

THE MILITANT

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15,000 grocery workers
strike in South Africa

— PAGE 5

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 58/NO. 27 AUGUST 8, 1994

Washington steps up threats to invade Haiti

BY LAURA GARZA

MIAMI — In the past few weeks, the Clinton administration has been stepping up military preparations for a possible invasion of Haiti. The Pentagon dispatched an additional 2,000 marines to the waters off the island in early July. They join other troops on 16 cutters and patrol boats already deployed by the U.S. Coast Guard in the area. These ships have been enforcing an economic embargo against the country and intercepting refugees on the high seas fleeing political terror, economic catastrophe, and

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N.Y. socialist campaign off to rousing start

BY EVA BRAIMAN

NEW YORK — "A century ago, Karl Marx called on the workers of the world to unite. Tuesday, Larry Lane did the same — and urged New York's workers to vote him into the governor's mansion." So began an article in the July 13 issue of the *Albany Times Union*. Reporters and photographers from the *Times Union*, the *Schenectady Daily Gazette*, and the Associated Press were among those attending a press conference in Albany, New York, that launched the 1994 Socialist Workers Campaign. The socialist candidates have also been interviewed on radio stations in

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United Auto Workers keep Caterpillar shut

Strike causes tactical differences among bosses

BY JOHN SARGE

PEORIA, Illinois — Some 1,000 red-shirted members of the United Auto Workers (UAW), along with their families and other supporters, held a spirited mid-day protest at Caterpillar's general office here, July 14. Organized by Families in Solidarity, a group of strikers' spouses and children, it was the largest strike support action since 14,000 UAW members walked out June 20. The nationwide strike began when company executives abandoned negotiations with the union over 94 unfair labor practice complaints filed against Caterpillar by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

The determination of the strikers has kept eight of the company's 10 production plants virtually shut and is beginning to affect the earthmoving equipment giant's capacity to meet customer demand. This in turn has caused tactical rifts within the employing class on the wisdom of the decision by Caterpillar's management to force a strike over the right of employees to wear union buttons and T-shirts on the job.

"The clash between Caterpillar Inc. and its unions is a needless mess," whined an editorial in the July 4 *Business Week*. "With its Japanese archrival Komatsu Ltd. eating dirt worldwide, thanks partly to high yen, Cat's business is booming," the editorial said. "Yet, instead of being a great success story, this is a petty tale of managers firing employees for wearing buttons and of workers launching guerrilla strikes shutting down critical production. . . .

"By firing a stream of employees for



Strikers picket Caterpillar distribution facility in Denver

wearing buttons and T-shirts that attack [Caterpillar's chairman Donald] Fites, Cat has driven many members back into the arms of the UAW," the big-business weekly's editors complained. "Decatur welder Nancy Waterman, who hadn't been a union activist in her 18 years at Cat," said an article in the same issue of *Business Week*, "helped to raise \$20,000 from fellow workers to buy TV commercials giving the union's side of the story. Now, she insists, 'We will last one day longer than Cat.'"

This is one of the recent examples pointing to the need for a more militant approach. Continued on Page 10

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Read about labor struggles at:

- Canadian Pacific Railroad
- Firestone, Pirelli
- General Dynamics
- Leslie Fay
- British Railtech

Oil, gas workers strike to end military dictatorship in Nigeria

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

A two-week-old strike in Nigeria's oil and gas industry has spread into a nationwide stoppage that has crippled commerce and transportation. Millions of people stayed away from work July 14, increasing pressure on Nigeria's military authorities to return the country to elected civilian government.

Lagos, the capital, and other cities were at a virtual standstill as banks, offices and stores remained shut since most workers stayed home to back the strike. Ports are closed by a dock workers walkout while public transportation has come to a halt. Even federal employees have joined the strikes, despite threats of repression from the military regime.

The working-class actions began July 4, when the Nigerian Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG) went on strike to demand the release of Moshood Abiola and the end of military rule. Abiola was the winner of Nigeria's 1993 elections, which were annulled by the generals. He was subsequently arrested and on June 12 military

authorities charged him with treason.

Nigeria's Campaign for Democracy, a coalition of dozens of groups opposing the dictatorship, is taking part in the current wave of protests. The organization led the actions that forced the former military ruler, Ibrahim Babangida, to resign last year. Iyo Opatokun, coordinator for the National Democratic Coalition, which is the main opposition group in Nigeria, stated, "We're going to make governing this country virtually impossible."

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), which includes 41 unions, will begin a two-day conference July 19 to consider a general strike in support of the oil workers' action. The NLC has in the past supported the military regime but pressure is mounting from the majority for a general strike.

The walkouts have greatly reduced oil production in Nigeria, the largest producer in Africa. Oil exports account for more than 90 percent of Nigeria's foreign exchange income, which was approximately \$10 billion last year.

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SOLIDARITY RALLY WITH CATERPILLAR WORKERS MAY 7

Workers, farmers, and youth from the United States and around the world will attend a socialist conference August 3-7 in Oberlin, Ohio. Delegates to the 37th national convention of the Socialist Workers Party will discuss the growing disorder of world capitalism since the 1987 stock market crash: a world headed toward greater class struggle, interimperialist conflict, the rise of ultrarightist movements, and growing pressures toward war. There will be panels, classes, and workshops involving all participants.

Trade unionists and socialists from across North America and around the world will discuss the current strike wave rolling across the United States and the new opportunities to strengthen the building of a communist party rooted in the industrial working class. A high point will be a report from a meeting of youth that will take place simultaneously with the convention, called by a young socialists organization that now has affiliated groups in cities across the country.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT SUPPORTERS OF THE 'MILITANT' IN THE NEAREST CITY LISTED ON PAGE 12, OR WRITE TO: SWP, 406 WEST ST., NEW YORK, NY 10014.

O.J. Simpson case: issue is violence against women — page 14



Bonn approves combat abroad

Germany's federal Constitutional Court ruled July 12 that German troops could participate in military operations abroad if they have been approved by Parliament. The decision overturns a 1949 constitutional ban that allowed German forces to act only in defense of German territory. The ruling was made the same day as the last U.S. troops left Berlin. German troops number 357,000, making the German military the largest in Europe outside Russia.

Even before the July 12 ruling, German troops had participated in noncombat operations in Somalia and Cambodia as part of a United Nations-sponsored military intervention. German foreign minister Klaus Kinkel said that the cabinet would discuss broadening the role of German troops in missions already underway. Kinkel said he opposed sending German soldiers to Rwanda, where French troops have already been deployed.

Italy premier backs off decree

Italy's prime minister Silvio Berlusconi withdrew a six-day-old decree that allowed more than 1,000 former government officials, businessmen, politicians, and others imprisoned on bribery and other corruption charges to be freed from jail. The decree abolished preventive detention for most crimes, including corruption-related offenses. It would also broaden the rights of those under investigation and bar judges from seeking extradition for those suspected of corruption.

A 30-month scandal involving some 4,000 of Italy's prominent political and business leaders has rocked the country. Berlusconi's decree, aimed to curtail an ongoing corruption investigation, added to a firestorm of public outrage. Berlusconi claims the decree would prevent Italy from turning into a "police state" but it has aroused public suspicion as a move to protect his friends and close associates.

Clashes erupt in Gaza

Israeli troops and the new Palestinian police fired on each other for the first time July 17 during daylong battles. Palestinian officials and hospital workers reported that two Palestinians were killed and 98 people injured. The Israeli army stated that 17 of its soldiers and border police were hurt by fly-



For the first time in 50 years, armored German vehicles paraded down the Champs-Élysées in Paris July 14 as part of Bastille Day celebrations. The German troops were part of 800-member Eurocorp contingent. This new army, put together by Paris and Bonn as an alternative to the U.S.-run NATO forces in Europe, should be in full operation by October 1995. It will include 50,000 troops from France, Germany, Belgium, Spain, and Luxembourg.

ing stones

The confrontation began after Israeli soldiers stopped letting Palestinians cross the border into Israel. Thousands of workers routinely face long delays as they cross the Gaza border each day to work in Israel. Unemployment is about 60 percent in the Gaza Strip. When the army stopped letting people pass, long lines grew and Israeli soldiers began shooting directly at the workers. Palestinian police fired back after one of them was shot in the lower back.

Yemen troops claim victory

Northern Yemeni troops declared victory July 7 after seizing the southern capital of Aden. The soldiers met little resistance as they moved into the city. The fighting prior to the northern victory had cut off water supplies to the city's 400,000 residents. Northern troops also took control of the eastern Hadramawt region, including the oil part of Mukalla. In Sanaa, the northern capital, the government hailed the end of the two-month old civil war. Southern leaders have fled Aden but said they would continue fighting.

Bangladesh gov't attacks writer

The Bangladesh government brought criminal charges June 4 against Taslima Nasrin, a writer and advocate for women's rights. Nasrin was charged with insulting the Muslim religion. She has also been threatened with death by Muslim clerics, one of whom offered a bounty of \$10,000 to anyone who killed her. Nasrin has gone into hiding. In Dhaka, the capital city, the chief magistrate set a deadline of August 4 for her to appear in court. She faces a maximum penalty of two years imprisonment.

Nasrin has been attacked for her comments on the Koran that "we have to move beyond these ancient texts if we want progress." She has also spoken against Islamic traditions that restrict women's rights.

Indonesian cops attack rally

A protest of 500 students in East Timor against the Indonesia military was broken up July 14 by club-wielding police. At least three students were killed and dozens injured, according to a human rights activist. Armindo Mayo, vice president of the University of Timor Timur, who led the demonstration, said protesters had planned to meet with a leader of the local Parliament to demand action against two soldiers accused of trampling on holy bread during mass at a Roman Catholic church. The protesters also demanded that Indonesian authorities ensure freedom of religion in East Timor.

In November 1991, Indonesian troops killed dozens of pro-independence protesters in Dili, capital of East Timor. The Indonesian government annexed East Timor in 1976 after intervening in its struggle against Portuguese colonial rule.

Honduras banana workers strike

Some 6,000 banana workers have been on strike since June 28 against the Tela Railroad Co. in northern Honduras. The union leadership reached an agreement with the company — a subsidiary of United Brands — in early July, but the workers rejected it. The workers decided to continue the strike, blockading the roads leading to the city of El Progreso.

Leaders of several union federations in Honduras occupied the regional offices of the Labor Ministry in solidarity with the banana workers. Thousands of other workers throughout the Atlantic Coast of Honduras are also threatening to block the roads and bridges. Since the strike began, the company has failed to ship half a million boxes of bananas, worth nearly \$2.4 million.

Bomb kills 17 at Jewish Center in Argentina

A bomb blasted through the headquarters of Argentina's main Jewish organization on July 18, killing 17 people and wounding up to 127. The death toll could rise to 20 according to members of Jewish organizations as rescue workers search the debris. About 100 people were inside the building at the time of the explosion, which struck when people were arriving for work.

The explosion coincided with the start of peace talks between Israel and Jordan. A bomb attack on the Israeli Embassy in Argentina two years ago killed 30 people. Argentina has the largest Jewish population in South America, approximately 250,000 people. Argentine president Carlos Menem ordered airports and the borders of the country sealed as the government began a hunt for those responsible. So far, the culprits of the bombing are not known.

Navy pushes to discharge gays

Several navy boards of inquiry have recommended honorable discharges for gay sailors after they revealed their homosexuality. A three-member board argued that Lieut. Tracy Thorne had not disputed the presumption that he had engaged in homosexual conduct, which is grounds for dismissal. Thorne's lawyers say they will appeal a discharge in Federal court.

An honorable discharge was also recommended for Mark Phillips after a naval officer had questioned him about his homosexuality in defiance of the Clinton administration's "don't ask, don't tell" policy on gays in the military. A third board of inquiry suggested a discharge for another serviceman who revealed that he was gay after President Bill Clinton had promised to lift the ban on gays in the military.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

'Militant' printing schedule

This is the last biweekly issue this summer. The next *Militant* will be printed and mailed to distributors on Thursday, August 11. With that issue, dated August 22, we will resume our weekly publication.

THE MILITANT

Defend abortion rights

From Birmingham, Alabama, to Cleveland and Little Rock, Arkansas, pro-choice forces are mobilizing to prevent Operation Rescue from shutting abortion clinics down — dealing further blows to the rightist antiwoman thugs. 'Militant' reporters provide eyewitness accounts of these important battles in defense of a woman's right to abortion as participants in the struggle. Don't miss a single issue!



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Rwandan troops order exodus into Zaire

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In one of its final desperate acts, officials of the rightist Rwandan government ordered a mass exodus into Zaire July 13. This move came as Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) forces routed government troops in Gisenyi, their last major foothold in the country.

Rwandan soldiers and vigilantes organized into auxiliary militias blasted loudspeaker messages ordering residents in the area to promptly leave and then proceeded to ransack and pillage the town. Hundreds of thousands of people massed in western Rwanda near Gisenyi began pouring across the border into Goma, Zaire. Many of these refugees were then also searched and robbed by Zairian soldiers.

The country's self-proclaimed president and three ministers, who were headquartered in the city, fled to Cyangugu in the so-called French protection zone in the southwestern corner of the country. About 1 million people, including much of the government and military had passed into Zaire by July 17.

Clashes have also occurred between French troops and RPF forces in southwestern Rwanda. Paris has threatened to deploy fighter bombers from its bases in Zaire against RPF troops if they don't halt their attacks on this French-occupied zone.

After Rwandan president Juvénal Habyarimana, who had ruled the country with an iron hand for the past 20 years, and Cyprien Ntaryamira, president of neighboring Burundi, were killed in a plane crash April 6, Rwandan government officials unleashed a massacre against their opponents.

Some 500,000 people have been killed in this central African country of 8 million. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross, 2.5 million people have been displaced in Rwanda and half a million have fled to neighboring Burundi, Tanzania, Zaire, and Uganda.

As the RPF made military gains in the battle against the numerically stronger government troops, Paris rushed some 2,500 soldiers to Rwanda. French military officials at first



Refugees from Rwanda thronged border crossing into Goma, Zaire, July 14.

proclaimed their intention to draw "a line in the sand" to halt the advance of RPF forces. However, after the rebels seized control of the country's capital, Kigali, and the second-largest city, Butare, in early July, Paris was forced to back off from its stated plan.

Paris claims that its current mission in Rwanda is a humanitarian one designed to provide protection for residents fleeing the fighting there. But the area occupied by the French military has become a safe haven for rightists who organized some of the worst massacres.

The French government continues to block applications of Rwandan refugees seeking asylum. In late June, for example, one 24-year-old woman from Rwanda who had fled to France last year after being beaten up and jailed, was ordered to leave the country because she could not "prove" her life was in danger.

According to the church group La Cima, a number of people from Rwanda now living as refugees in Burundi and Tanzania applied for asylum but none had yet

received a positive response. Rwandan students in France requesting full residence status have met a similar wall of silence.

Paris signed an agreement in 1974 to provide military hardware to the Rwandan dictatorship. When RPF forces launched a war against the regime in 1990, the French government stepped up its assistance. They placed some 150 military "advisers" at the permanent disposal of the Rwandan army. In 1993, Paris sent an additional 450 paratroopers to the country along with \$3.6 million in new military equipment, including armored cars, artillery pieces, and aircraft.

With the RPF taking virtual control of the country, U.S. president Bill Clinton announced July 15 the closing of the Rwandan government's embassy and the freezing of its assets. While the worst of the atrocities were occurring in Rwanda, Washington attempted to downplay the scope of the slaughter. For a while the White House instructed U.S. officials not to call it genocide.

The fighting in Rwanda is constantly presented in the big-business media as a prod-

uct of a centuries-old ethnic conflict between members of two tribes, the Hutus and the Tutsis. About 85 percent of the Rwandan population is considered Hutu, while 15 percent is labeled Tutsi. Recent reports published by some human rights groups, however, point to political motives as the reason for the mass killings.

Political motives for mass killings

A study conducted by the Human Rights Watch/Africa, for example, concluded that "the massacres were planned months in advance." In 1992, President Habyarimana's party, the National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development, and its rightist political ally, the Coalition for the Defense of the Republic Party, created what they described as youth wings, but which were actually auxiliary militias. Their members were armed and trained by the government and according to the *New York Times*, by French officers.

In a recent interview with the *Christian Science Monitor*, Michael Dottridge, the Africa program director of Amnesty International, pointed to instances of increased violence by government-organized civilian militias during 1992 and 1993 against political opponents.

One way for the government to hold onto power was "to precipitate mass killings of the entire Tutsi population," he stated. The slayings were carried out "by a group of people who have participated in mass killing who wanted power for power sake," Dottridge added.

Government leaders tried to whip up animosity by disseminating lies, which claimed, among other things, that Hutus would lose their land if the RPF won the war. But despite this propaganda campaign and the waves of violence, bonds of loyalty and friendship have remained strong among Hutu and Tutsi in many areas. "I had no problems with Tutsi, they were my neighbors," Anwe-Marie Mukarukaka told the *New York Times*. Others point out that identity cards that pinpoint citizen's ethnic background are exchanged often for political reasons. Identity cards were first issued by the Belgian colonizers in the 1930s. But so slight were the physical differences between Tutsi and Hutu that ownership of cattle became the basis for ethnic classification.

While most of those killed were Tutsis, thousands of Hutus opposed to government policy were also targeted. A doctor who recently returned to his home in Kigali aptly described the situation to the *Washington Post*, "Those who ordered the killings were a minority who had been in power for 20 years and wanted to stay there," he stated.

The leader of the newly formed RPF-led government, Faustin Twagiramungu, returned to Kigali from sanctuary in Europe July 14. He called for the formation of a national unity government that would only exclude the two rightist groups responsible for launching the mass slaughter — the National Republican Movement of Development and Democracy and the Coalition for the Defense of the Republic.

"The total victory of the Rwandan Patriotic Front should not provide an occasion for revenge, but rather one for national reconciliation," stated Twagiramungu, who vowed to end ethnic discrimination in Rwanda.

Workers, peasants in China resist effects of capitalist market measures

BY PAT SMITH

Attempts by Beijing to expand the use of capitalist market measures in China are meeting resistance from workers and peasants there. Beijing's enforcement of low wages and no-strike pledges has attracted large-scale capitalist investment in the so-called new economic zones. China's gross domestic product continues to grow at a rapid pace, as thousands of peasants are compelled to move from the countryside into industrial centers every day.

But China's workers and peasants are combating the miserable conditions they face under government-imposed "market reforms," which put the economy more at the mercy of world capitalism.

Earlier this year, 20,000 miners in China's northeastern Heilongjiang province went on strike against the state-run coal company to protest low wages and unsafe working conditions. Nearly 7,000 auto workers walked out recently at a Japanese-owned plant in Liaoning province.

Close to three-quarters of China's population lives in rural villages. Millions of peasants have migrated to the cities for a chance to earn a better living. They are one reason 5,000 factories are currently under construction in China's coastal provinces. The migrant workers are easy to spot. More than 50 million fill the train stations, factory dormitories, shanties, and street corners of the major cities.

Farmers from Sichuan province are building the new subway system in Beijing. Peasants from Zhejiang province are constructing new highways, hotels, and office buildings. Many leave their villages because they are promised construction jobs for \$1.25 a day, more than they can earn working the land. Others travel to industrial centers from northern and western China where the soil has been exhausted or water is scarce.

"People like me don't want to work on the land anymore," said Ren Jun, a 30-year-

old peasant who migrated to Beijing. "It's backbreaking work. I've tried it. The land is not fertile, and it is far from any water. It's just not worth it." If he stayed on the farm Ren could earn up to \$345 a year. But as a day laborer in the coal mines he could earn more than twice that.

Wang Xinmin, 24, has migrated from one city to another since he left Henan province seven years ago. He worked at a garment factory in a special economic zone near Hong Kong before coming to Beijing. The factory manager had promised high wages, but delivered only half of that on pay day. "The working conditions were really unsafe and chaotic," Wang said. "We were supposed to work eight hours a day. Actually, we had to work much longer."

Liu, a 24-year-old peasant from Jiangsu province, told the *New York Times*, "We left our construction team yesterday without notifying the boss. It serves him right." The construction boss had come to Liu's village promising peasants \$1.72 a day to lay bricks and pour concrete. He offered to pay their travel expenses to the construction site. But when they got to work, near Beijing's international airport, the boss cut their wages to 57 cents a day and said they would have to pay for their own train tickets. After working a month, Liu and five others left to return to the crops their wives had been tending.

"Almost all the male farmers in my village have gone to work in the urban areas to make extra money," a migrant worker told the *Times*. "Although the government purchase price for rice has been raised, the government also levies taxes more heavily on the land. There is just not enough land per person to make a good living."

"It is a double-edged sword to be sure," said Richard Baum, a political science professor at the University of California at Los Angeles. The migrant workforce "may be an efficient buffer helping to transform the

economy," he said, "but they are also a large pool of marginal people subject to the vagaries and insecurity of having no rice bowl they can count on."

Distressed by the surge in strikes and protests, President Jiang Zemin warned in a recent speech that "workers must not be driven onto the streets." The Chinese government ordered all foreign-funded companies to enroll their workers in the government-run All-China Federation of Trade Unions, the country's only recognized union. Some multinational companies are already unionized. Jerry Norskog, head of Johnson & Johnson's Xian plant, said the union and management work well together. "Like all Chinese, the unions know there is no free lunch," Norskog said. Officials at Shanghai Volkswagen said the union has helped increase productivity there.

In order to appease workers who are growing restive, Beijing has outlawed labor by children under 16, mandated an eight-hour workday, and guaranteed a minimum wage to take effect Jan. 1, 1995. Many factory managers, however, have ignored earlier requirements for an eight-hour day.

The Chinese government increased the price of some staple foods June 10, as an incentive to encourage farmers to raise production. Many farmers stopped growing or held onto crops waiting for a better price. Government officials fear that the 12 percent decline in grain crop acreage sown this summer could lead to food shortages in urban areas where workers have protested inflation, unemployment, and working conditions.

China is the world's largest grain producer, with total output reaching a record 456 million metric tons last year. Chinese government projections for the summer wheat crop, however, show a decline of at least 5 million metric tons from last summer's harvest of 115 million metric tons.

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Why did Ottawa renew aid to Cuba?

BY ROBERT SIMMS

On June 20, the Canadian government announced its intention to resume foreign aid to Cuba. Canadian foreign affairs minister André Ouellet, announcing the policy shift, said, "It is time to turn the page on Cuba. The Cold War is over."

The Canadian International Development Agency will thus channel about \$1 million this year in assistance through nongovernmental organizations working in Cuba. Ottawa will provide another to-

editorial, which put forward the real opinions and aims of Canada's rulers and their government. Cuba, the editorial stated, "is a dictatorship, repressive and undemocratic, whose very existence means a daily trampling of its people's political and legal rights. . . . But the everything-short-of-war strategy employed the United States is not a measured response to the situation. Nor is it terribly effective."

The *Globe's* editors want the downfall of the Cuban government. "The credit for making Cuba one of the poorest countries in the hemisphere must go to Mr. Castro and his cronies," the editorial stated. "The American embargo, however, offers Mr. Castro the opportunity to blame his country's problems on someone else: the yanquis."

The *Globe and Mail* editors also commented on Washington's travel ban. "The ban on travel and communication similarly shields the Cuban people from the reality of their own deprivation. Could the Castro regime long sustain popular support in the face of hundreds of thousands of visits to the island by prosperous Cuban-Americans?"

Both Ottawa and Washington share the same hostility to the Cuban revolution's expropriation of capitalist private property. They share the same contempt for the efforts of the Cuban people to build a socialist society based on human solidarity rather than private gain.

Ottawa's criticisms of Washington's embargo are not that it infringes on Cuba's sovereignty or that it harms the interests of Cuba's working people. The different policies of the Canadian and U.S. bosses reflect their different abilities to affect the situation in Cuba. Canada is a smaller and less powerful — economically, politically, and militarily — imperialist power.

Youth, trade unionists, and others in solidarity with the Cuban revolution, on the other hand, have every interest in opposing Washington's embargo and demanding that Ottawa send massive government-to-government aid to Cuba.

NEWS ANALYSIS

ken amount of \$500,000 in emergency food aid for children and mothers of breast-feeding infants. This is less than one-thousandth of Canada's \$2 billion annual aid budget.

The Canadian government supplied modest assistance to Cuba in the 1970s. But Ottawa slammed shut this aid flow in 1978 to oppose the Cuban government's sending of troops to the newly independent Angola to help the Angolans fight off an invasion by the army of the South African apartheid regime. Cuba's revolutionary solidarity was welcomed by peoples all over Africa.

Ottawa no friend of Cuba

Although Canada ranks as the largest single avenue to hard currency for Cuba, trade with Cuba is only a minuscule part of Canada's overall foreign exchange. Canadian capitalists are making investments in Cuba in the tourist industry and in mining. Canada Northwest Energy Ltd., partnered with the Cuban state oil company, announced an oil discovery last month. Two Canadian mining firms, Teck Corp. and Joutel Resources Ltd., recently signed agreements to develop gold and copper deposits in Cuba.

While using different methods, Canada's rulers have the same goals as the U.S. rulers with regard to Cuba. This fact was highlighted by a June 24 *Toronto Globe and Mail*

The Cuban reality through eyes of scholars, academics

The article below was published in the June 19 Cuban weekly newspaper *Juventud Rebelde* (Rebel Youth), along with the photo and headline above as they appear on this page. Translation is by the *Militant*.

BY HEDELBERTO LÓPEZ BLANCH

HAVANA, Cuba — The Sixth Cuba-U.S. Conference on Philosophy and Social Sciences met for five days at the Havana University's Enrique José Varona building. It made it possible for academics to exchange experiences, and for guests to know in fact how Cuban people resort to new alternatives in order to face the consequences of the economic blockade, without renouncing the road they chose 35 years ago.

The event was peculiar since it was attended by scholars not only from the United States and Canada, as on previous occasions, but also from Northern Ireland, Argentina, Puerto Rico, South Africa, and Jamaica, to mention a few.

Gloria León Rojas, professor at the Philosophy and History Faculty at the University of Havana and one of the event organizers, feels that these meetings allow scholars, both Cuban and foreign-born, to delve into today's problems, and contribute to break the blockade that Washington imposes on Cuba not just on an economic level but also in regard to ideas.

One can see the relevance achieved by these events, as indicated by León Rojas, given that the first one in 1982 was attended by six specialists from the United States, and this last one by 60 from that country, who gave 30



Cliff Durand



Laura Garza

presentations. There were more than 100 people from Cuba, who gave some 60 presentations. The topics included: economics, education, cultural identity, race, sex, and more.

Cliff Durand, coordinator for the U.S. side, told *JR* that these gatherings seek two objectives:

a) to promote academic exchange between Cuba and the U.S.,

b) to realize and express solidarity with the Cuban people, the highest achievement of which will be obtained upon the delegation's return, through explaining the reality of the archipelago.

He added that over the last few years bilateral academic exchanges have increased. This sixth meeting, in his opinion, has been very fruitful, since it has allowed professors and scholars from the U.S. to know Cuba's current situation, which they can now explain to their students at the universities, to seek material aid for the island.

According to Cliff, these gatherings represent ways of breaking the criminal and

Continued on next page

15,000 grocery workers strike in S. Africa

BY GREG ROSENBERG

In the largest nationwide strike since South Africa's first nonracial elections last April, some 15,000 workers at Pick 'n Pay supermarkets walked off the job beginning the second week in July. Workers, about half of whom are members of the South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union, are striking for a pay increase of \$63 a month. The company is offering a \$44 a month raise.

As workers began protests outside the supermarkets, the bosses won an injunction prohibiting strikers from being within 1,600 feet of a store. Police have unleashed dogs and fired rubber bullets and stun grenades at strikers. News reports indicate close to 1,000 workers have been arrested by police, and scores have been injured.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) office in the Johannesburg region said July 19 that if police continued to brutalize strikers and Pick 'n Pay bosses remain intransigent, they will call for a nationwide one-day strike on August 8.

COSATU national press officer Neil Coleman reported in a telephone interview that stores are staying open, despite a mass boycott by working people across the country. The company has hired scabs to keep the facilities going.

So far this year, the employers have lost 1.2 million workdays to strikes, as against 700,000 in the same period last year. The sharp increase comes as a result of working people taking advantage of the greater political space opened to them with the advances of the democratic revolution. An African National Congress majority was elected into a new constituent assembly during the first-ever nonracial ballot in April. Workers and peasants are now fighting with renewed confidence to win better conditions amidst the economic devastation and warped social structure left by apartheid.

'Upsurge in mines'

While wages are a central issue during the current strikes, workers' rights and dignity are at the forefront of their demands — especially the fight to eradicate the caste-like organization of labor established by the employers under apartheid.

Miners have waged a series of strikes over the past several months. The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) is currently in negotiations with the bosses association, and may launch a strike campaign following its rejection of an offer from the Chamber of Mines for an 8 percent wage increase.

The union is demanding no less than a 12 percent raise, said NUM spokesperson Jerry Majatladi in an interview. In addition, miners want immediate affirmative action measures, including wage and benefits parity for Black and white miners and increased holiday leave allowances.

"One of the most disturbing developments," complained Andrew Levy and Associates, a capitalist consulting firm, "is the upsurge in activity in the mines where the mood among both black and white workers is not one of conciliation and where demands are being made for an end of racism, the hostel system, and union recognition."

In a July 19 statement, COSATU charged that "certain forces are using the current industrial conflict to try and whip up a wave of anti-union hysteria. In particular, the NP [National Party], DP [Democratic Party], and IFP [Inkatha Freedom Party] response appears calculated to stampede the government into taking sides against workers in their battle for a living wage and human

dignity." COSATU "welcomes the rational and even-handed approach taken by President Mandela," the statement said. It called for more bona fide negotiations, an end to court intervention in strikes, limiting the involvement of police against walkouts, and reform of South African labor law.

The South African Human Rights Commission registered during June the lowest monthly death toll from political violence since January 1992. Of the 138 people killed, more than half died in Kwa-Zulu/Natal province, where the rightist Inkatha Freedom Party has its base.

In July, however, renewed combat spread in the townships of Tokoza, Vosloorus, and Kattloong, east of Johannesburg. At least 32 people died in the first two weeks of the month. Fighting was attributed to clashes between supporters of the ANC and Inkatha. Some members of self-defense units, which were originally established with ANC support to defend communities from attacks by apartheid agents, have added fuel to the fire.

A group representing about 50 self-defense unit (SDU) members in the townships announced that it would destroy migrant workers' hostels, charging that they are loyal to Inkatha.



Students join teachers from South African Democratic Teachers Union in protest for higher wages, July 1993.

"If the ANC government does not want to destroy the hostels we will do it ourselves. We are not interested in any peace efforts until the hostels have been destroyed," said one SDU member. He echoed threats against the premier of the region, Tokyo Sexwale of the ANC. "He will not come out of here alive. We voted for him hoping he will destroy the hostels. Now he wants to improve them. How can you improve dwell-

ings of people who kill us?" he said.

The ANC had earlier called for disbanding and disarming the units. In the wake of the renegade declarations, South African president Nelson Mandela said, "We are going to be forced to take very tough action against everybody who is... killing innocent people. That decision appears to be inevitable."

Warring sides agreed to a truce July 14 after the military announced it was sending more troops into the area.

Debate escalates over housing

With 17 million Blacks living on or below the breadline, and about 7 million in squatter shacks, the number of land occupations has been on the rise. This precipitated a sharp exchange over housing plans put forward by housing minister Joe Slovo and Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging (PWV) premier Tokyo Sexwale.

Sexwale called for building 150,000 low-cost homes in the PWV region over the next year. Slovo called for building 50,000 houses across the country. Sexwale argued that the Slovo plan would provide only "corrugated iron shacks" for homeless working people in the province, while Slovo stated the Sexwale plan was "chancing the housing future of the country in the hands of one construction company." The two later agreed to a study merging their plans.

The liberal Johannesburg *Sunday Times* argued against a rush to provide housing, counterposing construction to provision of water, sewers, electricity, "then clinics, then schools, and finally perhaps houses. Where would people stay in the meantime?" asked the capitalist journal. "Obviously, in self-built shacks, like many millions of poor people in China, or India, or Latin America...."

"Whites in this country, privileged though they be today," the *Times* continued, "have within living memory lived in dwellings built of wood and corrugated iron, and are no worse for it." The paper warned the ANC not to raise the expectations of the vast majority.

U.S., N. Korea talks to resume after Kim's death

BY PAT SMITH

Talks between Washington and Pyongyang are scheduled to resume after a week of mourning for North Korean president Kim Il Sung, who was eulogized in a state funeral July 19. The negotiations, which center around the Clinton administration's attempts to carry out nuclear blackmail against the North Korean government, were interrupted after one day due to Kim's death from a heart attack on July 8.

Officials of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) also postponed the first-ever summit with their counterparts in Seoul set for July 25-27.

Direct talks are regarded by both sides as a possible first step towards reunification of the Korean peninsula. The country was divided by Washington and Moscow following the defeat of Tokyo, Korea's former colonial ruler, in World War II.

One thousand students in Seoul protested July 14 against the South Korean government's restrictions on political activity. The Kim Young Sam regime declared it illegal to take part in any memorial services for the late DPRK president. Seoul has jailed several dozen students for putting up posters and planning ceremonies honoring Kim Il

Sung. South Korean cops raided universities July 13 and arrested dozens of students who planned to travel to the North for the funeral. Members of the chief opposition party in Seoul asked the South Korean government to offer condolences to Pyongyang. The regime refused.

South Korea's minister of foreign affairs, Han Sung Joo, told reporters in Seoul that his government has not noticed "any signs that there is any difficulty with the transition" in the North. On July 14 the regime in South Korea ended the military alert ordered following the announcement of Kim's death, saying events were proceeding so calmly in the DPRK that the alert was not necessary.

Radio Pyongyang announced July 13 that Kim Jong Il, the 52-year-old commander of the military and son of Kim Il Sung, had been raised "to the highest position of the [ruling Korean Workers'] party [and] the state."

Free trade and investment zone

"People who are close to Kim Jong Il are generally what you would call the reformist element in North Korea," said Selig Harrison, senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He said he believes the new DPRK president is interested in gradually opening North Korea to international investment and industry.

The DPRK government is already developing a free trade and investment zone in the northeastern region as part of a United Nations Development Program. Other zones are being proposed for the port of Nampo near Pyongyang and Sinuiju on the border with China. South Korean capitalists are eager to invest across the 38th parallel to take advantage of a cheap, Korean-speaking workforce and a new potential market.

Pyongyang has also revised its laws over the past year in order to open its markets more to international investment. "We must open the window to let the wind in, but not

the mosquitoes," the late Kim Il Sung said.

Japan's new coalition government, headed by the Social Democratic Party and Liberal Democratic Party, proposes improved relations with the DPRK. Tokyo is continuing its harassment of the association of Korean residents in Japan, however.

U.S. Senate minority leader Bob Dole denounced President Bill Clinton for offering condolences to the people of North Korea following Kim's death. Dole argued that Clinton should remind the world of Kim's "brutal dictatorship" and claimed Kim was responsible for the death of tens of thousands of U.S. soldiers. Representative Newt Gingrich complained, "I don't think we sent any condolences when Mao Zedong died."

"In fact, President Gerald Ford and his exiled predecessor, Richard Nixon, fell all over themselves with praise for Mao," the *New York Times* argued in defense of Clinton's moves. "The reason was that Mr. Nixon and Mr. Ford wanted the newly opened door to China to stay open."

Cuban reality as seen by academics

Continued from Page 4

inhumane U.S. blockade against Cuba.

Laura Garza, of Mexican descent, is a worker at a factory of aluminum doors and windows in Miami. She earns a low wage and knows the vicissitudes of living in a country where there is a high cost of living. Even so, she dedicates a great portion of her free time to participating in solidarity efforts with the Caribbean island.

Her talk at the event stated that in regards to the blockade the U.S. government is not going to change its stance toward Cuba, since the island — in spite of the changes — maintains the course of the socialist revolution.

Second, she thinks that because of the depression in the wages of the poorest layers in the U.S., plus the large migration coming in from Latin American nations, this is a good time to work with those forces to try and make them understand the need to eliminate the coercive measures against Havana.

I come from Miami, she said in closing, where they say that here you have problems which have no solution. And, nonetheless, I have seen that, in spite of the difficulties, there is hope and an enormous dignity to solve them, something that does not exist in other countries I have visited.

FOR FURTHER READING

- ◆ The Coming Revolution in South Africa by Jack Barnes
- ◆ The Future Belongs to the Majority by Oliver Tambo
- ◆ Why Cuban Volunteers Are in Angola two speeches by Fidel Castro. In *New International* no. 5.

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Immigrant rights activists back framed-up unionist

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

DEFENDING MARK CURTIS AROUND THE WORLD

This column reports on Curtis's fight against the police frame-up as well as his fight for parole. *Militant* readers are encouraged to contribute brief reports.

For more information, contact the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa, 50311. Tel: (515) 246-1695.

A consistent campaign among trade unionists and immigrant rights activists in the Los Angeles area has won new support for Curtis's fight for justice.

Activists have spoken about the defense case before unions, shown *The Frame-up of Mark Curtis* video to coworkers, and participated in mobilizations of thousands to defend the rights of immigrant workers.

Tyrone Gauthier is president of United Steelworkers of America Local 8065 in Fontana, California. The local has been campaigning for Curtis's parole for several years and has made important financial contributions. "We support Mark Curtis because he was a union member and a miscarriage of justice was

done to him," stated Gauthier. "We all need to unite through the universal solidarity of workers. By doing that we can help each other."

Another Curtis supporter, Tim Elliot, was part of a delegation that spoke before the Human and Civil Rights Committee of Service Employees' International Union Local 660. "We received a good response," Elliot reports, "and were invited to go with the union on their bus to a march in Sacramento in support of

support the prosecution's version of what occurred the night Curtis was arrested in 1988. Activists in the coalition, who also support Curtis, felt that the best way to answer this slander campaign against Curtis and his supporters was to show the video to those individuals interested in finding out the facts for themselves.

Five activists from the coalition attended the video showing. A discussion then ensued in which those who had the opportunity to see the video for the first time expressed shock at the frame-up of Curtis and the refusal of the parole board to grant him a new hearing. One activist asked when the next defense committee meeting would be and if she could get additional materials.

Leaders of the Movement of Rural Workers Without Land (MST) in the Brazilian states of Santa Catarina and Parana wrote to the Iowa State Board of Parole in June requesting that body grant immediate freedom to Mark Curtis.

The MST produced a leaflet on Curtis's case featuring an article from the April 1994 issue of *Perspectiva Mundial* on the board's decision to deny Curtis a parole hearing. The flyer also included a box in Portuguese titled "Who is Mark Curtis" that reviewed a few of the

the organizing efforts of the United Farm Workers, which we did."

Curtis supporters made a presentation at a public meeting in support of Geronimo Pratt, a former leader of the Black Panther Party who was framed up. A Salvadoran woman at the meeting requested a showing of the Curtis video at an immigrant rights meeting in a nearby city.

Mark Curtis Defense Committee supporters in Iowa received a good response at showings of the video *The Frame-up of Mark Curtis*. A member of United Auto Workers Local 997 who works at the Maytag Co. in Newton, Iowa, organized a house meeting. Midway through the video one of the workers commented that the stakes are too high for the courts and the prison system to simply let Curtis walk away from the conviction and jail term.

Another video showing was organized by Curtis supporters active in the Coalition Against Clinic Violence and Harassment. Since the coalition began last fall, it has found itself under attack by individuals in women's rights organizations who



Militant/Charles Ostrofsky
Mark Curtis Defense Committee activists show literature at June 26 'Free Leonard Peltier' rally in Washington, D.C. Peltier, a Native American rights leader, has been imprisoned on frame-up charges for 18 years.

facts of the case.

Guenter Francisco Loebens, secretary of the Native Peoples Missionary Council in Brazil, also wrote to the parole board on Curtis's behalf.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee has launched an international drive to raise \$10,000 to carry out its work and to prepare the next stage in the long-term fight to win Curtis's release.

The fund will be used for several projects, including Curtis's legal effort to overturn his conviction, which is being heard by a federal court judge in Des Moines. The defense committee is also preparing new and updated literature and plans to purchase a more powerful computer.

Reaching out with the fund will put Curtis's supporters in a good position to take advantage of new

opening to win backing for his case from striking workers, students, and others. A new campaign of letters calling for parole will begin in August and run through the end of September.

A national effort is being organized out of Des Moines to contact previous contributors and ask them to participate in the fund drive. Supporters around the country who would like to help in this project can contact the defense committee at the address above.

The following people contributed to this column: Mark Friedman, member of the International Association of Machinists in Los Angeles; Shirley Peña, member of United Auto Workers Local 997 in Newton, Iowa; Osborne Hart in San Francisco; and Nell Wheeler, member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 431 in Des Moines.

New U.S. crime bills threaten democratic rights

BY MARK CURTIS

FORT MADISON, Iowa — From atop Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., and state legislatures around the country, an avalanche of new laws is sliding down on us, threatening to bury our democratic rights. These so-called anticrime bills will not put a dent in crime or make our lives safer. Instead, the campaign around these laws by capitalist politicians will make it more likely that working people will be harassed, wrongly arrested, and framed-up by police. Workers will be held in prison longer under brutal conditions and will be subjected to more executions.

If you think that statement is too extreme, look at the various bills and the political

One member of Congress has added a provision to remove all strength-training equipment, like weights, from the federal prisons.

Most of the nearly 1 million prisoners in the United States are held in state prisons. With the federal government setting the pace, a variety of "crime bills" have been introduced in more than 30 states this year. Several include the "Three Strikes and You're Out" proposal, and at least one, in Georgia, makes it "Two Strikes and You're Out." There are mandatory sentencing laws that limit a judge's discretion in sentencing; truth in sentencing provisions that attack the right to parole; predator laws that allow the state to continue incarceration even after the sentence is served; and bills to prohibit plea bargains and to deny bail.

Blaming young people for a supposed crime wave, many of these laws target youth. Some allow for more teenagers to be tried as adults — as young as 13 in North Carolina. New curfew laws permit police to take into custody young people cops run into on the street after dark.

In New York state, Democratic governor Mario Cuomo's appointed panel of "experts" is recommending fingerprinting juveniles — those under age 16 — charged with serious crimes; doubling their current maximum sentence of 18 months; authorizing search warrants, now forbidden in juvenile cases; and giving the courts wider access to juvenile police records.

From \$600 million to \$3 billion would be spent for boot camps under the federal crime bill. There are now about 50 such camps in 30 states, which contain 8,000 inmates, mostly young men, although 13 states have boot camps for women. These are "high-decibel, high discipline" camps where inmates are forced to address the guards with "Sir! Yes, sir!" and put in long hours of grueling physical labor.

The January 7 *USA Weekend* gave a good

example of how guards treat inmates at these camps. The article quoted a guard welcoming a new arrival, 19 years old, to Georgia's Stone Mountain Boot Camp. "Get on your feet! Get up! Now get down! Do those push ups! Down! Up! On your feet!" barks Lt. Paul Wright. The strapping 42-year-old Vietnam veteran seems more menacing than a rabid dog.

These boot camps have been criticized because they have no effect on crime. Their supporters defend them precisely because of their abusive nature. "Nobody can tell me from some ivory tower that you take a kid, you kick him in the rear end, and it doesn't do any good. And I don't give a damn what they say, we're going to continue to do it in Georgia," roared Georgia governor Zell Miller.

Not all states promote these camps. In Iowa, for example, State Senator Ralph Rosenberg, a liberal Democrat, was the moving force behind the juvenile justice package recently signed into law. Preparatory studies shied away from even using the term boot camp, replacing it with what some legislators term "a holistic or total person approach" that they claim will provide proper diet and exercise, education, and self-esteem.

The Iowa juvenile package also included changes in state law to allow unannounced locker searches of certain students, no drivers licenses for school drop outs, and establishing two experimental boot camps (or holistic environments, if you prefer).

More punishment for working people

Accompanying these laws is a political campaign that seeks to establish a climate where more extreme measures of punishment are acceptable to working people and the police gain greater powers. The media carries frequent propaganda, claiming that prisoners are serving easy time in front of color TV's in air-conditioned comfort until the "revolving door" of parole quickly releases them to once

again prey on the law-abiding.

When Michael Fay was sentenced to a beating with a rattan cane in Singapore, numerous columnists in this country said that similar torture methods should be applied here.

"Caging works," crows Patrick Buchanan, the rightist politician who recommends it as a cure for graffiti on subway cars. After all, he says, "Against foreign enemies, Americans are ruthless and resolute. Dresden, Hamburg, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, napalm, smart bombs, these are the American way of war, a way that induces respect and fear in our enemies." Buchanan criticizes the "paralyzed elite" for not using measures against the "urban barbarians whose victims are Americans."

Much of the crime bill claims to have an enlightened character, wholeheartedly supported by liberals in Congress and the White House. The government will set aside \$10 billion for crime prevention. Gun control, treatment programs for drug abusers and sex offenders, and programs that claim to rehabilitate prisoners or that keep young people off the streets will all receive funding.

Such programs are always under the control of prison authorities, cops, and professional psychologists and counselors. To them, the accused are to be molded, reformed by those experts who claim to know more than the rest of us.

According to an editorial in the June 18 *New York Times*, "The idea is to create small laboratories in different parts of the country to get an idea what does and does not work to bring down crime rates in areas where large numbers of young people get into trouble." These studies are driven not by science but by the ruling rich and their system of brutality, denigration, and humiliation directed against the working class. The capitalist-owned media, politicians, and professional experts who feed at

Continued on Page 7

BEHIND PRISON WALLS



campaigns that accompany them.

The federal crime bill, proposed by President Bill Clinton and now being debated in Congress, would require a life sentence for anyone convicted of a third violent felony. This is being peddled as the "Three Strikes and You're Out" provision. The crime bill would allocate \$22 billion for new prison construction and for the hiring of 100,000 more cops. The real centerpiece of Clinton's proposal is the expanded use of the death penalty. The bill calls for an additional 39 cases in which capital punishment can be applied, including treason.

The bills — there are two, one in each house of Congress — also threaten to cut off educational Pell Grants for prisoners. This would eliminate most prisoners' chances of taking college courses while incarcerated.

Mark Curtis wins gate pass in Iowa jail

BY JOHN STUDER

DES MOINES, Iowa — Mark Curtis, a political and union activist serving a 25-year sentence on a frame-up conviction in Iowa, started a new job July 13 on a "gate pass" outside the walls of the John Bennett Correctional Center where he is imprisoned.

Curtis's gate pass job is working as a janitor in the hospital of the state prison next door. Being granted a gate pass is considered a step on the road to minimum security and eventual release. For this reason, Curtis's pass is a crack in the long-standing refusal of prison and parole board officials to grant him any advancement.

Curtis was arrested in 1988 in the midst of a public campaign to defend 17 coworkers from Mexico and El Salvador at the Monfort meatpacking plant in Des Moines. He was framed by police on charges of rape and burglary and brutally beaten in the city jail. The cops who battered him, and who were later found guilty for the beating, called him a "Mexican lover, just like you love those coloreds."

Goal to intimidate others

The goal of the authorities in the frame-up was to victimize Curtis for his union and political activities and intimidate others from fighting back against employer attacks. There is renewed interest today in Curtis's fight for justice as workers across the country, from Caterpillar to Firestone and the Canadian Pacific railroad, have been forced on strike to resist the unbearable pressure by the bosses to work longer and faster and to defeat other company concession demands.

Last October, Iowa state parole board officials refused to meet with Curtis and consider his case for release. The union and political activist has now served almost six years behind bars. Last year he served out the sentence on the frame-up rape conviction. He has an excellent record in prison and meets the legally mandated criterion for parole.

Instead, parole board officials insisted that Curtis be transferred for psychological evaluation by medical personnel to the state prison hospital at Oakdale. Curtis met with a psychologist from Oakdale who recommended that there was no need for further psychological review. At the end of 1993, Oakdale rejected the parole board's request for Curtis's transfer, writing that there were "no psychological issues" in his case.

Based on this development, the framed activist asked that the parole board grant him a hearing and release him from prison. The board turned down the request.

At the same time, Curtis initiated another request to prison authorities asking that he either be recommended for parole or be granted advancement to minimum security or a gate pass.

Advancement to minimum security?

On February 25, the same day Curtis submitted his request, he received a reply from Scott Stevens, his counselor. "I do not support movement to Minimum until programming in Medium is complete, specifically the Sex Offender Treatment Program at MSU," Stevens wrote. MSU is a special state prison sex offender program in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, that requires inmates to admit their guilt and relinquish any legal appeals of their conviction as a precondition of enrollment.

Curtis appealed this decision to Marty Rung, the Unit Manager of the John Bennett Correctional Center. On April 26, Rung responded tersely, "I concur with Mr. Stevens."

Curtis appealed this ruling to Warden Thomas Hundley, who is responsible overall for the prison complex in Fort Madison, which contains the Bennett facility, the maximum security Iowa State Prison, and two minimum security farms.

Hundley overturned the decisions of the Bennett officials June 7, writing, "I have no objection to the committee reviewing you for gate pass or the Farms."

Bennett officials then set up an interview for Curtis with the prison psychologist, who questioned him about whether he would attempt to escape if he were put on either a gate pass or sent to one of the farms. Curtis explained that he was involved in a highly public political and legal fight to overturn his conviction and to win release on parole, a fight he intended to carry through until he was successful.

Curtis met with his classification committee June 29, which informed him that he was being recommended for a gate pass.

At the same time, Curtis was told that his "custody rating" had been adjusted in May after he initiated his request for advancement. These ratings are used by prison and parole officials to determine whether an inmate is eligible for minimum, medium, or maximum security, as well as for other pro-

grams.

Curtis was told that his rating had been increased from five to seven. For this reason, the type of gate pass job he could receive would be limited to one inside the gates of the maximum security prison.

The union activist was informed that he was given the two additional points because of problems with his "institutional adjustment" and "age and behavior." Officials said this was done because he insists on his innocence and won't go to the Sexual Offenders Treatment Program.

Curtis was told that his case was different from other prisoners because it was such a public issue.

On July 7, Curtis requested a review from Warden Hundley about "receiving two additional security points when I was told I had them because I maintain my innocence."

"Will maintaining my innocence really give me a higher custody rating and hinder me from going to the farm?" Curtis wrote. "Please clarify this issue for me."

While this request for clarification is still under review, Curtis was granted a gate pass. He now leaves the John Bennett unit without being handcuffed to go to his job inside the maximum security prison as a janitor.

"This step will advance the fight to press

for Curtis's release on parole," said Hazel Zimmerman, treasurer of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. "On the one hand, it is evidence of the increasing pressure on prison and parole officials from the length of time Mark has served, the broad public support for his release, and, of course, from his strength — the way he conducts himself in prison and his commitment to fight."

"At the same time," Zimmerman said, "the way the parole board and prison authorities have conducted themselves makes it clear that they single Curtis out for special treatment because of the political nature of his fight. They still aim to exert as much pressure on him as they can, hoping they can break him."

"Nonetheless, they had to grant him the gate pass. The support Curtis has received from thousands of people from around the world contributes to making this possible," Zimmerman added. "These factors will help fuel the new campaign to urge the parole board to release him, which the Mark Curtis Defense Committee and its supporters will mount this fall."

To find out more about this fight for justice and to help out, contact the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa, 50311.

Curtis describes new prison job

BY MARK CURTIS

FORT MADISON, Iowa — For the first time since I came to prison more than five and a half years ago, I've made a concrete move toward minimum security and have better grounds to argue for my release. Today I started my new job on "gate pass."

Gate pass inmates work prison jobs outside the fence cutting grass, unloading tracks, sewing mattress covers, or doing maintenance work. About 20 inmates are on gate pass here at the John Bennett Correctional Center. Although they are supervised by guards, they leave the prison everyday without wearing "iron" — no handcuffs, leg irons, or belly chains. Being on gate pass is considered a step toward transfer to a minimum security prison.

My new job is janitor at the penitentiary's hospital and infirmary. It's considered a higher-security gate pass job because the hospital is inside the maximum security

walls of the prison. I will still live at the medium security John Bennett unit.

After breakfast we started our morning with a strip search and then boarded a gray bus that dropped us off at our different work sites. This was the first time in almost six years I'd been outside the prison without wearing chains, and that was nice. However, my coworker and I were the first to be dropped off and we went inside, through the many iron bar doors and gates of the old penitentiary. Then a guard gave us a pat-down search and handed us to another who gave us a second strip search.

We entered the hospital, a multimillion dollar project built in the 1980s, through the ancient cellhouse built in 1839. The steel walls form a modern building where prisoners make sick call and see the dentist and an infirmary where men with more serious medical problems stay.

My job as "lumper" or janitor includes sweeping, mopping, dumping trash cans, and delivering food trays to the nurses.

The hospital is high-security territory. Nearly every door must be opened electronically by guards enclosed in one of two control centers, or "turnkeys."

At noon, inmates from protective custody come for sick call. We are then barred from going into the hospital and have to stay in the infirmary until they leave. Much of our time then is spent in a tiny breakroom, unless other work needs doing.

We're janitors, not orderlies. We don't take care of the dozen or so inmate patients who live in the infirmary. Some of these patients are there temporarily and some long-term. Some are wheelchair bound, including one recent amputee. Most are elderly.

Our day ends about 2:00 p.m. with two more strip searches — four in all if you don't count the pat-down.

In spite of the hassles, it's a positive step. It demonstrates a small but real victory for the campaign for my defense and freedom.

New crime bills threaten democratic rights

Continued from previous page

the bourgeoisie's trough hate and fear working people and consider us a criminal class.

Here in Iowa, Doug Hansen, the Democratic Party's candidate for the county attorney's office in Buena Vista County, slandered packinghouse workers as "social pollution." Hansen accused the large meatpacking company IBP of being lax in checking workers' job applications and hiring those who've had past trouble with the law. He claimed his dispute was with IBP's corporate policies but his real aim is to demonize and criminalize packinghouse workers and if he wins the election his job will include prosecuting them in court.

Criminalizing the working class

Criminalizing the working class, youth, and oppressed nationalities aims to legitimize the use of force by the government against protesters, strikers, unions, organizations, and activists. An important battle on this front is being waged at the Robert Taylor housing project in Chicago, where police are trying to win the right to enter any apartment they want without a search warrant. They claim that the many shootings, murders, and drug sales near the buildings make it necessary to suspend the tenants' rights to be safe from such police invasions.

Clinton has held press conferences at the Robert Taylor housing project to promote the crime bill. Some tenants have agreed with the searches and even signed papers to waive their right to be safe from cop intrusions.

Clearly then, the crime bill and its clones are an assault on our democratic rights. But won't it at least slow down the crime "explosion" and aren't people everywhere demanding that the government crack down?

Violence against workers, women, and

children; the ravaging effects of addictive drugs; and the layer of thugs who rob and prey upon others are grave social problems. Last year there were 1.91 million violent crimes reported in the United States. But there is no crime wave or large sudden increase in violence sweeping the country. Neither is it the most important issue we face.

There is an explosion, but it's in the coverage of crime in the news, in cop shows on television, and in the pile of politicians making it their number-one issue. In Iowa for example, there is no popular clamor to reestablish the death penalty. But that hasn't stopped Gov. Terry Branstad from exploiting every grisly murder to call for rebuilding the gallows or its high-tech equivalent.

The root of violent crime today lies in the breakdown in human solidarity, a direct result of the workings of the capitalist system. Under capitalism, human solidarity is replaced by competition — for jobs and all the good things in life. The capitalists own nearly all the media and direct popular education, in the same way as they control their banks and factories. The ideas, values, and morals of the capitalist class are spread throughout the land and become the dominant ideology. Neither the collapse of so-called family values, divorce, permissiveness, violent-action shows on television, poverty, or bad genetics are the causes of crime.

Furthermore, the crimes the capitalists have committed against working people will go unpunished under the numerous crime bills. In fact, they aren't even considered illegal. The radiation experiments the U.S. government conducted on children, prisoners, and mentally retarded people; the incineration of child and adult followers of the David Koresh cult in Waco, Texas, ordered by Clinton and Attorney General Janet

Reno; the numerous victims of police brutality like Larry Milton of Des Moines, Iowa; the wartime slaughter of tens of thousands of fleeing soldiers and civilians in Iraq ordered by George Bush; and the daily maiming and deaths of workers on the job by accidents due to the greed of the corporate owners are all kosher according to the rules and standards of the wealthy families that run this country.

Only a socialist revolution led by the workers can put an end to this criminal system and build a new society in which crime, racism, and the oppression of women will have no fertile ground to flourish in. To organize such a movement it is in our favor to defend those democratic rights the crime bills threaten to weaken or eliminate altogether.

WRITE TO FRAMED-UP UNIONIST MARK CURTIS

Mark Curtis is a unionist and political activist currently serving a 25-year sentence on frame-up charges of rape and burglary. During his five years in prison, Curtis has kept in touch and solidarized with fighters involved in struggles around the world and has taken part in numerous efforts while in jail to support prisoners' democratic rights. He has participated in politics by writing for the *Militant* and sending messages of solidarity to other fighters.

Curtis seeks out political discussion and welcomes correspondence from workers, youth and other activists. You can write to him about activities in your area, and send unframed photos and news clippings of events. Be sure to include your full name and address on the letter.

Send all correspondence to:

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CURTIS'S DEFENSE EFFORT WRITE TO THE MARK CURTIS DEFENSE COMMITTEE, BOX 1048, DES MOINES, IA 50311



Mark Curtis #805338
JBCC Box 316
Fort Madison, IA 52627

SOCIALIST CAMPAIGN IN THE NEWS

The article below is reprinted from the July 13, 1994, *Daily Gazette*, published in Schenectady, New York. The story began on the front page of the daily newspaper.

THE DAILY GAZETTE

The Independent Voice of the Capital Region

WEDNESDAY
JULY 13, 1994

Socialist kicks off campaign

By PAUL FOY
Gazette Reporter

ALBANY — On the evening shift at General Electric Co., Larry Lane is known as the machinist who debunks conservative commentator Rush Limbaugh.

On Tuesday, the 48-year-old Albany resident introduced himself at the state Capitol as a candidate for governor for New York's tiny Socialist Workers Party.

Lane suggested that he has as much chance of winning the election as Gov. Mario Cuomo or leading Republican challenger George Pataki have of lifting New York's slumping economy.

He may come up short on votes, but Lane isn't without ideas to solve society's major problems.

New York should force employers to limit workers to 30 hours a week while paying them for 40 hours, to create more jobs and reduce unemployment — the root cause of crime, poverty and a lack of decent housing and health care, according to Lane.

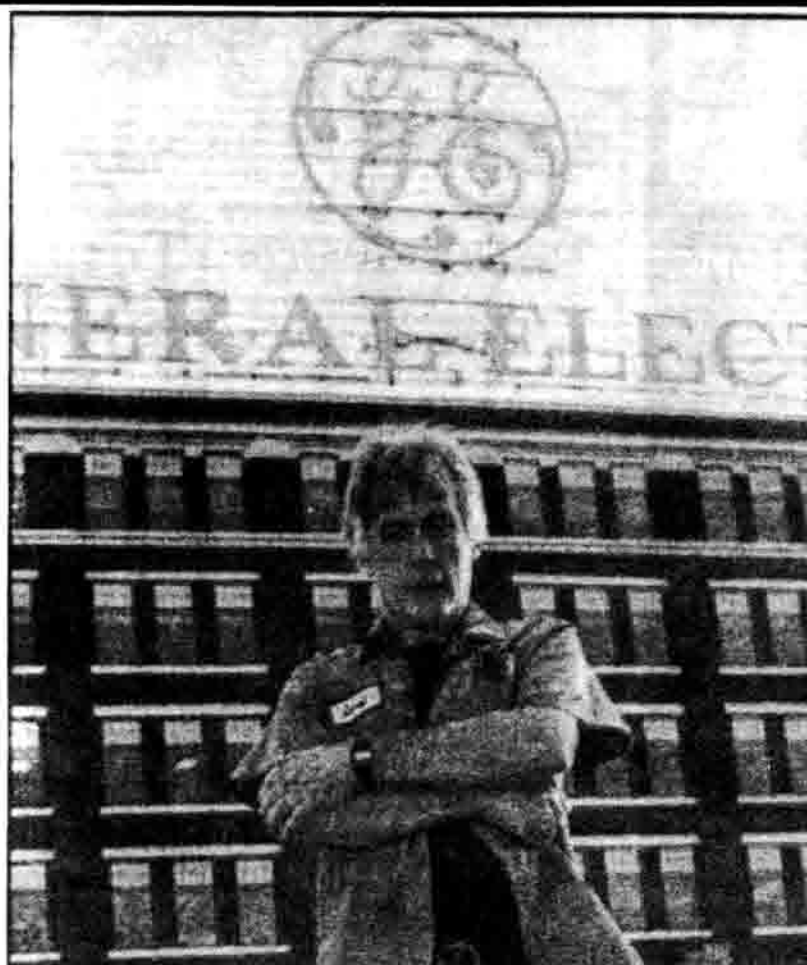
The Cuomo administration, he said, has responded to social problems by turning the Adirondacks into a "prison gulag."

Lane was unconcerned whether his "30-for-40" proposal might drive more business out of state. The idea would succeed, he said, if laborers around the world mobilized to support it.

"Reporters say, 'You socialists have really pie-in-the-sky ideas,'" said Lane. "But the most unrealistic thing is to assume that the other candidates can solve anything."

Lane, a union millwright by trade, is at risk of unemployment himself. A GE worker with only a year and a

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STEPHEN WEAVER For The Daily Gazette

Larry Lane, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor, stands in front of the General Electric Co. on Tuesday evening. Lane is a millwright at GE in Schenectady.

Socialist questions status quo

Continued from Page A1

half of seniority, Lane said he could get caught up in what he GE has laid off 1,000 salaried and contract workers since February and says it plans to cut another 400 hourly workers in October.

The company employs about 9,000 workers in the Schenectady area, down from a high of 45,000 in 1943. Citing similar statistics, Lane said it was evidence that capitalism doesn't work for the benefit of mankind.

Or, as Lane put it, capitalism is a "dog that doesn't hunt for us" — a phrase made popular by another of Lane's conservative foes, Ross Perot.

A political newcomer, Lane is running to help counter "an upsurge in rightist demigods" that he said began when Perot jumped in the race for president in 1992.

Two other socialist candidates, both 23 and from New York City, also appeared in Albany on Tuesday.

Senate candidate Naomi Craine took a swipe at the Libertarian Party's choice for governor, radio personality Howard Stern.

"We don't think there's a need to run celebrity candidates. We think there's a need to run candidates who can bring a working-class perspective to the election," Craine said.

"We need to fight to build a new society," added Brock Satter, the socialist candidate for state comptroller.

The Socialist Workers Party is kicking off a petition drive to get its total of eight designees on the statewide ballot in November.

The party traditionally captures only a fraction of the New York vote in general elections. In 1990, the socialist running for governor received 12,743 votes, or 0.3 percent of the total cast in that race.



Craine



Satter

N.Y. socialist campaign off to rousing start

Continued from front page
Albany and New York City.

Larry Lane, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of New York, is a member of the International Union of Electronic Workers. He is a machinist at General Electric's (GE) sprawling factory in Schenectady, New York. The socialist campaign has drawn an enthusiastic response among Lane's coworkers. Lane and campaign supporters, including five of his coworkers, have been talking to fellow GE employees at their factory gate and in the plant to gather signatures to put the working-class slate on the ballot. The socialist candidate explained that the growing resistance among workers in the plant to the bosses' attacks "finds a vehicle in the socialist campaign."

In a prime-time newscast on TV 6 in Albany, prominent area reporter Dan DiNicola accompanied Lane and socialist campaigners as they petitioned at GE and around Albany. He opened his television report by saying, "As a socialist, Lane works against everything GE

seems to stand for." The television camera focused on GE workers as Lane approached them for support, filming several who signed the petition and a few who wouldn't.

On one street corner, a young man who had just signed the petition was asked by DiNicola if he had ever voted for a socialist before. "No I haven't," said the young man. "Would you think about it?" asked DiNicola. "Yeah, definitely," he replied.

Back at the news desk, DiNicola observed, "I was really surprised that a lot of younger people, I'm talking about people in their 20s and 30s, really liked what [Lane] was saying."

Throughout the first week of the campaign, dozens of petitioners fanned out across New York City and upstate to bring the socialist alternative to working people and youth. Their goal is to collect 22,000 signatures to get on the ballot. More than 7,000 signatures were collected in the first eight days. Tami Peterson, 16, a volunteer from Salt Lake City, Utah, said, "This shows that by going out and petitioning for socialism in the streets, we can attract young people to the movement."

One 21-year-old met campaigners one night on Lark Street, a popular youth hang-out in Albany. The next day at 5:30 a.m. he joined the team to petition among GE morning-shift workers. Twenty-one signed up to support the socialist candidates' right to appear on the ballot.

Two young people who had met petitioners on the street stopped by the Pathfinder Bookstore in Manhattan July 19 for a discussion on Howard Stern's campaign. Stern, a rightist radio personality, is the Libertarian Party candidate for New York governor. Campaign supporters are organizing discussions on different issues every Tuesday and Thursday evening.

Another young man came to a July 16 campaign rally in New York City after meeting a team earlier that day. "I was always interested in a movement based on the working class and I've been looking for a group that can convince me that positive action can really change things," he said.

In his address to the rally, Lane blasted the various "war on crime" platforms being presented by the other candidates as "attacks on the democratic rights of working people and youth." He cited moves by incumbent New York governor Mario Cuomo and oth-

ers towards implementing the death penalty, boot camps for young offenders, fingerprinting of welfare recipients, longer prison sentences, and other measures.

Ruth Robinnett, a rail worker and Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in the 8th District, described her recent trip to Cuba with the Freedom to Travel Challenge. She vowed to use her campaign to support socialist Cuba and build opposition to Washington's travel ban and embargo.

Robinnett appealed for contributions to finance the socialist campaign. More than \$2,300 was raised in cash and pledges at the rally. In addition, a campaign supporter in Albany donated \$500.

Naomi Craine, 23, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate and a young socialist leader, spoke out against U.S. intervention in Haiti and for opening the borders to all Haitian refugees.

Summing up the experience of socialist campaigners on the streets, the young socialist said, "The response of youth to our campaign shows an openness to communist ideas that hasn't existed since the mid-1920s. The campaign offers something for young people to say 'yes' to. It helps them see the strikes and

working-class resistance as their own, and helps workers on the picket lines see their fight as part of a world picture."

Eva Braiman is a member of the United Auto Workers and the New York Young Socialists.

Minnesota socialists seek ballot spot

BY DOUG JENNESS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — At a news conference on the State Capitol steps here July 19, Socialist Workers Party candidates Marea Himelgrin running for U.S. Senate, and Jon Hillson for governor, announced they were filing more than 4,800 signatures for a place on the ballot in the November 8 elections. The state requires that 2,000 signatures be collected for each office on separate petitions in a two-week period.

Several local radio stations interviewed the candidates, who also talked briefly with a *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* reporter in the capitol press room.

Hillson, one of hundreds of striking Soo Line rail workers and a member of the United Transportation Union, stated, "Our strike deserves the support of every working person, youth, and fighter for social justice. We're part of a strike wave rolling across this country —

from Caterpillar to the Bridgestone tire workers. We're all resisting the bosses' assaults on our dignity, safety, and wages," he said.

When the reporter from Minnesota Network News, which broadcasts from several dozen local stations in rural Minnesota, asked Hillson what he would do for working farmers if he were elected governor, the candidate replied, "I'd declare a moratorium on foreclosures of farmers facing bankruptcy and immediately implement an aid program for the thousands of farmers who took a beating from last year's floods and have never received adequate compensation."

Himelgrin, is a factory worker and member of the United Steelworkers of America.

Also on the SWP ticket are Leah Finger, an assembly line worker at the Ford Truck plant in St. Paul who is running for lieutenant governor, and Damon Tinnon, a University of Minnesota student, for secretary of state.

An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis

A program for international working-class struggle today
Edited by Doug Jenness

How a program to fight for jobs, cancellation of the Third World debt, and for affirmative action is crucial to uniting working people internationally in face of employer and government attacks that are mounting with the capitalist crisis of the 1990s. (Also available in Spanish, Icelandic, Swedish.) Booklet \$3.00

New International no. 7

Articles include: Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq ■ Communist Policy in Wartime as well as in Peacetime ■ Communism, the Working Class, and Anti-Imperialist Struggle: Lessons from the Iran-Iraq War. \$12.00

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Fax (212) 727-0150. If ordering by mail, please add \$3.00 to cover postage and handling.

Socialists in Iowa back farmers' fight

Printed below is a statement being distributed by the Socialist Workers 1994 Campaign in Iowa. Angela Lariscy, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in the 4th District, presented the proposals outlined in the statement to some 200 people, mostly farmers, who attended a June 11 hearing in Goldfield, Iowa, on hog confinements. Lariscy is a member of United Auto Workers Local 270 in Des Moines. The hearing was called by an Environmental Agriculture Committee appointed by the governor.

Many working farmers present at the event reacted quite favorably to the socialists' point of view. The farmers are demanding government regulation of contract hog raising, with strict laws to protect air, soil, and water quality.

As the world depression extends, the social crisis for workers and farmers sharpens. The ruling billionaire capitalist families are trying to gain a competitive edge on their rivals for profits in industry and agriculture here and around the world. Industrial productive capacity is being shrunk at the same time the bosses are attempting and often succeeding in slashing wages and speeding up production.

For these greedy profiteers, agriculture is one of the arenas where they hope big gains can be made. Agriculture too is being restructured and reorganized in an attempt to advance the profit drive. This is being done at the expense of tens of thousands of working farmers in Iowa and states across the country.

The drive underway to restructure pork production is being spearheaded by the meatpacking bosses, large agribusiness concerns and wealthy farmers. The goal is to force down hog prices. The target of this profit drive is both the working farmers who raise hogs and sell directly to the packers as well as the contract hog farmers who are being forced to go deeply into debt — to

mortgage their lands or build confinement facilities — to go to work for the big contractors.

Contracts between working farmers and companies require a farmer to surrender the right to decisions on production and marketing while taking all the risks. Thousands of farmers who now raise hogs will be threatened with losing their land much like poultry growers around the country already have, while others will be forced into a new form of debt slavery.

With callous disregard for the environment, DeCosters, Farmland, Murphy Farms, and their ilk are pouring raw sewage into lagoons threatening the contamination of the water table, and releasing a stench which billows for miles.

Working farmers need a program to protect themselves from the devastation by capitalists. Working farmers, trade unionists, students and others must join together to put human needs before profits. The Socialist Workers 1994 Campaign defends the interests of working farmers and workers and advances a program to protect them from the ravages of capitalism. We demand:

- A moratorium on farm foreclosures.
- A guaranteed price for crops and livestock above the cost of production and adequate to provide a livelihood for working farmers and their families.
- Low interest loans and other forms of cheap credit to family farmers who need them.
- Free federal crop and livestock insurance with 100 percent protection against natural disasters.
- A livable union wage for workers in the packing plants and the hog confinement facilities.
- Immediate federal and state enforcement of protection of the environment, including the water table. Hold big business and the government responsible for damage to the environment and cleanup.

New 'Nueva Internacional' comes off the press August 1

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

A new issue of *Nueva Internacional*, a Marxist magazine of politics and theory in Spanish, comes off the press and will be available for sale August 1. Titled "The Rise and Decline of the Nicaraguan Revolution," *Nueva Internacional* no. 3 will be an invaluable political tool for revolutionary-minded youth and working people who can read Spanish in the United States and throughout the world. The English-language edition of *New International* with the same contents has already sold more than 2,000 copies since publication at the end of March.

The documents contained in this issue of *Nueva Internacional* explain the achievements and worldwide impact of the workers and farmers government that came to power in Nicaragua in 1979, and the political retreat of the Sandinista National Liberation Front leadership that led to the downfall of this government in the closing years of the 1980s. *Nueva Internacional* explains that this outcome was not inevitable, but flowed from the conscious political decision by the FSLN leadership to reject an anticapitalist course and the building of a communist party.

The editor of *Nueva Internacional* is Martin Koppel, who is also the editor of the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial*. Koppel, formerly a steelworker and active unionist in Chicago, has also edited several books and pamphlets published by Pathfinder, including *Habla Malcolm X* (Malcolm X Speaks), a collection of speeches and interviews by that outstanding revolutionary leader.



Cover design by Toni Gorton
Front cover of *Nueva* no. 3

Luis Madrid, the managing editor of *Nueva Internacional*, is a railroad brakeman in Chicago and member of the United Transportation Union. He worked with Koppel to prepare the manuscripts of the new issue of the Marxist magazine for publication. Before moving to Chicago, Madrid served as editor of the first two issues of *Nueva Internacional*.

The production of this magazine was completed entirely through labor donated by dozens of volunteers, from the translation of documents to the editorial work and printing. A team of 12 volunteers from six U.S. cit-

ies and San Juan, Puerto Rico, donated their time, skills, and energies to assist in the translation project. Among the volunteers are Blanca Machado, a retired teacher in Brooklyn; Selva Nebbia, a steelworker in Pittsburgh; Ismael Ortega, a Cuban-American active in defending the Cuban revolution in Miami; and Hilda Cuzco, who is a member of the editorial staff of *Perspectiva Mundial* in New York. Juan Villagómez organized a team of volunteer translators in Los Angeles, including his brother and sister.

Work has already begun on *Nueva Internacional* no. 4, the next issue to be published in the coming months, which will include the articles "Imperialism's March Toward Fascism and War" by Jack Barnes, "What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold," and "Cuba Confronts a Crossroads in the Fight for Socialism," by Mary-Alice Waters. Volunteers who can help with translation into Spanish are needed for this project as well. You can contact *Nueva Internacional* at 410 West St., New York, NY 10014; Tel. (212) 243-6392.

Socialist Workers candidates — 1994

Office	Candidate	Member of*
ALABAMA		
U.S. Congress: 6th CD 7th CD	Kay Sedam George Williams	USWA UAW
CALIFORNIA		
U.S. Senate	Kathryn Crowder	UTU
Governor	Ken Riley	ILGWU, SYOC
Attorney General	Thabo Ntweng	IAM
Treasurer	Ned Measel	UAW
FLORIDA		
U.S. Senate	Ernest Mailhot	IAM
Governor	Francisco Picado	ACTWU
Lt. Governor	Kelly Gilson	SYOC
U.S. Congress: 21st CD 17th CD	Laura Garza Maureen Coletta	USWA OCAW
ILLINOIS		
Governor	Catherine Sedwick	USWA
Lt. Governor	Luis Madrid	UTU
Secretary of State	Kristin Meriam	UTU, SYOC
Comptroller	Raymond Parsons	UTU
Treasurer	Johanna Ryan	USWA
Attorney General	Tom Fiske	USWA
University of Illinois Board of Trustees:	Sandra Nelson Robert Kissinger Brian Taylor	OCAW CTU SYOC
IOWA		
Governor	Mike Galati	UFCW
Lt. Governor	Shirley Peña	UAW
U.S. Congress: 4th CD	Angela Lariscy	UAW
Des Moines School Board	Ruth Nebbia John Studer	UFCW UAW
MARYLAND		
Governor	Ken Morgan	
MICHIGAN		
U.S. Senate	John Sarge	UAW
Governor	Toni Jackson	UFCW
U.S. Congress: 15th CD	Cindy Jaquith	UAW
MINNESOTA		
U.S. Senate	Marea Himelgrin	USWA
Governor	Jon Hillson	UTU
Lt. Governor	Leah Finger	UAW
Secretary of State	Damon Tinnon	SYOC
MISSOURI		
U.S. Senate	Richard Sorrentino	ACTWU
U.S. Congress: 1st CD 2nd CD	Pat Hunt George McBride	UTU USWA
NEW YORK		
U.S. Senate	Naomi Craine	SYOC, Militant staff
Governor	Larry Lane	IUE
Lt. Governor	Mary Nell Bockman	UAW
Comptroller	Brock Satter	SYOC
Attorney General	Nancy Rosenstock	IAM
U.S. Congress: 8th CD 12th CD 15th CD	Ruth Robinett Eleanor Garcia Ed Warren	UTU UFCW
NEW JERSEY		
U.S. Senate	Joanne Kuniansky	UTU
U.S. Congress: 9th CD 10th CD 13th CD	Nancy Boyasko Maurice Williams Steven Marshall	UAW Militant staff UTU
NORTH CAROLINA		
U.S. Congress: 6th CD 12th CD	Martin Boyers Susan Skinner	UAW UTU
PENNSYLVANIA		
U.S. Senate	John Cox	UTU
Governor	Deborah Liatos	OCAW
Lt. Governor	Gerardo Sánchez	UFCW
U.S. Congress: 1st CD	Hattie McCutcheon	
UTAH		
U.S. Senate	Nelson González	
U.S. Congress: 3rd CD	Barbara Greenway	OCAW
State Rep.: Dist. 23 Dist. 24	John Langford James Gallanos	USWA
State Senate, Dist. 3	Eileen Koschak	UTU
WASHINGTON		
State Senate	Harvey McArthur	IAM
WASHINGTON, D.C.		
Mayor	Aaron Ruby	
Council Chair	Sam Manuel	UTU
Council-at-large	Margrethe Siem	UTU
U.S. House of Rep	Bradley Downs	IAM

*ACTWU — Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; CTU — Chicago Teachers Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; ILGWU — International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; IUE — International Union of Electronic Workers; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; SYOC — Socialist Youth Organizing Committee; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU — United Transportation Union.

UAW strikers keep Caterpillar shut

Continued from front page
ing to nervousness in the capitalist press about the fact that the company may be biting off more than it can chew.

The Caterpillar strike is at the center of a small but real wave of walkouts across the United States. The strikers' unity and fighting spirit, along with solidarity from the entire labor movement, can lead to a major setback for one of the most prominent U.S. corporations. It can also inspire even broader labor resistance to the bosses' unbearable drive to squeeze more out of the blood and bone of the working class.

The strikers and their supporters encircled the headquarters building here July 14 with a picket line for more than an hour and a half. The picketers kept up a steady chorus of chants like "We are union," "No justice, no peace," and "Ho-ho, hey-hey, UAW's here to stay." They also sang the labor hymn "Solidarity Forever." Many on the picket line carried hand-lettered signs numbered 1 to 94, each outlining an NLRB charge against the company.

At one point, Coralee Mrazek, a leader of Families in Solidarity and the wife of a striker from the Mossville, Illinois, complex, tried to deliver a letter addressed to Caterpillar management. "You thought instead you could break the spirit of our families by your continuing harassment and intimidation, creating an oppressive atmosphere in the workplace," the letter said.

"Now you're distorting the facts about why the workers are on strike. But everyone knows that you are bent on destroying our union."

"That's not going to happen," the letter continued. "Because the only thing worse than working in a plant filled with harassment, intimidation, and oppression is working in that plant with no union representation."

Mrazek found the doors locked. After getting a security guard to open the door a crack, she threw the letter to the floor.

"All I asked was for them to hand the letter to the receptionist. Normally, you can walk in, but today he wouldn't take it," Mrazek told the picketers via a bullhorn.

"We're women who wear many different

hats, but today we have one purpose — justice now!" she said.

Jerry Brown, UAW Local 974 president, read a letter sent by President Bill Clinton to Caterpillar chairman Fites two days earlier. Clinton sent his letter to Caterpillar at the same time the Workplace Fairness Act, also known as Senate Resolution 55 (S-55), was being defeated in the Senate. This act purportedly would have made illegal the replacement of striking workers with scabs.

Clinton's letter to Fites

"I am writing today not to take sides in the substance of your current labor dispute," stated Clinton, "but to express my hope that both sides can together work out these differences in a spirit of cooperation, which allows you to get back to the business of creating jobs and quality products. . . .

"I believe that the threat or implementation of replacing striking workers, has a poisonous affect on relationships between workers and employers and that it does great damage to the collective bargaining process," Clinton continued.

"I know that the nature of your current dispute does not raise the permanent replacement issue," wrote Clinton, repeating Caterpillar's claims that it has no intention of hiring scabs and that the 1,000 workers the company has hired so far are not replacements but permanent additional employees.

"I want to challenge companies like yours that have been split by this issue in the past to move forward to new chapters of cooperation and economic revitalization, and I hope that spirit can be shown by both sides as you work through your current dispute," Clinton said.

The letter sparked quite a discussion among the unionists. One striker said, "It's about time the president did something for working people." Another said he thought it was a ploy by Clinton to cover his failure to get S-55 passed. "If he would have worked as hard for the striker replacement law as he did for NAFTA [North American Free Trade Agreement], Cat wouldn't be able to scare as many people as they do." The defeat of the bill was announced by newscasters during the rally.

Caterpillar executives in Peoria were not

happy about Clinton's letter. But rather than confronting Clinton head on, they chose to downplay the letter. A tight-faced Caterpillar spokesman, Keith Butterfield, appeared on local television stating, "We share [Clinton's] hope that an agreement with union leaders can be reached soon." He also said that he saw the letter as merely a political maneuver to get SR-55 passed in the Senate.

The following day the *Journal Star*, Peoria's major daily, which reflects closely the company's point of view, took the same careful tone as Butterfield in dealing with the letter.

"A letter from the President isn't the kind of thing a Fortune 100 chairman throws into the circular file," wrote the *Star*. "In the one notable labor dispute in which Clinton did intervene, a few words from the White House persuaded the chairman of American Airlines to drop his opposition to binding arbitration. As a result, flight attendants ended their strike four days after it began."

"This dispute also has two sides," the *Star* stated. "Clinton owes the UAW a letter, making the same argument for the same spirit of cooperation."

Response by Fites

On July 19, Fites responded to Clinton's letter. After thanking the president for "recognizing Caterpillar as a world market leader and a top creator of good-paying jobs for Americans," he got to the point.

"I understand the intense pressure exerted by the labor movement for you to express your support for S-55 the night before the U.S. Senate voted to consider the legislation," he said in a letter printed in the *Journal Star*. "Unfortunately, I was returning from a trip to Japan — where I was promoting the U.S. trade position as chairman of the U.S./Japan Business Council — and didn't learn of your letter which you faxed to us at 10:51 p.m., July 12, until after it was quoted from on the Senate floor." Fites argued that the central issue in the strike is the 1992 contract dispute and his company is not about to back off.

"The central issue in our conflict with the UAW has not changed," he said. "Our number one competitor is not an American company, but Komatsu, a Japanese company. Clearly, Caterpillar does not fit the union's 'pattern,' and we cannot compete effectively with our foreign rivals from our U.S. manufacturing base if we're saddled with a UAW 'pattern' labor agreement."

The Fites letter was published as part of a spread in the *Star* promoting Caterpillar's booming economic outlook, with the headline, "Cat likely to set record, analysts say."

According to the big-business commentators, the strike would have a negligible effect in the second quarter but could possibly lower the company's earnings by as much as 10 percent in its third quarter.

Meanwhile, despite protestations to the contrary, Caterpillar is hiring scabs. Company executives claim they are not employing strikebreakers, but workers they would need anyway to keep up with the expanded demand for their products. In truth, however, Caterpillar continues to bring in new em-

ployees to perform struck work through all sorts of guises.

Recently, the *Journal Star* carried an article on a janitorial worker who quit his job after being forced to perform struck work.

"They said do it or leave," stated Ken Simmons. "They're having us drive oil trucks, power sweepers, and do crib jobs. I was qualified to be a janitor. There ain't no one qualified to do what we're doing now except those guys on strike. It's just not right." Simmons is an employee of Professional Maintenance of Illinois Inc., the janitorial service used by Caterpillar. The company expected Simmons to do the struck work for \$6.75 an hour with no benefits.

Despite Caterpillar's attempts to get production started, workers on the picket line report the company has still been unable to do so. And solidarity actions like the recent demonstration at the company's headquarters in Peoria, are keeping the strikers' spirits high.

Ways to strengthen fight

The size and spirit of the July 14 action affected both supporters and opponents of the strike. One person coming out of the headquarters building tried to yank a whistle out of the mouth of an eleven-year-old son of a striker. At another point the Peoria police took a striker into custody for shining a mirror that disrupted Caterpillar's video taping of the protest. He was later released without being charged.

Strikers and their supporters were bolstered by the turnout. As the protest was disbanding, a call was issued for people available to converge on the Mapleton plant, outside of Peoria, to greet individuals coming out of work who had crossed the picket lines. More than 200 people responded.

Many union members are discussing ways to strengthen their fight. A striker from the Mossville Caterpillar complex with 23 years seniority explained, "We need to figure out how to combine with more unions and flex our muscles. We're getting frustrated, other unions are being forced to accept final offers."

Other solidarity activities that have taken place so far include a rally of 500, which stopped traffic, outside the York, Pennsylvania, plant July 20. Members of some 15 unions participated, including 60 Teamsters who had taken part in the national trucking strike earlier this spring. On July 8, 250 strikers and supporters marched for one mile around Caterpillar's complex in East Peoria to deliver baked goods and solidarity to pickets on duty at several gates.

During another solidarity rally of 500 at Caterpillar's headquarters July 21, which included two dozen miners from United Mine Workers of America District 12, Families in Solidarity announced their next action: A solidarity caravan at the company's complex in Mossville, Illinois, on July 28, culminating in a meeting at the Valley Lake Country Club at 5:30 p.m.

John Sarge is a member of UAW Local 900 in Wayne, Michigan. Salm Kolis, a member of the UAW in Atlanta, and Kathy Mickells, a member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers in Philadelphia contributed to this article.

Caterpillar strikers, supporters rally at plant in Aurora, Illinois

BY JOHANNA RYAN

AURORA, Illinois — At the Caterpillar plant here, nearly 100 strikers and their families turned out to wish the scabs and white collar employees a "Happy Inside Vacation" July 18. It was the first day of Caterpillar's traditional vacation shutdown. But this year the company, desperate to restore production, was not giving anyone a break. The strikers were joined by delegations from Teamsters Local 705 and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 336, as well as other unionists.

Rev. James Jackson, chaplain of Local 705, led the pickets in urging truck drivers not to cross the line. "Shame on you!" he thundered at one nonunion trucker through his bullhorn. "Any truck driver that crosses this line is a disgrace to the whole labor movement!" Mike Sacco of Local 336 snapped photos for the electrical workers' monthly newspaper. "These workers are a lot like us at Ameritech," he said. "They've had good wages and decent conditions for a lot of years. But now this company's out after their union, their solidarity — really, their whole way of life. They're learning some lessons the hard way, and we need to pay attention."

The strike remains strong with estimates of the scab workforce remaining at a few hundred, the majority of them bosses and white collar workers ill-equipped to do the job. A striker said in an interview that a truckload of expensive piping shipped out of Aurora last week had all been scrapped due to poor quality. "If you see a lot of cars out here," he said, "don't think there's a lot going on in there. Some of these supervisors drive two and three cars across the line just to make it look good."

Robin Recob, a laid-off steelworker who



Militant/Russell Hall
Walking the picket line in Aurora, Illinois.

hired on at Caterpillar in January, said she had no problem making up her mind which side to take in the ongoing battle. "If there wasn't a strong union here, do you think we'd be making this kind of money? Not a chance," she said. The United Auto Workers had just held an informational meeting in Ottawa, Illinois, she said, which had helped draw in many strikers like herself who commute an hour or more each way from small towns west of Aurora.

A number of workers anticipated that after the "vacation" period Caterpillar would step up its offensive against the union. "We'll be ready," several strikers promised.

Johanna Ryan is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 1011 in East Chicago, Indiana.

UAW, General Dynamics report pact

BY CAROLE JACKSON

WARREN, Michigan — United Auto Workers (UAW) officials announced July 15 that they had reached a tentative settlement with General Dynamics. Some 1,900 UAW members in Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania struck the Land Systems Division of General Dynamics, which makes tanks and tank parts, June 20. Contract talks had broken down over the company's demand for severe cuts in medical benefits. General Dynamics insisted that retirees pay \$25 out of their monthly pension toward health care and also wanted to force those working to pay 20 percent of their medical insurance.

The company then upped the ante after the strike began, stating that only those with very high seniority would be granted any medical insurance upon retirement, and that would come with a lifetime ceiling on coverage.

Only about 300 workers would be eligible for insurance under this proposal, and 1,246 would have no coverage at all once they retired.

Due to massive layoffs over the last decade, most General Dynamics employees

are close to retirement now. Half the workforce here at the Detroit Arsenal Tank Plant will be retiring by 1996.

"They're greedy," said one picketer at the tank plant. "They can make millions off of us by cutting health care."

Others noted that General Dynamics can hardly cry poverty. Its earnings for the first quarter of 1994 were up 8 percent over the same period in 1993.

Picketers were guardedly optimistic that the proposed settlement would not contain the deep cuts in medical coverage that the company originally demanded. Most said they would vote in favor of the pact if it retained most of their current health-care plan. According to UAW spokesman Jim Thorbin, workers would be required to pay 10 percent of their health-care benefits. The ratification meetings for the four Detroit-area locals on strike were scheduled to begin July 21.

Strikers also said they were somewhat surprised at the sudden announcement of a settlement. "They did not expect us to strike," surmised one UAW member. "We stood solid; no one crossed the line."

Canadian Pacific rail employees walk out

BY JON HILLSON
AND CHRIS NISAN

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — Some 1,200 United Transportation Union members, joined by more than 3,000 fellow rail unionists honoring picket lines, have shut down the ninth-largest U.S. rail carrier — the Canadian Pacific (CP).

Workers struck July 13 at 11:01 p.m. when four years of negotiations finally collapsed after a 30-day "cooling off" period imposed by federal control of railroad bargaining ended.

Up to 95 percent of the CP's rail traffic, was initially halted, according to the UTU, on more than 5,000 miles of track in 11 Midwestern states.

Upbeat and determined, 150 rail workers mobilized to picket CP's main headquarters and terminal here July 18. That day in Chicago, about 250 workers rallied to support the strike.

Teamster-organized truck drivers refused to deliver batteries and other parts when they were approached by union pickets, who urged them to honor their lines here.

Across town at the CP's U.S. business center, where 160 members of the Transportation Communications Union (TCU) are

honoring UTU picket lines, unionists handed out 1,000 leaflets to passersby urging them to support their strike. Not a single TCU member returned to work, despite boss-inspired rumors of impending breaks in the ranks of 16 railroad craft unions. On July 19, TCU members reported, the CP began a telephone campaign to get them back to work.

The battle between the company and the union is an important test of strength between rail labor and the rail bosses. The national contract covering UTU members on major U.S. railroads expires Jan. 1, 1995. The CP bargains separately with its unions.

The railroad is owned by the multibillion dollar Montreal-based Canadian Pacific transportation and shipping empire. UTU members on the CP's transcontinental Canadian operation are covered by a separate contract.

Pickets reported increased train traffic in and out of the yard as the strike entered its second week. This has sparked increased discussion over how to win.

Wade Birnbaum and Mark Wimmer, general chairmen of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees on the Canadian Pacific line, said in an interview that all of



Jon Hillson/Militant

Rail workers picket Canadian Pacific yard in Twin Cities area, Minnesota.

the nearly 1,300 members of their union were honoring UTU picket lines.

In Minneapolis, UTU members got hundreds of strike fact sheets into the hands of United Auto Workers (UAW) unionists at the Ford assembly plant, which resumed work July 18 after a summer shutdown. Ford maintains a multimillion dollar contract with the CP for transportation of just-in-time inventory and finished trucks. The UAW has

extended an invitation to UTU strikers to address their next local meeting.

Across the system, teams of UTU members report incidents of unsafe practices by bosses operating trains, derailments, and run-through switches.

At stake in the strike are the jobs of hundreds of UTU members that will disappear if the rail barons are successful in reducing current two-person road freight and yard switching crews to a single worker, along with an engineer.

While supervisors and nonunion office personnel have been attempting to operate trains, scab hires, including retired switchmen and engineers, have been lured by CP cash to cross picket lines in Minneapolis and St. Paul, where 350 UTU members constitute a key component of the strike.

But virtually none of nearly 60 new hires here have crossed picket lines, and many probationary employees are aiding the union. A union-sponsored meeting for new hires at the UTU's Minneapolis strike headquarters attracted nearly 30 workers, ranging in age from their early 20s to 50s, most of them with only weeks of service on the railroad. They cheered calls for unity between themselves and the union.

The strike headquarters has maintained 24-hour picketing at 10 sites at four yards and the corporate offices in Minneapolis/St. Paul, as well as road depots 100 miles north and south of the metropolitan area. Area unionists, from auto workers to airport machinists, along with workers from other railroads, have also joined picket lines.

The militant mood of strikers was fired up by a UTU labor/family solidarity rally July 11, which filled a St. Paul International Association of Machinists hall with nearly 300 workers.

UTU strikers realize they have a serious fight on their hands. "They get a little bit better at this every day," a veteran trainman here said as he watched management personnel and scabs attempt to switch out one of 28 tracks at the Ford Truck Assembly plant.

Jon Hillson and Chris Nisan are switchman on strike against CP Rail in St. Paul and members of UTU Local 1882.

Rubber workers strike Firestone, Pirelli

BY RUTH NEBBIA

DES MOINES, Iowa — More than 1,300 members of the United Rubber Workers (URW) Local 310 struck Bridgestone/Firestone at noon July 12 after reaching an impasse in negotiations. Another 2,700 workers in four other plants in Decatur, Illinois; Noblesville, Indiana; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and Akron, Ohio have also walked out, bringing to 4,000 the number of strikers.

Three days later, 683 members of URW Local 164 struck the Pirelli/Armstrong tire company here. They were greeted by about 50 cheering fellow union members outside the factory. Pirelli workers are also on strike in Nashville, Tennessee, and Hanford, California.

Both Des Moines plants produce tires for agricultural machinery. Firestone is a major supplier of the John Deere agricultural implements plants in the area. Pirelli, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, has 20 percent of the North American agricultural tire market share.

The take-back demands in Firestone's final offer would cut deep into workers' income and benefits and worsen working conditions. They include:

- Increases in payments workers make on their health insurance to \$68 per month for a family, with the possibility of an additional \$165 per month. Currently workers do not pay any of their insurance.
- A seven-day production schedule of 12-hour shifts with no premium overtime pay, reduced premium pay for holiday work, and no premium pay for weekend work.
- A wage reduction of more than \$5 per hour on base rate for some jobs, no cost-of-living allowance, a 30 percent wage cut for new hires, and wage increases set by company-controlled productivity levels.

The Pirelli contract negotiations broke down because of the imminent sale of the plant. Earl Seymour, president of URW Local 164, told the *Des Moines Register* that the company didn't want to agree to terms covering the Des Moines plant because it would be easier to sell it if a new contract wasn't in place. Pirelli had been asking for a delay in cost-of-living pay increases, reductions in employee health benefits, lowering of holiday work premium pay, and permission to hire temporary workers at less than union wages without benefits.

Pirelli retirees recently received a letter from the company stating that their health-care benefits would end October 15 due to higher than expected insurance costs. The company's letter suggested retirees purchase their own insurance or wait until a national health care plan is passed by Congress.

Many workers on the picket line expressed outrage that benefits that the union had won in the past would be cut when workers need them the most. Many recent retirees took a buyout from Pirelli and are not eligible for Medicare since they are not yet 65. Many have signed up for picket duty, including one with more than 33 years at the plant who was ready to sign up before the picket duty lists were ready.

BY MIKE ITALIE

DECATUR, Illinois — Strikers against Caterpillar and locked-out workers from A.E. Staley led a rally July 12 of 200 to greet members of United Rubber Workers (URW) Local 713 as they went on strike against Bridgestone/Firestone here. "I didn't expect them," said Phil Sheridan, a tire builder for 27 years at Bridgestone. "It sure gave us a big boost."

With 1,270 rubber workers on strike in Decatur, there are now 3,800 striking or

locked-out workers in this city of 80,000.

The strike support rally developed spontaneously. Workers around town came out at the publicized URW contract deadline of noon July 12. "I knew they [the rubber workers] were going out so I went by. I go to all of our rallies and figured I could be used," said Steve Fischer, who has 20 years at Staley and also farms hogs and cattle. Seventy-five of those who gathered were members of United Paperworkers International Union Local 7837 who have been locked out by A.E. Staley for more than a year. Linda Door, whose husband has worked at Staley for 30 years, said she joined the rally because "this town has got to have an awakening. Big business thinks it owns this town."

Strikers Phil Sheridan and Bob Phillips, both with 27 years at Bridgestone, were angered by company demands for mandatory 12-hour shifts with no overtime pay. "They think we should live just to work for them," said Phillips. Company-imposed 12-hour shifts is also a key issue in the United Auto Workers strike against Caterpillar. "The problem is that the global solidarity of the workers is always a step behind the global solidarity of the bosses," Sheridan said, connecting these strikes and other attacks on workers' rights.

Ruth Nebbia is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 431 in Des Moines. Mike Italie is a member of the United Steelworkers of America in Cleveland.

Rail workers in Britain step up action

BY CELIA PUGH

LONDON — Striking signal workers employed by Railtrack stopped most of the national rail network in Britain July 13. This was the fifth one-day strike for an 11 percent pay claim to cover past productivity changes. The company estimates the cost of the strikes at £50 million [US\$75 million].

The National Union of Rail Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT) is planning to step up its protests. Weekly one-day signal strikes will be boosted by a 48-hour walkout from noon July 26 to noon July 28. This will disrupt services for three days. A national solidarity rally and demonstration is planned for London July 30. RMT members in signal supervisory and management grades will be balloted to join the action. Railtrack management has forced these grades to work signal boxes during the one-day strikes. Those who refuse are threatened with discipline. Safety concerns are growing in response to the use of unqualified staff.


Railtrack claims that 20 percent of journeymen ran July 13. No signals were worked

by RMT members who had voted by a 4-1 ratio for strike action. Few trains were on main line routes and many were empty. The July 13 *Evening Standard* reported that "regular rail commuters decided they had had enough of the limited rail service and took to their cars to create the worst jams throughout London since the strikes began." The Freight Transport Association said that transport of goods was severely affected.

Signal workers basic weekly pay is between £146 and £226 (£=US\$1.50). Workers put in an average of 52 hours a week, with many working up to 72 hours. An initial 5.7 percent wage increase offered by Railtrack was blocked by the government, which insists on a 2.5 percent pay raise limit for the public sector. Railtrack is still state-owned.

Small pickets have been set up at signal boxes. At a picket line in Willesden, north London, strikers had just challenged two managers who drove through their line to staff the signal box. Willesden RMT branch member Garth Thomasson said that

Continued on page 12



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Haiti invasion?

Continued from front page
military repression in Haiti.

The White House has now placed some 11,000 troops within a 150-mile radius of the island. Five amphibious assault vessels are stationed in surrounding waters, including the most advanced amphibious command ship, the *USS Mount Whitney*. These ships house 2,000 marines and 20 troop-carrying helicopters.

In mid-July, some 2,000 paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, held one of the largest rehearsals of an air assault that the unit has had in two years. In addition, more than 400 marines conducted a two-day mock invasion drill on the Great Inagua Island in the Bahamas, about 80 miles northwest of Haiti.

While stepping up its threats to invade Haiti, Washington continues to deny Haitian refugees fleeing dictatorial rule by boat entry into the United States. After reversing its policy of immediately repatriating Haitians picked up on the high seas, the White House is now scrambling to find other places to put these refugees. U.S. officials have announced that the governments of Antigua, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, and Surinam have tentatively agreed to set up safe haven sites for some of the refugees.

Panama's current president, Guillermo Endara, agreed to and then withdrew his offer to take up to 10,000 refugees. However, Panamanian president-elect Ernesto Pérez Balladères has since promised to house 10,000 Haitians once he takes office September 1.

From mid-June to mid-July, more than 20,000 Haitians have fled their homeland by boat. The vast majority of them — close to 17,000 — are being held at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. The government is preparing to crowd up to 23,000 refugees onto this site. Facing indefinite detention in unsanitary conditions with a lack of food, and no access to immigration lawyers, about 1,300 people opted to be returned to Haiti.

"It's hard to believe that persons who risked drowning and being shot at would change their minds and go back to sanctions and repression," stated Steven Forester, an attorney for the Haitian Refugee Center in Miami.

In recent weeks a number of organizations that condemned U.S. president Bill Clinton's forced repatriation policy have issued statements backing the administration's so-called safe haven policy. Among those endorsing this position are the National Coalition of Haitian Refugees, Amnesty International, the American Immigration Lawyers Association, the American Bar Association, and the American Jewish Committee.

Washington is also seeking agreement from other governments to participate in a post-invasion occupation force in Haiti. The White House hopes to put together a 12,000-strong force, with no more than half coming from the United States.

So far, the Clinton administration has obtained tentative agreement from 12 governments to send troops, though this is based on the condition that Haiti's military rulers step down voluntarily. The governments of Jamaica, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Surinam, Belize, Panama, El Salvador, and Honduras are promising soldiers. All together they have volunteered between 2,000 and 4,000 troops.

Clinton has stated that Washington has a "grave responsibility" to guard against violent reprisals directed against Haiti's military.

The U.S. government's military moves have sparked a discussion among many Haitians. At a protest in front of Miami's Immigration and Naturalization Service July 15, Haitian activists chanted, "We don't want refugees in Panama! Cedras must go!" In discussions with participants, many expressed support for a U.S. invasion, citing this as the only way to get rid of Haiti's military leader, Lieut. Gen. Raoul Cedras. One young man disagreed, noting he had been held at Guantánamo previously and had no faith in the U.S. government.

Laura Garza is a member of the United Steelworkers of America in Miami.

- MILITANT LABOR FORUMS -

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Labor Upsurge: Strike Wave Unfolds Across United States. Speakers: Valerie Johnson, member of United Transportation Union; and Greg Gigg, member of Teamsters Union. Sat., July 30, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

Union settles Leslie Fay strike

BY KAREN RAY

WILKES-BARRE, Pennsylvania — The six-week strike by members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) against the dressmaking giant Leslie Fay ended July 13 with the ratification of a three-year contract. Some 1,800 ILGWU members had walked off the job in five states June 1 after management refused to negotiate a new contract and announced plans to shut down most of their U.S. manufacturing operations. More than 1,000 of the jobs slated for elimination were in Wilkes-Barre.

The company filed for bankruptcy earlier this year and had begun preparations to open a highly automated plant that would employ 150 here and move other production to Guatemala.

The contract was ratified July 13 in Wilkes-Barre by a vote of 500 to 54. The bankruptcy court put its stamp of approval on the agreement the next day.

The new three-year settlement stipulates that 600 jobs will remain in Wilkes-Barre for a minimum of one year. But 500 to 600 jobs will still be cut. This is half of the more than 1,000 jobs Leslie Fay planned to eliminate at the beginning of the strike. Those whose jobs are cut will receive severance pay — from \$1,500 to \$10,500 for the Pennsylvania production workers and \$5,000 to \$6,500 for employees at the Morrow, Georgia, distribution center. The Morrow plant will close, affecting about 50 union members. A \$5,000 job buyout is offered to workers who

would otherwise maintain their jobs based on seniority through the consolidation. The union estimates that 400 jobs will be lost after the buyout. Wages are in line with the national outwear agreement. The company will also pay the \$23 monthly copayment for health insurance.

The production plants in the Wilkes-Barre area will be consolidated into the Route 315 factory with workers from the other facilities having transfer rights by seniority and preferential hiring at the distribution center in Laflin, Pennsylvania.

Response mixed on strike's outcome

The response by union members in Pennsylvania was mixed as the details of the new pact were explained. Many workers said, "We got the best we could." But dozens of workers from the Throop, Pennsylvania, plant, which will close as part of the settlement, walked out of the union meeting without voting. For them, layoffs and increased commuting distances because of plant consolidation were not negotiable. Pearl Novak, a 46-year veteran of the Throop plant, said, "Maybe we didn't win much, but we certainly got attention."

The agreement established a labor-management committee to determine how to achieve a "goal of 600 jobs" after Aug. 1, 1995. The committee will accept a "binding decision by an impartial facilitator" if there is no agreement among its members. William Usery, labor secretary in the Ford administration, is the designated mediator.

Rail workers in Britain step up action

Continued from Page 11

managers came from Crewe in northern England. "This is a sign of weakness that Railtrack have dragged people so far. They told us they had a duty to Railtrack to keep the trains running. What they don't see is that Railtrack and the government are pushing through restructuring. Their jobs are on the line too." Thomason described the pressures, which have prompted the 11 percent claim. The pace and scope of work has increased. "We have no fixed meal or toilet breaks but have to snatch these when we can. We're under pressure to work our rest days. Many of the strikers have told me they welcome these one day strikes, it reminds us of what it feels like to have a day off."

Dan Evans, another Willesden signalman, said Railtrack's efforts to undermine the strike have hardened support. Railtrack has written to every striker with an offer tied to a self-financing efficiency package. Evans said, "This means about £3 a week for more work, more pressure, more job loss, and less safety. If signal workers didn't realize that Railtrack had this up their sleeve, they do now. Now

that we're on strike, we're in a better position to resist it."

Celia Pugh is an RMT member working for London Underground.

— CALENDAR —

CALIFORNIA

Berkeley

Why the Workers' Party is Winning in Brazil. Speaker: Dulce Maria Pereira, alternate Brazilian Workers' Party Senator for the state of São Paulo, African-Brazilian feminist, and television commentator. Tues., July 26, 7:30 p.m. St. John's Presbyterian Church, 2727 College Avenue. Sponsored by KPFA Radio, Progressive Asset Management, Inc., Earth Trade, Inc., and the Brazil Election Information Committee. For more information, call (510) 869-5799.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Why the Workers' Party is Winning in Brazil. Speaker: Dulce Maria Pereira. Fri., July 29, 6:30 p.m. 1199 National Health and Human Service Employees Union, 330 West 42nd Street, 8th floor, room 3-4. Sponsored by the Brazil Election Information Committee. For more information, call (212) 242-4201.

Jay Mazur, president of the ILGWU, called the accord "trailblazing," claiming that it points "the way to joint labor-management to preserve American jobs."

Unionists and other workers in the Wilkes-Barre area showed widespread support to the garment strikers. Picket lines remained strong throughout the fight. The company never succeeded in getting a court injunction limiting numbers on picket lines. Pickets remained up 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Many workers gained a new sense of the importance of solidarity. Following the contract vote, plans were being made for an ILGWU delegation to visit Caterpillar strikers in nearby York the next day.

At the SASSCO distribution center, a subsidiary of Leslie Fay, in Seacaucus, New Jersey, spirits were high about the contract ratification. Workers felt they had stood up to the company and had made some gains with the contract settlement. No jobs were threatened with elimination at this distribution center.

One worker explained that the strike had made her feel different about her coworkers. "We can stand up for what is right together," she said.

On July 18, the first day back at work, more than 150 union members at SASSCO held a rally in front of the plant before work. Wearing union T-shirts, they then marched back into work together as a show of their strength. Unionists at the Wilkes-Barre plants had made similar plans.

Karen Ray is a member of ILGWU Local 311 in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Jon Teitelbaum and Kathy Mickells in Philadelphia, and Rich Ariza, member of Mailhandlers Local 300, and Joanne Kuniansky, member of United Transportation Union Local 1445, in Newark, New Jersey, also contributed to this article.

TEXAS

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Protest Against Operation Blockade and Anti-Immigrant Bashing! All Out to El Paso! Sat., Aug. 20. Sponsored by Open Borders Coalition. For more information, call (512) 452-7453.

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A truthful lawyer? — "I would like to be representing O.J. For someone who does a lot of homi-



Harry Ring

cide cases, this is a terrific one to have. Most of the murder defendants you represent are poor people." — Norman Zalkind, a Boston criminal lawyer.

And a truthful producer? — "This may be considered exploitative but [it's] reflective of the

world we live in." — A Hollywood exec on the stepped-up number of commercials for new movies during the heavy TV coverage of the O.J. Simpson court proceedings.

"Try the new superstrength!" — We haven't heard anything more about the fellow who made it over the wall of a South Charleston, West Virginia, prison by braiding dental floss into a scaling rope. If pardons were issued for ingenuity, he would surely qualify. And think of the commercials he could do. It would be the mother of all product endorsements.

History — "JULY 1: A large quantity of peas were wasted at the Snyder Canning Co. recently when German prisoners of war, interned

at Howland's Island Camp, left their work station two hours early. Through a misunderstanding, the men left to board their bus after working eight hours instead of the required 10-hour shift. Rumors that they had refused to work because of the heat were unfounded." — The "Fifty Years Ago" column in the Syracuse, New York, *Post-Standard*.

Facts-of-life dep't — "It seems stupid to have to keep repeating it, but the greatest rewards are usually not far from the greatest risks." — A Johnson & Johnson exec in Russia on the soaring business/mob crime rate there.

Buy Woodstock stock — Tickets for Woodstock '94 are \$135 —

plus transportation, food, and extras. If you can't handle that, it's \$49 to see it on pay-per-view TV. One somewhat jaundiced news headline said: "Peace, Love and Profits... a Festival of Marketing and Music."

Go bald — The Psychomedics Corp. is marketing a hair-sample drug test. They claim it's more accurate than the standard urine test and will detect drug use as far as three months back. Scientists note that hair is a good filter and will pick up residues from the air.

Lesson #1 — Pay a pediatrics bill with MasterCard and get a free video and book on making a house safe for children. An accompanying caution: "MasterCard International

is not responsible for any accidents or injury resulting from use of the information presented..."

Home away from home — Discreetly tucked away in Beverly Hills, Sushiko, a Japanese sushi bar and restaurant, offers fine food at fine prices. The tab runs from \$200 to \$500. Regulars can apply for a seven-year, \$5,000 membership, including a 10 percent discount and your own sake cup.

Thought for the week — "Of the approximately \$1.5 billion spent on HIV prevention around the world last year, only 6 percent was spent for the developing world, which has nearly 90 percent of the planet's HIV population." — *Poz* magazine.

Thousands attend NAACP convention in Chicago

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

CHICAGO — More than 4,000 delegates, observers, and guests attended the 85th Annual Convention of the NAACP here July 9-14. The convention included plenary sessions and workshops on health care, education, and crime, as well as programs to advance Black-owned businesses. Thousands of young people attended the gathering, which had separate programs and events for youth away from the main body of the convention.

U.S. vice president Al Gore, Senator Paul Simon, U.S. representatives Maxine Waters and Major Owens, U.S. surgeon general Joycelyn Elders, and Rev. Jesse Jackson were among the speakers at the convention.

Gore, who spoke at one of the plenary sessions, skirted around issues that have drawn recent criticisms from prominent Black political figures, including U.S. policy on Haiti and President Bill Clinton's proposed crime bill. "Young people need something to say 'yes' to," he said in reference to the debate on crime. This "means addressing the roots of the problem."

In a tacit acceptance of the use of the death penalty, the convention passed a resolution calling for the Racial Justice Act to be included in the final crime package. This law would offer "strong civil rights protection against the discrimination in the application of the death penalty," the resolution said. The crime bill would extend the death penalty to more than 50 offenses, including crimes that do not involve murder, such as drug trafficking. The Racial Justice Act would ostensibly allow in-

mates on death row to use statistical evidence to argue that race played a role in their sentencing. However, some members of the Congressional Black Caucus, which sponsored the act, cited their absolute opposition to the death penalty as a reason they could not support the total crime bill package, regardless of whether it includes the provision.

The convention also adopted a resolution against the policy of the "American government of admitting peoples from all over the civilized world to this country; except the citizens of Haiti." It "is a racist policy, plain and simple," the resolution said.

NAACP executive director Benjamin Chavis said the group would not call for direct military invasion in Haiti. However, Jackson spoke in favor of a U.S. military invasion of the island. "Why is it we can fight and die for Kuwaitis that we've never met, but we can't go into Haiti to defend democracy?" he said. Jackson spoke at a labor luncheon attended by 1,000 people during the convention. He criticized Clinton's reactionary "three strikes you're out" campaign of mandatory life sentences for people convicted of three felonies and counterposed it to a scheme of reform and rehabilitation, including health-care and welfare reform, called "four balls you're on." According to Jackson, "ball four" would be a job offer. However, he made no proposals on how to implement this program.

In another reflection of the rightward shift of liberal capitalist politicians, Elders told convention participants "that Blacks have enjoyed entitlements too long. Entitlements are like having rights with no responsibility. We need empowerment to take responsibility."

"Welfare is not a destiny but a stop," she said in support of Clinton's pledge to "end welfare as we know it."

Chavis announced that the National African American Leadership Summit would reconvene the third week in August. The first summit meeting took place June 12-14 in Baltimore. South African president Nelson Mandela addressed the convention via satellite July 12. "We are proudly moved by your preparedness to join us in our endeavors, despite the challenges that your communities face at home," Mandela said. "South Africans look forward to many years of cooperation between us."

"Our freedom will be meaningless if we do not rapidly combat socio-economic problems to improve the lot of ordinary people," he added.

Chavis has drawn the ire of some of the national board members who have openly criticized him for inviting Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan to the Black leadership summit. Farrakhan did not attend the NAACP convention.

Chavis told the convention that the organization's membership increased from 490,000 in April 1993 to its current size of 675,000. Sixty-five percent of all new members are under 24 years old. Thousands of youth attended the NAACP's academic and technological contests held at the University of Illinois Pavilion. A crowd of about 8,000 people observed the contests.

A march and rally of 1,000 was organized against Burger King July 14, the last day of the convention. The protest was a response to an incident where about 6 Black youths, members of the NAACP, were refused entrance to the downtown restaurant on July 12. The cops forced 25 other youth to leave the restaurant. Chavis told the rally "this march



Ben Chavis at rally of 1,000 protesting racist mistreatment at Burger King.

today is part of the same spirit to return to direct action."

Earlier during the convention, on July 10, a 16-year-old Black youth was shot and killed after cops in an unmarked car attempted to search a group of young people who had gathered on a front porch. A witness said, "I saw him take off running and I heard the officer

yell for him to stop and a second later I heard the gunshot." Residents in the area said he was a good student and "he wouldn't be carrying a gun." NAACP member Cory Brown of Kentucky, said, "if we do not take a stand, it would be a travesty of justice." However, no discussion or resolution was brought to the floor concerning this case.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT
Published in the Interest of the Working People
August 8, 1969 Price 10¢

KITTERY, Maine — 300 New Englanders participated in a demonstration calling for the immediate release of Pfc. George Daniels and Lance Corporal William Harvey outside the Portsmouth Navy Yard July 26. July 27 is the second anniversary of the "crime" for which the two Marines were railroaded for a grand total of 16 years hard labor. The men, both young Afro-Americans from Brooklyn, are imprisoned in the Portsmouth brig.

Harvey and Daniels were stationed at Camp Pendleton in 1967. They led a group of 10 Marines who requested the "Captain's Mast," the procedure for seeing the Commanding Officer, in order to protest being sent to Vietnam. A sergeant took the statement of grievances from the group on July 27, 1967. Twenty days later Harvey and Daniels were arrested for "attempting to promote disloyalty in the ranks."

The Harvey and Daniels case began to attract attention early this year when Ed Sherman took an appeal to the Naval Board of Review in Washington, D.C. Sherman won a reduction of sentences from 10 years hard labor for Daniels to four years and from six years hard labor to three years for Harvey. Sherman plans to carry the case to the Military Court of Appeals and move for dismissal of the convictions and immediate release of the two men.

According to Sherman, "There was no

mutiny. Nobody disobeyed orders. There was no disobedience at any time. Yet both of these men received the maximum possible sentences under the law. Harvey and Daniels were the first enlisted men convicted for agitation against the war in Vietnam when no disobedience resulted from statements made."

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS
August 5, 1944

A storm of protest has broken out among the workers in Rome over the jailing by the AMG of Rosario Bentivegna, an active participant in the anti-fascist underground movement. Bentivegna, a medical student and member of the Stalinist party, is the first Italian citizen to be convicted by the Allied General Court at Rome.

Significantly enough, his crime is anti-fascist activity. For nine months before the Allies entered Rome, Bentivegna had fought against the Nazis with the armed partisans of the Committee of National Liberation. On June 5, a few hours after the Allies entered Rome, he caught a police lieutenant provocatively ripping down posters of the Committee of Liberation and of the Stalinist party. In the ensuing encounter he shot and killed the policeman.

For his struggle against the Nazi occupation, the Gestapo had put a price of 1,500,000 lire on Bentivegna's head. For his anti-fascist militancy the AMG prosecutor from the United States demanded the death penalty and the kangaroo court railroaded him to a year and a half in jail.

O.J. Simpson

Continued from Page 14

watching across the United States and around the world — and the multibillion-dollar networks made the most of it.

This coarsening of human relations is symptomatic of the disintegration of capitalist society, and such breakdowns in human solidarity play into the hands of rightists. (The brutal, racist Los Angeles cops, by the way, came out of this chase smelling like a rose — politely escorting Simpson at low speeds down the freeway for nearly two hours.)

The sensationalist tabloid *National Enquirer* ran a front-page photo shot of a skimpily clad Nicole Brown Simpson and two men, one shirtless, fondling her, under the headline, "Nicole & her lovers — The men who sent O.J. into a rage." This kind of coverage fuels the reactionary argument that murder can be justified by "jealous rage."

The most reactionary, racist, and antiwoman commentary on the Simpson case so far, however, has come from Khalid Abdul Muhammad, a leader of the Nation of Islam. He told an audience in Milwaukee on June 30 that Simpson "left his Black wife and then decided to live a life sleeping with the enemy."

"Dr. Muhammad said... when Black men abandon Black women tragedy follows," stated an article in the *Milwaukee Community Journal*. "Despite Simpson's shortcomings [Muhammad] continued, the Black community must present a public showing of support for the football great," the weekly reported. "We can think what we want about O.J., but when in public, we must come together, it's a family matter," said Muhammad. He argued that Blacks "should always fight for the innocence of the Black man."

Build socialist conference

Less than two weeks after this issue of the *Militant* goes to press, an international conference of socialist workers and youth will open August 3 in Oberlin, Ohio.

For five days delegates to the 37th national convention of the Socialist Workers Party and hundreds of other participants from across the United States and around the world will be taking up the key questions facing working people today.

What does the growing disorder of the world capitalist system mean for the working class and other exploited layers in society? Why are more young people today beginning to reject the racism, sexism, wars, attacks on democratic rights and human dignity that capitalism offers, and becoming more open to socialist answers? What is the significance of the strike wave bubbling across the United States today, what does it say about deeper resistance to the bosses' offensive within the working class, and how must communist workers in the trade unions respond to this changing situation? What are the stakes in defending the socialist revolution in Cuba today, and what needs to be done to carry out this fight? These and many other issues will be the subject of discussions, classes, workshops, and panels throughout the conference.

In addition, young socialists will be meeting during the

gathering to take the next steps in launching a nationwide socialist youth organization. They will report the results of their deliberations to all conference participants.

This is not something to miss. And in the couple of weeks left before the conference begins, dozens more young people and workers can be informed about this event and convinced to participate.

At a leadership meeting July 17, young socialists from across the United States and from Canada decided to put getting other youth to Oberlin August 3-7 at the center of their immediate work. Many of them are participating in the petitioning drive to get the Socialist Workers candidates on the ballot in New York. Other young socialists are planning regional recruitment and conference-building teams.

Communists of all ages can be part of making sure workers involved in labor resistance, abortion clinic defenders, antiracist activists, their coworkers, and others know about the socialist gathering.

With a final push to build the event, the conference of socialist workers and youth can register a step forward in strengthening the work of the communist movement internationally.

No to an invasion of Haiti!

Working people around the world need to protest Clinton administration rhetoric and military preparations for a possible invasion of Haiti.

Washington attempts to cloak its war moves in humanitarian garb, but its real aims are the opposite. The U.S. rulers' goal is not a democratic government in Haiti that will advance the interests of the toilers, but a stable regime that will do the bidding of the boss class in Washington. They seek to make the business climate in Haiti once again hospitable for U.S. corporations to continue reaping superprofits off the cheap labor and impoverishment of Haiti's working people.

Washington has a long history of imperialist intervention in Haiti, including a 19-year occupation from 1915 to 1934. The U.S. government supported decades of torture, murder, and disappearances under the Duvalier dictatorship.

An invading U.S. force might initially be popular among Haitian working people who view the troops as a way to end the current military junta's reign. But as an occupation force in the country, it would increasingly be used against the struggles of working people there for land and union rights and to protect Washington's friends within Haiti's military.

President Bill Clinton's chief concern is not restoring to power ousted Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who Washington views as incapable of maintaining U.S.-style stability. Instead, the U.S. president prioritizes the "grave responsibility" to guard against violent reprisals by Haiti's working people directed against the military butch-

ers in power today.

The economic embargo enforced by U.S. naval ships surrounding Haiti is an act of war. It increases the suffering of Haiti's toilers while the ruling elite and their military allies get off practically scot free. In fact, some have taken advantage of the scarcity created by the embargo to further enrich themselves through sales of hard-to-get goods on the black market.

Washington's disdain for Haiti's workers and peasants is most clearly revealed by its barbaric refugee policy. As some 20,000 people risked their lives to flee Haiti by boat from mid-June through mid-July, the Clinton administration slammed the door shut on their right to seek asylum in the United States.

The so-called safe havens set up as an alternative for these refugees at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and on the shores of several other Caribbean countries are nothing more than overcrowded prison camps where fleeing Haitians can be detained indefinitely.

The labor movement in the United States and around the world, as well as youth and all democratic-minded people, should demand that all U.S. borders be immediately and unconditionally opened to Haitian refugees. They should be guaranteed full democratic rights, decent living conditions, medical care, and the right to look for work.

No to an invasion of Haiti!

End the naval blockade and the embargo now!

Open U.S. borders to Haitian refugees!

Washington's nuclear holocaust

Between August 6 and August 9, 1945, Washington dropped two atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Forty-nine years later — even as they level threats at North Korea, Iraq, and other countries for possibly having nuclear weapons — the U.S. remains the only government to have ever used an atomic bomb against human beings.

Tens of thousands died instantly as a result of the attack on Japan and the death toll, due to radiation, continues to mount even today. The destruction was so great that 92 percent of the buildings in Hiroshima were leveled. For a mile in every direction the city was reduced to ashes. Immediately following the bombing of Hiroshima, then-U.S. president Harry Truman issued a message to the Japanese people. They faced "a rain of ruin from the air the like of which has never been seen on this earth," he said with unmatched brutality.

Washington dropped the bombs for only one reason — to definitively establish U.S. hegemony in the post-World War II world. In other words, the U.S. government vaporized thousands of people simply to prove it had atomic weapons and was willing to use them.

The danger that Washington will unleash a nuclear holocaust on the world did not end in 1945. The U.S. government justifies its aggression against North Korea today with claims that Pyongyang is a threat because it may have nucle-

ar weapons, but this turns reality on its head.

In 1950, as Korean troops pushed back U.S.-controlled United Nations military forces, Truman called on the Strategic Air Command to be prepared to dispatch atomic bombs to the region. Years later, General Douglas MacArthur explained that he had planned to drop "between thirty and fifty atomic bombs . . . strung across the neck of Manchuria . . . [and] spread behind us — from the Sea of Japan to the Yellow Sea — a belt of radioactive cobalt."

The U.S. employer class has held working people at home in the same contempt as it has the toilers of Japan and Korea. Between 1951 and 1963, Washington detonated 126 nuclear bombs at its Nevada test site. Each explosion released radiation into the atmosphere comparable to the amount released by the 1986 accident at Chernobyl, Ukraine, causing countless illnesses and deaths among soldiers and civilians alike. And earlier this year, government officials admitted that for years they had conducted secret radiation experiments on prisoners, mentally retarded children, and others.

Today, due to technological advances, an increasing number of governments are able to build nuclear weapons. But the horrendous events of half a century ago point to the real threat facing humanity — the capitalist system and its most powerful representative, the U.S. imperialist ruling class.

O.J. Simpson case: issue is violence against women

BY GREG ROSENBERG

In a letter on the facing page, reader Sue Kawakubo comments on the article "O.J. Simpson ordeal: latest front in cultural war," which appeared in the July 11 *Militant*. Kawakubo states that "for working people, this case is not about O.J. Simpson's sex life. It is about violence toward women, and should be discussed as such."

Kawakubo is right. The case has nothing to do with anybody's sex life. It is about violence against women and cold-blooded murder. The previous article side-stepped this central point.

The error started with the headline. The only "ordeal" worth writing about involves Nicole Brown Simpson. Her husband O.J. Simpson beat her up over the years, and in June she and a male friend Ronald Goldman were slashed to death outside her Los Angeles condominium.

Brutality towards women, especially in the home, has been pervasive throughout class society, right down to capitalism today. According to U.S. government estimates, between 1.8 million and 4 million assaults are committed against women in the home each year, and the actual figures may well be much greater since many such attacks go unreported.

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

As Kawakubo notes, important progress has been registered in the fight for women's rights in recent decades, including on the question of violence against women. For most of recorded history, it wasn't a crime for a man to beat his wife, or even to kill her under certain circumstances. Such violence was considered part of men's right to own a piece of property, or, in more recent times, just a "family matter."

Women have made progress on this and many other fronts, as millions of them poured into the workforce following World War II, including into basic industry and other nontraditional jobs. These gains, combined with the movement for women's rights and other social struggles, helped change the consciousness of millions of working people to see women as equal human beings.

Nonetheless, the fight for women's emancipation is far from over in the United States or anywhere else in the world, including the fight against violence. Murder or brutality against women committed by a family member is still less likely to result in a conviction than in virtually any other case. The entire working class and labor movement have an enormous stake in campaigning against every manifestation of women's oppression and the economic and social conditions that give rise to it.

O.J. Simpson beat up his former wife more than once. When he was caught in the act, he pleaded no contest and got a slap on the wrist from the court — counseling, which he was even allowed to conduct over the phone given his busy schedule as a "personality," and a \$970 fine. At the time, he told cops who responded to his wife's call for help that they were interfering in a family matter. In the note he released for public consumption June 17, Simpson whined that he felt he was the victim of an abusive relationship. This is a common refrain used to rationalize wife-beating and other violence against women.

Democratic rights not central issue

My previous article gave the false impression that the central issue surrounding this case was the trampling of O.J. Simpson's democratic rights. O.J. Simpson has the right to be presumed innocent of the murder charges against him until proven guilty. And illegal search and seizure and other violations of due process and constitutional protections by the cops and prosecutors endanger the rights of all, whether in this case or any other.

There is no evidence, however, that O.J. Simpson is being railroaded to prison. He is a prominent and wealthy sports figure and entertainer in the United States. As a millionaire, he has hired some of the most well-known and highly paid lawyers in the country. In U.S. capitalism's racist "justice" system, Blacks face unequal treatment; they have a disproportionate chance of conviction and harsh sentences. So far, however, racism has had little to do with O.J. Simpson's treatment either by the cops, courts, or the big business media.

Pornographication of politics

The article in the July 11 issue presented the phenomenon around the O.J. Simpson case as an example of the "pornographication" of politics and bourgeois public opinion in the United States. This remains true, although not for the reasons presented there.

When Simpson and his friend Al Cowlings drove down the Los Angeles freeway June 17 in the 60-mile televised "chase," crowds lined the roads and overpasses, many of them shouting "Go Juice go!" Those shouting "Go Juice!" clearly didn't care much about violence against women or about the crime Simpson is accused of committing. Whatever he did or didn't do wasn't their concern. The "chase" turned into a game, a show for the titillation of those

Continued on Page 13

Teachers protest education cuts in Cleveland

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.

Several hundred union teachers, school workers, parents, and their supporters packed the Board of Education meeting June 27 in Cleve-

Toronto aerospace workers end strike

Toronto-area aerospace workers at de Havilland Inc. approved a new contract offer from the company June 30, ending their eight-day strike. The 1,500 production workers, members of Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) Local 112 voted 84 percent in favor; 450 office workers, members of CAW Local 673, voted for the pact by a 91 percent margin.

De Havilland is 51 percent-owned by Bombardier, a major capitalist corporation based in Quebec, and 49 percent by the Ontario government. Despite Bombardier's record profits last year and in the first trimester of 1994,

ON THE PICKET LINE

land to hear about proposed cuts in education. Taking no discussion from the floor, school administrators hurriedly voted to eliminate 750 jobs in a 20-minute, record-short board meeting. "I'm stunned," said a teacher's aide. "So much for democracy and freedom of speech."

The overwhelming majority of participants at the meeting wore black. "We're in mourning for the students and the death of education in Cleveland," said a bilingual teacher from Tremont Elementary. Most came prepared to voice their opinions about the proposed cuts. Not given the opportunity to do that, teachers chanted, shook their fists, and booed administrators.

Citing a financial crisis, the Cleveland school board has long sought to make deep cuts in education services. The most recent layoffs are part of a package of cuts totaling \$36 million. Last year the board proposed laying off janitors, closing libraries, and cutting extra-curricular activities.

In May, the school board put a \$28 million levy on the ballot. Sixty percent of the voters turned it down. The Cleveland Teachers Union has opposed the reductions. □

the employers were demanding major concessions. The original contract offer called for extending a seven-year wage freeze, possible elimination of the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA), more contracting of jobs inside and outside the plant, and job amalgamations (combinations).

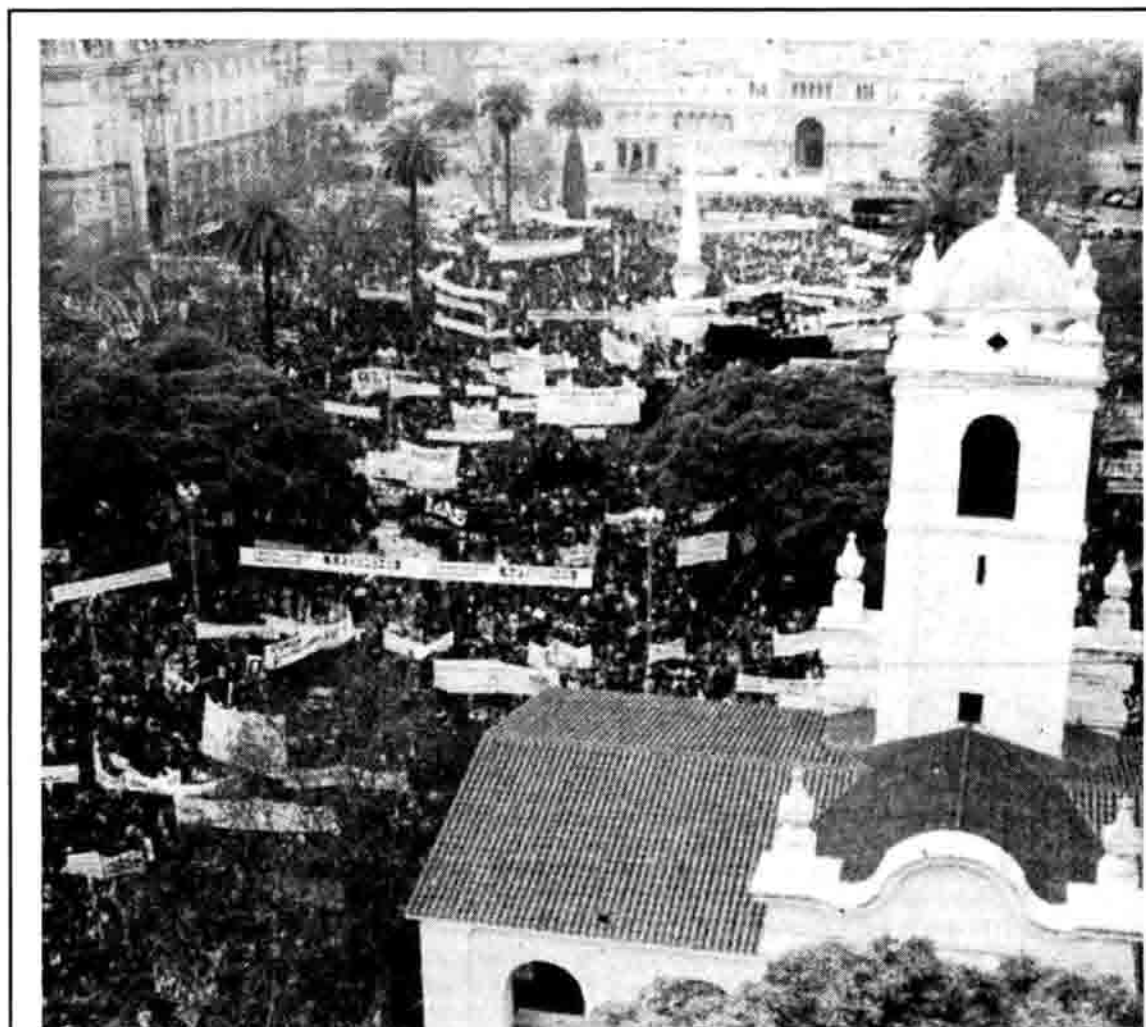
The strike succeeded in winning a wage increase of up to 25 cents in the first year and 15 cents in each of the following two years and maintained the COLA. Workers also gained an increase in pension payments. The union also got a letter of intent stating the company's plan to bring production of the new Global Express executive jets to the de Havilland plant.

Workers were unsuccessful in pushing the employers back on job combinations and contracting of work.

The current workforce has been cut by more than 2,000 from just three years ago. This was the seventh strike by de Havilland workers in the last 22 years. □

Women miners discuss current labor battles

Eighty women attended the 16th national conference of women miners June 24-26 in St. Louis.



Tens of thousands of workers in Argentina marched in Buenos Aires July 6. The unionists were protesting President Carlos Menem's measures, which have doubled unemployment and cut wages.

The event, sponsored by the Coal Employment Project, was endorsed by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). The largest delegation of working women miners came from the UMWA locals organized on the Navajo Nation lands in Arizona and New Mexico. Laid-off miners, women in nontraditional jobs, and a few male UMWA members also attended.

The conference took note of the current labor struggles. A special workshop was presented by Mike Griffin, who is locked out by A.E. Staley in Decatur, Illinois. UMWA vice president Cecil Roberts in the keynote address spoke about the United Auto Workers strike against Caterpillar. He went from the con-

ference to a rally the next day in Decatur in support of the Staley workers. Diana Kilmaury, vice president of the Teamsters, spoke to the conference the next morning. A collection of \$500 was raised for the Staley workers that Kilmaury was to take to their rally.

The conference included a number of international participants. Two women came from Women Against Pit Closures in Britain and two women miners came from Canada. A leader of the German mine workers also addressed the group.

Participants adopted a resolution congratulating President Nelson Mandela and the people of South Africa in their election victory and called for furthering ties with the mine workers union there. The con-

ference also approved resolutions on health and safety, sexual harassment, lobbying, preserving the history of women miners, and in support of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union strike against Leslie Fay. □

The following people contributed to this week's column: Roni McCann, member of United Steelworkers of America Local 9126, and Carol James, member of American Federation of Teachers Local 279, in Cleveland; Susan Berman, member of Canadian Auto Workers Local 1285, and Annette Kouri, member of International Association of Machinists Local 712, in Montreal; and Sherrie Love, member of the United Transportation Union in Los Angeles.

LETTERS

Deaths on the job

All social questions in capitalist society are class questions and death on the job is no exception.

On June 23, 10,000 cops from across Canada, the United States, and Europe turned out for the funeral of Constable Todd Baylis, who was killed in a shootout here in Toronto several days before. The funeral march, carried live on television and filling page after page of the daily newspapers, was more a reactionary anti-immigrant and more-guns-for-the-cops political demonstration. The cops and capitalist politicians are calling for the deportation of immigrants with criminal records and crying about the "on the job dangers" police face.

The man charged with the killing is Clinton Gayle, now 25, who emigrated to Canada from Jamaica when he was eight. He never became a Canadian citizen, and was ordered deported back to Jamaica three years ago because of a criminal record. He was never picked up by the immigration cops. He says he shot at Baylis and his partner in self-defense and has pleaded not guilty to the murder charge.

Globe and Mail columnist John Barber wrote some basic truths about class society when he pointed out the day after the funeral that in terms of death rates mining is 22 times more dangerous than "police work." Baggage workers are almost

twice as likely to be killed on the job. Between 1988 and 1992, 33 farm workers and 180 miners died on the job in Ontario. During the same time nine cops were killed.

Across Canada, between 1961 and 1992, 104 cops died mostly from shootings. But in Ontario alone 300 industrial workers die from workplace "accidents" every year — almost one per day. Over the same period of 31 years that would come to almost 10,000 deaths on the job. These figures don't deal with Canada as a whole or the hundreds of thousands who suffer serious disabling injuries.

It's clear that when cops carry out their basic duty of serving and protecting the power, privileges and property of the ruling capitalist families they face little risk of injury or death.

But when we sell our labor power to the employers whose goal is profits at any cost, we risk injury and death every single working day. John Steele
Toronto, Ontario

Simpson case I

Greg Rosenberg's article in the July 11 issue of the *Militant* offered some important insights into the right-wing character of the media frenzy surrounding the O.J. Simpson case. I do not, however, agree with his assertion that this case — which Rosenberg called a "lurid, porno-

graphic tale" in the hands of the U.S. press — is a diversion which working people should not care about. For working people, this case is not about O.J. Simpson's sex life. It is about violence toward women, and should be discussed as such.

Rosenberg's statement that Nicole Brown Simpson's and Ronald Goldman's murders are being used as part of a right-wing offensive is both valid and valuable. No class-conscious worker should be swept up in the demand for more cops or "stronger" government. But that does not mean this case is not worth discussing: it offers an excellent example of the callous disregard the capitalists' "justice" system shows toward victims of domestic violence. A recent *Seattle Times* article noted that Nicole Brown Simpson called police many times when she was being beaten by her husband (later ex-husband), including an episode where he broke down her door to gain entry to her home. When found bloodied and terrified in the bushes outside, she complained to the cops, "You never do anything. You just talk to him, then leave." If this is how capitalists' cops treat an affluent white woman, how do they treat working-class women in similar situations?

Our society has progressed. Once it was not a crime for a man to beat his wife; now it is. Yet statistics show that a battered woman is still more likely to stay alive if she re-

mains with her violent husband than if she leaves him.

All women deserve the right to live free of physical violence and intimidation. This is an important subject which must not be side-stepped. Sue Kawakubo
Seattle, Washington

Simpson case II

On our first midnight turn back at work July 11 following a few days off at the LTV steel mill here, several of us got into discussing some issues in the news. It began with a simple question by one of the guys who said, "So, what does everyone think of the O.J. Simpson case?" Everyone had an opinion. "What concerns me," said steelworker Adam Cockrell, "is the lack of hard evidence and how the judge's rulings could be used against our rights." Cockrell has 16 years in the mill between the galvanizing line and LTV Steel. "Who needs evidence," another worker who is white said sarcastically, "they got a Black man who killed a white woman."

"Whether he's innocent or guilty it seems that some things being done in the trial aren't right?" said Cockrell. He pointed out the fact that the police took more than five hours to get a search warrant. "Does that mean if they come to your house or mine and the lights are on but we don't answer that instead of coming back they can just break in?"

Another guy said, "What about that so-called chase of O.J.?" He then made a mock of the media show by imitating a sergeant over the cop radio, "Attention, squad car 165 could you back off a few feet so we can get our new cars up by the cameras."

"One thing is for sure," said a worker who popped up around the corner and pointed at everybody, "if that were me or you they would have pulled us out of that car and shot us and we wouldn't get a big trial like this and all this attention." That got a couple of us talking later about an article that appeared in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* quoting an expert on the death penalty who said those involved probably would not go after it in the Simpson case because it's harder when someone is known. Besides, he said, the death penalty is rarely used in cases of domestic homicides and O.J. Simpson doesn't have a long record. "It's the poor man who gets the chair," Cockrell said. The majority of everybody at work supports the death penalty.

Roni McCann
Cleveland, Ohio

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.

Young socialists plan to launch group

BY BRIAN MILLER
AND MARK GILSDORF

NEW YORK — Leaders of the Socialist Youth Organizing Committee (SYOC) from more than a dozen cities met here July 17 to assess their progress in building a nationwide organization. Also in attendance was a young socialist from Canada, where similar opportunities exist to organize young socialist groups.

Participants in the meeting put a priority on bringing as many young people as possible to the international gathering of socialist workers and youth at Oberlin College in August. A report by Tami Peterson of the young socialists of Utah proposed several regional teams to recruit young workers and students to SYOC and build the upcoming conference. In New York, this will be combined with a petitioning effort to put socialist candidates on the ballot. Many of the youth

leaders came into New York early to help this drive and attended a campaign rally the night before their meeting.

SYOC steering committee member Jack Willey opened the discussions with a presentation addressing the historic crisis of capitalism as it marches humanity towards fascism and war. Willey said that with the fall of the Stalinist governments in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the rise in resistance by workers around the world, and the growing layers of young people who are rejecting the future that capitalism has to offer them, the opportunities to build an international movement of young socialists are greater than any time in the last 60 years.

"Over the past four months," Willey continued, "the movement of young socialists we have been fighting to build has outgrown the form of a simple organizing committee. From immigrant rights demonstrations in

Los Angeles to anti-Klan protests in Michigan and Ohio to labor rallies in Illinois and Vermont, local groups have been very successful in jointly mobilizing their forces, getting to know each other, and developing some common experiences."

The day before the meeting, members of SYOC and other young people from Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia had participated in defending abortion clinics in Cleveland from Operation Rescue. Many clinic defenders came to a reception organized by the Young Socialists of Cleveland afterward, and some were interested in attending the conference at Oberlin.

The young socialist leaders concluded that they should move rapidly to a founding convention of a communist youth organization by the end of the year.

The meeting participants decided on a number of campaigns to be proposed to the

gathering at Oberlin. They decided to build a youth brigade to Cuba that is planned for January 1995, among other activities in defense of the socialist revolution in Cuba and against the U.S. embargo and travel ban.

As part of ongoing solidarity activities with the struggle in South Africa, the young socialists will support a world youth festival to be hosted by the African National Congress Youth League in South Africa next summer.

National recruiting teams and tours of young socialist leaders were also projected for the fall. This will intersect with getting out to picket lines and continuing to participate in struggles around abortion rights, police brutality, antiracist actions, and other issues. Building support for socialist election campaigns around the country will provide another important opportunity to meet young people and recruit them to a young socialist organization.

The meeting discussed the possibility of a weekly young socialist column in the *Militant*. "This will be a step in the direction of launching a young socialist publication to supplement the *Militant* and other communist literature some time in the near future," said Willey.

Damon Tinnon, a member of the SYOC steering committee from Minneapolis, gave a report on financing the young socialists. Many of the youth leaders had ideas for fund-raising, including beach and house parties, benefit concerts, raffles, T-shirts and button sales, and getting speakers grants from colleges. These activities together with contributions from supporters of the communist movement of all generations will be key to raising the nearly \$7,000 needed to complete the SYOC national fund drive, which runs through the end of July.

Steve Clark, a representative of the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party, attended the meeting and presented greetings from the party to the youth gathering.

Brian Miller is the SYOC coordinator in Philadelphia. Mark Gilsdorf is a member of the SYOC steering committee in Detroit.

Hundreds keep abortion clinics open

BY DENISE MCINERNEY

LITTLE ROCK, Arkansas — Supporters from Arkansas, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Louisiana, and Alabama joined pro-choice forces here July 6-9 to defend this city's women's clinics from attacks by abortion rights opponents.

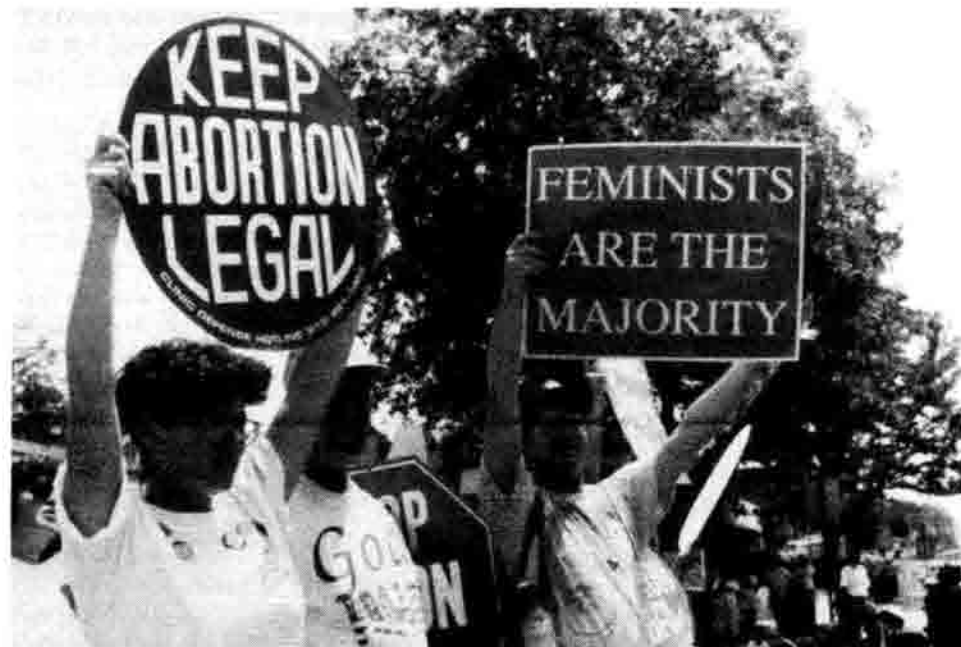
The "Summer of Justice," a joint campaign of several antiabortion groups — including Operation Rescue, Rescue America, and Project Rescue — attracted 150 people. These outfits promoted the action as a challenge to the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (FACE), a new law that makes blockading abortion clinics a federal crime.

The Arkansas Liberty Alliance organized the clinic defense. Two hundred to 300 clinic defenders turned out each day.

The only arrests came July 8, at the Arkansas Health Counseling for Women building. The owner of the building would not allow defenders on the property, despite the clinic's desire to have them there, so pro-choice supporters had to remain on the sidewalk.

At about 11:00 a.m., 30 antiabortion activists ran past police down an alley behind the clinic and blockaded the entrance. They were arrested and charged with criminal trespass.

The following day, opponents of abortion rights spent several hours at the same site, harassing and preaching to a disciplined line of 150 chanting pro-choice supporters. Dozens of additional clinic defenders stood ready at other sites in the city. The antiabortion



Abortion rights activists defend clinic in Little Rock, Arkansas.

tionists did not attempt to blockade any clinics.

Pro-choice supporters celebrated the victory they had achieved as the anti-choice groups packed up to leave. "All of the women who needed medical care were seen," said one student, who was a facilitator for the clinic defense.

At the end of the action, abortion rights activists announced that the American Coalition of Life Activists, another anti-abor-

tion rights outfit, will be targeting Jackson, Mississippi, August 6-13.

BY JANINE DUKES
AND JANICE ORTEGA

CLEVELAND, Ohio — Operation Rescue was met by a lively counterdemonstration of pro-choice activists when it attempted to picket clinics here July 15 and 16. Due to the strength and solidarity of the broad group that mobilized to defend a woman's right to choose, the anti-abortion rights forces were unable to close any clinic for any length of time. Their so-called sidewalk counseling tactic of harassing women attempting to visit the clinic was also hindered to a large extent.

The Cleveland Pro-Choice Action League did much of the hard work involved in building the action. Participants in the group had decided after last year's Cities of Refuge campaign by Operation Rescue to continue working together so that forces could be quickly mobilized in the face of right-wing threats to the clinics.

The abortion rights activists carried out spirited chanting at every site. At one clinic, members of the Young Socialists of Cleveland teamed up with a group of soon-to-be high school freshmen to lead others in chanting, "Our bodies, our lives, our right to decide!" and "Not the church, not the state, women must decide our fate!" It is important to defend the clinics because "the government denies people their rights regardless of the laws, so people have to come out and defend those rights," one of the young women, Aria Benner, said.

Janine Dukes is a member of the Socialist Youth Organizing Committee.

Learning about socialism

Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women

Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, and Mary-Alice Waters

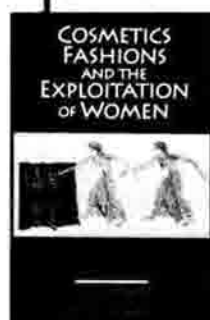
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SUPPORT THE SOCIALIST YOUTH ORGANIZING COMMITTEE FUND DRIVE!

Young socialists across the United States are working to build a nationwide organization that can be part of the international working-class movement to put an end to the horrors of capitalism and begin to build a new world.

You can help by contributing to the \$9,000 SYOC Fund Drive. Just fill out the coupon below and send it with your contribution to the Socialist Youth Organizing Committee, P. O. Box 2396, New York, NY 10009.

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