

THE MILITANT

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 57/NO. 36 October 18, 1993

Clinton escalates Somalia war

Facing resistance,
U.S. troops kill 300

BY HILDA CUZCO
AND BRIAN WILLIAMS

Washington is stepping up its military presence in Somalia in response to heavy casualties inflicted on U.S. troops in the fiercest battle fought by U.S. forces since invading the country nearly 10 months ago.

President Bill Clinton is ordering an additional 2,000 U.S. troops to Somalia while urging the United Nations to substantially increase its forces there as well. This move will bring U.S. military presence in the east African country to about 6,700 soldiers. The UN currently has a force of 28,000.

In a 15-hour confrontation October 3-4, Somali forces shot down three U.S. UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters. During the course of this fight at least 12 U.S. soldiers were killed, 78 wounded, and at least one captured.

Casualties were much higher on the Somali side. The Pentagon, however, in keeping with its usual policy, declined to disclose the number of Somalis killed and wounded. Italian state television reported that, according to Somali Gen. Mohammed Farah Aidid, 300 Somalis were killed in this latest attack.

The International Committee of the Red Cross counted at least 500 Somalis wounded in Mogadishu's three hospitals. "The operating tables are full right now. People are lying all over the floors in pools of blood," reported Paul Watson of the Toronto *Star*



Washington is sending 2,000 more troops to Somalia. Above, tanks bound for the African country are loaded into a transport plane near Savannah, Georgia.

newspaper. Journalists on the scene reported seeing truckloads of corpses being driven from the main battle area in downtown Mogadishu.

The fighting began after about 100 U.S. Army Rangers raided one or more buildings near the Olympia Hotel, next to a crowded

marketplace in downtown Mogadishu. The troops arrested 19 Somalis, including three who were thought to be advisers to Aidid. The U.S. soldiers were then met with a combination of rocket-propelled grenades and machine gun and cannon fire by

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U.S., UN troops
out of Somalia!

Dealing another blow to the myth of "humanitarian" intervention, President Bill Clinton has significantly expanded U.S. forces and armor in Somalia.

The latest battle in the streets of Mogadishu, in which hundreds of Somalis

EDITORIAL

were killed and wounded and, for the first time significant casualties were inflicted on U.S. troops, has led to a big debate within ruling-class circles on what should be done.

There's one simple step that should be taken. That is for the Clinton administration to immediately withdraw all U.S. troops and its military hardware from Somalia and for the 28,000-strong UN occupation force to do the same.

Robert Dole and other Republican and Democratic party politicians who express reservations today were fully behind the invasion last year.

Most of these scoundrels in Congress argue that the Pentagon, not UN generals, should have been in charge; that those "uncivilized" Somalis will never be able to solve their problems anyway; or that the initial humanitarian goals have gone awry, leading to a possible quagmire.

After Clinton announced a possible pull-back within six months, as tentative as earlier schedules for withdrawal, Dole and company changed their tune and began praising defense of the "integrity and honor of American forces."

The U.S. invasion of Somalia last December
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Yeltsin crushes opponents in brutal conflict between rival bureaucrats

BY GREG ROSENBERG

The standoff between Russian president Boris Yeltsin and leaders of the deposed parliament ended with combat on the streets of Moscow October 3-4. Yeltsin emerged the victor in the conflict between the two bureaucratic groupings, crushing his opponents with brutal military force.

Most working people in Russia watched the battle from the sidelines, not responding to calls to turnout by either of the warring gangs.

Initial press reports put the number of dead at 300, with 526 people wounded. The *New York Times* reported that "rows" of

bodies lined the pavement outside the burning parliament building.

Yeltsin ordered elite military units loyal to him into Moscow on October 3, including paratroopers from the 77th Guards airborne division and the Kantemirovsky artillery division. At 7 a.m. October 4 armored personnel carriers, T-72 and T-80 tanks began their assault on the parliament building. As 125-millimeter shells pounded the structure, soldiers began a floor by floor assault on those inside.

The only people allowed to operate the tanks and armored personnel carriers were officers.

London's *Financial Times* reported that inside the parliament "the scene was of carnage, squalor, and hideous destruction. Bullets and shells had raked the walls, smashed down ceilings, and made matchwood from doors."

By 6:00 p.m., Vice-president Aleksandr Rutskoi and chairman of the parliament Ruslan Khasbulatov had surrendered, and were escorted to Lefortovo Prison. Prosecutors said charges of treason were being considered against the two leaders of the anti-Yeltsin faction. Many of their supporters lay dead in the streets, while others surrendered.

Sniper fire from Moscow rooftops continued following Yeltsin's rout of his opponents. Up to 200 armed supporters of the parliamentary group were reported to have escaped the building before it was taken by the military.

Moving swiftly, Yeltsin acted to clear political opponents from government posts.

Yeltsin bans opponents

The Russian president, who has ruled by decree since he annulled parliament September 21, banned some opposition groupings and several newspapers; cut opponents telephone lines and removed their cars; and declared an overnight curfew in Moscow.

Yeltsin implemented heavy censorship against a broad range of newspapers ranging from the rightist *Day to Sovetskaya Rossiya* and *Pravda*. Censors blocked out criticism of Yeltsin and the army.

Some of those in detention were beaten to force confessions out of them.

Yeltsin also dissolved the Moscow city council October 3 and is threatening to dismiss many elected regional councils around the country, 50 percent of which opposed his September 21 decree dissolv-

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Russian troops, loyal to Yeltsin, fire on parliament building.

Iowa unionist files federal appeal against unfair trial

BY NORTON SANDLER

DES MOINES, Iowa — In a petition filed in federal district court here October 6, imprisoned trade union and political activist Mark Curtis demanded that his 1988 conviction on attempted rape and burglary charges be overturned.

The appeal — a habeas corpus petition — argues that the state of Iowa is holding Curtis in violation of basic constitutional guarantees of a fair trial and due process of law.

At the time of his arrest on March 4, 1988, Curtis was involved in a struggle at the Swift meat-packing plant in Des Moines to defend 17 Mexican and Salvadoran coworkers who had been whisked from the factory floor in handcuffs a few days earlier during a raid by federal immigration cops.

Curtis was falsely charged and convicted of sexual assault on a 15-year-old Black woman. The young unionist was also convicted on a burglary charge added weeks after his arrest for "illegally" entering the house of the alleged victim. He was sentenced to 10 years on the rape charge and 25 years on the burglary count with the two sentences running concurrently. After more than five years in jail, Curtis has now served out the required time for the sexual assault conviction and

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IN BRIEF

German bosses void wage pact

The Gesamtmetall employers' association canceled a western German wage agreement with IG Metall, the metalworkers' union, for the first time in its history. The contracts, which are up for renegotiation December 31, cover workers in the automotive, metal, electrical, electronics, and machinery sectors. The bosses hope to cut unionists' vacation time and pay to boost sagging profits.

Union officials said that the employers' association wants workers to pay both ways to get employers out of their crisis: once by the loss of jobs, and a second time by the loss of income. Some of Germany's most financially sound companies have laid off tens of thousands of workers in recent months. These moves run parallel to the government's attacks on health-care and social security programs. Meanwhile, the president of the German Chamber of Industry and Trade urged a wage freeze and more part-time jobs to solve the unemployment problem.

Unemployment rises in Germany

In the midst of Germany's worst recession since World War II, the country's mining and manufacturing bosses have dismissed almost 10 percent of their work force in the past year. Workers in the eastern part of the country have been hit the hardest. Employment in manufacturing there was down 20 percent in July from a year earlier.

Basque separatists killed in jail

José Corceua, Spain's interior minister, was forced to schedule an emergency appearance before parliament September 28 to calm outrage over the death of two Basque separatists, and medical evidence alleging the severe beating of a third, days after their arrest. Miren Gurutze died September 24 of heart failure while in custody. His death is believed to have been caused by torture at the hands of the Spanish civil guard and Basque police. Xabier Galparsoro died the same day after supposedly falling from the second floor of a police station.

Ex-Communist Party members win election vote in Poland

Former members of Poland's Communist Party came out on top in parliamentary elections September 20, winning 20 percent of



Protesters in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, burn effigy of Uncle Sam and U.S. flag in opposition to blockade of border traffic and stepped-up harassment of Mexicans by U.S. immigration cops. More than 10,000 people cross border to work in El Paso every day.

the vote. The Democratic Left Alliance, the umbrella organization under which the former Communist Party (CP) members are grouped, is negotiating with the Polish Peasants Party about forming a coalition. The Polish Peasants Party is also made up primarily of former CP members.

Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka's party, Democratic Union, whose "shock therapy" program to introduce market reforms has led to a backlash of protests by workers, rejected an invitation to join the coalition. Leaders of the Democratic Left Alliance assured worried investors that they would not abandon the market reforms that have lined the pockets of some of the victorious candidates. They promised tax breaks to foreign investors. Other party leaders said they would keep their campaign promise to double pensions.

Workers strike in China

Workers in plants funded by South Korean and Japanese companies in the Chinese port of Tianjin have gone on strike at least 10 times this year according to reports from the Reuters news agency. *Beijing Youth*

News reported that a strike currently under way there "is being handled by the relevant authorities," but gave no details. The protests are over low wages and poor working conditions. Beijing's drive to expand capitalist investment is generating growing disparities between the incomes of workers, peasants, and emerging entrepreneurs.

Fighting intensifies in Bosnia

Fighting in the former Yugoslavia increased after representatives of the Bosnian government rejected the latest UN partition plan to end the 18-month-long war. On September 29, Bosnia's parliament overwhelmingly voted down the agreement, which maps out borders to carve Bosnia-Herzegovina into three autonomous republics divided by nationality. A majority of the delegates voted to send the proposal back to the United Nations and European Community mediators with a demand that "territories seized by force" be returned. Serb forces led by Radovan Karadzic currently control 70 percent of Bosnia.

Clinton to return Cuban inmates

The U.S. Justice Department announced an agreement September 28 between Washington and Havana to return 1,500 Cubans who came to the United States in the 1980 Mariel boat lift. The Cubans are currently being held in U.S. prisons. Under the pact, U.S. authorities will repatriate up to 50 Cubans a month for the next two and a half years. Right-wing Cubans have condemned the agreement, saying it reflects a reversal of U.S. policy of noncooperation with Havana. The Justice Department ordered more than 2,500 of the 4,500 Cubans in the federal prison system be locked in isolated cells until further notice. Prison official said this move was to prevent possible rioting. Similar measures announced in 1987 sparked a two-week-long prison uprising.

Hijacker won't be prosecuted

The Justice Department announced it was dropping its case against the Cuban pilot who hijacked a plane with 52 passengers on board last December. Five people on the flight were subdued by force when they tried to prevent the hijacking. Cuban security personnel had testified against the pilot, Carlos Porcel, in Miami in August.

Mexicans protest border blockade

Hundreds of U.S. immigration cops began patrolling a 20-mile stretch of the border between Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, and El Paso, Texas, September 19. "Operation Blockade" is aimed at intimidating the more than 10,000 Mexican workers who cross the border to work in El Paso each day. Demonstrators in Mexico have stopped traffic on international bridges to protest the blockade and the stepped-up harassment by immigration cops. Mexican politicians and businesspeople are calling for a boycott of El Paso stores. Mexicans spend an estimated 30 percent of the \$6.5 billion in retail sales in El Paso each year.

U.S. truckers protest gas hikes

Truck drivers began tying up traffic on the Ohio Turnpike September 28 to protest President Bill Clinton's 4.3-cents-a-gallon gas tax increase. A convoy of 18-wheelers disrupted traffic when they slowed to 40 miles an hour on the highway west of Youngstown. Two days later 250 tractor-trailer drivers blocked traffic near Toledo by driving single file in the right hand lane at 55 miles an hour. Cops gave them citations for impeding traffic.

Aspin overrules Navy chief

Defense Secretary overruled Secretary of the Navy John Dalton October 4 by keeping Adm. Frank Kelso as the Navy's top officer. Dalton urged Kelso's removal for failure to show proper leadership at a naval aviators convention where scores of women were assaulted. Aspin also handed back the naval secretary's recommendation to discipline 12 other admirals and Marine generals who attended the 1991 Tailhook Association convention in Las Vegas, Nevada. He asked Dalton to clarify by October 15 the rationale for the suggested punishments. While none of the admirals and Marine Corps generals are accused of participating in the assaults, they are criticized for allowing the abusive behavior to occur. 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.

Pennsylvania clinic firebombed

A firebomb attack September 29 severely damaged a Planned Parenthood office in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, that offers abortion referrals and family planning. Days earlier a clinic in Peoria, Illinois, was also firebombed, and on September 20, an arson fire destroyed an abortion clinic and two nearby office buildings in Bakersfield, California.

—PAT SMITH

THE MILITANT

Worldwide coverage of actions in solidarity with Cuba

The 'Militant' explains why Washington's 'cold war' against Cuba doesn't end. On-the-scene reports describe how Cubans respond to a severe economic crisis. Participants in the movement against the U.S. embargo give firsthand accounts of activities of international solidarity. Don't miss a single issue!



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The Militant

Closing news date: October 6, 1993

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Managing Editor: ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

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Editorial Staff: Naomi Craine, Hilda Cuzco, Martin Koppel, Sara Lobman, Greg Rosenberg, Stu Singer, Pat Smith, Brian Williams. Published weekly except for next to last week in December and biweekly from mid-June to mid-August by the *Militant* (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Telephone: (212) 243-6392; Fax (212) 924-6040; Modem, 924-6048; Telex, 497-4278.

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

Second-class postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the *Militant*, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Subscriptions: U.S.: for one-year subscription send \$45 to above address. **Latin America, Caribbean:** for one-year subscription send \$65, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (airmail), send \$80. **Barbados:** Send \$75Bds for one-year subscription to P.O.

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Fighting tears apart republic of Georgia

BY GREG ROSENBERG

The 11-day siege of Sukhumi, the capital of Abkhazia, a semiautonomous region of Georgia, culminated in the capture of the Black Sea coastal city September 27. Abkhazian forces defeated troops under the command of Georgian president Eduard Shevardnadze. Georgian troops were subsequently routed from the rest of the province.

The war is one of some 200 conflicts tearing apart the former Soviet republics in the wake of the breakup of the Soviet Union.

Georgia, which declared independence in 1991, is the scene of at least three disputes within its borders. Forces in three "autonomous regions"—Abkhazia, Ajara, and South Ossetia—have all claimed some kind of independence from Tbilisi, the country's capital. In addition, military forces loyal to former autocratic president Zviad Gamsakhurdia are operating inside Georgia.

Up to 4,000 people have been killed and 100,000 made refugees in the fighting, which began in August 1992. At that time, Shevardnadze, the former Soviet foreign minister, sent in troops to crush a rebellion by the Abkhazian parliament, which declared its independence from Georgia. Georgian forces with tanks and armored vehicles rolled into Sukhumi, raised the Georgian flag, and decreed a curfew.

On and off fighting continued until a Russian-brokered cease-fire was signed. The agreement lasted only six weeks. On September 16, after the government of Georgia had withdrawn its heavy weapons, Abkhazian forces began a new offensive.

Sukhumi, formerly a popular tourist destination, lies in ruins. Electricity and running water have been virtually nonexistent for months. Bread is a luxury. Some working people in the area live on vegetables and fruit from the countryside, if they can get them. The *New York Times* reported that one couple in Sukhumi receives a total of 8,000

Georgian coupons for their combined monthly pensions, the equivalent of \$2.

Role of Shevardnadze

The *Washington Post* wrote that "when it comes to mind-blowing reversals of fortune, it is hard to top Eduard Shevardnadze."

The former Soviet official, surrounded by U.S.-trained bodyguards, directed the failed attempt to retain Abkhazia from a house that once was Joseph Stalin's summer cottage. He warned that the defeat would lead to the rapid dismemberment of Georgia. "The loss of Sukhumi is a great moral and political blow," said Shevardnadze, who vowed to "get Sukhumi back."

Shevardnadze blamed Moscow for the loss. "My conviction is that the plan for the occupation of Sukhumi has been drawn up in Russian headquarters," he said. The Georgian president offered to join the Commonwealth of Independent States in return for Russian troops siding with his forces in the days prior to his defeat.

Various political forces in Russia have supported the Abkhazian offensive. Some Russian officers have even been captured fighting alongside Abkhazian troops. However, no evidence has been presented to date that Russian president Boris Yeltsin or army officials collaborated with the Abkhazians.

The Abkhazia republic

Prior to the outbreak of war, the population of Abkhazia was 525,000, of which 18 percent were Abkhazians; 45 percent Georgians; and the rest, Russians and Armenians. The Abkhaz people are related to the non-Indo-European peoples of the North Caucasus and speak their own distinct language. In recent years some Abkhazians have pressed for a merger with Russia, while others favor independence.

Abkhazia became an autonomous Soviet republic in 1921. This was a result of the gains working people in the region made in the aftermath of the October 1917 Russian



Refugees flee fighting in Abkhazia, semiautonomous region of Georgia.

revolution.

The October victory in Russia gave an impetus to revolutionary uprisings elsewhere throughout the old czarist empire. The communist leadership under V. I. Lenin began to forge a voluntary federation of the various republics. This took place where capitalism had already been overturned, like in Russia and the Ukraine, and where that could not yet be accomplished but revolutionary workers' and peasants' governments had come to power, as in most of the Central Asian and Transcaucasian republics.

Lenin insisted on a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which became known as the USSR, not a new "Soviet" nationality, with patriotism used as cover for the maintenance and expansion of Great Russian chauvinism and bourgeois nationalism. He argued against a new "socialist nation-state" suppressing minority nationalities or a federation limiting itself to formal equality.

Instead, the Bolsheviks fought for a federation that took affirmative action to devel-

op the economies and culture of the oppressed nations in order to close the historical gap in social and economic conditions between them and the formerly oppressor Russian nation.

The Bolsheviks' policy on national self-determination and voluntary federation, however, began to be reversed in the early 1920s by the political course of an emerging privileged bureaucratic caste, led by Joseph Stalin. In 1922 Lenin opened a political battle against this course, but Stalin's reactionary policies prevailed following Lenin's death.

The bureaucratic course was intensified and institutionalized with the consolidation of the caste's counterrevolution in the early 1930s. Thousands of Bolshevik leaders were assassinated and the Communist Party was turned from a revolutionary instrument into a tool of repression. In that process Abkhazia was forced to become part of Georgia in 1930.

The USSR reemerged, in fact, as a prison house of nations inherited from czarism and imperialism. It was no longer a voluntary federation but a "Soviet" superstate where the resurgence and domination of Great Russian nationalism obliterated the proletarian internationalism of the first years of the revolution. Once Stalinism had transformed the Soviet Union into the opposite of a voluntary federation, its eventual breakup was inevitable.

The Abkhazian people, incorporated into Georgia, were discriminated against under Stalinist rule. This often took the form of conflict between Georgians and Abkhazians.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 was followed by escalating conflicts. Tensions have grown between government officials draped in different nationalist flags who are seeking to control more territory and resources within the republics themselves. Discord between the newly independent republics and Moscow has also escalated, leading to what the *Economist* calls "the threat of a giant Bosnia," from the Baltics to China.

Russian foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev, in an address to the United Nations September 28, called for UN troops to help Moscow police the former Soviet republics.

Quake in India causes sweeping disaster

BY GREG ROSENBERG

Up to 30,000 people perished in the September 30 earthquake that wiped out entire villages in a sugarcane-producing area of central India. Another 150,000 are left homeless. The shocking human toll left by the quake spotlights the imperialist super-exploitation of India and the utter bankruptcy of capitalist rule in that country of 880 million people.

One senior foreign aid official, who asked not to be named, said an independent survey of demolished villages suggested that the death toll could run as high as 50,000. Precise figures, however, are not available since thousands remain buried in the rubble of their former homes.

The *Times of India*, a major daily, said that "nature's fury has struck mercilessly in Maharashtra [one of the states hit by the earthquake]." Nature, however, is not responsible for the backward social conditions, under which hundreds of millions of workers and peasants live throughout India, that magnified the quake's impact.

The tremor, centered about 200 miles east of Bombay near the village of Killari, measured 6.4 on the Richter scale. In comparison, a far more powerful earthquake at 7.1 struck the San Francisco Bay Area in 1989, killing between 60 and 70 people.

The quake struck in the middle of the night, burying thousands as they slept. Buildings in India, especially in rural areas, are often weakly constructed from whatever materials are available: mud bricks, thatch, corrugated metal, and increasingly poor quality cement.

As working people began mass cremations of the dead, they faced a critical shortage of drinking water, a lack of food, and the destruction of all power sources.

These conditions are exacerbated by criminal inaction on the part of the government. Even the *New York Times* bureau chief in New Delhi, Edward Gargan, was forced to recognize this fact. In a September 30 dispatch from Hyderabad, Gargan wrote that

India's "disaster-relief system is among the best in the developing countries." But his October 3 article, entitled "Volunteers, Not Government, Help Indians Dig out of Rubble," told a different story. "On the nearby main road... nowhere was there any sign of Government relief." Instead, Gargan found army troops.

The Congress Party government of Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao pledged a paltry \$637,000 in relief aid.

Dozens of private organizations and working people from throughout the stricken area are aiding disaster-relief efforts.

The village leader of Killari, where 15,000 people had lived before it was totally demolished, reported that the region had been hit by a series of mild tremors for more than a year and that the government had provided no assistance to damaged houses over that time.

Social, economic devastation

Rao waited until October 4 to visit the disaster site, saying that he didn't want his movements to impede relief efforts. When he did arrive, police guards kept working people demanding housing at a distance.

L. K. Advani, leader of the rightist Bharatiya Janata Party, immediately rushed to the area, lambasting the Congress government.

A sharpening economic crisis and growing social breakdown plague India, where the world depression has a fierce impact. The per capita gross domestic product is \$290 a year. Even this statistic conceals the economic level of workers and peasants, since the wealthy owners of industry and land reap a far higher cut than the toilers.

The social debacle tearing at the country was evident this summer in the capital, New Delhi, home to almost 10 million people. On days when the temperature reached as high as 114 degrees, all power failed, water was unavailable to millions, phone service was out, and thousands of mounds of garbage lay uncollected.

"This is a complete breakdown," said Malvika Singh, assistant publisher of *Business India*. "If you don't have power in the capital after 45 years of independence, what do you have?"

The Rao government has been pressing its "economic reform" program, an effort to squeeze down the already minuscule social wage and living standards of working people while opening India up to imperialist investment in industry, land ownership, and finance.

The debt owed the imperialist banks is up 6 percent this year, to \$76 billion.

Despite being hampered by class-collaborationist leaderships of the trade unions, which are dominated by two Communist parties and social democratic groupings, working people are resisting attacks by the employers and government austerity moves.

A strike of 1.8 million truck drivers is currently affecting 40 percent of industry and being met with harsh government repression, including shootings and arrests.

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Palestinian unionists describe conditions under occupation

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

JERUSALEM — "Israel's prolonged and indefinite closure of the West Bank and Gaza and isolation of East Jerusalem has been the most damaging and disruptive policy of the occupying power on the daily lives of Palestinian workers since the Gulf War curfew," said Mohammed Barakat in an interview here September 26.

The closure, which was imposed March 31 and has remained in effect after the September 13 signing of the accord between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Tel Aviv, requires Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza to get special permits in order to enter Israel.

"This collective punishment measure has restricted the movement of nearly 2 million Palestinians," continued Barakat, who is the general secretary of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union in East Jerusalem, "and deprived them access to health-care facilities, food and medical supplies, employment and education, and places of worship in Jerusalem."

At least 57 military roadblocks along the so-called green line, separating the West Bank and Gaza from Israel, and within the occupied territories have divided these areas into four virtual military enclaves: northern West Bank, East Jerusalem, southern West Bank, and Gaza Strip.

Palestinians who want to travel from Nablus or other cities in the northern West Bank to Bethlehem, Hebron, or other cities in the southern part must take unmarked dirt roads through the mountains, since all paved roads go through Jerusalem. No public transportation is available through those circuitous routes.

"One of the most acute problems we face is unemployment," said George Hazboun, an activist in the General Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU) in Bethlehem.

The GFTU was organized in 1965. About 120,000 Palestinians belong to it in the West Bank. Another 18,000 are organized by the Palestinian Workers Trade Unions Federation in Gaza. "The two federations are separate because Jordanian labor law applies in the West Bank and Egyptian labor law in Gaza," said Hazboun. Jordanian law prohibits agricultural workers from joining the union, according to Hazboun. There are about 310,000 wage workers in the West Bank and Gaza out of a population of 1.7 million.

Joblessness stands now at 35 percent in the West Bank and 42 percent in Gaza since most of the 120,000 Palestinians who worked in Israel have been barred from going to their jobs since the closure. Most worked in construction, agriculture, house cleaning, and other service jobs. About 50,000 have been granted work permits after protests by Israeli employers.

"But the permits are only valid for 45 days," said Barakat "and the military authorities can cancel them anytime without giving a reason." Anyone who participated in a strike or was arrested for any offense is not given a permit. "Israel uses this tactic to weed out workers who want to fight. They don't want people who stand up for their rights." In addition, those who are laid off must find a new job before they can renew the permit. "But how can you look for a job if you can't travel," asked Barakat. "Workers are caught between a rock and a hard place."

Others have been idled as well. About 500 transportation workers, for example, are jobless since bus lines between Jerusalem and West Bank towns were shut down.

Those who do get permits work an average of 18 days per month at about \$10 to \$15 per day, about half of what Israeli workers get for similar jobs. Palestinian workers from the West Bank and Gaza who work in Israel pay health insurance and other taxes like Israeli citizens do, but are not entitled to unemployment insurance, vacation pay, or retirement benefits.

Real wages and the buying power of Palestinian workers have declined 43 percent since 1987, according to Hazboun. That's when the *intifada*, the rebellion by Palestinians against Israeli occupation, began.

Repression of unions eased

Barakat and Hazboun said, however, that Israeli repression of union activities — routine until recently — has slowed down considerably. "Since the peace talks [between Palestinians and Tel Aviv] began in Madrid 18 months ago," said Hazboun "there have been virtually no arrests of union activists or shutting down of union offices." During the first four years of the *intifada*, 21 of 49 local GFTU affiliates were shut down in the West Bank.

Palestinians who live in Israel, about 730,000, also face discrimination, the unionists said. Up until 1986, the National Insurance Institute had published separate figures on poverty in the Jewish and Arab populations in Israel. That year 60 percent of Arab families lived below the poverty level, compared to 12 percent among Jewish families. Since then, this gap has, at best, stayed at the same level.

Many divisions exist between Israeli and Palestinian workers Barakat and Hazboun said. Israel's per capita gross domestic product is seven times that of the West Bank and 14 times that of the Gaza Strip.

Palestinians from the occupied territories who work in Israel are obligated to join and pay dues to Histadrut, the Israeli trade union federation, but can only be associate members and cannot participate in union elections. GFTU unions are not allowed to organize workers in Israel.

Histadrut, known until 1966 as the General Federation of Hebrew Workers in the Land of Israel, was founded in 1920 during

a congress of Jewish workers. An exclusively Jewish organization, it associated with the Zionist movement from its inception.

With more than 1 million members today, Histadrut is the only union federation in Israel. It is also one of the country's largest employers. Hapoalim Bank, one of the country's largest; the steel and chemicals consortium Koor; and dozens of kibbutzim are among Histadrut's holdings. Nearly a quarter of Israeli wage earners work in companies owned by Histadrut. In fact, the trade unions are just one department of the federation. Most of its staff is involved with other business concerns.

In 1967 Histadrut changed its name to the Workers Federation in the Land of Israel and began admitting Arab members.

"Many Palestinians who have worked in Israel speak Hebrew," said Rasem al Bayari, chairperson of the Trade Unions Federation in Gaza. "There should be more communication and possibilities of common work with Jewish workers in the future." But as long as the occupation and the closure of the occupied territories continues this will be difficult, he added.

The recent influx of Soviet Jews has eased some of the pressure on Israeli employers who traditionally looked to the West Bank and Gaza for cheap labor. Some 500,000 Jews have immigrated to Israel in the last three years, most from the former Soviet Union. About 30,000 have come from Ethiopia. While unemployment among these immigrants remains as high as 20 percent in some areas, thousands have been used to replace Palestinian labor at gas stations, house cleaning, and other jobs.

Marcello, an Israeli from Tel Aviv who has worked in the steel industry for 10 years, said that there has been a modest upsurge of labor struggles in Israel this year. While unemployment has declined from 11 to 10 percent, the government is carrying out a series of privatizations and major cutbacks of social services. Health insurance payments, for example, have gone up from 0.5 to 7.5 percent of wages after government subsidies were reduced.

In response to these cuts, hospital work-



Militant/Argiris Malapanis
Palestinian construction worker in West Bank

ers walked out for a month in February, and teachers and telecommunications workers waged two-week strikes in June and July. "Some unions take a more independent stance from Histadrut officials," said Marcello. "But there is still a long way from connecting these economic struggles with the national question, the Palestinian question."

Views on accord

Recent opinion polls showed more than 60 percent of Israelis favored the accord between the PLO and Tel Aviv.

The Palestinian unionists interviewed expressed different opinions on the significance of the agreement.

"For the first time we'll have the chance to start our lives as Palestinians, with our identity, our flag," said Hazboun, who thought that brighter economic opportunities are about to open up for Palestinian workers. "It's time to stop half a century of violation, killing, and war."

Barakat said that the accord came at a low point of the *intifada* and as a result he was dubious about what can be accomplished in the near future. "But we are not tired of struggling," he said. "It's like if you are running long distance. If you reach the end of the marathon and you see you have to go another 25 miles you have to take a breather."

Israeli troops, helicopters attack dozens in Gaza

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

In a sobering reminder that Tel Aviv's aggression against Palestinians in the occupied territories is not about to subside following the signing of the Israeli-PLO accord, Israeli soldiers backed by helicopters attacked residential areas in Gaza October 2 in what they claimed was a search for "suspected gunmen."

In the Sabra neighborhood in Gaza City, troops using loudspeakers ordered dozens of residents out of their homes. A helicopter dropped smoke bombs and shooting was heard. Raids were also reported in the Gaza refugee camps of Jebaliya and Bureij where troops fired hand-held rockets into houses.

Army spokespeople said two people were killed and 16 arrested. The victims, they claimed, were members of Hamas, a Palestinian group that opposes the accord.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) condemned the raids. Tension between the PLO and Tel Aviv had already risen days earlier when Israeli troops captured a commander and six other members of Fatah, the main group in the PLO, who the occupying authorities have accused of violent attacks. The PLO responded by calling a commercial strike in Gaza September 30. Israeli government and military officials said such raids will continue. In fact Israeli foreign minister Shimon Peres said October 3 his understanding of the accord was that Israel and the PLO would join forces to fight those who opposed it.

On October 2, Israel also extended its northern border 200 yards into southern Lebanon. The move came only three weeks after Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin asserted that his country has no territorial ambitions in Lebanon. Tel Aviv has occupied a 2.5-mile-long zone in southern Lebanon since 1985.

The same day, a 70-year-old Palestinian woman was shot to death and a friend in her 50s was wounded while they were picking figs near the Israeli settlement of Ofra, north of Ramallah, West Bank. The wounded woman said the attackers were settlers.

These aggressive moves took place one day after the Clinton administration convened a "donors conference" in Washington. Representatives of 43 countries, including the United States, Israel, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and members of the European Community pledged loans or grants of \$2 billion

over the next five years for investments in the West Bank and Gaza.

"This is really an important moment because it continues the momentum of peace that was created in this signing ceremony at the White House on the 13th of September," said Nabil Shaath, chief political adviser to PLO chairman Yassir Arafat.

The World Bank has estimated that \$4.3 billion over a 10-year period is needed to rebuild the infrastructure of the occupied territories. But according to Samir Hulia, a member of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, \$11.6 billion over seven years is what will be needed.

Gil Feiler, director of a Tel Aviv-based market-research company, said, however, that expectations that even the funds pledged will materialize are unrealistic. "They can talk about receiving hundreds of millions, but they are dreaming if they think they will be able to raise billions from the Arab countries or the West," he said. "In the last three years there has been lots of talk, but few donations."

Funds needed for reporting trip!

Militant managing editor Argiris Malapanis and reporter Alan Harris traveled to Israel and the occupied territories to provide firsthand coverage on reaction to the Israel-PLO accord. Funds are urgently needed to cover costs. Make your check payable to the Militant Fund, earmarked for Middle East trip, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

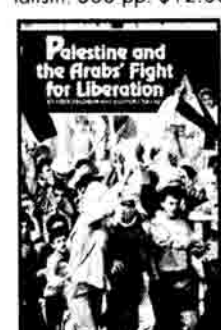
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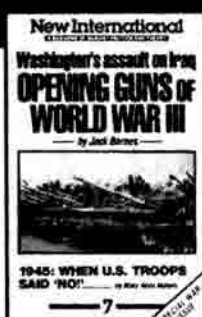
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Text of federal appeal of Curtis's conviction

Habeas corpus brief cites violations of unionist's constitutional rights at trial

Comes now the Petitioner, Mark Stanton Curtis, by and through his attorney, William L. Kutmus, and states the following in support of his Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2254:

DIVISION I (Jurisdiction)

1. Petitioner is an inmate at the Iowa State Penitentiary at Fort Madison, Iowa, currently serving a sentence of twenty-five years.

2. Petitioner was convicted of one count of sexual abuse in the third degree and one count of burglary, on September 14, 1988, in Polk County, Iowa.

3. Petitioner timely appealed his conviction to the Iowa State Supreme Court. Petitioner's appeal was transferred to the Iowa Court of Appeals, which affirmed his conviction on April 24, 1990. Petitioner timely filed an application for further review to the Iowa Supreme Court, and said application was denied.

4. In his direct appeal to the Iowa Supreme Court, Petitioner raised all of the federal constitutional challenges which are the subject of this Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus, and thus the Petitioner has fully exhausted his state remedies.

DIVISION II

(Failure of Trial Court to Instruct Jury on Theory of Defense)

5. At the state trial, the Petitioner produced a witness who testified that the Petitioner was with the witness and others at the time of the alleged assault of Demetria Morris. Based on this evidence, at the conclusion of the case, the Petitioner requested the submission of an instruction on alibi.

6. The State argued that the Petitioner had waived his right to an alibi instruction, due to Petitioner's failure to comply with the notice requirement of Rule 10, Iowa Rules of Criminal Procedure. Without providing a specific reason, the Trial Court refused to give the requested alibi instruction.

7. In his direct appeal to the Iowa Supreme Court, Petitioner argued that the failure of the Trial Court to instruct the jury on alibi constituted a violation of the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution.

8. Petitioner asserts that the failure of the trial court to give an alibi instruction constituted a fundamental defect which inherently resulted in a complete miscarriage of justice and was an omission which was inconsistent with the rudimentary demands of fair procedure, in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution.

9. Petitioner is entitled to an evidentiary hearing before this Court on the issue of the trial court's failure to give an alibi instruction, for the reason that the state trial court did not afford the Petitioner a full and fair hearing on the criminal charges.

DIVISION III

(Failure of Trial Court to Allow Cross-Examination of Witness)

10. At trial, Petitioner attempted to cross-examine one of the State's primary witnesses, Officer Joe Gonzalez, regarding prior disciplinary action taken against the officer for lying. Officer Gonzalez was not only one of the arresting officers, but was also a primary State witness to the operative facts of the offense with which the Petitioner was charged. The purpose of the cross-examination was to attack the credibility of the witness to show bias, motive and prejudice.

11. The State objected to the cross-examination for the reason that the particular line of questioning was improper impeachment under Rule 609, Iowa Rules of Evidence.

12. The Petitioner made an offer of proof which established that Officer Gonzalez had been suspended previously for lying about an incident which occurred in the course of his duty as a police officer.

13. The trial court refused to allow the admission of the evidence of Officer Gonzalez' prior acts of dishonesty for the reason that this evidence was irrelevant.

14. In his direct appeal to the Iowa Supreme Court, the Petitioner argued that the trial court's denial of Petitioner's right to cross-examine the State's witness constituted a violation of the confrontation clause of the Sixth Amendment, made applicable to the states by the Fourteenth Amendment.

15. Petitioner asserts that the trial court's



Mark Curtis testifying at 1988 trial in Des Moines, Iowa. On October 6, he filed federal appeal of his conviction on frame-up charges of sexual assault and burglary.

failure to allow the cross-examination of one of the State's primary witnesses was a violation of the confrontation clause of the Sixth Amendment, and that the suppression of this evidence was a violation of due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

16. The Petitioner is entitled to an evidentiary hearing on the issue of the suppression of evidence of a State witness's credibility and prior acts of dishonesty, for the reason that the state trial court did not afford the Petitioner a full and fair hearing on the criminal charges.

DIVISION IV

(Failure of Trial Court to Allow Evidence of Institutional Bias)

17. At the state trial, Petitioner sought to introduce the following evidence of institutional bias to support his defense theory of a police frame-up:

a. That the alleged victim's father, Keith Morris, had attacked and caused significant property damage to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee Headquarters at the Pathfinder Bookstore, and that the Polk County Attorney declined to prosecute Mr. Morris;

b. That the Petitioner was beaten and suffered serious injuries, at the hands of Des Moines Police Officers Wolf and Dusenberry at the Des Moines City Jail after Petitioner's arrest, and that officers Wolf and Dusenberry called Petitioner a "Mexican lover, just like you love those coloreds" at the time of the beating, indicating official knowledge of Petitioner's activist work; and

c. That the Petitioner, and several political and activist organizations of which Petitioner was a member, had been subjected to surveillance by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

18. The trial court sustained the State's motion in limine and objections at trial regarding the above-described evidence, for the reason that said evidence was irrelevant.

19. In his direct appeal to the Iowa Supreme Court, the Petitioner argued that the suppression of the evidence of institutional bias was a violation of the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution.

20. The failure of the trial court to allow the Petitioner to introduce relevant evidence of official institutional bias against him, in support of Petitioner's defense theory, constituted a violation of the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, which rendered the entire trial fundamentally unfair and resulted in a miscarriage of justice.

21. The Petitioner is entitled to an evidentiary hearing on the failure of the trial court to admit the above-described evidence, for the reason that this action by the state trial court denied the Petitioner a full and fair hearing on the criminal charges.

DIVISION V

(Failure of the Trial Court to Allow Evidence of the Sexual Assault Of Petitioner's Sister)

22. At the state trial, the Petitioner attempted to testify about his sister's sexual assault, for the purpose of showing that he was not of the character to commit rape, and that his personal convictions were such that he would stop to assist a woman in danger.

23. The trial court deemed that the above-described evidence was not relevant and refused the admission of this proffered testimony.

24. The proffered testimony was relevant on the issue of the Petitioner's character and disposition, and on the defense theory of Petitioner's actions which placed him at the

Morris residence.

25. In his motion for a new trial and direct appeal to the Iowa Supreme Court, the Petitioner argued that the exclusion of this relevant evidence was a violation of the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution.

26. The failure of the trial court to allow the Petitioner to introduce relevant evidence in support of his defense theory, was a violation of the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, which rendered the entire trial fundamentally unfair and resulted in a miscarriage of justice.

27. The Petitioner is entitled to an evidentiary hearing on the issue of the trial court's exclusion of evidence of the sexual assault of his sister, for the reason that this action by the state trial court denied Petitioner a full and fair hearing on the criminal charges.

DIVISION VI

(Trial Court's Failure to Grant Mistrial Based on Jury Misconduct)

28. In his motion for a new trial and in his direct appeal to the Iowa Supreme Court, the Petitioner argued that the following incidents involving members of the jury entitled Petitioner to a mistrial:

a. Removal of the only juror of Mexican-American descent from the jury panel, after the jury was sworn, solely on the basis the juror was familiar with some of the places mentioned during the trial was an abuse of the trial court's discretion and denied Petitioner the right to be tried by a jury representative of a cross-section of the community;

b. Jury misconduct occurred when a juror indicated that he had made up his mind on Petitioner's guilt before the defense presented its evidence, contrary to the admonition to the jury by the trial court; and

c. One of the jurors stated that she did not believe that the State had proved its case against the Petitioner beyond a reasonable doubt, and therefore the verdict was not arrived at through a fair expression on the part of all jurors.

29. The combination of the above-described incidents involving the jury constituted a violation of the Due Process Clause of the United States Constitution which rendered the state trial fundamentally unfair and a miscarriage of justice, entitling petitioner to an evidentiary hearing before the federal district court.

WHEREFORE, Petitioner Mark Stanton Curtis prays that the court order an evidentiary hearing pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2254 for the reason that the state proceedings did not grant to Petitioner a full and fair hearing on the criminal charges; that the Petitioner be released from state custody and a new state trial ordered; and for such other relief as the court deems appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,
s/William L. Kutmus

Framed-up unionist files appeal in Iowa

Continued from front page

is being held solely on the burglary charge.

Curtis was viciously beaten by the police in the city jail after his arrest. As they began to swing their clubs, the cops told Curtis he was a "Mexican-lover, just like you love those coloreds." Curtis sued the Des Moines police for the beating in federal court, and in 1992 he was awarded \$64,000 in damages and attorney fees.

Curtis's appeal of his original conviction was denied by the state court of appeals in 1990. The Supreme Court of Iowa refused to review the decision. The habeas corpus petition filed this month in federal court by attorneys William Kutmus and Jeanne Johnson cites numerous examples of violations of Curtis's constitutional rights that occurred in his trial.

These include not allowing Curtis to present evidence challenging the credibility of arresting officer Joseph Gonzalez; not instructing the jury that the Iowa unionist's alibi during the time of the alleged assault was grounds for acquittal; and refusing to allow Curtis's attorneys to present evidence and a legal case that the Des Moines cops

framed up Curtis because of their institutional bias against him.

Attorneys Kutmus and Johnson will be filing a brief presenting the legal arguments outlined in the writ. If successful, the court could order Curtis's release or that a new trial be held.

At the same time, Curtis and his supporters are demanding that he be released on parole. A delegation from the Mark Curtis Defense Committee met with the Iowa State Parole Board on October 6 to request that Curtis be granted a formal hearing and released on parole.

Limits on habeas corpus

"In addition to Mark's attorneys Bill Kutmus and Jeanne Johnson in Iowa, other constitutional lawyers have helped to prepare this appeal," explained Mark Curtis Defense Committee coordinator John Studer. He noted the contributions of New York attorneys Ed Copeland, Leonard Weinglass, and Dan Williams.

"All have told us Mark's appeal is based on strong legal grounds," said Studer. "At the same time, we are filing it at a time when

the president, Congress, and the U.S. Supreme Court are all working to narrow the right to federal appeals of state convictions." Habeas corpus petitions are an essential tool for all prisoners and have been used by many death row inmates to appeal their state execution sentences in federal court, Studer emphasized. He noted that the *New York Times* pointed out in an August 14 editorial that such petitions are "often the ordinary citizen's only insurance against unconstitutional imprisonment."

The government has been chipping away at the right of inmates to appeal and fight to overturn their state convictions. This bipartisan assault on a basic right of prisoners has been deepened by the Clinton administration in its 1993 "crime bill," which is being rapidly shepherded through Congress by Democratic senator Joseph Biden from Delaware.

"This appeal will be a tool for supporters to use to reach out and win new support. The key to winning Mark's freedom is building a powerful movement of unionists, political activists and supporters of democratic rights to press for his release," said Studer.

1928-93: 'Militant' only publishes with your help

BY SARA LOBMAN

As we head into week one of the \$75,000 Militant and Perspectiva Mundial Fund, I thought readers might enjoy a journey back in time to the very first campaign to raise money for the *Militant*.

When James Cannon, Martin Abern, and Max Shachtman began planning the first issue of the *Militant* just 65 years ago, they had no idea how it would be paid for. The three working-class leaders, just expelled from the Communist Party for opposing the thuggery and counterrevolutionary course of Joseph Stalin in the Soviet Union, had no money of their own.

A local printer agreed to print the first issue on credit and supporters in Chicago scrounged up a little cash. The new paper promised to come out twice a month. The second issue ran an advertisement for the first *Militant* fundraising event — a "Cabaret and Dance" to be held in New York on Dec. 1, 1928.

The paper was able to keep its promise to come out every other week. It printed documents smuggled out of the Soviet Union from those leading the fight against Stalin and his followers. It covered the union organizing campaigns and strikes in the textile mills of North Carolina and the debates and discussions among coal miners in the Illi-

nois coalfields and garment workers in New York. In short, it provided fighting workers with the news and analysis they needed to learn from previous struggles and to be better and more effective fighters in the battles of the day.

Fight for the 'weekly Militant'

In early 1929, the *Militant* placed a challenge before its readers. If \$2,000 was collected, the editors said, the *Militant* could end its semimonthly schedule. The final leg of this campaign was launched in September. Two months later — in a fitting celebration of the 12th anniversary of the Russian revolution — the *Militant* would become a weekly!

"The huge requirements of the present moment demand... publication as a WEEKLY MILITANT," a column in the paper launching the drive said. "The publication of the *Militant* as a WEEKLY will enable us to deal more promptly and in greater detail with the general struggle of the American and world working class, to consider its problems, to fight by its side in every daily battle against the class enemy."

The first weekly issue of the paper was dated November 30, 1929. "We can publish the *Militant* regularly and improve it with each issue only with YOUR aid," the pre-

ceding issue had explained. To that end, the *Militant* launched a Sustaining Fund on the heels of the successful fund for the weekly. The goal, the editors said, was to "establish a firm foundation under our feet."

"If you can give an outright donation of money, send it in immediately," *Militant* readers were asked. "If you can make a pledge to send in a sum of money each week... no matter how large or small the pledge may be, let us know right away."

Fund and circulation drive go together

Six and a half decades later, the *Militant* still comes out regularly and improves with each issue only through the support of our readers. As we go to press, we're still two days away from the official October 9 opening of the Fund. But already several areas report a good response.

The \$75,000 Fund was announced after supporters in Newark, New Jersey, had already made plans for *Militant* managing editor Argiris Malapanis to speak at a Militant Labor Forum about his recent trip to Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank. The program was quickly rearranged to allow the chairperson to make a short presentation on the fund. A pass-the-hat collection netted \$55.

Just days later, a rail worker — also from

New Jersey — decided to renew his subscription to the paper for a year. When he heard about the fund, he pulled out \$100 and told the *Militant* to keep the difference — a \$55 contribution.

Malapanis will be heading to Birmingham, Alabama, for the first weekend of the fund drive. He'll speak at a Militant Labor Forum scheduled to coincide with a meeting of socialist trade unionists who are members of the United Steelworkers of America.

Last week, bundles of the reprint of the special August issue of *International Socialist Review* were shipped to distributors around the world. Titled "Expanding the production of revolutionary literature," the supplement includes a two-page spread on the history and circulation of the *Militant* as well as many pictures and articles on the challenge of producing revolutionary books and newspapers from the *Communist Manifesto* through today. Supporters are encouraged to have plenty on hand for the fund drive.

Next week's *Militant* will report on the goals that local areas have decided to take as their part in fighting for the \$75,000 fund. Contributions received in the business office by 5:00 p.m. EDT on Tuesday will be counted toward that week's goal.

Atlanta socialist candidate fights ballot exclusion

BY SUSAN LaMONT

ATLANTA — Supporters of Bob Braxton, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Atlanta, are locked in a battle with city authorities to defend the socialists' right to be placed on the ballot for the November election.

Olivia Parks Woods, clerk of the Atlanta City Council, notified Braxton September 29 that he did not have enough signatures to qualify for ballot status.

The socialist candidate and campaign supporters had filed 7,500 signatures September 13 — more than double the 3,587 required to appear on the ballot. Braxton, a member of United Auto Workers Local 8882, was told he was 540 signatures short of the requirement.

Supporters of Braxton launched a vigorous protest campaign that has received

backing and widespread media attention. Braxton has appeared on seven radio talk shows. The campaign called a picket line in front of city hall October 1, and issued an open letter to working people in Atlanta headlined, "Atlanta Mayoral Ballot: No Workers Need Apply!" The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, the city's major daily, and the *Atlanta Enquirer* covered the picket line.

"This move to exclude the only working class candidate from the ballot is not only a slap in the face for the 7,500 Atlantans who signed my petition," Braxton wrote. "It is a serious attack on the democratic rights of all working people in the city. I and my supporters petitioned all summer to win public support for my right to be on the ballot — at shopping centers, on demonstrations and picket lines, at MARTA [subway] stops, and door-to-door. We explained that working

people need our own party, our own program; that the ballot should be opened up so that working people can run for office; that it's the democratic right of working people to have access to all points of view during the elections and to be able to vote for the candidate of their choice," the letter continues.

Two other candidates for mayor, A. Amen Ra and James Coleman, attended the October 1 City Hall picket line to show their support for Braxton's right to be on the ballot. Amen

Ra is the candidate of the Black Power Party. A number of city workers coming in and out of city hall also expressed support for the socialist's fight.

Messages demanding Braxton's name be placed on the ballot can be sent to Mack A. Dennis, Director, Fulton County Department of Registration and Elections, 141 Pryor St. SW, Suite 4075, Atlanta, GA 30303-3460. Please send copies to Socialist Workers Campaign, 172 Trinity Ave. SW, Atlanta, GA 30303.

Cuban foreign minister addresses UN

BY SARA LOBMAN

UNITED NATIONS — Cuban foreign minister Roberto Robaina condemned the U.S.-led embargo against his country in a speech to the General Assembly here October 4.

Calling the embargo "inhuman," Robaina pointed out that it prevents the Cuban people from "purchasing drugs essential for health," curtails their ability to "acquire resources to satisfy our material and social well-being," and threatens "our peace and daily life."

"To live in a sovereign and unyielding country is a crime for which 2 million children are threatened to pay with their lives," the Cuban leader said, noting that the General Assembly resolution calling for an end to the embargo, adopted last November, had been "welcomed by international public opinion."

"A genuine revolution succeeded in my country," Robaina said. "We have continued our project even when international circumstances have radically changed. . . . We demand that the path we have selected be respected."

United Nations is not democratic

"The United Nations has not been nor is democratic," Robaina said, pointing to the fact that Washington and governments in a handful of imperialist countries control all Security Council decisions. "A veto privilege linked with the might of states is inadmissible," he said.

Robaina called for the election of all members of the Security Council and for greater representation for the nations of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean than is currently the case. "The full democratization of the Security Council would

demand . . . the elimination of the veto privilege and the institution of a single category of members," he said.

Human rights, the Cuban foreign minister stated, are threatened by "the deterioration of the ozone layer, by the pollution of the environment . . . by the exhaustion of arable land, and by the constant increase in the legions of the undernourished and underemployed."

"While it is said that the dangers of a nuclear holocaust have disappeared," he said, "poverty and underdevelopment are perpetuated. Millions of men, women, and children unavoidably die each year."

'Beams of light'

"Nevertheless," Robaina said, "our planet shows some beams of light." He applauded the recently signed Israeli-PLO accord as "a preliminary measure [that] recognizes Palestinian autonomy over part of the occupied territories."

"We hope that this development constitutes an effective step towards the full restitution of the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to have their own state, in their national territory, and to the withdrawal of Israel from the other occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem," he stated.

Calling the opportunity to hear African National Congress president Nelson Mandela speak at an earlier United Nations session a "high honor," Robaina said, "We are encouraged by his confidence in the future and we sincerely hope that the process of dialogue now being carried out . . . will be conducive to the establishment of a united, democratic, and nonracial South Africa. We are ready to contribute with our modest efforts to that end."



Militant/Linda Joyce
Bob Braxton, right, and supporters of right to be on ballot picket Atlanta city hall.

CALENDAR

IOWA

Des Moines

Back from Cuba. Jon Torgerson, Drake University professor of philosophy reports on his recent Freedom to Travel Challenge Trip. Introduction by Rev. James Nelson, director, Wesley Foundation. Tues., Oct. 19, 7 p.m. Drake University, Bulldog Theater Olmsted Center. Sponsored by Drake University Department of Philosophy and Religion; Drake Wesley Foundation; Friends of Cuba/Iowa; and Rev. James Nelson, director Wesley Foundation. For more information call (515) 271-3170.

NEBRASKA

Omaha

Back from Cuba. Reports by five members of the Nebraska delegation on their recent Freedom to Travel Challenge Trip. Sat., Oct. 23, 7 p.m. Chicano Awareness Center, 4821 South 24th Street. For more information contact Doug Lee-

Regier at (402) 553-0945.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

African Cuban Cultural Rally. Harlem welcomes Cuban foreign minister Roberto Robaina. Sat., Oct. 9, 1 p.m. 125th St. and Adam Clayton Powell Blvd. For more information call (718) 712-5447 or (212) 926-5757.

Protest Washington's Economic Embargo of Cuba. Rally in front of the United Nations. Thurs., Oct. 14, 4:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. 42nd St. and 1st Ave. For more information, call the Cuba Information Project at (212) 227-3422, or the U.S. Hands Off Cuba Committee at (718) 601-4751.

End the Racist Occupation of Somalia. International Days of Protest October 29-30. Rally and march. Fri., Oct. 29. Assemble at 5 p.m. Times Square Recruiting Station (43rd St. and Broadway). For more information call, International Action Center at (212) 633-6646.

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END OF WEEK FIVE

Somalia, Russia events make 'Militant' even more valuable

BY NAOMI CRAINE

"The events in Somalia have started a big discussion at work," said Danny Booher, a member of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union from Boston. "One worker said, 'We should blow them [the Somalis] up.' Another worker, who is from Lebanon, argued against U.S. intervention."

Some of the workers in Booher's plant compared what's happening in Somalia to the U.S.-led war against Iraq, especially the ones who had read *New International* no. 7, which features the article "Opening Guns of World War III — Washington's Assault on Iraq."

The debates opening up over the U.S. war in Somalia, the growing destabilization in Russia and Haiti, and other developments in world politics make the *Militant*, its Spanish-language sister publication *Perspectiva Mundial*, and the Marxist magazine *New International* more valuable than ever to workers and young people who want to fight for justice.

Supporters of the socialist press are now into the second half of an international effort to win new readers. At the end of the fifth week of the 10-week circulation drive, sales of all three publications were significantly behind schedule. Readers in several areas report that the current target week effort is paying off, however, and with consistent work, it will be possible to get back on track in the coming weeks.

Militant supporters who are members of the United Auto Workers have raised their goal to 150 *Militant* subscriptions. Amy Husk from Cleveland described the success of sales teams outside the auto plants there. One of her coworkers got a leaflet at the plant gate and had already filled out the *Militant* coupon on it when she asked him to subscribe.

Supporters in Chicago also report success in selling six *Militant*



Militant sales at September 22 antiracist demonstration in Montreal. More than 1,000 people protested the presence of four delegates from rightist National Front of France at convention there.

subscriptions on the job in the first few days of the target week.

One of the keys to sales is putting in the hours. Eight *Militant* readers from Boston took turns staffing a table at the University of Massachusetts for eight hours one day, which netted five *Militant* subscriptions and four *New International*s. They went back for several hours over the next three days, and sold a total of 12 subscriptions and 6 *New International*s on that campus.

A two-day team to Ohio University in Athens showed the value of getting teams out into the region. *Militant* supporters from Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Morgantown, West Virginia joined forces to sell 11 subscriptions to the *Militant*, 2 to *Perspectiva Mundial*, 2 *New International*s, and 71 single copies of the *Militant*.

Militant readers in New Zealand have also been hitting the

campuses. Ruth Gray reported that two special teams traveled to Palmerston North and Wellington, selling a total of 50 single copies on campuses and at shopping centers. Ten students signed up to receive the socialist paper, including several who renewed their subscriptions. One of the renewals was sold at a national march on Parliament in Wellington to protest cuts in education funds. The subscriber also picked up the Pathfinder pamphlet *Panama: The Truth about the U.S. Invasion*.

A weekly table at the University of Houston that has generated regular sales of five or six single copies of the *Militant* "paid off last week, when we sold six *Militants*, three subscriptions, and a *New International*," Robbie Scherr faxed in.

The challenge is now to use the momentum from the target week to get on schedule before the end of the drive.

Australia meeting condemns attacks on Pathfinder, Black Rose bookshops

BY DOUG COOPER

SYDNEY, Australia — Nearly 40 people joined in a speakout at the Communication Workers Union here September 18 to defend democratic rights and protest right-wing violence. The meeting was sponsored by Pathfinder Books in response to two incidents aimed at intimidating working people and political activists: vandalism on August 30 by anonymous right-wingers who spray painted swastikas and threats across the front of the Pathfinder bookshop; and an August 5 arson attack against the Black Rose Anarchist Bookshop.

Speakers included Joy Balazo, the secretary for human rights of the Social Responsibility and Justice Committee of the Uniting Church; Suzanne for the Black Rose Collective; Bob Aiken, Pathfinder Books manager; and Michael Schembri, of Lesbian and Gay Solidarity.

Mary McNish, honorary secretary of the NSW Council for Civil

Liberties, sent a message opposing "physical violence by groups of mindless thugs. What these destroyers are opposed to is the free play of ideas," she said.

Suzanne described the attack on the Black Rose Bookshop and explained that the cops were continuing frame-up efforts against a collective member who they deem a "main suspect" because he was one of the first people on the scene.

Joy Balazo from the Uniting Church described a series of right-wing attacks several years ago against clergy and parishioners involved in antiracist activities. T-shirts impregnated with chemical irritants were sent to parishioners' children, a Uniting Church and the home of its pastor were spread with feces, and death threats were made. The attacks culminated with a shotgun assault on the home of then African National Congress representative in Australia Eddie Funde. The attacks stopped only when police were forced to respond because

of a public outcry.

Bob Aiken, the Pathfinder bookshop manager, pointed to the importance of broadly supported protests that involve the labor movement and all other defenders of democratic rights as the best way to defend working people today and prepare for future battles.

Several messages of solidarity were sent to the meeting, including from Peter Sams, assistant secretary of the Labor Council of New South Wales, the statewide union body; Sandra Nori, Labor Party member of the NSW parliament for the Port Jackson electorate; Susan Blackwell, executive director of the Australian Book Publishers Association; and Rev. Dorothy McRae-McMahon, director for the Commission for Mission of the National Assembly of the Uniting Church.

Doug Cooper is a member of the National Union of Workers and works at the Weston Biscuit Co. in Sydney.

The MILITANT PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL NEW INTERNATIONAL

	SOLD / GOAL		SOLD / GOAL		SOLD / GOAL	
UNITED STATES						
Houston	44	60	73%	7	15	5
Miami*	64	120	53%	19	50	19
Los Angeles*	98	190	52%	42	95	6
St. Louis	38	75	51%	1	8	0
Cincinnati*	7	14	50%	0	2	0
Philadelphia*	50	100	50%	10	25	5
Detroit	40	85	47%	3	10	6
Pittsburgh	40	85	47%	4	8	4
Boston	50	115	43%	13	30	23
Seattle	29	70	41%	0	15	0
Greensboro, NC	31	75	41%	0	10	0
Denver	4	10	40%	0	2	0
Portland, OR	6	15	40%	2	2	2
San Francisco	47	120	39%	11	35	0
Cleveland	26	75	35%	0	5	0
Morgantown, WV	22	65	34%	1	3	1
Newark, NJ	42	130	32%	10	40	10
Salt Lake City, UT	25	85	29%	3	15	3
Baltimore	20	70	29%	4	10	20
Des Moines, IA	25	90	28%	11	40	4
Chicago	35	130	27%	8	30	6
Birmingham, AL	20	75	27%	0	10	0
New Haven, CT	4	15	27%	1	3	0
Twin Cities, MN	29	110	26%	2	18	0
Atlanta	21	80	26%	4	10	0
New York	35	135	26%	7	45	1
Brooklyn, NY	30	130	23%	6	40	5
Washington, DC	15	75	20%	5	15	1
Albany, NY	0	5	0%	0	2	0
Albuquerque, NM	0	2	0%	0	1	0
U.S. TOTAL	897	2,406	37%	174	594	101
AUSTRALIA	12	35	34%	0	10	5
BELGIUM	0	5	0%	0	4	0
BRITAIN						
London	24	65	37%	1	5	8
Manchester	12	40	30%	0	1	0
Sheffield	8	35	23%	0	3	0
Britain Total	44	140	31%	1	9	8
CANADA						
Toronto	28	85	33%	4	15	10
Vancouver	16	70	23%	2	10	7
Montreal	17	70	24%	4	12	40
Canada Total	61	225	27%	10	37	17
FRANCE*	5	10	50%	1	3	9
GERMANY	1	—	0%	0	—	0
GREECE	6	9	67%	1	1	4
ICELAND	4	10	40%	0	1	0
NEW ZEALAND						
Christchurch	21	35	60%	0	1	2
Auckland	42	65	65%	3	6	4
New Zealand Total	63	100	63%	3	7	6
PUERTO RICO	0	2	0%	3	5	2
SWEDEN	20	60	33%	12	20	24
TOTAL	1,136	3,002	38%	205	691	176
SHOULD BE	1,500	3,000	50%	350	700	600

*raised goal

IN THE UNIONS

	SOLD / GOAL		SOLD / GOAL		SOLD / GOAL	
UNITED STATES						
ACTWU	14	32	44%	3	12	2
OCAW	29	75	39%	0	—	0
UTU	29	86	34%	2	2	0
USWA	26	85	31%	4	3	0
UMWA	18	60	30%	0	2	0
UFCW	16	55	29%	4	38	0
UAW*	40	150	27%	4	10	0
ILGWU	5	20	25%	10	25	3
IAM	20	90	22%	3	—	0
U.S. Total	197	653	30%	30	92	5
AUSTRALIA						
AMEU	2	3	67%	0	—	0
FPU	2	3	67%	0	—	1
NUW	0	2	0%	0	—	0
Australia Total	4	8	50%	0	—	1
BRITAIN						
RMT	9	12	75%	0	—	0
TGWU	4	7	57%	0	—	0
AEEU	1	3	33%	0	—	0
Britain Total	14	22	64%	0	—	0
CANADA						
IAM	3	6	50%	0	—	1
CAW	2	9	22%	0	1	0
USWA	1	13	8%	0	2	1
ACTWU	2	2	0%	0	—	0
Canada Total	6	30	20%	0	3	2
NEW ZEALAND						
EU	2	7	29%	0	—	0
UFBGWU	2	8	25%	0	—	1
MWU	0	2	0%	0	—	0
New Zealand Total	4	17	24%	0	—	1
SWEDEN						
Food workers	0	3	0%	0	—	3
Metal workers	1	5	20%	0	—	0
Transport workers	0	2	0%	0	—	0
Sweden Total	1	10	10%	0	—	3

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; NUM — 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

Youth from across Canada participate in three-week solidarity brigade in Cuba

BY JOHN MUNORU
AND ANNETTE KOURI

HAVANA, Cuba — More than 100 people from across Canada, most of them youth, participated in a three-week voluntary agricultural work brigade in August in solidarity with Cuba. This was the largest brigade ever from Canada with volunteers coming from Toronto; Montreal; Vancouver, British Columbia; and Edmonton, Alberta.

The participants stayed on the campus of the José Antonio Echevarría Superior Polytechnic Institute (ISPJAE), an engineering university on the outskirts of Havana. Brigades from Spain, Mexico, and Venezuela also shared the campus. About 100 Cuban students from the university, who gave up two weeks vacation time to participate in a voluntary labor minibrigade, were also housed here as were many students from other countries, most of them African.

The work day started with a wake-up call to music at 6:30 a.m. Members of the brigade would jump out of their mosquito nets and hurry to clean and tidy up so as to be punctual for a breakfast of milk and bread, which was served in a special work kitchen shared with the Cuban students from ISPJAE.

Organized into four teams, they joined the Cuban youth in working on banana plantations, sweet potato fields, and sorting soybeans in fields that were part of the campus. Teams were also sent to cut grass and vegetation on university grounds. The work was done with machetes because of the lack of fuel and spare parts for the grass mower. This was one example of the serious economic crisis facing Cuba, which was triggered by the collapse of trade with the former Soviet Union and eastern Europe, the country's major trading partners until 1990, and exacerbated by the continuing 33-year-long U.S. economic blockade.

Living and working conditions

Working and living in Cuba brought youth from Canada face to face with the reality of living conditions in Cuba today. Some of the *brigadistas* had not anticipated the extent of the hardships. They saw the reality of shortages of fuel, foodstuffs, construction materials, and spare parts. Food shortages meant invariably eating meals of rice and beans, occasionally served with chicken. Sometimes fruits were also available.

The brigadistas were told that the food they ate was far better than what students at the university normally eat. It was not only the scarcity and quality of food that dramatized the situation but also the long lines of people waiting for overloaded buses, the rationing of electricity, and a notable increase in prostitution and crime. On one occasion, members of the brigade had paid



Militant/John Munoru
Volunteers from Canada sort soybeans on grounds of José Antonio Echevarría Polytechnic Institute. More than 100 people joined brigade.

to attend a famous disco playing Cuban music in downtown Havana. They arrived and found the entire city plunged into darkness as a result of the rationing of electricity.

While touring Old Havana, some of the youth from Canada had caps snatched from their heads by Cuban youth on bicycles. Lucy from Montreal had her purse stolen in a crowded bus, but a member of the Union of Young Communists (UJC) pursued the youth and recovered it. Such developments sparked debates and discussion about the situation in Cuba today. Brigadistas also had to deal with children begging for money in Havana.

Eduardo, one of the UJC leaders on the voluntary work team, discussed some of these social problems. He explained that the crisis prompted the majority of Cubans to respond through solidarity but that some respond by pursuing selfish ends.

"Everybody gets food rations and everyone is assured of health and education; nobody is left homeless," he said. "However some Cubans have opted for crime, prostitution, black-market activities, and wanting to go to Miami, but these are a small minority." Eduardo added that hundreds of thousands have volunteered to do agricultural work, indicating that the majority are responding through a collective effort.

This elicited further discussions. Eduardo organized his team to be able to have 30-minute daily talks with the youth from Canada on the situation in Cuba.

"The question of becoming self-sufficient in food production is a political question," said Ana Ibis López, the secretary general

of the UJC, in a meeting with some members of the brigade. "This university was almost closed down two years ago because of food shortages," she said. López explained that the government freed up 70 acres of sugarcane land around the campus for food production and mobilized voluntary labor brigades to plant crops.

"Now foodstuffs such as sweet potatoes, vegetables, bananas, and others are available to the students at the university," López said.

Lively discussions and debates in French, English, and Spanish — often all at once — broke out at the work site and continued during meals. After lunch and a short rest work continued.

In the evenings, back at the university, discussions on Cuban politics, education, and culture were organized with government officials, Communist Party members, and student leaders.

Legacy of Che Guevara

One key to responding to the economic crisis has been the organization of the volunteer agricultural brigades. Young people are the backbone of this movement in Cuba today.

"Cuban youth are becoming more political, more Cuban, and more revolutionary," as they participate in voluntary labor, López said. This is why young people are studying the ideas of Che Guevara, who was the leading advocate of voluntary labor in the early years of the revolution, she explained. Guevara, born in Argentina, became one of the central leaders of the Cuban revolution.

Many Cuban students talked about the errors made in the 1970s when voluntary labor was neglected. Che's ideas were not studied, and the goal of self-sufficiency in food was abandoned as the revolution relied more and more on its economic ties with the former Soviet Union.

Sere, a student from Burkina Faso, said that Cuba's reliance on the Soviet economic model was wrong. He said that any aid Cuba was getting from the Soviet Union should have helped the country become self-sufficient in food but the opposite happened. He pointed out that Thomas Sankara, the slain leader of the revolution in Burkina Faso, a country in West Africa, once said that "aid should assassinate aid."

Voluntary labor in Cuba was revived through the "rectification process" in the late 1980s, which was centered on the mobilization of hundreds of thousands of Cubans to build housing, child-care centers, and other facilities needed by working people.

Gilbert Olivera, a 20-year-old UJC member and a student at the university, explained how in response to the call to fight for food self-sufficiency Cuban youth have formed the Che Guevara movement. Youth who do more than 65 hours of voluntary labor become members. Thousands have surpassed this goal. "The number 65 is significant because Che would have turned 65 last June," Gilbert said.

Many Cuban students had different opinions on the recent government measures to decriminalize possession and use of the U.S.

dollar, a step announced July 26th by Cuban president Fidel Castro. Eduardo, one of the UJC leaders at ISPJAE, felt that the measures "were necessary during this special period." He said it was needed to deal with a developing black market but added that this could also create inequality because not many Cubans could have access to dollars.

Others compared this measure with the decision of the Cuban government to prioritize the development of tourism as a way to bring hard currency into the country. One woman who works as a secretary said that the measure will create divisiveness and inequality in the society. She felt that tourists are already being put ahead of Cubans. "They have special hotels, special buses, and are given preferential treatment in shops," she said.

In the many discussions that took place, the brigadistas expressed their views about Cuba. In the main, it was the solidarity of the Cuban people and the collective response of thousands to the crisis that most impressed brigade members.

"People in Cuba are facing tremendous challenges," said Rachel from Montreal. "I admire their solidarity and how they organize their social priorities. Despite the long lines to get food or the long wait for buses, the Cubans show extraordinary cooperation and solidarity. How would Montreal look with similar problems?"

Antonio, from Edmonton, said, "I come from Chile, but I came to Cuba because the Cuban way is the way to go" for Latin America.

'Cuba deserves solidarity'

John, also from Edmonton, said he liked the "cleanliness" of the revolution and the fact it was not "betrayed" like the revolution in the former Soviet Union. In interviews with the Cuban press, John stated that Cuba deserved solidarity because it sent troops to Angola to help defeat South Africa's racist army.

Mike, an admirer of the Cuban revolution from Sudbury, Ontario, thought one task given to the brigadistas was like a punishment. Soybeans that had been left in a damp place had to be sorted and husked by hand in the heat with insects flying around in a former pigsty, a task taking hours. He had suggested that they be left to dry in the sun and then crushed, but an inexperienced Cuban volunteer insisted it had to be done the original way. An elderly farmer came by and agreed with Mike. Then the work was reorganized and proceeded quickly.

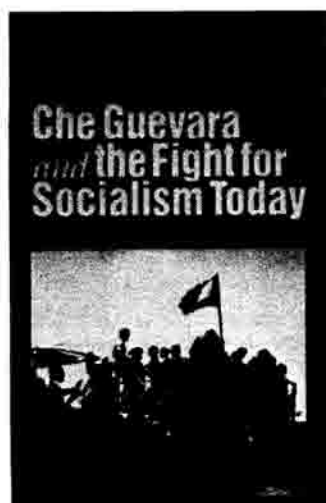
Many Cuban youth were eager to learn about the situation in Canada. They were surprised to hear that a large number of students have to work part-time to pay for their tuition. Some Cubans were very interested in discussing the struggle of the Quebecois for national rights. They were also surprised to learn of the large number of unemployed people in Canada and the level of homelessness and poverty. But they were very happy about the solidarity with Cuba that brigadistas expressed.

A highlight of the trip was the visit of brigadistas with the Cuban hunger strikers near the U.S. Interests Section in Havana, who were carrying out a solidarity action in support of hunger strikers in the United States. They were demanding release of a bus being held by U.S. customs officials that was being driven to Cuba as part of the U.S./Cuba Friendship caravan, which successfully challenged the U.S. economic blockade.

The Canadian brigadistas signed a petition addressed to U.S. president Bill Clinton demanding release of the bus and the immediate lifting of the blockade. Washington eventually felt under enough pressure and released the bus.

Brigade members returned to Canada committed to getting out the truth about the struggle of the Cuban people. Daniella, a student at York University in Toronto, and Claudia said they would like to organize campus meetings and radio interviews to tell the truth about Cuba.

John Munoru and Annette Kouri were participants in the brigade from Canada. Gary Watson, a member of the Canadian Autoworkers union, and Brigitte Grioux contributed to this article.



CHE GUEVARA AND THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM TODAY

Cuba Confronts the World Crisis of the '90s

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

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Businessman wins fight against ban on travel to Cuba

BY JANICE LYNN

ALEXANDRIA, Virginia — Daniel Walsh runs Liberation Graphics, a poster and greeting card consulting business specializing in art and dissent. He recently won a seven-year battle against the U.S. government for the right to travel to Cuba.

On September 3, Walsh was the first person granted a license to conduct business in Cuba under amended Treasury Department regulations. He plans to meet with artists and others in Cuba to make arrangements to bring back Cuban political posters.

Walsh explained in an interview that these posters with their vivid images and brilliant colors "are the best political graphics in the hemisphere and have affected all poster art around the world for the last 30 years."

Walsh said he considered this an important victory. "We won because the American people honestly believe in the free flow of ideas and information. We don't like censorship," he said.

Walsh said his victory "could open up opportunities for others to visit countries like Cuba without the government telling us we can't get another point of view."

For seven years, Treasury officials had insisted that Walsh transact his business by telephone or mail and denied him the right to travel to Cuba and spend any money there.

But on June 29, the Treasury Department published new travel regulations authorizing transactions "in appropriate cases" for humanitarian purposes; clearly defined educational or religious activity by recognized human rights organizations; public performances or exhibits; and for the import or export of information or informational materials. There are still a number of conditions placed on the license and it is up to Treasury Department officials to determine "appropriate cases."

A September 4 *Washington Post* editorial, commenting on Walsh's victory, called for upholding the right to travel and the right to receive information.

The *Post* editors explained that while technically, travel to Cuba is not banned, the U.S. embargo prohibits U.S. residents from spending dollars in Cuba.

"There are a few exceptions for researchers, journalists, and those having

close relatives in Cuba," the *Post* editors noted. "But the average American cannot go unless someone in Cuba is willing to pick up the tab for all his expenses."

The *Post* editors asked, "Why should funds that allow for travel and promote the exchange of ideas and information be restricted?"

In another challenge to the travel ban a "Freedom to Travel" trip to Cuba October 10-17 is being planned. It will involve prominent political and entertainment figures.

These moves to open up travel and the free flow of information between the United States and Cuba are part of a broader campaign to pressure the U.S. government to end its 33-year-old embargo against the Cuban people.

Freedom to Travel to Cuba trip gains support

BY PAUL MONTAUK

SAN FRANCISCO — The October 3 send-off celebration organized by the Freedom To Travel Committee was a rounding success. The large home where the party was held was packed wall to wall when the announcement was made that 180 people from 25 states across the United States are packing their bags and preparing for a historic confrontation with the U.S. government over the right of U.S. citizens to travel to Cuba. The large group will depart for Havana from Cancún, Mexico, October 10 on a Cuban airliner and return October 17.

This action follows the recent success of the U.S.-Cuba Friendshipment which delivered 100 tons of humanitarian aid to Cuba in August.

Tom Hansen from Pastors for Peace, which spearheaded the Friendshipment, will be joining this trip.

The travelers range in age from 4 to 87. U.S. regulations make it illegal for U.S. residents to spend money in Cuba. For committing the "crime" of exercising their constitutional right to travel, these 180 people risk fines of \$300,000 and up to 10 years in prison.

One of the challengers, Teresa Walsh,

received medical assistance in Cuba after U.S. hospitals refused to provide rehabilitative therapy for her spinal cord injury because she had no medical insurance. An ABC news reporter will be participating.

Over \$30,000 worth of medicines collected by Dr. Hesham Ragab will be carried by the challengers to a pediatric hospital in Havana. Many are also bringing much-needed items for gifts such as soap, toilet paper, and toothpaste.

When this endeavor was first announced by Global Exchange, the organizers hoped that 50 people would participate. But support mushroomed and the phones at Global

Exchange in San Francisco are still ringing with more requests to go.

Attorneys from the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Lawyers Guild will be meeting the challengers when their flights arrive back from Cuba and are required to go through customs. Participants will return from Cuba in groups. The committee organizing the trip is also urging that as many people as possible come to the airports when the groups arrive to show support and welcome people back. For more information on the particulars call Freedom to Travel Committee, (415) 558-9490. FAX (415) 255-7498.



International Trade Union Co

Militant/John Steele

More than 250 unionists from across the United States and Canada participated in a conference in solidarity with Cuba in Toronto October 1-3. Cuban trade union leaders (from left to right) Albis Nubia Favier Ramirez, Manuel Montero Bistilleiro, Cuban translator, and Angel Luis Mena Kindelan spoke to the gathering as a part of two-week visit to Canada.

Meetings in Britain, U.S. give boost to Books for Cuba Fund

BY HUGH ROBERTSON

MANCHESTER, England — More than £100 was raised for the Books for Cuba Fund at a program at the Pathfinder Bookstore here September 11. The public event was organized to celebrate the expansion of Pathfinder Press.

Pathfinder, a New York-based publishing house which publishes books and pamphlets that generalize the lessons learned in struggle by the modern working class, started the fund in response to requests from schools and libraries in Cuba for donations of books. Volumes already donated include the writings and speeches of revolutionary leaders such as Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, V. I. Lenin, Ernesto Che Guevara, Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, Leon Trotsky, and Malcolm X.

Grazyna Maresch, a laid-off engineering worker, and Pete Kennedy, a rail worker, each gave presentations to the meeting. Both had participated in the volunteer construction project that renovated the Pathfinder building in New York.

BY BARRY FATLAND

LOS ANGELES — Nearly 60 people attended a reception and meeting here September 18 that raised close to \$1,400 in contributions and pledges for the Books for Cuba Fund.

Three drivers on the recent U.S.-Cuba

Friendshipment caravan — Mary Ann Schmidt, Kevin Jones, and Dr. Hesham Ragab — spoke at the event. The caravan defied the U.S. embargo of Cuba by delivering 100 tons of material aid to the island. The meeting was chaired by Mark Friedman, a Pathfinder sales representative in southern California.

Schmidt, who was part of the team that organized a public fight to demand that the U.S. government release a school bus it was refusing to allow to cross into Mexico, explained that she was donating \$100 to the fund, in spite of the 10 percent pay cut she had just received as a Los Angeles public school teacher. Pathfinder books, she said, help people in Cuba understand the world.

Ragab reported that many of the Pathfinder books he has brought with him to Cuba on previous trips are each passed around and read by many people.

Jones, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for Los Angeles city comptroller and a member of the United Auto Workers at McDonnell Douglas, explained that the books Pathfinder produces are important, not only for Cubans, but for all those fighting for their rights.

With the contributions from Los Angeles and Manchester, the Books for Cuba Fund stands at \$4,914. Further contributions should be earmarked "Books for Cuba Fund" and sent to the Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

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Miners win support; Clinton backs bosses

BY GREG ROSENBERG

The Clinton administration has lined up with the coal bosses and other enemies of the labor movement in a Supreme Court case against the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

Clinton's Justice Department filed a friend-of-the-court brief against the UMWA in late September. The mine workers are appealing \$52 million in fines leveled against them in the wake of their victory against Pittston Coal Co. in 1990. The fines would rip a huge chunk from the UMWA strike fund. In his brief, the administration's solicitor general, Drew Days III, said the fines did not violate the Constitution.

Oral arguments before the Supreme Court are expected sometime in December.

As the current strike by 18,000 miners in seven states entered its fifth month, solidarity tours by UMWA members are reaching out for support to working people across the country, helping to cut across a news blackout by the big-business press.

Meanwhile, negotiations continue between another Clinton administration appointee, federal mediator William Utery, and the UMWA. No details on the talks have been released. Prior "offers" from the coal bosses were total concession packages.

BY MARK SEVERS

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Two striking members of the UMWA toured the state of Alaska for six days. Jerry Kellerman and Dan Spinnie from southern Illinois spoke at union gatherings in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Kenai.



Miners joined rally in York, Pennsylvania, October 1 to support members of the United Auto Workers who have been fighting for a contract with Caterpillar for two years.

Spinnie explained the main issue in the strike to a meeting of the Fairbanks Central Labor Council. "The mine bosses have been closing down union mines, then leasing the mineral property rights to nonunion subsidiaries, increasing profits by cutting wages. They take the profits and everything with them to the new mines except the union miners who made it possible," he said.

At the Fairbanks meeting, Kellerman explained that in order for the UMWA to win this strike, they must receive the support of all working people in the United States. "Probably the two events that have inspired me most since the strike began," he said, "were the solidarity strikes of coal miners in Australia and factory workers at a battery plant in South Africa."

The two strikers were warmly received

by unionists in Fairbanks, interviewed by the local TV stations, and a lengthy article on their stay in Fairbanks appeared a few days later in the *Fairbanks News Miner*.

Mark Severs is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 2202 in Seattle.

BY JOHN COX

HOMER CITY, Pennsylvania — A coal truck driver drove his vehicle into a mine workers picket line September 23, injuring striking UMWA member Warren Frederick. His truck was immediately surrounded by picketing miners. Pennsylvania state troopers stationed across the street from the entrance to the power plant initially claimed they didn't see the incident. When they were told that picketing UMWA members had recorded the attack on videotape, the cops took the driver into custody. Truck driver Timothy Pugliese was later arraigned on charges of simple assault and released on \$2,500 bond.

Nick Molnar, president of UMWA District 2, said the union set up an informational picket line outside Homer City Penn/Ellec Generating Station to expose the company's practice of encouraging coal truck drivers to bring in overloaded vehicles. This is not only illegal, but creates a dangerous situation on roads traveled by the trucks.

Violent and provocative actions by drivers — encouraged by the coal operators — are nothing new. A few days after the incident near Homer City, truckers attempted to sabotage cars driven by UMWA members with jackrocks, used to flatten tires, when the mine workers set up another informational picket in nearby Armstrong County.

Hundreds rally for iron ore miners

BY MAREA HIMELGRIN AND DOUG JENNESS

NASHUAUK, Minnesota — "The right to strike is under attack in northern Minnesota," David Foster, director of District 33 of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) told more than 800 iron ore miners and their supporters at a rally here September 30.

Foster was referring to the decision by National Steel Pellet Co. to lock out 614 members of USWA Local 2660 in nearby Keewatin. "This lock-out is retaliation by the company for our exercising our right to strike on August 1," he said.

Steelworkers tried to return to work September 16 after voting to accept National's August 7 contract offer. Company officials turned the unionists away at the plant gate, saying that the offer had been removed from the table, and that they wouldn't be allowed back to work until a contract was signed. National Steel threatened to close mines unless costs are cut significantly.

To standing ovations, speaker after speaker pledged their support to the locked-out workers. Miners from Eveleth, Minnesota, wearing black armbands with "No contract — 6860" emblazoned in red, were prominent in the crowd. Their local's contract also expired August 1. Under the employer's threat to close the mine if they struck, the workers decided to stay on the job under contract extensions while trying to negotiate.

Stan Daniels, president of USWA Local 6860, told the rally that Eveleth Mines, like

National Steel, had introduced a "cooperative partnership" with the union to cut costs. "They told us we should walk arm-in-arm with them," said Daniels. "But we know that if we release their arm, they'll stab us in the back."

The rally followed the convention of USWA District 33 in St. Paul, Minnesota. A number of convention delegates attended the event in Nashuauk.

National Steel's Minnesota mine supplies taconite pellets to its mills in Detroit and Granite City, Illinois. The presidents of the union locals that organize these two mills were enthusiastically welcomed by the crowd.

The featured speaker of the evening was USWA president Lynn Williams. He pledged to convene a meeting the next day of all the local presidents and district officers present at the rally to discuss how to bring the resources

of the USWA nationally to bear on a publicity campaign to pressure National Steel back to the bargaining table in Keewatin.

Several dozen union members gathered at a local bar after the rally to talk things over. When asked what he thought of the rally, one miner answered, "It's a start. But we need a whole movement to get our jobs back."

The next day, at the union shack near the plant gate and at the union hall in Keewatin, spirits were considerably higher than they had been before the rally. The local is discussing putting out stickers and sending delegations of Iron Range miners to meet with Steelworkers at National Steel's mills.

Marea Himelgrin is a member of USWA Local 9198 in Roseville, Minnesota. Doug Jenness is a member of USWA Local 15199 in Anoka, Minnesota.

BY KIP HEDGES

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — Some \$1,550 was donated to the United Mine Workers Relief Fund October 1 by members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 879 at the Ford Motor Twin Cities assembly plant in what was described as the best plant-gate collection ever. Striking coal miner Doud Hitt of UMWA Local 2250 joined a dozen members of the UAW for the collection.

Hitt, who toured the Twin Cities, Minnesota, area for a week, received a warm response when he spoke at the United Steelworkers of America District 33 convention. Some delegates had recently been on strike against the owners of the huge taconite mines in northern Minnesota. "We are fighting for our very survival. And we have no chance of winning without your help. We have to use the power that our unions have to defeat this corporate concern," said Hitt.

Kip Hedges is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1833 in the Twin Cities.

Farmers face worsening conditions in Canada

BY ROGER ANNIS

MONTREAL — Grain farmers in western Canada are facing a steep drop in income this year, according to a report in the August 12 issue of the *Western Producer*.

Prices of initial payments to farmers for the 1993 crop year from the Canadian Wheat Board are down 15 percent. The board is a federal government body responsible for all

marketing of wheat and other major grains in Canada. Transportation costs are up an average of 15 percent and handling charges at country grain elevators are up 3 percent. All this amounts to an average 21 percent cut in farmers' income compared to 1992. Prices last year were already close to historic lows.

"You can put up with the odd bad year," 26-year-old Manitoba farmer Robert Berry told the *Western Producer*, "but the way it's been going it's just awful."

Berry says the only way he can keep his farm is by working full-time for an oil company. He added that every farmer he knows under the age of 45 has an off-farm job.

"I don't really know how the grain farmer makes it, really," explained Alberta cattle farmer Ken Morrow. "They've been strangling him for five years."

Lloyd Stanley, chairman of the NFU's Farm Crisis Committee in Saskatchewan, told the September 1993 issue of *Union Farmer*, the union's monthly paper, that Saskatchewan government figures show returns for every farm commodity in that province except canola, a grain used to produce edible oil, were below the cost of production in 1992.

Stanley says that judging by the number of calls received by his committee, farmers are being evicted from their land in record numbers by government and private financial institutions. More and more farmers will be driven to stand up and fight, he says.

"They're saying we've lost everything already; there's nothing more to lose; it's time to do something."

Prices for cattle and hogs are up 13 percent and 19 percent respectively in 1993. But these price gains for producers are being offset by reductions in government-support programs. Statistics Canada reports a 34 percent drop in support payments to all farmers in Canada in the first six months of this year.

On September 17, the federal government and seven provinces announced an end to an income insurance program for cattle farmers. Governments and enrolled farmers paid into a fund that would repay farmers when prices fell below a certain level. The program was ended because large capitalist farmers and beef-processing companies are worried it could be used by competitors in the United States to justify protectionist measures against Canadian exports. Cattle and beef exports from Canada to the United States totaled \$1.5 billion (US\$1.2 billion) in 1992, 38 percent of Canadian production.

While these capitalist interests favor "free" trade in beef and cattle with the United States, they successfully lobbied the Canadian government earlier this year to impose prohibitive tariffs against beef imports from Australia and New Zealand.

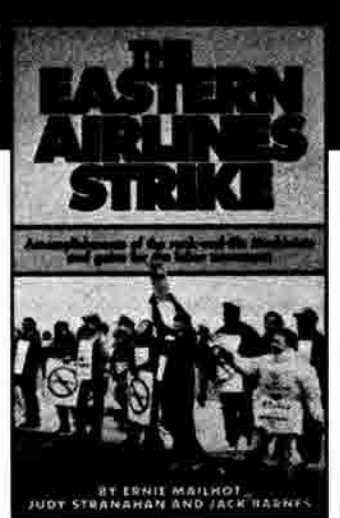
Roger Annis is a member of Canadian Autoworkers Local 1900 in Montreal.

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Report details Waco holocaust cover-up

BY NAOMI CRAINE

The federal cops who began the vicious assault and siege on the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, earlier this year altered evidence and lied to investigators and Congress about their actions, according to a Treasury Department report issued September 30. The director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) and other top officials of the agency, which carried out the initial attack on the religious sect, were removed from their posts following the release of the report.

On February 28, more than 100 ATF agents, backed up by National Guard helicopters, surrounded and stormed the Branch Davidians' ranch in what was planned as a surprise attack, claiming the group was in possession of illegal weapons. Six residents and four cops died in the fight that ensued.

After this bloody start, hundreds of federal, state, and local police laid siege to the complex. The FBI took control of the operation, and on April 19 led a six-hour tank and tear gas assault. The result was a conflagration that left more than 80 people dead, including at least 17 young children. Attorney General Janet Reno ordered the assault, and President Bill Clinton gave the plan his stamp of approval.

Authorities maintain that the blaze was started by the Branch Davidians in an act of mass suicide; survivors deny that and say the fire began when one of the tanks knocked over a kerosene lantern used for lighting after the FBI shut off electricity to the wooden buildings.

The report issued by the Treasury Department, which includes the ATF, only took up the events surrounding the initial raid. Re-

no's Justice Department is due to release its investigation on the siege and fire in early October. The Justice Department has jurisdiction over the FBI.

Extensive cover-up

The Treasury Department report reveals that senior ATF officials went to great lengths to cover up aspects of what they had done, including reworking a written plan for the assault to conform to the agency's policies and then lying about the changes.

One statement they inserted, according to the *Washington Post*, was that the raid was necessary because David Koresh, the head of the Branch Davidian sect, would not leave the premises and could therefore not be arrested in any other manner. Koresh, in fact, did leave the complex at times.

The investigation also concluded that after their plans went awry ATF officials attempted to place the blame on an undercover agent who had actually warned them that Koresh knew about the planned assault and advised it should be called off.

While it pointed to these and other instances of lying and mismanagement and strongly criticized top ATF officials, the report did not question the raid's underlying assumption — that it's all right to carry out a massive armed assault on more than 100 men, women, and children to serve a search warrant, as long as you do it by surprise and no cops get killed.

The soon-to-be-released conclusions of the Justice Department investigation are "said to clear senior officials from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Attorney General Janet Reno of making any significant mistakes, even though Ms. Reno, acting



Federal police search through the ruins of Branch Davidian complex in Waco, Texas. After 80 people were burned to death, including 17 children, during a raid ordered by Attorney General Janet Reno in April, federal agents raised the U.S., Texas, and ATF flags on premises. ATF agents altered evidence and lied concerning their conduct in Waco, a recent Treasury Department report said.

on the advice of senior bureau officials, ordered the assault on April 19 in which armored vehicles punched holes in the compound and filled it with tear gas," stated the October 2 *New York Times*.

Survivors of fire face trial

"Our clients said the Feds were lying all along, and they were," said Gary Richardson, commenting on the findings of the investigation. Richardson is the lawyer for one of the survivors of the April 19 blaze.

Eleven Branch Davidian members have been accused in the deaths of the ATF agents, and face trial sometime in the next few months. The government doesn't claim that all the defendants fired shots that killed or wounded cops. Instead they are being charged under a broad conspiracy statute, meaning they can be found guilty for contributing in any material way to the "circum-

stances" that led to the deaths. One defendant, Paul Fatta, was not even inside the compound on the day of the raid.

Another defendant, Kathryn Schroeder, pleaded guilty on September 9 to forcibly resisting a federal officer, and has reportedly agreed to testify against the others. Schroeder was admittedly unarmed during the initial gun battle, but carried a rifle or machine gun to help guard the complex against further attacks at times during the siege. She faces up to 10 years in prison, but has not been sentenced yet.

Several others who survived the fire or left the ranch during the siege are under orders to remain in Waco as "material witnesses." Shelia Martin, whose husband and four oldest children died in the conflagration, has only had one of her three remaining children returned to her.

Some of the survivors have been given free lodging at a local hotel. Mark Domangue, the hotel owner, told the *Washington Post*, "Well, they're people. I never saw them as cultists. I saw them as people."

Government officials "had four different versions of what went on during the siege," Domangue said. "And then the stories changed again from time to time. It really disappointed me that the government could get away with that. Well, they get away with it all the time, but nobody knows the magnitude."

N.Y. hearings reveal cop violence, corruption

From testimony of former New York City cop Bernard Cawley during Mollen Commission hearings on police corruption and violence.

Q: Your nickname was the Mechanic?
A: Yes, it was.
Q: And why were you given this nickname?
A: Because I used to tune people up.
Q: What do you mean tune people up?
A: It's a police word for beatin' up people.
Q: Did you beat people up who you arrested?
A: No. We just beat people up in general. If they're on the street, hanging around drug locations. Just — It was a show of force.
Q: Why were these beatings done?
A: To show who was in charge. We were in charge, the police.

BY MIKE TABER

NEW YORK — Millions here are getting a rare detailed view of the operations and internal workings of the police.

On September 27 public hearings began on corruption within the New York City Police Department (NYPD). The hearings are being conducted by a five-member commission headed by Milton Mollen, former deputy mayor for public safety. The Mollen commission was appointed by Mayor David Dinkins in July 1992, following disclosures of police involvement in drug trafficking.

During the first week of hearings, former and active-duty cops testified about their involvement in or knowledge of a wide range of police practices: from burglary, extortion, and drug trafficking to beatings and rape. The witnesses described how these activities are protected within the police department by an entrenched system of immunity, known as the "blue wall of silence."

Former officer Michael Dowd testified that he and 15 or 20 other cops in Brooklyn regularly engaged in "hitting spots," or robbing drug dealers. In this way Dowd was eventually able to earn \$8,000 a week in "protection" money.

Another witness, Kevin Hembury, described how he and some 20 other cops from the NYPD's 73rd Precinct in Brooklyn's Brownsville neighborhood had shaken down more than 100 cocaine dealers, beaten civilians, and stolen money during drug raids.

In the most graphic testimony thus far, former cop Bernard Cawley recounted his

activities as a member of the 48th Precinct in the Bronx. Over a four-year period he and his partners illegally broke into hundreds of apartments, stealing money, drugs, and guns. In police parlance, this was termed "doing doors."

Cawley distinguished himself with his fellow cops by his aptitude in "tuning people up," or beating them. For this he was nicknamed "The Mechanic," and rewarded by his superiors. Cawley testified that he had personally administered 300 to 400 such beatings. To cause maximum injury unlined leather gloves with lead packed across the knuckles were particularly popular in his precinct, and many officers regularly reported to work with them.

During raids on suspected drug locations in Black or Latino neighborhoods, Cawley testified, a usual practice was to beat up all the residents of a particular building: men, women, and children. "We'd stop by to harass the people who lived there almost constantly, whenever we had time," he remarked. Thirty to 40 cops participated in these raids.

Cawley also told the commission about a raid on a suspected prostitution site. After clearing out the male customers, the cops told the women, "Relax, we're police officers" — then raped them.

Other witnesses gave testimony on the NYPD's Internal Affairs Department (IAD). Supposedly assigned to investigate allegations of improper conduct within the police force, the IAD is in fact used to prevent such disclosures and to victimize those who file complaints.

The Mollen commission hearings have been openly attacked by Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly as "one-sided" and "scripted." Phil Caruso, the head of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association has criticized the hearings' "circus atmosphere."

To restore the cops' tarnished image, the big-business media and many politicians in the Dinkins' administration are attempting to focus blame on a small number of "rogue" and "renegade" cops. Calls have been made to revamp the Internal Affairs Department and appoint a special prosecutor in order to restore confidence in the police.

But the testimony thus far has graphically presented the true face of the police in capitalist society, a portrait many working people know only too well from personal experience. Used to terrorize working people and

mete out summary "justice," cops have always worked hand-in-glove with big drug traffickers, pimps, and other professional criminal layers.

The commission's hearings are expected to last another week.



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

BY RICH STUART

Pathfinder, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Britain, and Canada, publishes the works of working-class and communist leaders who have made central contributions to the forward march of humanity against exploitation and oppression. Pathfinder bookstores are listed in the directory on page 12.

The Miami Pathfinder bookstore signed up four new members of the Pathfinder Readers Club last month. Miami's September Readers Club newsletter featured Pathfinder's newest title, *To See the Dawn*, and the forthcoming *Nelson Mandela Speaks*. The newsletter is written in three languages, English, Spanish, and French.

Pathfinder bookstore volunteers in Morgantown, West Virginia, report selling five copies of the newly reissued *Mother Jones Speaks: Speeches and Writings of a Working-Class Fighter* in September. Two of the books were sold to coal miners and one to a steelworker at Ravenswood Aluminum company. The other copies were sold from a Pathfinder book table at the West Virginia convention of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and to a Pathfinder Readers Club member. The Morgantown bookstore has ordered five more copies of *Mother Jones Speaks* to restock the shelves.

The Readers Club newsletter sent out

from the London Pathfinder book shop last month tells readers of the special sale offer on the works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels available to Readers Club members in Britain. Those who buy more than £75 (\$113) worth of books receive a free one-year extension of their Readers Club membership. In the United States, Readers Club members get a one-year extension for buying \$100 or more of the books by Marx and Engels.

The London newsletter also reports that three activists who recently participated in a work brigade to Cuba found "great interest — especially from Cuban youth — in Pathfinder books."

"Some youth had already heard of Pathfinder as its books are on sale in the Havana Libre Hotel, for example, and they are introduced to students at the International Politics School in Havana," the newsletter adds. London Pathfinder readers are encouraged to contribute to the "Books for Cuba Fund" to put more books distributed by Pathfinder in the hands of Cuban workers and youth.

A soldier in the U.S. Marine Corps recently wrote Pathfinder, "I was reading Nelson Mandela's *The Struggle Is My Life* and I am interested in the free catalog." The publisher gets frequent catalog mail orders from individuals around the world. Local Pathfinder bookstores in some areas are looking to build up their mail order business by offering to send books to customers who can't make it in to the bookstores.

Continued from front page
ing the parliament.

There were no reports of fighting outside Moscow. The presidents of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Azerbaijan threw their support to Yeltsin.

In contrast to the August 1991 events, when hundreds of thousands of working people turned out in the streets to oppose a military coup attempt, most workers in Moscow steered clear of the conflict. Tens of thousands watched the bombardment from a safe distance, while others caught it on television.

State worker Sergei Mozhayev, walking near the burning parliament, said "I think they're all fighting for their portfolios, their food rations, and their dachas. We don't give a damn. What we need now is a normal life."

"It would be best if Yeltsin and Khasbulatov were to leave office at once," said Galina Ivanova, watching the shelling from the south bank of the Moscow River. "Both sides are guilty for the blood shed today."

Yeltsin's moves followed October 3 marches of thousands of demonstrators, the storming of police lines around the parliament, the taking of the mayor's office and the government television station. The *New York Times* reported that "no more than 15,000 people went into the streets," while the *Financial Times* put the figure at 40,000.

Gun battles between police and armed supporters of the Ruskoi/Khasbulatov group killed several people and injured hundreds.

Some working people who are fed up with the economic crisis in Russia joined the demonstrations.

Prominent among defenders of the parliament building and march leaders were those carrying red flags with the hammer and sickle, expressing nostalgia for the former governing apparatus of the Soviet Union; people waving flags of the Russian czar; and black-shirted youth proclaiming allegiance to the rightist Russian National Unity party and sporting stylized swastika patches on their shoulders.

Beneath a poster plastered to the wall outside the parliament building, someone had written anti-Semitic slogans. "It is dark. I have an ax in my hands. And although there are not so many Yids in the country, by my count there are too many."

Bureaucratic gang warfare

The Yeltsin and Ruskoi/Khasbulatov groups both laid claim to acting for "democracy," "reform," or "the constitution." The reality is that each grouping was fighting over which section of the bureaucratic caste ruling Russia will have access to wealth as the economy disintegrates, as well as over the pace of moves toward integrating Russia's economy into the world capitalist market.

Working people in Russia are beginning to resist austerity moves amid the economic and social breakdown there. More than half a million coal miners shut down half the country's mines September 6 in a protest over safety and wages, which are sometimes paid as much as four months late. Inflation now stands at 29 percent.

A *New York Times* reporter complained that "the people, steeped in socialist propaganda, are outraged by the vulgar display of the new rich, still called speculators, and their fondness for fancy Western cars, casinos, and imported liquor."

The imperialist powers, who view Yeltsin as their only hope to smooth the road toward a capitalist transition, were unanimous in their support for the Russian president, which intermingled with unease over the prospect of continued instability.

U.S. president Bill Clinton's aides declared he was "foursquare" behind Yeltsin. One diplomat at the European Community foreign ministers' meeting in Brussels said "we are putting our money on the Yeltsin horse because we have not got any other horse."

Financial Times economic editor Peter Norman wrote that "the latest developments in Moscow have left the International Monetary Fund more uncertain than ever about whether it will be able to resume financial support for economic reform in Russia."

On September 29, Yeltsin "freed" the price of bread, and decreed other moves that will send rent prices skyrocketing.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Deepening Political and Economic Crisis in Russia. Speaker: Jim White, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Oct. 16. Dinner: 6 p.m. Program: 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Translation into Spanish. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

MISSOURI

St. Louis

U.S. Out of Somalia! Speakers: representatives from American Friends Service Committee, All African Peoples Revolutionary Party, and Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Oct. 16, 7:30 p.m. 1622 S. Broadway. Donation: \$3. Tel: (314) 421-3808.

NEW YORK

Brooklyn

The Crisis in Russia and the World Capitalist Disorder. Speaker: Joel Britton, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Oct. 16, 7:30 p.m. 59 4th Avenue (corner of Bergen). Donation \$4. Tel:

(718) 399-7257.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

Patrick Buchanan and the Culture War. Speaker: Lee Oleson, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Greensboro City Council at-large, and member of United Auto Workers. Sat., Oct. 16, 7:30 p.m. 2000-C S. Elm-Eugene St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Native Americans Under Attack. Stop Forced Relocation of Navajo and Hopi People. Presentation of Academy Award-winning video, "Broken Rainbow" by Janet Cavallo and Jason Corwin of the Big Mountain Support Group. Sat., Oct. 16, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South St. Donation \$3. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

Pittsburgh

Buchananism and the Culture War — What

Clinton escalates war in Somalia

Continued from front page

Somalis. Some 300 to 400 U.S. troops were involved in the fighting.

This was the latest in a series of raids by U.S.-led forces in Mogadishu in a drive to capture Aidid, who Washington blames for the mounting casualties of UN and U.S. forces at the hands of growing numbers of Somalis angered by the continued occupation of their country. A few weeks earlier, U.S. helicopter gunships opened fire on a crowd of Somalis, killing more than 100 civilians.

Since arriving in Mogadishu in late August, the 400 Army Rangers have conducted more than a dozen such raids, detaining many Somalis. They even mistakenly seized a man resembling Aidid who turned out to be head of a UN-backed Somali police force.

For months Washington has counted on its massive air firepower to terrorize the Somali population into submission. However, as this latest confrontation shows, this seems to be increasingly less effective. According to the October 5 *New York Times*, "The United States military establishment was stunned, as one top general put it, by 'the size, scope, and ferocity' of this counterattack."

Another senior Pentagon official described the Somali fighters as being "more aggressive and getting better all the time."

Hundreds of Somalis took to the streets to celebrate their success in counteracting this latest U.S. attack.

In response to this latest setback, the Pentagon immediately rushed to Somalia some 600 troops together with new military equipment, including 4 tanks, 14 Bradley fighting vehicles, 2 AC-130 gunships, and replacement helicopters.

U.S. secretary of defense Les Aspin promised to unleash even more massive U.S. military firepower, vowing that Washington

would "respond forcefully if any harm comes to those who are being detained."

Clinton scheduled a series of meetings with his top policy advisers. "We are not withdrawing from our obligations," stated one senior Pentagon official in describing matters under discussion.

"It's time for Americans to be very steady in our response and not talk about getting out," stated Secretary of State Warren Christopher. "Until security is established we can't think about leaving."

Christopher was responding to the growing unpopularity of the U.S. military operation in Somalia, which is also reflected in a growing debate in Congress.

Capitalist politicians debate options

"What's happening is that 85-90 percent of the people back home are saying, bring the boys home," stated Democratic Party senator Bob Kerrey of Nebraska. "I think it would be a mistake for the United States to unilaterally pull out of a United Nations operation."

Several senators, including Armed Services Committee chairman Sam Nunn, said the United States must either increase the size of its presence in Somalia or reduce the scope of its operations there.

Others, like Democratic senator Robert Byrd from West Virginia and Republican Party senator John McCain from Arizona, have called for withdrawing the troops. They express disagreement with the administration's decision to place U.S. troops in Somalia under UN command.

"Do not put U.S. troops under UN control anytime, anywhere," wrote conservative columnist William Safire in an October 7 article in the *New York Times*. Safire said Clinton had been "mistaken to remove the main body of our troops before the job was done." "The idea that we can mix U.S. military

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operations into a UN-led command structure is politically dead in this country," stated the editors of the *Wall Street Journal*, who also warned, "For the United States to cut and run ... would make a hash of U.S. leadership in future brushfires."

"If the U.S. ... pulls out its troops, then other countries which have sent troops to Somalia are unlikely to remain committed to the UN operation," warned Terence Lyons, a policy director at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C.

Echoing this sentiment, UN secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali wrote in a September 27 letter to U.S. secretary of state Christopher that withdrawal of U.S. forces would "lead to the rapid decomposition of the whole Unosom [United Nations Operation in Somalia] operation." Boutros-Ghali's letter was in response to statements by Christopher a week earlier expressing a desire to redeploy and withdraw some of the U.S. troops in the near future.

In response to Clinton's announcement that he was reformulating the administration's Somalia policy, which includes a vague promise to set a date for withdrawal in about six months, many of those in Congress who were most vocal in demanding an end to the Somalia mission began changing their tune.

"It is not a time for panic," stated Republican Senate leader Robert Dole. "We need to come to a resolution over what is happening in Somalia, but we should not do it in any way that would either now or later impact on the integrity and the honor of American forces."

According to the *New York Times*, the UN secretary-general has asked Adm. Jonathan Howe, the retired U.S. naval officer who is the special UN envoy in Somalia, to examine the feasibility of creating an interim government in Somalia.

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Great White Father "Don't call us." — PINE RIDGE, South Dakota — A new Indian Health Service



Harry Ring

vice hospital was set to open in November, until officials discovered that someone forgot to include a telephone system. . . . The hospital's grand opening will be delayed three months while competitive bids are taken, a contract is awarded, and phones installed." — News item.

"Could be" or "will be"? — "Best Health Care Could Be Limited to Wealthy — Economists point to two-tier system. Low-wage workers could be confined to low-cost option." — News headline.

Stuffed pigs and gravy — During a recent strike at the Los Angeles Dept. of Water and Power, several hundred managers functioned as live-in scabs. Food was trucked in by caterers during the nine-day walkout, for which the city paid \$481,000. (That's \$53,444 a day!) A caterer's waiter said the managers had gorged themselves like pigs. About 50 came down with food poisoning. A health official said overeating wouldn't cause the illness, but could aggravate it.

Next, helicopter raids? — San Francisco officials are mapping a new strategy in their war against the homeless — a police operation to confiscate the shopping carts which some homeless use to haul their belongings. A police commander assured it wouldn't be a dead-of-night operation. He said force would not be used, "unless the person absolutely refuses."

Tough situation — Faced with the worst marketing crisis in its 300-year history, the French champagne industry finds itself with nearly a billion bottles in its underground storage caves, enough to meet world demand for the next four years.

Plenty of company — On the

basis of a county-by-county breakdown, the Southern Baptist Convention estimates that 46.1 percent of the folks in Alabama may be headed for hell. The figures are part of a nationwide survey. The analysts assumed that all non-Christians are doomed, and has a secret formula for measuring the odds on members of other Christian sects.

The system that works — The director of the International Monetary Fund said that the number of jobless workers in the industrial world will exceed 32 million this year, equivalent to the population of Spain and Sweden combined.

Appropriate gift — We're late

in reporting it, but if you used your Sears credit card before September 30, you were eligible for a free "mini-screwdriver kit." The offer was mailed in Western Union telegram envelopes which, a Sears rep advises, evokes "a sense of urgency and attention."

Due process — The California prison system will activate the first of 19 "death" fences. The high-voltage barriers will instantly electrocute any prisoner desperate enough to try to escape.

Thought for the week — "You touch the fence and you die. . . . I think it's an appropriate 20th Century technique in a modern prison." — A deputy warden.

Latino workers face deadly conditions in L.A.

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — Recently, *Los Angeles Times* reporter David Freed made a study of health and safety conditions of Latino factory workers in the Los Angeles area.

After a six-month investigation, Freed wrote a lengthy three-part series published September 5-7. It's entitled, "SWEAT AND BLOOD — Latinos in the Factories."

His investigation confirmed what's already pretty well known, that Latinos hold most of the hardest, lowest-paying jobs.

But, additionally, he establishes that their jobs are, by far, the most dangerous.

That, Freed adds, is despite the fact that "their labors are essential to manufacturers and the local economy."

Freed reports that Los Angeles County has 875,000 manufacturing jobs. Almost half of these are held by Latinos. Their ranks include immigrants, documented and undocumented, mainly from Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, and other Central American countries.

Most of them, he indicates, work in smaller, nonunion, low-wage shops.

Latinos hold 44 percent of the county's manufacturing jobs, Freed found, but they account for 67 percent of the workers killed on the job.

Horrendous conditions

The injury rate is even higher. An official study of job-related accidents in the county found that 75 percent of the victims had Spanish surnames.

OSHA, the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration, leaves health and safety enforcement to Cal/OSHA, its California counterpart.

The *Times* investigated 75 accidents in which Latinos were injured or killed. At least 65 of these happened in shops which had not been inspected by Cal/OSHA for the previous three years. Safety inspection records are kept for only three years.

Freed found workers employed in shops for ten years or more who said they had never seen a Cal/OSHA inspector.

That's not surprising. For all of Los Angeles County, and neighboring Ventura County, the agency has 42 inspectors and industrial hygienists — one inspector for every 490 manufacturing plants. Consequently inspectors rarely visit a site unless a serious injury or death has been reported.

Only a few of the inspectors speak Spanish. So, when checking out an accident, they generally look to the boss to provide a translator.

Freed found that many immigrants operating dangerous equipment, or handling toxic products, receive little training and a minimum of protective gear.

He found that emergency medical teams are often not summoned for undocumented workers who suffer major injuries. He recounts gruesome stories of seriously injured

workers being taken to walk-in clinics.

And he reports slap-on-the-wrist fines for deadly safety violations.

In an area foundry, Johnny Zermeno got trapped in the hopper of a sand-mixing machine and was crushed to death.

Cal/OSHA found that the company had failed to install a device that would have prevented the machine from being turned on if someone was in the hopper.

The company was fined \$1,800.

At a pottery plant, Mercedes Verdugo was assigned — after a day's training — to operate a hydraulic press that stamps out dishes from wet clay.

Apparently reaching over to clear away some clay, he leaned on two control buttons. The press came down, crushing his head.

Company officials speculated that Verdugo may have committed suicide.

Cal/OSHA found nine safety violations, including failure to shield the control buttons with a safety guard.

This company was also fined \$1,800.

Noting that few workers in such shops file formal safety complaints, Freed cites a sociologist who observes:

"The economy has made people, especially those with undocumented status, desperate for work and more willing to take any job on any terms.

"No one wants to complain when you can look on any street corner in the city and find any number of people waiting to take your place."

That's a pretty grim estimate. It suggests that there's little workers can do about it. It's true that widespread unemployment is going to continue. And so will the immigrant-bashing drive, which is designed to accomplish a double purpose.

One is to divide immigrants from the rest of the working class and scapegoat them for the economic slump which is a byproduct of the bankruptcy of capitalism.

The other, as the facts in Freed's articles show, is to make immigrants — particularly the undocumented — as vulnerable as possible to superexploitation.

Fight by drywallers, janitors

But last year's strike of drywall construction workers, most of them Latino, proved that a successful fight can be waged against these conditions.

To establish a union, drywallers successfully carried out a series of organizing strikes at a number of southern California construction sites.

For five months, they fought the bosses, the cops, and immigration agents who combined to try to break the strike. And they won solidarity throughout the labor movement.

They forced a sector of the industry to sign an agreement that created a union hiring system and won wage increases and medical benefits.

Today, there's the ongoing, determined fight of Justice for Janitors, the mainly Latino and Latina office building cleaners who have been waging a militant, high-visibility fight to improve miserable wages and put a brake on the harsh speedup.

Nor have they limited themselves to wages and conditions. They have regularly joined demonstrations against cop brutality and the racist, anti-immigrant activities of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. They are proving in action that exploitation, oppression and injustice can be fought.



Tatiana Valencia, her husband Homero Valencia, and Arturo Alva. Both men were severely burned at plastics factory in San Fernando, California.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



SEATTLE — Under the pretext of defending "law and order," the city administration here is moving hard and fast against black militants, aiming its biggest guns at the Black Panther Party. One of their targets is Panther Party candidate and co-captain Curtis Harris. By the use of constant harassment, arrest and attempts to intimidate Harris, they are seeking to discredit Harris's election campaign and weaken the leadership of the Black Panther Party.

On Sept. 8, the day after Harris's formal nomination as candidate for the state legislature by the Black Panther Party, Harris was arrested and charged with "threatening to kill a police officer." Although he was inside a courtroom at the time, the 10 cops who made the arrest jumped him, gouged his eyes, kicked and choked him, and sprayed Mace in his face.

In addition to Harris, a number of other Panthers are facing trial this month on similar frame-up charges. Panther Captain Aaron Dixon goes to court on Oct. 22 to appeal a conviction and six-month sentence for "unlawful assembly" stemming from a sit-in at Franklin High School last March. Also this month, preliminary motions will be filed in the case charging him with "grand larceny by possession" for being the head of an organization in whose headquarters an allegedly stolen typewriter was found.

Panthers Chester Northington, Tony Buford, Willie Brazier and Richard Brown are also facing trial later this month on trumped-up charges of arson. Meanwhile the arrests and the harassment continue and, according to Panther Captain Aaron Dixon, scarcely a day goes by without some cop harassing or arresting Panther members.



October 16, 1943

How Badoglio's officers, asked for arms by the Italian workers for use against the Nazis, deliberately betrayed the workers and turned them over to the Nazis, has now been authoritatively told by *Libera Stampa*, Italian-language anti-fascist newspaper of Lugano (Switzerland).

In a report from Turin, the Oct. 1 *Libera Stampa* describes what happened in that city when the workers learned that the armistice had been declared between the Allies and the Badoglio regime:

"The workers through their leaders suspended work in the big factories . . . to assume . . . the armed defense of their city" against the Nazi troops who were outside the city.

"But they needed arms. Representatives of the Turin workers therefore called on the commander of the Turin garrison, [Badoglio's appointee] General Adamirossi, and asked for arms to repel an eventual attack on the part of German armored troops which they knew were advancing on Turin.

"General Adamirossi courteously asked them to be patient during the few hours necessary for transportation and delivery of the arms. However, a tragic betrayal was being prepared: the workers' leaders were handed over to the Germans who had arrived in the meantime. The time which General Adamirossi has demanded for the delivery of the arms was used by him to conclude an agreement with the Germans for the surrender to them of Turin."

In Bergamo, workers who demanded arms "were told by the military commander that only a few outmoded rifles were available," the Associated Press reported Sept. 12.

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U.S., UN troops out of Somalia!

Continued from front page

ber, as well as the UN operation there since May, has never had anything to do with feeding the hungry.

U.S. forces entered Somalia when the worst of the famine there was over, intent on using the plight of the Somali people to reassert Washington's right to militarily intervene in so-called trouble spots around the world. Their plan, under the auspices of a UN force, has been to impose on the Somali people a "political solution" in the form of an interim government that would be more to the liking of Washington in the strategically located country in the Horn of Africa.

"Whoever controls Somalia could control the southern entrance to the Red Sea and thus the Suez Canal," stated the *Navy Times*, a U.S. military magazine, last December, in a frank admission of Washington's aims.

However, growing numbers of Somalis see things otherwise. Despite the massive display of U.S. military firepower, they've taken to the streets and fought back, demanding an end to the U.S. and UN occupation of their country.

In response, the Clinton administration has been escalating its military intervention in this east African country and is threatening to impose even more severe punishment upon the Somali people.

In late August, Clinton ordered 400 specially trained Army Rangers to Somalia with the central mission of capturing Somali leader Gen. Mohammed Farah Aidid. In the past month this crack unit conducted more than a dozen assault raids, detaining and harassing countless numbers of Somalis. In response to the latest battle, the White House is rushing 2,000 additional U.S. troops to Somalia together with tanks, armored personnel carriers, and new attack helicopters.

The United States government has no right to impose any "solution" upon the Somali people.

The actions by imperialist powers — the United States, Italy, Britain, France, and others — are responsible for the plight of the Somali people. Intervention today, whether hiding behind a humanitarian guise or on the pretext of "protecting our soldiers," simply aims to perpetuate imperialist superexploitation of the country.

Only a revolution that organizes and mobilizes people in the towns and countryside can solve the social problems Somali people face.

Working people and all supporters of social justice need to raise their voices and join protest actions demanding an end to the occupation of Somalia now!

Russia's gang warfare

The strife in Moscow over the past several weeks is best described as gang warfare.

The autocratic Yeltsin and the Khasbulatov/Rutskoi grouping in parliament, each with its own niche in the parasitic bureaucratic caste in Russia, shot up the city with the aim of gaining more access to political power and economic resources from which they derive their privileges and perks. Neither side offers a way forward for working people in Russia, who are mired in an economic catastrophe. They only differ on the pace of "reforms" to integrate Russia's economy into the world capitalist market.

Yeltsin's gang, which held the support of military units, carried the day.

Working people have no interest in siding with either gang. And that was precisely the reaction of tens of millions of workers in Russia — they observed the entire affair from a safe distance, not responding to the appeals of Yeltsin or his opponents. Only 15,000 to 40,000 people heeded the call of those locked up in the "White House" for an uprising.

These events are a continuation of the trend toward growing instability, economic breakdown, and social fragmentation since the August 1991 coup attempt that preceded the breakup of the Soviet Union. Then, unlike last week, hundreds of thousands of Russian workers came out in the streets and prevented a military takeover.

As this decade began and the Berlin Wall crumbled, spokespeople for the billionaire families who rule the United States and other imperialist powers proclaimed the triumph of capitalism and victory in the cold war.

Recent events show this was a hollow claim. Washington and its allies were, in fact, the losers. For decades, imperialism put pressure and relied on the parasitic bureaucracies who lorded over the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to police the working class and isolate it from the struggles

of workers and peasants around the world, with all the depoliticizing and demoralizing consequences that flow from that separation.

When the Stalinist regimes disintegrated, often in the face of organized popular opposition, all Washington gained was more instability. Imperialism will have to take on and try to defeat the working class in order to reestablish capitalism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Millions of workers have fought and will resist attempts to impose belt-tightening moves aimed at preparing for the restoration of capitalism in Russia, Poland, and other countries in the region.

Today, amid the rough seas of the world economic depression, Yeltsin's victory in the turf war was hardly, as the big-business press claimed, a triumph of "democracy."

The imperialists place great hopes in Yeltsin, who Clinton calls "the one president, the one government, the one power center" in Russia. You can put the chatter about democracy aside. The White House desperately seeks a figure who can get a hold of the situation and move against the workers.

By censoring all voices of opposition and ruling by decree, Yeltsin shows what kind of methods he will attempt to utilize against working people, as his regime opens new assaults on the living standards and social wage of workers and peasants.

The Russian bureaucracy has so far backed off from the most radical assaults on the working class, fearing the reaction it would engender. Yeltsin claims he will step up the pace. It remains to be seen how far he can go.

The hope by big business, however, that the Russian president will open a smooth road toward capitalist restoration is in vain. There will be no stability — short of crushing the working class. At each stage of this process, working people will resist and fight for their interests.

More than a few bad apples

City officials in New York are working overtime to convince working people that the horrors described by former cops at the Mollen Commission hearings are the fault of a handful of "renegades," not standard procedure in the police department. They hope to use the hearings to restore credibility in the supposedly "honest" majority of cops. From the mayor's office and police commissioner on down, we're told that the problem is just a few bad apples.

But this view is false from beginning to end. The beatings, harassment, torture, kickbacks, and other rampant corruption, systematically carried out by the cops in New York, are an essential part of their job. "We just beat people up in general," former officer Bernard Cawley bluntly explained. "It was a show of force . . . to show who is in charge."

Two years ago the Christopher Commission, set up in the wake of the police beating of Rodney King in Los Angeles, exposed some of the racism, sexism, and violence perpetrated on a daily basis by the cops there.

That commission's report, like the hearings in New York, tried to claim that the punishment meted out to King was an exception, blaming a "problem group" of 44 cops. But the document itself went on to say that nearly 6,000 officers — close to 75 percent of the police force — were cited once or more in a four-year period with brutality complaints. Of those only a handful were ever prosecuted for any crime, and even fewer were convicted.

Under capitalism, the primary role of the police is to protect and serve the rights and property of the millionaire ruling families. To accomplish this goal, the cops intimidate and mete out punishment to youth, workers, and farmers — with special vigor against working people who are Black, Latino, or immigrants.

Sometimes this is blatantly clear. In computer messages made public by the Christopher Commission, for example, two cops joked about how the year before police in Los Angeles attacked a peaceful protest march organized by the Justice for Janitors union organizing campaign.

Coal miners on strike across the country have also experienced how the cops help out the bosses. Police in Homer City, Pennsylvania, stood by as a picketing unionist was intentionally struck by a coal truck; the driver was not arrested until other strikers informed the cops they had videotaped the incident. Meanwhile, the United Mine Workers of America still faces millions of dollars in fines levied by a pro-company judge during the Pittston Coal strike three years ago.

Other victims of police brutality and frame-ups include Puerto Rican independence activists, Irish opponents of British occupation, fighters for the rights of Native Americans, and political activist Mark Curtis.

It's not just local police that play this role either. The deadly raid, siege, and fiery assault on the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, was carried out by the federal cops of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms and the FBI — and approved at the top levels.

Under capitalism, a cop is a cop is a cop, and they will act with increasing violence as the world economic crisis pushes the ruling class to defend its profits by more brutal means. That's why workers and youth need to speak out against each and every instance of cop brutality and demand justice, as well as oppose all attempts by the government to grant cops greater freedom to use their guns and nightsticks. The fight against police brutality is an essential part of defending democratic and human rights.

Mandela in U.S. seeks funds for post-apartheid South Africa

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

African National Congress (ANC) president Nelson Mandela concluded a successful 10-day visit to the United States October 2 that focused on seeking funds to help rebuild a new, democratic South Africa and revitalize an economy devastated by decades of apartheid rule.

The trip began with a call by the ANC leader in a speech before the United Nations for the lifting of economic sanctions against South Africa.

Shuttling between New York and Washington, D.C., Mandela and other ANC leaders spoke at meetings hosted by business executives, bankers, pension fund managers, and government officials, as well as conducting a number of interviews with journalists and appearing on several TV news shows.

Addressing an investment conference sponsored by top Wall Street firms October 1, Mandela stated, "Our common humanity moved all of us to oppose apartheid. Our common humanity must move to complete the effort to expunge racism from South African society."

Pointing to the type of investment he envisions, the ANC leader said, "It must . . . have the potential to say to everyone that they have the possibility to lead decent lives, to feed themselves and their children, to regain their human dignity."

In response to concerns raised about high levels of violence in South Africa, Mandela explained that most of these attacks are limited to a few isolated areas and are carried out by elements within the state security force opposed to the elimination of apartheid rule. A democratic government can effectively stop the violence, he said.

While some U.S. firms are making plans to reinvest in South Africa, others are taking a more cautious approach. "South Africa is not sufficiently desperate for cash that it will pay large enough interest-rate premiums to offset the political risk," stated one Wall Street investment adviser, who preferred to remain anonymous, "according to Reuters."

Mandela has continued to seek a dialogue with right-wing whites grouped in the umbrella organization the Afrikaner Peoples Front (APF), which includes the pro-apartheid Conservative Party and the neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB).

In an interview with the South African Press Association, Mandela said that the ANC is prepared to accommodate Afrikaans speakers in one of South Africa's regions "on the condition that no area is reserved exclusively for a particular ethnic group."

"Those people who are in that area," continued Mandela, "must be given full rights of citizenship, and those who want to go and settle in that area must be allowed to do so."

South Africa's multiparty negotiating forum is currently drafting an interim constitution that envisions a federal government composed of nine to 11 regions, each of which could make its own decisions about education, language, and other local issues, but without apartheid-type segregation laws.

Meanwhile the ANC's nonracial perspective is winning new support among white farmers. A number of them in the western Transvaal and the Orange Free State, long considered a stronghold of right-wing political groupings, have recently joined the ANC, according to Dries Bruwer, president of the Transvaal Agricultural Union.

The Johannesburg *Beeld*, an Afrikaans newspaper, reports ANC spokesperson Carl Niehaus saying that there are between 100 and 200 white farmers on the ANC's membership rolls, including the eastern Transvaal, Natal, and western Cape.

In mid-August about 2,500 members of the all-white Mineworkers' Union and the ANC-affiliated National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) carried out their first joint strike against the Highveld Steel Plant near Witbank. The workers, who were protesting low wages, won an improved pay increase from management.

Iran, Azerbaijan, and the Central Asian Republics

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SATURDAY

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 *To See the Dawn*, the documentary record of the First Congress of the Peoples of the East, held in Baku, Azerbaijan, in September 1920.

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OCTOBER 23-24
SALT LAKE CITY,
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SUNDAY

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

Sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum. For information on time and location of presentations and classes in each city, call Pathfinder bookstores listed on page 12.

Michigan Blue Cross workers reject health cuts

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.

Three thousand five hundred members of the United Auto Workers union (UAW) are giving Blue

other unions support us, and we will win." □

Connecticut health workers beat union-busting attempt

Members of District 1199 of the New England Health Care Employees Union voted unanimously to return to work after a five-and-a-half-month strike against the Winthrop Health Care Center in New Haven, Connecticut. Although the negotiated agreement offered no increase in pay and forced the 180 workers to give up two paid holidays, strikers saw the agreement as a victory for the struggle.

Winthrop owner Nelson Tuchman had vowed to bust the union

ON THE PICKET LINE

Cross & Blue Shield of Michigan a taste of its own bitter medicine by striking to keep their health-care benefits from being slashed.

Claims processors, clerks, and service workers walked out in Detroit, Southfield, Grand Rapids, and Lansing September 20 after working under an extension of their old contract since August 31.

"The main issues are wages and health care," said Janis Harvard, a picket captain at the company's Detroit office where 1,500 unionists, predominantly women, walked out. "The company wants to add copay[ments] and limit the number of health plans we can choose from, and they only offered us a 1 percent raise."

Another striker reported that the company guards "are videoing the picket lines, bumping pickets as they walk by, and bringing people's supervisors down to watch us. But we won't be intimidated."

On September 24, Detroit cops showed up and threatened to ticket or arrest pickets for blocking traffic. Dozens of strikers were at the drive-ways trying to convince truck drivers and others not to cross their lines.

Harvard explained, "We're united, the UAW supports us, the

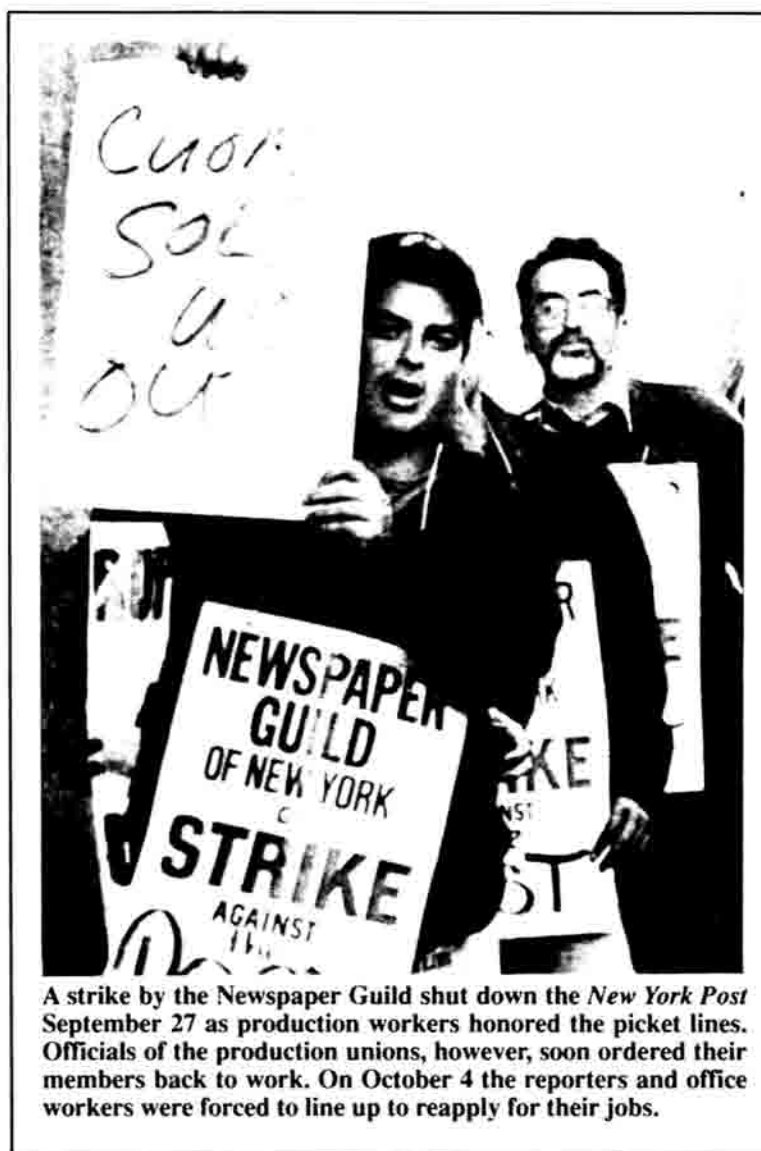
and replace the workers with permanent scabs. Instead, as union organizer Leslie Frane put it, "We replaced Tuchman." Last month the state of Connecticut put the nursing facility under receivership because of violations of state health regulations. Furthermore, Tuchman himself has been indicted for defrauding the Medicaid program of \$391,000. □

Clothing workers stage in-plant contract protest

At Biltwell Co. in St. Louis members of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) Local 1104 are gearing up for a struggle around their contract, which usually is patterned after the national ACTWU wool agreement that expired in October.

On September 26 the entire executive board staged a quick demonstration, walking through the plant shouting "What do you want? A contract! When do you want it? Now!" They were all given written warnings for misconduct.

The following day all union members wore red. At each of the three morning breaks they conducted a walk through the plant, winding up



A strike by the Newspaper Guild shut down the *New York Post* September 27 as production workers honored the picket lines. Officials of the production unions, however, soon ordered their members back to work. On October 4 the reporters and office workers were forced to line up to reapply for their jobs.

in the cafeteria with a quick chant of "Contract! Contract!" □

Boston bus drivers defeat frame-up

All charges were dropped against three Boston school bus drivers August 31. The drivers, who are organized by United Steelworkers of America Local 8751, were arrested a year ago and falsely charged with 60 counts, including assault with a deadly weapon, destruction of property, and 21 civil rights violations.

The arrests stemmed from a protest by drivers against a highly publi-

cized attempt last year to train Boston school department management to drive buses in the event of a strike. Local 8751 has been forced to wage almost yearly struggles to retain its right to represent the bus drivers, including several strikes. The bus drivers union was a supporter of efforts to desegregate the Boston public schools in the 1970s and has been a target of the Democratic Party politicians who run the city, including ex-mayor Raymond Flynn, every since.

The victory capped a year-long campaign by the union, which resulted in hundreds of messages of protest being sent by unions and

community groups across the country. Numerous rallies and picket lines were held and the state AFL-CIO sent out mailings urging support. □

Philadelphia gas workers march against concessions

More than 1,000 members of the Gas Works Employees Union (GWEU) and their supporters marched September 15 around City Hall in Philadelphia, chanting, "We want a contract," "No givebacks," and "The city's unsafe."

The workers then entered the building and packed the City Council chambers, demanding passage of a resolution to press Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW) to continue negotiations with the union for a contract. The previous week, PGW management had refused to meet with the union.

More than 1,800 members of the GWEU Local 686 walked off the job August 6 in response to management's unilateral imposition of a takeback contract, including reduced starting wages and cuts in health benefits.

The union said that the imposition of the takeback contract by PGW was illegal and that its members had been effectively locked out. State officials have also ruled the work stoppage a lockout.

"This is a company that made \$34 million in profit last year," said GWEU president Joseph Given. "They want nothing but givebacks. We've been telling them from day one, no givebacks." □

The following people contributed to this week's column: John Sarge, member of United Auto Workers Local 900 in Detroit; Tim Craine in New Haven; Becky Ellis, member of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 1104 in St. Louis; Russell Davis, member of International Union of Electrical Workers Local 201 in Lynn, Massachusetts; and Deborah Liatos, member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 8-234 in Philadelphia.

LETTERS

Death penalty I

In the August 30 issue of the *Militant*, the editorial entitled "Justice for Gary Graham" states that "the president's latest [anticrime] proposals include the addition of 50 more crimes to the list of offenses punishable by death." An article in the same issue, "New Iowa law restricts rights of prisoners," explains that Clinton "will seek to broaden the death penalty to include 50 offenses." Could the *Militant* clarify the number of capital offenses that would be included under the Clinton administration's proposed "anticrime" legislation? I haven't seen an estimate or ballpark figure elsewhere.

Obviously, even if only one offense were punishable by death under capitalism, that is one too many. But it's useful to have an accurate number to use when talking to others who are appalled by the use of the death penalty, but don't realize the implications of the proposed legislation and still hold some faith in Clinton as a "progressive" Democrat or welcome alternative to the Reagan and Bush administrations. Explaining the facts goes a long way toward exposing the antidemocratic, brutal nature of this administration, as well. Marty Michaels
Washington, D.C.

Editor's reply: President Bill Clinton's "anticrime" package, introduced in Congress by House Judiciary Committee chairman Jack Brooks and Senate Judiciary Com-



mittee chairman Joseph Biden Jr., both Democrats, brings the total number of crimes punishable by death to 47. This includes more than a dozen capital offenses that were on the books prior to 1972. Some of the proposed new grounds for execution include terrorism, genocide, and some civil rights offenses.

Death penalty II

U.S. Rep. Jack Fields, R-Humble, Texas, has recently announced he is introducing legislation to kill all funding for death penalty resource centers in 19 states.

These resource centers are often the only access to legal counsel by the poor of all races on death rows across America. Without attorneys

they do not get their constitutionally guaranteed appeals. Mistakes have been made in the past, and without legal representation more innocent blood will be shed.

In my own state of Texas the resource center is handling the cases of 200 of the 361 men on death row. Of the remaining 161 some 70 people have no lawyers at all!

Apparently, Rep. Fields feels that only those persons wealthy enough to afford private attorneys should be protected by the U.S. Constitution. Marta Glass
Missouri City, Texas

Union-hating journalism

The media hate campaign against the miners on strike at the Royal Oak

Mines gold mine in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, reached a new low in September with the publication of an article in the *Edmonton Journal* entitled "How mischief became murder at Giant mine." ("Giant" was the name of the mine under its previous owners.)

The article was reprinted in the September 19 issue of the *Montreal Gazette* and probably appeared in other Canadian papers as well.

The lengthy article purports to tell the story of the explosion at the strike-bound mine that killed nine scab replacement workers underground on Sept. 19, 1992.

"This story describes the RCMP's (Canada's federal police) working theory of what happened," explains the article's introduction.

The lengthy article describes a lurid and secretive operation by characters it names "Suspect #1" and "Suspect #2" to plant the bomb that killed the nine scabs. A third conspirator, called "Man #1" in the article, is said to have joined the group several weeks before the explosion.

The article quotes the fictional conspirators at several points, giving the impression that it is actually a real-life story being described. I, for one, had to refer back to the article's introduction to figure out if the writers claimed to be presenting a true story or fiction.

The article does not directly name its characters as members of the union on strike at the mine, the Canadian Association of Smelter and Allied Workers (CASAW). But

it certainly leaves this impression. The third paragraph of the article reads, "RCMP believe the two suspects committed the most troubling and wicked crime in the history of the Canadian labor movement."

Neither does the article explain that the RCMP "theory" doesn't fit many of the known facts about the explosion. These include the unsafe conditions known to be prevalent in the mine before the explosion, the fact that Royal Oak waited several hours before calling police to the scene after the explosion, and that the company immediately shipped many of the scabs out of town for good.

The article doesn't explain the refusal by police and government authorities of CASAW's demand for a full public investigation into the explosion. Nor does it explain that the violent, strikebreaking role played by the RCMP since the beginning of the strike shows that it has no interest or ability to conduct an impartial investigation of the explosion.

This article is an example of union-hating, yellow journalism at its worst.

Roger Annis
Montreal, Quebec

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.

British youth protest racist attacks

BY PETE CLIFFORD

LONDON — "They say get back, we say fight back," chanted hundreds of youth from Bangladesh leading a 1,500 strong demonstration October 3 through the Tower Hamlets borough of east London.

This is the area where, on September 18, British National Party (BNP) politician Derek Beackon was elected to the local council. Beackon campaigned on a slogan of "Rights for Whites." After he was elected, he proclaimed, "The British people have had enough; we're going to take our country back."

The October 3 demonstration was called by Youth Connection, an organization built by Bangladeshi youth in the last few weeks. "We've just had enough; it's time to stand up and take to the streets," explained Sayeed, one of the march stewards. "The turning point was when a racist gang beat one of our youth, 17-year-old Quddus Ali, on September 8. When we went to protest outside the hospital, where he's still in a coma, the police set upon us. Nine people were arrested. They have been charged with riot under the Public Order Act, and could get life in prison." Rod, another Youth Connection leader, added, "There have been nine youths arrested, but no arrest of the racists who beat Quddus Ali."

The next day, "there was heavy policing," Kosru, another activist, explained. "Every few minutes a police van or foot patrol went by. But around 10:45 p.m., when there were no police around, 30 BNPs came into Brick Lane, smashing up shops. The police let the BNP get away and then arrested one of us."

The day after the police attack, the activists decided to build Youth Connection, which now includes members from 30 different youth clubs and other groups in the area.

A number of unionists who work for the local government joined the march. Nearly 100 Bangladeshi youth wearing yellow vests stewarded the action, preventing both police and racist provocations. Reaction to the demonstration from people in the neighborhood was mixed. Wendy Dubrau, who is white, clapped and cheered as the march went by. "I've lived in this area for 30 years and don't support anyone who attacks people because they are immigrants," she said. "There is a shortage of housing and jobs around here, but that's because of the government." One shopkeeper said, "These marches are closing down our business," while another advocated whites demonstrating against Blacks.

While many public figures, including Prime Minister John Major and the Archbishop of Canterbury, have condemned the election of the BNP, others have stepped up their attacks on immigrant workers. Winston Churchill, a conservative member of Parliament, has argued that immigration "adds to the pressure in the communities and provokes reactions." Last year 9,000 people were deported from Britain, a record num-



Bangladeshi youth leading a 1,500-strong demonstration against racism in east London, October 3. Action was called by newly formed group Youth Connection.

ber. The government recently strengthened its anti-immigrant regulations with passage of the Asylum Law, making it harder for political refugees to gain entry into Britain.

Should rightist group be banned?

Bill Morris, general secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union, is one of many labor leaders calling for the BNP to be banned. Labour leader Tony Blair at his party's national conference this week called for making racially motivated violence a new category of criminal offense.

Andrew Puddephatt, general secretary of

the civil liberties group Liberty, disagrees. "There is a danger that the government will begin to ban groups which are opposed to its policies," he explained. "We do not believe it is useful to give the government extra powers to ban organizations." Marcella Fitzgerald, a spokesperson for the Communist League, also argued against a ban. "It's a dangerous mistake to look to the very forces whose racist policies incite the BNP to deal with them. What's more they will use any ban to curtail the rights of others tomorrow."

Since the BNP election victory, the Anti-

Nazi League (ANL) and Youth Against Racism in Europe (YRE) have organized protests at the top of Brick Lane where BNP supporters regularly sell their paper. The first action led to 33 arrests of both rightists and antiracist activists, as they violently clashed. Then on September 26 the police saturated the area, penned in the ANL demonstrators, and arrested 57 supporters of the BNP for breach of the peace, simply for approaching the area for the paper sale. The rightists were later released with no charge. The *East London Advertiser* reports in its September 30 issue that traders in the area are seeking an injunction to ban all demonstrations.

Antiracist actions planned.

Following the October 3 protests, more mobilizations against racism are planned. Support is building for two marches called for Saturday, October 16 in London. One, called by the Anti-Racist Alliance, a coalition endorsed by the Communist Party, Labour Party, and Trades Union Congress, will march through central London and deliver a statement calling for a ban on the BNP. The other, called by the ANL and YRE, will march to the BNP's south London headquarters under the slogan of "Close down the BNP." Both marches are winning support from unionists and students who want to take a stand against racism. From Manchester alone 20 coaches are booked to take students to the ANL protest. The Transport and General Workers Union has also called for a demonstration later this year.

Pete Clifford is a member of the Transport and General Workers Union at G.E. Lighting in London. Celia Pugh, Ian Grant, and Julie Crawford also contributed to this article.

Des Moines abortion rights activists rally in defense of pro-choice doctor

BY ANGEL LARISCY AND DANNEN VANCE

DES MOINES, Iowa — What was planned as a modest picket to defend Des Moines-area physician Herbert Remer, unjustly accused of assault, turned into a full-fledged rally of more than 350 supporters of abortion rights October 1.

Remer was arrested and charged with assault causing injury September 4 after defending himself from an attack outside his office by David Shedlock, a leader of the anti-abortion-rights group Operation Rescue (OR).

Remer and his family have been terrorized by Shedlock and OR for more than two

years because his medical practice includes performing abortions. Remer is one of only a few doctors in Iowa who continue to perform abortions and the only one to provide them in the second trimester of a pregnancy.

Following Remer's arrest, area activists began plans for the public protest at County Attorney John Sarcone's office to demand the charges be dropped.

Coinciding with news of the demonstration was publicity surrounding the case of Karen Thomas Stewart, a patient of Remer's who had been harassed by Operation Rescue.

Stewart recently suffered a miscarriage. After a visit to Remer's office, she received a letter from OR that spoke of "the guilt of

having killed one's own child."

Stewart explained she was upset and outraged by the letter. "I went to the police and the county attorney who told me there was nothing I could do," she said. "I decided nothing wasn't good enough."

She contacted a reporter from the *Des Moines Register*, who ran a feature article on her case.

Throughout the week, radio and TV stations regularly announced the October 1 event. On that day the *Des Moines Register* ran an editorial announcing the protest and endorsing its efforts.

Many abortion rights supporters at the rally signed petitions demanding Sarcone drop the charges and signed up to be contacted about upcoming events.

People driving by the demonstration, including a city bus driver, responded enthusiastically to signs saying, "Honk if you are pro-choice."

After marching in front of the county courthouse for 45 minutes, protesters gathered to hear remarks from Remer and others.

Lisa Strong, an abortion rights activist from Minneapolis who had been charged under an undemocratic "anti-stalking" law for following a caravan of Operation Rescue activists, commended Remer for "breaking the silence" and speaking out against attacks on doctors and clinics that provide abortions. Strong faces up to one year in prison and a \$3,000 fine if convicted.

At the event activists built a meeting for the following Tuesday to discuss ways to continue actively defending Remer and abortion rights.

Angel Lariscy and Dannen Vance are members of United Auto Workers Local 270 and work at Fawn Engineering in Clive, Iowa.

Miami protesters commemorate Haiti coup

BY RACHELE FRUIT

MIAMI — More than 1,000 demonstrators here commemorated the second anniversary of the brutal coup that overthrew the Haitian government of Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The September 30 demonstration took place in Little Haiti and was sponsored by Veye Yo, the most important Haitian rights organization in Miami.

The demonstration took place just a month before Aristide is scheduled to return to Haiti under a UN-brokered agreement. More than 600 U.S. soldiers and a similar number of "police experts" from other countries are to begin arriving in Haiti in mid-October. All of the troops will be under UN command.

Already, violence and repression are increasing in the country. On September 11, Antoine Izmerly, a close supporter of Aristide, was dragged from a church service and shot in the head by members of a special police force. Col. Joseph François, the di-

rector of the military police, has stated he has no intention of stepping down from his position, as the UN agreement requires.

Under the impact of these events, discussions among Haitians living in the United States have intensified. While some people support the UN and U.S. political and military intervention, others are adamantly opposed.

"I know we can't trust the United States," one protester commented at the September 30 demonstration, "but what else can we do?"

Thirty-five people participated in a discussion on Haiti sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum here. Panelists included Pierre Jeanty from the *Little Haiti Journal*; Edouard Charles, president of the Haitian Student Organization at Miami Dade Community College; Rolande Girard, from the Socialist Workers Party; and Louis Menard, a priest who came to the United States from Haiti in 1989. The program was chaired by Maggie McGraw, Socialist Workers candi-

date for Miami city commission. A lively discussion followed the presentations.

Intervention by the United States and United Nations is a necessary evil because of the 40,000 Haitians who have been forced to flee because of their affiliation in a political organization, union, or student group, one participant said.

Another disagreed. The United States has not provided any help for people anywhere in the world, the member of the Association of Refugees from Guantánamo, said. "We have lived it. We know it very well. Look at Somalia, Iraq, Panama. What's different about Haiti?"

Another speaker explained that U.S. intervention in Haiti is not new. "Where do you think the bullets, tanks, and uniforms come from?" he asked. "Who invites the Haitian military to Washington and Paris? The U.S. government does need to do something: get out."