

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

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incident at Guantánamo
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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COSATU convention opens in South Africa

BY JAMES HARRIS
AND GREG ROSENBERG

SOWETO, South Africa — Under a banner reading "Reconstruction for Working Class Power!" more than 1,700 delegates gathered at Vista University here September 7 for the opening of the 5th congress of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).

A major topic of the meeting is the fight being waged by the working class and rural toilers to eradicate all forms of discrimination against Blacks after decades of apartheid rule and to forge a South African nation. Since May, more than 100,000 workers have participated in strikes. Most of the major walkouts are over for now.

The day delegates convened, some
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Prison officials file charges against Curtis

BY JOHN STUDER

FORT MADISON, Iowa — After holding political and union activist Mark Curtis in "investigative segregation" lockup for more than a week, officials at the Iowa State Penitentiary filed charges against him on September 2, accusing him of "assault, threats and intimidation, damage to property, and obstructive/disruptive conduct."

Curtis, who continues to be held in lockup, has been in prison in Iowa for six years, framed up on charges of rape and burglary. He was arrested and brutally beaten by Des Moines cops in the middle of a defense campaign for 17 coworkers who had been seized in an immigration raid at the Swift packinghouse plant where they worked.

He was thrown in lockup by prison authorities just as his supporters around the world launched an ambitious campaign to press the Iowa State Board of Parole to free him. Curtis, who is due for a parole hearing in November, is more than eligible for release.

Curtis was given a report summarizing
Continued on page 12

Cuba: 70,000 youth rally in defense of revolution

Students, young workers protest U.S. aggression

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL
AND LAURA GARZA

HAVANA — Tens of thousands of chanting, jumping, clapping, and dancing youth jammed the steps of the University of Havana and spilled onto the streets here September 7 in a rally to mobilize mass support for the Cuban revolution.

Tens of thousands of other students and young workers marched and rallied in cities across the country, including

Eyewitness report

the eastern cities of Bayamo and Santiago, where a sizable march took place. The Federation of University Students (FEU) and the Federation of High School Students (FEEM) called the actions. CNN reported that more than 70,000 students and others participated in the demonstrations.

"We're in a battle of ideas, and we have no doubt we're going to win," FEU president Otto Rivero told the enthusiastic crowd. "Revolutionaries are the majority here, and we must make sure they see us."

The demonstrations occurred at a moment when the U.S. government has been stepping up its aggressive moves against Cuba, and a time of growing social polarization inside Cuba between the broad majority who defend the revolution and those who oppose or give up on it. The latter is reflected in the tens of thousands of people who have been leaving the island by raft or boat in an attempt to reach the United States.

"For every Cuban without dignity, there are 100 more with dignity" was the slogan of the student mobilization.

Clinton not popular

Students boisterously chanted throughout the rally. "Long live free Cuba, down with the Yankees" was one popular chant. Whenever Cuban president Fidel Castro's name was mentioned, waves of "Fidel, Fidel" would erupt among the youthful demonstrators.

U.S. president Bill Clinton was not popular in this crowd. Groups of youth shouted inventive and humorous chants denouncing Clinton for his anti-Cuba policies.

The students, like many Cuban working people, were
Continued on page 8



AP Wide World Photos

Tens of thousands of university students and young workers rallied September 7 in Havana to support Cuba's socialist course.

Clinton threatens invasion of Haiti

BY PAUL MAILHOT

"The time for action has arrived," Deputy Defense Secretary John Deutch stated following the late August meeting of

the 13-nation Caribbean Community and Common Market (Caricom) in Jamaica. "There can be no doubt in anybody's mind that the multinational force is going to Haiti."

Deutch along with Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott attended the Caricom meeting to secure political support and military backing for an invasion of Haiti from the assembly of Caribbean countries. Although only four of the seven Caricom nations that possess military forces decided to commit troops to the effort, U.S. officials touted the decisions of the meeting as broad regional support for an invasion of neighboring Haiti.

Clinton flexes military muscle

Under the guise of trying to reinstall exiled president Jean-Bertrand Aristide and reestablish "democracy" in Haiti, the Clinton administration has begun campaigning with a new urgency to flex its military might in the Caribbean and assert U.S. domination in the hemisphere. Washington is taking these steps as it has escalated aggressive actions against socialist Cuba.

With the recent decision of Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago

to provide 266 soldiers to an invasion force that will likely number almost 15,000, the Clinton administration is acting as if all its ducks are in a row and military intervention against Haiti is not only likely, but inevitable. The record of Washington's preparations demonstrates that the threat is deadly serious.

In May and June Washington secured the agreement of the United Nations to tighten an economic embargo on Haiti with comprehensive trade sanctions, a ban on flights in and out of the country, and restrictions on financial payments between Haiti and the United States.

In July, the UN Security Council passed a resolution calling for "all necessary means," to bring Aristide back to power, at the same time indicating that all diplomatic avenues were being exhausted. Administration officials view the Security Council's action as legal justification for an invasion.

Washington stages provocation

In a provocative action shortly before the Caricom meeting, a 183-foot U.S. Navy patrol boat zoomed across the edge

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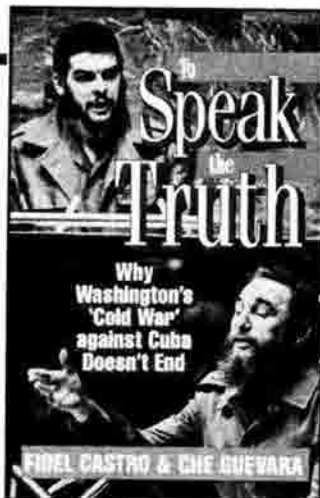
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5,000 rally in Decatur, Illinois, on Labor Day — page 10

Women in Seoul protest Japan war reparation plan

Korean women angrily demonstrated in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul August 31. They denounced a \$1 billion plan from Tokyo to finance cultural and student exchanges throughout Asia as atonement for forcing as many as 200,000 women to be sex slaves for Japanese soldiers during World War II. No actual victim of the Japanese atrocities will receive compensation.

Many of the women who were forced from their homes, often at gunpoint, and herded into huge brothels came from South Korea. The Japanese government also forced Chinese and Filipino women to serve in the brothels for Japanese soldiers. After many years of silence about this chapter of their lives, Korean and Filipino women have begun to organize and demand direct compensation for being forced to serve as "comfort women" for Japanese soldiers.

The Japanese also conscripted tens of thousands of Koreans and used them as forced labor in lands Japan conquered during the second world war. Japan has avoided all individual payments of compensation for fear that it would encourage massive accumulated demands from the many victims of Japanese colonial aggressions across Asia before and during World War II.

Japan airline workers forced to wear Mickey Mouse ears

Japan Airlines' (JAL) latest gimmick to raise its profits includes forcing its flight attendants to don Mickey Mouse ears on its "Dream Express" flights. The airline has painted three of its jets with huge Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck characters and spent \$3.5 million on its Disney campaign.

JAL tried to get all flight attendants to wear the ears but the union balked. In response to the union's protest against the degrading uniform, company spokesperson Geoffrey Tudor said, "Travel is part of the entertainment industry and the sooner some people understand that, the better."

Unemployment rises in Japan

Unemployment in Japan rose to 3 percent in July, the highest level in seven



Some 1,000 people marched in Hilton Head, South Carolina, September 3 to protest the flying of the confederate flag over the state capitol. The NAACP called the demonstration.

years. While only half of the 6.1 percent unemployment figure for the United States, the long-held belief by Japanese workers of job security and stability is fading with the constantly rising jobless rate. Corporate heads in Japan are shifting more and more production to other countries throughout southeast Asia to take advantage of cheaper labor and drive down costs in their own country.

As a solution to the jobs crisis, government ministers called for the creation of more temporary jobs, which would have fewer restrictions on employers and mean worse conditions for workers.

Last U.S. troops leave Somalia

By mid-September the last 80 marines will leave Somalia, according to U.S. State Department officials. The departing soldiers are the final contingent of a military force that at its peak involved 26,000 troops on Somali soil.

Some 18,000 United Nations troops remain in Somalia. Their responsibilities include overall security for UN personnel,

escorting relief convoys, and training a new Somali police force. However, the UN force has for some time now largely remained inside their compound in order to duck the fighting taking place in the country. UN soldiers from India were recently ambushed by Somali militia members. Seven Indian soldiers were killed in the battle.

Russian farmers: higher prices

For the first time in decades farmers in Russia are being forced to sell their produce at market rates rather than at a government determined price set in the spring, before planting begins. Russian farmers complain that regional food distributors and processors have monopoly control of the market and are offering such low grain prices that it will impoverish many of them and put in jeopardy this year's harvest.

Nikolai Rybakov, a manager at Roskhleprodukt, the state grain purchasing agency that was transformed into a joint stock company last year, is not sympathetic. "We look at the rates in regional commodities markets and then we decide what price to pay farmers," he stated. "We cannot pay farmers more than the world prices."

Russian workers demand wages

After being unable to pay its workers for two months, Russia's Tula arms factory stopped production September 2 for the first time in its 300-year history. Customers, including the government, have not been paying the factory for their orders and a last ditch effort to produce hunting rifles and save the factory flopped.

Oleg Soskovets, Russia's first deputy prime minister, has warned that the country's late payments crisis could soon spark social unrest. He recently told a group of bankers and industrialists that the failure of

many energy companies to pay their workers over the past few months could provoke mass action by coal miners, as well as oil and gas workers.

Athens deports immigrants

The Papandreou government in Greece has begun one of the biggest purges of Albanian immigrants in recent history. Since August 15, more than 20,000 Albanians have been driven to the border and forced back into Albania. The deportees are primarily young immigrant workers who sought jobs in Greece. Nearly all entered the country after trekking for days across mountains that divide the two countries.

Albanians being sent back are allowed few of their personal belongings, and have had to leave furniture, rent deposits, and bank savings behind. Landlords and employers, many of whom benefit enormously from the situation, have been asked by the government to hand over all Albanian immigrants for screening.

Selloffs in Argentina

The Argentine government is preparing another round of privatizations aimed at completely selling off federal enterprises to private businessmen. Economy minister Domingo Cavallo said the remaining state enterprises to be sold included all airports, three nuclear power plants, the post office, the federal mint, and the country's largest petrochemicals plant.

Cavallo also assured Argentina's bankers that the government would keep a tight reign on government spending. There will be a hiring freeze in the public sector and spending on social programs will be cut by 10 percent.

Ruling halts discharge of gay

A Federal appeals court ruling in San Francisco August 31 halted the discharge of a homosexual flight instructor who had told a television interviewer, "Yes, in fact, I am gay."

The judges' ruling on the case of Keith Meinhold, an officer with 13 years in the military, did not challenge the navy's contention that homosexual conduct "seriously impairs the accomplishment of the military mission." But the court rejected the idea that a soldier simply stating that he or she is a homosexual is grounds enough for discharge.

"From the government's standpoint," Eugene Fidell, an expert in military law, said, "a test like this is a nightmare." Under a Clinton administration policy, gay men and women can supposedly serve in the armed forces as long as they don't engage in any homosexual acts.

U.S. president Bill Clinton's Justice Department, however, has mounted several vigorous challenges in court against gay soldiers who have fought to remain in the military after being discharged because of their sexual orientation.

—PAUL MAILHOT

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UN meeting pushes overpopulation fiction

BY SARA LOBMAN

The United Nations Conference on Population and Development convened in Cairo, Egypt, on September 5. The governments of 180 countries sent delegations to participate in the 10-day meeting, which has the stated goal of limiting growth of the world's population.

The main document submitted to the conference for approval was prepared by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). It projects a population of from 7.8 to 12.5 billion people by the

Excerpt from: 'Too Many Babies? The Myth of the Population Explosion'

— see page 13

year 2050, up from 5.7 billion today. The highest increases in population, the report says, will be in Africa, followed by Asia and Latin America. The industrialized countries, including the United States, Britain, Western Europe, and the former Soviet Union, continue to have a relatively slow rate of population growth.

According to the UNFPA report, an increase in life expectancy from 41 years to 61 years over the past four decades has compounded the so-called population problem.

The UN document perpetuates the myth that "overpopulation" — not capitalist exploitation and imperialist domination of working people in the semicolonial world — is to blame for economic and social crises, hunger and spread of preventable diseases, as well as destruction of the environment. It claims that population growth of the size anticipated will put huge strains on the supply of natural resources, such as forests, fish, and clean air.

Most of those attending the conference accept these false premises. But even a few articles on the event in the big-business press have provided facts refuting such arguments. The September 3 London *Economist*, for example, said that environmental damage has "tended to be a function less of population density than of the



Many participants at United Nations Conference on Population and Development present abortion and sterilization as methods of population control, not rights women must have to be able to control their own bodies. Above: women in Pakistan are paid 50 rupees (\$1.60) for agreeing to be sterilized.

vigor with which the environment is protected." The article noted that Holland, with a relatively high population density of 4,500 people per 1,000 hectares (2,470 acres), has a better-than-average record of land preservation, while Brazil, with a population of 170 people per 1,000 hectares, has a poor record.

The UN report rejects concerns that the food supply will not keep pace with population growth, noting that "during the past 10 years, the world's food production has increased by 24 percent, outpacing the rate of population growth." This argument has long been the stock-in-trade of population control advocates. However, the report also notes that food production is uneven. In Africa, for example, it fell by 5 percent, while the population grew by a third.

The UN paper also points to big shifts in population distribution as millions of rural toilers move to large cities to look for work. The report estimates that the workforces of Asia, Africa, and Latin America will increase by 1.3 billion people between 1995 and 2020. By the end of the century, it anticipates, more than half the world's population will live in cities.

Supporters of the UNFPA document present sterilization and abortion as tools

in a fight to limit population growth. It calls for the right of women to "safe, effective, affordable, and acceptable methods of fertility regulation of their choice," and includes "pregnancy termination" as part of the "reproductive services" that should be available.

Debate on abortion rights

This has provoked a debate. Six governments — those of Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Sudan, Monaco, Liechtenstein, and Iraq — are boycotting the conference around the abortion issue.

The Pope, in a statement issued by the directory of the Holy See press office in Rome, stated that "an entire culture that held that the right to life was 'self-evident' now wants to reject this fundamental principle in every sphere of life." Abortion, the Pope's statement said, is "an evil as heinous as killing any other human being." In June, a conference of 114 of the Catholic church's 139 cardinals unanimously endorsed an appeal by Cardinal John O'Connor of New York to condemn any measures that would legitimize "abortion on demand, sexual promiscuity, and distorted notions of the family." O'Connor also described abortion as

"cultural imperialism."

Following a church-organized rally of 200,000 in the Philippines to protest the conference, the government in Manila dropped two women's rights advocates from its official delegation to the conference and agreed to a joint position paper that rejects the right to abortion.

Cairo's Al Azhar University — considered to be among the most authoritative voices of Islam — condemned the UN document as implicitly condoning homosexuality, abortion, and adolescent sex. One organization, the Moslem Brotherhood, accused the conference of attempting to curb population growth among Muslims. Another, the Islamic Group, threatened to attack people attending what they called a "licentiousness" conference.

Egyptian gov't cracks down

Using these threats as an excuse, Cairo has rounded up and jailed scores of people in the capital city and in southern Egypt, extended by 45 days the detention of the Islamic Group's principal attorney, and prohibited street demonstrations.

Massive battalions of cops and security forces have been instructed to monitor "all suspicious activities aimed at stirring up popular opinion."

The Clinton administration, which initially spoke in favor of including the clause on abortion in the UN document, shifted its position after the papal protests. A State Department cable in March 1994 said that Washington "believes that access to safe, legal, and voluntary abortion is a fundamental right of all women."

Just days before the conference opened, however, U.S. vice president Al Gore assured the Vatican that "the United States has not sought, does not seek, and will not seek to establish any international right to an abortion."

"The confluence of our interests with the Vatican's is strong," said Katie McGinty, director of the White House environment office and an aide to Gore. "The fact is that the church is taking a strong leadership role on women's health, on the health of children, and on the role of the family," she added.

Various compromise proposals have been submitted to the conference by Washington and governments in Europe. One says that policy on reproductive matters is "the sovereign right of each nation, consistent with the national laws and in conformity with international human rights standards." It would also delete a phrase in the original UNFPA paper that says couples "have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of sexual and reproductive health." The Canadian government wants to include language demanding parental consent before young people can have access to contraceptives and information on sex.

New Zealand ruling party barely escapes loss

BY PATRICK BROWN

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — The ruling National Party narrowly escaped defeat in an August by-election in the Christchurch electorate of Selwyn. The election was organized after Ruth Richardson, the local Member of Parliament (MP) and former finance minister in the National government, resigned her seat.

The National Party won the seat by just 418 votes. The three-year-old Alliance, a coalition of five different groups dominated by former Labour Party activists, came in second. The Labour Party itself came in a distant third. The election results illustrate the growing political instability in New Zealand.

The electoral contest at Selwyn was national news, since the fate of the National Party government was in the balance. The general election in November last year slashed the National Party's large majority won in 1990, leaving it with 50 seats — a mere one-seat majority — compared to 45 for the Labour Party.

The Alliance and the rightist New Zealand First Party each hold two seats in Parliament. National's wafer-thin majority slowed somewhat the momentum of the cuts on social services and other attacks on working people by the employers. The sacking of Richardson as finance minister following that election symbolized the government's weakened position.

With its victory at Selwyn, the National Party maintains its one-seat majority in Parliament. But the narrow win is particularly striking since the party has claimed credit for the economic recovery that has been under way in New Zealand since 1992, following a decade of economic stagnation.

The Labour Party, which for some six decades has been the sole alternative to the National Party and had long claimed the allegiance of the majority of working people, was the big loser in the elections. As the ruling party from 1984 to 1990, it led a major restructuring of the New Zealand economy in the interests of the capitalist class, deregulating investment, privatizing state industries, and reducing spending on social services. While capitalist firms that survived are now enjoying increased profits, the standard of living of working people has been driven down.

The Alliance, is now number two behind the National Party in nationwide opinion polls. Its election manifesto last year promised higher taxes, increased social spending, universal 'free' public education and health care, and a \$1 billion public works program.

Working-class resistance

While the unions continue to retreat before the government's and employers' offensive, there have been significant protests against health and education cutbacks, forcing the rulers to back peddle on some of their attacks.

For example, community protest meetings and rallies against the closure of rural hospital services were a feature of politics in the Selwyn electorate during the by-election.

When New Zealand Rail, the operator of the key ferry link between the North and South islands, prepared for a major confrontation with Seafarers Union members on the inter-island ferries in June — proposing massive job losses and threatening the very existence of the union — the government and courts re-

fused to back the attacks. The resulting settlement was described as a "stalemate."

The government's failure to confidently open a new assault on working people's rights has given fuel to a growing number of right-wing voices.

New right-wing organizations

During the Selwyn election a new rightist political formation called the Association of Consumers and Taxpayers (ACT) began campaigning more aggressively. Although it did not stand a candidate, ACT opened an office in the electorate, declaring that it would keep the other candidates "honest."

ACT's most prominent leader is Roger Douglas, the former Labour Party finance minister who was knighted for his part in restructuring the economy. ACT proposes carrying through to the end the privatization of health and education services.

Douglas nails the National and Labour parties for failing to do this. ACT's manifesto is his recently published book, *Unfinished Business*. He proposes slashing both government expenditure and income taxes to give consumers and taxpayers more "choice."

During the by-election ACT also released a "law and order" policy which, among other reactionary measures, proposed tougher prison sentences and ending the right of the accused to silence. It called for compulsory work schemes under military discipline for all those aged under 25 who have been unemployed for three months or more.

Patrick Brown is a member of the Engineers Union in Christchurch, New Zealand.

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Pathfinder Fund off to enthusiastic start

BY LUIS MADRID

The \$125,000 Pathfinder Fund has gotten off to a good start. Hundreds of participants in an international socialist educational conference at Oberlin, Ohio, in early August, met the fund challenge with enthusiastic donations. Pledges to date total \$101,000. More than \$5,400 has been collected.

Pathfinder publishes books that recount the struggles of working people around the world from the point of view of the revolutionaries participating in and leading those battles. The purpose of the fund is to help implement the New York-based publisher's decision to keep in print its entire list of some 300 titles, as well as continuing to produce new ones in a timely fashion.

Pathfinder's backlist includes important books such as *The Communist Manifesto*, by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels; *In Defense of Marxism*, by Leon Trotsky; and *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*, by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, and Mary-Alice Waters.

"It is a very ambitious program for a publishing house our size to decide to keep all of our titles in print," Pathfinder sales director Rich Stuart explained. "Since this is not necessarily a 'profitable' perspective, most publishers opt to let their older titles go out of print. But politically, we can't afford to do this."

From Cuba to New Zealand and from Iran to the United States, working people and a new generation of youth are fighting to defend themselves from the ravages of capitalism. The lessons of a century and a half of working-class struggle, told through the speeches and writings of Marx, Engels, V.I. Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, Trotsky, Fidel Castro, and others, are in more demand and are more precious than ever before.

Defense of Cuba's socialist revolution

"The time to speak the truth has come," Fidel Castro said in a 1960 speech to the United Nations, explaining imperialism's implacable hatred of Cuba's socialist revolution. Castro's entire speech appears in

the Pathfinder book *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End*. "The government of the United States cannot be on the side of the peasants because it is an ally of the landowners. It cannot be on the side of workers anywhere in the world because it is an ally of the monopolies. It cannot be on the side of colonies because it is an ally of the colonizing powers," the Cuban leader said.

Answer to Washington's lies

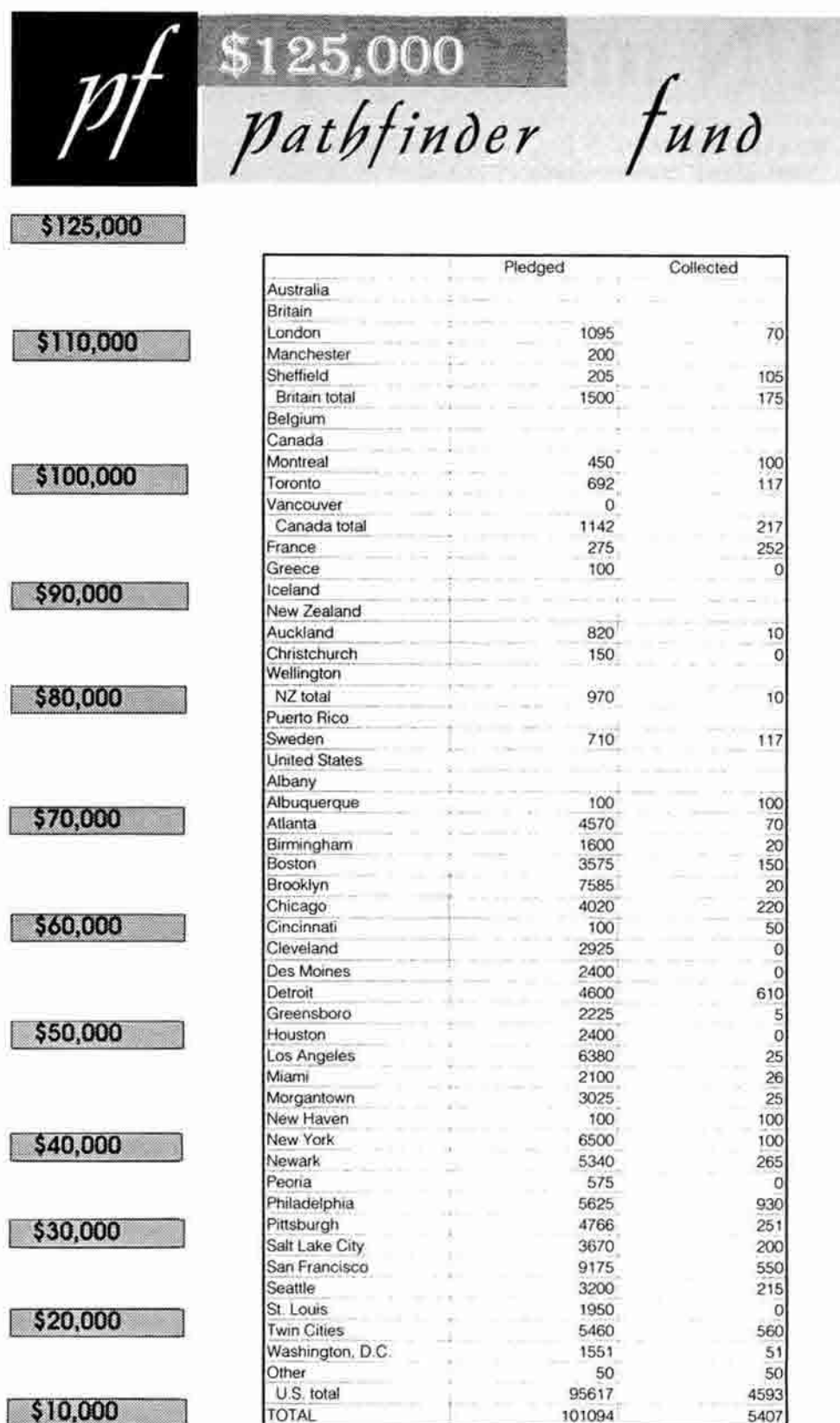
Today, as Washington and its big-business media friends escalate their barrage of lies against Cuba, this and other Pathfinder books on Cuba acquire a heightened importance.

Another key title available is *Socialism and Man in Cuba*. In this pamphlet, Ernesto Che Guevara, a leader of the Cuban revolution, explains the political tasks and challenges in leading the transition from capitalism to socialism. Guevara's document is one of nearly 40 titles on Cuba or by Cuban revolutionaries published by Pathfinder. Plans are also underway for the fifth printing in September of *The Second Declaration of Havana* by Fidel Castro.

Fund-raising events

Michael Tucker reports from New Zealand that Pathfinder supporters there are organizing fund rallies in Auckland and Christchurch for September 10, and two weeks later in Wellington. Planning such events early in the drive in other cities around the world will help get momentum going as we head toward making the goals in full and on time by the November 15 deadline.

The scoreboard that appears on this page, points to the challenge that remains to reach out broadly to insure pledges, meet and surpass the overall goal, and to step up the collection and prompt remittance of pledges into Pathfinder. To be included on the weekly scoreboard, money must arrive at the Pathfinder office, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014, no later than Tuesday, 12 noon, E.D.T.



Washington gears up for brutal invasion of Haiti

Continued from front page

of Port-au-Prince harbor and navy surveillance planes hovered off shore.

In spite of the cover that Washington secured through the UN, the commitment of Jamaica, Barbados, Belize, and Trinidad and Tobago to send a few troops as part of an invasion force is especially dear to the Clinton administration because it ties other governments in the region into the war plans. "Administration officials said it is important that this sensitive job [military invasion of Haiti] not be done solely by U.S. troops, which could project an image of Yankee imperialism," explained an article in the *Washington Post* after the declaration of Caricom leaders.

Another key element of the Clinton administration's plans is the at least tacit sup-

port of Congress for military intervention. Representative Lee Hamilton, chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee, has informed the Clinton administration that congressional approval is not required before sending troops into Haiti. "I think we're right at the point of invasion," said Hamilton. "I don't think you can send two high-ranking officials to the Caribbean making the kinds of comments that they made yesterday without following through."

Some are nervous over invasion

While President Bill Clinton is moving ahead, some in capitalist circles are nervous. "If we don't invade now, the administration will be accused of being wishy-washy," said Senator Richard Lugar, an In-

diana Republican on the Foreign Relations Committee. "If we do invade, it will be a historical mistake."

The *New York Times* has sounded an alarm against invasion as ill-timed and ill-prepared. In an editorial September 2 titled "Still a U.S. Invasion. Still Wrong," the *Times* argues that strong action against the Haiti regime is justified. But the political support is not strong enough to sustain the type of military action that Washington will likely be mired in.

"The UN charter only permits such authorization when there is a threat to international peace," noted the *Times*. "Therefore, a threat was duly declared, founded in large part on the supposedly destabilizing dangers of a continuing flow of refugees throughout the region."

Likewise the *Times* pointed out how weak of a cover the Caricom commitment really is. "Appending 266 soldiers from Barbados, Belize, Jamaica and Trinidad to an American army of at least 10,000 cannot hide the fact that an invasion, if it comes, would be a foolish and unnecessary act driven solely by the Clinton Administration," the editorial stated.

The 266 soldiers coming from Caribbean nations will be equipped, trained, and transported to Haiti by the United States. Underlining the reality that this is an entirely U.S. operation, the Caribbean troops will not enter into the country until seven to 10 days after the U.S. Marines have begun the invasion.

The likely invasion of Haiti has met with some opposition from editorial writers and mostly Republican Party politicians. Support for Clinton's course has come from many liberal forces in the Democratic Party. Randall Robinson, leader of TransAfrica, has demanded that Clinton give Haiti's military rulers 48 hours notice or face being ousted by U.S. forces.

Representative Kweisi Mfume, a Maryland Democrat who heads the Congres-

sional Black Caucus, said, "It's no longer a question of whether or not it's inevitable. It's a larger question of whether or not we find ourselves with reasons as to why we should not invade."

2,000 at funeral of slain priest

While the Clinton administration is working overtime to lay the groundwork for military action, more than 2,000 Haitians turned out to mourn the death of Rev. Jean-Marie Vincent, a Catholic priest who led a peasant movement in the 1980s. Vincent was the first priest ever assassinated in Haiti.

Vincent was shot to death August 28 by thugs undoubtedly connected with the military. The police, a hearse, and a Justice of the Peace appeared at the scene of the killing only moments after the shooting, even though no one had called them.

The large crowd at Vincent's funeral September 2 gathered more to express anger than sorrow for the slain priest. "They have never gone so far with their work of destruction," said Rev. Quesnel Alphonse. "He was one more victim of state terrorism."

Because of death threats and harassment from Haiti's military rulers, the Creole-language *Libete* newspaper was forced to halt publication September 5. This was the third time in four years that this underground weekly has been shut down.

One indication of the U.S. government's professed but hypocritical concern for the Haitian people is seen by the treatment being afforded the nearly 15,000 Haitian refugees who are being incarcerated at the Guantánamo Naval Base in Cuba. The U.S. military recently subdued another rebellion by the refugees protesting wretched living conditions and Clinton's refusal to grant them political asylum. *Reuters* news reports that in the latest protest at least one Haitian was seriously injured and six U.S. soldiers suffered minor injuries.



Some 250 people marched September 4 in Miami to protest the murder of Jean-Marie Vincent, a leader of the peasant movement in Haiti.

'Militant' takes to the streets

BY SARA LOBMAN

From Labor Day events and protests against U.S.-government aggression against Cuba to college campuses and working-class neighborhoods, supporters of the *Militant* newspaper in cities around the world took to the streets September 3-5, for the opening weekend of a 10-week circulation campaign. The goal is to sell 3,300 subscriptions to new readers of the *Militant*, 700 subscriptions to the paper's Spanish-language sister publication, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 1,250 copies of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* by November 13. Already, supporters are getting a good response among fighting workers and youth.

'How do I sign up?'

"Is that the *Militant*?" a striking rubber worker in Decatur, Illinois, asked a distributor. When she responded affirmatively he continued, "How do I sign up? I don't think we're getting the whole truth about Cuba." He purchased an introductory subscription on the spot.

Betsy Farley reports that more than 5,500 people participated in a Labor Day solidarity parade in Decatur to support striking autoworkers and rubber workers, as well as locked-out members of the United Paper Workers International Union. Five people got subscriptions to the *Militant* and more than 30 people bought single copies of the socialist paper.

United Transportation Union member Jon Hillson wrote in from St. Paul, Minnesota, to say that his coworkers on the Canadian Pacific-owned Soo Line—who recently returned to work after a 46-day strike—were particularly interested in the recent *Militant* article on how striking workers at the

Firestone tire plant in Decatur and their allies kept scabs from entering the factory. Five of the rail workers bought subscriptions to the paper and four purchased single copies.

"The focus on our sales has been getting out the truth about the Cuban revolution," Janet Roth reported from Auckland, New Zealand. "We sold one renewal subscription



Distributors in Detroit discussed the U.S. war drive against Cuba with students at Michigan State University in East Lansing.

to the *Militant* and four single copies at a picket against the U.S. war moves. In addition, one man bought a copy of *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End* and asked us to get back to him about a subscription.

"A student came by the bookstore looking for information for a school project," Roth said. "But she ended up getting a subscription to the *Militant* to follow the fight to defend abortion rights." Supporters in New Zealand have sold 17 subscriptions so far: 9 in Auckland, 7 in Christchurch, and 1 in Wellington.

Supporters in Salt Lake City, Utah, didn't waste a minute of the international drive. On the first morning a team of five headed out to a couple of large apartment complexes in nearby West Valley City. They sold four subscriptions to the *Militant* and one copy of the book *To Speak the Truth*. In addition, seven people said they were interested in the paper and indicated they could pay later in the week. Distributor Dan Fein noted that these "call-backs" often become new readers. Supporters of the socialist press in Salt Lake City plan to keep an accurate record of everyone who says they are considering subscribing so they can get back to them in a timely way.

Sales on campus

In Houston, distributors also got off to a good start by taking advantage of the beginning of a new school year. Young people snapped up a *Militant* subscription, two subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, one copy of *To Speak the Truth*, and several other pamphlets from a table at the University of Houston. Reader Robbie Scheer reports that

another *Perspectiva Mundial* subscription and two *Militant* subscriptions were sold to people coming by the local Pathfinder bookstore, while a participant in an emergency protest to oppose the U.S. war moves against Cuba bought a *Militant* subscription.

Starting next week we'll print a scoreboard to help readers mark the progress of the international campaign to win new readers. To be included on the chart each week, subscriptions, as well as reports of *New Internationalist* sales, need to arrive in the *Militant* business office no later than Tuesday at 12 noon, E.D.T.

Unionists seek out truth on Cuba

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

More working people today are thinking about and open to discussions on the socialist revolution in Cuba. Washington's war drive against Cuba has sparked an interest among workers in the United States in what the leaders of the Cuban revolution have to say. That is what promoters of the Pathfinder book *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's Cold War Against Cuba Doesn't End* by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara have found in factories across the country. Wide distribution of the book is an important counter to the constant slanders by the U.S. government against Cuba.

Betsy Farley reports that a coal miner bought the book at a recent Labor Day event in Decatur, Illinois. Many of the participants at the rally, who are strikers at nearby plants, were interested in discussing their views of the Cuban revolution and what Washington is really up to.

Bob Miller, a supporter of the *Militant* who works at the Ford assembly plant in Edison, New Jersey, said that a young Black coworker started up a conversation about Cuba during one of their breaks. Miller, who was reading the *Militant* at the time, said the coworker told him that Castro was the problem. Miller lent him the paper and encouraged him to read

it over night to get a different view point.

The next day the coworker approached Miller and explained how much he liked the *Militant's* coverage. The coworker pointed to the ad promoting the book and said he wanted to buy one. Miller just happened to have a copy handy and sold it to the coworker on the spot.

Miller reports that a Haitian coworker who has read the *Militant* for many years borrowed a copy of the book recently and purchased his own after reading it.

In Houston, Willie Mae Reid,

who works in an oil refinery, reports that a coworker recently bought a copy of *To Speak the Truth*. He was "concerned that the U.S. might go in to smash the Cuba revolution," Reid said.

A member of the United Auto Workers in Cleveland, who is also a veteran of the Gulf war, asked *Militant* supporters about events in Cuba. He has a subscription to the paper and was eager to discuss the coverage. He was shown a copy of *To Speak the Truth* and said, "This is just what I need to understand what's happening there."

James Warren, a steelworker in Chicago, said he has had many discussions with coworkers about Cuba. Since Warren recently returned from a trip to Cuba his coworkers know him as a supporter of the Cuban revolution.

Warren said that based on a number of wide-ranging discussions he has sold one copy of *To Speak the Truth* along with other Pathfinder titles. The coworker who bought the book said, "Fidel really makes sense."

Another coworker whose wife heard Castro on CNN said he made very good points and asked if the book was available in Spanish. He bought a number of Pathfinder titles including issue no. 8 of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*, featuring "Cuba and the Road to Socialism."

BOOKS SOLD

| UNION* | GOAL | SOLD |
|--------|------|------|
| ACTWU | 8 | |
| IAM | 40 | |
| ILGWU | 10 | |
| OCAW | 9 | 1 |
| UAW | 35 | 3 |
| UFCW | 6 | |
| USWA | 10 | 1 |
| UTU | 15 | |

*See chart for complete names of unions

WHERE WE STAND start of week one

SOLD 0%

SHOULD BE 0%

| | Militant | | | Perspectiva Mundial | | | New Internationalist | | |
|-------------------|----------|------|---|---------------------|------|---|----------------------|------|---|
| | sold | goal | % | sold | goal | % | sold | goal | % |
| Australia | 30 | | | 8 | | | 18 | | |
| Britain | | | | | | | | | |
| London | 70 | | | 3 | | | 37 | | |
| Manchester | 50 | | | 3 | | | 20 | | |
| Sheffield | 40 | | | 1 | | | 14 | | |
| Britain total | 160 | | | 7 | | | 71 | | |
| Belgium | 2 | | | 2 | | | 1 | | |
| Canada | | | | | | | | | |
| Montreal | 80 | | | 25 | | | 45 | | |
| Toronto | 90 | | | 17 | | | 35 | | |
| Vancouver | 75 | | | 10 | | | 20 | | |
| Canada total | 245 | | | 52 | | | 100 | | |
| France | 4 | | | 5 | | | 6 | | |
| Greece | 11 | | | 1 | | | 6 | | |
| Iceland | 13 | | | 1 | | | 4 | | |
| New Zealand | | | | | | | | | |
| Auckland | 75 | | | 5 | | | 30 | | |
| Christchurch | 35 | | | 1 | | | 8 | | |
| Wellington | 5 | | | 0 | | | 4 | | |
| New Zealand total | 115 | | | 6 | | | 42 | | |
| Puerto Rico | 2 | | | 5 | | | 4 | | |
| Sweden | 40 | | | 20 | | | 15 | | |
| United States | | | | | | | | | |
| Albany | 10 | | | 1 | | | 3 | | |
| Albuquerque | 7 | | | 2 | | | 2 | | |
| Atlanta | 105 | | | 15 | | | 25 | | |
| Birmingham | 75 | | | 5 | | | 15 | | |
| Boston | 115 | | | 36 | | | 52 | | |
| Brooklyn | 110 | | | 36 | | | 65 | | |
| Chicago | 145 | | | 32 | | | 50 | | |
| Cincinnati | 10 | | | 5 | | | 4 | | |
| Cleveland | 95 | | | 16 | | | 20 | | |
| Denver | 5 | | | 3 | | | 2 | | |
| Des Moines | 85 | | | 36 | | | 35 | | |
| Detroit | 100 | | | 11 | | | 27 | | |
| Edinboro | 6 | | | 1 | | | 3 | | |
| Ft. Madison | 2 | | | 1 | | | 2 | | |
| Greensboro | 65 | | | 4 | | | 15 | | |
| Hartford | 5 | | | 1 | | | 4 | | |
| Houston | 60 | | | 12 | | | 12 | | |
| Los Angeles | 230 | | | 101 | | | 105 | | |
| Miami | 120 | | | 55 | | | 70 | | |
| Morgantown | 55 | | | 1 | | | 17 | | |
| New Haven | 10 | | | 2 | | | 8 | | |
| New York | 145 | | | 40 | | | 70 | | |
| Newark | 140 | | | 35 | | | 50 | | |
| Peoria | 30 | | | 3 | | | 10 | | |
| Philadelphia | 115 | | | 30 | | | 47 | | |
| Pittsburgh | 105 | | | 12 | | | 26 | | |
| Portland | 2 | | | 1 | | | 2 | | |
| Salt Lake City | 110 | | | 16 | | | 35 | | |
| San Francisco | 150 | | | 42 | | | 70 | | |
| Seattle | 80 | | | 12 | | | 23 | | |
| St. Louis | 80 | | | 6 | | | 22 | | |
| Twin Cities | 125 | | | 17 | | | 35 | | |
| Washington, D.C. | 85 | | | 30 | | | 35 | | |
| U.S. total | 2,582 | | | 620 | | | 961 | | |
| TOTAL | 3,204 | | | 727 | | | 1,228 | | |
| DRIVE GOALS | 3,300 | | | 700 | | | 1,250 | | |
| IN THE UNIONS | | | | | | | | | |
| AUSTRALIA | | | | | | | | | |
| FPU | 3 | | | 0 | | | 1 | | |
| CANADA | | | | | | | | | |
| CAW | 12 | | | 1 | | | 3 | | |
| USWA | 9 | | | 1 | | | 3 | | |
| Canada Total | 21 | | | 2 | | | 6 | | |
| NEW ZEALAND | | | | | | | | | |
| UFBGWU | 4 | | | 0 | | | 1 | | |
| EU | 6 | | | 1 | | | 1 | | |
| MWU | 4 | | | 0 | | | 1 | | |
| N.Z. Total | 14 | | | 1 | | | 3 | | |
| SWEDEN | | | | | | | | | |
| Food workers | 3 | | | 0 | | | 2 | | |
| Metal workers | 2 | | | 0 | | | 2 | | |
| Sweden Total | 5 | | | | | | 4 | | |
| UNITED STATES | | | | | | | | | |
| ACTWU | 25 | | | 11 | | | 14 | | |
| IAM | 80 | | | 3 | | | 14 | | |
| ILGWU | 20 | | | 20 | | | 15 | | |
| OCAW | 46 | | | 2 | | | 15 | | |
| UAW | 135 | | | 15 | | | 30 | | |
| UFCW | 15 | | | 17 | | | 5 | | |
| USWA | 80 | | | 3 | | | 19 | | |
| UTU | 85 | | | 10 | | | 25 | | |
| U.S. Total | 486 | | | 81 | | | 137 | | |

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

Generation X and the 'Communist Manifesto'

The article below is based on a public talk Ken Riley, a National Committee member of the Young Socialists has given at Militant Labor Forums in Los Angeles and other cities, on campuses, and elsewhere. Riley, a garment worker and member of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, is also the Socialist Workers candidate for governor of California.

BY KEN RILEY

LOS ANGELES — Who speaks for our generation? What problems do we face? Where should we look for answers? These questions about the so-called "generation X" are being discussed lately in different bourgeois magazines and newspapers. These commentators, however, discuss what they think about us, not what we think. They ask young people questions such as, "Is Kurt Cobain [lead singer of the 'grunge' band Nirvana who recently committed suicide] your hero?" Or, "Have you ever suffered from depression before?" If they do ask a question of some importance — like, "Do you think your future is going to be better or more secure than your parents?" — no matter how we answer they continue to tell us where to go for therapy.

The problem that is inherent in these types of articles is that they come from a point of view that defends capitalism. This leads them away from addressing the real problems and discussing a way forward for humanity.

The Young Socialists start with explaining what stage in the world we are in, where the world is headed, and where we can get answers to do something about it.

Capitalist depression

The world capitalist system is in crisis. This was signaled by the crash of the New York stock market on Oct. 19, 1987, the steepest one-day plunge in this century.

We see the effects of these depression conditions with the rise of unemployment, homelessness, racism, social explosions, threats of war, attacks on women and immigrants, and nationalist demagoguery in the United States and around the world.



Militant/Eric Simpson



Militant photos: Top: Dave Wulp; Bottom: Jon Hillson

The Young Socialists organizes youth to participate in working class and revolutionary fights today, including union battles, struggles for women's rights, and actions against racism and imperialist war.

As long as capitalism exists, despite ceaseless ups and downs of the business cycle, these conditions will not be reversed unless the capitalist governments of the world are able to deal major blows to the working class and labor movement and destroy masses of commodities and capital.

To carry out this program they will have to rely on major assaults on our democratic rights, resorting to the violent extremes of fascism to smash workers and revolutionary organizations. They will move towards world war to destroy capital and beat back their rivals, if they can inflict crushing blows on the working class.

We can already see these developments as ultrarightists and fascist types like Rush Limbaugh, Patrick Buchanan, Louis Farrakhan, and Ollie North are getting a bigger hearing. The Ku Klux Klan is more active, organizing support for the racist prin-

cipal Hulond Humphries and the racist school board in Wedowee, Alabama. Rightist thugs have murdered a second doctor who performed abortions in Pensacola, Florida, declaring open season on all defenders of abortion rights. A coalition of ultrarightists and fascists are the ruling government in Italy and rightists are spreading throughout Europe and other countries.

Communist Manifesto

This is what radicalizing youth and workers will increasingly face in the fight for a better world. This is why workers and young fighters should look to the *Communist Manifesto* and its authors Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

The *Communist Manifesto* is the first book of its kind, because it is the weapon of working people to take power from the

ruling class and abolish their capitalist system. This document describes the historic line of march for the modern working class from its birth under capitalism towards a socialist society based on human needs and solidarity, instead of profits for the wealthy few.

Like many radicalizing youth today, Marx and Engels were young political activists when they wrote the *Manifesto* in 1848. They participated in the fights and revolutions that were spreading through Europe. Through these experiences they came into contact with revolutionary workers in Germany, France, Belgium, and elsewhere. Marx was 29 and Engels was 27 when they wrote the *Communist Manifesto*. But as they explained, if they had not met an organized group of experienced revolutionary workers, there would not have been a communist movement in the mid-nineteenth century or at least these two wouldn't have been part of it, and the movement would have been weaker.

Today young fighters have the same opportunity. Right now there is a strike wave across the United States. Workers at Caterpillar and other strikers are defending themselves against the bosses' attacks on their dignity and living conditions. They are reaching out for solidarity from other unionists and youth. There are demonstrations in defense of abortion rights and gay rights, and counterdemonstrations against the Ku Klux Klan, racism, and attacks on immigrants.

Thousands of young people and workers are part of this resistance. And this is also what the Young Socialists are doing across the United States — lending solidarity to the fighters at Caterpillar and other strikes; defending the democratic rights of women, gays, Blacks, and immigrants; actively defending and telling the truth about the Cuban revolution; as well as organizing classes and discussions on the *Communist Manifesto*, Malcolm X, the Cuban and South African revolutions, and other topics. I urge all young fighters to join us.

To join the Young Socialists or for more information, write to P.O. Box 2396, New York, NY, 10009, or call (212) 475-6482.

SUPPORT THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS FUND DRIVE!

Young socialists are working to build an 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 \$12,000 YS Fund Drive. Just fill out the coupon below and send it with your contribution to the Young Socialists, P.O. Box 2396, New York, NY 10009. For more information call: (212) 475-6482.

\$7,109 Collected

- ☐ Enclosed is my contribution of \$_____
- ☐ I pledge \$_____
- ☐ I would like to join the Young Socialists
- ☐ Please send me more information

NAME _____ AGE _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
PHONE _____

Frame-up victim denied parole 13 times

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — Frame-up victim Geronimo Pratt has been denied parole for the 13th time. Railroaded to prison by the FBI and Los Angeles police, the former Black Panther Party leader has served 23 years of a life sentence.

He was convicted of a 1968 Los Angeles murder despite the evidence that at the time he was attending a Black Panther meeting in Oakland, some 400 miles away. Pratt has insisted that logs of FBI wiretaps would confirm that he talked on the Oakland Panther phone several times the day of the killing. During that time, the FBI was pursuing its secret drive to destroy the Panthers by any means necessary.

Party phones were tapped as a matter of routine. Curiously, the Oakland tap log for that week is "missing." Wesley Swearingen, a retired FBI agent, has come forward to state that he saw documents confirming that a tap was in place on the Oakland phone at the time.

Two years ago, several participants in the Oakland meeting came forward to confirm that Pratt was there. They disclosed that the late Huey Newton, then the party's top leader, had barred anyone from testifying in Pratt's behalf because Pratt opposed him in a bitter factional dispute.

At the time, the only one to reject this was Panther Kathleen Cleaver, who testified at Pratt's trial that she had participated in the meeting and that he was also there. At his recent parole hearing, Pratt asked that Cleaver, now an attorney, represent him. The parole board arbitrarily refused.

At his trial, the principal evidence against Pratt was the testimony of Julius

Butler, a fellow Panther who swore that Pratt had confessed the crime to him. After the trial, it was established that Butler was an FBI plant in the Panther Party and earlier had been a Los Angeles County sheriff's deputy.

Nebraska authorities electrocute man in first execution since 1959

BY BILL KALMAN

DES MOINES, Iowa — On September 1, Nebraska authorities put a prisoner to death in the electric chair for the first time since 1959. Harold Otey, 43, had spent almost 16 years on death row at the Nebraska State Penitentiary in Lincoln before his execution.

He was sentenced to death for the June 1977 rape and murder of a young woman in Omaha, Nebraska. He was convicted based on a confession that Otey later claimed was coerced from him by the police. He maintained his innocence to the end.

Through the years Otey had become one of the most well-known death row inmates in the United States. Hundreds of letters from around the world flooded Nebraska governor Benjamin Nelson's office in the days prior to the execution demanding that it be stopped.

Otey's execution was a flash point for the debate on the death penalty. State officials, both Democrat and Republican, campaigned for his execution. Area physicians, however, refused to attend the killing and pronounce Otey dead. More than 2,000

people — both supporters and opponents of capital punishment — faced off against each other outside the prison gates in Lincoln the night of the execution.

At a press conference the day before, Governor Nelson dismissed the international campaign to stop the execution. "I see no reason to change [the death sentence] under all the circumstances I've reviewed," he stated. "There comes a point in time that for justice to serve all of us, it must be carried out."

Socialist Workers candidate for governor of Iowa, Mike Galati, sent a message to Nelson demanding that he stop the execution. "The Otey case and your planned execution once again demonstrates the barbaric role of capital punishment in this society as a terror weapon against working people and against workers who are Black in particular. This weapon has for decades been used to attack and intimidate unionists and other fighters," the socialist explained.

Bill Kalman is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 431 in Des Moines, Iowa.

Rightists emboldened by U.S. war drive

Counterrevolutionary Cuban-American organizations go on the offensive

BY SETH GALINSKY

MIAMI — Taking advantage of U.S. war moves against Cuba, right-wing Cuban-American groups here have gone on the offensive. In the last few weeks, they have held a series of demonstrations, marches, and picket lines.

The largest of the actions, on August 27, drew thousands of people to downtown Miami, including many families. Some of the marchers chanted "Blockade, Blockade! War, War! Freedom, Freedom!" The march, held on Little Havana's Calle Ocho, was organized by "Cuban Unity," a coalition of rightist groups that includes avowed terrorists. It was severely weakened earlier this year after the Cuban American National Foundation, the best-known of the rightist anti-revolution

groups, and others pulled out.

While the police estimate of 15,000 to 20,000 participants is greatly inflated, the march was still substantial. It was billed as a funeral procession, with demonstrators following behind the coffin of a Cuban rafter who died in the Florida Straits. Empty caskets to symbolize others who have died trying to reach the United States were also carried to a nearby cemetery.

On September 4, several actions opposing the Cuban revolution were held. One hundred protesters gathered in Hialeah, Florida, and then drove to the Bay of Pigs Memorial in Little Havana, the site of a hunger strike by six right-wing Cubans. The strikers are calling on Washington to enforce a total blockade of Cuba and allow paramilitary groups here to launch attacks

against Cuba from U.S. territory.

The same day, some rightists gathered at Miami's Bicentennial park, according to the Miami Herald, "after hearing rumors that...the pro-Castro Antonio Maceo Brigade was going to demonstrate."

'Less rights than we do'

In fact, a coalition of anti-embargo groups had initially planned to demonstrate at this site, but had postponed the action after the cops stalled for several days on granting a permit.

When asked by a *Herald* reporter if members of the Antonio Maceo Brigade have a right to demonstrate, Jose Victorero, a member of Tactic of Combat, said they had "less right than we do."

In the most serious incident so far, the

offices of *Replica*, a Spanish-language magazine here that calls for a dialogue with the Cuban government, were firebombed September 4. The damage was minimal.

The right-wing groups have been able to use sympathy for the plight of the rafters — and frustration by many in the Cuban-American community with the difficult economic crisis their relatives face on the island — to win support for stepping up the pressure on Cuba.

The rightists, who have lost significant ground in recent years in the Miami Cuban-American community, feel emboldened by Washington's war drive and are attempting to get back some of this ground.

While the Clinton administration's war moves toward Cuba have given the ultra-right some steam, the measures have also caused uneasiness among large numbers of Cuban-Americans.

Many are uncomfortable with the new policies of refusing entry to refugees, the cancellation of family visitation to Cuba, and the restriction on sending money to family members in Cuba.

Outside one union-organized garment factory in Hialeah September 6, five Cuban workers spent their lunch break discussing the measures.

"It's worth the sacrifice," said one of the men in the group referring to the measures.

"I just don't like it," said a woman sewing machine operator whose nephew is being held at Guantánamo. "I see all that barbed wire. They're prisoners in a concentration camp."

It's worth it "if it helps bring down Fidel," said the first man.

"But they've been saying that for a long time," the woman responded. "I don't think it's going to happen. He still has support from a lot of governments."

Divisions among right-wing groups

The U.S. measures have widened divisions among the right-wing groups. The Cuban American National Foundation, for example, has supported Washington's negotiations with the Cuban regime over the question of immigration. But other right-wing forces have denounced the discussions as a betrayal.

Writing in *El Diario las Americas*, a right-wing Spanish-language daily published in Miami, columnist Juan Abreu states, "It's sad, but it seems that there are no signs that in the near future we will see that popular and spontaneous rebellion that our exile leaders wish for so much."

Abreu complains about the immigration discussions and "the fifth column of sellout Cubans in Miami" and then adds that "in the middle of this desolate panorama...something positive occurred New York." The positive event: A right-wing Cuban protesting outside the Cuban Mission in New York "slapped around" a supporter of the Cuban revolution.

"Patience and civility have a limit," Abreu claims. "We need to be prepared to give it back...blow for blow, death for death.... An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, there is no other road for Cuba."

In spite of the right-wing offensive, opponents of the U.S. embargo of Cuba and supporters of the Cuban revolution have found more space for discussions and in many cases less hostility among Cuban-Americans and others when explaining why Washington hates the Cuban revolution and why working people should not believe the lies about Cuba.

Sixty people attended a Militant Labor Forum in Miami August 27 to hear a panel of speakers protest the U.S. war moves.

Recent reports in the big business media, such as Channel 4 here, have pointed to demonstrations in other parts of the United States that have opposed the war drive against Cuba. Channel 4 claims that actions like these could never happen in Miami.

But the Miami Coalition to End the U.S. Embargo of Cuba and a coalition of Cuban-American groups are planning to show, once again, that this is not true. They are planning a public demonstration in Miami for September 10.

Hundreds condemn Clinton's Cuba policy

BY PAT SMITH

Hundreds of working people and youth condemned the Clinton administration's attacks against the socialist revolution in Cuba at picket lines and public forums around the world.

"The conflict did not start in 1959," Elizardo Sanchez of the Antonio Maceo Brigade told a crowd at a Militant Labor Forum in Miami. "The U.S. government has wanted to drive our people into submission and make it just another colony. But they definitely have not broken the will of the Cuban people," Sanchez told the 60 participants August 27.

Cuban-Americans in Miami have been debating, discussing, and arguing about the Clinton administration's policy of cutting off travel and funds to family members in Cuba, Sanchez explained. "We have to lose our fear and speak out and be part of these discussions," he said. "We also need to participate in demonstrations."

Also addressing the meeting were Samedi Floreuil, a leader of the Haitian rights organization Veye-Yo; photo-journalist Tony Savino, who just returned from Guantánamo, Cuba; Tony Llanos of the Miami Coalition to End the Embargo Against Cuba; Cuban-American journalist Marcos Castellon; and Ernie Mailhot, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida.

'Visit Cuba, see for yourself'

"Visit Cuba, see for yourself," read one of the placards at a lively picket of almost 100 people August 31 at the Federal Building in Los Angeles. The action was organized in a few days by the Coalition in Solidarity with Cuba as a quick response to Washington's escalating provocations. A young worker who heard about the rally from a radio announcement said, "It's ridiculous that the United States has been trying to keep Cuba from sustaining itself just because they disagree with their ideology." A student at the University of California at Santa Barbara agreed. "Who is the U.S. government to tell the Cubans what to do with their own country," he said.

"I'm here today to protect the revolution. Cuba represents the hope and inspiration for all of Latin America," said a member of Youth For Peace in El Salvador.

"I am here as one of the 'wretched of the earth,'" Musa Kamara said at an August 28 Militant Labor Forum in Greensboro, North Carolina. "Cuba was once a member, but freed itself in 1959 through a heroic revolutionary struggle of its leaders and its people." Kamara, originally from Sierra Leone, was referring to Franz Fanon's book *Wretched of the Earth*, which is about the exploitation of semi-colonial countries by imperialism.

"Those of us who are familiar with the feudalistic conditions under which women suffer in most African countries know what the Cuban revolution has meant for women," Kamara continued. "Cuban women have come to Africa as soldiers, as teachers, as doctors." Local television stations covered the forum as well as a picket



Some 100 people rallied at the Cuban Mission in New York September 2 to demand an end to the U.S. embargo and protest the August 30 attack by right-wing thugs from a Cuban-American group who assaulted Cuban diplomatic personnel.

line held two days later.

Young people from Ogden to Orem, Utah, made up the majority of the 35 people who picketed the Federal Building in downtown Salt Lake City September 6 to protest Clinton's moves against Cuba. Earlier in the day, 100 leaflets announcing the picket had been distributed to students at East High School by members of the Coalition Against War With Cuba, which sponsored the picket.

Protests around the world

"People may believe there is no longer a problem because talks are taking place," Ken Gill, former general secretary of the Manufacturing, Science and Finance Union and current national chairperson of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign, told 150 protesters at the U.S. embassy in London September 6. "This is not the case." Gill announced a week of actions in solidarity with Cuba in October. A message from Unison, the largest trade union in Britain with 1.4-million-members, called on Washington to fulfill its immigration agreement with Cuba, lift the blockade, and end sanctions. Other unionists, solidarity activists, and members of Parliament attended the picket.

Shouts of "Cuba sí, yanquí no, U.S. out of Guantánamo!" greeted officials at U.S. consulates in Auckland and Christchurch, New Zealand, September 2. Fifty demonstrators withstood the cold and rain in Auckland to demand "U.S. hands off Cuba." The protest, organized on short notice by the Cuba Friendship Society, was covered on the *Nightline* news program and in Auckland's *New Zealand Herald*.

A high school student who participated in the Christchurch picket helped distribute leaflets earlier in the day to build the event. Five university students were among the 24 protesters. They first became interested in defending the Cuban revolution after hear-

ing Marcelino Fajardo, Cuba's consul-general in Australia, speak at Canterbury University earlier this year.

More than 50 people chanted, "U.S., Canada hands off Cuba" at an August 26 protest at the U.S. consulate in Vancouver, British Columbia. The August 26 picket was sponsored by Amigos de Cuba, the Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association, Vancouver-Cuba Friendshipment, the Communist League, and the Freedom Socialist Party.

Some 20 people picketed outside the U.S. embassy in Stockholm, Sweden, August 31 to denounce Washington's lies and aggression against the Cuban revolution. Passersby took leaflets and gestured their support to the protesters. Some 25 participants at a Militant Labor Forum in Stockholm September 3 discussed events in Cuba with Teresita Vicente from the Cuban embassy in Sweden, a representative of the Swedish-Cuban Friendship Society, and Carl-Erik Isacson, a leader of the Communist League.

The following people contributed to this article: Robert Dees, a member of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union in Greensboro, North Carolina; Ned Dmytryshyn, a member of the International Association of Machinists in Vancouver, British Columbia; John Evenhuis, a member of the Young Socialists and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in Los Angeles; Seth Galinsky, from Miami; Pamela Holmes, a member of the Transport and General Workers Union in London; Geoff Mirelowitz from Seattle; Anita Östling from Stockholm, Sweden; Colin Parker, from Auckland, New Zealand; and Joan Shields a member of the Meat Workers Union in Christchurch, New Zealand; Brock Satter, a member of the Young Socialists in New York; and Dan Fein in Salt Lake City.

Cuban youth rally

Continued from front page
angry at the Clinton administration's provocative detention of Cuban rafters at the U.S. military base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. They also opposed the recent moves to tighten the U.S. embargo against Cuba by barring Cuban-Americans from visiting or sending money to relatives on the island.

August 5 events

Signs identifying different colleges and high schools represented at the rally dotted the crowd. Hand-painted signs proclaimed slogans such as "Dignity" and "Fidel yes." Students banged on drums, danced on the steps of the main campus building, and sang and swayed to the music of the popular band Moncada.

The student mobilizations, called a few days after schools opened, were organized in response to an unprecedented confrontation that took place here August 5. That day, thousands of workers, joined by many youth, had mobilized rapidly to battle several hundred antigovernment rioters near Havana's waterfront who were breaking store windows, looting, and attacking police officers. The riot broke out during a period of several armed — and in some cases deadly — boat hijackings in July and August.

"During the August 5 events, the generation now studying in universities and secondary schools had a unique opportunity to defend the revolution" by beating back the antigovernment riot shoulder to shoulder with workers, Rivero noted in an interview in the Cuban daily *Granma*.

He added that the student organization would begin the semester "with a different kind of curriculum, launching a political offensive in the universities with debates, exchanges of ideas, clarifying the active role students must play in society."

Discussions and opinions abounded at the rally. "It's inhuman to imprison people in Guantánamo and cut off family visits," remarked Itzel Vela Caravia, 22, a medical student. Explaining the wave of rafters leaving Cuba and the August 5 riot, she said, "It's the [U.S.] blockade that influences that situation. If they lift the blockade, people's lives will improve."

In spite of the economic adversities Cubans face today, "we as students don't pay a penny to go to college," she noted.

Ivan, a 26-year-old transportation worker, said of the rafters leaving Cuba, "They didn't have the courage to confront what we're confronting."

'Get rid of blockade'

His friend Roberto, a student, commented on Washington's long-standing policy of not granting immigration visas to Cubans while encouraging departures by raft, saying, "I don't know everything but I know they created that emigration. Those rafters are unfortunates who were urged on by the United States. They should just lift the blockade. We must continue along our

path." He was hopeful the New York talks between the Cuban and U.S. governments on immigration issues would lead to lessened conflicts between the two.

"I hope they get rid of the embargo," said Kirenia, who with a group of classmates from a technical school had brought a big banner with the portrait of Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara.

Half a dozen junior high school students, 12 and 13 years old, crowded around a reporter to state their views. A few said they knew from their U.S. relatives what conditions working people face in the United States. Dafnee Cabrera said those jumping on rafts "think it's a paradise over there. But there they have to pay for their health care, for their house, they have to work real hard."

'We want this revolution'

Her classmate Iracena Garcia, upon being asked why she was at the rally, said, "For our revolution. We want this revolution because we were born in it. We want to defend our homeland." Tatiana Santos interjected, "They should return our base in Guantánamo." The students interrupted the interview to join a new round of chants.

A student from the city of Matanzas, Magdelys Perez, 23, stated, "We may not have many material things, but we have ideas. I admire a lot the ideas of Che." She said she came to the rally on her own from Matanzas. "I traveled here straight after school. All of us at this event are here voluntarily."

Angel Cedeño, 26, referring to the August 5 riot and the combative response to it by workers, said, "We don't want a minority to crush our ideas. For our generation, this is the time and place to put up the kind of fight that has a place in history."

Not all agree

Not everyone shared the views of the student demonstrators. The day before the rally, at an open-air handicrafts bazaar near the Habana Libre Hotel, two artisans spoke of relatives and neighbors who had taken to the rafts. "I think the rafters are crazy to risk their lives," one said, "but if I could leave by normal means, I would go to the United States." He added he had quit a job as a machinist because he could earn more money making and selling jewelry.

Of the August 5 rioters, he remarked sympathetically, "Most of them are just unhappy because of economic reasons." The other artisan, who had quit her computer technician job to sell jewelry, disagreed, saying, most of those involved in the riot "were common criminals." Her husband had just left by raft; she said she would stay in Cuba "as long as I can make it here."

Workers at cigar factory

During a visit to the Heroes of Moncada cigar factory in the southern suburb of Marianao September 7, several workers expressed their views.



Militant/Cindy Jaquith

Demonstrators in Havana in February 1990 protest a U.S. Coast Guard attack on the Cuban ship Hermann.

"These measures by Clinton are terrible," said Pedro Rolle, 55. "They put an end to family visits from the United States and to sending remittances here." Washington, he said, "hasn't abided by the 1984 immigration accords. In the last 10 years, they only gave visas to 11,222 Cubans," Rolle added, noting the exact figure.

Some workers expressed hopes in the U.S.-Cuban talks. Modesta Arozarena, 50, however, said, "I don't think the outcome will be favorable because the United States is always opposed to us." She added that if Washington carried out further aggressions against Cuba, "We are well prepared for anything." Arozarena had taken part in the August 7 rally of 500,000 to repudiate the murder of police officer Gabriel Lamoth by boat hijackers.

Rolando Garcia, 30, commented that Washington "at first said Cuba wouldn't let people leave the country. Now they're complaining that we let people go and that it's a 'maneuver by Castro.'"

He was concerned about the detention of more than 20,000 Cubans at Guantánamo. "What's the United States going to do with them? I think it's a short fuse that's about to explode; that could provoke a confrontation with the United States." Garcia mentioned the 28 Cubans who crossed a minefield trying to enter the U.S. base and were turned away by U.S. marines at the base entrance and forced to go back. "Some of them stepped on a mine — that could lead

to a confrontation." There have already been protests and disturbances by both Cubans and Haitians confined on the base.

Different views about rafters

Workers have various views about the social composition of the rafters, many of whom are men in their 20s and 30s. "It's people who don't work," said Alexander Sutil, expressing a common view. "They are people who steal and who sell things on the black market at excessive prices. Here in Marianao I know several who left."

Garcia added, "A lot of those who leave are the dregs. But there are decent people too, who believe they'll find a good life in the United States. You feel sorry for them that they didn't have the strength to stay."

The local union president, Vilma Iturralde, explained that since the August 5 events, workers throughout the city have defended their factories. "We are responding by doing revolutionary vigilance in our factories. We've also gone to protect medical centers and other facilities against possible attack."

Numerous workers, students, and others have commented that the August 5 battle had a big impact on supporters of the Cuban revolution. Yuri Díaz, a construction worker from Camagüey, said, "Revolutionaries were put to the test there. It was training for future struggles."

"It was like a revolutionary injection," he added.

U.S. restrictions curtail Miami-Havana travel

BY LAURA GARZA

MIAMI — The impact of the Clinton administration's cutoff of family visits to Cuba was apparent the minute we arrived at the ticket counter at the airport here September 5. A small line formed in the early morning, in contrast to the usual large and lively crowd that always gathered, stretching for several blocks, on Concourse B in preparation for the day's flight to Cuba. Where hundreds were before only a few now stood, and the mood was subdued.

Several customs agents, wearing "Contraband and Enforcement Team" T-shirts, scrutinized people and their documents. An airport agent went up and down explaining to Cubans in line. "You can't take back to Cuba more than you brought," he said. "Treasury and Immigration agents will check every passenger. They'll frisk you, even if you have money in your bra. They won't let you on. You'll have to resolve it and go another day. If you have money inside letters, they have dogs that will sniff it out. Last week there was a problem with a gentleman who had money in a letter, and he couldn't get on the plane."

Perspectiva Mundial editor Martin Kopp-

pel and I were traveling on journalists' visas, one of the only ways still legally open for a U.S. citizen to go to Cuba. We showed letters proving we were on assignment as regularly employed journalists. The agents asked if we were carrying packages or letters for other people. They continued down the line, stopping and rejecting one person even before he reached the ticket counter. They later pulled aside at least one other at the door to the plane.

Behind us in line was a Cuban-American woman from New Jersey accompanying her father who was returning to Cuba. Most of those in line are Cubans who were in the United States visiting and are now going back. "It's disgusting, it's not fair. They let people going to Vietnam take all the money they want," she said, "but we can't go to Cuba. How can they tell me I can't see my family? I'll go through a third country if I have to."

When the plane finally took off it was mostly empty, with only about 30 people on board. The majority were elderly Cubans returning home joined by a few diplomats and journalists.

Passing through customs to enter Cuba was a brief affair.

HELP 'MILITANT' PROVIDE FIRSTHAND COVERAGE OF EVENTS IN CUBA AND SOUTH AFRICA

Perspectiva Mundial editor Martin Koppel and *Militant* correspondent Laura Garza, a member of the United Steelworkers of America in Miami, are already in Cuba, providing firsthand coverage of recent events from the factories, farms, and schools of the Caribbean country.

In addition, the *Militant* has requested permission from the U.S. Army's Atlantic Command to send correspondents to the Guantánamo Naval Base in Cuba.

Militant staff writer Greg Rosenberg and James Harris, a correspondent from Peoria, Illinois, who is a long-time activist in the United Auto Workers, are in South Africa covering the COSATU convention.



MILITANT/JON HILLSON
May Day demonstration in Havana, Cuba, 1990.

Funds are urgently needed to cover the costs of these trips. We urge all readers to send generous contributions right away. Please send your check or money order earmarked "reporting trips" to the *Militant*, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

U.S. troops provoke incident at Guantánamo

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

U.S. troops provoked a serious incident at Washington's naval base in Guantánamo, Cuba, September 6. Two U.S. soldiers were injured and one was hospitalized after a confrontation with hundreds of Cubans detained there.

CNN reported September 7 that the disturbance at Guantánamo broke out when Marines went after a Cuban chasing a soccer ball that rolled out of bounds of the detention camp during a mid-day game. Some 650 Cubans confined at Camps Papa and Quebec on the base began throwing rocks at the pursuing U.S. soldiers.

The same day, U.S. and Cuban diplomats ended six days of talks in New York without reaching any agreement on the issue of Cubans who are leaving their country by raft seeking to come to the United States. Negotiations are scheduled to resume in a few days after Ricardo Alarcón, who heads up Cuba's diplomatic team, returns from a trip to Havana.

The September 6 incident took place as U.S. military authorities continue to expand the detention camps set up on the Guantánamo base for Cubans being intercepted in the Florida Straits. The U.S. Navy has already herded more than 25,000 Cubans there, making many of the detention sites — with subhuman living conditions — overcrowded.

Pentagon officials said one U.S. soldier was hit in the shoulder by rocks and returned to duty later, while a second suffered an eye injury and had to be hospitalized. During the melee the windows of a military police vehicle were broken and a fire ignited and burned grass for a while before being extinguished by U.S. personnel.

A Pentagon press release stated, "The incident occurred at approximately noon apparently because the Cuban migrants are confined to their camp." U.S. officers told reporters that there are military rules on the base the detainees are supposed to abide by. But one member of the military brass there told CNN that conditions in the camps are causing the friction between the Cubans and U.S. soldiers. "They are frustrated, it's hot, they are angry," he said, speaking of the Cuban detainees.

Pentagon officials refuse to say whether any Cubans were injured or disciplined after the confrontation.

Guantánamo: a 'tinderbox'

While U.S. planes began transporting small numbers of Cubans from Guantánamo to U.S. bases in Panama, some 1,000 Cubans on average continue to arrive every day at the U.S. naval station, which is built on Cuban soil and held by force.

U.S. Army Col. John Himes told CNN reporter Brian Cabell at Guantánamo that an incident on the base or across the heavily mined border with the Republic of Cuba could become "a point that acts as a flashpoint in a tinderbox and it could erupt into something much greater."

Besides coverage on CNN, the September 6 incident received at best scant attention in the U.S. media. The *Wall Street Journal* and the *Washington Post* barely mentioned it. The *New York Times* ignored it altogether. The Pentagon has in fact kept a tight lid on the number of reporters who are able to visit the U.S. base at Guantánamo. Besides the big-business dailies and magazines, and the main television networks, few other news organizations have been given permission by the U.S. Atlantic Command to send journalists there.

At the same time, Washington is floating outlandish stories in the media that the Cuban government may be responsible for the disturbances at Guantánamo. A news item in the September 2 *Wall Street Journal*, for example, titled "Inside Agitators?" stated, "Counterintelligence specialists at the Defense Intelligence Agency worry that Castro is sending provocateurs to stir up the Cuban refugees detained at the U.S. Navy base at Guantánamo. Riots at the base 'will be Castro's next move,' predicts one Pentagon official."

But it is the conditions at the Guantánamo camps and the treatment by U.S. officers of those incarcerated there — on top of the illegal occupation of the bay against

the wishes of the Cuban people — that have created an explosive situation.

Of the six camps set up for the Cubans, surrounded by barbed wire, only one has running water. Food distribution is irregular. Tents are set up on dusty fields with no vegetation under the tropical, broiling sun. Health care services are scant.

"There's no deodorant, or razor blades for the men to shave," exclaimed Miriam Escobar, 35, to reporters. She arrived August 22 with her daughter and husband.



Cuban refugees at U.S. base in Guantánamo. Terrible conditions at the camps and the fact that they are on land stolen from Cuba, have created an explosive situation.

"There's no hygiene. You can't get used to this. We want to know how long we'll have to stay here."

The Pentagon already evacuated 2,000 family dependents and civilian employees, mostly women and children, from the base, after military officials stated the situation there was "too dangerous." Its garrison has also been reinforced by 5,000 soldiers, bringing U.S. troop strength to 8,000.

Nearly 15,000 Haitian refugees, who have fled a repressive military regime, are also detained at Guantánamo under the same inhuman conditions as the Cubans. A second disturbance broke out in the Haitian camps a few days before the September 6 incident as refugees rebelled against their conditions. U.S. bulldozers continue to clear land to house more than 60,000 Cubans on the base indefinitely.

Meanwhile, on September 6 the Pentagon flew nearly 100 Cubans from Guantánamo to U.S. military bases in Panama — the first among thousands to be transferred there. The government of Ernesto Pérez Balladares, who was sworn in as president September 1, has pledged to accept 10,000 Cubans at U.S. military bases on Panamanian soil for a period of up to six months. Pentagon officials said that no pregnant women will be allowed out of Guantánamo Bay, and any Cubans who are found to be pregnant in Panama will be returned to Guantánamo. The reason? U.S. military officials could not decide whether infants born in the camps would have the right to Panamanian citizenship.

Tight Treasury regulations enforced

At the same time, federal agents have begun enforcing new regulations issued August 30 by the U.S. Treasury Department on orders from the Clinton administration. These rules curtail charter flights from Miami to Havana, forbid the sending of money by Cuban-Americans to family members in Cuba, and ban travel to Cuba to visit relatives except for emergencies such as terminal illness.

Some 50,000 people visited Cuba from the United States last year, mostly Cuban-Americans. Up until the beginning of September, 10 charter flights made the Miami-Havana trip every week. "Travel is now being curtailed by 80-90 percent of previous levels," said Bob Guild of

Marazul Tours, one of three travel agencies that run flights to Havana.

As of mid-September, only two flights per week will go to Cuba from Miami, Guild said. ABC charters, one of the three companies that flew to Havana, plans to suspend all flights for now.

In addition to Cuban Americans, the new restrictions make travel to Cuba much harder for those U.S. citizens who could previously go to Cuba legally.

Specifically, the old regulations granted

permission to "persons who are traveling for the purpose of gathering news, making news or documentary films." The new rules limit this category to journalists "regularly employed in that capacity by a news reporting organization." Filmmakers and freelance writers are no longer allowed to go.

Professional researchers were also given fairly blanket exemptions from embargo restrictions before. Now they too must apply for permission on a case-by-case basis. While specific travel permits had been available "for purposes of public performances, public exhibitions or similar activities," such travel is now prohibited. And those hosted by the Cuban government or other Cuban institutions are not allowed to travel to Cuba any longer.

According to Guild, the new rules also make it illegal for U.S. citizens to travel to Cuba via third countries, like Canada or Mexico, if they use Cuban airlines. In addition, Washington has put pressure on Mexican and Canadian airline companies to make it even harder to get tickets to Cuba in the United States. A representative of the New York office of Mexicana airlines, for example, which operates one flight per day to Havana from Mexico City, said in an interview September 7 that she had instructions from her home office not to make reservations for travel to Cuba in the United States. U.S. citizens can purchase tickets only by contacting the company's travel agents in Mexico.

"These horrendous restrictions and attempts at economic strangulation of Cuba to this extent represent a policy of war," said Andrés Gómez in an interview. Gómez is a leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a Miami-based organization of Cuban-Americans who support the Cuban revolution.

Washington-Havana negotiations

While Washington has been implementing its aggressive measures against Cuba, negotiations by diplomats of the two governments were held in New York September 1-7. The talks were confined to the immigration issue, like similar discussions that have been held about twice a year since 1984. The Cuban government insists that the U.S. economic embargo be put on the table as well, but the Clinton administration categorically rejects the demand.

U.S. officials at first asked Havana to block Cubans from leaving by boat, in exchange for Washington's promise to grant visas to a minimum of 20,000 Cubans a year. The Cuban delegation rejected this proposal.

At a meeting at the Cuban Mission to the United Nations in New York September 3, Alarcón, explained Havana's position.

One of the main reasons for the current emigration, he said, is Washington's economic and information embargo on Cuba. Alarcón, who is the president of his country's National Assembly, Cuba's parliament, said the U.S. policies aimed at strangulating Cuba economically exacerbate hardships for millions of Cubans, thousands of whom decide to leave. He blasted the new regulations and said that repealing these measures must be part of the talks.

Alarcón explained how U.S. policy has encouraged and created the current massive exodus of Cubans by boat. "Since 1984, the U.S. government has granted only 11,222 visas to Cubans applying to emigrate," he said. "At the same time, Washington welcomed 14,000 who came to the U.S. illegally until July of this year." The visas granted in this 10-year period represent a tiny fraction of what Washington pledged in a previous agreement.

According to an immigration pact between the two countries signed in 1984, Washington promised to grant visas to some 20,000 Cubans per year. U.S. immigration laws that went into effect in 1990 actually raised that figure to almost 28,000.

The U.S. government has not only violated the terms of this agreement, Alarcón said, "but has turned the other way and supported terrorist outfits that operate out of Florida and carry out armed attacks and other provocations inside Cuba." He condemned the use of the misnamed Radio Martí, set up by Washington to beam pro-U.S. propaganda into Cuba. He also demanded that U.S. authorities prosecute or return to Cuba Leonel Macías González, who killed Cuban navy officer Roberto Aguilar Reyes when he hijacked a boat with 26 people and fled to the United States August 9.

Alarcón stated that the Cuban government will not back off its policy that allows anyone wishing to leave the country to do so, but will continue to try to persuade those who leave by raft or boat to refrain from setting off on the risky voyage. On August 28, the Cuban government issued a decree stating that for safety reasons Cubans would not be allowed to take children aboard rickety rafts bound for the United States.

"We are still open to work out a reasonable compromise on the immigration issue," Alarcón stated, "even if the U.S. does not agree to discuss the embargo and the recent stringent travel restrictions."

The next day, the Cuban diplomat presented a proposal that Washington grant visas to more than 100,000 Cubans to ease the backlog of applicants who wish to emigrate to the United States. U.S. officials rejected the proposal but talks continued for a few days. Negotiations were suspended September 7 when Alarcón flew back to Havana for consultations.

U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher told reporters he hopes the talks will resume soon. But Christopher and other administration officials insist they will not discuss U.S. economic sanctions and the travel ban against Cuba "unless Castro moves toward democratic change."

Several columnists in the big-business press and editors of major dailies call for lifting the embargo or for placing economic sanctions on the negotiating table. These commentators, however, have the same goal as those backing Clinton's measures: to weaken and eventually overthrow the revolutionary government headed by Cuban president Fidel Castro.

An editorial in the September 6 *Washington Post*, for example, which backed talks on issues broader than immigration, stated, "The embargo plays into the Cuban Communist leader's hands now by handing him a nationalist banner. But in fact the regime is cause, not consequence, of the embargo. End the regime, and there will be no embargo."

5,000 unionists march in Decatur, Illinois, Labor Day to build solidarity with strikes

BY JIM GARRISON
AND ANGEL LARISCY

DECATUR, Illinois - A sea of red T-shirts engulfed downtown as more than 5,500 striking United Auto Workers, United Rubber Workers, and locked-out United Paper Workers International Union (UPIU) members, along with other trade unionists and their families and supporters, paraded through the streets on Labor Day in solidarity with the union struggles taking place here.

The Decatur parade was led by members of the UPIU who have been engaged in a battle for almost two years against the A.E. Staley Manufacturing Co., a producer of corn sweeteners. They carried a banner reading "Decatur: Pride of the Prairie or Company Town," followed by "Fight Corporate Thugs at Firestone/Bridgestone, Staley/Tate and Lyle, Caterpillar."

The UPIU contingent was followed by members of the United Rubber Workers (URW) union on strike against Firestone and the United Auto Workers (UAW) on strike against Caterpillar. Each of the unions has adopted the color red for their union T-shirts in a show of unity. Thousands of other unionists filled out the crowd.

'Strike has reinvigorated everyone'

Strikers received cheers from people lining the streets as they chanted, "We are — Union!" and "Scabs out! Union in!" The parade stretched over a mile, winding through city streets and ending up in a rally in front of the Macon County courthouse. Commenting on the mood in the city, a member of the UAW noted, "The Firestone strike has reinvigorated everyone."

The UAW has been on strike against Caterpillar since June 20 after waging a two-year battle inside plants across the country for a decent contract and against company harassment. URW members walked off the job on July 12, refusing to accept a concession contract that included two tier wages, 12-hour shifts, and pay cuts. All three of the union locals on strike in the city are organizing activities together. Weekly meetings consistently attract 200 or more strikers and their families.

Many strikers were still talking about a protest held on August 31. On that day, workers from all three unions gathered at the UPIU union hall for civil disobedience training, then rallied at one of the Caterpillar plant gates.

Cops issue citations

When it was reported that the police were planning to issue citations to workers who were hit by a scab pick-up truck August 29 at the Firestone plant gate, more than 150 workers marched into the police station demanding they deliver the notices in front of everyone. When the police refused to come out the workers started chanting, "Cops out!"

Finally, the two workers who were hit by the pick-up and two others who had come forward to volunteer as witnesses were issued tickets for "impeding traffic."

Many workers explained that their fights aren't being portrayed fairly by the city administration and the media, which blames workers for the strife.

Striking rubber worker Tom Welsh said, "The figures reported are a million and a half dollars in lost revenue for the city. The city council refuses to talk to us and the media doesn't want to write the real stuff." Despite the efforts to smear striking workers as the problem, he thought "the mood is good" among strikers.

Some workers have expressed concern that they might never get their jobs back. But Richard Brummett, a member of the UPIU on strike against Staley, stated his opinion openly. "Even if they close down, it's a win for us. I'd rather see it close than us go back with the company's offer, he said." Brummett compared this struggle to the fight of Eastern Airline workers who fought to keep the airline from running as a nonunion carrier.

Workers from the three unions on strike are building a solidarity action for October 1 to commemorate the third anniversary that Caterpillar workers have been without a contract and the second anniversary of the lockout of Staley workers.

Workers push solidarity on Labor Day

The Decatur events were the highlight of a weekend of activities in central Illinois where thousands of workers are on strike.

Braving chilly temperatures and occasional showers, some 300 union members and their families gathered for the 13th Annual Labor Day Solidarity Picnic sponsored by the Labor Council of West Central Illinois. The majority of those unionists present were members of UAW Local 974 on strike against Caterpillar.

The gathering afforded members and families an opportunity to reflect on the conditions at Caterpillar that had led them to walk out as well as to share experiences from the past two months of the strike.

Mack Street, a striker with 37 years seniority in the plant, said, "Caterpillar's strategy has been to divide and conquer. They've sent off a series of mailings to the membership. In one letter they threaten us with the loss of our jobs and then in the next they present themselves as being on our side."

Don Roberts, another Caterpillar striker attending the picnic with his family, expressed the anger felt by strikers toward the company's actions. "Caterpillar pro-



Labor Day march in Decatur, Illinois, September 5 brought together thousands of unionists locked out by A.E. Staley and on strike against Caterpillar and Bridgestone/Firestone. The marchers were cheered by people lining the streets.

voked a strike," Roberts said.

Roberts, who was never disciplined for activities on the job in 29 years, was suspended twice this year — the first time for eight days and then for two months. Roberts was written up for drinking coffee for five minutes and snacking on the job. "Because I wore a red T-shirt and I'm a little mouthy," Roberts said, he became one of the many targets for company harassment during the first part of this year.

Labor Day celebrations were also held in surrounding communities. Toluca, Illinois, a town of only 1,500 residents, hosted a Labor Day festival — as it has for the past 46 years. This year the parade included some 300 members of UAW Local 974. Near the end of the parade route, the

strikers broke out in their trademark chant, "We are — union!"

As the Labor Day action in Decatur ended, Jessie Bunch, a member of the UPIU expressed the sentiment of many that day when he said, "It seems like things are getting worse — every time a contract comes up the company goes after the union. But I think we'll all win if we keep sticking together and that's the reason there are a lot of people out here today. We've just got to keep doing what we're doing."

Jim Garrison is a member of United Auto Workers Local 110 in St. Louis. Angel Lariscy is a member of United Auto Workers Local 270 in Clive, Iowa.

Unionists rally against scabs at Caterpillar

BY BRIAN PUGH

PEORIA, Illinois — Some 500 United Auto Workers (UAW) strikers and supporters rallied at Caterpillar headquarters here September 1 to protest the company's refusal to settle 95 unfair labor practice charges. Pickets filed in front of the main doors chanting, "We are union!" and "Hey hey, ho ho, Donald Fites has got to go!" The action was part of the weekly picket line organized by Families in Solidarity — spouses, children, and supporters of the UAW strike. Caterpillar, the world's leading earthmoving equipment manufacturer, continues its drive to break the union.

Caterpillar has forced hundreds of office workers to cross picket lines and perform struck work during the 11-week strike. Along with permanent new hires, tempo-

rary workers, and some union members who have crossed the picket line, these office workers have been victims of serious injuries. Severe burns, broken bones, and even amputations have been documented by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, as well as by the union.

Union appeals for solidarity

As office workers left for lunch September 1, strikers and supporters handed out leaflets explaining how "white collar and inexperienced workers are being sacrificed." The leaflet explains that Caterpillar continues to deny these injuries are taking place, but that the union will continue to document them. "After all, we are a union, which means we are for the workers and for the community," it states.

During the rally, union leaders passed out copies of an article by U.S. News and World Report on Vance security, the strike-breaking outfit hired by Caterpillar. Titled, "Calling all strike busters, the new lions who guard the gates," it states, "These 'rent a mercenaries' offer beleaguered managers a way to keep their strife-torn shops open."

The union is being forced to respond to the company's violence-baiting of the UAW. Caterpillar has accused strikers of throwing tire-damaging "jack-rocks," and picket-line intimidation. In response, the union leaflet pointed to the well-known provocative tactics used by Vance security.

"A Virginia state trooper reported seeing Vance throwing jack-rocks out during the UMWA strike against Pittston Coal," explained one unionist to the rally. Dennis Weaver, a striker from the Mapleton foundry, said, "I knew it was a strike-break deal when they brought Vance in."

Over the past several weeks the Peoria

Journal Star has run numerous articles on Caterpillar's plans to shift production from its struck UAW-organized plants in Illinois to nonunion facilities around the country and to the plants organized by the International Association of Machinists in Joliet, Illinois. Striker Bill Shrode, who works at the tire plant, stated, "These moves are not caused by the strike. They are part of the reason for the strike."

Some 161 jobs are to be cut at the struck Decatur plant and 112 new jobs started up at the Joliet plant. "The ones out here now are used to Caterpillar's tactics," added striker Larry Harris, referring to his fellow union members on the line. "The ones they can scare are in there," pointing to workers who have crossed.

Since the beginning of the strike, Caterpillar has used several agencies to recruit temporary workers to scab on the strike. Strom Engineering is a Minneapolis firm that has recently moved to Peoria to herd scabs. News reports state that hundreds of people lined up during the past couple of weeks to apply for jobs. During an unfair labor practice strike it is supposedly illegal for the company to hire permanent replacement workers.

John Smith, a striker with 25 years at Caterpillar, asked mockingly, "How long is temporary? You know how that goes. If they can train me they can train somebody else."

Caterpillar continues to claim production is at normal levels. "They say they've got production going out the door," said Harris. "Down the road from here is the Bork scrap yard. They haul all of Caterpillar's scrap. Bork has a mountain of scrapped engine blocks and other engine parts out there. So it's going out the door all right — out the back door to Bork."

THE CHANGING FACE OF U.S. POLITICS

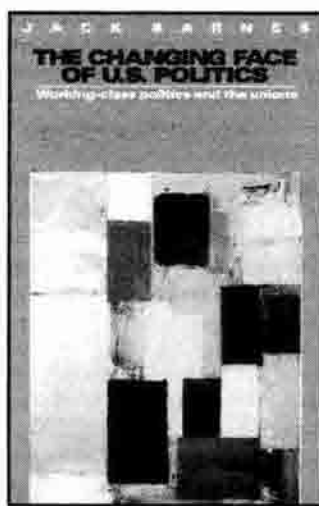
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CP-Soo bosses take aim at track workers

BY JON HILLSON

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — Negotiations between the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees (BMWE) and the Soo Line Railroad, the US subsidiary of the Canadian Pacific Ltd. (CP) business empire, resumed here September 6, with the rail bosses continuing to press its effort to farm out BMWE track building and repair work to nonunion contractors.

The CP announced this aim in early August, claiming it would take bids on 200 track jobs, in the midst of a strike by 1,100 determined members of the United Transportation Union (UTU) in 11 midwestern states against the Soo Line, the ninth largest U.S. railroad.

The BMWE's 900 members were

among the most stalwart of the 3,000 CP workers in 16 railroad craft unions who honored UTU picket lines during the 46-day strike.

On August 26, perceiving an apparent bargaining deadlock with CP bosses, UTU officials informed Department of Transportation Secretary Federico Peña and the Federal Mediation Service that they "might" attempt to expand the UTU strike to other railroads. The intended outcome transpired, with President Bill Clinton invoking the antiunion Railroad Labor Act, suspending the strike, and ordering union members to return to work.

UTU officials affirmed compliance with the edict hours in advance of the president's signature on August 29, halting the

longest rail strike since 1978. Union members took down picket lines that day.

The UTU members are working under the old agreement in a 60-day "cooling off" period as a newly named Presidential Emergency Board comes up with contract proposals.

Attempt to bar solidarity pickets

Clinton's order coincided with a scheduled hearing in federal district court here, prompted by the CP's push to get an injunction to bar the BMWE from solidarity picketing with the UTU strikers, as well as to prevent a track workers strike against the rail bosses' attempts to hire scabs. Defying the CP's union-busting probe, BMWE ranks had earlier voted to autho-

rize such action if the carrier took bids on contract work.

Track workers from Mason City, Iowa, to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, St. Paul, Minnesota, and Chicago met, rallied, helped strengthen UTU picket lines, and set a powerful example of solidarity. This effectively shattered the CP's antiworker fantasy that decades of boss-organized "craft" divisions would splinter labor unity, and wreck the strike from the start.

Instead of a hearing August 29, the BMWE and the company agreed to a moratorium until September 19 to settle the dispute.

The UTU's return to work under presidential order "changes the situation" in which the BMWE had faced the railroad, said Wade Birnbaum, a BMWE general chairman. "We're going from a 'replacement worker' issue, to a 'supplemental worker' issue."

CP seeks to punish strike supporters

The CP is seeking "to punish people who honored the UTU strike line. They're saying, 'if you wouldn't have stayed out, this wouldn't have happened,'" he noted. At least 50 laborers in the Twin Cities area were told not to report to work until September 6, Birnbaum explained.

Initial talks with the CP since the UTU strike was suspended, Birnbaum said, "didn't go very well." The rail bosses still seek to contract out labor to temporary workers based on meeting priorities, he said, "but to them, everything is a priority."

The BMWE's 1991 contract comes up for negotiation on Jan. 1, 1995, along with those of all the other CP rail unions, coinciding with the expiration of the UTU's national rail contract.

Track gang denied work

Dave Lorendo, a BMWE track work extra-gang lead man, explained that nine of his 11 crew members were refused work by CP supervisors when they came back on the job. When the unionist explained to one boss that BMWE members were complying with a presidential order, he was told, "You're kind of forgetting who pays you around here."

Track workers, explained Lorendo, a recently elected local chairman of BMWE Local 928, are "a little bummed at the company. And we're not sure if everybody is coming back yet. But we know what the consequences were if we lost [the UTU strike]. If the UTU went out again we'd walk out again as quick as the first time. And [the UTU dispute] isn't over. We've got to stay together. Of the 900 [BMWE members], we hear just five crossed the picket line. We're ready to do it all over again without hesitating."

Jon Hillson is a CP rail switchman in St. Paul, a member of UTU Local 1882, and the Socialist Workers candidate for governor of Minnesota.

Workers walk out at Eagle Electric

BY FRED FELDMAN

NEW YORK — "What do we want? More money! When do we want it? Now!" and "No money, no work!" were the chants that rose time and again during two days of mass picketing September 1 and 2 by 800 striking workers at four Eagle Electric Manufacturing Company plants in the Long Island City section of Queens.

The strike began after an August 31 union meeting of 850 workers voted overwhelmingly to reject the company's final contract proposal. Only 78 voted in favor.

Eagle Electric workers are members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 365, an amalgamated local. The company produces consumer electrical equipment — fuses, light switches, wall plates for switches, cable, and extension cords. The great bulk of the workforce make between \$5.50 and \$7.90 per hour. A small layer of employees in designated skilled trades are paid considerably more. The big majority of workers are immigrants from South America, the Caribbean, China, Africa, the former Soviet Union, and Eastern European countries. A majority of the workers are women.

The proposal from company president Neal Kluger essentially maintained the contract terms that have been in force for the last six years and widened slightly the wage gap between skilled trades and most production workers. The company's offer provided for a 2.5 percent increase in each



Militant/Nancy Rosenstock

Rejecting a concession contract, hundreds of union members at Eagle Electric set up a picket line at the plant chanting, "No money, no work!"

year of the three-year pact and 2 percent for the semiskilled. But for the "unskilled" — overwhelmingly women on piece rate who make up the majority of the workforce and are the most harassed by supervisors enforcing speed-up — the company offered a 2 percent raise for the first

two years and 1.5 percent in the third year.

The union negotiating committee recommended rejection. At the August 31 union meeting the ranks were in a fighting mood. Many workers greeted the company's offer with hoots, shouts of anger, and groans. Several described the proposal as "ridiculous" and "insulting." Groups of union members chanted "Strike!" in English and Spanish. "It's about time," one fuse department assembler said.

At a September 2 meeting of hundreds of pickets outside two of the struck plants, a top company official, introduced by union president Sam Mieli, said that negotiations had not broken down and that the company was preparing a new offer.

Fred Feldman is a member of UAW Local 365 at Eagle Electric.

Rubber workers strike remains solid

BY BARBARA BOWMAN

DES MOINES, Iowa — "We're very solid. There was some concern on the picket line that the younger workers would cross. But I think the opinion now is that no one is going in," said Debbie Owens in describing the strike by 1,300 members of the United Rubber Workers at the Bridgestone/Firestone plant here.

Owens and other union members spoke to the Militant coming out of the Prairie Meadows race track here Aug. 31, where hundreds of Firestone workers joined in a video hookup with their union brothers and sisters also on strike at the company's plants in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Akron, Ohio; Noblesville, Indiana; and Decatur, Illinois. The hookup was called by United Rubber Workers union (URW) officials to answer claims made by management about the company's need for deep concessions.

A couple of weeks earlier, management had mailed a video tape to the homes of the 4,200 Firestone strikers across the country that attempted to explain why accepting the company's "best and final offer" is in the interest of union members.

'They're out to break the union'

Owens is a single mother of five children with seven years seniority. Responding to Firestone's demands for concessions, which include mandatory 12-hour shifts, increased workers' payments for medical coverage, and 30 percent pay cuts for new hires, Owens said, "You wonder how often you have to start over. If they win, it's like we'll have to start over again."

"We went out of our way to give our best," emphasized Owens. "We thought if the company makes money, we'd have secure jobs. Now," she said, "they don't just

want concessions, they're out to break the union. We're at the point that all the unions have to stick together. If we lose, everyone loses. You better believe John Deere is watching us." (The contract between the United Auto Workers union and John Deere expires September 30.)

Upon exiting the race track, URW Local 310 president Bernie Sinclair told the press, "Our members are as solid today as when we went out." Some workers with fists in the air shouted, "Hang together boys, hang together. Others shouted, "Solidarity forever, no way we are going back."

"What they are trying to do is scare people into concessions," said shop steward Darrell Lawrence, a moulder with 25 years in the plant. "We're in this for all rubber workers. They say they can't compete with Goodyear so they need concessions. If we give in then the next round it will be Goodyear saying it can't compete without concessions."

"We produced more pounds per man hour than in any time in the history of Firestone," continued Lawrence. "It's not only a matter of money — it's job security, seniority, and job combinations. Under their new contract there would be no such thing as a warranted absence form work," he explained. "What they want is a nonunion shop. It doesn't work that way. Our plant has been union for years and years. Take away the benefits and decent wages, and you've got a packinghouse."

"They are trying to scare the younger workers by saying they're planning to hire 200 [replacement workers] at a time. But these guys come from \$7 or \$8 an hour jobs," Lawrence said in reference to the younger union members at Firestone here. "They don't want to go back to that. No, it's not over yet. I see us coming out victorious."

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Continued from front page
the charges against him signed by Louis Galloway, a guard from the prison's Internal Affairs department, which conducts investigations against prisoners. In the report, Galloway claims that officials are prepared to present the following "evidence" against Curtis:

- A statement from a nurse in the prison hospital, where Curtis had been working on a "gate pass," claiming that she heard him threaten and saw him assault another inmate;

- A statement from a guard claiming that Curtis told him he had slapped an inmate;

- A statement from a "confidential informant," an inmate, who "substantially agrees" with the two other statements; and

- A photograph that appears to be of chipped lenses in a pair of glasses.

The report concludes that these four items, and the fact that Curtis refused to respond to the guards' interrogation when they told him they were considering filing a report against him, lead to the presumption that he is guilty.

Under prison regulations a hearing before an Administrative Law Judge is to be convened to rule on the charges against Curtis. While he is permitted to present witnesses on his own behalf, Curtis is not allowed to question the guard's witnesses against him. The guards, however, are allowed to question Curtis.

Curtis has requested adequate time from prison officials in order to prepare his defense. He and his attorney, William Kutmus, have requested that Kutmus be allowed to represent Curtis at the hearing.

Meanwhile, supporters of Curtis's fight for freedom and defenders of political rights have been sending faxes, telegrams, and letters to Acting Warden Paul Hedgepath at the penitentiary, urging that the charges be dropped and Curtis be released from segregation.

Miscarriage of justice

"I believe there to be considerable evidence that [Mark Curtis's] incarceration is a miscarriage of justice," faxed Joe Straley, professor emeritus at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, and chair of the Peace and Justice Committee of the Community Church of Chapel Hill.

"I am sending you this letter by fax to urge that you drop your effort to victimize Mark Curtis," wrote Harold Ruggless, president of United Auto Workers Local 270 in Des Moines. "Far from being a 'criminal,' Mark Curtis is an activist in the movement to better the conditions of working people. He is an excellent candidate for parole and I would be happy to have him working next to me, living next to me, and helping to build my union."

"After reviewing the charges you have leveled against Mr. Curtis, I believe that they are nothing but an attempt to smear him in order to derail his effort to win his release on parole. I urge you to reverse this course. Let Mark Curtis out of lockup now," Ruggless said.

Thirteen workers from the Goman meat-packing plant in Sweden, led by the chairman of the Union Club, faxed a letter to the acting warden, noting, "We have sent letters protesting other prison authorities' treatment of Mark Curtis. We have discussed his case at several union meetings. We have sent money to his defense campaign."

Seven garment workers from St. Louis, Missouri, headed by Rom Burris and Dorothy Jones, the president and secretary of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 1104, wrote, "Mark has been a model prisoner. He should be paroled, not put in lockup!"

Numerous letters were sent from participants at a Labor Day march in Decatur, Illinois. Among those to write were Ray Rogers, president of Corporate Campaign; David Yard from United Mine Workers of America Local 1969 in Virden, Illinois; and Ronald Van Scyoc, recording secretary, and Frankie Travis, one of the "road warriors" of the paper workers local locked-out for more than a year by the A.E. Staley Manufacturing company in Decatur.

Messages protesting the lockup of Mark Curtis can be sent to Paul Hedgepath, Acting Warden, Iowa State Penitentiary, Highway 61, Fort Madison, Iowa 52627, or fax to (319) 372-6967. Copies should be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311, or fax to (515) 243-9869.

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Stop U.S. Threats Against Cuba! Speaker: Aaron Ruby, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Washington, D.C.; others. Sat., Sept. 17, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South Street. Donation \$3.

Tel: (215) 546-8218.

Defending Women's Rights Today. Speakers: Mary-Elise Haug, Mid-Atlantic regional director of the National Organization for Women; representative, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Sept. 24, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South Street. Donation \$3. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

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No U.S. Troops to Haiti! Speakers: Jean Marie Gabriel, member of national board of Federation of Haitian Students in Haiti; representative, Quixote Center's Haiti Reborn Campaign. Sat., Sept. 17, 7:30 p.m. 1802 Belmont Rd., NW (in Adams Morgan). Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

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The New 'Clinton Crime Bill': an Attack on Working People. Panel discussion. Sat., Oct. 1, 7:30 p.m. 1802 Belmont Rd., NW (in Adams Morgan). Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

BRITAIN

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Troops Out of Northern Ireland. Speakers:

Judith Ward; Anne Howie, Communist League, member of Amalgamated Engineering Union. Sat., Sept. 21, 6 p.m. 60 Shudehill, Manchester. Donation £2. Tel: 061-839-1766.

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Stop the Lies about Cuba! Speaker: Jacques Malfati, representative, Communist Organizing Committee. Sat., Sept. 17, 6:30 p.m. Salle de l'AGECA, 177 rue de Charonne (métro Alexandre Dumas).

CALENDAR

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Parole Now for Mark Curtis! Speakers: Nell Wheeler, Mark Curtis Defense Committee, member, UFCW Local 431, Des Moines, Iowa; others. Sat., Sept. 24, 7 p.m. ILWU #6, 255 9th Street (between Harrison and Folsom). Donation: \$5. For more information, call (510) 530-2577.

Cops attack striking rubber workers

BY TIM MAILHOT

HUNTSVILLE, Alabama — More than 1,000 members of United Rubber Workers (URW) Local 915 and their supporters were teargassed in the early hours of September 6, while holding a mass picket line to discourage scabs from entering the Dunlop Tire Corp. plant. Police used riot sticks against the strikers and arrested four members and supporters of the union.

The police fired tear gas "in front of us and behind us," said Dan Knoch, spokesperson for URW Local 915. "They fired it in the direction they told us to go. They were not trying to disperse the crowd — they were trying to hurt people."

At least three strikers were beaten by the cops as they sat blocking a road in defiance of the police's orders to disperse. Two scabs were injured when objects were thrown through their windshields.

Hundreds of strikers and supporters were at the road leading up to the entrance to the Dunlop plant, some as early as 4:00 a.m. As scabs began to report for work, URW members tried to wave them off, telling them not to go in. Some of the cars were pelted with rocks and bricks as they proceeded down the road to the plant. About 50 police from Huntsville and Madison, Alabama, and the Madison County Sheriff's Department were on hand, as was the Huntsville SWAT team dressed in riot gear and gas masks.

At one point police blocked further entrance to the plant and ordered the pickets

to leave. When strikers did not respond, the tactical squad began to move forward in a line stretching across the street. The picket line rapidly dispersed when tear gas was lobbed into it.

Unionists rejected company offer

These events came after union members voted down a tentative offer by a 719-712 margin on September 1. The proposed agreement was negotiated in a three-day bargaining session and was recommended by URW officials. Strikers on the picket line indicated that the offer was no different than what they had previously rejected.

The company originally demanded major changes in work schedules, weekend work without premium pay, the right to contract out work, gutting of the seniority system, and a giveback of one week of vacation and a cost of living escalator won in a previous 13-week strike. These terms are similar to what Bridgestone/Firestone Inc. has demanded of URW members, who are on strike in other cities. Union literature points out that if these concessions are taken, it would have a ripple effect, enabling other tire manufacturers to demand similar contract terms.

In spite of the close vote, a striker on the picket line said that the local discussed the outcome, and everyone agreed to stay out. Only 42 members have crossed the picket line. The company claims that there are now 500 replacement workers in the plant.

The strike is in its 12th week with no

sign that the company is backing off from its plans to establish working conditions on its terms. The Dunlop tire plant was purchased by Sumitomo Rubber Industries (SRI) in 1986. Since then, the union says that there have been continual run-ins with management over efforts to increase profitability and implement work-rule changes and production methods. On July 7, company officials announced that the plant would be closed if "major structural changes" were not agreed to by the union.

Dunlop claims that they have lost money at the plant every year since 1987, including \$10 million in 1982 and \$4.4 million in 1983. Projected losses for 1994 before the strike were \$9.5 million, according to the company. SRI also claims to have invested \$250 million in capital improvements in the plant since 1986.

A union fact sheet points out that the majority of this money was spent buying equipment from Sumitomo-owned tire plants in Japan. Some of the equipment was old and worn out, most was purchased at inflated prices. The union, for its part, has made concessions in previous contracts to help put the company on its feet.

In response to the latest events, the company promptly obtained a temporary injunction that allows only six pickets at the main gate, standing 12 feet apart. Dunlop also announced that it will be presenting another tentative agreement to the union for a vote.

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SWEDEN

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Take your choice — Responding to Republican allegations that he's soft on the death penalty, Florida Gov. Lawton Chiles, running for reelection, points out that



Harry Ring

eight people have been executed during his administration, only one less than under his Republican predecessor.

Too many cavities? — Inmates of Wisconsin state prison system

have been denied the right to receive candy. Officials said too much of the stuff has been coming in.

Try exercising the guards — Wisconsin has also barred the use of barbells in prison gyms, responding to an asserted public concern that inmates are getting too muscular. Also, prison tennis courts are being destroyed or turned into shuffleboard decks.

They've got what it takes — Responding to criticism that former Stalinist bureaucrats are cleaning up in the East European free market, Alison Flint, an economic specialist, observed: "People who made it in the old regime are going

to make it in the new one too. A 'holier-than-thou' attitude can get in the way of development."

Nothing sacred? — "We're in a dogfight. Some of the competition has gotten down to a level I would never want to see at Cadillac." — A GM honcho, distressed by the fact that a slump in luxury car sales has led to ads bad-mouthing rivals and, even worse, some price-trimming.

Sleep on it — MIT neuroscientist Richard Wurtman got wide media coverage with the finding that melatonin, a hormone tablet sold mainly in health food stores, may be a good sleeping pill. Wurtman is also vigorously campaigning to

make the hormone a prescription drug. He just happens to own some \$6 million worth of stock in a company that has the inside track on patenting melatonin as a prescription drug.

Where else but the good ol' USA? — You don't need to be a millionaire to own a million-dollar home. All it takes is an income of \$4,000 a week, a \$300,000 bundle for down payment, and coughing up \$6,039 a month on a 30-year mortgage.

Who watches the watchdog? — San Francisco's Office of Citizen Complaints, an asserted police watchdog agency, disclosed that the files for 25 of its cases are

missing. Officials speculate that the recently resigned director either misplaced the files or walked off with them.

We could offer Newark water — Billed as "the champagne of bottled water," Niagara water is actually tap water from Irvine, California. How come the name? The company founder comes from Niagara Falls, New York.

Includes Niagara water — With the fashion world now pushing athletic themes, stylish water pouches are in for in-city hikers. Like, a Chanel water bottle encased in gold and leather mesh, \$1,125.

Booklet lays bare myth of population explosion

For almost two centuries theoreticians and governments have blamed "too many babies" for the hardships faced by the working class. Population growth, they've argued, is the cause of underdevelopment of the Third World, destruction of the environment, hunger, and war. In his pamphlet *Too Many Babies? The Myth of the Population Explosion*, excerpted below, Joseph Hansen counters these arguments, first raised by the Rev. Thomas Malthus in 1798. Copyright © Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY JOSEPH HANSEN

Marxist analysis has shown us that when we speak of "overpopulation" in capitalist society we must add a most important qualification. It is "relative." Not relative to the food supply, as the naive Reverend [Thomas] Malthus believed, but relative to the part of the investment that goes by the attractive name of "payroll." The size of the payroll, as everyone knows, is only partially determined by common human needs. The capitalist, a devoutly religious man, leaves the final say on payroll matters to his god, Profits, the Moloch to whom he piously offers the flesh and bone of his workers.

That is why an "overpopulation" of millions can appear in a few short months in a country as wealthy as the United States, flooding the employment offices, and just as suddenly disappear when the economic cycle enters a period of boom.

The real meaning of "overpopulation" can be seen with exceptional clarity in colonial or semicolonial countries whose economies have been molded by imperialist interests. Cuba offers a good example.

When he was tried for leading an unsuccessful revolt against the Batista dictatorship in 1953, just before his 27th birthday, Dr. Fidel Castro gave the following eloquent description of the Cubans whom he sought to arouse. It is worth studying for the picture it offers of the kind of people the Malthusians are talking about when they advocate an intensive campaign to persuade the world's "overpopulation" to get themselves sterilized.

When we speak of the people we are not talking about those who live in comfort, the conservative elements of the nation, who welcome any oppressive regime, any dictatorship, any despotism, prostrating themselves before the masters of the moment.

In terms of struggle, when we talk

about people we're talking about the *six hundred thousand* Cubans without work; the *five hundred thousand* farm laborers who live in miserable shacks, who work four months of the year and starve the rest; the *four hundred thousand* industrial workers and laborers whose salaries pass from the hands of the boss to those of the moneylender, whose life is endless work and whose only rest is the tomb; the *one hundred thousand* small farmers who live and die working land that is not theirs; the *thirty thousand* teachers and professors who are so badly treated and paid; the *twenty thousand* small business men weighed down by debts, ruined by the crisis and harangued by a plague of grafting and venal officials; the *ten thousand* young professional people who finish school with their degrees anxious to work and full of hope, only to find themselves at a dead end, all doors closed to them, and where no ear hears their clamor or supplication. These are the people, the ones who know misfortune and, therefore, are capable of fighting with limitless courage!

To round out the picture, we should of course take into consideration the fact that this large "overpopulation" of Cuba was a great convenience to the American sugar interests. They paid four months wages to a skilled and highly industrious labor force and then put those hundreds of thousands of workers into mothballs for the next eight months. During those months, the "dead time," the Cubans could not even work at their crops, for they were denied access to the land although much of it was uncultivated. So they starved. And this on a fertile tropical island easily capable of feeding a population many times larger!

Hunger disappears in future

Cuba is not exceptional. Ours is a hungry planet. Imperialism has plundered our planet, annihilated entire populations, condemned hundreds of millions of human beings to death by starvation, and doomed the majority of mankind today to chronic hunger. Not even the American people with the highest standard of living in the world have escaped the ravages of this ruthless economic system.

The Malthusian theory reduces man to little more than a gullet and a set of reproductive organs. Marxists take a decidedly different view of humanity. They note that man has hands and a brain, the capacity to use tools and an inclination for teamwork.

These have made him, in distinction to all other animals, a food producer. This is the secret of mankind's conquest of the earth, a conquest that would remain an impenetrable mystery if we were to confine ourselves to Malthusian concepts. (Where did these expanding numbers get their food?)

The truth is that the world now has at its disposal more than sufficient means to rapidly eliminate the hunger and poverty inherited from past ages. The same means, rationally developed, could soon assure everyone on this planet a decent living. Luxury for all, including abundant leisure time, could be realized within a relatively few years.

If you really stop to think about it, considerations as powerful as these are not needed to show that we have the means to end poverty quite rapidly. Simply consider where we would be today had all the factories that were closed down in depressions and recessions in the past half century been run at top capacity. Or consider how much farther ahead we would be if we had eliminated the useless duplication and appalling waste due to blind competition.

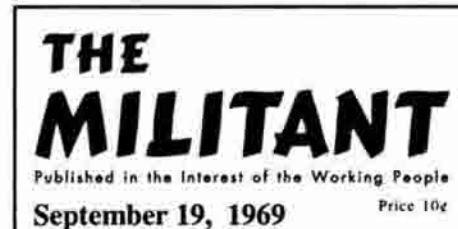
Or if the billions of dollars spent in idiotic advertisements were put to useful purpose. Consider how much more productive our economy would be if the standing armies were eliminated, the swollen



Militant/Harry Ring
Agricultural workers in Cuban cooperative, 1968. Revolution destroyed system that employed peasants four months out of the year and let them starve the other eight months.

government bureaucracies trimmed down, and the millions of people wasting their lives in these pursuits were given worthwhile occupations.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO



The American Civil Liberties Union is considering legal action against Trans World Airlines for their refusal to carry Robert F. Williams from London to Detroit. Williams was on his way back to the U.S. after eight years of exile when, upon changing planes in London, he found that TWA and other airlines flying to the U.S. refused to honor his ticket. At the same time, British authorities took him into custody and have imprisoned him in London's Pentonville Prison.

TWA claims that its decision not to fly Williams was based on information from the FBI that "a civil disturbance could be anticipated on his arrival in Detroit."

Robert Williams was one of the first black leaders in this country to advocate self-defense for Afro-Americans. He was forced to flee the country in 1961 after being framed up in his home town of Monroe, North Carolina, on a kidnapping charge. During his exile he has lived in Cuba, China, North Vietnam, and most recently, Tanzania. Some time ago, Williams decided to return to the U.S. and fight the frame up charges against him.

Lawyers in London are seeking to obtain

Williams' release from prison, and Williams remains firm in his determination to return to the U.S. As news of the actions against Williams spreads, more and more voices of protest are being heard on both sides of the ocean.

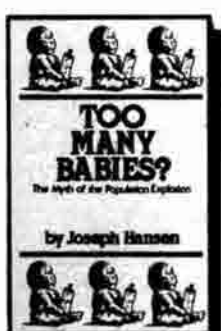


Latest dispatches report that workers' committees have been organized and have taken over control of many large industrial establishments in Paris, particularly in the "Red Belt" to the north and west.

"Committees manned by the rank and file...are growing in strength daily," writes the N. Y. Times correspondent in the September 11 issue. The Times correspondent describes his interview with one such workers' committee at the Hispano-Suiza plant where 1,500 workers were employed.

The spokesmen for the workers stated that the company's regular management had decamped on August 18, on the day the General Confederation had called out a million workers on strike.

"The heads of many French firms deemed it wise to remain away from their plants," observes the correspondent, "until the fever of excitement over liberation had died down and they could explain why valuable aid had been given to the Germans."

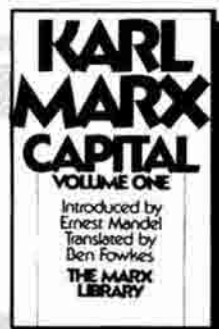


FOR FURTHER READING

Too Many Babies?

The myth of the population explosion
by Joseph Hansen.

If in the midst of abundance part of the population goes hungry, Hansen explains this is due not to the quantity of those without food but to the quality of the economic system under which they live — one that dooms them to starvation in the shadow of bursting granaries and warehouses. Booklet \$3.00.



Capital
by Karl Marx
\$13.95

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Oppose U.S. invasion of Haiti

Working people should not be fooled by Washington's pretenses of trying to "restore democracy" in Haiti. Clinton's preparations to invade that country are aimed at asserting the U.S. rulers' "right" to flex their military muscles in the Caribbean, especially as it escalates its aggression against socialist Cuba. Washington also hopes to maintain stability in the region and halt the mass exodus of Haitians fleeing from the brutal regime there. Far from a concern for democracy, the U.S. government has backed successive military dictatorships in Haiti for decades.

In fact, Washington has supported dictatorships throughout Latin America and the rest of the underdeveloped world for most of this century. U.S. military might has never been used to advance the interests of working people. Profits have always been the driving force of U.S. military intervention.

Wealthy U.S. bosses back repressive regimes in order to extract the natural wealth and exploit cheap labor in the underdeveloped world. Whatever fills the capitalist coffers is what is important: It may be zinc in Peru; oil in Venezuela; or the control of commercial sales of products like coffee from Brazil, Colombia or Costa Rica; or the marketing and transportation of bananas from Guatemala and Honduras.

Cuban president Fidel Castro aptly described the situation to the United Nations General Assembly back in 1960. "Latin America's economic resources are controlled

by the monopolies.... [that] exercise economic control over the most important industries of the country," he said.

While the U.S. government talks of reestablishing "democracy" in Haiti, it incarcerates Haitians under miserable concentration camp conditions at the Guantánamo naval base in Cuba, along with thousands of Cubans also seeking entry into the United States. Clinton administration officials talk about the brutality of Haiti's military rulers, which cannot be denied, yet thousands of Haitian workers who risk their lives to flee that brutality can't get the slightest help from Washington. U.S. policy continues to deny Haitian refugees political asylum.

"The multinational force is going to Haiti," says Deputy Defense Secretary John Deutch. But this will be a U.S. invasion in spite of UN authorization and a token force of 266 troops from four Caribbean nations. Nothing good will come of it.

Castro spoke the truth when in 1960 he told the UN General Assembly, "Our countries can at any moment become the victim of the use of such forces against the rights of our peoples."

Working people around the world should side with workers and peasants in Haiti and demand:

Open the U.S. borders to Haitian and Cuban refugees!
No U.S. invasion of Haiti!
Stop the war moves against Cuba!
U.S. troops out of Guantánamo!

Defend Mark Curtis

By placing Mark Curtis in so-called Investigative Segregation and filing trumped-up charges against him just five weeks before they must decide whether to grant him a parole hearing, prison officials hope to smear him and his record, push back his parole effort, and keep Curtis locked up. This is part of the long-term perspective of the authorities to keep Curtis in prison until he breaks. In this way they want to set an example that rebellious working-class fighters will face severe punishment if they challenge the billionaire ruling-class families and their bosses and politicians.

Mark Curtis is a political activist who was involved in a fight to defend immigrant workers when he was arrested, beaten, and framed up on rape and burglary charges in 1988. He remains politically active in prison, helping to organize an event celebrating the life of Malcolm X earlier this year, writing articles for the *Militant* on world politics and prison matters, and extending his solidarity to working-class fighters around the world.

Curtis is overdue for parole. The fact that the authorities

continue to hold him is an affront to growing numbers of class-conscious trade unionists, fighting youth, and defenders of democratic rights everywhere.

The stakes in getting Curtis released from lockup are high. When the prison authorities decided to put him there, they made it clear they knew exactly who he was. You're backed by your "friends in Des Moines" they told him, referring to the international defense effort on his behalf. Curtis supporters must answer this challenge immediately.

Now is the time to reach out as broadly as possible with this case. Curtis's fight can be taken to workers on strike against Caterpillar, Firestone, and General Electric, and to unionists across the country; to young people on high school and college campuses; to activists in defense of Cuba and a woman's right to choose abortion; and others.

Supporters of Curtis need to act rapidly to send faxes, telegrams, and letters to Paul Hedgepath, the acting warden, demanding:

Drop the charges. Release Mark Curtis from lockup!
Parole Mark Curtis Now!

The overpopulation sham

The United Nations-organized Conference on Population and Development is a sham. It seeks to perpetuate the racist, anti-working-class myth that "overpopulation" — not capitalist exploitation and imperialist domination — is to blame for economic and social crises, hunger, and the spread of preventable diseases, and destruction of the environment. The goal is to convince the toilers that these problems are their fault; that there is no other solution but to keep the birthrate down to the bare minimum.

But the population control advocates turn things on their heads. The reason for the grinding poverty in much of the world is not "too many people" but the unequal relationships between the owners of the wealth and the working class; between the imperialist countries such as the United States, Britain, Germany, France, and Japan, and the semicolonial countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. As Joseph Hansen points out in a pamphlet titled *Too Many Babies? The Myth of the Population Explosion*, "Capitalism dooms people to starvation in the shadow of bursting granaries and warehouses."

This explains the predictable selectivity of the imperialists and their spin doctors in passing out the "too many babies" tag. Somalia, India, Mexico, and China are overpopulated, they say. But Belgium, with a population density seven times that of Mexico or the United States with three times more people per square mile than Somalia, are not!

It's equally incorrect to blame environmental destruction on the supposedly too-rapid propagation of the species. It's not hordes of "extra" people who ravage the rain forests of Brazil or dump toxic waste into oceans and rivers. Capitalist ranchers and corporations with names

like Exxon and Union Carbide are the culprits.

In one sense, of course, there is overpopulation under capitalism. The owners of the mines, mills, and factories depend on a vast army of unemployed "surplus labor" to keep wages low and working people in their place. But this is a phenomena of the market system, not the natural state of the world.

In this context, the attempt to link the fight for abortion rights with those who advocate population control delivers an especially hard blow to the right of women to control their own bodies. It identifies the abortion rights fight with the reactionary goals of social engineers who try to control peoples lives, especially the poor. Population control advocates are as damaging to the fight for women's rights as those who attempt to make women have more children in order to increase the population of a certain nationality. In both cases women are encouraged, pressured, or forced to subordinate their reproductive lives to the population schemes of a higher body. The results are a disaster for women. In India desperately poor women are paid little more than a dollar to be sterilized, and in China forced abortions are common. Meanwhile, in many countries, women are denied access to contraceptives or the right to have an abortion.

There is a road forward in the fight against poverty, war, and environmental destruction. It is the international fight of working people and their allies against capitalism and for a socialist society that can rationally organize the use of the world's resources in the interest of humanity. In that fight, the untold millions of toilers who, in the words of Fidel Castro, "know misfortune and, therefore, are capable of fighting with limitless courage," are not a burden but our greatest asset.

COSATU Convention

Continued from front page

25,000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) began returning to work after nearly six weeks on strike. They scored a decisive victory over the employers, winning a 10.5 percent wage increase. The union also won nonwage demands, including forcing the employers to agree to upgrade literacy levels in the industry. Negotiations on other demands will continue.

Workers have won wage increases in strikes and negotiations averaging nearly 10 percent over the past two months, outpacing a 7.5 percent average rate of inflation. This is a sharp break from the past several years, during which wages have declined.

Opening day speakers pointed to several issues under nationwide debate. These include the pace of implementation of the African National Congress's Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP). The RDP incorporates the demands for land, housing, and jobs that are at the heart of the democratic revolution unfolding here. Other themes included the role of strikes in achieving workers' demands, and the attitude of the labor movement toward the government. The ANC holds a majority of seats in South Africa's constitutional assembly. What is referred to as the Government of National Unity also includes the National Party led by F.W. de Klerk and the Inkatha Freedom Party of Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

Mandela addresses congress

Welcomed enthusiastically by delegates, ANC and South African president Nelson Mandela addressed the congress. "The ideal of a nonracial, nonsexist, and democratic South Africa in which there is social equity is the mission the ANC set itself over the decades," stated Mandela. "This is the mission of our alliance. It is a mission that should continue to guide us, no matter how steep the road and how rugged the terrain in which we have to operate."

He called on the union movement "to play the role of a critical extraparlimentary force. But today you also have to take active part in determining and implementing government policy," using what he called "the elements of political power that we have together achieved in struggle."

Big business has complained loudly about the recent strikes, demanding ANC action against them. "We need to challenge the notion that strikes are, as a rule, inimical to the task of reconstruction and development," the ANC president said. "We fully support the workers in their struggle to improve their conditions."

Pointing out that there are at least 5 million unemployed workers in South Africa, and that 7 million people live in squatter camps, Mandela argued, "The task of mobilized people to become masters of their own destiny remains. This is a task that falls squarely on the shoulders of the political as well as the mass democratic organizations." He added that it is necessary to strengthen all these organizations.

"In striking, don't just look at your interests, the interests of your union," said Mandela. "In the final analysis, the strength of organized labor depends on its ability to articulate and promote the interests of workers as a whole."

Mandela said that "the higher the cost of production, the more business wants to retrench," instead of hiring. "Bear that in mind.... I know it's unpopular to you, but without us tightening our belts it's going to be very difficult to solve economic problems in this country."

Urging delegates not to pull any punches when questioning ANC ministers at the meeting, Mandela said, "I want to warn you that you are in power. It is no longer sufficient to criticize. You have to build."

Representatives from Cuba

In one of several departures from his prepared speech, Mandela made special mention of the presence of delegates from Cuba, who were attending a COSATU congress for the first time.

Delegates roared their approval when two representatives of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), Ramón Cardona Nuevo and Salvador Valdes Mesa, were introduced along with Marcos Rodríguez Costa, *chargé d'affaires* of the new Cuban embassy in Pretoria.

Washington's war drive against Cuba came up several times. "We must say to America — Hands off Cuba!" said COSATU president John Gomomo in his address to the meeting.

Gomomo told delegates that "the immediate goal of the South African working class led by its vanguard party and its giant mass trade union movement is to liberate the South African nation. It is the working class actively taking part in the current phase of a movement from apartheid to a state of national democracy."

"We realize," he said, "that even though the popular vote for a peoples government was wonderfully successful, we are saddled with a government of national unity for the next five years." He called for COSATU members to actively support the Reconstruction and Development Program.

Fraternal guests included delegations from the ANC and other organizations in the democratic movement, COSATU's farm workers organizing project, National Council of Trade Unions, and the South African Communist Party.

Rail workers in Britain organize more strikes

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

against Britannia Airways, which is the United Kingdom's second largest airline. In terms of volume, it is the biggest charter airline in the world. Some 87 percent of the 700 members who cast a ballot supported a strike, according to the union.

The union, which is part of the Transportation and General Workers Union, had rejected a pay hike

Restaurant Workers Union are in the fifth month of a bitter strike against the Harvard Club in New York. "They forced us to strike," said Alfred di Gioia, a 38-year-old houseman. He explained that the club insisted workers share the costs of medical insurance without offering any wage increases. None of the 118 strikers have broken ranks.

Management at the club has followed a long-established practice of paying workers bonuses to perform specific tasks, instead of hiring additional employees. For shoveling snow, for example, workers were paid \$10, the same amount they received for cleaning up after sick or drunken members.

The company's latest offer was a \$6 a week pay raise in addition to demanding the workers split the cost of medical insurance. A similar company, the Yale Club, settled a contract with the union that included pay hikes of \$95 a week over five years and improvements in medical coverage.



Militant/Julie Crawford

Activists join picket line in London August 22 to show support for railroad signal workers on strike against Railtrack.

ON THE PICKET LINE

about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

Signal workers at the British Railtrack are organizing further one- and two-day strikes in response to the company's plans to fire employees. Leaders of the National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers (RMT) announced plans for a 48-hour work stoppage for September 14 and 15. A 24-hour strike is also planned for September 23. These actions are to follow a 24-hour walkout called for September 8.

Reports of Railtrack's plans to dismiss striking workers and offer them a new contract drew an angry reaction from Jimmy Knapp, RMT general secretary. He asserted that a Railtrack policy of hoping to scare people back to work was "doomed to failure." Knapp said, "Railtrack should abandon their macho management stance and get back to genuine negotiations on RMT's claim. That is the only way this dispute is going to be resolved."

Airline workers in Britain vote to strike

British Airlines Stewards and Stewardesses Association members voted in favor of strike action

offer of 3 percent of basic wages with an extra 2 percent lump sum payment. Britannia is preparing replacement workers and said it has secured more than the 400 scabs to replace the cabin staff in the event of a strike. Some 900 of the airline's 1,460 cabin crew belong to the union.

Cockpit crews strand thousands in Beirut

A 24-hour warning strike that stranded thousands of travelers at Beirut International Airport, ended September 3 when cockpit crews at Middle East Airlines (MEA) resumed normal flights. The walkout, which involved 300 pilots and flight engineers grounded at least 10 MEA planes scheduled to fly to Europe, the Gulf, and North Africa. The strike came at the height of Lebanon's annual summer travel rush, when thousands of people who fled the 1975-90 civil war to live abroad return to visit relatives. The crews have demanded pay increases to cope with the soaring cost of living. The airline, primarily owned by the state, asserts it cannot afford to increase salaries.

Workers at Westinghouse begin voting on contract

Workers at Westinghouse Electric Corp. are expected to vote on a contract offer over the first three weeks in September. A proposed tentative settlement was announced by union officials hours after pickets were set up August 29 in Baltimore; Abingdon, Virginia; Buffalo, New York; and the Pennsylvania towns of Trafford, New Kensington, Bedford, Manor, Cheswick, and Blairsville.

Officials of three unions representing about 5,400 workers recommended approving the contract. "Compared to the nature of things, it's the best contract," said Robert Killmet of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, a member of the negotiating committee. Health benefits had been a major stumbling block in the negotiations, said Heather Albright, a spokeswoman for the International

Union of Electrical Workers. The agreement offers a wage increase of 13 percent over a four-year period and includes a managed health care plan for most employees, according to Westinghouse.

Grocery workers strike in Oregon and Washington

United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 555 and Teamsters Local 206 are currently on strike in Portland, Oregon, Vancouver, Washington, and other areas in southwest Washington. The walkout began August 18.

About 7,900 retail clerks, stock persons, meat cutters, truck drivers, and others have been affected by the strike. They are asking for language in their contract that will guarantee full-time hours for a certain percentage of workers who have seniority, and a guarantee of 20 hours a week for part-time workers, enabling them to receive benefits.

Currently, the Fred Meyer gro-

cery chain has the power to grant workers as many or as few hours as they wish.

Workers claim that the awarding of hours is being used by the company as a tool to obtain obedience. Employees' health benefits, vacation, sick leave, and holidays are dependent on the number of hours they work. The Teamsters are also asking that Fred Meyer give them full-time work and refrain assigning their routes to part-time hires. The company has refused to talk with the unions until they drop their demand for a guarantee of hours. The strikers, however, are standing in solidarity against the demands of the bosses and have refused negotiations until their demands are addressed.

Meg Novak, member of the Young Socialists in Seattle, Washington, and Paul Freeman, member of Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers Local 78 in Portland, Oregon, contributed to this column.

LETTERS

Learning labor history

In High School I never learned about Labor Day or labor history. Labor's struggle is only one aspect of our past that does not mesh with the fairy-tale American History taught by public schools. So like me you may not have learned that President Grover Cleveland made Labor Day a national holiday on June 28, 1894, or that six days later he sent federal troops into Chicago to crush one of the largest and best organized efforts by labor to redress grievances, the Pullman strike.

In the midst of the 1893 depression the Pullman Company had laid off 2,200 workers in the past year, cut wages by a quarter, and otherwise exploited the workers in the company town. And yet after paying the usual 8 percent dividend to stockholders, the Pullman Company still had a surplus of \$4 million.

After federal troops enforced the destruction of the strike, the railroads blacklisted Eugene Debs and the other strike leaders, and the most powerful union in the U.S. was thus destroyed. While the government gave the sop of a holiday to the workers, the government gave troops in support of the railroads' merciless drive to maintain profits irrespective of the consequences for labor.

We should ask our children if they're learning about labor and other neglected aspects of our history. If they're being fed fairy tales, we should take a lesson from labor and organize, organize with



other parents and with teachers and demand a change! If we organize ourselves properly, as Debs said, "the people can have anything they want." We could make history.

Chuck Heffernan
Boston, Massachusetts

Capitalist injustice

A New York man's 14-year fight against frame-up charges of arson and murder ended with his acquittal August 16.

Eric Jackson-Knight was sentenced to 158 years in prison in 1980 after being found guilty of setting a Brooklyn grocery store ablaze in 1978. Six New York firefighters died in the fire.

That conviction was overturned

in 1988 and a new trial was ordered after it was revealed that crucial evidence pointing to Jackson-Knight's innocence was withheld by the Brooklyn district attorney's office.

Upon hearing the hidden evidence at a hearing, the judge who sentenced Jackson-Knight turned to the former prosecutor, who is now an acting State Supreme Court Justice, and said, "I sent a man away for 158 years and you knew he wasn't guilty."

In his book *Notebook of an Agitator*, communist fighter James Cannon lays bare the true face of the "justice" system in the United States. "It is well-known among convicts, prison wardens, prosecuting attorneys and policemen that a large percentage of prisoners

are doing time for crimes they did not commit," writes Cannon. "This is not to say they didn't have police records in most cases, and hadn't committed some crime or other — the most important one the crime of being broke when they were arrested."

"That's just about the worst fix a man can get himself into in this country — to have a bad record, and no money or influence, and to get picked up by the police when they need some convictions."

"Many a man is doing time in prison for some specific crime to which he falsely confessed under duress; or pleaded guilty to in a deal with the prosecuting attorney and the police who 'had something on him'; or for which he was framed."

The busting of Jackson-Knight's frame-up helps expose the anti-working-class nature of capitalist justice and helps tip the scales in the favor of other frame-up victims like Mark Curtis.

Kevin Dwire
New York, New York

Antiabortionist thug

Representatives of the Everywoman's Health Centre have called for charges to be laid against Gordon Watson, for assaulting a clinic worker on August 3. Watson shoved a video camera in the face of a clinic worker who was filming him.

Watson is an avowed antiabortionist and thug with a history of violence and provocative behavior at abortion clinics in the Vancou-

ver area. When the abortion clinic run by Dr. Henry Morgentaler — a longtime fighter for abortion rights for women in Canada — was bombed to the ground in Toronto in 1991, Watson appeared at the Vancouver demonstration protesting the bombing with a sign that said "boom."

Watson also is known in the Vancouver area as a violent individual who harasses and menaces abortion providers, women seeking abortions, and workers who happen to work in the same building where abortion clinics are located.

On August 23, special prosecutor Don Sorochoan announced that Watson will be charged with assault and contempt of court for the August 3 incident at Everywoman's Health Centre.

In another development, Dr. Morgentaler is pressing the government to pay for abortions performed outside the Prince Edward Island (PEI) province.

According to PEI law, the government will only pay for abortions when they are performed in a hospital. The catch-22 is that no hospitals in PEI perform abortions.

Ned Dmytryshyn
Vancouver, Canada

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.

IRA cease-fire in N. Ireland shows weakness of British imperialism

BY TONY HUNT

SHEFFIELD, England — The Irish Republican Army (IRA), which for the past 25 years has been waging a military campaign against the British occupation of Northern Ireland, announced "a complete cessation of military operations" August 31. The announcement marks a significant move towards the involvement of the nationalist party Sinn Fein in constitutional

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talks on the future of Northern Ireland.

Sinn Fein has supported the IRA campaign and is seen by many working people as the political leadership of the resistance to British imperialist domination. The IRA cease-fire stems primarily from the weakness of Britain's rulers and their inability, despite massive repression and crippling divisions among working people, to crush the resistance to the British presence. They cannot stabilize the political situation in the north of Ireland while excluding Sinn Fein from the talks.

In West Belfast and other working-class Catholic areas of Northern Ireland many were jubilant following the IRA announcement. In Belfast, participants in a 50-car cavalcade waved Irish tricolors and chanted, "It's victory all right, it's victory!"

"No-one was winning. The time had come for something to be done and the IRA was courageous enough to do it," Belfast taxi driver John Murphy told the *Daily Mirror*. One young person in Belfast pointed to the continued harassment of Catholics by the police and the army. "They are still stopping and searching workers going to work," he said.

Call for withdrawal of troops

Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams, addressing a rally of thousands August 31, said that the struggle had entered "a new phase." At a later press conference Adams demanded the withdrawal of troops and police from Catholic areas and an end to raids, searches, and arrests. "All forms of repressive legislation should be scrapped," Adams said, and "Irish political prisoners in Britain should be transferred home immediately."

Irish prime minister Albert Reynolds reacted enthusiastically to the IRA announcement and met with Gerry Adams and John Hume, leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) in Northern Ireland. All three signed a statement committing them to "democratic and peaceful methods." It was the first time a Sinn Fein leader met the Irish prime minister since the beginning of the IRA armed campaign in 1969.

The John Major government in London has been cautious, calling on the IRA to declare a "permanent" end to their campaign. This wariness reflects the weakness of the British rulers and their need to feel firm ground under their feet before proceeding. Several politicians of the ruling Conservative Party and right-wing Unionist parties in Northern Ireland, who support the link with Britain, oppose any concessions to Sinn Fein or any tampering with the constitution of the United Kingdom (UK).

The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), the right-wing capitalist party that ruled Northern Ireland until 1972, has so far followed London's guarded line. But the ultra-right Democratic Unionist Party, led by Ian Paisley has accused Major of "caving in" to the IRA.

Washington played a significant role in the cease-fire negotiations. A delegation led by Bruce Morrison, which included U.S. capitalists with Irish connections, met with Sinn Fein leaders August 25. White House national security adviser Tony Lake was also involved in "direct contacts with UUP leader James Molyneux to assure him of Washington's even-handed approach."

Rightist terror gangs continue attacks

Right-wing Loyalist thugs have continued with their terror campaign. On August 31 they assassinated John O'Hanlon, a Catholic worker. Four days later a car bomb attack was executed against the Sinn Fein headquarters. Strong evidence exists of collusion between these gangs, the British army, and the Northern Ireland police force called the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). Today, however, London is concerned that the rightists will hinder its plans. Major has called on the terror gangs to "put a permanent end to their violence." He also staged a walkout of a meeting with Paisley September 6.

The violence in Northern Ireland, which has resulted in 3,170 deaths during the last 25 years, is not the product of "centuries-old conflicts," but stems from the efforts of the ruling rich of Britain and Ireland to maintain both national oppression and capitalist exploitation. Above all, Ireland has been a source of cheap labor for Britain's capitalists. The bosses have also kept workers in Britain weak by systematically fostering divisions between those born in Ireland and those born in Britain. London's domination of Ireland is the linchpin of capitalist rule throughout the British Isles.

Northern Ireland, established in 1921, entrenched crippling divisions, along religious lines between workers and farmers who are Protestant and those who are Catholic. This was done through systematic discrimination in housing and employment against Catholics — backed up by repres-



Militant/Naomi Craine

Thousands demanded British troops leave Ireland at August 14 protest in Belfast

sive laws and, at the time, the only regularly armed police force in the United Kingdom.

The IRA campaign began in 1969 after thousands of Catholic working people and youth took to the streets to demand an end to discrimination. The demonstrations were met with brutal repression by the police force. Armed assaults on Catholics were organized by rightist gangs, led by part-time policemen. Thousands were driven from their homes. The IRA's military operations began in response to these attacks.

The IRA campaign was also a response to the deployment of British troops in Northern Ireland to break the resistance of Irish Catholics. Initially hailed as defenders of Catholics, the British troops real role soon became clear as an occupying force in Catholic areas. In 1972, 13 workers were gunned down by troops during a civil rights march. In the absence of a working-class leadership basing itself on the mobilization and increasing self-confidence of working people, many workers and youth who were Catholic looked to the IRA and its military campaign as the only way to answer the repression and the denial of their civil and national rights.

The IRA's military campaign, however, left the majority of workers and farmers in Ireland on the sidelines. At the same time it was workers in Britain and Ireland who were frequently killed or maimed. The rulers used this fact to bolster the divisions between Irish-born and English-born workers and win acceptance for attacks on democratic rights such as the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

British rulers tire of costs

Today, London sees the ending of the IRA military campaign and the involvement of Sinn Fein in talks as necessary to reorganize capitalist rule in Ireland. The worldwide economic depression, the sharpening competition with their imperialist rivals, the huge cost of subsidizing Northern Ireland and maintaining troops there, and their failure to crush the resistance, have forced Britain's rulers to look for a new and more effective way to ensure that Ireland remains a source of cheap labor and profits. Britain's capitalists also want to make sure the divisions among workers remain in place in Ireland and Britain.

Capitalists on both sides of the border have been pressing for a stabilization of the military and political situation to improve their opportunities for making pro-

fits. Ireland's bankers have called for a "growth corridor" of improved rail and road links between Belfast and Dublin.

U.S. capitalists are also licking their chops at the new possibilities for investment and exploitation in Ireland. They would like to develop it further as a production platform within the European Union. Morgan Stanley, a U.S. investment bank, recently described the Republic of Ireland as the "Celtic Tiger," comparing it to the robust economies of Southeast Asia. Among the attractions for U.S. capital are prospective privatization of state shareholdings in major companies, including the airline Aer Lingus where workers have been involved in a militant battle against the government to defend jobs.

While Britain and the United States have common interests in stabilizing the situation in Ireland, they will be fierce rivals in making the most of the profit-making opportunities. This is another reason for London's slow and more cautious approach to talks with Sinn Fein. UK officials have been much cooler than their Irish counterparts in describing Washington's behind-the-scenes role.

Whatever new arrangements are negotiated for capitalism in Ireland, they will be designed not to further self-determination for Ireland but to create better opportunities for big business to exploit cheap Irish labor — Catholic and Protestant alike.

However, the weakness of British imperialism and the ending of the military campaign of the IRA, which was an obstacle to the mobilization of workers and youth and the fight for unity, does open up opportunities to fight for self-determination and solidarity among workers in Ireland and Great Britain. It places responsibilities on fighters worldwide to campaign for British troops — which are the real source of the violence — to get out of Ireland, not just from some areas; repeal of the broadcasting ban on the voice of Sinn Fein leaders; repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act; positive action for Catholic workers who have been discriminated against for decades; freeing of the political prisoners; and the pulling down of the so-called peace lines, which are just Berlin walls across working-class neighborhoods in Northern Ireland.

Tony Hunt is a member of the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union in Sheffield.

For Further Reading

IRELAND AND THE IRISH QUESTION

by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

For workers in Britain, Marx and Engels explain, "the national emancipation of Ireland is no question of abstract justice or humanitarian sentiment, but the first condition of their own social emancipation." Articles, letters, and documents on Ireland by the founding leaders of the modern working-class movement. Progress Publishers. 665 pp. \$19.95



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