

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**Palestinian struggle is key question in Middle East**

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## Palestinians weigh value of accord with Tel Aviv

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS  
AND ALAN HARRIS

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip — "I would be very glad if the Israeli army withdrew even one meter from our land," said Marwan al-Ghoul, a Palestinian journalist, September 21. "But that is not the case, not yet anyway." Al-Ghoul is one among many here who have expressed skepticism or outright opposition to the agreement between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Israeli government.

The accord, officially signed September 13, calls for withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Gaza Strip and the town of Jericho in the West Bank and the subsequent elec-

### 'Militant' managing editor gives eyewitness account

tion of a Palestinian council with legislative authority in these areas. Israeli forces are to remain in control of the 144 Israeli settlements, encompassing 115,000 people, that are spread throughout the occupied territories.

"The Israeli occupation continues," said al-Ghoul. "We don't have real control of our lives." His point had already been brought home as we entered the crowded streets of Gaza City. Heavily armed Israeli troops had stopped dozens of young Palestinians at roadblocks to "check identities."

"This harassment is a daily occurrence," said Zakharia Talmas, our driver, as a soldier pointed his machine gun toward the car and ordered Talmas to stop. The soldiers let us go after checking identity cards and passports. Some of the Palestinian youth did not



Living conditions for big majority of Gaza Strip's 800,000 residents are desperate. Most Palestinians living there were expelled from their villages by Israeli government.

have the same luck.

Most Palestinians we spoke to here, however, expressed hope that the accord will be a step forward in their fight for self-determination. Al-Ghoul said several polls in the news show 65-70 percent of Palestinians in Gaza support the agreement.

"I hope it will help bring peace and a

return to normal life in the future for Palestinians and Israelis," said Rasem al Bayari, chairperson of the Palestinian Workers Trade Unions Federation in Gaza. "It is a first step toward an independent Palestinian state."

Al Bayari helped organize many of the

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## Striking miners tour western coalfields

BY PAT GROGAN  
AND JOHN LANGFORD

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah — Bill Reynolds and Marty Jacoby, two miners on strike against the Rochester and Pittsburgh Coal Co. in Indiana, Pennsylvania, completed a two-and-a-half-week solidarity tour of Utah in September. They were able to speak to thousands of working people about the issues and stakes in their four-month-long strike that now involves some 18,000 miners.

"We used to say this was a strike for job security," Reynolds said, "but this doesn't make clear what's happening. Most people don't feel they have job security." The miners explained that the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) is driving to rid the coalfields of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). The miners said that the coal bosses are shifting more and more production to nonunion mines, and refusing to hire laid-off union miners in newly opened operations. This is a direct violation of the 1988 contract the BCOA signed with the union. Since the average productive life of a mine is 5-7 years, they said, many union miners face the prospect of being forced out. The BCOA hopes in this way to weaken and eventually get rid of the union. The coal miners, Reynolds said, are determined to take a stand to defend their organization.

"Until now, I didn't understand that it was

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## Protests demand 'U.S. out of Somalia!'

BY JOHN STEELE

TORONTO — Chanting "Clinton go home," "Stop the killing," and "Down with the United Nations," close to 100 people demonstrated at the U.S. consulate during noon hour traffic September 16. The majority of the protesters were Somali working people living in Canada.

Similar demonstrations were scheduled in Ottawa, Ontario; Rome; Amsterdam, Netherlands; London; Stockholm, Sweden; and other cities, participants at the Toronto protest were told. It was also announced that about 100 Somalis were leaving from Toronto that day to protest in Washington, D.C.

Men, women, and children carried huge, colorful banners reading: "Let the Somali people decide their own destiny," and "No justice, no peace." A huge banner depicted the recent massacre of Somalis by U.S. and Pakistani troops.

"Your policy is deception. You are accomplishing nothing," Sophia Abdulahi shouted into a bullhorn as she condemned the United Nations occupation of her country. "Get out of Somalia. We don't need your help. Stop bombing hospitals. We don't need you. Go home!" she said.

Dr. Abdullahi Emli read a statement on behalf of the Somali Committee for Peace which organized the Toronto action.

"Nothing can excuse UNOSOM's [United Nations Operation in Somalia] acts of violence and disrespect for the most fundamental rights of the Somali people," Emli said. "The continuation of this insane operation is further proof of the U.S.'s insidious agenda, carried out in the name of the United Nations."

"The massacres are like what the U.S. did in the Vietnam War," said Jamal Naleye who came from Hamilton. "Fifty UN troops have been killed in Bosnia and the U.S. is not using helicopter gunships yet," he added to applause. "But in Somalia they are shooting women and children in the streets."

In his speech to the demonstrators, Tony DiFelice, a machinist and Communist League federal election candidate in Etobicoke North, pointed to the growing scandal over the murder and torture of Somali

citizens by Canadian troops. "Prime Minister Kim Campbell and former prime minister Brian Mulroney are responsible for these crimes and attempted cover-up," he said.

DiFelice called for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Somalia and demanded that Ottawa "open Canada's doors to all Somalis who want to immigrate here."

John Steele is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 2113 at Ford Electronics.



Protest at U.S. consulate in Toronto. Demonstrators denounced the small-scale war being fought under the cover of the United Nations by Washington.

## Ford auto contract demands concessions

BY PETER THIERJUNG

CLEVELAND — Officials of United Auto Workers (UAW) union locals that organize workers at Ford Motor Co. met September 20 and proposed a contract settlement that contains substantial concessions. The tentative agreement will deepen divisions among auto workers and erode current wages and benefits. Ratification votes by the union's 96,000 members at Ford are slated for September 26.

Effectively establishing a third tier for new hires, the proposed contract calls for future employees to start at 70 percent of full pay. It would take three years to reach 100 percent. Employees hired under the previous contract started at 85 percent of the full wage and had to work 18 months to catch up.

The settlement also contains a back-door copayment on health-care benefits. According to Associated Press the cost of living adjustment (COLA), which generated \$1.39 an hour under the former agreement, will be cut, with 22 cents allocated to the company's costs for medical benefits. The giveback amounts to nearly \$500 a year per worker calculated on the basis of a 40-hour work-week. Another 5 cents was eliminated outright and 10 cents was negotiated away for

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## IN BRIEF

### Clinton pledges to step up U.S. intervention in Somalia

In a meeting with Italian prime minister Carlo Ciampi, President Bill Clinton defended Washington's military presence in Somalia. Clinton said he will step up U.S. involvement there rather than withdraw in the face of continued opposition to the United Nations-sponsored occupation. Italian officials have threatened to withdraw their 2,900 troops from Somalia. The Italian troops were redeployed outside Mogadishu, the Somali capital, in mid-September. The U.S. Senate passed a resolution calling on the administration to either withdraw troops by November 15 or consult with Congress on the nature of their role.

On September 21, more than 50 Army Rangers swooped down by helicopter on a building in Mogadishu, arresting Osman Hassan Ali, a chief aide to Somali leader Mohammed Farah Aidid. Three other Somalis were also detained.

### Reports show health crisis

An annual U.S. government report revealed a continued disparity in health and medical care based on race. The infant mortality rate for Blacks, for example, was more than double that of whites. According to the survey, 32 percent of Latinos, 21 percent of Blacks, and 11 percent of whites had no health insurance last year.

A separate report revealed a 35 percent increase since 1985 in the number of cases of tuberculosis among children under age 15.

### U.S. companies cut more jobs

Three major U.S. companies announced staggering job cuts in mid-September. U.S. West Inc. said it would eliminate 9,000 jobs—one in seven employees—mostly through layoffs in Arizona, Minnesota, Oregon, and Washington. The cuts are the largest announced by the phone company since similar layoffs in 1991.

American Airlines plans to abolish 5,000 jobs by the end of 1994 and shed some routes. This is on top of 1,700 layoffs already announced.

Du Pont Co. said it will cut 4,500 jobs in the United States by mid-1994 and plans to pare down its European work force over the next year. Two-thirds of the U.S. workers being fired will be dismissed by the end of November. About 1,300 employees received



Some 10,000 French farmers protested September 15 to demand that European Community negotiators reopen talks with Washington on agricultural trade. The so-called Blair House agreement calls for a significant cut in farm subsidies. Above: farmers set up a barricade of burning tires on a highway south of Paris.

pink slips earlier this year. The chemical giant has laid off 10,300 of its own employees and nearly 3,000 contract workers in the last two years.

### Mercedes workers protest cuts

Some 50,000 Mercedes-Benz workers demonstrated in cities throughout Germany September 14, protesting the planned layoff of more than 22,000 workers and cuts in benefits. Nearly 20,000 gathered in Sindelfingen, near Stuttgart, in what their union, IG Metall, called the biggest protest by Mercedes workers since World War II.

### State of emergency in Georgia

Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze declared a state of emergency to begin September 20 that bans rallies, imposes a curfew, and disarms opponents. Shevardnadze had threatened to resign and 10,000 of his supporters protested when parliament initially refused to grant him emergency powers. Shevardnadze also won his demand

that parliament dissolve itself for three months.

Meanwhile, forces led by former National Guard commander Lotti Kobalia captured a rail and road junction that links the capital city of Tbilisi to Georgian ports on the Black Sea. Seven soldiers and two civilians were reportedly killed in that attack. Shevardnadze warned the rebels that the government plans to launch a counteroffensive against them.

### Monarch restored in Cambodia

Cambodia's two major political parties—the Cambodian People's Party and the royalist Funcinpec—have agreed to name Prince Norodom Ranariddh first president and to restore his father, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, as king. Sihanouk ruled Cambodia as its monarch from 1941 to 1955. This ends the interim arrangement in which Ranariddh shared power equally with Hun Sen, the former prime minister. Hun Sen will assume the title of chief deputy, or second president. The new arrangement is expected to take effect in a few weeks, after the newly elected national assembly completes work on the constitution.

### Tokyo unveils economic plan

Reports that Japan's gross national product fell at an annual rate of 2 percent last quarter indicate that Tokyo could be slipping into a so-called double-dip recession. The Japanese government announced its third program in about a year to try to pull the economy out of its worst downturn in at least two decades. The plan includes spending an additional \$57 billion on public works, low-interest loans for home buying, and loans and other incentives for businesses. The package did not contain the big cuts in income taxes that corporate heads had pushed for. A commission will recommend changes in the tax system by November that may include consumption taxes

that will offset any cuts in income tax.

### Filipino peasant leader freed

Jaime "Ka Jimmy" Tadeo, chairman of the Peasant Movement of the Philippines, was released from prison on parole August 6 after serving more than three years on frame-up charges of misappropriation of funds. His arrest occurred in the context of widespread demonstrations against U.S. military bases in the Philippines, and in opposition to the government's agrarian reform policy.

### Demjanjuk to return to U.S.

An Israeli Supreme Court justice rejected appeals September 19 for a new war-crimes trial against John Demjanjuk. He is now free to leave the country. Demjanjuk's conviction on charges that he was Ivan the Terrible, the Nazi gas chamber operator at Treblinka concentration camp who tortured Jews before putting them to death, was overturned July 29 when the Israeli Supreme Court ruled there was reasonable doubt as to his identity. He spent nearly eight years in solitary confinement in Israeli jails, half of them on death row.

The U.S. government had extradited Demjanjuk to Israel and stripped him of his U.S. citizenship. The Clinton administration, which has fought to prevent Demjanjuk from returning to the United States, now says it will not challenge the court order that permits him entry while a federal appeals court in Cincinnati decides whether to reopen the proceeding that stripped him of his U.S. citizenship.

Demjanjuk's lawyers maintain that during his deportation and extradition proceedings Washington improperly withheld crucial evidence that proved his innocence, and that such misconduct is grounds for reopening the case.

### Navy drops Tailhook charge

The U.S. Navy withdrew charges of conduct unbecoming an officer against Lieut. Cole Cowden September 20. Cowden was one of five officers on trial in the scandal involving the sexual harassment and assault of women at the 1991 naval aviators convention in Las Vegas, Nevada. Navy officials said they did not have a strong enough case against the officer to go to trial.

A Pentagon report in April accused 104 fliers of indecent exposure, assault, and lying under oath, among other violations. The Navy has already dropped half of the cases. About 40 officers have been fined or reprimanded.

### Bolivian gov't lays off miners

The Bolivian government laid off 35,000 miners and closed 220 tin mines September 17 after the price of the metal fell to \$1.99 a pound. Tin accounts for nearly 13 percent of Bolivia's exports. Luis Prado, president of the National Mining Chamber, said that 120,000 mining and mine-related jobs could be lost if the government does not step in with financial and technical assistance.

In 1986, 23,000 state-employed miners were laid off when the price of tin dropped to \$2.67 a pound. —PAT SMITH

## THE MILITANT

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# Cops in Puerto Rico kill worker in raid

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — José Rosario Díaz, 22, was the first fatality in a series of combined police and National Guard attacks on residents of public housing projects that began in June of this year. Rosario, who was killed September 8, was a worker at the Goya food processing plant. María Rosario Díaz, the 25-year-old sister of the dead man, was wounded when police officer Miguel Díaz Martínez shot her in both legs.

The shootings are part of a campaign launched by the island's governor, Pedro Rosselló, to step up repression. In May he mobilized the National Guard to carry out joint patrols with police at shopping centers, beaches, and other public areas. The justification was the rising crime rate in Puerto Rico. Since May, the sight of camouflage-dressed soldiers with automatic rifles driving Humvees and military trucks through the streets has become common.

Businessmen in the tourism sector of the economy, however, were strongly opposed to the sight of soldiers on the beaches and in areas frequented by tourists and rich Puerto Ricans. They said it was bad for business because it made Puerto Rico look like other Latin American countries where such scenes are common. As a result, the governor pulled the troops out of these areas and began the campaign against the public housing projects. Prior to the September 8 killing, a total of 19 projects had already been taken over.

Typically, several hundred police and soldiers backed up by helicopters move in on a project in the middle of the night. The helicopters are used to place snipers on the roofs of the buildings.

After the initial attack, the project is walled off and police secure control of all entrances to the area. The National Guard units are removed and a smaller police unit stays to staff the checkpoint. The Barbosa project had been

the cops' first target. The National Guard troops were removed less than a week before Rosario was gunned down.

## Conflicting stories

The three daily newspapers in San Juan have offered widely different accounts of the events leading to Rosario's death.

The *San Juan Star* interviewed the aunt of the victim, María del Pilar Ramos, who was a witness and was herself threatened by the police. Rosario was entering the gate of the public housing project where the police maintain a checkpoint, she said. Since he did not have the necessary papers for his car on him, he parked and walked to his apartment to get documentation. When he did not immediately return, Díaz, the policeman, walked over to the apartment and called him a troublemaker.

When Rosario came out of the house, the cop pulled his gun and fired.

Wilfredo Vázquez, who holds the World

Boxing Association superbantam title, was visiting his mother who lives in the project when he witnessed the crime.

"Police say that the cop was attacked by a whole bunch of residents and hit with a baseball bat," said Vázquez. "That is all lies. No one hit him with a bat or a pipe or anything."

Twenty minutes before the killings the same police officer had been rude to Vázquez as he was trying to enter the project.

Vázquez said he saw the policeman swear at Rosario's sister and push her to the ground. The young man came out of the apartment and said, "Hey, that's my sister. What's the matter with you? Are you crazy?"

Rosario punched the cop in the chest and was fatally shot, according to the boxer. It was only the intervention of neighbors that prevented the cop from killing Rosario's sister and aunt, Vázquez reported.

*El Nuevo Día* initially ran their report under the headline "Youth Dies in 'Riot' at Barbosa Project." It reported the cops' version of the events — that Díaz was surrounded by 20-25 people and that he was hit in the back with a baseball bat before he fired his service revolver.

*El Vocero*, a third paper, reported that, according to the residents of the housing project, the policeman who pulled the trigger has a history of treating them in an abusive and aggressive manner. In fact, it quickly came out that in 1989 Díaz held a fellow officer and a police colonel hostage for several hours in a police station. With a revolver and a shotgun he threatened to kill the two cops. After he surrendered, Díaz spent some time in a mental hospital and was expelled from the police force. Criminal charges were filed and then dropped. He appealed his expulsion and was eventually reinstated.

After two days of protests by hundreds of residents who were confronted by police armed with semi-automatic rifles, both *El Vocero* and *El Nuevo Día* acknowledged that the police version of the September 8 events was in dispute.

Just two days after Rosario was killed, the Pila housing project in Ponce was taken over by a force of 450 police and national guardsmen.

Pila is the largest public housing project in Ponce. It has 907 apartments in 58 buildings. Ponce is the second-largest metropolitan area in Puerto Rico and is located 60 miles from San Juan on the south coast of the island.

Police superintendent Pedro Toledo personally supervised the operation with a machine gun in his hand.

## Montreal Pathfinder bookstore opens

BY ROGER ANNIS

MONTREAL — A celebration marked the official opening of the new Pathfinder bookstore in this city on September 11. The store is located in a storefront at 4581 St. Denis Street near the corner of Mont-Royal, one of the busiest commercial areas in downtown Montreal.

"We're really excited about the new location," bookstore director Mary Ellen Marus told the *Militant*. "We're right in the heart of the French-language bookstore district in Montreal and we've had dozens of people come into the store since we opened one week ago."

"Many customers walk in off the street," she continued. "Others who know us already can get here more easily than before when we were located away from downtown. The work we did to widely publicize the store before the actual opening has really paid off."

Michel Prairie, director of Pathfinder Press's French-language publication program, welcomed guests to the open house. "This new store is one of 35 Pathfinder bookstores around the world," he noted.

Prairie pointed to three things that make the new store important — it makes available the ideas and experiences of the revolutionary and social movements of our time; it is staffed and operated on a volunteer basis; and the literature selection is multilingual, with books in English, French, and Spanish.

The bookstore opening was featured that night on CFCF Television Pulse News, the main English-language television news program in Montreal.

"With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union, are these books relevant?" reporter Joe Singerman asked the television audience, after describing the books featured in the store.

"We're living in a world of unemployment, war, and depression," bookstore volunteer Katy Lerougetel replied, "and people are looking for an alternative. We're getting more and more people coming in looking for answers to the big questions of the day."

Singerman went on to report, "Organizers of the bookstore clashed with Montreal police last June at a rally at the Maurice Richard Arena. They were forced to remove English books from a table full of literature. At the same time, police ignored a fascist group that was distributing racist literature."

The Commission of Police Professional Ethics is investigating an official protest that the bookstore has filed on the incident.

Describing the new store, Marus explained, "We have about 40 percent more shelf space now and we're putting a lot of work into expanding the selection of books. We can now display the collected works of Marx and Engels, of Lenin, and a broad range of other titles."

"We're expanding our selection of books in French as well," Marus said. "Sixty percent of Montreal's population speaks French as its first language so we have to put lots of time into finding and ordering the books that Pathfinder doesn't yet have the resources to translate or publish in French."

"To give you one example of this," she continued, "when the agreement over limited autonomy for the Palestinians in the territories occupied by Israel was announced, we set up a display in the front window of the store of our books on the



A celebration marked the official opening of the new storefront Pathfinder bookstore.

struggle for the national rights of the Palestinians. Within five minutes we sold our only copy of a French-language book by Maxime Rodinson on this subject! We placed an order right away for three more copies.

"We took the time to plan and build an attractive, professional bookstore," Marus stated. "We built wooden shelves for the books and restored the original brick along one of the store walls."

"We have a big job ahead of us now to

raise the \$6,500 needed for renovations and the expansion of the bookstore stock," she concluded.

Thirty-five people attended a Militant Labor Forum event in the bookstore September 11 to hear from members of a group of more than 100 young people who traveled to Cuba from Canada this August to learn more about the Cuban revolution and participate in voluntary work.

Roger Annis is a member of Local 1900 of the Canadian Autoworkers in Montreal.

## Yeltsin and parliament 'depose' each other as Russia's political, economic crisis grows

BY GREG ROSENBERG

The political havoc in Russia entered a new stage September 21 as President Boris Yeltsin announced he was dissolving the legislature by decree. Rival bureaucrats in parliament, backed by the Constitutional Court, rapidly countered with a vote deposing him. The Supreme Soviet named Vice-president Aleksandr Rutskoi acting president.

Yeltsin's announcement came after months of threats and counterthreats by the rival groupings.

Despite the claim by both sides in this turf war that they are acting to defend "democracy," "reform," or "the constitution," the driving force behind the conflict is a fight between different groups of privileged bureaucrats over who will take the lion's share of the spoils, as Russia's economy hurtles toward a complete breakdown.

"The only way of overcoming the paralysis of state power in the Russian Federation is its radical renovation on the basis of the principles of people's power and constitutionality," Yeltsin said in his televised speech. "Being the guarantor of the security of our state, I am obliged to propose a way out of this deadlock."

Yeltsin claims to be the "strong leader" that Russia needs, a Bonapartist figure who stands above the widely different interests of the working class and the privileged layers in the country.

In reality, however, he represents the interests of the wing of the petty-bourgeois caste that hopes to benefit from a rapid transition to a market economy. Other sections of the bureaucracy fear that moving too quickly against the standard of living of Russia's workers and peasants will provoke social explosions.

Declaring that elections for a new parliament would be held December 11-12, Yeltsin said he would be in favor of "early presidential elections after a certain period," and that anyone attempting to "wreck" the elections would be "criminally responsible."

Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of parliament, called for a national strike to oppose Yeltsin. "I turn to all servicemen, policemen, and employees of the security ministry with a demand not to obey criminal orders coming from the president," he said.

Both Yeltsin and Rutskoi made appeals for loyalty to their respective allies in the Russian army, which declared "strict neu-

trality." Yeltsin had earlier ordered the Dzerzhinsky Division, a unit of Interior Ministry troops loyal to him, into Moscow.

No large demonstrations or troop movements were reported in Moscow the first day following Yeltsin's announcement.

## Regime of permanent crisis

The privileged petty-bourgeois social layers that Yeltsin and his rivals represent are in a state of permanent crisis.

Economic breakdown, continuing disintegration of Russia's borders, and national conflicts within the country are all contributing to the ongoing disputes between ruling bureaucrats.

But none of the wings of this privileged layer has a solution to the country's economic and social crisis.

Inflation reached 29 percent in August. More than 4,000 cases of diphtheria have been reported so far this year, with 100 deaths. Tuberculosis is up by 26 percent, and typhoid fever is seeing a resurgence. There has been at least one case of bubonic plague diagnosed.

Official unemployment stands at just under 1 million workers, although, according

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# ANC campaign emphasizes mass action

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

"Any practice of racial discrimination will be declared a criminal offense" in post-apartheid South Africa, stated African National Congress (ANC) president Nelson Mandela in a speech near Cape Town in mid-September.

Mandela and other ANC leaders continue to speak around the country at various meetings, explaining the group's political perspective and seeking to win support for its election campaign leading up to the first-ever democratic, nonracial vote set for April 27, 1994.

At a conference organized by the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa emphasized his organization's mass action political perspective. It is important that the ANC should not be allowed to "disappear into Parliament and exist there only," he told the gathering. "We shall still need a strong ANC outside Parliament."

Describing the April 27 election as a means of advancing the freedom struggle, Ramaphosa said, "We shall need a strong COSAS, strong youth organizations, strong trade unions, strong civics, strong organizations of people on the land and the landless, to ensure that we transform this society into one from which we all, and the poor in particular, benefit."

Mandela elaborated further on this perspective in the opening address he presented to a special conference of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)

held near Johannesburg September 10. "I fully believe that the ANC will never betray the cause of democracy and the cause of the workers," he stated.

"If an ANC government does not deliver the goods, you must do what you did to the apartheid regime," Mandela said to applause from about 1,700 delegates representing 13 COSATU affiliates and more than 1 million workers.

## ANC reaches out to all South Africans

In addition to taking its message throughout the Black townships, the ANC has been reaching out to all South Africans, encouraging them to embrace the ANC's nonracial program.

"This is not a time for panic," stated Mandela in Cape Town's civic center September 13. "This is not a time to emigrate to Australia. There is work to be done. White people who still own many of the resources and ply many of the skills we will need in the future have a special role to play. They have a special responsibility."

"I hope to persuade you that we are in reality the only organization with the commitment, the will, and the courage to reconstruct our war-torn and divided society," Mandela stated. "Let's bury the past," he said in Afrikaans to roars of approval. "What's done is done."

Meanwhile, random violent attacks continue to occur in South Africa by forces hoping to derail the negotiations process and upcoming election. Unidentified gun-



African National Congress supporters canvassing door-to-door in Soweto

men killed at least six people and wounded nine others September 21 when they fired on a minibus carrying commuters south of Johannesburg. Bystanders accused the government's security forces of complicity in the attack. This shooting occurred two weeks after gunmen killed 23 people and wounded 25 in two separate attacks on commuters in a nearby industrial area.

The ANC has blasted these killings as the work of a "third force" — rightists both within the South African cabinet and outside it.

Speaking at a church function in Johannesburg, Mandela blasted those responsible for the ongoing violence. "No government anywhere in the world... would have tolerated the death of more than 20,000 people and dismiss it as a problem of black people killing black people," the ANC leader said.

Abundant evidence exists that the state's police forces and other rightist elements are involved in the violence, Mandela charged. "Politicizing crime will not stop the murders. Decisive action against the right-wing and black surrogates of the government will end the violence."

South African president F.W. de Klerk has been meeting with Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi in an effort to persuade him to return to the multiparty talks. Buthelezi walked out of the negotiations in July to protest the decision to hold a democratic election on April 27. He is demanding a preelection guarantee that extensive regional powers be granted to the KwaZulu "homeland" that he governs, and that a new national government not have the power to change this.

Government officials have raised the idea of holding a referendum on the transitional constitution currently being drafted by political parties participating in the multiparty talks. The ANC rejects this proposal, stating that it "runs counter to the process of negotiations" and represents "a gigantic blackmail of the majority of the people of our country."

"The ANC believes that a referendum will only serve to delay the implementation of April 27 as an election date," said a statement released by the organization.

In another development, officials from the ANC and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) began talks in Harare, Zimbabwe, September 20 on the organization of a new South African security force. The PAC is seeking troops from abroad to be part of this operation.

## Campaign supporters in Atlanta demand paper lift blackout of socialist candidates

BY SUSAN LaMONT

ATLANTA — Supporters of Bob Braxton, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor, caused quite a stir in downtown Atlanta September 9 when they picketed the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* to demand that the city's major daily paper lift its news blackout on the socialist campaign.

The campaigners got a sympathetic response from dozens of passersby, including newspaper workers coming in and out of the building. Many shook Braxton's hand and expressed support for the socialists' fight for equal treatment from the pro-capitalist daily. Several reporters introduced themselves and chatted with the candidate. Prominent civil rights attorney Roger Mills also joined the picket line to show support for the fight for fair news coverage. "The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* editorializes about the importance of democratic elections in every corner of the globe," explained the leaflet handed out by Braxton's supporters. "But here in Atlanta, the *J/C*'s editors cover only the big-business candidates and blackout news about the only working-class candidate. They are deliberately misleading Atlantans, trying to decide for the voters who the 'real' candidates are, instead of objectively covering all the campaigns."

The picket line was covered by four radio stations and *Creative Loafing*, a local weekly. A short item and picture on the

picket line also appeared in the *Journal-Constitution* the following day.

On September 13, Braxton, who is a member of United Auto Workers Local 882 at Ford Motor Co., and his supporters held a news conference at City Hall to file 7,500 signatures gathered by supporters to place his name on the November ballot. The filing followed two months of busy campaigning and petitioning throughout the city.

This is the first time the Socialist Workers Party has been able to petition to get on the ballot in Atlanta. Previously, the only way to gain ballot status was to pay an exorbitant filing fee — \$3,000 in the case of mayor — or attempt to qualify as a "pauper," which is defined in such a way as to keep almost anyone with a job from qualifying.

Despite filing more than twice the required number of signatures, supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign anticipate the possibility that the Atlanta authorities may try to reject Braxton's petitions.

They have been seeking broad backing for the candidate's right to be on the ballot and urging supporters of democratic rights to send messages to Mayor Maynard Jackson and to Mack Dennis, director of registration and elections for Fulton County, calling on them to treat the socialists' petitions fairly. So far, messages have been received from Teresa Nelson, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Geor-

gia; Emory Women's Center director Ali Crown; prominent anti-apartheid activist Faye McDonald Smith; Lawrence Younger, sergeant-at-arms of United Auto Workers Local 882; civil rights attorney Mills; and attorney Brian Spears.

Just as Braxton finished filing the petitions, he met a small group of airport cab drivers who had come to City Hall to try to speak before a public safety commission hearing. The drivers, many of whom are immigrants from Africa and the Middle East, were the victims of a raid on September 9 in which 14 were arrested on immigration and other charges. Following the dragnet, Braxton had issued a statement calling for an end to the harassment of airport cab drivers and demanding the charges against them be dropped. The drivers welcomed Braxton's support and took copies of the statement to pass out at the airport.

*Susan LaMont is a member of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 365 at Arrow Shirt in Austell, Georgia. She is a chairperson for the Georgia Socialist Workers 1993 Campaign.*

## N.Y. walk-a-thon for democracy in South Africa set for October 23

BY SUSAN ANMUTH

NEW YORK — A Walk-a-thon for Democracy in South Africa is set to occur here on October 23. Its purpose is to raise funds for the African National Congress (ANC) campaign leading up to the April elections in that country, and to involve as many people as possible in activities in solidarity with the fight for a democratic South Africa.

"Joining this walk-a-thon is in a real sense supporting our own freedom," commented Cleveland Robinson, chairman of the New York State Martin Luther King Commission and cochair of the Coalition for Democracy in South Africa (CODISA). CODISA and the Immobilize Apartheid Coalition are sponsoring the event.

Hospital workers union Local 1199 has printed 20,000 brochures, subtitled "Walk the Last Mile to Freedom with the African National Congress." The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees District 37 donated stamps for a 6,000 piece mailing to groups and individuals that includes students, religious institutions, health care activists, and wom-

en's rights fighters. Labor Against Apartheid sent its own mailing on the walk-a-thon and is addressing central political events such as a commemoration for W. E. B. DuBois at Carnegie Hall, and on college campuses.

David Dinkins, mayor of New York City, is honorary chairperson of the walk-a-thon which will begin with a rally at the United Nations at 10:00 a.m. and proceed six miles to a closing rally at the Harlem State Office Building. Organizers project a variety of entertainers and speakers, including a keynote address from a leader of the ANC.

"This is not merely an election contested by different political organizations," the brochure explains. "It is a contest between freedom and oppression; peace and civil war. The outcome of this election will affect over 100 million people throughout Southern Africa. This is the opportunity for people of good will in the United States to affect the election. Walk the last mile to a democratic society with the ANC."

For more information or to order brochures, call (212) 666-1288.

*Susan Anmuth is a member of United Auto Workers Local 980 in Edison, New Jersey.*



Supporters of Atlanta socialist campaign protest daily paper's news blackout



# Somali meat-packers protest racist abuse

BY JON HILLSON  
AND EDY RUGER

MARSHALL, Minnesota — Pent-up anger over months of racist abuse of immigrant workers from Somalia by bosses at Heartland Foods sparked walkouts and protests at the turkey-processing plant here in south-western Minnesota farm country.

The actions, which began September 10, virtually shut down production on the plant's night shift, which is composed almost entirely of workers who are Somali. Overall about 150 of Heartland's 600 workers are from Somalia.

"When we left Somalia and came here, we did not expect all this trouble, this racism and discrimination," Abdirisak Ibrahim, a 19-year-old worker, told the *Militant*.

Most of the Somalis involved in the job action had been in the United States for about a year. Some traveled from as far as San Diego and Atlanta when they heard about the Heartland jobs from family and friends.

The first Somali worker at the plant, which is organized by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, was told about jobs there by a Latino worker in California. A majority of Heartland workers are Mexican, Central American, or Chicano.

The September 10 walkout was touched off when the son-in-law of an operations manager hurled a turkey drumstick at a Somali worker.

## Company ignored complaints

The company took no action in the incident, contrary to management practice in cases where complaints were made against immigrant workers. When the worker who had been attacked demanded some action, he was summarily fired.

Later, during their break, 13 unionists approached plant manager George Spang to demand he revoke the dismissal. Spang refused, ordering them back to work, even before the break ended. The workers refused to return, and Spang told them they too had been fired.

An additional 35 workers, all from Somalia, then walked off the job. Many stood outside the plant on the sidewalk, joined by family and friends.

Later that day, nearly 100 workers met in an apartment complex and decided to join the protest by refusing to report for work.

"We have trouble with the Somalis," Spang stated. "They have no discipline."

When a reporter asked if he was referring

to a few specific workers or a group, Spang responded, "Somalis period."

The company's harassment of the workers from Somalia is not new. A letter in the *Marshall Independent* charged that in an employee meeting months earlier, Spang had abused the workers.

The plant manager, the letter stated, told the meeting, "You Somalis have intolerable body odor and a breath that stinks. Unlike [in] your country, there is plenty of water [in the United States] and I would advise you to use the water. It will cost you nothing."

"We wanted to solve the problem, stop the intimidation and discrimination," Hakeem Kalif, 23, told the *Militant*. "We wanted to be able to do the job. We wanted some respect."

## 'Came for work, not prison'

"We came here to work," a 19-year-old immigrant added, "not to be in prison." Grievances ranged from insufficient break periods and refusal by supervisors to allow workers to warm their hands after working in ice, to line production speed.

"I once asked a supervisor," Ibrahim said, "'Before the Third World was [in the plant], did you have prisoners [for employees]?' He just laughed."

"On the front page of the newspaper, you see our picture," he continued, "and on the back page there is a helicopter shooting in [the Somali capital] Mogadishu. It's a surprising thing; it makes you think."

In addition to workers from Somalia and Latin America, Heartland employs immigrants from Vietnam, as well as workers who were born in the United States.

According to the company, 82 of the Somali workers have lost their jobs. None of the dozen workers who spoke to the *Militant* intend to return to the plant. The majority have already left Marshall for California, Iowa, and the Minneapolis/St. Paul area to find work.

A small number of Somali workers are still employed at the plant. Daily shifts have been increased to 12 hours to maintain production.

Several more Somali workers from out of state, contacted through the federal job service, have already been hired.

This was the second eruption in the plant in four months.

In May the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) rounded up dozens of night-shift workers from Mexico and Central America and deported them.



Workers who walked off the job at Heartland Foods to protest racist abuse and harassment. "We wanted to solve the problem, stop the intimidation," said one.

Heartland recruiters had hired the workers in Eagle Pass, Texas, providing them false documentation for work. Several months later, the company worked out the raid with the INS.

Other Latino workers then walked off the job, protested in the street, and occupied a company lunchroom. This forced Heartland bosses to fork over bonus and vacation pay withheld from the departed unionists, whose action had won the support of coworkers, as well as district Teamsters officials in Mankato, Minnesota.

When the raid and walkout happened, most of the Somali workers stood aside, several told the *Militant*.

"We did not support that," Ibrahim said. "We knew the Mexicans got short pay, that they were suffering from their illegal status, but we didn't say anything. Now we understand. If anyone suffers a problem and complains, they are fired."

The grievances raised by the Somali workers were "all legitimate," Teamsters Local 544 shop steward René de la Cruz explained. "I have to give them credit for how they stood up."

But, de la Cruz said, in their determination to get things done immediately, "it was them against the company, making the decision to get everything done by themselves. It would have been better to do this through the union."

De la Cruz reported that the plant manager "told me if I talked to more than one Somali at a time, I'd be suspended or terminated for 'encouraging a work stoppage.'"

The sudden walkout, isolated on one shift, elicited an uneven response among workers.

Part of this was due to the company's success in "getting different groups to hang out by themselves," de la Cruz said. "That's how [Heartland] likes it — segregated, no unity."

Some of the Latinos, the unionist added, believed the Somalis didn't work hard enough, echoing a charge by the bosses. "Some people thought they were spoiled," he said.

"You are right; the supervisors are no good," one white worker, a farmer, with nine years in the plant, told Ibrahim.

Outside the plant, two Mexican workers expressed solidarity with their Somali coworkers.

"I care about them. They are my friends," one woman said.

"Es igual (it's equal)," another worker replied sharply to a question from a reporter on whether workers in the plant from Mexico and Somalia faced different conditions.

Heartland's contract with the Teamsters expires Jan. 3, 1994.

Jon Hillson is a railroad worker in St. Paul, Minnesota, and a member of the United Transportation Union.

# 'No justifiable reason to keep Curtis in prison'

Mark Curtis, a unionist and political activist, was the victim of a frame up and beating by the police in Des Moines, Iowa. He was convicted on false charges of sexual assault and burglary in September 1988 and is currently serving a 25-year sentence. Since his arrest, thousands of workers, farmers, students, and fighters for democratic rights around the world have demanded justice for Mark Curtis.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee has extended its Parole Now Campaign. The group is encouraging supporters around the world to send more letters urging parole for Curtis.

Below are excerpts from some of the hundreds of letters already received. To send a letter requesting Curtis' release, write the Iowa State Board of Parole at: Capitol Annex, 523 East 12th St., Des Moines, IA 50319. Send copies to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee at: P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, IA 50311, or call (515) 246-1695; fax (515) 243-9869.

\* \* \*

**Mario Consoli**  
President, Amalgamated  
Clothing and Textile Workers  
Union Local 187  
Lawrence, Massachusetts

The undersigned are officers and members of ACTWU, Local 187.

We are writing to urge you to grant immediate parole to Mark Curtis. We work in factories with workers from more than a dozen countries and we speak many lan-

guages. We are proud to speak up for a fellow worker like Mark who upholds the principle of equality and unity among all workers.

Mark has already completed the prison term for the sexual abuse charge — the main charge for which he was unjustly jailed. He has an excellent prison record and has continued his activity on behalf of workers' rights and social justice. There is no justifiable reason to keep Mark Curtis in prison. Simple fairness calls for his release.

Six other members signed the letter.

**Gwendolyn M. Patton**  
Director,  
Creative Learning Center  
Montgomery, Alabama

I am writing today in support of the request for parole of Mark Curtis, a prisoner in your state prison system. As a volunteer who works with children whose mothers are in prison, I know how important it is for a family member to be released from prison, so he can return to his loved ones and resume a life of productivity and contributor to society.

I understand that Mark has been a model prisoner with an excellent work record that merits parole. He has had no previous record. I feel that with all the support Mark and his case have generated, it will not be difficult for him to find a supportive environment, employment and encouragement if he is released on parole.

I also understand that Mark has completed the state-required time to be served for the sexual-abuse charge. In my opinion, it is a disservice of justice to be forced to

admit you are guilty of a crime you have denied committing from the beginning before parole is granted. After all, Mark has already served his time.

I respectfully request that you grant a speedy parole to Mark Curtis.

**Ignacio Meneses**  
Member, United Auto Workers  
Local 157  
Detroit, Michigan

I am writing to request parole for Mark Curtis, currently imprisoned at the Bennett Correctional Center, Fort Madison, Iowa. I have followed the case from beginning and I am convinced that early parole is justified.

I believe Mr. Curtis is eligible for parole. His prison record is good and on June 18, 1993, he finished serving time on the conviction of alleged sexual abuse. He remains behind bars today solely for the extra charge of burglary which state officials added on, months after his arrest. He has a high level of community support. Mark Curtis has consistently maintained his innocence of all charges and his appeals are current. No purpose is served by keeping him in prison and if he is paroled, he can continue his excellent work in support of social justice for all.

**Emilia G. de Sandoval**  
Representative, Commission for  
Solidarity and Defense of  
Human Rights  
Chihuahua, Mexico

On behalf of the current Commission

for Solidarity and Defense of Human Rights in Chihuahua, Mexico, we direct to you our concern for Mark Curtis's legal situation.

We have closely followed Mr. Curtis's case and in the process there appear several irregularities. We know the record of this fighter, who is concerned with winning social justice for working people in the United States.

We respectfully request parole for Mark Curtis, now that he has met all the necessary requirements in accordance with the terms of the state of Iowa.

**Bert Jagerby**  
President, Workers' Union  
Pripps Brewery  
Bromma, Sweden

Mark Curtis has now been imprisoned for over five years for a crime he all the time has denied he committed. His behavior in prison has been exemplary and he has been offered a job, which he can begin if he is released. He has committed support from all over the world.

I, the undersigned, represent 500 brewery workers at Pripps, Sweden's biggest brewery, who are members of the Swedish Foodworkers' Union. Through our union, we are members of the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations, IUF. I appeal to you to give Mark a hearing by the Parole Board and consider his case favorably so he will have a chance to be free and provide for himself.



# One thousand more miners join strike

BY MARY ZINS

MARISSA, Illinois — On September 15, the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) expanded its strike for a contract with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) to include 1,000 unionists at 17 facilities in southern West Virginia. Most of the workers are employed at mines owned by Peabody Holding Co. and Consol Energy Inc. and contracted out to smaller outfits.

Eighteen thousand UMWA members are now on strike in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. For many of these workers this has been their longest strike ever for a national contract. The walkouts began on May 10 when miners at Zeigler Coal Co., Arch Mineral Corp., and Amax, Inc. mines began a "selective" strike in Illinois and Indiana.

Mike DeLost, newly elected vice-president of UMWA Local 1148 at Peabody's facilities here, said, "We've been on strike for 135 days now. I think Peabody and Consol expected us to break ranks by now."

He said contract talks are taking place, but so far all the demands of the BCOA are

concessionary. DeLost said the strike has had a financial impact on the coal bosses. "But Peabody is owned by Hanson, Inc., which is making profits off operations besides coal mines, and Consol has a lot of nonunion mines that are continuing to operate during this strike."

Peabody management in Marissa has thus far not attempted to resume production. "After 135 days on the picket line and in the strike headquarters, things seem quiet," he said. "There's nothing new from day to day. We need to get the word out to miners still working that you may not be on strike, but what happens in this fight will very much affect every mine worker," DeLost added.

In the latest attempt by the coal bosses to attack the UMWA, Arch Minerals filed two lawsuits in federal court in Benton, Illinois, on September 3. Using the federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, the company charged the UMWA with conspiracy to commit acts of violence and sabotage. Coal operators have filed similar lawsuits against the union throughout the strike areas.

Fred Wagner, president of UMWA Local



Militant/John Langford  
Bill Reynolds, striking miner from Homer City, Pennsylvania, speaking to unionists at Communication Workers of America Local 7704 picnic in Salt Lake City, Utah.

1392 at the Captain mine in Percy, Illinois, is specifically mentioned in the suit. "The company is trying to portray UMWA strikers as the bad guys, bent on violence," he said. "Oftentimes company personnel and security guards have staged the events they charge us with, and then they say the mine

workers did this or that. They want to undermine the public support we have won."

Wagner added, "The coal companies want to tie the UMWA up in the court system where working people don't get a fair hearing so that we can't be reaching out for more solidarity."

## Two striking mine workers tour western coalfields

Continued from front page  
a question of the union," said a steelworker after hearing Reynolds speak.

"You hear people talking all the time about how things wouldn't be so bad for the unions today if we had all stuck together back when they broke PATCO [the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization]," said one woman, a member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) union. "So I'm telling people that now's their chance to do something, so we don't find ourselves a couple of years from now saying, 'If only we had stuck together back when they tried to break the mine workers.'"

Jacoby attended a meeting of the National Organization for Women that was devoted to a report by participants in the successful defense of abortion clinics in Denver. After listening to a description of the detailed, disciplined way the clinic defenders had organized, Jacoby told the meeting, "We do a lot of the same things you do; we use a lot of the same tactics. Everybody has to do what you did: stand together." Jacoby said the union itself is not involved in the issue of abortion rights, but that most miners he worked with respected the right of women to choose and make their own decisions. "No one should tell women what to do on this or anything else," he said.

### Western coal miners discuss strike

An important feature of the tour was the chance to discuss the strike with coal miners in the western United States. Reynolds and Jacoby were hosted by UMWA District 22, based in Price, Utah, during the annual Labor Day events there and received invitations to speak to meetings of miners on the Navajo Nation in Kayenta, Arizona, and Window Rock on the Arizona-New Mexico border.

Western miners, who waged militant strikes against the coal bosses in the late 1980s, are not directly involved in the current contract fight.

At the Labor Day events sponsored by District 22, Reynolds and Jacoby had the

opportunity to speak with more than 300 miners and their families, including members of the UMWA from Colorado, Wyoming, and Arizona.

In Kayenta and Window Rock the miners discussed the stakes in the strike for the whole UMWA at meetings that were translated back and forth in both English and Diné, the Navajo language.

The tour grew out of the OCAW National Women's Conference in July in Washington, D.C. That gathering heard reports from members of the UMWA explaining the issues in the strike. A resolution was passed unanimously urging every local of the union to organize solidarity activities. Returning from the conference, several women began working with other union members on a solidarity tour.

"To me, it was the very best beginning for the women's committee of the union," said Linda Freeman, a member of OCAW

Local 2-591. "We came back and got the whole union involved. We did something that made us stronger union people, made our union stronger. To make solidarity a real thing, that's something." Freeman's local voted to turn their annual union party into a "Solidarity Night" and opened it up to all union supporters.

The Student Anti-Apartheid Coalition made a donation and gave a letter to the strikers expressing their support to the "fighting UMWA coal miners." The students said the reception they had received a few months earlier when they brought students from South Africa to UMWA locals on the Navajo reservation had "solidified our perspective that we are part of the same struggle. We stand with you in confidence of your strength to win the demands of your strike because an injury to one is an injury to all."

The strikers spoke to hundreds of work-

ers at Labor Day events organized by the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), the Communication Workers of America and the UMWA. The state AFL-CIO turned over its office, phone, and fax machine to the miners. Close to \$5,000 has been contributed to the strike so far. The miners also walked the picket line with striking members of a fire fighters' local of the OCAW at a nuclear facility in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

Oil workers toured Reynolds and Jacoby through the Phillips refinery. A worker had been killed at the Flying J refinery just days before the tour began — the direct result of a decision by the company to bring a new unit on-line, while bypassing basic safety procedures.

John Langford is a member of USWA Local 8319 at Magcorps. Pat Grogan is a member of OCAW Local 2-578 at Phillips refinery.

## 'Labor and farmers share common enemy'

BY JON HILLSON

WILLMAR, Minnesota — "Solidarity!" Ed France, a Pine City, Minnesota, dairy farmer, shouted into the microphone, waving a salute to Ken Cochrum, the striking coal miner who'd just finished addressing more than 200 gathered here at the state convention of the National Farmers Organization (NFO).

France is the president of the state organization, whose annual gathering took place September 11.

The NFO, headquartered in Ames, Iowa, serves as a bargaining agent for farmers who pool production of livestock, grain, and dairy commodities, and sell to large buyers.

Cochrum, a 15-year veteran of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 2250 at the Kerr-McGee-owned mine in West Frankfort, Illinois, is currently on a speaking tour in Minnesota.

Explaining the issues in the UMWA strike, Cochrum told the convention that "labor and farmers share a common enemy: the big corporations that are trying to destroy the unions, and agribusiness and corporate farming, which are driving the family farmers out of existence."

"I've seen the corporations wipe out family farms in southern Illinois," Cochrum said to the crowd, "and something has got to be done."

"We've failed in the unions to be on your side," the coal miner said. "We've got some educating to do. We have got to educate that family farmers aren't responsible for high food prices. And you've got to let it be known that our wages aren't the reason for the high cost of farm equipment. We can't allow ourselves to be divided by these lies."

"We have to combine, we have to have unity between labor and agriculture," Cochrum said. "That's the only way we'll

ever win."

Exchanges about the devastation of this year's grain crop was a major topic of informal discussion between farmers at the convention. In his chats with farmers, Cochrum learned about the inadequacy of government disaster aid programs in rural areas.

"One thing we in the United Mine Workers have learned," he told the convention, "is that if you wait for the government to help you, you're going to end up waiting a whole, long lifetime."

Cochrum was warmly applauded by the farmers. Several speakers referred to the miners' struggle in subsequent remarks. And many farmers came up to the UMWA member to shake his hand.

"You're in some conflict," one farmer said. "You too," Cochrum replied, "We're in it together."

Jon Hillson is a railroad worker in St. Paul, Minnesota, and a member of the United Transportation Union.

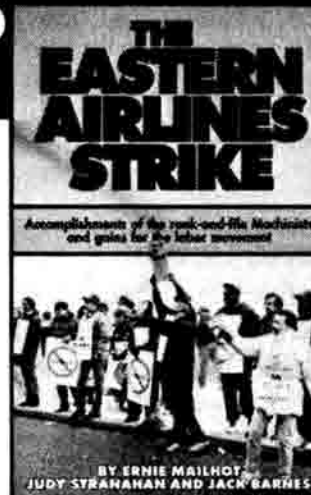


Striking UMWA member Ken Cochrum

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Available from Pathfinder bookstores listed on page 12 or from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. If ordering by mail, please add \$3.00 to cover postage and handling for the book.



# October target week will help boost sales of socialist press

BY GREG ROSENBERG

The challenge before supporters of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *New International* magazine is to begin organizing now for the October 2-9 international target week. By working to take advantage of every volunteer and every sales opportunity, we should be able to enter the second half of the circulation drive on schedule.

By now, the *Militant* business office should have received 30 percent of the 3,000 subscription goal, but only 22 percent have made their way to New York. Sales of the Spanish-language *PM* and *New International* lag substantially behind.

The good response to the socialist publications among working people and youth in cities around the world is an indication that as supporters shake off the rust, we can bring performance in line with projections.

The dozen or so cities that are ahead of the game should give immediate consideration to raising their goals to help the international effort.

During the target week, supporters will fan out to college campuses in their cities and regions, factory plant gates, political meetings, campaign events, farm meetings, picket lines, and strike support activities to give the drive the added boost needed.

Now is the time for distributors on layoff and vacation time, or those who can just take a few days to help organize special sales teams, to hit the road for a few days of concentrated sales in their region or beyond.

A good example comes from *Militant* distributors in New Zealand, who continue to help set the pace internationally. Dean Hazelwood in Auckland reports that on an all-day trip to Waikato University, supporters sold 24 single copies and 3 subscriptions to the paper.

Things are going so well that they have raised their goal for weekly single copy sales to 65 because of the increased openings to get out the working-class press.

In Paris, seven copies of the French-language *Nouvelle Internationale* and two *Militant* subscrip-

tions were sold at Fete l'Humanite, an annual festival sponsored by l'Humanite newspaper.

From Detroit, maintaining its top-five position among distributors of the paper in the United States for the third week in a row, Gary Boyers writes that over the past week and a half supporters

sell single issues of the paper. We are confident that we'll have bigger sales in the weeks ahead."

In Cleveland, Don Mackle reports that 48 *Militants* were sold at automobile factory gates. Auto workers at Ford vote on a proposed contract September 26.

Ned Dmytryshyn in Vancouver,



Militant/Arthur Hughes

Supporters of *Militant* introduce socialist press and *New International* to thousands of people at annual New York is Book Country fair. Five subscriptions and more than \$400 worth of literature were sold.

"have sold 5 *Militant* subscriptions and 14 single copies of the paper to members of the United Auto Workers. Widespread publicity in the local media of Ford's major concessionary contract demands has heightened discussions on a wide range of topics" among auto workers. Boyers reports that "the outstanding example ... was a sales team to a truck plant which sold out its bundle of 10 papers in the first 20 minutes of the sale."

This example goes to show that you can always use some extra *Militants* wherever you are!

"Supporters here feel like we're just getting warmed up," says Boyers, "especially in organizing to

British Columbia writes that Teamsters union members at a cables plant picked up five *Militant* subscriptions and a copy of *New International* last week. One worker, a laid-off coal miner, said that "employers all over the world are driving for concessions and are bent on weakening and busting unions." He liked the paper's coverage of labor battles. Another worker, who had just returned from South Africa, was drawn to *New International* no. five, featuring the article "The Coming Revolution in South Africa."

As distributors gear up for the target week, don't forget — send us your sales stories! Readers around the world appreciate it.

## Yeltsin and parliament 'depose' each other as Russia's political, economic crisis grows

Continued from Page 3

to the *Washington Post*, some forecasts warn that number may jump fivefold by the end of the year if "reform" measures are carried through to the end.

Washington and other imperialist powers demand austerity moves against Russia's working people. They are counting on Yeltsin as their hope to contain the struggles of the working class, create stability, and nurture conditions that would allow for the massive influx of capital.

The International Monetary Fund decided to delay granting Moscow a promised \$1.5 billion loan for failing to move swiftly enough on its austerity plan. The World Bank also delayed a planned \$600 million loan, due to Yeltsin's inability to carry through what the *New York Times* called "painful market-oriented measures."

U.S. president Bill Clinton immediately announced his support for Yeltsin, who told Clinton twice over the telephone that he intends

to "quicken the pace of reform."

Secretary of State Warren Christopher said that Yeltsin's efforts were "an investment in the national security of the United States." When asked about the legal issues involved, he replied, "I am not going to get into a discussion of Russian constitutional and legal issues."

Reflecting the anxiety over continued instability in Russia and the inability to contain it, Wall Street stocks tumbled by 38 points. "There are uncertainties and risks associated with this course," said a senior administration official.

The *New York Times* editors hailed Yeltsin's move as "A Democrat's Coup."

### Degenerated workers' state

In August 1991, working people in the former Soviet Union won an important victory by defeating a coup aimed at pushing back their ability to organize and speak out in their own interests. The leaders of the coup also hoped to forcibly hold

together the involuntary federation of republics that made up the Soviet Union.

But the subsequent change in governmental forms, Yeltsin's rise to the presidency, and the breakup of the republics didn't change the fact that Russia remains a workers' state — basic industry remains nationalized and there is no capitalist class. The new forms, and the different individuals in power, also did nothing to alter the bureaucracy's stranglehold on political power.

This stranglehold dates back to the Stalinist counterrevolution beginning in the mid-1920s that destroyed the Bolshevik party, which led Russia's socialist revolution in 1917.

As the crisis in Russia gets worse, class conflicts will sharpen. Either the working class will organize a political revolution to sweep away the privileged layers or there will be a bloody reimposition of capitalism.

## WHERE WE STAND

SOLD: 22% 661

SHOULD BE: 30% 900

END OF WEEK THREE

	The MILITANT		PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL		NEW INTERNATIONAL		
	SOLD / GOAL		SOLD / GOAL		SOLD / GOAL		
UNITED STATES							
Cincinnati	4	10	40%	0	2	0	3
Philadelphia	33	90	37%	7	20	4	20
Detroit	31	85	36%	2	10	1	30
St. Louis	24	75	32%	0	8	0	30
Miami	38	120	32%	13	50	19	60
Morgantown, WV	18	65	28%	1	3	0	20
Los Angeles	52	190	27%	18	95	3	95
Seattle	19	70	27%	0	15	0	25
Pittsburgh	22	85	26%	1	8	1	20
Newark, NJ	33	130	25%	9	40	0	70
Greensboro, NC	19	75	25%	0	10	0	20
Houston	14	60	23%	2	15	3	15
Cleveland	17	75	23%	0	5	0	25
Salt Lake City, UT	19	85	22%	3	15	2	35
San Francisco	26	120	22%	7	35	0	70
Atlanta	16	80	20%	4	10	0	20
Denver	2	10	20%	0	2	0	5
Twin Cities, MN	21	110	19%	0	18	0	30
Boston	21	115	18%	5	30	10	45
Des Moines, IA	16	90	18%	5	40	1	40
Brooklyn, NY	20	130	15%	4	40	0	50
Chicago	18	130	14%	5	30	0	35
Birmingham, AL	9	75	12%	0	10	0	20
Washington, DC	9	75	12%	3	15	0	20
New York	16	135	12%	3	45	1	55
Baltimore	8	70	11%	3	10	0	20
New Haven, CT	1	15	7%	1	3	0	10
Portland, OR	1	15	7%	0	2	0	10
Albany, NY	0	5	0%	0	2	0	—
Albuquerque, NM	0	2	0%	0	1	0	—
U.S. Total	527	2,392	22%	96	589	45	898
AUSTRALIA							
	10	35	29%	3	10	3	20
BELGIUM							
	0	5	0%	0	4	0	10
BRITAIN							
London	13	65	20%	1	5	7	25
Manchester	7	40	18%	0	1	0	20
Sheffield	4	35	11%	0	3	0	15
Britain Total	24	140	17%	1	9	7	60
CANADA							
Vancouver	16	70	23%	1	10	2	30
Toronto	17	85	20%	3	15	10	45
Montreal	7	70	10%	2	12	0	40
Canada Total	40	225	18%	6	37	12	115
FRANCE							
	3	6	50%	1	3	7	10
GREECE							
	3	9	33%	1	1	4	5
ICELAND							
	0	10	0%	0	1	0	3
NEW ZEALAND							
Christchurch	16	35	46%		1	1	5
Auckland	27	65	42%	1	6		15
N.Z. Total	43	100	43%	1	7	1	20
PUERTO RICO							
	0	2	0%	1	5	0	10
SWEDEN							
	11	60	18%	7	20	15	50
TOTAL	661	2,984	22%	117	685	94	1,196

## IN THE UNIONS

	The MILITANT		PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL		NEW INTERNATIONAL	
	SOLD / GOAL		SOLD / GOAL		SOLD / GOAL	
UNITED STATES						
ACTWU	10	32	31%	1	12	0
UTU	21	86	24%	2	2	0
UAW	22	100	22%	1	10	0
OCAW	15	75	20%	0	—	0
UFCW	11	55	20%	1	38	0
UMWA	10	60	17%	0	2	0
USWA	12	85	14%	0	3	0
IAM	12	90	13%	2	—	0
ILGWU	1	20	5%	7	25	0
U.S. Total	114	603	19%	14	92	0
AUSTRALIA						
AMEU	2	3	67%	0	—	0
FPU	1	3	33%	0	—	1
NUW	3	3	0%	0	—	0
Australia Total	3	9	33%	0	—	1
BRITAIN						
AEEU	1	3	33%	0	—	0
RMT	3	12	25%	0	—	0
TGWU	1	7	14%	0	—	0
Britain Total	5	22	23%	0	—	0
CANADA						
IAM	2	11	18%	0	1	1
CAW	2	15	13%	0	3	0
USWA	0	13	0%	0	2	1
ACTWU	0	2	0%	0	1	0
Canada Total	4	41	10%	0	7	2
NEW ZEALAND						
EU	1	7	14%	0	—	2
MWU	0	2	0%	0	—	0
UFBGWU	2	8	25%	0	—	1
New Zealand Total	3	17	0%	0	—	3
SWEDEN						
Food workers	0	3	0%	0	—	0
Metal workers	0	5	0%	0	—	0
Transport workers	0	2	0%	0	—	0
Sweden Total	0	10	0%	0	—	0

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



# 'Fight for national rights of Palestinians is axis of class struggle in Israel and region'

'New International' provides important analysis of politics in Middle East

Printed below are excerpts from the article "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq" by Jack Barnes that appeared in *New International* No. 7.

This article was written in 1991 in response to the U.S.-organized war in the Persian Gulf earlier that year. In August 1990, Washington launched an air, sea, and ground blockade of Iraq. This was followed by a massive six-week bombardment beginning Jan. 16, 1991, and a 100-hour invasion of the country at the end of February.

**"The Gulf war widened the divergence between the foreign policy interests of the U.S. and Israeli ruling classes ..."**

An economic embargo of Iraq continues to this day, depriving millions of working people there of food, medicines, agricultural supplies, and other vital necessities.

Militant readers will find these excerpts on Israel and the Palestinian struggle useful in understanding developments unfolding in the Middle East today.

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A collateral objective of the war drive was putting Washington in a stronger position to force a "solution" to the Palestinian national question. For the U.S. rulers, the realization of this goal — somehow eliminating the roots of the *intifada*,<sup>1</sup> without igniting a broader revolutionary upheaval — is intertwined with progress toward their long-standing aim of establishing stable, profitable relations with the major capitalist regimes in the region, whose populations are predominantly Arab. These regimes, which stretch from the Atlantic coast of northern Africa to the Arab-Persian Gulf, rule over populations many, many times the size of Israel's and over lands that contain strategic supplies of oil and other major sources of natural wealth. Wash-

1 The *intifada* is the sustained uprising — including protests, strikes, rallies, and resistance to land confiscations — begun in December 1987 by Palestinians and their supporters in Israel and in other Arab territories occupied by Israel following the June 1967 war.

ington aims to assert more strongly than ever its position as the predominant imperialist power in its relations with these regimes.

From the early 1960s, the U.S. government increasingly supplied Israel with modern military equipment and had to rely on it as a bastion to defend imperialist interests in the Middle East. During the mid- to late 1950s, an upswing in worker and peasant struggles for national sovereignty and land throughout the region gave rise to bourgeois regimes in a number of countries that, from the standpoint of imperialism, were too weak and unreliable to play this role. With the consolidation over the past quarter century of larger and stronger capitalist classes, and a growing middle class, however, Washington grabbed the chance to use these bourgeois governments more effectively to promote its own interests. The military defeats dealt to these regimes by Israel in wars in 1967 and 1973 induced sections of their ruling classes to turn more sharply toward imperialism. The Egyptian rulers have led the way in this regard, recognizing the State of Israel following the 1978 Camp David Accords engineered during the James Carter administration.<sup>2</sup>

The U.S.-organized war in the Gulf widened the divergence between the foreign

2. In June 1967 the Israeli government invaded Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. By the time a cease-fire took effect after six days of fighting, Israeli forces occupied East Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip, and the Sinai Peninsula. Nearly 1,000 Israeli soldiers were killed and 4,500 wounded. Some 4,000 Arab combatants were killed and 6,000 wounded.

The 1973 war lasted from October 6, 1973, when Egyptian and Syrian forces attacked Israeli units occupying the Sinai and Golan Heights, until a cease-fire took effect on October 24. Contingents from Jordan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq also took part in the fighting. In the course of the war 2,800 Israelis were killed and 7,500 wounded. More than 8,000 Arab combatants were killed, 19,000 wounded, and 8,000 taken prisoner.

Accords between Egyptian president Anwar al-Sadat and Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin were signed under the auspices of U.S. president James Carter at the presidential resort at Camp David, Maryland, on September 17, 1978. Under terms of a subsequent peace treaty, signed in Washington March 26, 1979, Cairo extended formal diplomatic recognition to the Israeli state; Tel Aviv withdrew from the occupied Sinai Peninsula in 1982.



May 1989 protest in West Bank. Intifada has shown capacity of Palestinian people to fight for land and self-determination. Momentum of early years of uprising has largely been lost.

policy interests of the U.S. and Israeli ruling classes. The Israeli rulers come out losers from U.S. imperialism's strengthened alignment with the Egyptian, Saudi, and Syrian regimes, which joined in the military alliance against Baghdad. This weakens Israel's influence with Washington, its special place in the world imperialist system, and thus its leverage in wresting ever-increasing U.S. economic and military assistance and attempting to block such U.S. aid to regimes in the Arab countries.

This divergence between Washington and Tel Aviv is contrary to what most of the major media portrayed during the war as a new high point of cooperation. This is supposedly exemplified by the Israeli government's "agreement" not to send its war-

**"Within an imperialist framework there is no solution to the Palestinian question ..."**

planes against targets in Iraq in response to Baghdad's Scud missile attacks and Washington's subsequent dispatch of Patriot antimissile missile batteries to Israel. The truth, however, is that Tel Aviv never had any choice in the matter. The U.S. military command simply refused to give the Israeli air force the "friend or foe" codes that would have allowed Tel Aviv's bombers and fighter jets to enter Iraqi airspace without being shot down by — or shooting down — the U.S. aircraft that controlled those skies.

In fact, Washington humbled Tel Aviv during the Gulf war in order to block it from disrupting the U.S. rulers' foreign policy and military goals. Israel relies on its proven record as a garrison state: that it will respond militarily to any perceived threat, and respond tenfold to any attack on its territory. The Israeli regime, though, was forced by the U.S. government to take the hits from Baghdad's Scud missiles without responding. Although the Scuds are militarily insignificant, the inability to retaliate was another political humiliation for Tel Aviv.

The bitterness and frustration in Israeli ruling circles grew even more as it later became clear that Washington's much-touted Patriot missiles are a failure. They didn't destroy most warheads or prevent the Scuds from doing damage. The Patriots did nothing more than blow apart the highly inaccurate Scuds, scattering the warheads and other debris at random. Scud warheads came down and exploded on Israeli territory regardless, and parts of both the Scuds and Patriots did damage as well. (In fact, Israeli military evaluations insist that each Scud missile launched by Baghdad after the de-

ployment of the Patriots did more damage than those beforehand.)

While Washington's interests have diverged further from Tel Aviv's, however, this has not brought the U.S. rulers any closer to a "solution" to the Palestinian question, without which their efforts to establish stable relations with bourgeois regimes in the Middle East are continually disrupted. Washington's biggest political obstacle in this regard is the irrepressible fight by the Palestinians for their national self-determination — above all the struggles of the Palestinians living inside the post-1967 borders of "Greater Israel." This remains an enormous problem for imperialism, no matter how much cooperation the U.S. government gets from Moscow, and no matter how many trips Secretary of State James Baker makes to the region, shuttling between Tel Aviv and the capital cities of Washington's allied regimes in various Arab countries.

Tel Aviv seized on Washington's war drive as cover to extend its garrison-state brutality against the Palestinian population in the West Bank, Gaza, southern Lebanon, and inside Israel itself. It imposed a round-the-clock curfew — virtual house arrest — on the Palestinian population, depriving hundreds of thousands of families of their livelihoods. Thousands of Palestinians were rounded up, beaten, and jailed. Israeli cops, troops, and rightist vigilantes murdered Palestinian fighters with greater impunity. Tel Aviv stepped up air raids on Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. Despite earlier pledges to Washington, the Israeli regime openly organized immigrants from the Soviet Union and other Jewish settlers to expand land takeovers in the West Bank and Gaza. If the Israelis can't fly the skies against the U.S. Air Force, they can still build settlements on stolen Arab land — for a while.

Within an imperialist framework, there is no solution to the Palestinian question. The fight for the national rights of the Palestinian people is the axis of the class struggle in Israel and throughout those areas that historically constituted Palestine. The Palestinian people continue to press forward the fight against their dispossession and earn solidarity from Arab peoples and conscious fighters among the oppressed and exploited around the world. The Palestinians have not been so dispersed geographically as to lose their national identity and cohesion.

Above all, so long as the Palestinians are not expelled en masse from Israel and the occupied territories, every step forward in their struggle for national liberation is at the same time an *internal* social and political crisis for Tel Aviv. Moreover, every move by Tel Aviv to incorporate the occupied territories into a permanent "Greater Israel"

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guarantees intensified resistance, including among the Palestinians inside Israel itself, thereby deepening its internal crisis. In addition to some 3.5 million Jews, 2.5 million Palestinians are currently living under Israeli rule: 800,000 inside the pre-1967 borders, and 1.7 million on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip.

Palestinian national self-determination is irreconcilable with the class interests of the Israeli ruling class. The bourgeois regimes in the surrounding Arab countries, while claiming to speak on behalf of their "brothers" the Palestinians, have repeatedly shed Palestinian blood to preserve their own class power and state privileges. Washington is pressuring more of these governments to follow in the footsteps of Cairo by establishing diplomatic relations with Israel, and some may do so. Nonetheless, these capitalist regimes must take into account the potentially destabilizing political consequences at home among the Arab and other oppressed peoples — who strongly identify with the Palestinian struggle and who, along with working people the world over, are the only reliable ally of the Palestinians.

The nearly four-year-long intifada on the West Bank and Gaza Strip has reaffirmed that the Palestinians will not stop fighting until they have won their struggle for land and national self-determination. That's why Washington is no closer after the Gulf war than it was beforehand to finding a way around this dilemma. The U.S. rulers urge Tel Aviv to trade "land for peace." But the response by the Israeli rulers in deeds outweighs any diplomatic words. Tel Aviv acts on the conviction that only the peace of the grave will still the Palestinians' struggle for land.

\* \* \*

The Palestinians are among the biggest victims of the fakery of the bourgeois governments in the region, all of which falsely claim to speak and act in their interests. These blows were dealt to the Palestinians not just by the treacherous Egyptian, Syrian, and Saudi regimes — or by the desperate King Hussein of Jordan, who will turn his guns on the Palestinians again, if he finds it expedient, just as he did in September 1970.<sup>3</sup> No less damage was done by the reactionary demagoguery of Baghdad, which postured as the champion of the Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim peoples, while in practice it sapped their capacity for anti-imperialist struggle. Baghdad cynically called for "linkage" of Iraq's partial withdrawal from Kuwait with the Palestinians' demands for national self-determination.

The leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization also did great harm to the Palestinian struggle by endorsing this demagogic, after-the-fact linkage. This tailing after Baghdad left PLO leaders politically disarmed to explain the *real linkage* that does exist with the Palestinian struggle; the pressing need for *action* in solidarity with Iraq in the face of imperialist assault; the reactionary character of Baghdad's brutal invasion of Kuwait; and the fight against imperialism throughout the region and the world.

The failure of the PLO to chart such a revolutionary course is a reflection of its growing bourgeoisification. This evolution was *revealed* more clearly by the U.S. aggression in the Gulf, but it was not *caused* by the war. The political retreat by the central PLO leadership has been under way for some time.

A political toll has been taken over the past ten or fifteen years by the continued dispersion of the Palestinian people. A whole layer of Palestinian youth have grown up outside the historic lands of Palestine. A PLO apparatus has been built up throughout

countries in the Middle East and North Africa hosted and financed by the bourgeois regimes in the region. A few factions of the PLO have become willing tools in the hands of these governments. The blows dealt to the PLO forces in Lebanon over the past decade by the Israeli regime, by the Syrian regime, and by the various Lebanese bourgeois political forces — these have had an additional disorienting and demoralizing impact on layers of the leadership, turning their eyes further away from the ranks of the Palestinian masses inside and outside Israel. The gap has grown between the PLO apparatus and the young Palestinian fighters inside the borders of "Greater Israel," where the liberation fight has been centered more and more.

But this is not a finished process. The PLO remains a revolutionary-nationalist movement with a predominantly petty-bourgeois leadership. The outcome of the PLO's political evolution remains intertwined with the living struggle of the Palestinian people, who have not been cowed or defeated. More of the leadership of the Palestinian movement has shifted to the occupied West Bank, to Gaza, to Jerusalem, and to inside Israel's pre-1967 borders — especially since the beginning of the intifada more than three years ago. More of the leadership is being taken by those who

are pressing forward the fight for land, for equality, for national self-determination, for a fully sovereign Palestinian state, and who in doing so are helping to change the world.

Some Palestinian leaders draw important political lessons from the harm done to their struggle by the demagoguery of the Saddam

## “The gap has grown between the PLO apparatus and the young Palestinian fighters...”

Hussein regime. One example can be found in an interview with Hanan Ashrawi run in the May 3, 1991, issue of the *Militant*. Ashrawi was part of a delegation of Palestinian leaders who met with Secretary of State James Baker when he was in East Jerusalem in March and again in April. She teaches on the West Bank at Bir Zeit University (when the Israeli army does not have it shut down). She gave a phone interview to two *Militant* reporters, Argiris Malapanis and Derek Bracey, April 9 from Ramallah on the West Bank.



PLO chairman Yassir Arafat with Iraqi president Saddam Hussein. PLO leadership dealt a serious blow to Palestinians' demand for self-determination by allowing Baghdad to link that struggle with the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

## ‘New International’ now available in Swedish

BY ANITA ÖSTLING

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Volunteers here have just completed work on a Swedish-language edition of *New International*.

The new volume, *Ny International* no. 1, will include, among others, the articles "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's assault on Iraq," and "1945: When U.S. troops said 'No!'" The latter is about the "Bring us home" movement by U.S. troops in Asia and Europe at the end of World War II. The magazine also includes a section titled "Communism, the working class, and anti-imperialist struggle: Lessons from the Iran-Iraq war."

With the publication of the edition in Swedish, *New International* — a magazine of Marxist politics and theory — is now available to working people around the world in four languages. Eight volumes have been produced in English, four in French, and two in Spanish.

The project of producing *Ny International* was accomplished through the combined efforts of 20 volunteers who translated, copyedited, designed, proofread, stripped up, and collated the book.

The volunteers are union members on assembly lines in breweries, food processing plants, and auto factories; in mainte-

nance shops in rail and aerospace; in production of telecommunications and electrical installations; and in public services. A couple are unemployed. They spent hours after work, on weekends, and during vacation time to bring the enormous effort home.

A professional printer volunteered his services as well.

Work on the translation started in January. Major emphasis was placed on ensuring high quality including through consulting professional translators to help render words. For example, military terms were checked with the translation department at the Ministry of Defense.

Volunteers then organized to check the translations to guarantee a consistent style throughout the book.

To paste up the pages for filming and printing, a special light table was brought into the Pathfinder bookstore in Stockholm. After the text was printed, volunteers collated the piles of individual pages into books. It took mobilizations to assemble the 400 copies of the magazine.

Supporters in Sweden are organizing to get the new publication out as widely as possible. They have already taken on a goal of selling 50 copies during the *Militant* circulation campaign. Commenting on the tremendous effort that went into pro-

Ashrawi responded to the statement by some PLO supporters that the confrontation between Baghdad and Washington in the Gulf put a world spotlight on the Palestinian struggle and led to gains for their fight for international recognition. "It's not a question of gains," she said. "There were no gains [from the Gulf war]. The Palestinian question was moved to the forefront of the international agenda as a result of the intifada, which is the Palestinian human voice of resistance, as you know. Popular resistance."

She continued:

It is the unfortunate fate of the Palestinian issue to be manipulated and used by the Arab leaderships historically for their own ends. You see, it is an acid test, a source of credibility. It is part of the "credentials" of any Arab leader. And most Arab leaders have succeeded in oppressing their own people, using the pretext of a national cause, which is the Palestinian cause. They have manipulated us for their own ends, whether economic, political, regional, or international.

Pointing to the popular support for Saddam Hussein that did build up among many Palestinians in late 1990 and early 1991, Ashrawi continued:

In a way, it was a regression to a messianic approach. Instead of placing your faith in the power of your own people and the determination of the popular movement, you started to place your faith in an individual, which is against the intifada ethos. The intifada, the Palestinians, and the PLO had succeeded in removing the Palestinian cause from Arab patronage and manipulation, and placed it on its own terms within Palestinian hands and under Palestinian sovereignty. We speak for ourselves.

Saddam Hussein's pro-PLO, pan-Arab, and pan-Islamic rhetoric and demagoguery dealt a blow to each of the struggles by the Palestinian, Arab, Islamic, and other peoples of the region oppressed by imperialism. Each of those fights was harmed, not aided, by being linked by Hussein to his expansionist annexation of Kuwait — a move that gave imperialism a golden opportunity to intervene against the peoples of the region in a way it had not been able to do for decades. Far from popularizing or mounting support for any of those causes, Hussein's reactionary posturing disoriented and demobilized the toilers, setting back a common struggle against the oppressors and exploiters at home and abroad.

ducing the book, one volunteer said, "The end result is something to place with pride in the hands of workers, farmers, and youth."



Publication of Swedish-language *New International* means more fighters can read magazine's working-class analysis.

3. In September 1970, King Hussein's army, with the support of Tel Aviv and Washington, launched an all-out attack on Palestinian refugee camps and communities in Jordan, aiming to blunt the growing militancy of the Palestinian freedom fighters and maintain stable relations with Israel. More than eight thousand Palestinians were killed in the assault, a massacre that has become known as "Black September."



# Palestinians weigh accord with Israel

Continued from front page

rallies of tens of thousands of jubilant Palestinians who have poured repeatedly into the streets of Gaza over the past week to celebrate the signing of the Israeli-PLO accord. The Palestinian flag now flies on practically every rooftop, including on shacks in the middle of citrus and vegetable farms and on the beach, in this narrow strip of land by the Mediterranean Sea, barely 5 miles wide and 26 miles long.

Opponents of the accord have organized sizable protests as well. Ten thousand people turned out for a rally September 18 called by the Palestinian group Hamas to denounce the agreement. "Gaza-Jericho — it's a scandal," a slogan that rhymes in Arabic, was the most popular chant. Only a handful of Palestinians, however, heeded a call by Hamas to fly black flags instead of the Palestinian banner after the accord was signed.

Hamas has won support from many Palestinian youth in the occupied territories with its militant language and promises to return all land stolen from the Palestinians since the 1947 partition of the region. At the same time it advances a program that calls for the expulsion of Jews from a future Palestine, advocates second-class status for women "according to Islamic law," and defends capitalism.

Hamas and PLO inmates in Israeli jails issued a statement saying the two rivals have agreed on a "code of honor" banning inter-Palestinian violence to express disagreements over the Israel-PLO accord. "We are calling on our people to avoid any clashes," said Mohammed Nazzal, the Hamas representative in Jordan, where the movement has its main political headquarters.

The pro-accord Political Guidance Committee in Gaza, which is dominated by Fatah, the largest group in the PLO, issued a leaflet September 20 calling for an end to celebrations. "Ten days of celebration is enough," it said. "There is work to be done."

On the evening of September 21,

masked gunmen shot dead Mohammed Sha'aban, a well-known lawyer in Gaza and a Fatah activist. He was murdered as he was driving home from a meeting to support the accord. PLO spokespeople, however, denied this was a political killing.

## Gaza Union of Industrialists

Several Palestinian factory owners, among the staunchest supporters of the accord, also expressed the view that it is time to focus on putting together a new Palestinian administration in Gaza. "We expect the political and economic situation will stabilize," said Omar Saraj, who owns a construction firm in Canada. "It is finally time to rebuild the place and live in better conditions. Much is needed for infrastructure — sewage, roads, telecommunications, potable water," he said in an interview at the office of the Union of Industrialists in Gaza.

He pointed to a Palestinian police recruitment drive announced by the PLO the day before in the Arab daily *Al Quds* as a first step toward a Palestinian administration. Saraj said he expects to use his firm as part of the development projects he hopes will take place, including building a seaport and airport in Gaza.

He pointed to an international conference of "potential aid donors" called by U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher September 20 as the way forward in raising funds for such development projects.

Living conditions for the big majority of Gaza's 800,000 residents are desperate. Most Palestinians have come here as refugees, expelled from their villages in what since 1948 has been Israel. They live in camps run by the United Nations Work Relief Administration (UNWRA). Shacks, where several dozen people often crowd into two or three small rooms without potable water, crowd the dusty, unpaved streets. Garbage litters almost every unoccupied lot, since there is no organized waste collection. Unemployment officially stands at 42 percent. Those out of work



Bill Rayson

**Palestinian construction workers from occupied territories forced to work in Israel without legal status. The decision by Tel Aviv in March to close its borders with Gaza and the West Bank devastated the lives of tens of thousands of people.**

live on meager food portions handed out by the UNWRA.

There are about 1,700 Palestinian factory owners in Gaza. But only eight firms employ 50 or more workers, while 42 percent have 2-3 employees. Many of these industrial shops, which provide 12,000 jobs when they are in full production, are closed due to the inability to buy raw materials imported from Israel and inordinate taxes imposed by the occupation authorities. The manufacturing facilities in citrus packing, plastics, glass, and metal shops "are primitive," Saraj said.

Hashem Shawa, who sits on the board of the Gaza-based Bank of Palestine, said he hopes that as the Israeli-PLO accords are implemented, Palestinian capital from abroad will flow into Gaza and Jericho.

## Effects of Israeli occupation

Most other Palestinians, however, including supporters of the Israeli-PLO agreement, were not as optimistic as Saraj and Shawa about the future.

Abdull Ra'ouf Mahadi, an activist in the Trade Unions Federation, pointed out that Tel Aviv has maintained the military-imposed closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip since the signing of the accord. In effect, since March 31 the order has prohibited Palestinians living in the occupied territories from entering Israel without special permission. "This has devastated the lives of tens of thousands of Palestinians who used to work in Israel," said Mahadi.

More than 120,000 Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza worked in construction, agriculture, and other low-wage industrial jobs in Israel before the closure. "[Israeli prime minister Yitzhak] Rabin has only given permits to 18,000 from Gaza, over the protests of many Israeli employers," Mahadi added. Overall, work permits for Palestinians throughout the occupied territories do not exceed 50,000 now.

This morning [Israeli] soldiers arrested 50 workers for crossing the border to Israel "illegally," after their bosses invited them to go," Mahadi said. "Some of them were beaten in custody." Those who do get work permits cannot use public transportation. They are driven to their workplaces in employer-sponsored buses and are only permitted to stay inside the work site.

Besides work permits, Palestinians from Gaza must carry magnetic cards to enter Israel. Occupation authorities use these cards to check computerized records for anybody who has ever been detained. Arrest for any reason automatically excludes Palestinians from being able to enter Israel. To be eligible for the magnetic card, workers must produce income tax documents showing they have paid all taxes to the Israeli civil administration.

"It won't be easy to overcome these problems even if the Israeli troops withdraw," said Mahadi.

"I can't export any vegetables to Israel," said Rushdie Shamalah, pointing to another problem. Shamalah farms two acres of land just off the Mediterranean coast south of Gaza City. Much of the citrus, the biggest agricultural products here, as well as strawberries, bananas, and other fruits and vege-

tables are rotting in the fields because of the closure of the occupied territories, Shamalah said. "This has destroyed the lives of many farmers."

"I hope the agreement will bring peace in the Middle East," he added.

"After six years of *intifada*, we need peace. We need our freedom to move around without harassment." As he watered rows of cucumbers, Shamalah pointed to a few Palestinian families swimming or relaxing on the beach. "This is new," he said. "Maybe it's a sign of returning to a more normal life."

## Passing headache to PLO

These devastating social and economic conditions and the continued repression by Israeli authorities sparked the more-than-five-year uprising — called the *intifada* — by youth and other Palestinians against the Israeli occupation. This rebellion against Israeli rule has been most consistent in Gaza.

"In a way, Israel is trying to pass its headache over to the PLO," said Haidar Abdel Shafi in an interview. Shafi is the head of the Red Crescent in Gaza and one of the negotiators in the Palestinian team that has taken part in 41 rounds of talks with the Israeli government.

He added that the *intifada* is at a low point. "The continuous relapsing of the Palestinian struggle is not caused only by external aggressions but is also a result of underestimating our own internal potential, as well as our constant dependence on external support," he said. "Israel doesn't want to keep Gaza or Jericho," commented Shafi, who opposes the accord. "But at the same time there is a contradiction. The recognition of the PLO, which is the voice of most Palestinians, is positive, is a step forward." He said future negotiations can register other gains only "if the struggle continues."

## Funds needed to cover special reporting trip

Beginning in this issue, the *Militant* will feature coverage from a special reporting trip to the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Israel. Managing Editor Argiris Malapanis and Alan Harris, a *Militant* reporter from Britain, are providing on-the-scene coverage of the discussions and debates unfolding among working people and others in the region over the Israeli-PLO accords. In addition, their articles will offer readers accurate reports on social and economic conditions in Israel and the occupied territories, labor struggles there, and other political developments in the region.

Such trips are expensive, and are only possible through contributions from our readers. Donations to help defray the cost of this important trip should be earmarked "Middle East trip" and sent to the *Militant*, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

# Israeli parliament debates pact on West Bank, Gaza

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS AND ALAN HARRIS

JERUSALEM—Deputies to the Israeli parliament are debating the accord between the government and the Palestine Liberation Organization that was signed by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in Washington, D.C., September 13.

"For 100 years we dreamed of peace," Rabin told the deputies. "This is our chance."

The day before the debate opened, Israeli planes and artillery had resumed the bombing of several villages in southern Lebanon. Tel Aviv claims its troops were attacked first.

Israeli big business has been almost unanimous in its support for the accord. When the news first hit the wires, the Tel Aviv stock exchange soared to unprecedented heights and Israel's 18 most prominent industrialists took out giant advertisements congratulating the government. Israeli capitalists have repeatedly urged the government to strike a deal. The Israeli Manufacturer's Association and the Chamber of Commerce have maintained an ongoing dialogue with their Palestinian counterparts.

Rabin and other government spokespeople argue that granting limited self-rule to Palestinians in parts of the occupied territories is a "reversible experiment," a test in areas — Gaza and Jericho — that few among the Israeli ruling class would be sorry to see lost.

## Opposition to accords

There are significant numbers of people in Israel who are opposed to the accord, however. As the debate opened in parliament September 21, thousands gathered in protest. Israel Radio put the crowd at "tens of thousands," while organizers said it reached 150,000.

The biggest ovation at that rally was given to Likud party deputy Ariel Sharon, who was housing minister before Rabin's Labor Party won last year's election. Sharon called on the crowd to oppose "within the framework of the law the gangs of Arabs trying to disturb traffic on the roads."

He was referring to the many celebrations of Palestinians in the streets of Jerusalem following the signing of the accord.

Former member of parliament Elyakim Haetzni called on the demonstrators to disobey orders from any Palestinian police force that is set up in the occupied territories. He argued that Israeli soldiers and police should ignore any orders by the government to uproot settlements. "This government is not my government; Rabin is not my prime minister," he said.

Master of ceremonies Zvi Heudel, who is head of the Gaza Coast regional council, distanced rally organizers from Haetzni's comments. Soldiers should obey all orders, he cautioned.

Israeli peace activists have organized demonstrations in front of the home of Rabbi Ovadian Yosef, who heads the religious party Shas. His organization, with six members in parliament, has threatened to vote against the accord.

"The agreement is the best we can get at this point," Adam Keller of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace said at one rally. "We had almost lost all hope, especially after the bombing of South Lebanon in July. We were demonstrating against the government because they were like war criminals. ... Now we are its critical supporters."

Emboldened by the ruling class support, Rabin has called the vote on the accord with the PLO "a vote of confidence" in his government.



# Pathfinder titles are well received during book fair in Sweden

BY INGE HINNEMO

Pathfinder books were well received at the September 9-12 book fair attended by 90,000 people in Gothenburg, Sweden. The Pathfinder booth was busy most of the time, with two or three discussions taking place simultaneously as visitors pored over the various titles on display.

The Gothenburg book fair is a broad cultural event where authors, journalists, and other well-known personalities make speeches, hold seminars, and take part in debates.

An attractive display on Pathfinder's forthcoming book *Nelson Mandela Speaks: Forging a Democratic, Nonracial South Africa* was featured at the booth. Also available for the first time were sample copies of *Ny International*, which contains the Swedish-language translation of *New Internationalist* no. 7 with the feature article "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq" by Jack Barnes.

Pathfinder's new title *To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920 — First Congress of the Peoples of the East* together with *The Truth about Yugoslavia: Why Working People Should Oppose Intervention* were also the topics of much discussion among people stopping by the table.

A talk in a "speakers' corner" by Pathfinder representative Birgitta Isacson on the development of the South African revolution drew 15-20 people, mostly youth. At another speak-out, Catharina Tirsén from Pathfinder spoke to almost 50 people about "The Opening Guns of World War III."

Ten ministers who are women visited the Pathfinder booth over the course of the four-day book fair. They were especially attracted

to the books by Evelyn Reed on women's history and the struggle for women's liberation. While the book fair was taking place, 47 female ministers from the Nordic countries as well as Estonia and Latvia were in town for a conference to celebrate the inauguration of the first bishop in Gothenburg to support the right of women to be ministers.

Several authors from South Africa and Namibia who came by the booth were particularly interested in such Pathfinder titles as *Thomas Sankara Speaks*, various books by Malcolm X, and *Art and Revolution* by Leon Trotsky. An Australian pilot now employed by the Swedish airline Swedair said that he had seen the book *The Eastern Airlines Strike* in a union library in Sydney.

A high school student who was writing a thesis on Malcolm X had great difficulty choosing between titles by Malcolm X, *Leon Trotsky on Black Nationalism and Self-determination*, and *The Struggle is My Life* by Nelson Mandela.

A food worker from Gothenburg who had visited the Pathfinder booth last year after buying "The Opening Guns of World War III" in English in a local bookstore returned to the booth twice this year for discussions. He bought *Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom* and *Israel: A Colonial Settler-State*.

All totaled, more than \$625 worth of books were sold. Ten copies of *Ny International* were ordered and five were prepaid. The booth was staffed by three Pathfinder representatives from Stockholm, one Pathfinder supporter from Manchester, England, and a supporter from Malmo in southern Sweden. An Iranian living in Gothenburg visited the booth one day, then returned to help staff it for several hours during the next two days.



Pathfinder booth at 1992 Gothenburg book fair

## Special sale on books by Marx, Engels extended to November 1

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

Pathfinder's special sale of titles by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the founders of scientific socialism, has been such a success that it will be extended through November 1. The sale offers a 33 percent discount on all titles by Marx and Engels published or distributed by Pathfinder.

The offer is available only to members of the Pathfinder Readers Club. You can join for \$10 for one year at any Pathfinder bookstore (see list on page 12) or by mail. Those who purchase \$100 or more in the sale will receive a one-year extension of their membership free.

Collections of articles, letters, and polemics by Marx and Engels in English, Spanish, and French have been the main feature of the sale.

These books are an excellent starting point for beginning a Marxist education. The topics covered range from the origins of private property to a discussion of strategy for the trade unions; from the revolu-

tions of 1848 in Europe to the fight for women's equality.

Most of these books were originally produced in the former Soviet Union. They are now out of print and are getting harder and harder to find. The privileged bureaucrats in Russia — now that they have given up any pretense of socialism — no longer have the slightest interest in publishing them.

Over the last year Pathfinder has searched around the world for the remaining supplies of these books so that they can be sold to people who want to read them. The numbers will be surprising to some.

"We don't have complete records yet," says Pathfinder sales director Rich Stuart, "but it's clear that this has been the biggest sale of titles by Marx and Engels in the history of Pathfinder."

Orders from readers from Brussels, Belgium, to Birmingham, Alabama, have totaled "\$10,000 or more," Stuart reports.

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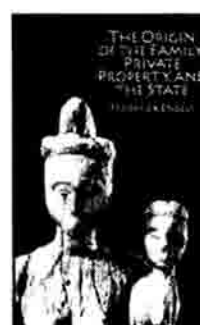
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**Fiji: An Eyewitness Report.** Speaker: Brendan Gleeson. Sat., Oct. 16, 7 p.m. 199 High St. Tel: (3) 656-055.

# California unionist wins support

The following article entitled "Friends raise funds for Socialist Navy employee" appeared in the September 7-9, 1993, edition of the *Alameda Journal*.

Supporters of a local Navy worker who has been accused of violating a pre-World War II federal statute, because he ran for a seat on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1992, raised \$1,900 for his legal fund at a barbecue Sept. 4.

Milton Chee, a sheet metal worker at the Alameda Naval Aviation Depot, is being investigated for violating the 1939 Hatch Act by running for supervisor. If convicted, Chee could be fired.

The Hatch Act prohibits employees from running for partisan office or from taking a leading role in campaigns. The act outlaws the use of a federal office or position toward political ends.

Chee, a member of the Socialist Workers Party, was interviewed by federal investigators on July 19.

If the Office of Special Counsel decides to charge Chee, he will go before the Merit System Protection Board, which will hold an administrative hearing. If convicted, he may appeal before an administrative law judge.

Chee contends that the reason he is being investigated is because he is a Socialist working in a war industry who disagrees with the U.S. government over such things as the Persian Gulf War. He also contends that he is just a target in a broader attack on the rights of government employees to express themselves politically.

According to Chee, the entire episode began a week before last year's November election when a Naval Aviation Depot supervisor accused him of distributing pamphlets for his campaign at Alameda Naval Air Station. Base regulations prohibit the distribution of politically oriented literature on the base.

Chee contends he was not distributing campaign literature, which is considered contraband, the same way that weapons and drugs paraphernalia are. Even if the Office of Special Counsel does not charge him under

the Hatch Act, base officials could still take action against him for violating that rule.

Chee said he did not realize it at the time, but those same officials turned him in to the Office of Special Counsel.

Those interested in donating to the legal defense fund for Chee should call James Gotesky at (415) 282-6255 or send donations directly to David S. Handsheer, Attorney at Law, 3284 23rd Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94110.

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## Iran, Azerbaijan, and the Central Asian Republics

Celebrate publication of  
**TO SEE THE DAWN**

<p><b>SATURDAY</b> Presentation, slideshow on political developments in Iran, Azerbaijan, and the Central Asian republics by Ma'mud Shirvani, who returned from the region. Shirvani is a coauthor of the introduction to the Pathfinder book <i>To See the Dawn</i>, the documentary record of the First Congress of the Peoples of the East, held in Baku, Azerbaijan, in September 1920.</p> <p><b>SUNDAY</b> Two classes: The Baku Congress: Historic Step in Forging International Unity Politics Today in Iran, Azerbaijan, and the Central Asian Republics: The Lessons of Baku</p>	<p><b>OCTOBER 2-3 — MONTREAL, QUEBEC</b></p> <p><b>OCTOBER 9-10 — NEWARK, NEW JERSEY</b></p> <p><b>OCTOBER 16-17 — TWIN CITIES, MINNESOTA</b></p> <p><b>OCTOBER 23-24 — SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH</b></p>
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For information on time and location of presentations and classes in each city, call Pathfinder bookstores listed below.

# Auto pact calls for concessions

Continued from front page  
other unspecified purposes.

Skyrocketing health-care costs have made opposition to copayments a central issue for many UAW members.

Under the proposed agreement, auto workers will receive a 3 percent wage increase in the first year. In lieu of wage increases in the two remaining years, the contract calls for 3 percent lump-sum payments, a provision that erodes wages.

In the first year of the contract, Ford's 83,000 retired UAW members will get pension payment increases of \$1 a month multiplied by the number of years they worked for Ford. A lump sum of \$570 will be paid in the second and third years instead of pension increases.

To sweeten the bitter pill, Ford has offered workers two additional paid days off each year. Further details on the contract have not yet been reported.

## Mixed reactions among auto workers

Reactions among UAW members at Ford are mixed. Many expected to face deeper concessions. "From what I can tell, it's not bad," said a metal finisher with five years' seniority at the Ford Michigan truck plant in Wayne. "There would have been a lot of 'no' votes if new hires would not have eventually made full wages. Since they will, I think it will pass."

"I think the new-hire wage will cause dissension in the plant," Todd Trockley told the *Militant*. Trockley is an assembly line worker at the Ford plant in Avon Lake, Ohio, who says he will vote against the proposed contract.

Ed Sword, a Ford worker, said it was difficult to make an informed comment on the new agreement. But "it seems the UAW is giving up some previous gains and the company is expecting more from the work force," he said.

"I intend to vote against the contract," said Amy Husk Sanchez, another Avon Lake worker. "The new wage tier further divides our union and the givebacks are serious threats to health-care benefits and wages."

Negotiations are continuing between the UAW and the other two big U.S. automakers, Chrysler Corp. and General Motor Corp. (GM). Chrysler is expected to follow the pattern set in the proposed agreement with Ford.

GM, however, is expected to demand even deeper concessions than Ford. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the company is reeling from some \$17 billion in losses since 1990 as it lost ground to its competitors.

GM announced last year that it would attempt to cut 74,000 jobs and close 21 plants.

*Peter Thierjung is a member of UAW Local 538. John Sarge, a member of UAW Local 900 in Wayne, Michigan, contributed to this article.*

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**A God that kills with a smile?**  
— In Houston, Robert Drew wants his death sentence overturned



Harry Ring

because the execution order by Judge Charles Hearn included the judge's signature accompanied by a smiley face drawing. The good judge said he always signs his name that way as a symbol of his faith in God.

**Recheck those numbers** — "A

recent survey found Puerto Ricans find their motivation to go to the office in the morning lies primarily in the paycheck at the end of the week." — *The San Juan Star*.

**If you don't eat up the profit**  
— The disclosure that people work mainly for the money stemmed from a study of upper-level management folk. It also reported that the self-employed are happier. "When you work on your own," one exec explained, "even if it's selling shish kebabs on the beach, you're in control of the business, of the success, of the profit."

**No room for agnostics** — "At the very least, if we are to live within a market capitalist system, it is unsatisfactory that we should

have doubts about its moral foundations." — Britain's Lord Lawson.

**In fighting trim** — A third of Los Angeles residents have no medical insurance. Meanwhile, on average, 52 percent of regional hospital beds are empty, sparking slashes in staff and care. One expert says this is good preparation for health care "reform" because they already have adjusted to a competitive environment.

**Willie won't** — Before moving into the White House, Clinton said a major objective was to ensure that workers employed full time didn't live below the poverty line. Now it's explained that this can't be done without raising the minimum wage.

But what with all his other problems, "administration sources" explain, he won't be pushing for an increase until next year — at the earliest.

**Smelled like dead butts** — Despite vigorous arm-twisting by Mayor Richard Riordan, the Los Angeles City Council twice rejected a deal to sell a landmark library to Philip Morris and rent it back. Explained one council member: "Frankly, the risk of this transaction is... not being able to explain it to anybody in the city of Los Angeles."

**Remember, drink lots of water** — A California environmental group is suing 14 household plumbing manufacturers. They cite a find-

ing that faucets commonly leak hazardous levels of lead into tap water for years after being installed. The study found contamination from new faucets to be 150 times higher than state safety standards. A plumbing attorney said lead from faucets only occurs during the "early life" of the fixtures.

**Quarterly reminder** — When feasible, clippings for this column should be sent c/o Pathfinder Bookstore, 2546 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, Ca. 90006. And to each of our contributors, a quarterly, comradely thank you.

**Thought for the week** — "Everything important about life can be learned through sitcoms." — *The Cable Guide*.

## 'Rising Sun': Japan-bashing or good mystery?

BY PATTI HIYAMA

A debate has been raging even before its release about whether the movie *Rising Sun* is racist and anti-Japanese. The movie, based upon the best-selling book of the same name by Michael Crichton, has been described by some reviewers as engaging in Japan-bashing.

The plot of both the book and the film is a suspenseful murder mystery. Detectives uncover a combination of kinky sex, corporate cover-up, and corrupt politicians that attempt to link the murder of a young woman in Los Angeles to a Japanese corporation's efforts to buy a high-technology U.S. company.

The movie was picketed July 31, opening night, in New York City by members of the New York Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans Against "Rising Sun." The coalition included 20 Asian-American organizations, such as the Japanese American

and internationally, is in the midst of an ongoing crisis of overproduction combined with a falling rate of profit. International competition between the imperialist powers has intensified. Tokyo and Bonn are Washington's major competitors.

Trade wars inevitably lead to shooting wars, as happened in World Wars I and II when the major imperialist powers fought for control of valuable resources and markets. The rulers use racist hysteria to whip up nationalist, patriotic sentiment in order to mobilize working people to fight wars not in their interest.

The racism in the book is developed more subtly than in literature before World War II. The stereotyped Japanese characters — the corrupt, sinister gangster; the unscrupulous cold-blooded businessmen — become less than human as the story progresses. The Japanese become so foreign, so alien that they almost belong to a different species.

Connor, one of the detectives, says, "Behavior that seems sneaky and cowardly to Americans is just standard operating procedure to Japanese."

The ruthless Japanese businessman murdering the call girl to facilitate his company's takeover of a U.S. corporation becomes a metaphor for Japan's murder of the United States. The depersonalization of the Japanese makes them into a modern "yellow peril" that must be defeated.

### Scapegoating Japanese for the crisis

In the book Crichton's character, Senator Morton, gives a graphic picture of the crisis facing capitalism: "Real wages in the country are now at 1962 levels. The purchasing power of American workers is back where it was thirty-odd years ago. ... Think back to the fifties, when American workers could own a house, raise a family, and send the kids to college, all on a single paycheck," Morton says. "Now both parents work and most people still can't afford a house. The dollar buys less, everything is more expensive. People struggle just to hold on to what they have. They can't get ahead."

But, rather than blaming the economic system of capitalism for this ongoing depression, the author points a finger at Japanese corporations. He argues that "it's time for all of us to pull together."

Crichton makes a strong case for protectionism to give U.S. industry a competitive edge over Japanese industry.

But all of us do not share the same interests. What is good for General Motors is not good for working people. Corporations exist to make a profit. And the way they make a profit is on the backs of working people by speed-up, driving down wages, consolidation of jobs, and cutting entitlements like medical benefits and social security. Working people, on the other hand, are trying to live like human beings and maintain a decent standard of living. So in fact our interests are diametrically opposed to those of the corporations.

The book is a prowar polemic with the trappings of a thriller. It is pure propaganda reminiscent of the anti-Japanese literature produced during World War II — the last time U.S. capitalism needed to rally support in its fight against Japanese big business for raw materials and markets. The movie is not.

*Patti Iiyama is a member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 4-227 in Houston.*



Japan-bashing by the government and employers has often led to violence against Asian-Americans. Does *Rising Sun* promote racist, prowar stance against Japan?

## IN REVIEW

Citizens League (JACL), the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, and the Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence. They were protesting its racist depiction of Japanese. A debate about whether the movie really is racist has opened up since then in the pages of *Pacific Citizen*, the JACL newsweekly.

Some of the people who accuse the movie of racism have not seen it, but assume that it is the same as the book. The book is quite different from the film, however, and I recommend reserving judgment until seeing it. The debate over the character of the film ignores that the pro-imperialist, prowar content of the book is missing from the movie.

The book is racist in its depiction of the Japanese, interspersing crude polemic and "facts" against Japan with the thriller plot. The racism has a clear purpose: it justifies Washington's call to war against Japan in support of U.S. big business.

While the movie, directed by Philip Kaufman and starring Sean Connery and Wesley Snipes, has scenes depicting racism and some negative stereotyping of Japanese, it does not serve the same purpose. It is entertainment, not argument.

Although the movie contains some polemics against Japanese big business, propaganda for imperialist war is not even a secondary theme. By removing most of the political content, the xenophobic racism against the Japanese is toned down and everyone is cynically portrayed as corrupt — politicians, businessmen, even the heroes, who take bribes without blinking. The producer and director may have realized that they would not make as much money on a warmongering movie. So it is an entertaining, suspenseful, fast-paced thriller.

### Book a 'rallying cry' for war

The *New York Times* in reviewing the book *Rising Sun* compared it to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in terms of being "at its heart a rallying cry." It is a rallying cry for war, economic and ultimately military, against Japan.

It is no accident that this thinly disguised prowar polemic has gotten so much publicity and become so popular at this time. The capitalist system, both in the United States

## — 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



On the eve of the Olympic Games, scheduled to open Oct. 12 in Mexico City, civil strife in the nation's capital has flared into street fighting in a number of neighborhoods.

A Sept. 23 police attack on a demonstration near the National Polytechnic Institute led to an all-night battle between cops and students. At least three, and possibly 15, people were killed, and dozens, including cops, were injured. Henry Giniger, writing in the Sept 25 *New York Times* described this as "the bloodiest encounter since the wave of student agitation first swept over this capital two months ago."

According to Giniger's report, the students, most of whom were of high-school age, defended themselves against police gunfire with firearms. The battle raged for 12 hours and only ended after army detachments had been called to reinforce the police.

The cause of the current flare-up was a decision by the Diaz Ordaz government to use all the military force necessary to put an end to the student movement that has been building up since the end of July around the central slogan, "Free Mexico's Political Prisoners!"

On Sept. 18, thousands of troops, trucks, and armored cars moved onto the campus of the University of Mexico. The invasion was in flagrant violation of the Mexican constitution which guarantees campus autonomy. Rector Javier Barros Sierra at once denounced the military occupation as uncalled for and as an "excessive act of force." With the judiciousness proper to his office, however, he also denounced the striking students for using university buildings for "political purposes."

Strikes in solidarity with the Mexico City students were reported at schools in Monterrey, Cuernavaca, Chihuahua, Villa Her-

mosa, Culican and Merida. The government was said to have begun to put up road blocks to stop carloads of students on their way to make appeals for solidarity.



October 2, 1943

While the Allied leaders are not very much interested at the present time in committing themselves too definitely on the flood of post-war resolutions, plans and proposals which have been introduced in this country and Britain, they have already outlined the blueprint of "international machinery" for preserving capitalism in Europe and are busily at work implementing it. Food and "order" are the slogans under which this machinery will operate to prevent the peoples of Europe from democratically choosing socialist governments.

In Washington last week Secretary of State Hull announced the terms, already approved by the U.S., British, Soviet, and Chinese governments, for the establishment of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration which will handle the collection, transportation and distribution of food and other supplies for those areas in need of them.

While food is a powerful weapon in combating revolution in famine-stricken countries, it may not be able to turn the trick by itself. Also needed is force, that is, troops. That the Allied leaders are not overlooking this consideration was evidenced last week in a speech made in Britain by Sir Samuel Hoare, author of the infamous Hoare-Laval betrayal of Ethiopia and now British ambassador to Spain.

"Sir Samuel placed 'food and order' as the first needs of Europe. 'We are prepared in full cooperation with our great Allies to prevent famine by insuring the effective distribution of food supplies and to forestall anarchy by Allied garrisons at key points on the continent,' he said." (*N.Y. Times*, Sept. 21.)



## High stakes in coal miners' fight

The strike by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) against the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) faces big challenges. The more than four-month walkout now involves 18,000 miners in seven states.

There are high stakes involved. The miners are not just fighting off concessionary demands by the coal barons. The strike is about whether there will be a UMWA in the years to come.

For some years, as part of the worldwide effort of the capitalist class to shore up its sagging profit rates, the coal operators have engaged in a process known as double-breasting. As coal seams are mined out, or if the bosses decide to shift production, the owners open new mines under different company names and they open them non-union.

In 1988, the UMWA won agreements from the BCOA that any time a member company starts up a new mine, three out of five jobs will go to laid-off union workers. In direct violation of this pact, the operators have simply lied about who really owns new facilities, and avoided hiring union miners. In some cases, they have openly ignored the provisions of the contract without hiding behind a new name.

The bosses' goal — the crippling of the UMWA — is what the ranks of the mine workers are determined to resist. The fate of millions of workers will be touched by the outcome. This includes nonunion miners, who know that if the UMWA is defeated the coal bosses will come after their wages and benefits with a vengeance. Tens of thousands of workers in the United States look to the miners as an example. The UMWA is the only national union that has fought and defied the employers' profit-hungry demands for major concessions over the past 15 years.

The big-business press has honored its part of the bargain with the coal companies by imposing a virtual blackout on the strike. Millions of workers, union and nonunion, know nothing of this battle.

Struck companies are hard hit. According to London's *Financial Times*, the strike is costing Peabody Coal Co. about \$1 million a day. But the loss in overall production

is being made up for by mines that aren't struck — both nonunion and union — many of which are working six days a week.

In the age-old tradition of the bosses, the coal companies are attempting to frame the union for violence on the picket line. They are aided by their allies — the courts and cops of the capitalist class. A West Virginia grand jury is at this moment cooking up charges against workers at the Arch Ruffner mine there for the shooting of a contractor.

The companies spend piles of money on provocative full-page ads in coalfield newspapers aimed at demoralizing miners by blaming strike activity for the shrinkage in union membership and "inviting" miners to come back to work. Some of these ads are not run in mining areas, but in towns where steelworkers, auto workers, and working farmers predominate. These are aimed at undercutting solidarity for the miners' fight.

Above all, the biggest fact weighing in on the miners is that the class struggle in the United States and worldwide is at a low point right now. When UMWA members won a strike victory against Pittston Coal Co. in 1990, the links built up between the miners and strikers battling Eastern Airlines played no small part in their success. In addition, thousands of workers from around the country poured into the miners' Camp Solidarity to lend their fighting energies to that struggle.

UMWA members are determined. But now more than ever the strike needs help — the active involvement of the entire labor movement, working farmers, students, and democratic-minded people in the United States and internationally.

Union locals in every city can aid this battle. Now is the time for workers, students, and other supporters of the strike to head down to the coalfields to visit the picket lines. Inviting UMWA strikers to your city for a solidarity tour can open new doors for the miners and bring to bear an important weapon — the active solidarity of working people across the country.

Now is the time to act and join in the fight against the operators' union-busting drive.

## Protest occupation of Somalia

The recent demonstration in Toronto demanding an end to the U.S. and UN military intervention in Somalia is exactly what's needed.

Protesters at the Toronto action expressed the sentiment of a growing number of working people living in the United States, Canada, and other countries — as well as in Somalia — as they shouted, "Get out of Somalia! We don't need your help! Stop bombing hospitals! Go home!"

Increasingly, the massacres of Somali men, women, and children by U.S. forces lead to comparisons with atrocities committed by Washington during the Vietnam War.

The Somalia intervention exposes the real face of U.S. foreign policy, exploding the myth that Washington's military intervention there or anywhere else has anything whatsoever to do with humanitarian objectives.

In the aftermath of the killing of more than 100 people and the wounding of countless others September 9 when U.S. helicopter gunships fired onto the streets of Mogadishu, Washington has continued its assault. U.S.

troops persist in carrying out searches and arbitrary arrests of Somalis in their homes and on the streets. And UN forces continue to fire mortar shells right into the area of Somalia's largest hospital. The latest weapons barrage there wounded 34 civilians. UN officials first denied they had fired these shells, and then later changed their story.

U.S. president Bill Clinton has made clear that he plans more of the same. In a recent meeting with Italian prime minister Carlo Ciampi he called for stepping up U.S. intervention rather than withdrawing in the face of continuing conflict.

More protests to force an end to Washington's criminal intervention are needed. The power of the labor movement should be brought into this fight. Unionists can take the lead in working with Somali organizations to plan such demonstrations in the coming weeks.

Working people and all supporters of social justice need to continue taking to the streets demanding an end to the occupation of Somalia now!

## Join effort to sell socialist press!

From October 2-9, *Militant* supporters will organize a special target week that can give the current 10-week international subscription drive a big boost.

The *Militant* invites all its readers to participate in this effort. Introduce a friend or coworker to the paper. Join up with other distributors on teams organized every day out of the Pathfinder bookstores listed on page 12. Or order a small bundle and some subscription blanks on your own.

From its eyewitness coverage of events in Israel and the occupied territories to weekly news articles about the unfolding democratic revolution in South Africa to analysis of the crisis in Russia, the *Militant* is unique. As the world capitalist disorder accelerates, youth and working-class fighters need the news and political analysis presented in the pages of the socialist paper each week to help them chart a fighting road forward.

Through visits to campuses, door-to-door discussions in working-class communities, and setting up attractive literature tables at political events, supporters will be seeking to maximize the number of subscriptions sold during the eight days.

The goal is to place the international drive, which has been behind for the first three weeks of the sales campaign, back on schedule. A successful target week can also help create the campaign atmosphere needed to keep the drive on schedule for the remaining five weeks.

During this special effort and throughout the rest of the circulation drive, *Militant* supporters will be fielding sales teams to coal mining areas. The labor news reported each week in the *Militant* will be particularly attractive to

striking members of the United Mine Workers of America. And our worker-correspondents participating in these teams will help expand the paper's ongoing coverage of this important labor battle.

The events unfolding in the Mideast today make *New Internationalist* particularly valuable. Readers will want to make a special effort to introduce new subscribers and others to the article "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq," which appears in *New Internationalist* No. 7. As supporters can see from the excerpt printed in the *Militant* this week, this article provides a valuable analysis of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination.

"Opening Guns of World War III," along with other articles from *New Internationalist* no. 7, are now available in Swedish, as well as Spanish and French.

Special attention needs to be paid to selling subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial* and copies of *New Internationalist*. Sales of both of these publications have fallen even further behind schedule during the early weeks of the circulation campaign. *Perspectiva Mundial* provides to the growing numbers of Spanish-speaking workers in the United States and around the world a socialist, working-class perspective unavailable in any other Spanish-language publication. The October issue of *Perspectiva Mundial* will be shipped to distributors on September 30. Supporters should consider organizing some special sales teams during the target week to more widely distribute the magazine.

The efforts of every *Militant* supporter will ensure that the target week is a success.

## Operation Rescue steps up attacks on Iowa activists

BY ANGEL LARISCY  
AND MELANIE WILLIAMS

DES MOINES, Iowa — The right-wing antiabortion group Operation Rescue (OR) has stepped up attacks against defenders of women's right to choose abortion here. A special target of their efforts is Dr. Herbert Remer.

On September 4, Remer was charged with "assault causing injury" after he defended himself from an attack by Operation Rescue's communication director, David Shedlock.

Remer is one of the few doctors in central Iowa willing to provide abortions and the only one to perform them in the second trimester of a pregnancy. Des Moines is one of only three cities in Iowa where a woman can get an abortion.

Remer explained that he had been attempting to photograph pickets outside his Windsor Heights clinic when Shedlock hit him with a sign. "I didn't have a sign to defend myself," the doctor said, "so I used my fist. That's all I had."

When police arrived, they arrested Remer and charged him with assault. No charges were brought against Shedlock.

"They said it didn't matter that he hit me first," the doctor said of the cops' justification for their actions. "They said I was being arrested because I hit harder. Who can actually measure that? I was only protecting myself."

Shedlock's harassment of Remer and intimidation of abortion rights supporters is well known in the area. Over the past year he has followed the doctor's children; picketed his clinic, home, and synagogue; and waited for him at the airport when he returned from vacation. His clinic staff has been similarly threatened.

Most recently, Remer's trash was taken from outside his house. It was found in Operation Rescue director Judy Maki's car.

Operation Rescue members have developed a close relationship with police in the area. The September 10 *Des Moines Register* reports that the antiabortion forces supply local cops with photographs and videos when requested and keep a cellular phone on hand to contact the police.

In the week following Remer's arrest, two other abortion rights activists were arrested on charges of simple assault and criminal mischief outside of Remer's clinic. Both of them became involved in verbal exchanges with Shedlock, who says they damaged OR's signs.

### Harassment of Pathfinder bookstore

While Dr. Remer is the focal point of Operation Rescue's attacks, other abortion rights activists in Des Moines also report recent harassment.

Remer was a panelist at an August 22 Militant Labor Forum titled "Defending Abortion Rights, Clinic by Clinic" at the Pathfinder bookstore. Six Operation Rescue members attempted to disrupt the meeting with pickets while taking pictures and yelling epithets. The event was successful despite their efforts.

On two separate occasions in the week following the forum, Shedlock accosted people leaving the bookstore, screaming, "Murderer." He has been seen copying down license plate numbers near the store as well.

These attacks coincide with a discussion and debate in Iowa City, two hours east of Des Moines, over the attempted murder in August of George Tiller, a doctor who provides abortions in Wichita, Kansas.

In the August 30 issue of the University of Iowa newspaper, the *Daily Iowan*, David Mastio asserted, "The abortionist in Kansas, Dr. Tiller, who was wounded by a pro-life advocate outside of his clinic, is a case where deadly force is justified."

Since Mastio's column appeared, another *Daily Iowan* writer, Jeff Klinzman, was fired after he advocated picketing the newspaper's office to demand that Mastio be dismissed.

Remer is planning to fight his arrest. "I want public pressure put on the prosecutor's office to drop the charges against me and arrest David Shedlock," the doctor stated. "Operation Rescue has gotten away with this kind of behavior for too long."

In response to the recent attacks, activists in the Des Moines area are planning to picket the city attorney's office on October 1 to demand the charges against Remer be dropped.

Angel Lariscy is a member of United Auto Workers Local 270 at Fawn Engineering in Clive, Iowa.



Militant/Chris Remple  
Remer addressing forum at Pathfinder bookstore



# Clothing workers protest takeback demands

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

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

Clothing workers and striking coal miners joined forces in Philadelphia, September 18 to urge Center City shoppers to boycott men's suits made

Shippensburg and Verona plants, which employ some 900 workers, if its demands are not met.

In late August, workers at the Allentown plant organized a militant response when the company refused to allow ACTWU International Representative Phil Cohen into the plant.

According to the *Morning Call*, "some 200 workers poured out of the plant... chanting 'We're all in or we're all out!' and shaking their fists as two state troopers looked on."

Workers circled Cohen and pushed their way past security guards back into the building. Once inside they refused to work and instead organized a brief demonstration outside the plant. The



Militant/Pete Seidman

Unionists in Philadelphia call for boycott of suits made by Greif. The company is demanding steep concessions.

## ON THE PICKET LINE

by Greif Companies and sold under such labels as Perry Ellis, and Chaps and Polo by Ralph Lauren.

This action was one of many in cities all across the country called by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU). ACTWU's national wool contract, which covers 42,000 workers, expires by October.

The miners, who are on a week-long tour of Philadelphia winning solidarity with their strike, helped set an example in explaining the justice of ACTWU's demands to passersby.

Greif Companies recently dropped out of the Manufacturers' Association and is seeking major concessions from 1,600 workers in Allentown and Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, and Verona, Virginia.

They are asking for five paid holidays back, a three-year wage freeze, the surrender of a fourth vacation week, and a \$13.50 medical copayment.

Tam, a worker who comes from Hong Kong and is currently working at Pincus Brothers Harwell, explained that his wages here are less than what he used to earn when he worked in Hong Kong as a salesman. "I have to work three jobs to pay the mortgage on my house," he said.

Greif is threatening to close the

company was forced to call off work for the day.

### Returning strikers turned away at steel plant

"This is a very odd thing," said an iron ore miner from United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 2660, "we did not expect this at all."

More than 615 iron ore miners were locked out of the National Steel Pellet Co.'s Keewatin, Minnesota, plant when they reported to work September 16 after a 47-day strike.

At a special union meeting the day before, the steelworkers had voted overwhelmingly to accept the company's August 7 contract proposal and end their first strike in 17 years.

The company claims that proposal had been taken off the table and the union is still on strike.

Workers continue to report to work for each of the shifts, but are told there is no contract with the union and therefore they cannot go to work.

Dave Foster, USWA District 33 director, told the *Hibbing Daily Tribune* that such a move is "an illegal act in violation of the National Labor Relations Act."

The unionists have filed com-

plaints with the National Labor Relations Board which will include a claim of full back pay and wages from the start of the lockout.

### 10,000 workers walk out of plants in Indonesia

On September 1, 6,000 workers stopped work at the PT Khong Tai Indonesia Reebok shoe factory in East Bekasi, West Java, over wages and conditions.

Workers are demanding the firing of general manager Ronal Siahaan. Since Siahaan's appointment in April, work has been increased to eleven and a half hours a day, and employees who are late are forced to stand in the sun. A number of workers have fainted during the punishment.

They are also demanding transport allowance, one-hour breaks (instead of half an hour), attendance allowances after three months, and wage increases to \$1.00 per day for workers who have been with the company for three months and \$1.25 for those employed over six months.

On the same day in the East Javanese city of North Malang, 4,000 workers at the PT Bantoel

cigarette factory also went on strike. They demanded wage increases, transport and meal allowances, and wage restructuring to accommodate length of employment and experience. This is the first strike at the factory, which has been operating for 63 years.

Late in the day, 39 worker representatives met with company management, the Department of Labour, and the head of the Malang All Indonesia Workers Union (SPSI), Marsidik Salamoen. At 1:00 p.m. workers were told that an agreement had been reached and the results would be announced by the company on October 2.

The following day, however, workers refused to begin work and gathered outside the factory grounds. They wanted to know the results of the meeting immediately and were not prepared to wait until October 2.

### British Columbia gov't orders rail strike ended

Sixteen hundred rail workers were told to go back to work August 2 by the New Democratic Party government in British Columbia, Canada.

They had been on strike for 35 days.

The workers belong to seven different unions organized at British Columbia Rail. The government imposed a 90-day "cooling off period" because all seven unions did not agree to a mediator's recommendation.

The mediator had proposed a wage increase of 2.05 percent for the first year, and a 2.2 percent increase for each of the second and third years. This recommendation was marginally higher than the two percent ceiling the British Columbia government aims to impose on all provincial employees.

The United Transportation Union (UTU) vetoed the mediation recommendation. This veto was unanimously endorsed by the trade council of all seven unions. The UTU opposes the elimination of cabooses as an attack on safety.

The following people contributed to this week's column: Wendy Lyons, member of ACTWU, and Pete Seidman, member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers in Philadelphia; Edy Ruger in Minneapolis; and Colleen Levis, member of Canadian Autoworkers Local 3020 in Vancouver, British Columbia.

## LETTERS

### Israeli troop withdrawal

There was an important factual error in the lead editorial in the September 20 issue of the *Militant*. Referring to the partial withdrawal of Israeli troops from land seized in the 1967 war, the editorial stated that "this is something Tel Aviv had sworn it would never do."

Actually, the Israeli rulers have been divided on this question. While the Likud bloc had taken a hard line against giving up any territory as part of a diplomatic agreement, it was always the position of Rabin's Labor Party to hold out the prospect of territorial compromise as part of a broader settlement that would include recognition of the Israeli state. During the last Israeli election Washington made it quite clear that it preferred the more flexible position of the Labor bloc to Likud's intransigence.

Insofar as I can see, the current agreement falls short of actual territorial concessions by the Israeli regime, although I would agree with the *Militant* that the agreement to withdraw Israeli troops from Jericho and Gaza is an important gain for the Palestinians. The degree to which the Palestinian people will be able to take advantage of the opening created by any Israeli pullback will be determined through struggle. The Israeli government will try to give the very limited autonomy envisioned in the accords a finished character — they will try to make it the end point of the political process. The Palestinians, of course,

will try to expand this autonomy and use it as a platform to fight for a genuinely independent state.

The fact that the Israelis have chosen Jericho as the place to test this agreement in the West Bank is important from that point of view. While Jericho is an important town and well-known in Europe and the Americas because of its Biblical fame, it is not the place with the most weight in the West Bank. Nablus has perhaps four times as many people as Jericho, and a history of great militancy. Jericho stands alone on a flat desert plain, and could be easily sealed off, while Nablus is nestled in steep hills and has close connections with many nearby farming villages.

David Frankel  
Detroit, Michigan

### Small businesspeople

I disagree with Marty Boyers' letter to the *Militant* of September 20 in which he says, in so many words, that workers should not be concerned about whether Clinton's proposed health plan puts a heavy burden on small businesspeople.

In the first place, it is not rational or efficient to pay for health care through the contributions of small business, rather than having the government pay for health care across the board. It does put a proportionately much bigger burden on a small business than on a big business. It also does not correspond to the concept that health care is a right which the government has an

obligation to provide for everyone, whether they are employed or not.

In general, workers should support small businesspeople as opposed to the banks, the landlords, and big business which rip them off. As the economic situation continues to worsen, many small businesspeople, especially those who do not hire labor, but even some who do, can be won to socialism.

It is especially important for communist workers to pay attention to this question because small businesspeople are prime targets for recruitment by fascist demagogues like Patrick Buchanan.

Finally, workers have to begin to see themselves not just as an oppressed class, but also, and more importantly, as the leader of all the oppressed and exploited in society — women, Blacks, immigrants, farmers, and also small businesspeople.

Tony Prince  
New York, New York

### Health care spending

In the *Philadelphia Inquirer* of September 13 it was reported that during the first half of 1993 the sum of \$3.9 million was contributed to congressional campaigns by health-care providers: insurance companies, HMOs [Health Maintenance Organizations], hospital and drug companies and medical associations. Were these contributions made to guarantee better health care for the American people or to make sure that any new plan that is finally



approved does not materially interfere with the profits of these special interest groups?

One of the targets to be shot down is the American Health Security Act (HR 1200) which provides for a single-payer Canadian-type system which, according to a July report of the Congressional Budget Office, would save \$319 billion between the years 1995 and 2000, while extending immediate comprehensive coverage (including long-term and nursing home care) to all Americans and fully preserving freedom of choice to doctors and patients. These savings would result from the fact that the government would be the only payer (as in

Medicare), thus eliminating the intermediate role of large insurance companies and HMOs. President Clinton's "managed competition" plan would only increase the role of these companies and thus deliver a lower rather than a higher level of care.

Harry Fruit  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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



## Election victory of rightist politician sparks national debate in Britain

BY CELIA PUGH

LONDON — On September 18 Derek Beackon, a racist, right-wing politician of the British National Party (BNP), won a local council seat in the East London borough of Tower Hamlets. This is the first time this rightist party has won an election. After a recount, Beackon polled 1,480 votes, 7 more than the Labour Party candidate. The *Evening Standard* reported that Beackon's election was greeted by one group of 80 youth singing "Rule Britannia" and chanting *sieg heil*.

The same week that the BNP won the election, hundreds of youth took to the streets to protest a racist attack on Quaddus Ali, a 17-year-old student who was assaulted by a gang of white youth. Ali has been on a life support machine since September 8.

Beackon's election has sparked a national debate, including newspaper banner headlines and editorials, special TV programs, statements by government ministers, and discussions in pubs and workplaces.

Blacks and Asian immigrants make up 25 percent of the population in the district where Beackon was elected. These residents have joined earlier generations of Jewish immigrants and refugees. Unemployment in the Tower Hamlets area is 25 percent — more than twice the national rate — with a chronic shortage of affordable homes to rent.

Beackon used his campaign to scapegoat immigrants for the depression conditions that face many workers in Britain. "When I was a child the East End was almost totally white. You could walk down the street unmolested," Beackon said to the *Guardian* newspaper. "All that has changed now. I blame the government and the establishment for letting the Asians and the Blacks in. I do not want them here."

Many capitalist politicians have felt compelled to distance themselves from the BNP, even though the anti-immigrant policies of the government have fueled these rightist elements. "I deplore the election of any candidate who does not recognise that all sections of our community have equal rights under the law," declared Home Secretary Michael Howard. "Everyone in this country is fully entitled to live their own lives free from harassment and violence."

And Prime Minister John Major said, "I want to make it clear that there is no place in our society for these sort of policies."

In a press statement from the Anti Racist

Alliance (ARA), a coalition endorsed by the Trade Union Congress, the group's national secretary Marc Wadsworth said, "While welcoming Michael Howard's statement of opposition to the result, we are obliged to place great responsibility at the door of the government which has met a rising tide of racist violence with complacency and inaction. The ARA has campaigned for the introduction of new legislation to make racist violence a criminal offence." The organization is also demanding that the government ban the BNP.

### Divide and rule

A statement issued by the Communist League (CL) explained that the BNP was elected "because of frustration with the employers and their government, who fail to address any of the real problems facing working people. Workers and youth all over the world face depression conditions: growing homelessness and unemployment, less and less job security, and declining value of wages. The concern of the rulers in this economic crises is not for us but for a recovery of their profits. To push through their policies and cripple our fighting capacity, they increasingly rely on divide and rule. More and more they seek scapegoats — from immigrants to single mothers — as the cause of the problems."

The CL statement pointed to the active policies of the Conservative government to restrict the rights of immigrants through a new asylum and immigration act. The im-



Rightist politician Derek Beackon celebrating election victory after winning council seat.

plementation of these laws by immigration police has led to deaths of five asylum seekers in prison custody and the recent police killing of West Indian-born Joy Gardner. These new laws follow restrictive immigration legislation introduced by the Labour government in the 1970s.

The Labour Party has also said it would make moves against immigrant workers.

During the last election Labour spokesperson Gerald Kaufman criticized the excesses of the proposed asylum bill in the case of "genuine political refugees," but pledged that a Labour election victory would see action against "economic refugees."

"Looking to the government to ban the BNP is a dangerous mistake," the CL statement argues. "It is the government's policies and those of the other capitalist politicians that open the door to the BNP's rightist solutions and thuggery. We need to rely on our own actions and organisation."

*Militant* supporters who visited Tower Hamlets after the election results were announced reported a range of opinions. Many local people, Black and white, agreed with a large *Militant* poster declaring "Unity — not divide and rule. Housing for all." Many shoppers wanted to discuss how to oppose the BNP, and agreed that instead of competing with each other for housing, working people should demand homes for everyone. Twenty-three people bought issues of the *Militant* and many more took copies of the Communist League statement. A Bengali youth who bought a *Militant* in the area said he did not agree with the campaigning to shut down the BNP headquarters. He said, "We should defend ourselves when we're attacked, but banning them just turns them into martyrs."

But not all responses to the *Militant* were positive. One woman stopped to explain that she disagreed with the poster and was pleased with the BNP vote. "My kids aren't getting a decent education because we're losing our British culture with all this stuff about Asian food and language. We're not getting the jobs or houses," she said. "I think all the parties are corrupt — Tory, Labour, and Liberal — and it's good to see a party for ordinary people like me getting a chance. All the others are interested in is their own pockets, that's all they wanted when they sent our boys to the Gulf, oil money."

## 'Mistreatment of Cuba must come to end'

BY RICHARD HAZBOUN

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A forum calling for an end to the U.S.-imposed embargo of Cuba was held at Howard University on September 17. Fifty students, local residents, and others attended the event, which was organized by the International Students Association and the Caribbean Students Association and chaired by John Cotman of the Political Science department.

Omwale Elson, president of the International Students Association, and Ché Keens-

Douglas, president of the Caribbean Students Association, opened up the meeting with greetings. They spoke of the responsibility of international and Caribbean students in particular to organize educational events for those who are concerned with social justice and the right to self-determination, and who can be won to oppose the embargo against Cuba.

William Worthy, a professor in the Journalism department, said there are numerous indications that the U.S. embargo against Cuba is weakening and that there are those who for different reasons support a gradual lifting of the restrictions. "Our goal is to end the embargo immediately," he emphasized. Worthy, a longtime opponent of the embargo and Washington's travel ban, was victimized by the John F. Kennedy administration for making a 1961 reporting trip to Cuba in violation of the reactionary McCarran-Walter Act.

Hilbourne Watson, president of the Caribbean Studies Association, condemned the trade ban as illegal, immoral, and inhuman.

Kendall Moore, who joined other international and Cuban youth as a participant in a recent brigade to the island, spoke about her experience there. The brigade was a "visible way to show solidarity and make a contribution" to the Cuban revolution, while providing an opportunity for discussions and exchange of ideas, she said. Voluntary labor allows young people to participate in confronting the difficulties faced by the Cuban revolution, she added, and many young people there are "ready to defend their country and its achievements in spite of the severe shortages that they face."

The economic crisis in Cuba and the U.S.-organized trade embargo contribute to life-threatening emergencies, including electrical outages that shut down all hospital equipment, preventing needed health care; and the lack of fuel, which hinders ambulances from

responding to accidents in a timely manner. The message she brought back from Cuba, Moore said, is that "the mistreatment of Cuba must come to an end" and "the youth in this country have a responsibility to support those in Cuba by helping bring an end to the embargo now."

Bernardo Toscano of the Cuban Interests Section expressed his appreciation on behalf of the Cuban people to the organizers of the event and to all present for their words of solidarity and support.

"We are facing the most difficult time in Cuba," said Toscano. He explained that the 1992 Cuban Democracy Act — legislation passed by the U.S. Congress to tighten the economic embargo is meant to "try to starve the Cuban people." One of the law's provisions prohibits ships involved in trade with Cuba from docking in the United States for six months. Toscano pointed out that 90 percent of the cargo that such ships carry is food and medicine.

"Cuba is facing a double blockade," he continued. The first is the U.S.-imposed restrictions and the second is the loss of 85 percent of trade that came with the collapse of the governments in Eastern Europe and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. In addition, several unusually severe storms this year have wreaked havoc on food production and housing on much of the island.

Toscano noted that in spite of all these hardships, Cuba continues to provide free health care and education, and has reduced the infant mortality rate and increased life expectancy to figures bettering those of many industrialized countries.

In the discussion period several young people spoke of the need to educate Howard University students about Cuba in order to build the pressure required to bring an end to the embargo.

## New York groups call October 14 rally against embargo of Cuba

BY SILVIA MACHADO

NEW YORK — A coalition of different groups has come together here to organize a rally to demand Washington end its 33-year-old economic embargo against Cuba. The demonstration will take place in front of the United Nations from 4:30 p.m. — 8:00 p.m. Thursday, October 14, at 42nd Street and First Avenue.

"We are doing this now because on that date the UN secretary-general will be addressing his report to the General Assembly on the implications of the U.S. blockade," explained Leslie Cagan of the Cuba Information Project, one of the initiators of the action.

"We think that as the United Nations takes on this question there are a growing number of people in this country who are opposed to the U.S. policy regarding Cuba," Cagan added.

Rev. Lucius Walker of Pastors for Peace, which sponsored the U.S.-Cuba Friendshipment, explained that the October action will

build on the victory won by the second Friendshipment caravan that succeeded in breaking Washington's embargo by taking 100 tons of material aid to Havana in August. The convoy won the support of thousands of people throughout the United States.

The rally will demand the normalization of U.S. relations with Cuba, the end to all trade restrictions, and the lifting of the travel ban that makes it difficult for U.S. citizens to visit Cuba.

"I believe this demonstration will be an opportunity for people who have not been involved to get involved in the movement to end the blockade," said Cagan. "We are doing it in front of the UN because we think it's their job to enforce international law and Washington is breaking international law with its embargo against Cuba."

For more information on the demonstration call the Cuba Information Project at (212) 227-3422, or the U.S. Hands Off Cuba Committee at (718) 601-4751.