 3 mine explosion that left eight miners dead in December, and around the miners' fight against the coal bosses for a contract," he said.

Five more UMWA members bought subscriptions on the picket lines in southern Illinois. "The strikers wanted to discuss what's happening in the world, not just their fight," said Richard Sorrentino



United Food and Commercial Workers union members examine *Militant* while picketing New Jersey store

from St. Louis. "They want to follow the German metalworkers' fight and other struggles."

## 'We need paper like Militant'

"We need a paper like the *Militant*," Ron Lambert, a gold miner in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, said as he bought an introductory subscription. The Nerco Con mine where he works faces the possibility of a strike in the next few weeks. Lambert was one of 14 miners and other unionists who bought *Militant* subscriptions during a May 22-23 weekend of solidarity activities with strikers at the Royal Oak gold mine there.

Ned Dmytryshyn from Vancouver, British Columbia, reported that striker James Mager also bought a subscription. "I see it at the union hall all the time and I love to read it," he said. "I like the on the spot labor coverage, its international aspect, and that it takes the side of unionists fighting to defend their unions." Mager also picked up a copy of *New International* no. 8 to learn more about Che Guevara and the Cuban revolution.

"The war in Yugoslavia remains the predominant concern here," wrote *Militant* supporters Georges Mehrabian and Natasha Terlexis from Greece. These two support-

ers have gone well over their goal of selling five subscriptions. "All our subs were sold on a combination of interest in the coverage on Bosnia, the Cuban revolution, developments in South Africa, and the U.S. labor movement," they said.

In both New York and New Jersey, *Militant* supporters report interest in the socialist paper among grocery store workers, members of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union, on strike in both states. Ruth Robinett from New York described a visit to one picket line at a Pathmark store. "A number of the picketers were interested in

the labor coverage in the *Militant*," she said. "As we left the line three strikers were reading the paper and considering signing up for an introductory subscription. We plan to return later in the week to follow up." One UFCW member who works at a supermarket that has not been struck yet bought a subscription from a door-to-door sales team in the borough of Queens. He especially wanted to read the coverage on the miners' strike.

In San Francisco, *Militant* supporters have almost completed their goal of selling 70 copies of *New International*. "A lot of the *New Internationals* have been sold by union members to coworkers who have already been subscribing to the *Militant*," reported Kathryn Crowder. "We've also been taking them out on door-to-door sales and when we go to pick up subscription renewals. One Haitian woman renewed her subscription and bought all four copies of *Nouvelle Internationale* in French when we went by her house," Crowder said.

Supporters of the *Militant* who have gone over their local goals are now pushing to make sure the international goals are met. Steve Iverson, a *Militant* supporter in Salt Lake City, Utah, volunteered for a few days to help distributors in St. Louis reach their goals. *Militant* supporters in Cleveland have already surpassed their *Militant* subscription goal, and are planning to help those in nearby cities reach their targets.

A chart in next week's issue will list the final results of the campaign, based on subscriptions and reports on *New International* sales that arrive in the *Militant*'s business office by Wednesday, June 2, at 12:00 noon EDT.

# Pathfinder books are welcomed in Azerbaijan

BY MA'MUD SHIRVANI

BAKU, Azerbaijan — Representatives of Pathfinder Press traveled to Baku, Azerbaijan, in mid-May following the conclusion of the Tehran Bookfair in Iran. Baku, a city of 2 million on the Caspian Sea, had been part of the Soviet Union until its breakup in 1991. It is highly industrialized, with a large oil and petrochemical industry.

In Baku, the Pathfinder representatives were welcomed at the Academy of Sciences, the Akhundov State Library of Azerbaijan, and Azarkitab, the main distribution agency for books in this country. The Akhundov State Library is open to the public six days a week, 11 hours a day, and has some 4 million books.

The economy is in crisis here, partly a product of the dislocations resulting from the compartmentalization of economic production in the various republics that made up the former Soviet Union, including Azerbaijan. Despite the lack of funds for purchasing books, libraries and research academies are very interested in obtaining Pathfinder titles.

The news of Pathfinder's plans to publish a new book this summer entitled, *To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920 — First Congress of the Peoples of the East*, was greeted with pleasure and surprise by historians at the Academy of Science.

In fact, plans had been made here to publish a two-volume book on the 1920 Baku Congress of the Communist International in celebration of its 70th anniversary. But this project was suspended because of the political upheaval that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union.

On hearing of Pathfinder's plan to publish the congress's proceedings, arrangements were made for Pathfinder representatives to view a film on the Baku Congress that was made by a crew from Moscow who had traveled to the congress along with delegates from the Communist International. The 40-

minute film includes footage of the proceedings of the congress and shows the response of the working people of Baku and other towns on the route who were celebrating the arrival of the delegates and the congress itself.

Students told the Pathfinder representatives that more English language books are going to be introduced at the university. The alphabet is being changed from Cyrillic, to Latin.

Many people here are discussing the world that is now opening up to them —

what the Soviet Union was and why it collapsed. They are interested in Pathfinder titles, especially the writings and speeches of communists and other revolutionaries.

A donation of Pathfinder books was presented to the director of the Akhundov State Library. These included: *To Speak the Truth*; *The Coming Revolution in South Africa*; *Problems of Women's Liberation*; *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*; *The Revolution Betrayed*; *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*; and *U.S. Hands Off the Mideast*!

After looking over the Pathfinder books for some time, a researcher at the Academy of Sciences asked what the word "pathfinder" meant. After being told, she paused and said, "The name is appropriate."

Funds are urgently needed to help cover the cost of Pathfinder's participation in the Tehran bookfair and subsequent visits in Azerbaijan and other former Soviet republics. Contributions can be sent to Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

# Scandals highlight Clinton's policy crises

BY NAOMI CRAINE

An uproar over a White House travel office. A \$200 haircut. A \$15,000-a-couple fund-raiser. U.S. president Bill Clinton and his administration were scrambling to deal with a flurry of minor scandals at the end of May.

After firing the entire White House travel staff May 19, administration officials put one of the president's cousins, Catherine Cornelius, in charge of that operation. An Arkansas-based company that handled Clinton's presidential campaign travel was hired to take over the functions of the office, which include arranging travel for journalists to cover the president's activities.

White House press secretary Dee Dee Myers first told reporters the staff was fired because of evidence of "gross mismanagement" and "very shoddy accounting practices." The administration called in the FBI to carry out a criminal investigation of the travel office.

It was soon revealed, however, that both Cornelius and Harry Thomason, owner of a one-third stake in an airline consulting firm that had worked for Clinton's election campaign, had previously urged the administration to take such action.

Faced with charges of cronyism by the media and Republican Party politicians, the White House quickly dumped the Arkansas travel agency and reversed the firings of all but two of the travel staff, placing them on paid leave instead.

Asked whether the administration had been too hasty in firing the workers before completing the review of the office, White House communications director George Stephanopoulos said, "Well, we want to avoid any questions about that."

Stephanopoulos has also been working overtime to explain why half the Los Angeles airport was closed for almost an hour May 20 while a \$200-a-shot Beverly Hills hairstylist, Cristophe, came on board Air Force One to give the president a trim.

Answering questions about why Clinton's plane had to sit on the runway with engines running while commuter flights circled overhead waiting to land, Stephanopoulos offered, "Everybody has to get their hair cut."

Asked about who paid for the pricey cut, he added, "The president and his family have a personal services contract with Cristophe to cover things like this."

A few days later the Democratic Party

decided to drop a breakfast with Clinton from the agenda of a \$15,000-a-couple weekend fund-raiser offered to corporations, lobbyists, and the like. Fund-raisers offering "access" to high public officials for a high fee are not at all unusual; this one simply happened at a bad time.

Such high society functioning is the norm in the White House, whether Democrats or Republicans are in office. There is ample evidence of cronyism, nepotism, and abuse of governmental privilege among U.S. government officials — liberals and conservatives.

But these recent incidents became public scandals because of sharpening tactical divisions among the U.S. rulers over how to further the bipartisan assault against the standard of living and rights of working people at home and abroad. Clinton faces another foreign policy fiasco in Bosnia.

At home thousands of miners and other workers are resisting the employers' offensive. Washington has not found a smooth path to push forward major cutbacks in Social Security, Medicare, and other social programs. Clinton's disapproval ratings have risen above his approval ratings in recent public opinion polls.



# Washington plans intervention in Haiti

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

SEATTLE—The U.S. government is pushing plans to deploy a 500-strong police force in Haiti and to resume direct aid and training of Haiti's military. This is part of Washington's efforts to intervene in the deep social and political crisis wracking the Caribbean country since President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted in a bloody coup in September 1991.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

In late April President Bill Clinton publicly called for sending "an international peacekeeping force" to Haiti and hinted at wider U.S. military intervention. "The White House said last week it was considering sending troops as advisors to help reform Haiti's military," the *Seattle Times* reported April 24. "But some analysts predict U.S. soldiers will be needed to police the divided society."

Washington is attempting to get other Caribbean governments to join this police force. On May 10 foreign ministers of various Caribbean countries met with U.S. and United Nations officials to discuss the plan. The meeting took place in Grenada, the small Caribbean country U.S. troops invaded in 1983 after the revolutionary government of Maurice Bishop had been overthrown by a Stalinist faction within the ruling New Jewel Movement.

The military officers who ousted Aristide in 1991 unleashed a reign of terror in the countryside and poor shantytowns of the cities. In attempting to crush the workers and peasants, who had become increasingly confident and active since the overthrow of the Duvalier dictatorship in 1986, the army acted to shore up the rule of Haiti's small capitalist class.

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### Aristocracy cheers coup

"Haiti's tiny aristocracy are cheering—and financially supporting—the violent military coup that toppled the champion of their country's poor masses," reported the *Washington Post* at the time. The *Post* interviewed people in the wealthy town of Petionville and reported that few seemed concerned about the hundreds of workers being killed in the city. "I think the army is doing their job very well," one man said. "We give the soldiers on the street money."

The coup created more problems for

Washington, however, as the military was unable to cow the Haitian people or drive them out of political activity. Despite arrests, torture, and murder; sporadic protests, strikes, and demonstrations have continued since the coup.

Unrest in Haiti can have an explosive impact throughout the Caribbean, a region long dominated by U.S. investors and of great importance to the world position of Washington's ruling families. Haiti lies along strategic shipping lanes leading to the Panama Canal and a short distance from the southern coast of Cuba and the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay.

The coup also provoked a new exodus of refugees from Haiti, creating more challenges for the U.S. government, which has no intention of providing humanitarian

and Germany from extending their influence in the area. Washington was particularly concerned that the German regime, soon to be America's rival in World War I, would establish naval bases in Haiti.

Washington arrogantly assumed the right to rule over the Haitian people. In a typical comment, Assistant Secretary of State William Phillips described Haitians as "an inferior people who failed to maintain the degree of civilization left them by the French [who ruled Haiti as a slave colony] or to develop any capacity of self-government entitling them to international respect and confidence." Washington had genuine contempt for Haitian people who led the first successful antislavery revolt in the hemisphere, leading to the country's independence from France in 1804.

student groups, newspapers and radio stations, were crushed. Other wealthy families made peace with Duvalier, allowing him control of the government as long as they continued to prosper. Top ranks of the army, the Catholic Church, and government all became part of the Duvalierist apparatus.

Washington, under both Democratic and Republican administrations, backed Duvalier at every key stage in his long rule. In 1958 a U.S. Marine mission was sent to Haiti to train and work with Duvalier's military. When a group of Haitian and Cuban revolutionaries tried to overthrow Duvalier in 1959, the U.S. Marines joined in a bloody campaign that crushed the attempt and launched an indiscriminate wave of reprisals through the country.

The Kennedy administration backed

Duvalier as a procapitalist alternative to the Cuban revolution. In 1962 Washington financed a modern new airport at Port-au-Prince in exchange for Haiti's vote for the U.S. motion to expel Cuba from the Organization of American States. And on several occasions, when Duvalier was threatened by small armed insurgencies, Washington sent warships to Haitian waters to back the dictator.

François Duvalier died in 1971. U.S. ambassador Clinton Knox ensured that his son, Jean-Claude Duvalier, followed as the next dictator. U.S. advisors and aid flowed into Haiti, enriching Duvalier and other ruling families further while the living standard of workers and peasants fell steadily. Hundreds of U.S. factories were set up in duty-free zones, producing goods for export to the United States but paying workers only two to three dollars a day.

By February 1986, however, Haiti's workers and peasants openly rebelled against the dictatorship. Washington whisked Duvalier away to comfortable exile in France, hoping to forestall a deeper social revolution. U.S. ambassador Clayton McManaway worked with top officers of the army to set up a series of military regimes, trying to contain the explosion of political activity that followed Duvalier's downfall.

Only after it became clear that continued military rule could not cow the Haitian people or produce a stable government, did the army, with Washington's blessing, allow elections to take place in December 1990. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, an outspoken opponent of Duvalier and the subsequent military regimes, won with a two-thirds majority vote, and held office until the September 1991 coup.

Officials of the Clinton administration were no strangers to the Duvalier dictatorship. A prominent figure in Clinton's election campaign, former Democratic National Chairman Ron Brown, received \$146,400 a year as the Washington lobbyist for Duvalier between 1983 and 1986. Brown attempted to increase U.S. aid to the dictatorship, promote U.S. investment in Haiti, minimize U.S. tariffs on Haitian goods, and improve the regime's image in Washington.

Clinton rewarded Brown by nominating him to be Secretary of Commerce, a post he holds today. The Senate whisked Brown through confirmation hearings in January, with both Democratic and Republican senators lavishing him with praise. Asked about his work for Duvalier, Brown replied: "I'm very proud of that representation... We have to understand that Haiti had good relationships with the United States at that time."

Working people around the world must oppose Washington's cynical and callous plans to intervene in Haiti and join in solidarity with Haitian workers and peasants in their fight for a better future.

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



More than 170 Haitian refugees, who Washington recognized as qualifying for political asylum, are being held by U.S. authorities at the camp pictured above on the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo, Cuba. The White House's contempt for the refugees is consistent with Washington's long history of interventions in Haiti to prop up a series of military regimes.

Militant/Harvey McArthur

relief and resettlement to the victims of the coup. In fact, Clinton has maintained the U.S. policy of piracy on the open seas, by intercepting refugees and returning them by force to the hands of the Haitian military.

In an attempt to stem this crisis, Clinton, like his predecessor George Bush, seeks to impose a settlement that would return Aristide as president in the hope of establishing a credible and stable government. At the same time, Washington wants to impose conditions that guarantee capitalist rule will not be threatened.

In statements to reporters February 5, Clinton charged that Aristide had made "inflammatory statements" that caused "people in the military and others to have fear for their personal security, in ways that are inconsistent with running a democracy. We have to be able to restore democracy in a way that convinces everybody that their human rights will be respected and, for an interim period, protected," he stated.

The May 10 *New York Times* noted that "opponents of Aristide are concentrated among Haiti's small privileged classes. They have voiced deep fears that the President's supporters, concentrated among the poor, will exact revenge on the many who supported the army's overthrow of [Aristide]."

Washington's police force and expanded military presence aims precisely at reassuring and protecting this Haitian capitalist class, maintaining imperialist superexploitation of the country, and blocking workers and peasants from any attempts to take control of their country and their destiny.

### U.S. created Haitian military

Clinton's proposal that U.S. advisors "reform" the Haitian military is particularly cynical. The current Haitian army, responsible for thousands of deaths just in the 20 months since the 1991 coup, has its origins in the military force created by U.S. Marines during Washington's 19-year occupation of Haiti earlier this century.

U.S. president Woodrow Wilson ordered the invasion of Haiti in July 1915 to strengthen U.S. hegemony over the Caribbean and to block the governments of France

The occupation forces quickly disbanded the Haitian army and organized a new military force, called the Garde. The rank-and-file were Haitian, but all the officers were U.S. Marines.

"The Garde was specifically created to fight against other Haitians," wrote Haitian scholar Michel-Rolph Trouillot. "And the Garde, like the army it was to sire, has indeed never fought anyone but Haitians. Its most important campaign was its participation alongside the Marines in the war against peasant nationalists led by Charlemagne Peralte and Benoit Batraville, when Marines and Garde together killed at least 6,000 peasants. Another 5,500 cultivators died in the forced labor camps that the Garde ran for the occupiers."

The U.S. decided to withdraw from direct rule over Haiti in the early 1930s, and trained a Haitian officer caste to take over the Garde, now the Haitian army. Graduates of the first officer class became the backbone of a succession of pro-U.S. regimes. One, Paul Magloire, led a coup d'état in 1950 and installed himself as president.

Washington deepened its ties with Haitian officers during World War II when the Pentagon built a naval base on the island and supplied aircraft and armored vehicles for the first time. The only time these weapons were used was to suppress strikes and demonstrations in the late 1940s and mid-1950s.

Magloire was overthrown by a mounting wave of mass protests at the end of 1956. In 1957, Daniel Fignolé, a lawyer and leader of the working-class movement in Port-au-Prince, was elected president. Nineteen days later the army ousted him, slaughtering thousands in the poor shantytowns of the capital. A military junta then organized new elections, which brought François Duvalier to power.

### Duvalier dictatorship

Duvalier had secretly created his own power base with gangs of thugs and assassins known as Tontons Macoutes, and he went on to consolidate a dictatorship that lasted 29 years. Opposition groups, including unions,

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# Activists discuss Cuban revolution at forum in Miami

BY MAGGIE McCRAW

MIAMI — More than 100 people crowded into the Pathfinder bookstore here May 22 to discuss the Cuban revolution in an event sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum.

Activists from the Alliance of Workers in the Community (ATC) and the Antonio Maceo Brigade (BAM) — many of whom recently returned from the May 1 celebration in Havana — attended, along with participants in the April 24 humanitarian aid flotilla from Key West, Florida, to Cuba. Haitian rights fighters, Miami organizers of the Pastors for Peace-sponsored Friendship to Cuba, and others participated as well.

"Working people in Cuba are stronger today, despite a difficult economic situation with no immediate end in sight," said Ernie Mailhot, a member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party. Mailhot participated in the May 1 celebration and attended a recent meeting in Havana of Cuba solidarity groups from the United States. Since the collapse of trade with the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, Cuba has faced serious shortages of food, medicine, and other necessities. The difficulties are exacerbated by the 33-year-old U.S. economic embargo.

"Because of the economic crisis there are people who want to leave Cuba, and some take part in the black market," Mailhot said, "but the big majority support the revolution and are involved in thinking out and taking collective action to face the difficulties. The overwhelming majority know that the revolution is responsible for the gains in Cuba today."

While U.S. government officials and others are predicting the imminent demise of the Cuban revolution, Mailhot said, it is, in fact, the worldwide capitalist system that is decaying as evidenced by the war in the former Yugoslavia and the holocaust unleashed by Washington in Waco, Texas.

Clara Varela, a leader of the ATC, described the goals of her organization. "Last year we collected 65,000 signatures in the streets of Miami against the blockade of Cuba and took them to the White House. We also work to improve communications between the United States and Cuba and send medicine," she said. Varela was one of the 211 ATC members who recently went to Cuba.

She explained that, while the economic situation is bad, the Cuban government continues to provide for the people. "The Cuban

government is giving out B-complex vitamins free to every citizen. You can hear complaints about the shortages, but people are standing firm in support of the revolution and the government because they know the stakes involved," concluded Varela amid chants of "Cuba sí, bloqueo no!"

Elizardo Bascoy spoke for the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a group of younger Cuban-Americans who support the revolution.

"The ATC is a group I admire very much," he said. "They left Cuba as adults by their own will. Some now think they made a mistake. For others, life in the United States has taught a very hard lesson. They are willing to risk everything to help their families back home."

Bascoy pointed out that the ATC trip to Cuba marked the first time a Miami group of those who left the island after 1980 was invited by the Cuban government to be part of the May 1 celebration.

## Intimidation campaign

Following their trip, ATC and BAM members have faced an intimidation campaign, aimed at driving ATC members out of political activity and preventing others from approaching the group.

"Look around the room. People are not intimidated, despite being in the spotlight," Bascoy continued. "Living under the Cuban revolution for 20 years, they have learned the value of social justice. In Cuba there are



Tony Savino

Pathfinder bookstore in Miami was packed during May 22 forum on Cuban revolution. Peter Eves, at microphone, participated in aid flotilla to Cuba from Key West, Florida.

no homeless. Medicine and education are free. People are worth something — they're not a machine, not an object of production. You carry that experience with you all your life."

Other speakers included Peter Eves, a participant in the Key West flotilla, Rev. José Reyes from Pastors for Peace, and photojournalist Tony Savino. Lavarice Gaudin, a leader of the Haitian rights organization Veye Yo, was given a round of applause when he was introduced from the floor.

Eves narrated a video he made documenting the rough, 36-hour trip to deliver aid to Cuba and the send-off from Key West, in front of the U.S. government's Radio Martí broadcast installation site.

Reyes encouraged the audience to attend an upcoming meeting in Miami to hear Cuban religious leaders on a 40-city U.S. tour

sponsored by Pastors for Peace and the National Council of Churches.

Young activists from the ATC, the Antonio Maceo Brigade, and the Socialist Workers Party passed the hat and collected \$150 for the Friendship to Cuba.

A lively discussion followed the forum presentations. Among the topics addressed were the U.S. government's ban on travel to Cuba, the plight of both Cuban and Haitian rafters who die at sea because they are denied entry visas, and the negative role of the big-business media in Miami.

Reporters from Channel 23, a Spanish-language TV station, and the *Miami Herald*, and *El Nuevo Herald* newspapers attended the forum.

Maggie McCraw is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 368 in Miami.

# Cuban government takes measures to confront optic neuritis epidemic

BY PAT SMITH

The Cuban government is taking every step possible to confront an epidemic of optic neuritis, which has affected 26,000 Cubans. The disease impairs vision, leading to partial blindness, and affects the nervous system. Cuban doctors and scientists immediately began intensive research on possible causes and treatment.

Symptoms of the illness began increasing last year in a tobacco-growing community in the Pinar del Río region, leading doctors to investigate pesticides and other toxins used in agriculture. The government went on an educational campaign to inform the nation of possible causes and encouraged people to visit their neighborhood family

doctors. This helped reduce the number of severe cases. Cubans are proud of their health-care system, which despite the U.S. embargo approaches that of most developed countries. Because of free, universal health care — one of the conquests of the 1959 revolution — working people in Cuba are not plagued by many diseases that affect millions in Third World countries.

In a statement to the World Health Organization (WHO) reprinted in the May 5 issue of the Cuban daily, *Granma*, Jorge Antelo, Cuba's deputy minister of public health, explained that at present Cuban scientists believe the epidemic could have multiple causes, such as vitamin deficiency, toxic elements, and a viral agent.

The Cuban diet underwent a drastic change after the collapse of trade with the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The U.S.-imposed embargo made it very difficult for Cubans to replace imports of foods like milk and meat. Hundreds of thousands of Cubans have since mobilized in agricultural work brigades in a nationwide effort to use the collective power of working people to achieve food self-sufficiency. The brigades, along with a proliferation of home gardens throughout the island, have made progress toward increasing food production, especially in fruits and vegetables. But shortages still remain. A serious storm in March destroyed many crops, aggravating the problem.

As a preventative measure the government began distributing vitamin supplements to the entire population of 11 million. "Vitamins in the B complex, vitamin A, and folic acid were prescribed as a precautionary measure for the totality of our population," said Antelo, "effective since May 1, 1993."

The government is spending \$17 million to import the vitamins and has issued an international appeal for help.

On May 12 the World Health Organization passed a resolution asking WHO-member governments to give aid to Cuba to alleviate the consequences of the March storm. A delegation of WHO officials visited the island May 19 to assess the level of help required to combat the optic neuritis epidemic. The Pan American Health Organization in Washington sent nine specialists to Cuba to investigate the problem as well.

The May 21 *New York Times* quoted Maurice Victor of Dartmouth Medical School saying that based on available evidence, "there is nothing mysterious about it — it's Strachan syndrome." According to Victor, this syndrome is well known to nutritionists. It was first detected during the Spanish Civil War and affects many undernourished people and alcoholics in the United States and other countries.

Antelo, however, insists the epidemic is "totally different from all those described in the very ample bibliography consulted by our scientists."

Cuba continues to investigate possible causes and treatments for the disease. Reuters reported May 21 that a slight decrease in the number of cases has been noticed recently. But Raúl Gómez Cabrera, director of the Hermanos Almejeiras Hospital in Havana, warned, "There's nothing definitive yet."

Cuban doctors hope their findings will help others affected by this illness. Unlike medical institutions in imperialist countries, Cuban officials are making all findings from research on the disease available to health officials around the world.

# Cuban pastors tour U.S. capital

BY RICHARD HAZBOUN

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A delegation of 10 Cuban religious leaders is visiting the United States to promote reconciliation and an end to the U.S. embargo against the Cuban people.

During their three-day stay in Washington, D.C., they met with members of Congress and State Department officials, held a news conference, and participated in an ecumenical service of "Faithful Solidarity" at the Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ.

Some 70 people attended the May 19 service which included a dinner and reception.

Bishop Joel Ajo Fernández, the head of the Cuban delegation and vice-president of the Council of Latin American Methodist Churches, stated, "We are speaking on behalf of the Cuban people who are suffering scarcities of food and medicines. This is the time to say to the U.S. government, 'Stop the embargo.'"

Fernández explained that he was speaking on behalf of "56 denominations in Cuba, 1,900 local congregations, and thousands of pastors, but most of all in the name of all the Cuban people."

Rev. Basilia Figueroa of the Church of God in Havana said that "with or without the

blockade, we will continue."

Rev. Lucius Walker, executive director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO), also spoke.

He said that the Cuban clergy were in the United States to explain the impact of the U.S. embargo on the Cuban people and to discuss ideas for a new relationship between the United States and Cuba.

At a May 20 Capitol Hill news conference, Congressman Charles Rangel joined the Cuban religious leaders in calling for an end to the U.S. embargo.

Rangel recently introduced the Free Trade with Cuba Act, which would lift the trade embargo and normalize travel and communication between the two countries.

The Cuban delegation represented Methodist, Baptist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Church of God, and Christian Pentecostal churches.

The delegation is sponsored jointly by IFCO, Pastors for Peace, and the National Council of Churches. IFCO has made education and action to end the U.S. embargo its top priority.

The Cuban delegation will be visiting 40 cities in the United States through May 24, participating in public meetings and church services.

## FOR FURTHER READING

**Cuba Confronts the World Crisis of the '90s**  
CHE GUEVARA AND THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM TODAY

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# Should unions seek their own health plans?

BY MAC WARREN

CHICAGO — A new contract has been approved by members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) at A. M. Castle Metals's three unionized warehouses in Chicago, Cleveland, and Kansas City, Missouri. Most workers consider the agreement a victory against the company's takeback demands. "We didn't get the insurance we wanted, but, all in all, this is a big improvement over

## UNION TALK

Castle's final offer," said Robert Dixon, a steelworker at Castle's Chicago warehouse. USWA negotiators pushed through a union-owned health insurance plan that the workers had previously rejected.

The 230 workers covered under the agreement voted 116-62 in favor. The contract, which runs through Sept. 30, 1995, replaces one that expired Sept. 30, 1992.

The new contract comes six months after the unionists carried out a two-week strike. The walkout ended October 19 after the company threatened to hire permanent replacement workers.

Under the agreement workers will receive a \$1,500 bonus, a 24-cent wage increase the second year, and 35 cents the third year. It also retains a cost of living allowance (COLA) the company had previously tried to take back. Workers' copayments on insurance will begin only in the third year of the agreement, and the maximum monthly payment will be \$42; the company was demanding \$80 per month for all three years.

Castle Metals is one of the largest steel service centers in the country. It has only three USWA-organized warehouses and is one of the most profitable companies in the industry.

In the fall of 1992 Castle announced that its earnings rose from 3 cents a share in 1991 to 50 cents a share in

1992. This made the company's takeback demands even more outrageous in the eyes of the steelworkers.

The most important questions in dispute were wages and the health plan. Castle's final offer on wages was a \$2,000 signing bonus, a 35-cent raise over three years, and 26 cents in COLA.

Castle unilaterally implemented its own group insurance December 31 when the old agreement expired. The plan included copayment of up to \$80 per month for family coverage, which Castle Metals began to deduct the first week of January.

Castle then organized a series of "informational" meetings on company time aimed at winning acceptance of its demands.

The steelworkers began to organize themselves to demand a better contract. A committee set up following the strike organized distribution of buttons and T-shirts, which were worn on payday. Workers organized to speak their minds at the company's propaganda meetings. The unionists missed few opportunities to press the company to go back to the bargaining table.

Workers aggressively organized to collect dues as a form of solidarity in face of the company's refusal to deduct them from the payroll following the strike. More than 95 percent of the workers paid all or part of their dues. Leaflets were distributed on the state of the negotiations. Union member Frank Ochoa said, "It was important we spoke at the meetings and wore our T-shirts and buttons because it showed the company that we meant business."

### Medical insurance was greatest concern

The area of medical insurance was the point of greatest concern during the contract dispute. The Upholsterers International Union Health and Welfare Fund (UIU) is owned by the USWA International. It was taken over by the Steelworkers after the USWA merged with the UIU. The USWA executive board has pumped millions of dollars into the fund since then. For the past six years workers

have lived under this union-owned insurance plan.

In numerous cases the fund responded in an unprofessional and incompetent way to the needs of steelworkers who depend on it. The most common complaint about the UIU is the number of bills it has left unpaid over several years. For this reason, a majority of workers at all three facilities voted to discontinue use of the UIU for our insurance. Most voted for a MetLife group plan offered by the company.

In spite of the rank-and-file vote against using the UIU, the USWA officials introduced it as the plan of preference.

Because workers were forced to either accept the UIU or vote against the entire contract, a majority voted for it. At the ratification meeting the USWA-appointed chief negotiator Len Hickey attempted to present the UIU proposal as a company-imposed problem. Over the course of the discussion, however, it was established in no uncertain terms that the UIU was the union officialdom's initiative.

After the contract vote, workers felt set back, although a lot of them were clear that the insurance concession was not imposed by the company but rather by international union officials against us.

"We stood up to the company and got what we could from them," said union member Eladio Hernandez. "We didn't realize until too late that the chief negotiator had no intention of fighting to get the MetLife insurance plan. We can be proud of what we accomplished and look forward to the next round in two years."

The experience of Castle workers with the UIU Health and Welfare Fund is yet another lesson in why workers should oppose the union running businesses, whether a health plan or a hot-dog stand. The business of the union should be defending the interests of its members, including advancing the demand for universal, free medical care for all working people.

Mac Warren is a member of USWA Local 7773 at Castle Metals in Chicago.

# Baltimore meat-packers fight against concessions

BY MICHELE SMITH

BALTIMORE — After an 11-day strike against the Parks Sausage Co. here, 104 members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 27 overwhelmingly approved a new contract and returned to work. The workers went on strike May 9 in response to demands by Parks for deep concessions. None of the strikers crossed the picket line.

On May 10, the first full day of picketing, nine police patrol cars and a van appeared at the picket line as police escorted strike-breakers and a truck into the plant.

Management tried to keep production going with supervisory personnel and 15-20 people from a temporary agency. This angered the strikers and helped build a community and labor rally on Monday, May 17.

Some 300 people, representing more than two dozen unions, walked the picket line, including 70 members of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union who work at Londontown, a nearby clothing factory.

Following the rally, union officials and management reconvened with a federal mediator. Parks then agreed to halt the scab operation for 24 hours while negotiations continued.

The company's "final offer" included a permanent 75-cent-an-hour pay cut, a \$20-a-week deduction for health-care costs, the elimination of time-and-a-half pay after eight hours, and the lowering of wages for new hires. This could reduce weekly paychecks by \$60-70 a week.

### Company claims losses

Parks claimed a \$4.5 million loss in the past two years made the proposed cuts necessary. Raymond Haysbert, Park's chairman and chief executive officer, threatened to close the plant if the union didn't accept the proposed contract.

Parks is Baltimore's last remaining major meat-packing plant. Esskay, owned by Smithfield, permanently closed several months ago, laying off some 400 workers. A retired former Esskay worker who stopped by the picket line told the strikers, "Hold firm. We gave Esskay 25 cents. Then they wanted 50 cents and then \$2.50. Now they've shut the plant down and are refusing to pay people their pensions."

In 1992 Parks was Maryland's fifth-largest Black-owned business. In 1989 it had moved into an "enterprise zone," where businesses enjoy big tax advantages.

Parks workers, who had not had a wage increase since October 1991, had voted to

extend the current contract, which expired in October, 1992, for six more months.

The 34-month contract that the workers approved includes a 50-cents-an-hour pay cut lasting five and a half months until Nov. 1, 1993, and an increase in the base pay rate of 25 cents per hour on March 30, 1995.

UFCW Local 27 agreed to take over the health plan, which will provide health care at no additional cost to the workers. A provision to pay new hires \$1 an hour less than the current starting wage is part of the new contract. This is on top of a \$2 difference that was already in place from a previous contract.

Workers coming out of the contract vote were generally pleased they were able to push back the company on the cuts that had been originally proposed.

Michele Smith is a member of UFCW Local 27 and works at Parks Sausage.



Hundreds of unionists marched May 17 to support Parks Sausage strikers

Militant/Yvonne Hayes

# Textile workers in South strike against firing

BY BRUCE KIMBALL

GREENSBORO, North Carolina — On May 16 at 11:00 p.m. workers at Fieldcrest Cannon's decorative bedding plant in Eden, North Carolina, walked off the job for 48 hours in an "unfair labor practices" strike. This action was taken in response to the company's firing of union leader Laverne Lambeth. The Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU), which organizes the plant, also cited the company for harassment of union members involved in union activity, and for failure to discuss grievances.

Workers at the five other unionized Fieldcrest plants in North Carolina and Virginia met May 17 and voted for a 24-hour solidarity strike with workers at the bedding plant.

The strike began at 11:00 p.m. that night. The following day hundreds of workers at the Fieldcrest Cannon towel mill in Columbus, Georgia, showed their solidarity by gathering outside the plant entrance before each shift change. They carried union signs and chanted slogans, waiting until one minute before the bell rang before entering the plant together. "This solidarity strike is the wage workers talking," said Darrell Carter, a shop steward at the Fieldale, Virginia, plant. "We are in a big fight with Fieldcrest; our jobs and union are at stake. If we don't fight they will push us out."

"This strike really woke some people up," said Bobby Foley, a weaver in the Karastan

rug mill. "People got excited by the fact that we were standing up, and joined the union right there on the picket line!"

About 80 percent of the nearly 2,800 workers at the six mills stayed off the job, registering a victory for the union in these "right-to-work" states. Many workers who are not union members also joined the strike.

This was the first strike against Fieldcrest Cannon since the early 1970s and the first at one of its Eden plants since the 1950s, according to company officials.

Workers at the Fieldcrest plants have been without a contract since April 20. Negotiations are now reportedly broken off until June 15. The company is demanding the institution of a smoking ban on company premises, the option to use 12-hour shifts, and a wage freeze. The company has also begun to subcontract jobs that had been part of the bargaining unit, and has engineered wage cuts on jobs that are based on piece-rate production. The union wants language that will protect jobs in the event that the company changes owners, and is trying to collect back pay still owed to workers after more than a year.

Since the expiration of the contract, workers have been organizing protest actions inside and outside the plants.

In late April two busloads of workers attended a press conference in Greensboro, where the union announced its determination to fight for a decent contract.

There have been leaflet brigades at the

plant gates, and many workers are wearing union T-shirts and stickers on the job. Foley explained that union supporters had been putting stickers up "everywhere in the mill." He added, "If management takes down two stickers, we put up four more."

As a result of these efforts, union activists have gained more organization and confidence, as well as recruited many new members to the union. The company's firing of Laverne Lambeth and its intimidation campaign are viewed by many unionists as efforts to counter these gains. But coming out of this strike, Fieldcrest workers feel stronger than ever.

In the Columbus plant, nearly all of the 300 weavers organized a one-hour sit-down in the towel mill canteen May 21. The weavers have been particularly hard hit as the company has lowered piece rates.

"People are more involved and more have signed with the union," said Hommer Gary, a slasher attendant at the Columbus mill, who has worked for the company 17 years. "But things could get rough. We have a long fight ahead of us but the union's actions have put us in a stronger position."

Bruce Kimball works at Cone Mills in Greensboro, and is a member of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 1391. Susan LaMont, a member of ACTWU Local 365, who works at Arrow Shirt Co. in Austell, Georgia, also contributed to this article.



# Behind debate on N.Y. school curriculum

## Rightists seize initiative to push bipartisan assault on public education

BY DEREK BRACEY  
AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

NEW YORK — A debate concerning what children should learn in school here has received national attention. The discussion, which became the focal point of the May 4 elections for community school boards in the city, has continued since then.

Rightist forces seized the initiative in this debate late last year. Their goal is to push attacks on public education; weaken the separation of church and state through an effort to reinstitute prayer in schools; attack the rights of women; and erode civil rights for gays. This ongoing conflict is another front in what right-wing politician Patrick Buchanan has called the "cultural war."

The New York debate has revolved around a first-grade educational curriculum that schools chancellor Joseph Fernandez introduced in early 1992, called "Children of the Rainbow." This guide for teachers was written in an attempt to provide children with what Fernandez calls a "multicultural education."

Supporters of the guide claim it can help boost the self-esteem and reduce the alienation of children, and raise a new generation of people less inclined to engage in racist attacks or attacks on immigrants, women, and gays.

In December 1992 the conflict flared when Fernandez suspended a community school board in the New York borough of Queens, headed by Mary Cummins, for refusing to implement the Rainbow curriculum. There are 32 of these boards, which have considerable control of elementary and junior high schools in their respective districts.

Nine days later the New York City Board of Education, an appointed, citywide body, overturned Fernandez's decision and reinstated the Queens school board. Then in February, the citywide board voted not to renew Fernandez's employment contract, which ends in June.

The focus of the dispute has been a 15-page section near the end of the 443-page guide for first-graders entitled, "Fostering Positive Attitudes Toward Sexuality." It explains to teachers in part that "children of lesbian/gay parents may have limited experience with male/female parental situations; if there is no representation of their lives in the classroom, they may suddenly be made to feel different."

Encouraging teachers to "give children a healthy sense of identity at an early age," the Rainbow guide said that "classes should include reference to lesbians/gay people in all curricular areas." Among the recommended books for class reading are *Daddy's Roommate*, about a boy with a gay father; *Heather Has Two Mommies*, which explains artificial insemination, and *Gloria Goes to Gay Pride*.

Fernandez had implemented other controversial policies in the school system. In 1991 New York became the first city in the United States to distribute condoms in public high schools. At about the same time as the "Children of the Rainbow" guide was introduced, a draft curriculum was issued to teach elementary school students about AIDS.

### Rightists attack 'Rainbow' guide

Rightist forces have attacked the material introduced under Fernandez's chancellorship, especially the Rainbow guide. John Hale wrote in the May 25, 1992, issue of the *National Review*, "We are talking about a school system which has exhibited an impaired ability to carry out basic instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics; a system which now has a corps of security officers larger than the police force of the city of Boston to attempt to protect students from physical harm. Instead of dealing with either of those problems, the school system is worried about molding first-graders' attitude toward lesbianism."

Irene Impellizzeri, a Board of Education appointee opposed to Fernandez's policies, said, "The family instinct is the indestructible minimum of morality." She asserted that anyone advocating a curriculum that didn't include that notion would see "the gradual dehumanization of his own children before his own eyes."

Rightist groups intervened heavily in the May 4 elections for community school boards. One of these organizations, Concerned Parents for Educational Accountability, produced videotapes that claim homosexuals are recruiting in classrooms.

The Christian Coalition, led by right-wing politician and television preacher Pat Robertson, opened an office in New York City and produced 500,000 copies of a voters' guide that characterized candidates' views on "morals in the schools." Among those agreeing to help distribute the voters' guides were the New York Catholic archdiocese and the Congress of Racial Equality, whose leader, Roy Innis, is running for mayor of New York.

According to incomplete results in the vote for 288 school board seats, announced as of May 21, 51 of 87 candidates backed by the Christian Coalition and Catholic hierarchy were elected. Rev. Terry Twerell, Manhattan borough's Christian Coalition representative, called the results "an encouraging first step." About an equal number of Fernandez's supporters were also elected, however.

Rightists like Buchanan and Robertson argue that the root of the crisis in education is a move by society away from the "traditional values" of "family, faith, and country."

### Buchanan intervenes

Buchanan invited Cummins to be one of the featured speakers at a conference of his new organization The American Cause, which took place May 14-15 in Washington, D.C. "One of the heroines of America's cultural war is Mary Cummins," said Buchanan in his opening remarks at the conference. "Told she had to introduce the propaganda of the homosexual lifestyle to first-graders, Mary rebelled."

"Where did the American Crisis come from?" Buchanan asked in the brochure distributed at the conference. "It came out of public schools from which the Ten Commandments were long ago expelled," he answered. Buchanan and Robertson have used their support to right-wing forces in the New York school board elections to advance their campaign against women's rights, particularly the right to abortion. "The Bosnia of the cultural war is abortion rights," Buchanan declared in a syndicated column last September.

Buchanan's moves are part of his long-term effort to recruit cadres to an incipient fascist movement at a time of capitalist depression. The rightists attack women's rights, use deeply ingrained social prejudices against gays, and promote reactionary obscurantism on basic questions like sex education as part of a broader assault by the U.S. rulers on the rights and social gains of working people. Their efforts prepare the ground for further assaults on public education.

### Education is a class question

There is a crisis in education. It is not an issue of the rights of children, as many liberals argue, but a question of defending the interests of the working class. Faced with the government's bipartisan moves to undermine public education, working people should counterpose a fight for universal, lifetime education free of charge for all, where children as well as adults can learn discipline for reading and study as well as basic skills.

Facts about sexual functions of human beings can and should be taught, as scientific facts on human evolution are taught, instead of reactionary myths like creationism that Robertson and other rightists would like to return to.

Students should also be taught about the fight by farmers, workers, and others to conquer the Bill of Rights in this country; an objective history of the U.S. Civil War; the struggle to form industrial trade unions in the 1930s; how working people destroyed the Jim Crow segregation system in the South and fought for women's rights; and other fundamental facts.

Discrimination against gays, women, and oppressed nationalities, however, does not stem from lack of adequate education in school but from the social division of sexes and race prejudice, perpetuated by conditions of life under capitalism.

The source of reactionary social preju-



Right-wing rally in New York against 'Rainbow' curriculum

dices is not the working class but the billionaire ruling families.

Schools, like all educational institutions in any social system divided into classes, are organized to promote the prevailing ideas of the ruling class. In a period of decaying bourgeois democracy the ideas of the capitalist class are thoroughly reactionary.

Through the fight to defend and extend abortion rights and access to contraception, expand affirmative action, combat race prejudice, and other social struggles, however, working people can make gains that will be reflected in advances in culture and education, including in school curricula.

### Liberals put wind in sails of rightists

Those who attempt to answer the right wing by defending the Rainbow curriculum put more wind in the sails of the reactionary campaign against public education. Fernandez and other liberals who champion this curriculum attempt to use the classrooms not to teach facts, including on sex education, but to impose their particular views of certain lifestyles.

A pamphlet distributed under Fernandez's chancellorship, for example, which encourages condom use, recommends among other things: "For anal intercourse, lube up the receptive partner's anus (asshole) as well. . . . Do it! (Have fun!)" Such "explanations" that focus on "fun" things youth should "try out" have nothing to do with sex education.

The drive by liberal social "experts" and politicians for so-called multicultural education is no more an advance for working people than Buchanan's attempt to return to teaching the "Ten Commandments" or "our Anglo-American heritage." These liberals perpetuate nonscientific, classless views and try to impose them on students.

Fernandez and other liberals promote the

view that alienation and decline in human solidarity under capitalism can be resolved by changing the way children learn to think — teaching children what opinions to hold on various issues. This, they argue, can resolve many of the social problems working people face today.

This view that social conflicts can be softened or tamed through the use of such social engineering in the schools is not new. In 1923, Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky argued against its use in the newly formed Soviet Union in a speech titled, "Tasks of Communist Education." The speech is reprinted in a collection of Trotsky's writings, *Problems of Everyday Life*, which is published by Pathfinder.

"The utopian humanitarian-psychological viewpoint," said Trotsky, "is that first we must educate the 'new human beings,' and then they will create the new conditions. We do not believe this. We know that human beings are the product of social conditions, and cannot somehow jump out of them."

Liberals argue that social problems can be solved, not by fighting to rid humankind of capitalism, but by "understanding those different from you." Whites can understand Blacks, men can understand women, native-born can understand immigrants. It follows that bosses and workers should learn to understand each other as well.

But social problems are not a result of lack of understanding. They stem from the antagonism of social classes with opposing interests.

Human culture and education can take qualitative steps forward only through the fight by the working class to defend its interests, which can ultimately be accomplished when working people take power away from the exploiters and begin to build a society based on human needs, not profits.

## Buchanan holds conference on winning 'cultural war'

BY GREG McCARTAN

WASHINGTON, D.C. — "Traditionalists have only just begun to fight," said Patrick Buchanan here May 14, opening the first conference of his organization called The American Cause. The meeting was entitled, "Winning the Culture War."

It was another effort by the right-wing newspaper columnist to win cadres and build support for his rightist social agenda, which includes assaults on the right of women to abortion, a government crackdown on rights of immigrant workers, reintroducing prayer in schools, and sweeping cutbacks in social entitlements like Social Security and Medicare.

"The war for the soul of America is not over," he said, calling the conference the "Boston Tea Party of the cultural counter-revolution."

Some 400 people, mostly Buchanan disciples from across the country, attended the conference. Keynote speakers included Michael Medved, author of *Hollywood vs. America*; Joe Farah, editor of the conservative paper *Dispatches*; nationally syndicated columnist Samuel Francis; and Allan Carlson, president of the Rockford Institute.

Buchanan, who was an aide to President Ronald Reagan and mounted a challenge in the Republican Party primary to President George Bush last year, said the "assault on our culture" is given the name of "multiculturalism. But it is not about appreciating the cultures of other peoples; it is an across-the-board assault on our own Anglo-American heritage."

Francis opened the second day of the conference explaining that a "radical or revolutionary conflict that involves the redistribution of power" is what "conservatives" should focus on, rather than preserving the status quo.

"We are fighting to overthrow something," he said. "We need to dethrone the dominant authorities in this country."

Panel presentations included "DeMythologizing Hollywood's Culture War" (called "Hollywood Values and Jewish Values" in early promotional material); "Why Johnny Can't Tell Right From Wrong"; "The Obligations of Statesmen Who Know Abortion is Wrong"; "The Culture War on Campus"; and "The Homosexual Rights Agenda."

A full report on the conference will appear in next week's *Militant*.



# Intervention in Yugoslavia

Continued from front page

Democratic senator Daniel Moynihan, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, stated that with this retreat "the moral basis of the world international order in the aftermath of Bosnia is weakened as it has not been since the 1930s."

## 'American leadership vital'

A number of daily newspaper columnists also noted the broader problems that Washington's retreat posed. Columnist Jim Hoagland wrote in the *Washington Post*, "Bosnia is no longer about Bosnia. Bosnia is about allied unity."

After discussing various options Clinton should consider to regain the initiative, Hoagland concluded, "In some ways, the details are less important than the need to convince the Europeans — and, one senses, Clinton himself — that American leadership is both vital and possible on European security issues. . . . A new Christopher mission that can claim a success in European-U.S. consultation should be an urgent priority for Washington."

*New York Times* columnist Anthony Lewis, a strong supporter of U.S. military intervention, pointed out some other places where he feared U.S. intervention would become more difficult: "Other demagogues are ready to arouse religious and racial passions in many parts of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe." Lewis cited the comment of a diplomat who said, "It's the end of an era — the era of American leadership and power in Europe."

Writing in the *New Yorker* magazine, Sidney Blumenthal also sounds the alarm over "the absence of decisive American leadership" in Bosnia. Blumenthal explains that "Bosnia has not just been about Bosnia. If NATO had any mission after the Cold War, it was to maintain European stability; it has now been revealed to be without purpose. . . . Without the United States to direct it, the Western alliance is little more than an armored vehicle bringing relief. Clinton's post-Bosnian foreign policy confronts the ruin of NATO."

Blumenthal criticized Clinton for wishing for "consensus in a situation that could work only by coercion. . . . If [Clinton] falters in foreign policy his Presidency will be fatally undermined. There are few things more dangerous to a President's and a nation's credibility than the suggestion of commitment without putting force behind it."

## Effects of embargo

Notwithstanding Clinton's hesitations to push ahead with the bombing plan, Washington's actions toward the former Yugoslavia are having severe effects. The greatly tightened economic embargo could lead to "a total collapse of the [Serbian] economy by September," noted a report from Belgrade by David Ottaway in the *Washington Post*. The article described some of the embargo's results, including "serious shortages of such basic items as sugar, flour, and cooking oil. Foreign reserves that once exceeded \$10 billion have slipped to about \$300 million."

Ottaway added that "the public mood in Belgrade . . . has become downright grim as citizens spend more and more of their time shopping for scarce food supplies and waiting endlessly in line at gas stations or for fuel-short public transport." He also reported that the antiwar opposition was now in "disarray," with opposition leaders, fearful of action by rightist forces, avoiding street protests.

A *New York Times* report on the embargo quoted Washington officials stating that "the sanctions against Serbia are now the strongest ever put into effect, and are much tighter than those currently in place against Iraq." One U.S. government official boasted, "The party's over" for Serbia. "Cash is short for them. How much these guys have stashed away for a rainy day over the last year and a half, we can't be completely sure. But we know the rainy day is here."

Meanwhile, government officials in Belgrade announced May 25 they would not accept international monitors at Serbia's border with Bosnia to verify allegations that they are providing weapons and other supplies to the Serbian rightist forces in Bosnia. Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic had said a month ago such inspectors would be welcome.

# — MILITANT LABOR FORUMS —

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

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

## CALIFORNIA

### Los Angeles

**The June 8 Elections in Los Angeles and the Deepening Crisis of Capitalism.** Speaker: Kim Allen, Socialist Workers Party write-in candidate for Los Angeles mayor. Sat., June 5, 7:30 p.m. 2546-C W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460. Translation to Spanish.

## FLORIDA

### Miami

**What's Behind the War in Yugoslavia? Why Working People Should Oppose Intervention.** Speaker: Argiris Malapanis, co-author of new book *The Truth about Yugoslavia*. Sat., June 5, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$5. Tel: (305) 756-1020. Translation to Spanish and French.

## ILLINOIS

### Chicago

**Is Opposing NAFTA in Workers' Interests?** Speaker: Doug Jenness, author of pamphlet *Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s*. Sat., June 5, reception 6:30 p.m., program at 7:30. 545 W. Roosevelt Rd. Donation: \$5. Tel: (312) 829-6815 or 829-7018. Translation to Spanish.

## MINNESOTA

### St. Paul

**The Politics of Operation Rescue and Defending Abortion Rights Today.** A panel discussion. Sat., June 5, 7:30 p.m. 508 N. Snelling Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

## NEW JERSEY

### Newark

**Support Striking Coal Miners and Grocery Store Workers.** A panel discussion. Sat., June 5, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$3. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

## NEW YORK

### Manhattan

**The New World Disorder Accelerates.** Speaker: Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party National Committee member. Sat., June 5, reception 6:30 p.m., program at 7:30. 191 7th Ave. Donation: \$5. Tel: (212) 747-8421.

## PENNSYLVANIA

### Pittsburgh

**Cuba Today: Challenges and Opportunities Facing Working People.** Speaker: Francisco Picado, participated in recent *Militant* reporting trip to Cuba, member, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. Sun., June 13, 2 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$5. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

## UTAH

### Salt Lake City

**The Fight for Gay Rights Today.** A panel discussion. Sat., June 5, 7 p.m. 147 E. 900 S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

**Struggle in the Coal Fields: Support the Miners' Strike!** Sat., June 12, 7 p.m. 147 E. 900 S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

## WASHINGTON

### Seattle

**Advances in the Struggle against Apartheid: Eyewitness Account from South Africa.** Speaker: Brian Pugh, Socialist Workers Party, recently participated in International Solidarity Conference in South Africa. Sat., June 5, dinner 6 p.m., program at 7:30. 1405 E. Madison. Donation: \$5 dinner, \$5 forum. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

# German steelworkers make gains in strike

Continued from front page

and 100 percent by April 1996.

Under the agreement signed by metalworkers a week earlier, wages will rise to 80 percent of those in the west by December 1993 and 100 percent by October 1996.

The steelworkers will get a bonus payment of \$238; those who quit by June 30, 1993, will receive \$390. The new agreement also has an escape clause that allows companies to reopen wage negotiations if they can prove they are in financial difficulty.

"Without the strike this result could not have been achieved," Wagner said.

The deep economic depression in Germany guarantees that government attacks on the social wage will increase.

The London *Financial Times* reported May 17, "The German government will be forced to negotiate a second solidarity pact,

designed to finance the cost of subsidies for east Germany, with employers and unions in the coming months. It will involve for the first time substantial cuts in social spending, because of a drastic shortfall in its expected tax revenues.

"One important factor behind the shortfall," the *Times* continued, "is sharply rising unemployment, which reduces disposable incomes and tax revenues while increasing the burden on social welfare programs. Officials in the finance ministry now expect the economy to contract by 2 percent this year . . . while they fear unemployment will rise by 500,000 to 3.5 million in 1993 and by a further 200,000 to 300,000 in 1994."

A new law restricting the right to asylum, passed by the German parliament May 26, is aimed at shifting the blame for the economic crisis onto immigrants and refugees. Ten thousand demonstrated in Bonn against

## AUSTRALIA

### Sydney

**The Truth about Yugoslavia—Why Working People Should Oppose Intervention.** Sat., June 5, 6 p.m. Surry Hills Neighborhood Centre, cnr Norton and Collins St. Donation: \$3. Tel: 02-281 3297.

## BRITAIN

### London

**Iran, the Asian Republics of the Former Soviet Union, and Their Place in World Politics Today—a first-hand report.** Speaker: Ma'mud Shirvani. Sun., June 6, 2 p.m. 47 The Cut, SE 1. Donation: £2. Tel: 071-401-2409.

### Manchester

**Iran, the Asian Republics of the Former Soviet Union, and Their Place in World Politics Today—a first-hand report.** Speaker: Ma'mud Shirvani. Fri., June 4, 7 p.m. Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Donation: £1. Tel: 061-839-1766.

### Sheffield

**Iran, the Asian Republics of the Former Soviet Union, and Their Place in World Politics Today—a first-hand report.** Speaker: Ma'mud Shirvani. Sat., June 5, 6 p.m. 1 Gower St., Spital Hill. Donation: £1. Tel: 0742-765070.

## CANADA

### Toronto

**Support the Miners! Report on UMW Strike in the U.S. and Recent Battles in Western Canada Coalfields.** Speaker: George Rose, member United Steelworkers of America Local 8754. Sat., June 5, 827 Bloor St. W. (between Christie and Ossington). Donation: \$4. Tel: (416) 533-4324.

### Vancouver

**Labor's Fight against Cutbacks and Union Busting: Reportback from Yellowknife and Ottawa.** Speaker: Ned Dmytryshyn, participated in May 15 labor rally in Ottawa and May 22 rally in Yellowknife. Sat., June 5, 7:30 p.m. 3967 Main St. (between 23rd and 24 Ave). Donation: \$3. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

the legislation during the discussion and vote in the parliament.

While workers voted on the contract, the president of the IG Metall union, Franz Steinkühler, resigned.

Steinkühler, who played a key role in the 3.3 million-member union for 30 years, held seats on the boards of directors of three German companies: Daimler-Benz, Volkswagen, and Thyssen. His official salary was about \$165,000 a year.

Press reports have indicated that Steinkühler bought \$610,000 in stock of a company connected with Daimler-Benz that quickly rose in value, giving him a \$39,000 profit.

Steinkühler denied making the investment based on inside information from board meetings. He subsequently announced that he would contribute the profits to the east German workers' strike fund.

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Harry Ring

Clinton carried at the Inauguration. Resembling Socks, the White House cat, it's done in crystal-studded alligator. Available at fine jewelers, about \$2,845.

**User friendly** — In Yokohama, Japan, \$30,000 will buy a burial plot, which is swept and watered daily by

a robot. But the main feature is a robot priest programmed to deliver a variety of prayers in stereo. On each anniversary he spends a half hour at the grave site saying mantras for the soul of the departed.

**Enjoy** — The food section of the *Los Angeles Times* recently focused on fish — how, with a bit of care, you too can buy good fish at the supermarket. Some 26 pages later, a report advised that one in five samples of swordfish and shark checked by the feds had illegal levels of toxic methyl mercury. And that's by U.S. standards. By the more realistic standard said to be used by Canada, five out of five would have been rejected.

**But not to worry** — The greatest source of mercury may be canned tuna. It reportedly has only one-tenth of the level of shark and swordfish, but folks eat a lot more of it.

**Backside theology** — Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, Vatican overseer of doctrine, would like to see altars turned around again. In the '60s, they were turned around so that the priest and audience faced each other. The Cardinal feels this makes the priest "too important," and may be one reason for the feminist notion that women should be ordained.

**Doing their number** — California officials said that due to faulty

data processing, the number of people in the state who lost their jobs during the slump has been exaggerated and this will be corrected. So, if the unemployment office seems unusually crowded, don't be misled. Many of the folks in line don't really exist.

**A lot of pizza** — Ivan Boesky, the Wall Street swindler who did time, briefly, wants more support from his wealthy ex-spouse. He explains he needs \$1,000 a month for clothing, \$430 for dry cleaning, \$300 for haircuts and \$3,500 for food.

**Class education** — Glassboro State College in New Jersey

changed its name to Rowan College in return for \$100 million from industrialist Henry Rowan. Part of the money provides scholarships for children of his employees — except children of members of the United Electrical Workers because they "won their contract through threats and strikes against the company."

**"Old subsidies never die"?** — The government subsidizes the mohair (from angora goats) industry to the tune of \$550 million a year. According to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, "The Pentagon sought the subsidy years ago because mohair was once used to make military uniforms."

## Claims that Vietnam holds U.S. soldiers are a hoax

BY STU SINGER

Ever since Washington's 1975 defeat in its war against the Vietnamese people, the POW/MIA (prisoner of war/missing in action) issue has been raised by capitalist politicians as an argument for maintaining the U.S. economic embargo against Vietnam. This effort also includes blocking loans from international financial institutions to Vietnam.

On April 12 the *New York Times* ran a front-page article entitled "Files Said to Show Hanoi Lied in '72 On Prisoner Totals." Dated in Moscow, the article states, "A document described as a top secret report written by a senior North Vietnamese general and delivered to the Communist Party Politburo in Hanoi in September 1972 says that North Vietnam was holding 1,205 American prisoners of war when Hanoi maintained that the number was only 368."

According to the *Times*, Stephen Morris, a Harvard University researcher, found this document in the Soviet Communist Party's archives in Moscow.

The news story about Morris's "discovery" happened to have been released just before a meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) scheduled for late April in Washington, D.C. At that meeting representatives from France, Japan, and other countries were expected to announce significant loans to Vietnam. This would have marked a rare rebuff to the U.S. government's 18-year-long trade embargo.

After the latest "revelations" about the POWs hit the press, however, the IMF discussion on Vietnam was postponed.

### Credibility of document crumbles

The credibility of Morris's so-called discovery began to crumble right away. On April 14 the *Times* reported that "Pentagon officials, noting that the document is an English translation of a Russian version of what a Soviet-era note described as a Vietnamese report, said the public should not accept it until a Vietnamese version was found."

No one claims to have found a Vietnamese version.

Morris is no innocent researcher who stumbled onto something. He was a prowar activist in Australia in favor of the Vietnam War. He acknowledged, "I have a history of opposing the Communist Party of Vietnam."

Clinton dispatched to Hanoi retired Gen. John Vessey Jr., a former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and special envoy to

Vietnam during the Reagan administration. After speaking with Vietnamese officials, Vessey said he had doubts about the document's authenticity.

Gen. Tran Van Quang, supposedly the author of the 1972 document, flatly denied that he had ever written anything like it and denounced it as a forgery by someone interested in "undermining advances in relations between Vietnam and the United States."

The Morris document claims the Vietnamese held 1,205 U.S. military prisoners in September 1972. Vietnam released 591 prisoners with the signing of the peace agreement the following year.

In a May 20 editorial the *Wall Street Journal* claimed that "the Vietnamese executed their remaining prisoners after the fall of Saigon in 1975."

### What are the facts?

The Morris document, however, as well as the entire POW/MIA campaign, is nothing but a hoax. Rutgers University professor H. Bruce Franklin has exposed many of the lies that form the backbone of this campaign in a book titled *M.I.A., or Mythmaking in America*, published by Lawrence Hill. The facts show:

- The U.S. government has never claimed there were anything close to 600 unaccounted for troops from the Vietnam War.

- None of the 591 prisoners of war who were released ever claimed there were other prisoners.

- There has never been a shred of evidence that any massacre of U.S. prisoners took place as the *Journal* editors claim.

Other points in Morris's document are also outright fabrications:

- The document claimed prisoners were segregated according to rank and released according to their political views. POWs who were released deny both assertions.

- Tran Van Quang, supposedly the author of the document, was not deputy to the North Vietnamese army general staff in 1972, as the document claims. He served as commander of a military zone from 1966 to 1973, instead.

- The document says that three of the U.S. prisoners of war had undergone astronaut training. But U.S. government records show that these individuals were not captured in Vietnam.

The Vietnam POW/MIA hoax has been

one of the main pillars of right-wing propaganda in the United States for almost 25 years. It was Texas billionaire Ross Perot's entry into national politics in 1969. At the invitation of then-president Richard Nixon, he attempted to fly Christmas dinners to POWs being held in North Vietnam. Crusading for POWs remains a major issue that Perot cloaks himself in today. Many cadres of Perot's presidential campaign come out of POW/MIA groups.

### Fake photographs

The last big sensation was created in 1991 when photographs were released supposedly of U.S. pilots shot down over Vietnam and Laos in 1966 and 1970 and still being held as prisoners in Vietnam. Investigations of the photos by U.S. government and military officials established that one of them had been taken in a Bangkok, Thailand, bird sanctuary. The other was a reproduction of a 1923 picture reprinted in a 1989 Soviet magazine found in a library in Cambodia.

The debate on relations with Vietnam reveals divisions within ruling circles in the United States. Top officials from both Democratic and Republican parties and major businessmen from companies like Caterpillar and United Airlines, indicate they favor normalizing relations with Hanoi.

Both capitalist politicians and businessmen for or against the normalization of relations with Vietnam share the imperial view that the Vietnamese government is

obligated to account to Washington for every bone of every pilot shot down for dropping bombs on the Vietnamese workers and peasants. The U.S. rulers have no such right.

Washington is responsible for the murder of more than one and a half million Vietnamese during that war. Whatever number of missing in action the U.S. government claims, the Vietnamese missing in action are estimated at 300,000.

Unexploded bombs, mines, artillery shells, and deadly chemicals spread by U.S. troops continue to take Vietnamese lives today.

Washington lost the Vietnam War because the Vietnamese people heroically fought for 15 years for their right to control their own destiny. Their successful resistance to U.S. imperialism inspired opposition to the war in the United States and throughout the world. Millions protested. Opposition to the war extended to soldiers within the U.S. military. This opposition aided the Vietnamese people in their fight against U.S. aggression.

Since Washington's defeat, not one cent has ever been paid of the reconstruction aid that Nixon agreed to in the 1973 peace agreement with Hanoi. This debt to the Vietnamese people should be paid in full.

Working people today should speak out again on Vietnam, demanding that the U.S. embargo be lifted, and they should tell the truth about the POW/MIA myth.

## — 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

**THE MILITANT**  
Published in the Interest of the Working People  
June 7, 1968 Price 10¢

General de Gaulle launched his counteroffensive in defense of capitalist rule by threatening civil war against the 10 million workers and students of France who have been on strike for two weeks and have occupied factories and universities throughout the country.

He postponed the national referendum earlier promised for June 16 and dissolved the National Assembly. Under the Gaullist constitution this move calls for a new general election within from 20 to 40 days.

In preparation for a showdown, his government is mobilizing troops for use against the populace.

De Gaulle and the French capitalist class he serves are aware that the workers will resist and the students and farmers are not disposed to yield. They know from earlier experiences in the Algerian war that, under conditions of deep-going social crisis, not even a well-trained conscript army will readily carry out counterrevolutionary repressions against the people.

What then accounts for their menacing move? De Gaulle and his retainers likewise know that the key to preserving their domination is the conduct of the CP leadership. They calculate upon compelling the Stalinists to knuckle under so that the workers and their allies might be held back from contesting for power, withdraw from the struggle in the streets and factories, and rely for salvation on the National Assembly elections.

On the other hand, if the workers find

leadership that cannot be bulldozed, and effectively counters the Gaullist aggression, the army ranks can turn out to be no more "dependable" in the pinch than the other oppositional elements of the nation.

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

June 5, 1943

PITTSBURGH — Without any special strike call being issued and with casual matter of factness, the miners here today stopped digging coal. Word was sent around last night that the truce had not been extended and every miner to a man gave the answer "We don't work without a contract."

One thousand delegates representing directly 350,000 Michigan members of the United Auto Workers, meeting in conference in Detroit May 2, rejected a resolution of their International officers condemning John L. Lewis and the miners' use of the strike weapon, and instead adopted a forthright resolution completely solidarizing themselves with the militant stand of the miners.

The Sailors Union of the Pacific (AFL) voted unanimous support for the miners' fight.

Akron's rubber workers demonstrated their solidarity with the miners by emulating them in a five-day strike last week. Chrysler workers did likewise in a four-day walkout.

Don't believe the lies of the boss press! The workers, both AFL and CIO, are for the miners — even where the top union officialdom and the finky Stalinists, servile agents of Roosevelt, are preventing the masses in the unions from expressing their solidarity toward the miners.

## FOR FURTHER READING

# OUT NOW!

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# Support striking coal miners!

Continued from front page

body Holdings Co. under their belts. In early February after the UMWA's contract with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association expired, more than 7,000 miners struck Peabody, demanding that the company turn over information on its holdings and leases. Peabody gave in, just one day after the union called out 1,700 miners from several additional coal companies.

When UMWA members returned to work under a 60-day contract extension, they didn't stop fighting. Instead, they used the time to prepare for what they knew would be the second round of the contract battle. Throughout the coalfields, miners, their families, and supporters got ready. Picket shacks stayed up in front of Peabody mines. New shacks were added outside mines owned by other companies. T-shirt days were organized each week, where miners came to work wearing the camouflage shirts that have become the uniform of the strike. Workers started holding roadside meetings outside the mines, and then driving to work together in caravans. And members of UMWA family auxiliaries stocked up strike kitchens and prepared strike offices with fax machines, coffeepots, and crockpots.

Most importantly, rank-and-file coal miners and their union didn't stop reaching out for solidarity. Rallies were organized in St. Louis, Los Angeles, and Pittsburgh. A solidarity day at the end of April involved 10 unions in the United States and the Trades Union Congress in Britain.

Rank-and-file miners have a proud history spanning decades of successful resistance to company demands for concessions. The union mobilizations, support strikes, and cross-country car caravans of the Pittston strike victory of 1989-90 — many organized hand in hand with Machinists on strike against Eastern Airlines — are experiences that thousands of miners were involved in and hope to expand in the current fight. They know the value of solidarity and the importance of linking up with other unions in battle.

Nonunion miners have already been inspired by the UMWA-organized fight. That's what lies behind the organizing drives of miners at the Buck Creek mine in Indiana, at Marrowbone in West Virginia, and at Wolf Creek in Kentucky.

Many working people are beginning to fight as the employers demand more and more of us to pay for their crisis. Grocery workers in Colorado, New Jersey, and New York; printers in Georgia and Nebraska; mushroom workers in Pennsylvania; gold miners in Canada; Timex workers in Scotland; jewelry workers in South Dakota; garment workers in Boston; and textile workers in North Carolina

are just some of the working people that have decided in the recent period to resist the bosses' attacks. All these fights will gain strength and new confidence by joining ranks with the striking miners. The example of the coal miners is terrifying to the bosses, but is a real boost for any fighting worker.

As more miners join picket lines in the United States, metalworkers and steelworkers in Germany wound up strikes that pushed back the rulers' austerity measures and gave workers there new confidence in their fighting capacity. German workers can be powerful allies of U.S. coal miners.

Solidarity actions with the miners are already being organized around the United States. A local of the United Auto Workers (UAW) in St. Paul is organizing a "Solidarity Trip to the Coal Fields" for Memorial Day weekend. "Our solidarity is all the more important now with the UAW contracts with Ford, GM, and Chrysler expiring September 15," their flier says. Three striking miners from southern Illinois traveled to St. Louis to speak to local meetings of the United Steelworkers of America recently. These are examples that should be emulated by working people everywhere. Family farmers trying to save their land, women's rights advocates, antiracist fighters, and supporters of civil liberties all can help win support for the miners, providing solidarity the strikers will need to win.

High school and college students can get into the action as well. Invite a coal miner to speak at a campus meeting, take up a collection to help the strike fund, or grab some friends and head down to the coalfields to show your support.

Solidarity for the coal miners does not stop at the U.S. border. In 1989 during the Pittston strike, a delegation of coal miners from the United States was welcomed at an international rally to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the National Union of Mineworkers in Britain. At a May 26 rally in Osage, West Virginia, UMWA president Richard Trumka told a crowd of 400 miners and their supporters that messages of solidarity and promises of financial help were arriving from unions around the world.

There is no indication that the bosses are going to give in easily. But the miners are prepared for a long fight, and with the help of working people around the world they can win. The miners are not just fighting for themselves and their jobs. If they are able to push back the bosses' attacks, then every union, and every working person will be stronger.

Solidarity with the coal miners! Their fight is our fight! Together we can win!

# End the embargo on Vietnam

Washington has maintained a trade embargo against Vietnam from the moment the Vietnam War ended in 1975 with the rout of U.S. forces from Saigon. The U.S. government's decision to launch this embargo came on top of its refusal to pay reconstruction aid promised to Vietnam at the 1973 signing of the peace agreement with Hanoi.

Washington has attempted to justify this hostile stance by raising Vietnam's alleged refusal to cooperate in tracking down the remains of soldiers who were missing in action during the war. But by insisting on an accounting of every single missing person from that massive war, Washington is demanding the impossible from Vietnam.

Furthermore, the hue and cry around the missing soldiers is a gigantic attempt to turn the victim into the criminal. Washington carried out the biggest bombing campaign in history, and one of the most murderous, against the Vietnamese people. The bombing scarred Vietnam, leaving much of the countryside looking like the surface of the moon. The Vietnamese themselves lost more than 1.5 million lives and hundreds of thousands were missing in action.

The hoax advanced by Harvard researcher Stephen Morris and many capitalist politicians, who claim to have

unearthed evidence of some 600 U.S. officers held prisoner by Vietnam, followed a major effort by Vietnamese authorities, working with U.S. officials, to pursue every possible thread of information on those U.S. soldiers still not accounted for. But as the article by Stu Singer in this issue points out, the document's credibility, as well as the entire POW/MIA story, is in shambles.

The real reason for the trade embargo against Vietnam and the perpetuation of the POW/MIA myth has nothing to do with some missing soldiers. It stems from Washington's defeat in 1975, when Vietnamese workers and peasants fought successfully to rid themselves of capitalism and imperialist domination.

Since it could not defeat the Vietnamese people with its military might, Washington sought to make the cost of victory so high that workers and peasants around the world would hesitate to emulate that example of standing up to imperialism.

This is the sole reason for Washington's attempt to strangle Vietnam economically. It also provides the driving force behind its criminal embargo against Cuba.

Working people should demand that the embargo against Vietnam be lifted immediately.

# Is Cuba different than former Soviet Union?

Raul Segarra, in this week's letters column, raises some questions about democracy in Cuba. There are no legal opposition parties in Cuba, he says. He asks whether this means there is the potential for a bureaucracy to develop in Cuba that is "above and beyond the control of the workers, similar to what occurred in the Soviet Union."

The fundamental question in Cuba, however, is not an abstract question of what Segarra calls "democratic process," but whether working people are organized to place their stamp on politics and use the power they have fought for and won in order to shape their own destiny. In this, workers and farmers in Cuba are stronger today than they have been for many years.

In 1959, when working people in Cuba overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista regime, they were involved in the most democratic action possible — a mass, popular revolution.

# DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

In the months following this victory, the leadership team around Fidel Castro helped deepen the mobilizations that culminated in the expropriation of the foreign and domestic landlords and capitalists who had held political and economic power.

In the decades since, Cuba's working people have continued to be the decisive makers of history. They have mobilized time and again to confront the challenges facing the revolution — from the 1961 literacy campaign to today's voluntary agricultural brigades fighting for food self-sufficiency, as well as the internationalist efforts in which hundreds of thousands of Cuban working people and youth have volunteered as doctors, teachers, construction workers, and soldiers to aid other peoples around the world.

The essential ingredient that marks Cuba as different from the degenerated workers' state in the former Soviet Union is the revolutionary character of the leadership of the Cuban Communist Party.

In Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, working people were driven out of political activity by a privileged bureaucratic caste that subordinated everything else to its own narrow interests, abandoning the revolution's goals. By the late 1920s this bureaucracy, headed by Joseph Stalin, had turned the Bolshevik Party from a revolutionary tool of workers to an instrument of repression against working people.

The Cuban revolution, too, has confronted the problem of bureaucracy. In fact, in the mid-1980s Cuba's revolutionary leadership launched a political campaign to combat some of the worst aspects of economic and social policies that had been copied from the Soviet Union and were resulting in the demobilization and demoralization of Cuban working people.

In response to this campaign, which became known as the "rectification process," tens of thousands of workers, farmers, and youth joined volunteer brigades to build child-care facilities, schools, hospitals, and housing. Working people gained new confidence in their collective ability to resolve the economic and political challenges facing the revolution, and to combat the growing privileges and corruption of a layer of administrators and technocrats.

The collapse of the Soviet and Eastern European regimes has triggered a deep economic crisis in Cuba. One effect of this has been the reinforcement of a layer of relatively better-off Cubans, such as managers of the new tourist hotels, who look to capitalism as the solution to Cuba's problems. But the most weighty effect of the events in Eastern Europe has been the further breakdown of barriers that stood in the way of working people participating in political life. The decades-long domination of Stalinism in the international working-class movement and its substantial influence within Cuba had tended to isolate Cuban revolutionaries from like-minded fighters around the world. This began to break down with the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Everywhere in Cuba today — in workplaces, at universities, and on the street — people are discussing political ideas more widely and openly than in many years. "All the political rigidity is gone," a number of longtime revolutionaries told this reporter during a trip to Cuba in March. Many of them likened the situation to the political ferment of the early 1960s, when the working-class vanguard fought to develop a proletarian course and leadership.

The political discussion unfolding in Cuba today would be accelerated if more than one political party were allowed. This would strengthen the ability of the working-class vanguard — organized in the revolutionary party, the Communist Party — to wage the fight for political clarity that is necessary for the revolution to advance. But this cannot be the central criterion by which working people around the world judge the revolution and its leadership.

Working people should defend the Cuban revolution from attack by imperialism, as Segarra notes. But even more, workers should look to it as an example. The revolutionary leadership there continues to mobilize the power of the workers and farmers to fight to advance the interests of the working class in Cuba and around the world.

— SARA LOBMAN



# Thousands support Timex workers in Scotland

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 as a way for other fighting workers around the world to learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

More than 3,000 people gathered in heavy rain early in the morning May 17 outside Timex's Dundee,

leader Arthur Scargill addressed a crowd of 4,000 and called for solidarity with the Timex workers.

Workers from nearby factories including from National Cash Registers, Levi's, and Nirex won the agreement of their employers to take off work in order to join the May 17 picket line. Hundreds of other workers and young people attended the demonstration from across the country, including from London, Cardiff, Birmingham, and Durham.

Shug, who together with his wife has worked at Timex for more than 40 years, said, "I think it's reached the stage now that, rather than go back on his terms, I'd see him close, and take my chances looking for

Some 130 union members and their supporters attended the May 1 meeting and banquet to mark the second anniversary of the strike against the F. L. Thorpe Co. which produces Black Hills gold jewelry in nearby Deadwood, South Dakota. The 92 women who worked at the company, over half of them for minimum wage, voted overwhelmingly in July 1990 to affiliate with USWA Local 7044, which organizes 1,300 gold miners in the area and several other local businesses.

The company hired Berens and Tate, a union-busting law firm, to negotiate with the local. After seven months of fruitless talks, 97 percent of the jewelry workers voted to strike.

Sandy Osborn, a strike activist, explained, "We were tired of unfair treatment, poverty wages, poor benefits and no pension benefit."

Unfair labor practice charges against Thorpe are still in the appeals process. When the company began to hire scabs, the jewelry workers offered to return to work. The company picked 34 workers it

comes to an end pretty soon and our girls can all come in."

Several Thorpe workers commented that other jewelry manufacturers in the area are pressuring the owners of Thorpe not to settle with the union because of the example that a union victory would set. Some 1,000 other jewelry workers are employed in the area — none of them unionized.

Different union locals brought solidarity messages to the rally. Some of the steelworkers who participated traveled nearly a thousand miles in buses and vans rented by USWA District 33.

## Boston garment workers strike

One hundred fifty garment workers from throughout Boston's Chinatown and their supporters held a rally outside the Fashion B factory on May 18 to protest the substandard wages and working conditions in that garment shop. The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union

\$24.88 check for 72 hours of work — the training wage.

Huang opened Fashion B in April one block from his Fashion A shop, which is organized by the ILGWU. He moved the work and machines from Fashion A to Fashion B and laid off the union work force.

The union argues that Fashion B is really the same company as Fashion A and the union contract should be honored. On May 13 the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) issued wage violation complaints against Huang.

The work force at both shops is made up almost entirely of women who recently immigrated from China.

Workers at Fashion B walked off the job on May 18 with the support of the union. Although they returned to work the next day, the ILGWU is maintaining a picket line outside the shop from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week — the hours that the shop is running production.

Huang got his start in the garment industry 11 months ago with the help of the union. The ILGWU rented him space in the union's building in Chinatown and leased him the sewing machines he later moved to Fashion B. Upon opening the first plant, Huang was hailed by Boston mayor Ray Flynn as a "Model for minority business opportunities in Boston."

Although a union contract was signed with Fashion A, the garment boss does not pay the minimum wage. Workers from the union shop reported being paid \$180 for two weeks of work. All but two workers have been laid off from Fashion A; the union has found work for all of them.

The following people contributed to this week's column: Ian Grant, a member of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union in London; Marea Himelgrin, a member of USWA Local 9198, and Doug Jenness, a member of USWA Local 15199 in St. Paul, Minnesota; and Karen Ray, a member of ILGWU Local 311 in Lawrence, Massachusetts.

## ON THE PICKET LINE

Scotland, factory, where 343 workers are fighting for reinstatement. The workers were locked out and fired when they went on strike three months ago to resist selective arbitrary layoffs. Although a negotiated settlement was reached on the layoffs, management demanded a wage freeze and cuts in benefits as a condition for their return to work. About 270 replacement workers have been hired by Timex so far, and the company claims it needs to hire 230 more to meet increased demand. The plant produces electronic circuit boards.

The mass picket marked the ending of the 90-day period after which, under British law, Timex management can selectively rehire from its sacked workforce. The locked-out workers claim Timex is falling short of production targets, and expect management to try to rehire some of them in a bid to break the union's resolve, and regain much-needed skills.

The police sent more than 500 officers, half of Dundee's force, to the demonstration. The company brought replacement workers into the factory an hour earlier than usual to avoid the picket. Thirty-eight supporters of the Timex workers were arrested as police attacked the demonstration.

Later, at a rally in the town center, National Union of Mineworkers

another job."

"You'd have to be daft," said Ann, who was holding the fort in the pickets' trailer after a May 15 march of 4,000. "If you went back now they'd treat you like dirt."

Most of the replacement workers come from the ranks of the unemployed. While some of the workers on the picket line describe these scabs as the "dregs of society," "drug addicts and down-and-outs," one said they had discussed whether the union should do more to reach these workers before they are recruited to cross the picket lines. Despite denials by social security officials, workers report that unemployed relatives have been threatened with loss of benefits if they refuse to be interviewed for the jobs offered by Timex.

## S. Dakota jewelry strike in second year

Taconite miners from Minnesota's Iron Range, soda ash miners from Wyoming, circuit board and nursing home workers from the Twin Cities in Minnesota — all members of District 33 of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) — gathered at the Moose Lodge in Lead, South Dakota, to rally in support of striking Thorpe Jewelry workers.



Pickets at Pathmark in Jersey City May 22. Twenty thousand United Food and Commercial Workers members are on strike or locked out at 226 stores in New Jersey and New York. The union will hold a solidarity rally June 5.

would allow back in; 21 of the original strikers continue to picket daily. Weekly strike meetings include both workers inside and outside the plant.

Elsie Millard, one of those allowed to return to work, told the May 1 rally, "We're hoping this

(ILGWU) organized the rally.

Phillip Huang, the garment boss, has been paying workers \$2-3 an hour and forcing the stitchers and cutters to work 50-70 hours per week. The union reported one worker received a

## LETTERS

### Bureaucracy in Cuba?

The *Militant* frequently writes stories about Cuba. The opinions expressed are very favorable toward the Castro regime. Cuba is held as a model which socialist and communists in the United States should strive for.

Although the revolution in Cuba is important for workers to defend, I do not agree that workers in the U.S.A. should strive for a regime like Castro's to come to power in this country. The reason is that there are no legal opposition political parties in Cuba. This situation, along with the absence of a democratic process, has the potential to create a bureaucracy which is above and beyond the control of the workers, similar to what occurred in the Soviet Union. Although Castro has not allowed this to occur in Cuba, the current political system there can facilitate this bureaucratization process.

Raul Segarra  
New York City

### Cuba solidarity concert

The enormous Rubén Darío Theater in Managua was filled to capacity May 9 for a concert to support Cuba. The concert had to be rescheduled from the day before, due to torrential rains and winds which knocked power out in many parts of the city, left more than a thousand people homeless, and three dead.

The concert size was an indication of the widespread recognition that Cuba, a poor country, has always given aid generously to Nicaragua. Despite the increasing polarization and political violence here, it is common to hear people, regardless of their political convictions, speak affectionately of the Cuban volunteers. In the field of medicine especially, the Cubans are known to be excellent practitioners, "real human beings," the first to arrive and the last to leave their work posts.

Many of us in this country are especially moved by the suffering caused by the economic crisis in Cuba now, and hope that humanitarian minded people the world over will continue to respond by demanding an immediate end to the U.S. embargo against that small, struggling country.

Joanne Tortorici  
Granada, Nicaragua

### Cuba Solidarity II

The coming July 26, 1993, will mark the 40th anniversary of the heroic assault on the Moncada garrison, in Santiago de Cuba. On behalf of the Executive Secretariat of the African, Asian and Latin American Peoples' Solidarity Organization (OSPAAAL), we appeal to all organizations to carry out actions and rallies in solidarity with Cuba and its revolution, and at the same time to particularly demand with all

your force the ending of the economic blockade against the country, which has already lasted more than three decades.

The criminal blockade that constitutes a massive violation of the human rights of a whole nation and a grievous pretension against the Cuban free self-determination, has been increased at the same time by the loss of the trade that Cuba systematically maintained with the former European socialist countries. Also, Cuba was recently affected by "the storm of the century" which inflicted great damages to the nation's economic activities since March 13.

The 47th session of the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution on the "need to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba," which was supported by the overwhelming majority of the members of the United Nations.

René Anillo Capote  
Secretary General, OSPAAAL  
Havana, Cuba

### Behind debt crisis

In Canada, as in the U.S. and other countries, the assault against labor more and more takes place under the guise of "fighting the budget deficit" — meaning higher taxes, fewer jobs, and reduced social services for working people.

The starting point in responding

to these attacks must be that it's *their* government, not *our* government.

Most taxes, no matter who supposedly pays them, are part of the surplus value produced by the workers and appropriated by the government to use on behalf of the capitalist class as a whole.

Social entitlement programs won by the working class are something completely different — an increased social wage, won through struggle, although still under capitalist rule and administered by their government.

Social Security in the U.S. and the Canada Pension Plan were, from the outset, deliberately isolated from general government revenues and set up as self-financing insurance plans. These are the biggest "social programs" in the U.S. and Canada and they have always been fully paid by the payroll taxes levied to support them. *There is not and has never been a deficit in Social Security or the Canada Pension.* Last year U.S. Social Security ran a surplus of \$62 billion!

I think the government revenues that pay for these (and other) elements of the social wage are not part of surplus value but are *deferred wages* of the working class. These deferred wages funds have nothing whatsoever to do with the deficit and debt crisis of the governments.

The March 19 *Militant* article of the debt quoted the *New York Times* as warning that the debt restricts

investment in production. This is the old cry of a "capital shortage," much believed by capitalist economists, but still a phony.

What really underlies the current economic depression is not a shortage of capital but a *surplus of capital* that cannot bring adequate profit or any profit at all. Investment in production is unattractive to the capitalists because of the falling profit rate, manifested in general overproduction of goods and price competition.

The debt crisis is the result of this general capitalist crisis, not the other way around.

I completely agree that there's no point in calling for canceling the debt in imperialist countries such as Canada and the U.S. The debt is not the workers' problem. Our problems are layoffs, wage cuts, union-busting, cuts in the social wage, racist violence, wars, and so on. Our struggles should be directed at defending ourselves from these attacks and ultimately against the capitalist system — not merely against one of the symptoms of its decay.

George Rose  
Toronto, Ontario

The letters column is an open forum for all views points on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.



## South Africa police arrest dozens of Pan Africanist Congress members

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In a move aimed at derailing multiparty talks just as a date for South Africa's first democratic nonracial election was about to be announced, South African police arrested 73 members and leaders of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) in a predawn raid May 25. This marks the harshest crackdown on leaders of an anti-apartheid organization since F.W. de Klerk became president in 1989.

The African National Congress (ANC) strongly condemned the arrests while vowing to press ahead with the negotiations to end white minority rule. "It reminds one of the old apartheid days of Gestapo tactics, jackboot activity, and wholesale detentions," stated Cyril Ramaphosa, ANC chief negotiator.

"I think we should not panic about what happened," stated ANC president Nelson Mandela. "I am sure that the democratic forces are strong enough to overcome this crisis."

The PAC, which had just joined the multiparty talks in March, pulled out, saying it will not take part while its members remain in jail. Negotiators had been making significant progress and were expected to announce before the end of May an exact date for one-person one-vote elections to take place before April 1994.

Mandela has also called for lowering the voting age from 18 to 14. He announced to the media that this move "would be giving [the vote] to people who fought for democracy."

This proposal has stirred a controversy among other forces involved in the multiparty talks. Danie Schutte, the ruling National Party home affairs minister, condemned this proposal, saying it would not receive serious consideration in any "civilized country."

ANC spokesperson Carl Niehaus said the voting-age question would be debated within the ANC. But discussions would probably focus on having the limit lowered to 16 from the present 18, he said. "Young people were part of the liberation struggle and it's difficult to say they should not have the vote in a country their contemporaries have fought and died for," Niehaus told Reuters. In Brazil, Cuba, and Nicaragua the voting age is 16.

### Mass action campaign

Throughout May the ANC-led national campaign of mass actions has involved tens of thousands of workers and youths. The local and regional protest actions have demanded the setting of an election date and the installation of a Transitional Executive Council with real decision-making powers to preside over this process.

Students and teachers have been participating in numerous demonstrations and rallies demanding free and equal education. On May 21, in a victory for the student protesters, the government suspended for this year a \$16 compulsory graduation fee for Black students. One of the central demands of many of the student protest actions had been to scrap this fee.

The South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) announced that a national education strike will begin May 24 and could involve 80,000 teachers. The teachers are demanding a 25 percent pay raise, as well as better working conditions and a single education department to replace the current racially segregated system. According to SADTU the average pay for many teachers is \$475 a month. Those in rural areas earn far less while having up to 70 students per class.

In addition to demonstrations, the ANC has organized consumer boycotts in many regions throughout the country. In Bloemfontein, located in the Orange Free State, a successful boycott campaign was carried out in mid-May.

"Our boycott is aimed at the conservative city council which is reluctant to give us permission to hold marches," stated White

Mohapi, ANC zonal chairperson in Mangaung. "We're, therefore, demanding free political activity in the city."

Thirteen people were killed and more than 60 were wounded May 22 as ANC supporters marched through the Black township of Thokoza, east of Johannesburg. According to ANC spokesperson Tokyo Sexwale, the police on the scene from the nearby town of Alberton failed to stop Inkatha Freedom Party supporters from attacking the protesters.

"Someone is switching on and off the violence, depending on developments in negotiations," stated Mandela, who rejected police allegations that the fighting was an ANC-Inkatha feud. "Some political elements in government are responsible," he said. "They must bear the primary responsibility for violence."

To protest the attack, the ANC called a consumer boycott of Alberton, the overwhelmingly white city south of Johannesburg where the ANC marchers were headed.

### Plot to assassinate Slovo

The May 11 Johannesburg *Star* reported details of a right-wing plot to assassinate South African Communist Party (SACP) national chairperson Joe Slovo. The plan was to shoot Slovo outside his Johannesburg home between May 15 and 21. The police had known about the plot for days but did not tell Slovo, who learned about it from the *Star* reporter.

According to the South African weekly *New Nation*, Conservative Party leader Clive Derby-Lewis, who is under arrest for the April 10 murder of ANC leader Chris Hani, helped form a secret paramilitary organization called the Home Guard, supposedly to watch over white neighborhoods. At a meeting of the right-wing Civic Action League in Durban last year, Derby-Lewis "allegedly



South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) members marching in April. The union is demanding a 25 percent wage increase and an end to segregated schools. The union began a national strike May 24 as part of the mass action campaign led by the ANC to press for setting a date for democratic elections. Recent arrests of PAC members aim to derail multiparty talks.

spoke of plans to eliminate 25,000 ANC members," the *New Nation* said.

"We must take the threat from the right wing very seriously because they are firmly entrenched in government structures," said Nelson Mandela May 11 on his return from a week-long trip to Britain, Germany, and Switzerland.

"We hope that the government will stop warning us about the danger of Black surrogates and will concentrate their attention on the real threat to negotiations in South Africa — that is from the right wing," he said.

"No organization in this country has got

the strength to slow down the peace process," Mandela continued. "That we are not going to allow."

While Mandela was out of the country a new right-wing organization, the Afrikaner National Front, was formed. Led by four retired army generals, the group brings together some 20 rightist groups that seek a "white homeland" after apartheid ends.

After a three-day leadership meeting, the ANC announced May 14 that it was offering to hold talks with the new rightist group. The talks would occur outside the multiparty forum.

## Swedish electricians fight concessions

BY INGE HINNEMO

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — "We do not demand big wage hikes. We just want to defend what we have got and get a reasonable raise — even if we have to strike into the next year," said Hans Schoug, president of the Swedish Electricians Union, speaking at a meeting of 1,000 striking electricians in Stockholm May 12.

Ten thousand electricians have been on strike in Sweden since May 10. Another 20,000 were locked out May 19.

The EA, the employers' organization for firms doing electrical installations and maintenance, set the stage for the fight by giving notice terminating all contracts and agreements with the union. It has demanded a whole list of massive concessions. These include a wage cut of 20 kronor (US\$2.75) an hour, which means 50,000 kronor (US\$6,850) a year, and doing away with the eight-hour workday.

Since 1986 piecework has been regulated by the so-called ATL-list. This means that if a job takes more than eight hours, workers have a right to do it as piecework following the rates in the list.

Employers are demanding the elimination of the ATL-list. This would mean rates would have to be agreed to by the employer and individual workers. If he or she refused the employer's offer, the worker would be paid the basic hourly wage.

But the electricians have no contract for this basic pay scale. Their average hourly wage is about 90 kronor (US\$12.30). The EA is demanding that basic pay be set at the lowest pay level. They are offering 67 kronor (US\$9.15). The employers say they will guarantee the current wage level for everyone now employed. This means there will be two different tiers in the wage scale.

The 5,000–6,000 unemployed members

of the union and youth who get jobs in the future will have to accept the lower basic pay scale. And they will not be in a position to refuse piecework pay of 30–70 kronors (US\$4.10–9.60) below the present level.

The employers also demand the right to freely change working hours and introduce shifts at will. They want to take away the eight-hour workday and replace it with a system based on total labor time for the entire year. Workers would no longer get overtime pay if they work more than eight hours in any given day.

About 1,000 workers attended the strike meeting May 12. Almost as many came to a similar meeting a week later. Support for the strike is massive.

This fight comes after several unions in Swedish industry have signed contracts with the employers. Originally all the employers'

organizations prepared for battle by demanding radical concessions. The companies wanted all national contracts replaced by local negotiations plant by plant as well as taking away the eight-hour workday. The employers backed down from these demands. But the agreements reached call for all or part of wage raises in the coming two years to be dealt with in local negotiations.

The fight may now be enlarged to the entire construction industry. Employers in this industry have already locked out workers in support of the owners of the electrical firms. The Construction Workers Union has given strike notice for 5,600 workers who are fighting for a new contract. The employers have answered by threatening to lock out another 25,000–30,000 workers. The main concession demanded by construction firms is the elimination of the present system of regulating piecework rates.

## Australian workers protest social cuts

BY MANUELE LASALO

MELBOURNE, Australia — "Never in the history of Victoria have so many people turned out so often to oppose any government."

John Halfpenny, secretary of the Trades Hall Council, addressed those words to more than 50,000 cheering unionists who had converged on the state of Victoria's Parliament House to protest planned cuts in health care, education, and pensions. The May 6 demonstration was the third such massive mobilization of unionists in six months to protest deep attacks on union rights, jobs, and social services. It coincided with full-day and half-day work stoppages by public service workers throughout the state.

The Liberal-National coalition govern-

ment, led by Jeff Kennett, announced in its April budget statement cuts of A\$730 million (U.S. \$504 million) over two years, eliminating an estimated 15,300 jobs.

The biggest cut, A\$380 million to hospitals and health services, will cause a loss of some 5,000 jobs. Teachers estimate that between 130 and 215 schools will be closed, putting approximately 6,000 education workers out of a job.

The only government department that did get a raise in its budget was the police.

The government also plans to remove its obligation to fund the insurance policies of 300,000 public service employees.

The march on Parliament House inaugurated a 74-day campaign of rolling work stoppages in Victoria.