

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Guantánamo: staging ground for Haiti invasion
— PAGE 9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 58/NO. 33 SEPTEMBER 26, 1994

U.S. hands off Haiti! Open the U.S. borders to Haitian refugees

Working people the world over have a responsibility to demand Washington halt all plans for a military invasion of Haiti. Clinton's order to put 20,000 U.S. troops into battle to supposedly defend democracy is sheer hypocrisy. Far from any humanitarian concern for the people of that country, the White House wants to assert Washington's prerogative to police the Caribbean, and all of Latin America for that matter, increase U.S.

Editorial

Continued on page 14

Clinton readies military invasion

BY PAUL MAILHOT

As the *Militant* goes to press U.S. president Bill Clinton is delivering a speech to the nation to prepare workers and farmers in this country for the commitment of more than 20,000 U.S. troops to battle in Haiti. The Clinton juggernaut is already on its way to that Caribbean country with the aircraft carrier *America* in the lead. It will be joined by the *Eisenhower*, which leaves September 14 carrying troops and 50 helicopters from the army's 10th Mountain Division.

Prior to Clinton's speech the White House dispatched its emissaries in ever more public fashion to detail Washington's commitment to begin an imperialist takeover of Haiti.

Top officials in the Clinton administration went before television cameras on the Sunday talk show circuit September 11 to



U.S. Marines during exercises on a military base in Camp García in Vieques, an island that is part of Puerto Rico. They are preparing for invasion of Haiti.

push for public support for the planned U.S. military invasion against Haiti.

Speaking on the NBC television show "Meet the Press," U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher proclaimed with fanfare, "A president has the responsibility to do what is in the nation's interest. I think [there] comes a time when we have to use

military force."

"Haiti is in our backyard," Madeleine Albright, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, boasted on the ABC news program "This Week with David Brinkley" September 11. Clinton does not even need the approval of Congress to launch mili-

Continued on page 6

U.S., Cuban gov'ts sign immigration pact

BY LAURA GARZA
AND MARTÍN KOPPEL

HOLGUÍN, Cuba — The Cuban and U.S. governments reached an agreement on immigration matters on September 9. The negotiation of the pact took place in the context of a growing flow of Cubans trying to reach U.S. shores by raft as well as an escalation of aggressive moves by Washington against Cuba.

Since August 19 the Clinton administration has detained thousands of Cubans at sea seeking to reach the United States and incarcerated them in crowded camps at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. Several confrontations have already taken place between Cubans and Haitians detained there and U.S. troops. In addition, the U.S. government has drastically tightened the restrictions on travel of U.S. residents to Cuba, and has barred Cuban-Americans from sending money to their relatives on the island.

Meanwhile, U.S. military forces are preparing to invade neighboring Haiti.

U.S. gov't agrees to 20,000 visas a year

The accord was reached after nine days of negotiations in New York. The Cuban delegation was headed by the president of Cuba's National Assembly, Ricardo Alarcón, who has led previous negotiations with Washington on immigration.

A major feature of the accords is Washington's commitment to grant a minimum of 20,000 residence visas a year to Cubans

deemed eligible, on top of those issued to Cubans with immediate family members in the United States.

The U.S. government also agreed to grant visas within one year to some 19,000 Cubans already on a waiting list of approved immigrants, many of whom have been waiting for years.

Reaffirming Washington's decision to detain would-be Cuban immigrants at Guantánamo as well as in Panama and other countries, the accord states, "The United States has discontinued its practice of granting provisional entry to all Cuban immigrants who reach U.S. territory by irregular means." The document adds, "Cuba will take effective measures within all its means to prevent unsafe departures, primarily using methods of persuasion."

It also states that Washington and Havana have agreed "to cooperate to take timely and effective action to prevent the illegal transport of people bound for the United States. The two governments will take effective measures, within all their means, to oppose and prevent the use of violence by any person who attempts to reach, or reaches, the United States from Cuba by forcibly diverting aircraft and vessels."

In an interview that appeared September 11 in the Cuban newspaper *Juventud Rebelde*, Alarcón explained the Cuban government's view of the agreement. Describing it as "satisfactory," he said the pact "showed that the Cubans and the Ameri-

cans can negotiate with seriousness and results, on the basis of equality and respect for sovereignty and independence."

Alarcón said the accord represented "two important changes in Washington's immigration policy: ending the practice of automatically admitting any Cuban who arrived in the United States, including those who murdered and kidnapped people, and pledging effective measures against those who hijack aircraft and boats."

Continued on page 8

Iowa prison officials discipline unionist

BY NORTON SANDLER

FT. MADISON, Iowa — Thirty days in the "hole" and one year in lockup is the punishment Administrative Law Judge Charles Harper meted out to union and political activist Mark Curtis here September 12.

The "hole" is disciplinary detention, where Curtis will be denied access to radio and television, kept in his cell for 23 hours a day, granted a 10-minute shower and shave three times a week, and only allowed out of his cell for exercise for one hour a day. "Lockup" is administrative segregation. Conditions here are similar to the hole, but Curtis will be allowed radio and television. Prisoners in both the hole and lockup are only allowed two personal and

Continued on page 4

Hundreds protest lockup of Curtis

BY JOHN STUDER

"The treatment Mark Curtis has suffered is revolting. It seems that Iowa State Penitentiary (like many other prisons) is using [segregation] for political purposes," wrote Lisa Faruolo and Michele Vignola on behalf of the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee. The letter is one among hundreds from unionists, political activists, and supporters of political rights that have been faxed and mailed to Paul Hedgepath, the acting warden at the Iowa State Penitentiary, demanding that Mark Curtis be released from segregation.

"I have recently been informed about the recent allegations involving Mr. Mark Curtis, an Iowa corrections inmate," Alfredo Alvarez, former head of the Des Moines Human Rights Commission, wrote. "This latest of a series of obstacles laid out be-

Continued on page 12

SPECIAL OFFER

\$20 BOOK AND 12-WEEK SUBSCRIPTION TO THE 'MILITANT'

To SPEAK THE TRUTH

Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End

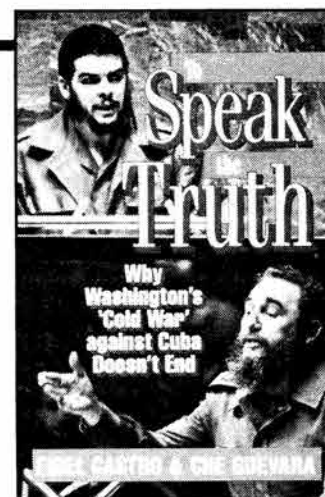
FIDEL CASTRO AND CHE GUEVARA

Why the U.S. government is determined to destroy the example set by the socialist revolution in Cuba and why its effort will fail. Introduction by Mary-Alice Waters.

\$12 book only (normally \$16.95)



Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Fax (212) 727-0150. If ordering by mail please include \$3 to cover postage and handling.



Lagos cracks down on rights

The Nigerian military regime of Gen. Sani Abacha is cracking down on democratic rights following the September 5 end of a two-month-long strike by oil workers. New decrees strip the courts of the power to challenge the government's authority, extend the time people can be detained without charges from six weeks to three months, and proscribe three independent newspapers. The first victim of the decrees was the 5-million-strong Nigerian Labor Congress, which had filed a lawsuit challenging the military's dissolution of its executive committee. A high court judge dismissed the case September 6, saying she no longer had jurisdiction.

The oil workers strike was aimed at forcing an end to military rule and the release of Moshood Abiola, who won the June 1993 presidential elections and was imprisoned by the government on treason charges last June. The strike cut production of Nigeria's only major export by more than a quarter from nearly 2 million barrels of crude oil a day, and severely disrupted fuel distribution nationally.

Refugees told to leave Zaire

According to reports on Zairian radio, the government has given Rwandan refugees 30 days to leave the country. Zaire's deputy prime ministers, who gave the ultimatum, are involved in negotiations with Rwandan authorities. Officials in Kinshasa are demanding the return of the 2 million Rwandan refugees currently living in camps in Zaire, as well as the disarmament of about 40,000 soldiers of the Rwandan Armed Forces who fled to Zaire after being defeated by the Rwandan Patriotic Front.

N. Zealand meat industry slumps

The collapse of two big New Zealand meat processing companies, Weddel and the Fortex group, has underscored the deep financial problems afflicting the country's largest export industry. The British-owned Weddel, which controlled 18 percent of the industry and owned six factories, collapsed last month after banks refused to lend it more money. The company's failure marked the end of British investment in the industry. Over the past decade, a string of locally-owned companies have also gone



Women protest outside the Gaza City jail in early September to demand release of 48 Palestinians who were arrested after the killing of an Israeli soldier.

out of business. This situation has drawn attention to the indebtedness of remaining companies and raised questions about the future of the industry in New Zealand.

Workers in China oppose attacks on social wage

The Chinese government reports continued labor unrest as a result of the massive attack on social conditions that is part of the introduction of capitalist economic reforms. Many state enterprises are closing or attempting to restructure. In some cases workers have not been paid. At the same time, housing, medical care, and other benefits are costing workers more. Illegal work stoppages and strikes have been reported along with incidents involving violent attacks on factory managers and their families. Among the incidents disclosed were six women at a meat and egg plant who hired thugs to beat up their boss.

Police attack march in Bolivia

Some 20 union leaders were arrested September 6 in the outskirts of Potosí,

Brazil, when police disrupted a march of 300 people to the capital city of La Paz. Cops attacked the marchers, who included peasants, students, and teachers, when they arrived at "La Garita," a policecheck point. The previous week a similar action in Cochabamba was attacked by cops who threw tear gas from military helicopters.

The protesters were demanding the withdrawal of troops from Chapare, a coca-producing region; review of the antidrug law; implementation of development programs; and the release of union leader Evo Morales. Other labor organizations showed their solidarity by participating in the marches.

U.S. economy 'most competitive'

According to the 1994 World Competitiveness Report, an annual global survey, the United States has replaced Japan as the world's most competitive economy for the first time since 1985. The strength of the U.S. economic recovery and nearly a decade of economic restructuring helped boost the United States to its top ranking, the survey said.

Robert Hormats, vice chairman of the international arm of Goldman, Sachs & Co. and a former State Department official, said U.S. companies made "enormous gains in productivity and lower unit labor costs," making it harder for other countries to compete. Japan's drop in rank to third place behind Singapore, reflects the country's worst recession in decades after eight years as the world's top-ranked competitor.

Rightists attack Bosnian town

Rightist Serb forces assaulted Bosnian army positions in the town of Bihac September 8. The rightist troops fired

surface-to-air missiles at two NATO combat jets sent to investigate the fighting. The jets were not hit.

Meanwhile, the Serb forces led by Radovan Karadzic expelled more than 2,500 people, primarily Muslims, Croats, and Gypsies, from the areas of Banja Luka and Bijeljina in northern Bosnia during the first week of September. Most of the 108,000 people not of Serbian origin who lived in these regions before the war have been driven out. Less than 11,000 remain.

Occupation troops leave Berlin

Troops from the United States, France, and Britain left Berlin September 8, ending their 49-year occupation of the city. They occupied the country immediately following Germany's defeat in World War II. Russian soldiers had withdrawn from the city the previous week. Troops from the United States, France, and Britain will remain in other parts of Germany, including 60,000 U.S. GIs who are part of the largest NATO force in Europe. No Russian military force remains in Germany.

No entry into NATO for Russia

U.S. and German officials agreed September 9 that Russia would not be allowed to become a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) anytime soon. "If Russia were to become a member of NATO that would blow NATO apart. It would be like a United Nations of Europe. It wouldn't work," German defense minister Volker Ruehe said at a conference of German and U.S. business leaders. U.S. defense secretary William Perry agreed that it would be at least five years before NATO would consider the question. "I'm not prepared to close the door" completely on that issue, he said.

The German defense minister said the governments of Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia should be allowed to join the military alliance before the year 2000. But Perry asserted that such a step would not happen in the "near future." NATO's so-called Partnership for Peace program is supposed to facilitate former Soviet-bloc government's in becoming full members of NATO.

Moscow seeks debt ceilings

The Russian government is seeking a ceiling on the amount it would have to pay each year on its foreign debt. As of January 1, the debt totaled \$83.7 billion. Moscow has scheduled \$4.7 billion for interest payments alone in 1994. More than \$2 billion was paid to service the debt in 1993.

Meanwhile, a top economic official said privatized companies that have acquired huge debts in corrupt deals should be returned to government control to root out crooked executives. The aide explained that while it might "look like a temporary return to nationalization of property, there are no other ways" to solve the problem of deficits. Russian companies owe more than \$45 billion to each other.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

THE MILITANT

Solidarity with striking workers

From striking auto workers and rubber workers in Decatur, Illinois, to rail workers in Britain, working people are fighting back against the bosses' attacks. The 'Militant' provides the facts—the workers' side of the story written by correspondents who take part in these battles. Don't miss a single issue!



SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

☐ \$10 for 12 issues

☐ \$15 for 12 weeks
RENEWAL

☐ \$27 for 6 months

☐ \$45 for 1 year

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION

PHONE

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT, 410 WEST ST., NEW YORK, NY 10014.

The Militant

Vol. 58/No. 33

Closing news date: September 14, 1994

Editor: GEORGE FYSON

Managing Editor: ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

Business Manager: NAOMI CRAINE

Editorial Staff: Naomi Craine, Hilda Cuzco, Martin Koppel, Sara Lobman, Paul Mailhot, Greg Rosenberg, Pat Smith, Brian Williams, Maurice Williams.

Published weekly except for one week in December and biweekly from mid-June to mid-August by the Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Telephone: (212) 243-6392; Fax (212) 924-6040.

The Militant can be reached via CompuServe at: 73311.2720 or via Peacenet at: themilitant Internet email: 73311.2720@compuserve.com or: themilitant@igc.apc.org

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

Second-class postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Subscriptions: U.S.: for one-year subscription send \$45 to above address. Latin America, Caribbean: for one-year subscription send \$65, drawn on a

U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (airmail), send \$80. Asia: send \$80 drawn on a U.S. bank to 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Canada: Send Canadian \$75 for one-year subscription to Militant, 4581 St. Denis, Montreal, Quebec H2J 2L4. Britain, Ireland: £36 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution, 47 The Cut, London, SE1 8LL, England. Continental Europe, Africa, Middle East: £40 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution at above address. France: Send FF300 for one-year subscription to Militant, 8 allée Berlioz, 94800 Villejuif cheque postale: 25-465-01-S, Paris. Belgium: BF 1,900 for one year on account no. 000-1543112-36 of 1Mei Fonds/Fonds du 1 mai, 2140 Antwerp. Iceland: Send 5,000 Icelandic kronur for one-year subscription to Militant, P.O. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik. Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark: 500 Swedish kronor for one year. Pay to Militant Swedish giro no. 451-32-09-9. New Zealand: Send New Zealand \$90 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand. Australia: Send Australian \$75 to P.O. Box K879, Haymarket, NSW 2000, Australia. Pacific Islands: Send Australian \$75 or New Zealand \$100 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the Militant's views. These are expressed in editorials.

Parti Québécois wins election in Canada

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE

MONTREAL — "Toward the referendum," "Secession drive starts rolling." These are some of the newspaper headlines on the September 12 election of a Parti Québécois (PQ) government in Quebec, the second largest of Canada's 10 provinces.

The PQ victory is widely seen as a possible step toward the breakup of Canada and the creation of an independent Quebec. The PQ, a bourgeois nationalist party, has promised to organize a referendum aiming to establish a "sovereign" Quebec within 10 months.

The PQ won 77 of the 125 seats in the National Assembly, against 47 for the incumbent Liberal Party (PLQ) and 1 for the newly formed Quebec Democratic Action Party (PADQ), a split-off from the PLQ. But the actual popular vote was 44.7 percent for the PQ, against 44.3 percent for the Liberals — a meager 0.4 percent majority. Eleven percent of the vote went to the PADQ, other parties, and independent candidates.

Seeking a third consecutive mandate, the Liberals campaigned on "job creation" and "economic development" and opposed the threat of separation. The PQ stressed the need for a "change," after nine years of Liberal government rule marked by a prolonged and deep recession. Most trade union officials supported the PQ.

According to public opinion polls, a majority of Quebec's population favors some form of greater autonomy for the province, but is about evenly split over the separation of Quebec from the rest of the country. The day after the election, the big-business media across the country described the results as a protest vote against the Liberals.

With the exception of the debate over "Canadian unity" versus "Quebec sovereignty," there was indeed no other significant difference between the campaigns of the two major capitalist parties. Both emphasized the need for reducing the government budget deficit, slashing social services, and giving money to big business — claiming that this would lead to reducing Quebec's 12.2 percent official rate of unemployment.

There are close to 7 million people in Quebec, of whom 5.5 million speak French and constitute an oppressed nationality in Canada. The PQ was first elected in 1976 as the culmination of more than a quarter century of massive struggles involving hundreds of thousands of working people against the discrimination and national oppression they were subjected to.

Unlike the 1960s and '70s, however, there is no mass movement or struggle

against national oppression in Quebec today. The announcement of a third PQ victory was received without any of the spontaneous street celebrations that marked its first election in 1976.

Canadian dollar rises

Following the larger-than-anticipated showing by the Liberals in the election, the majority of Canada's ruling class expressed confidence that a referendum by the PQ will be defeated. The value of the Canadian dollar rose 1 cent against the U.S. dollar, the first such increase in six years, and stock markets remained stable following the election. "Just changing the government has no major implications for the Quebec economy relative to other parts of the country," said economist Ted Carmichael of J.P. Morgan Securities.

An editorial in the September 13 *Toronto Globe and Mail*, however, stated political instability might be in the offing. "The Parti Québécois is not just another government and it won't act like one," it said. "As the Péquistes flail away, the federal Liberals must respond forcefully. To remain silent or inactive out of fear of giv-



Militant/Monica Jones

May 1993 demonstration in Montreal against government cutbacks. Both capitalist parties support slashing social services and giving money to big business.

ing offence to Quebecers invites a political paralysis Canada cannot afford."

During the last 15 years, there has been a bitter discussion and repeated failures at constitutional reforms over the demand for a "sovereign Quebec," which has been put forward by a layer of capitalists who are Quebecois in order to get more power against their competitors in the rest of the

country and internationally. The majority of Canada's ruling class stubbornly resisted any weakening of their state in face of growing inter-imperialist competition.

The federal government, wrote the *Globe*, "cannot abandon its commitment to reduce the debt, to reform the social-welfare system, to revise the national sales tax, to forge a true economic union."

UN conference debates immigration

BY SARA LOBMAN

A statement that would encourage governments to allow immigrants to be reunited with their families provoked a debate in the closing days of the United Nations Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, Egypt.

The September 5-13 meeting, which drew delegations from 180 countries, was organized around the false premise that "overpopulation," not capitalism, is responsible for hunger, disease, war, and environmental destruction. Discussion at the conference centered around a 113-page document submitted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

The governments of the United States, Britain, and Germany led the charge against the disputed clause, which stated, "Governments of receiving countries must insure the protection of migrants and their families, and recognize the right to family reunification." Delegates from Bonn and London argued that the sentence suggested that relatives of immigrant workers or of naturalized citizens have a right to immigrate, as well.

Washington, which has mobilized its military to keep tens of thousands of Haitian and Cuban immigrants from reaching U.S. soil, said it feared that if the para-

graph was allowed to stand it would lead to a flood of immigration. To cover their bases, however, officials from Washington assured conference participants that U.S. laws already provided for the reunification of immigrant families.

'Compromise' on abortion rights

Some 60 delegates from Latin America and semicolonial countries in other parts of the world rose in protest against the U.S. stance during a closed committee session at the conference on September 10. The protest forced the committee chairman, Fred Sei, to postpone the next meeting for two days.

On the next-to-last day of the conference, the United States and European Union said they would accept a compromise clause submitted by the Zimbabwean delegation calling on governments to "recognize the importance of the principle" of family reunification. However, three dozen other delegations rejected this watered-down statement, insisting that the conference document establish family reunification as a right, with no qualifications.

The debate on abortion rights that had consumed most of the earlier sessions of the conference was largely resolved in the

last few days. The original conference document called for the right of women to "safe, effective, affordable, and acceptable methods of fertility regulation of their choice," including "pregnancy termination." Supporters of this clause, however, presented it as a component of a worldwide battle to control population growth.

But even in this context, the clause drew harsh opposition from the Vatican and numerous other delegations. In fact, six governments — those of Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Sudan, Monaco, Liechtenstein, and Iraq — boycotted the conference because of their adamant opposition to abortion rights.

According to the New York Times, the final compromise language "remove[d] any impression that abortion could be construed as a universal right or that it could be perceived as a means of family planning."

Self-serving contributions

The conference agreed to set a goal of raising \$17 billion by the year 2000 to meet its projections. However, only one-third of this money is supposed to come from the wealthy imperialist countries. The countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America are supposed to cough up the remaining two-thirds. A significant percentage of the contributions agreed to by the United States and other governments are self-serving. For example, some \$60 million of Washington's pledge will go directly into the pockets of U.S. companies that manufacture contraceptives.

While participants have touted the conference as focusing on the broader questions of women's health and education, not simply curtailing population growth, the bulk of the funds allocated by the meeting — some \$10.2 billion — is earmarked for "family planning," more than twice the amount projected for reproductive health. Broader health and education programs are not budgeted at all.

U.S. pilot charged in downing over Iraq

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The U.S. Air Force on September 8 charged an F-15 pilot with negligent homicide and dereliction of duty for his role in the shooting down of two army helicopters flying over northern Iraq last April 14.

The pilot, Lieut. Col. Randy May, was charged with 26 counts of negligent homicide — one for every person killed in the downing of the two Blackhawk helicopters. According to an Air Force spokesman, the charges, which could result in dismissal and a maximum prison term of 26 years, were the most serious ever leveled against a pilot for what the Pentagon terms a friendly fire incident.

Also charged with numerous counts of dereliction of duty were five crew members of an airborne radar plane patrolling the skies over Iraq that day.

Two weeks earlier, U.S. defense secretary William Perry announced that Washington would pay \$100,000 in damages to each of the families of the 11 non-U.S. citizens killed in the downing of the aircraft. Those on board the two Blackhawk helicopters included British, Turkish, and French military personnel.

The U.S. fighter jets were supposedly enforcing a no-fly zone imposed by Washington, London, and Paris over northern Iraq in early 1991 at the end of the Gulf War. Under this military order, the Iraqi government is prohibited from flying

planes over its own airspace north of the 36th parallel. In August 1992 a similar violation of Iraqi airspace was declared over southern Iraq below the 32nd parallel.

Crippling economic embargo

The U.S. rulers have used these no-fly zones to maintain their aggression against Iraq, bombing targets in that country dozens of times. In addition, Washington continues to enforce a crippling economic embargo against Iraq. These sanctions, imposed under United Nations auspices, have been in effect since Aug. 6, 1990.

Those suffering the most under the impact of the embargo are working people. According to Unicef, almost 100,000 children have died since the embargo first went into effect. Polio, diphtheria, and measles have taken a heavy toll because of a vaccine shortage, and the number of babies born with malformations or dying during delivery has increased.

Washington and its allies have conducted tens of thousands of jet patrols and helicopter surveillance flight over northern Iraq during the three and a half years that the no-fly zone has been in effect.

Last April, after the U.S. helicopters were first downed, the Pentagon said that the F-15 pilots involved in the incident were in compliance with the military's rules of engagement for firing on aircraft in the area. In fact, the first news stories on

the April 14 incident said that Iraqi fighter jets had shot down the two U.S. helicopters. But U.S. government officials quickly backtracked from this claim. After further reviews by the top brass, a decision was made to pin the blame on the individual aircraft crew members.

"These guys made a pretty horrific mistake," stated Robert Gaskin, a former Air Force fighter pilot and Pentagon civilian official. "Had [authorities] done any less it would have looked bad for the Air Force."

FROM PATHFINDER



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.

Capital
by Karl Marx
\$13.95

Available from bookstores, including those on page 12, or directly from Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Please include \$3 for the first book and \$0.50 for each additional title, to cover postage and handling.

New Zealand rallies boost Pathfinder fund

BY PAUL MAILHOT

Supporters of Pathfinder in New Zealand organized rallies in Auckland and Christchurch September 10 to push forward the effort to help raise \$125,000 internationally for the publication of revolutionary and communist books. Pathfinder sales representatives in each city spoke on the importance of Pathfinder's books for working people and youth as weapons in the war against capitalism. The speakers also gave a brief outline of the history of the workers movement's efforts to produce its own publications.

In addition to the rallies, a letter about the appeal was mailed to Pathfinder Readers Club members and other supporters of Pathfinder. A quick response from two people who received the letter has already netted \$180 for the fund. To date supporters of Pathfinder in New Zealand have pledged \$2,100 toward the international effort.

\$50,000 by October 1

More than \$100,000 is pledged toward the Pathfinder Fund already. However, only \$7,682 has been sent in so far. The biggest challenge now is for coordinators of the fund in every city to get the effort organized: ask every supporter of Pathfinder to make a pledge, start collecting right away from all those who have already made pledges, begin organizing rallies and other events that can help explain the importance of Pathfinder for fighting workers and youth today, and involve others in the campaign.

Our goal is to have \$50,000 in hand by October 1. Meeting this challenge will help get the drive on track and build some needed momentum. More importantly, the funds are needed now. Pathfinder's ambitious publishing program — to keep some 300 titles of revolutionary and communist literature in print — can move forward in a big way this fall, but a lot depends on getting the financial support soon.

Pathfinder will reprint *Labor's Giant Step* by Art Preis this month with an attractive new cover. This authoritative history of the battles that helped forge the modern U.S. labor movement is an invaluable tool for workers locked in battles with the bosses today.

In addition to *Racism, Revolution, Reaction, 1861-1877: the Rise and Fall of Radical Reconstruction*, which has also been recently reissued with a new cover, Pathfinder is going back to press on *My Life*, the autobiography of Leon Trotsky. Books by Trotsky, one of the central leaders of the October 1917 Russian revolution, are being picked up more as workers and youth try to dig deeper for an understanding of communism and the collapse of Stalinism in the former Soviet Union.

One of Pathfinder's major editorial undertakings this fall is the production of *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*. This newly translated edition, written by one of the central leaders of the Cuban revolution, presents a day-to-day chronicle of the 1966-67 guerrilla struggle in Bolivia and the campaign to forge a continent-wide revolutionary movement of workers and peasants capable of contending for power.

Getting organized

Printed on the accompanying chart are proposed goals for the Pathfinder Fund in cities across the United States. Supporters of Pathfinder internationally are also being urged to consider setting a goal. Coordinators of the fund in every area should decide on their goal and fax it into Pathfinder at 212-727-0150 no later than September 19.

The chart printed next week will reflect the decisions made by each area on their local Pathfinder Fund goal. That chart will also include the payments made to date and where we are at in the drive. To be included on the weekly scoreboard, money must arrive at the Pathfinder office, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014, no later than Tuesday, 12 noon EDT.

\$125,000 Pathfinder Fund

CITY	Pledged	Paid
Australia	780.00	0.00
Britain		
London	1,095.00	70.00
Manchester	200.00	0.00
Sheffield	205.00	105.00
Canada		
Montreal	450.00	100.00
Toronto	692.00	117.00
France	275.00	250.00
Greece	100.00	0.00
New Zealand		
Auckland	1,695.00	10.00
Christchurch	375.00	0.00
Wellington	30.00	0.00
Puerto Rico		75.00
Sweden	710.00	160.00
United States	Proposed goals	
Albuquerque	100.00	100.00
Atlanta	5,000.00	4,570.00
Birmingham	2,600.00	1,600.00
Boston	5,000.00	3,575.00
Brooklyn	8,000.00	7,585.00
Chicago	7,400.00	4,020.00
Cincinnati	150.00	100.00
Cleveland	3,500.00	2,925.00
Des Moines	3,000.00	2,400.00
Detroit	6,000.00	5,500.00
Greensboro	2,500.00	2,225.00
Houston	4,000.00	2,400.00
Los Angeles	8,500.00	6,380.00
Miami	2,900.00	2,100.00
Morgantown	1,800.00	3,025.00
New Haven	400.00	100.00
New York	7,500.00	6,600.00
Newark	6,500.00	5,340.00
Peoria	750.00	575.00
Philadelphia	8,000.00	5,625.00
Pittsburgh	5,500.00	4,766.00
Salt Lake City	5,500.00	3,670.00
San Francisco	10,000.00	9,175.00
Seattle	5,000.00	3,200.00
St. Louis	3,750.00	1,950.00
Twin Cities	6,500.00	5,460.00
Washington	3,500.00	1,551.00
Other		315.00
TOTAL	125,000.00	103,124.00

Enclosed is \$_____ I pledge ☐\$1,000 ☐\$500 ☐\$100 ☐Other_____

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ Zip_____ Country_____

Send contributions to Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014

Curtis given one year in lockup on false charges

Continued from front page

two legal phone calls a month.

Harper ruled that the union activist was guilty of assaulting another inmate in the prison hospital last month. He said the harsh sentence was warranted because of the "violent and unprovoked nature" of the alleged attack.

Additional charges against Curtis for "threats and intimidation," "obstructive and disruptive conduct," and "damage to property" were dropped. Despite this, Curtis was ordered to pay for a new pair of glasses for the inmate he is accused of assaulting.

In 1988 Curtis was brutally beaten and framed up by the Des Moines police. He has served six years of a 25-year sentence on charges of rape and burglary. At the time of his arrest, Curtis was involved in a struggle at the Monfort meatpacking plant in Des Moines to defend 17 Salvadoran and Mexican coworkers who had been seized during a raid by immigration cops in the plant.

Kangaroo court

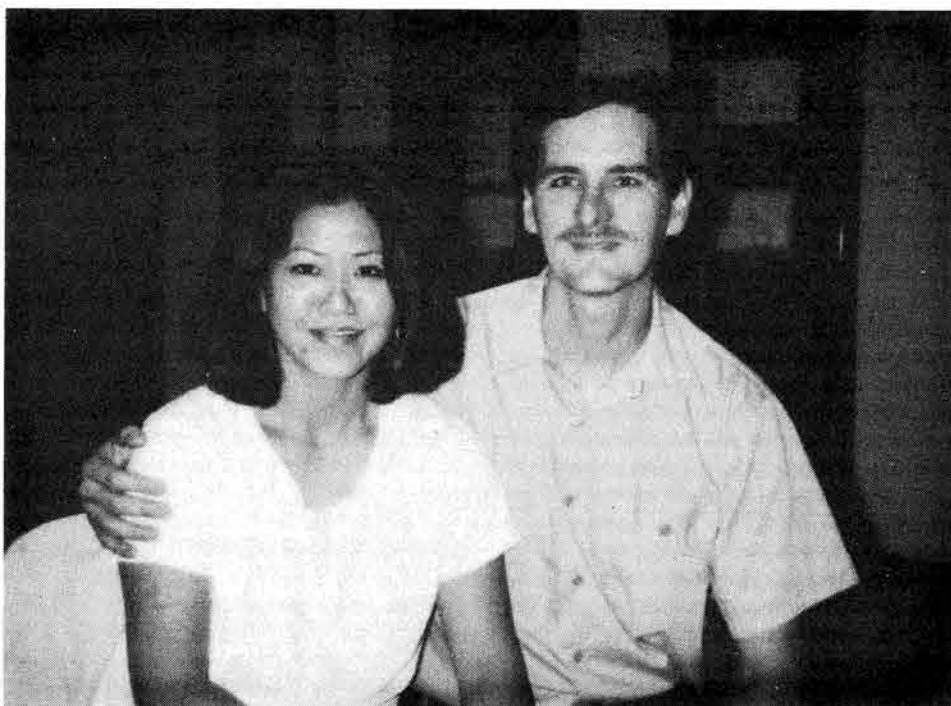
Curtis was brought to the hearing handcuffed behind his back and, despite his protest, kept handcuffed during the entire 30-minute hearing. Besides Curtis, the only people present at the hearing were the law judge and some guards.

Curtis told the *Militant* that last week he had requested to have his attorney, William Kutmus, present for the hearing. He renewed the request at the hearing. It was denied. The handcuffs made it difficult for Curtis to look at prison reports and other documents he had with him in a folder in presenting his defense.

No witnesses were presented against Curtis, and he was not allowed to confront his accusers. The evidence presented against him centered on a document, prepared by Captain Burton from prison Internal Affairs, that was supposedly a transcript of a tape recorded interview Burton claims he took from a prison nurse.

According to Burton, the nurse heard

Curtis threaten another inmate, then looked around the corner and saw Curtis slap the inmate, and saw the inmate's glasses fall to the ground. The only other "evidence" against Curtis was a written document from a "confidential informant" that Curtis was not allowed to see. Harper said it corroborated Burton's report of the nurse's testimony.



Mark Curtis with his wife Kate Kaku during a visit in early September at the state penitentiary in Ft. Madison, Iowa.

Curtis explained to Harper that he has been in prison for six years without any violent incidents on his record. He said that he categorically denies that he assaulted anyone.

Curtis went on to explain that he had an exchange of words with another inmate on August 23 but it was nothing more than what happens scores of times inside the prison walls everyday. The hearing lasted some 30 minutes.

Curtis was taken back to his cell. A short while later a copy of Harper's decision was dropped through the cell bars. He was pronounced guilty. Harper noted that the evidence — the guard's version of a nurse's story — was not the best, but that it was enough for him to find Curtis guilty of assault.

In addition to sentencing Curtis to 30

tions.

"Mark Curtis was convicted by a kangaroo court today," John Studer, coordinator of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee told the *Militant*. "And to take this two-bit case and sentence Mark to over a year in lockup is an outrage."

"We were able to get over 150 union and political activists to fax or mail protests to the prison over the last week and our campaign had an impact. They were forced to review their case and drop three of the four charges they raised against Mark. They had to drop the false claim they made initially that Mark confessed the alleged crime to a guard. They were left with a weak case and yet they dealt Mark as harsh a sentence as they thought they could get away with."

'Their goal is to break him'

"They aim to vilify Mark as a violent person, to smear his record, to push back his fight for parole. Their goal is to break him and to humble his supporters. Their real target is not only Mark but a generation of workers and activists, including many youth who are coming into politics today," Studer said.

"We urge supporters of justice to fax, telegram, or write a letter today to Acting Warden Paul Hedgepath and to the Department of Corrections demanding that the verdict be overturned and Mark be released from lockup. By acting promptly — and loudly — we can have an impact," Studer emphasized.

Letters should be sent to Paul Hedgepath, Acting Warden, Iowa State Penitentiary, Box 316, Fort Madison, Iowa 52627, fax number (319) 372-6967; and to Sally Chandler Halford, Director, Iowa Department of Corrections, Capitol Annex, 523 East 12th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50309, fax number (515) 281-7345.

Copies of protest messages, along with financial contributions to aid the campaign to overturn the conviction, should be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa, 50311.

days in the hole and a year in lockup. Harper added a year to the minimum time Curtis must serve in prison before being released, unless he is granted parole.

24 hours to appeal

Curtis told the *Militant* that he has 24 hours to file an appeal with the acting warden, Paul Hedgepath, who then has 15 days to respond. If he upholds the verdict, Curtis can appeal to the Department of Correc-

'Militant' sets target week

BY SARA LOBMAN

The Militant has set October 1-9 as a special target week. Supporters of the socialist paper; its Spanish-language sister publication, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and the Marxist magazine *New International*, are urged to begin making plans now for stepped-up sales to fighting workers, youth, and political activists.

This is a good time to get in touch with distributors in nearby cities to organize multi-day regional teams that can sell at plant gates, picket lines, college campuses, and in working class neighborhoods. Some readers may want to take time off from work to join these teams; others can help lead the effort in town, organizing day-time and evening sales, renewal calling, and introducing the paper to youth and others at political events.

Supporters in San Francisco couldn't wait for the official target week. They called one the very first week of the drive and sold 23 subscriptions to the Militant, 5 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions, and 7 copies of *New International*. "Teams to college campuses were particularly good," Cathy Gutekanst reports. A sales team met one student at San Francisco State University who later came to a citywide picket line against the Clinton administration's attacks on Cuba, bought a Militant subscription, and joined the Young Socialists.

Altogether five Militant subscriptions were sold at the protest, including two of the \$20 special offer that includes the book *To Speak the Truth*. "I'm Cuban and I didn't know all the facts that are in this paper," one woman said. "I need this paper now so I won't feel so alone."

"Our table was surrounded for the entire evening," Katy LeRougetel said. She and several



Militant/Cindy Jaquith
Socialist Workers candidate Cathy Sedwick with A.E. Staley workers in Decatur, Illinois.

other supporters from Montreal set up a display of socialist literature at McGill University for the annual Activities Night. Three students subscribed to the Militant. "I don't agree with the invasion of Haiti at all," said one young woman from that country as she paid for a sub.

A subscription to *Perspectiva Mundial* and seven single copies were sold at an event in Montreal to commemorate the 1973 coup in Chile," LeRougetel added.

Distributors in Toronto participated in a Labor Day parade. A member of the United Steelworkers of America pulled out money for a Militant subscription as soon as he saw the coverage on Cuba. "I've never met anyone who thinks like I do about that," he said.

From the Twin Cities, supporters headed south to Carleton College the first week of the drive. Three students there bought Militant subscriptions and 15 signed up for more information on the Young Socialists. Two more subs were sold in Minnesota to members of the United Transportation

Union at Canadian Pacific rail, and four to members of the International Association of Machinists at Northwest Airlines.

Two classes — rich and poor

Robbie Scheer faxed in a note from Houston to report on successful sales in Texas. A reader who works at Maxwell House/General Foods and is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union introduced a coworker to the Militant. After reading the speech by socialist leader Eugene Debs in the September 5 issue of the paper, she decided to get a subscription. "He was absolutely right about there being two classes — rich and poor!" she said.

Scheer, who works at a refinery organized by the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union, says some of her coworkers are also interested in the socialist paper. After passing a copy of the Militant around to her work crew, they all pitched in to get a joint subscription.

In Auckland, New Zealand, supporters have gotten a good response to the Militant, as well. A sales team to Massey University in Palmerston North sold three subscriptions and 18 single copies of the paper. One student, who's hoping to go on a work brigade to Cuba, bought a subscription, noting, "You can't get information like this through most media here."

Distributors in each city are encouraged to send in reports mapping out their plans for the target week no later than Tuesday, September 27 at 12 noon EDT. For readers who haven't yet joined the international campaign, it's not too late. You can find the distributors nearest you by looking at the directory on page 12. Or take a sales goal for your city. Bundles of five or more can be ordered from the Militant for \$1.05 per copy.

WHERE WE STAND end of week one

SOLD 12%

SHOULD BE 10%

	Militant			Mundial			International		
	sold	goal	%	sold	goal	%	sold	goal	%
Australia	9	30	30%	0	8		1	18	
Britain									
London	12	70	17%	0	3		0	37	
Manchester	5	50	10%	0	3		0	20	
Sheffield	4	40	10%	0	1		0	14	
Britain total	21	160	13%	0	7		0	71	
Belgium	0	2	0%	0	2		0	1	
Canada									
Toronto	14	90	16%	0	17		0	35	
Montreal	11	80	14%	3	25		1	45	
Vancouver	10	75	13%	0	10		2	20	
Canada total	35	245	14%	3	52		3	100	
France	2	4	50%	2	5		11	6	
Greece	0	11	0%	0	1		0	6	
Iceland	2	13	15%	0	1		0	4	
New Zealand									
Wellington	2	5	40%	0	5		0	4	
Christchurch	10	35	29%	0	1		0	8	
Auckland	10	75	13%	0	0		0	30	
N. Z. total	22	115	19%	0	6		0	42	
Puerto Rico	0	2	0%	2	5		0	4	
Sweden	8	40	20%	6	20		2	15	
United States									
Portland	3	2	150%	0	1		0	2	
Peoria	9	30	30%	0	3		0	10	
Seattle	18	80	23%	0	12		0	23	
Cincinnati	2	10	20%	0	5		0	4	
Denver	1	5	20%	0	3		0	2	
Twin Cities	24	125	19%	1	17		0	35	
Detroit	19	100	19%	1	11		0	27	
Salt Lake City	19	110	17%	0	16		0	35	
Des Moines	12	85	14%	0	36		0	35	
Washington, D.C.	12	85	14%	0	30		0	35	
St. Louis	11	80	14%	0	6		0	22	
Birmingham	9	75	12%	1	5		1	15	
Cleveland	11	95	12%	0	16		0	20	
San Francisco	17	150	11%	0	42		0	70	
Los Angeles	26	230	11%	1	101		1	105	
Greensboro	7	65	11%	0	4		0	15	
Boston	12	115	10%	0	36		0	52	
Philadelphia	12	115	10%	5	30		0	47	
New York	15	145	10%	7	40		5	70	
Albany	1	10	10%	0	1		0	3	
Pittsburgh	10	105	10%	0	12		0	26	
Miami	11	120	9%	1	55		0	70	
Atlanta	9	105	9%	2	15		0	25	
Brooklyn	9	110	8%	0	36		0	65	
Houston	4	60	7%	1	12		0	12	
Chicago	9	145	6%	0	32		2	50	
Newark	6	140	4%	0	35		0	50	
Morgantown	2	55	4%	0	1		0	17	
Albuquerque	0	7	0%	4	2		6	2	
Edinboro	0	6	0%	0	1		1	3	
Ft. Madison	0	2	0%	1	1		1	2	
Hartford	0	5	0%	1	1		0	4	
New Haven	0	10	0%	6	2		2	8	
U.S. total	300	2,582	12%	38	617		19	961	
TOTAL	399	3,204	12%	51	724		36	1,228	
SHOULD BE	330	3,300	10%	70	700		125	1,250	

IN THE UNIONS

AUSTRALIA									
FFU	0	3	0%	0	1		1	2	
BRITAIN									
TGWU	1								
CANADA									
ACTWU	0	2	0%	0	0		0	1	
CAW	6	12	50%	0	1		0	3	
IAM	0	18	0%	0	3		0	7	
USWA	0	9	0%	0	1		0	3	
CANADA Total	6	41	15%	0	5		0	14	
NEW ZEALAND									
UFBGWU	0	4	0%	0	0		0	1	
EU	0	6	0%	0	1		0	1	
MWU	0	4	0%	0	0		0	1	
N.Z. Total	0	14	0%	0	1		0	3	
SWEDEN									
Food workers	0	3	0%	0	0		0	2	
Metal workers	0	2	0%	0	0		0	2	
Sweden Total	0	5	0%	0	0		0	4	
UNITED STATES									
UMWA	1								
UFCW	4	15	27%	0	17		0	5	
UTU	22	85	26%	0	10		0	25	
UAW	19	135	14%	1	15		0	30	
IAM	9	80	11%	0	3		1	14	
USWA	8	87	10%	1	3		1	21	
OCAW	3	65	5%	0	4		0	26	
ILGWU	0	20	0%	0	20		0	15	
ACTWU	1	25	4%	2	11		0	14	
U.S. Total	69	592	12%	4	84		2	169	

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; FFU-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; TGWU-Transport and General Workers Union; UAW-United Auto Workers; UFBGWU-United Food, Beverage and General Workers Union; UFCW-United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA-United Mine Workers of America; USWA-United Steelworkers of America; UTU-United Transportation Union.

Unionists sell Cuba book on job

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The campaign by socialist workers to promote the Pathfinder book *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' Against Cuba Doesn't End* is beginning to

BOOKS SOLD		
City	Goal	Sold
Atlanta	20	3
Birmingham	15	0
Boston *	25	0
Brooklyn	40	16
Chicago	30	1
Cleveland	20	1
Des Moines	20	5
Detroit	18	1
Greensboro *	10	1
Houston	17	7
Los Angeles *	40	0
Miami	25	5
Morgantown	10	2
New York	50	14
Newark	30	3
Philadelphia	22	0
Pittsburgh	20	0
Peoria	10	0
Salt Lake City	20	2
San Francisco *	30	0
Seattle *	20	0
St. Louis	12	0
Twin Cities	25	6
Washington, DC *	20	0
Auckland	10	0
Christchurch	5	0
Union	Goal	Sold
ACTWU	8	0
IAM	40	0
ILGWU	10	0
OCAW	24	1
UAW	35	4
UFCW	6	1
USWA	10	1
UTU	15	4
* proposed goals		

get an eager response.

Thousands of working people and youth worldwide are watching Washington's provocative moves against the Cuban people, and are beginning to question what the U.S. government and the big business media have to say about this island nation. They are becoming more aware of the long history of imperialist domination foisted on Cuba and the rest of Latin America by successive U.S. governments.

In addition to the goals taken by socialist workers for sales to their coworkers, efforts are being launched to sell the book more broadly in cities across the country. For the next month, from September 10 to October 10, socialists in 18 cities have adopted goals of selling 377 copies of *To Speak the Truth*.

Sue Skinner, a rail worker at Amtrak in North Carolina, said that one of her coworkers recently bought the book. "You have to really read it," he told her. "They do not want to let Castro speak freely. Castro says everything very clearly — it's very educational for the rest of the world. They have brainwashed us with the wrong conception about him, everyone just really has to read this book!"

An auto worker from Brooklyn reports that activists there sold 16 copies of the book during the past week and a half. Four copies of the book were sold at industrial work-

places. Campaigners met with an especially good response, selling nine books while staffing literature tables at college campuses and community events.

Campaigners in the Manhattan area have sold 14 copies of *To Speak the Truth*, Mary Nell Bockman reported. Four of those were sold through the special offer of \$20 for the book combined with a subscription to the socialist weekly the Militant.

Openness to discuss Cuba

Ruth Robinett, another rail worker who recently visited Cuba, said, "There's a real openness to hear what I have to say since people know I've gone to Cuba. The recent events have pushed open more discussion and interest among workers."

Robinett has sold three copies of *To Speak the Truth*, including two that were sold with the special subscription offer. One of her coworkers, an older Black man, who bought the book remarked, "I've always hated capitalism, but I never knew anything about socialism."

Robbie Scherr from Houston writes, "We've done really great on the *To Speak the Truth* campaign during the first week. We've already sold six — obviously the proposed goal of 10 is too small." Houston activists have raised their goal to 17.

Clinton peddles plan for invasion of Haiti

Continued from front page

tary action in Haiti since this "is not a war," she added, calling the planned invasion "a police action."

The U.S. government has a long history of backing brutal regimes in Haiti stretching back to at least 1915 when Washington invaded the country and occupied it for 19 years. Albright now contends that "we cannot tolerate a military dictator overthrowing a president that was elected by 70 percent of his people." The present military rulers of Haiti came to power in 1991 after ousting the elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Human rights groups estimate that some 3,000 people have been killed in Haiti since the military coup.

At the same time as Christopher and Albright were presenting their case for a military invasion of Haiti, Washington organized yet another provocation off the shores of the country. A U.S. Navy destroyer and two other warships steamed toward the capital of Port-au-Prince September 11 — close enough to attract a crowd of Haitians onshore — before turning back. The U.S. embassy spokesman in Port-au-Prince, Stan Schrager, described it as "just a normal routine training exercise." Schrager said U.S. helicopters would soon begin flying over the capital city dropping U.S. propaganda flyers.

The Pentagon now has nine warships stationed off Haiti's coast with another 12 ships activated as "ready reserve." Since late July, live-fire training exercises, in-

cluding assault combat, grenade launching, sniper rifle tactics, and rescue evacuation have been organized on the island of Vieques in Puerto Rico. "Round the clock mini invasions are taking place," the *San Juan Star* said on July 30. About 150 soldiers from Jamaica, Antigua and Barbuda, and Belize arrived in Puerto Rico September 12 to begin training with U.S. forces for the anticipated invasion.

"There are only two countries in the hemisphere that are not democracies. Haiti is one of the two," Christopher said in citing several reasons to justify why military action must be taken to overthrow the regime in Haiti. Human rights violations by the military and thousands of Haitian refugees setting off in boats seeking asylum in the United States are creating instability in the hemisphere, the secretary of state said. Washington supposedly has an obligation to respond to the UN decree calling for "all necessary means" to restore the Aristide government, Christopher claimed.

'Why not invade Cuba?'

"If American interests are establishing democracy, migration, and stopping human rights violations, then why not invade Cuba?" Tim Russert, host of "Meet the Press," asked Christopher. Cuba has "no democracy," Russert said. "Vice President [Al] Gore said [Cuban president Fidel] Castro had a worse human rights record last week than the Haitian government; and



Haitian refugees held at camps on the U.S. Naval Base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

migration, more plentiful than Haiti," he added, listing the common slanders against the Cuban government peddled by U.S. officials and the big-business media.

"Other than the fact there are 175,000 Cuban soldiers and only 7,000 Haitian soldiers," Russert said, "why not invade Cuba?"

"We have objectives, the same objectives in those two places," Christopher replied. "But we have different strategies."

With plans marching forward to launch an invasion and military takeover of Haiti, Clinton administration officials have begun laying the groundwork to put together a formidable police force to maintain order. "The key is not just to invade the country — it is to sit on the country," one

government official told the *New York Times*. Washington plans to draw heavily from the existing Haitian security forces to form the bulk of the new police apparatus.

The prospect of recruiting those responsible for the violence and murder in Haiti for the past three years has been met with disapproval from deposed president Aristide. The White House sent Gen. John Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to smooth over the dispute and salvage the main public prop for the invasion — that Washington is being asked by Aristide to invade and restore the democratically elected government. Aristide is now insisting that no more than 1,500 new police officers should be drawn from the existing security forces.

However, Washington's main concern is stability, not democracy. Clinton is concerned that with the onslaught of a military invasion, those who have been responsible for the brutality in Haiti may flee before the United States has a chance to recruit them for the new security force.

In order to add legitimacy to the planned U.S. actions against Haiti, Washington is working overtime to recruit other countries to contribute to a "multinational" force. Christopher announced September 12 that the governments of 17 nations, including Argentina, Belgium, Bolivia, Israel, the Netherlands, Panama, and the United Kingdom, have committed troops to assist the 20,000 U.S. soldiers that are expected to be mobilized for the invasion. Clinton and Gore personally called a dozen government officials around the world to get pledges of troops and thus political cover for the planned invasion.

But the small commitments of forces to the invasion and its aftermath cannot hide the fact that the action would be a U.S. operation through and through. Administration officials admit that the "American-dominated" phase of the occupation would last seven months, and that some 6,000 troops would remain in Haiti for an extended period afterwards in a "peace-keeping" role. At least half of those would be U.S. soldiers.

A mild debate has opened up among capitalist politicians and liberal commentators as to whether the Clinton administration has the power to wage war against Haiti without congressional approval. Fearing a real public debate of Washington's role in Haiti and its hypocritical treatment of Haitian refugees, Clinton has not asked for support from Congress. Nor is he being pressed by congressional leaders from either the Democratic or Republican parties to seek their agreement in order to proceed with the invasion.

While Republican senator Robert Dole has criticized the Clinton administration for not making a strong enough case for the invasion, he acknowledged in an interview on the CBS News program "Face the Nation," that if Clinton went ahead he would have the backing of Congress.

Texas billionaire Ross Perot, who has recently begun a pre-election nationwide speaking tour, has vigorously attacked Clinton's plans to invade. One of his arguments centers on the racist notion that Haitians prefer living under a dictatorship. "If we want democracy in Haiti, we have to leave troops there. When the troops are removed, a dictator inevitably takes over," Perot said in a recent statement. "History teaches us that the people in some countries prefer a single, strong leader for reasons that we cannot understand. Haiti fits this mold."

History proves Washington has never acted in the interest of Haiti's working people

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The Clinton administration has all but announced a planned invasion of Haiti in the guise of "restoring democracy." But a brief look at the history of the U.S. role in Haiti reveals that the U.S. government has never acted in the interest of Haiti's workers and peasants.

Haiti's toilers have a long history of resistance to oppression and foreign intervention. In August 1791, slaves in the French colony revolted. The struggle lasted for 12 years, ultimately defeating the local slave owners, the soldiers of the French monarchy, a Spanish invasion, and British and French expeditions. Jean-Jacques Dessalines, a former slave, organized the final struggle for independence, defeating the French army and establishing the independent country of Haiti on Jan. 1, 1804.

At the end of the 19th century, French and German businessmen began to invest in commerce and public utilities in Haiti. This alarmed the U.S. government, which considered Germany its chief rival in the Caribbean. In 1888 U.S. assistant secretary of state Alvey Adee described the country as "a public nuisance at our doors."

As the United States began to expand its influence in the Caribbean, navy warships became increasingly active in Haitian waters. U.S. warships visited Haitian ports often from 1857 to 1913 under the guise of "protecting American lives and property."

Meanwhile, growing indebtedness and increasing impoverishment led to unrest among the workers and peasants, threatening the grip of Haiti's elite rulers. Seven presidents were overthrown between 1911 and 1915. Angry crowds tore apart the last president, Vilbrun Guillaume Sam, in July 1915.

1915-1934 U.S. occupation

Washington had been waiting for just such a pretext to occupy the country. In fact, it had a cruiser in Port-au-Prince already waiting. In December 1914 a detachment of U.S. Marines had seized the government's gold deposits from the Banque Nationale. The July 1915 invasion that followed led to almost 20 years of occupation, ending in August 1934.

The U.S. government disbanded the Haitian army and replaced it with U.S. troops, took control of the country's finances, and rewrote the constitution to permit foreign ownership of property. In August 1915, U.S. Admiral William Caperton wrote to the navy secretary in Washington, "Next Thursday...unless otherwise directed, I will permit congress to elect a president."

But the Haitian people did not take the occupation sitting down. A peasant uprising took place between 1918 and 1922. The leader of the resistance, Charlemagne Peralte, set up a provisional government in 1919, but was later captured and killed. The magnitude of the revolt forced the United States to call in reinforcements, who killed some 30,000 Haitians in their effort to crush the independence movement. Even after the Marines left in 1934, Haiti's economy was firmly controlled by the U.S. ruling class, who made sure that each successive regime was beholden to U.S. interests.

Papa Doc and Baby Doc

François Duvalier (Papa Doc) became president of Haiti on Oct. 22, 1957. He immediately moved to eliminate all opposition to his rule, declaring himself "president-for-life" and founding the Tontons Macoutes, a bloodthirsty security force, to back up this rule. His son Jean-

Claude — known as Baby Doc — assumed the presidency with all its brutality upon his father's death in 1971. An estimated 50,000 people were murdered or disappeared by the Tontons Macoutes during the three decades of Duvalier rule. Their legacy of brutal repression continues.

The Duvaliers were well-supported by their friends in Washington. During the first six years of Papa Doc's regime, he received \$100 million from the United States. U.S. aid continued for the rest of his reign, to the tune of up to one-fifth of the annual government budget. Washington was equally generous with the younger dictator, sending Baby Doc some \$50 million a year right up until his ouster in 1986.

Meanwhile, U.S. corporations profited handsomely from the superexploitation of Haiti's natural resources and the labor of the country's workers and peasants. They paid very low wages and almost no taxes. Reynolds Mining, for example, paid just 2.4 percent in taxes on its bauxite mining operation in 1963. In 1982, when the bauxite ran out, Reynolds closed shop, throwing thousands out of work and leaving Haiti with nothing but a hole in the ground.

Washington armed Duvalier

In exchange for Duvalier's cooperation, Washington provided weapons and training to Duvalier's military and police. The Leopards, a counterinsurgency army unit, was set up in 1971. It was trained by U.S. advisers at bases in Panama.

The history of U.S. involvement in Haiti has always been to support the brutal regimes that open the door for imperialist plunder. When Jean-Claude Duvalier was overthrown in February 1986 by massive popular mobilizations, Washington rushed emergency military aid to Haiti's generals, while maintaining a massive military presence in the Caribbean.

When democratically elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide was overthrown in a military coup by some of the same forces who had supported the Duvalier dictatorship, the U.S. government tightened its borders against Haitians fleeing the massive repression that followed.

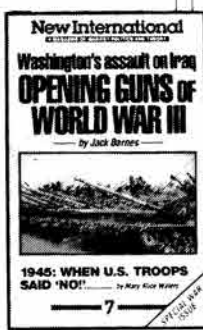
History may not always repeat itself, but in this case it would be a safe bet that a U.S. occupying force will not "restore democracy" to Haiti. Instead, like in 1915, U.S. troops will be the greatest barrier to the Haitian people fighting for their rights.

New International no.7

Opening Guns of World War III Washington's Assault on Iraq

by Jack Barnes

The U.S. government's murderous blockade, bombardment, and invasion of Iraq heralded sharpening conflicts among imperialist powers, more wars, and growing instability of international capitalism. Also includes "Communist Policy in Wartime as well as Peacetime" by Mary-Alice Waters. \$12



Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write **Pathfinder**, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. If ordering by mail please include \$3 to cover postage and handling.

Miami protesters condemn U.S. attacks on Cuba

BY RACHEL FRUIT

MIAMI — In a victory for democratic rights, 100 people held a spirited rally here on September 10 to protest the U.S. government's aggression against Cuba. Twenty opponents of the Cuban revolution held a counterprotest nearby, but were unable to disrupt the demonstration.

"The big business media and the rightists say that protests against the U.S. attacks on Cuba can't happen in Miami" because of the strong presence of right-wing Cuban-Americans, Ernie Mailhot told rally participants. Mailhot was speaking on behalf of the Miami Coalition to End the Embargo of Cuba. "But today we have shown that this is a lie. We will continue to demonstrate to demand an end to the U.S. war moves against Cuba, and that they close the detention centers, close Krome, close Guantánamo, and end the embargo."

Andrés Gómez, a leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, noted that the Cubans at Guantánamo "are prisoners in their own country under the occupation of foreign troops."

Participants in the rally also included members of the Alliance of Workers of the Cuban Community, the Cuban-American Professionals and Businessmen, the Socialist Workers Party, and others.

The Tampa Cuba Friendship Brigade organized a carload of people. Maura Barrios reported that the group had organized a program on Cuba at the University of South Florida in early September that more than 30 people attended.

"We are here because it means being able to see our families and help them," said a factory worker from Miami. "The millionaire Cubans have all their families here and don't care."

While many of the demonstrators were supporters of the Cuban revolution, others simply came to voice their opposition to

the embargo.

A large mobilization of police — on foot, in cars, and on horseback — kept the rightist demonstration under control. Organizers of the march had spent the preceding week demanding that the city administration protect the anti-embargo rally. An earlier request for a protest permit had been denied. This week, it was clear the police had decided to discourage a large right-wing protest. However, the strong police presence also limited the size of the anti-embargo demonstration. At least 20 people later said they had planned to participate, but could not make it past police lines.

Reporters came from all the major national and local media, including ABC, CBS, NBC, and CNN television; the *Miami Herald*; the *New York Times*; and National Public Radio.

Following the demonstration, 50 people gathered at the Pathfinder bookstore in Miami's Little Haiti for lunch and a brief program to assess the victory. Similar protests took place in other cities.

BY PAT SMITH

Opponents of Washington's provocations against the socialist revolution in Cuba continue to take to the streets in cities across the United States.

Some 500 protesters, including a large contingent from the Dominican Friends of Cuba, marched September 8 from the army recruitment center at Times Square in Manhattan to the Cuban Mission several blocks away. The broadly sponsored march drew longtime Cuba solidarity activists as well as unionists and youth new to this fight.

"We are here today to stand in solidarity with Cuba," Chimbuko Tembo of the African American Cultural Center in Los Angeles told 140 people at a September 8



Militant/Eric Simpson

Nearly 500 activists marched in New York September 8 to protest Washington's threats against Cuba and to demand an end to the economic embargo.

action. "As African Americans we have always been involved in struggles for justice. The blockade is immoral, and it is vindictive against the Cuban people."

March organizers forced police to require a demonstration of 40 ultrarightist Cuban-Americans to move across the street. The counterdemonstrators rallied around a banner of the terrorist outfit Alpha 66. Stick-wielding rightists attacked a group of demonstrators leaving the protest. The Coalition in Solidarity with Cuba sponsored a press conference September 13 to denounce the assault and to discuss the Clinton administration's policies on Cuban immigrants.

Nearly 200 demonstrators, including

students from area universities, rallied that same day in San Francisco.

In Boston, the July 26 Coalition sponsored a September 8 picket line of 100 people outside a military recruitment center. Cuban-American and Haitian activists, trade unionists, and representatives from Veterans for Peace, the Socialist Workers Party, and the Workers World Party spoke. The coalition is planning future activities, including an October 22 teach-in.

More than 50 people picketed the U.S. consulate in Montreal September 10. In Sydney, Australia, 60 workers and youth protested in front of the U.S. consulate September 2. A meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, the following day drew 35 people.

—YOUNG SOCIALISTS AROUND THE WORLD—

Mobilizing to defend Cuba's socialist revolution

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists, an international organization of young workers, students and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS or

to join write: Young Socialists, P.O. Box 2396, New York, NY 10009, or call (212) 475-6482.

BY BROCK SATTER

Since the stepped-up attacks by the U.S. government on the Cuban revolution began on August 19, Young Socialists around the world have been mobilizing to defend and tell the truth about the Cuban revolution. The Young Socialists Steering Committee put out a statement on August 22 denouncing the war moves by the U.S. government. Local groups responded quickly.

"At first there was a debate on how quick we should act," Montreal Young Socialists member Patricia O'Beirne stated, "but people became convinced of the need and urgency to explain the facts about Cuba, about U.S. immigration policy, and about the aggression of Canada against Cuba. We saw the need to organize and collaborate with others."

Young Socialists in Montreal built a meeting at a local college defending the Cuban revolution, where 20 people showed. Two Young Socialists gave presentations. People who came to the forum asked about democracy in Cuba and the U.S. immigration policy. The YS then showed a 20-minute video of a CNN television interview with Fidel Castro on the immigration policy.

The Montreal YS joined protests with a half dozen other student organizations, associations, and solidarity groups outside the U.S. consulate. Holding Young Socialists signs stating "Hands off Cuba U.S./Canada" and "U.S. out of Guantánamo," the Montreal YS joined 60 people, most of whom were in their early 20s or younger. Three people have asked for more information on the YS as a result of these activities.

In the United States, from New York to San Francisco to Salt Lake City, Young Socialists have been joining and building protests against the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo and the U.S. embargo on

speakeouts and forums.

"We knew it was a major thing to do right away," YS National Committee member Cecelia Ortega, a high school student in Cleveland, said. The Young Socialists in Cleveland went out selling the *Militant* and distributing flyers. "We went out as often as four times a day," Ortega explained.

The Cleveland YS helped organize a forum in a local coffee shop near Case Western college where 30 people participated. A YS member spoke and helped answer such questions as "Why are so many people leaving Cuba?" and "Why is the U.S. government so opposed to Cuba? People came because they were attracted to Cuba and were unsatisfied with what was going on. Because we were out there daily, people took us more seriously," Ortega added. New people have now been coming to the Cleveland YS meetings.

Classes on Cuba

In Greensboro, North Carolina, Young Socialists are planning a three-part educational series on Cuba to discuss the gains of the revolution, the situation in Cuba today, and how workers and youth are organizing to defend their socialist revolution. This will coincide with the October 2-11 tour of Cuban Interests Section representative José Ponce, who will also visit Atlanta and Birmingham, Alabama. The Young Socialists are helping to build the tour in all three cities.

In Philadelphia, Young Socialists held a forum at Temple University where National Committee member Jack Willey gave a presentation on the Cuban revolution. Aaron Forbes, 20, a first-year student at Temple, decided to join the Young Socialists after helping sell the *Militant* and attending the meeting. "The actions of the U.S. government have helped me see the true character of capitalism," Forbes said, "Their efforts to squelch the democratic processes in Cuba show that the U.S. doesn't support democracy. Cuba seems far more democratic for working people than the U.S." During the day 17 *Militants*

were sold at the YS table and 30 people signed up for more information about the organization.

The Philadelphia YS, which has gone from one member to seven since the founding of the Young Socialists in August, will be holding a class next week on the pamphlet *Cuba Will Never Adopt Capitalist Methods*. The Young Socialists in Boston are organizing an educational conference on October 1, which will feature a presentation on South Africa by the 1992 Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. president, James Warren. The emphasis of the conference will be on defending the Cuban revolution.

'To Speak The Truth'

The YS Steering Committee is proposing that each local group take on a goal of selling the book *To Speak The Truth*, a collection of speeches by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara delivered at the United Nations over a 20-year period that describe why Washington's aggression against Cuba doesn't end. In addition to the sales goals, the Young Socialists will be participating in and building classes on the book in many cities.

Socialist Workers Party trade union director Joel Britton and Jack Willey for the YS Steering Committee explained the importance of this book in a joint statement issued August 25. "*To Speak The Truth* is a weapon in the hands of trade unionists, farmers, and young people who want to counter Washington's lies," they said.

As part of a range of activities in defense of the socialist revolution in Cuba, the Young Socialists will be a sponsor of a November 12 national march on Washington demanding an end to the U.S. embargo. They will actively build this event across the United States and Canada, to bring as many young fighters as possible to speak out against Washington in defense of the Cuban revolution.

Brock Satter is a member of the Young Socialists Steering Committee.

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.

\$7,454 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 _____

U.S.-Cuba immigration accord

Continued from front page

Several armed hijackings of passenger ferries and other boats took place in Havana in July and August. In separate incidents, hijackers killed a police official and a navy lieutenant. In this atmosphere, an antigovernment riot broke out August 5 on the city's waterfront, where rioters, drawn by rumors of another hijacking, attacked police and vandalized stores and hotels. They were beaten back by thousands of workers and youth who support the Cuban revolution.

Outraged by the murderous hijacking, half a million people mobilized in Havana August 7 to show their support for the revolution.

At that time the Cuban government announced it would no longer take measures to stop people from leaving the country by raft without U.S. visas. The revolutionary government pointed out that Washington, as part of its propaganda campaign to portray Cuba as repressive, had for decades promoted the flow of "rafters" from Cuba by denying visas to those who wanted to travel while openly welcoming all those who made it to U.S. shores.

In the biggest wave of emigration since 1980, more than 25,000 went to sea in rafts in subsequent weeks, most assuming they would be rescued by the U.S. Coast Guard and automatically granted asylum.

U.S. embargo against Cuba

Noting that many of those who left Cuba cited the current economic hardships in that country, Alarcón said, "To arrive at a definitive, lasting, and complete solution to this problem, one has to examine and eliminate the principal cause of it, the U.S. economic blockade against Cuba." Nonetheless, he stated, "we didn't reject or dismiss the possibility that even though they [Washington] refused to suspend the blockade we could reach an acceptable, reasonable agreement."

The Cuban official remarked that Washington has always used its immigration policy "as a weapon of destabilization, to create internal difficulties and problems in our country." However, he cited the accord as progress because for the first time the U.S. government agreed to a minimum number of visas to be granted.

In a 1984 immigration accord, Alarcón said, "the United States promised only to grant up to 20,000 visas a year, as a ceiling — which in practice was not fulfilled even by 5 percent — now they say they will grant at least 20,000 a year."

The accord also states that the voluntary return of Cuban rafters detained by U.S. forces at Guantánamo or elsewhere — reportedly around 250 — "will continue to be arranged through diplomatic channels."

Asked about Clinton's cutoff of family visits and cash remittances to Cuba, Alarcón said the Cuban delegation had raised this issue in the negotiations.

It is "paradoxical," the Cuban leader said, "that this administration, which brags about its great concern for ordinary people,

for their problems, for social issues...has taken measures that neither Ronald Reagan nor George Bush undertook to thwart communications between Cubans."

He added, "If they aspire to have normal relations in immigration between both countries, all obstacles should be eliminated."

After the immigration accord was signed, the Cuban government issued a statement urging people who want to go to the United States to use the newly negotiated legal channel. "Naturally," the statement said, "not all those who wish to emigrate will be able to; in no Third World country is this possible. But a formula has been reached that will allow many to realize their objective in an absolutely safe and legal manner."

The Cuban government publicly announced that it would resume patrolling the borders, granting a 72-hour grace period — later shortened — to allow people with rafts to dispose of them. Authorities would rely "principally on persuasion," it said.

Since September 12, few departures by raft have been reported along the country's coast and most rafts have disappeared from the beaches. "The objective has been reached without a single incident, without a single death or injury, without a single drop of blood shed," the Cuban government pointed out in a September 14 statement.

Reaction among working people

The U.S.-Cuba immigration accord has received widespread approval among working people and others here.

"I think it's progress," said Eliecer Avila, 24, a worker at the Rafael Freyre cooperative farm in Holguín province. "It means the United States has agreed to sit

down and talk with Cuba. That makes the [U.S.] blockade harder to justify."

"It's better to have an agreement, to allow visas, and not to lose lives at sea," said Osmir Peña, a vendor at a candonaga — the popular term for open air markets — in Holguín. Unlike previous waves of emigration from Cuba, the vast majority of people interviewed here expressed no hostility toward those leaving the country. "They are crazy to risk their lives like that" is a common remark. "Some are criminals, but they include people whose morale simply deteriorated, who didn't have the firmness to keep on fighting like the rest of us," said Camilo Silva, a young English teacher in Holguín.

René Cordero, a leader of the chemical workers union in Havana, commented on one aspect of the accord he considered important. "It's the first time the United States has committed itself to take action against hijackers," she said.

Some people, while supporting the agreement, expressed skepticism that the U.S. government would follow through. Carlos Villares, a plumber who is a member of the Blas Roca contingent of volunteer workers building the Cohiba Hotel in Havana, said, "I have a lot of doubts they will comply with it. They didn't do it before," he noted, referring to the 1984 accords.

Julio Arguelles, another member of the Blas Roca contingent, added, "They say they are going to grant 20,000 visas a year, but they're restricting flights from the



Militant/Sam Manuel
Ricardo Alarcón, president of Cuba's National Assembly, led his country's delegation in talks with Washington in early September.

United States. That's a contradiction. You know, the United States has tried to provoke an internal explosion here for the past 35 years, but the harder they squeeze us, the harder we fight for our socialist principles." Many remain concerned about the explosive conditions created by the U.S. government at the Guantánamo base. Several disturbances have occurred recently at the detention camps there.

The escalating U.S. preparations for an invasion of Haiti have not gone unnoticed by Cubans. "I think the United States is going to invade Haiti," said Adel Diaz, 28, a leader of the Union of Young Communists in Holguín. "An invasion of that country is a spearhead aimed against us. We're going to have to redouble our defense."

Interviews with rafters opting to leave Cuba

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL
AND LAURA GARZA

COJIMAR, Cuba — As the sun sets, knots of people cluster around a half dozen hand-built rafts on a small piece of beach here, east of Havana. Each is meant to carry four to eight passengers.

There is a fair-like atmosphere, as curious spectators gather to watch the would-be travelers to the United States and their odd-shaped vessels, made from wooden planks or light metal pipes. Some "rafters" are sitting in their contraptions, waiting for the tide to rise and the burning sun to disappear. Others are busy with the finishing touches. Two men are mounting a motor in one small craft. "I'm not going. I'm just offering my services as a mechanic," one says.

Some people are quietly circulating with items for sale — cigarettes, rum, oars, construction materials, a whole boat. No police or authorities are in sight. "The police

and the coast guard have helped us," one man says. "They tell us when it's not safe to sail."

Today, September 9, an immigration agreement between the U.S. and Cuban governments has just been reached but no one knows the details yet. Some of the rafters are apprehensive. This may be their last chance to set off unhindered.

The crowd tonight is mostly men in their mid-20s to mid-40s, although a large number of the 35,000 who have left Cuba since early August are younger.

One group includes five men and a woman: a medical technician, 33; a former ambulance driver, 44; a former electric company worker from Camagüey, 40; a heavy equipment driver, 45; an unemployed man, 31; an unemployed woman, 28.

"I have three university degrees," says the woman. She has not worked for the past six months, she says, because "it's not worth it. The pay is too little." The man from Camagüey has not worked in several months either.

Do they know they are going to end up detained at "The Base"? we ask. "Yes, but better there than here," says one. They offer various estimates of how long they expect to be held at the U.S. Naval Base at Guantánamo, Cuba, until "finally" they will be allowed to get to the United States — six months, a year, two years. "At least we'll have better food to eat on the base," says the woman.

Another raft sitting on the beach carries seven passengers: an unemployed secretary, 21; her brother, a former restaurant worker at a tourist hotel, 19; a set designer for the Tropicana night club, 38; his wife, a dancer at the Tropicana; a truck driver; a former electrician at an army maintenance plant; a quality control inspector at a shoe factory.

As with the other group, several are currently unemployed while some only quit their jobs days ago. "I graduated as a stenographer, but I haven't found any job worth working," says Carmela Giol. Her brother Julio, when asked why he was no longer working at the restaurant, replies, "It was too rough to work there. If I were

getting paid in dollars I wouldn't be here on the beach." Carmela adds, "We're leaving because here there's no food."

The set designer complains, "I make 200 pesos a month. If I got paid 200 dollars, I could make it." He adds, "My wife traveled to 43 countries as a dancer. I have a higher position than her but I can't travel because of my prison record. I was jailed for punching someone and twice for trying to leave the country illegally."

When prodded further, several say they were involved in petty black market operations. "Look, I make 200 pesos a month," says Lorenzo Cairo, the truck driver. "You have to survive by stealing. I sell what I can steal from the state. For a bag of cement I get 100 pesos — almost half my salary." Cairo adds, "I'm not a criminal. The black market is practically legal here."

Several give more than just economic reasons for leaving the country. "Everything is in ruins. Socialism doesn't work," says a former electrician. "And it's all because of one man — Fidel Castro. Two men. If he and Raúl [Castro] left Cuba, everything would be better."

"Fidel just doesn't want to negotiate with the United States," Carmela Giol chimed in. "Why does Washington maintain an embargo against Cuba? Because we won't negotiate the economy."

What kind of life do they expect in the United States? we asked. Are they concerned about finding work? "If you're a good worker, anyone can get a job in the United States," the set designer says. "Sure, you have to work hard, but you see the fruits of your labor."

Asked about the prospect of facing racist discrimination, Julio Giol says, "I don't think there's discrimination over there like we're told. There are Blacks who are millionaires, like Michael Jordan."

"Any place is better than here," says the set designer. "We could go to Colombia. A friend of mine told me that in Colombia, for every beggar there are 60 men wearing suits." They all state that they would rather live in any country but Cuba — Mexico, Argentina, even the Dominican Republic. Haiti? "No, not Haiti," the truck driver says.

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

Perspectiva Mundial editor Martín 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 African 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.

Guantánamo base: staging ground for Haiti invasion

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Washington ended all flights of news reporters to the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, September 15. Tens of thousands of Cubans and Haitians seeking entry into the United States are being held in detention camps there. Pentagon officials justified their action by explaining that the base is being used as a staging ground to invade Haiti.

In the days before the announcement, a new confrontation developed in the camps where 28,000 Cubans are confined. At least one Cuban died and two were injured during several days of demonstrations against the conditions in the camps and against Washington's policy of not granting them visas to enter the United States.

Some 2,500 Cubans escaped over the concertina wire encircling the detention camps on September 10 and began walking about the naval base. Two of the detainees were injured as security forces tried to herd them back into the camps. One had to be hospitalized after a base security officer stabbed him in the shoulder with a bayonet, said Richard Scott of the Pentagon.

Another protester died September 12 after jumping off a cliff. Military officials claimed the man wanted to go swimming, and accidentally hit his head on a rock.

About 200 of the demonstrators who broke out of the camps peacefully occupied a downtown area of the base for two days after the announcement of the immigration accord. They ended the occupation

only after receiving assurances they would be able to tell their grievances to reporters scheduled to visit later that week.

Detainees 'don't like being confined'

One major cause for complaint is that those who left Cuba by boat or raft over the previous three weeks will not be eligible for visas to enter the United States unless they return to Cuba. Washington has promised to grant a minimum of 20,000 visas a year to Cubans wishing to move to the United States, but says it will not put those who were picked up by U.S. military ships on the high seas on the list. If they do not return or go to a third country, the Clinton administration says, they will be kept indefinitely at Guantánamo.

Besides being angry over the immigration policy, the protesters "don't like being confined to their camps," Maj. Rick Thomas, a U.S. military spokesman at the base, stated.

This was the third serious confrontation since Washington began interning Cubans at the naval base. Three Cubans were injured August 31 by an explosion in the minefield that separates the Guantánamo base from the rest of Cuba. They had safely reached the U.S. side of the field, but were forced back across by U.S. officers who denied them entry. Two U.S. soldiers were injured September 6 after marines began chasing a Cuban who was playing soccer. Six hundred fifty detainees responded by throwing rocks at the soldiers.

Washington clamps down on travel to Cuba

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Under the pretext of responding to the so-called Cuban refugee crisis, Washington has virtually cut off family visits and economic assistance between Cuban-Americans and their relatives on the island and clamped down on other travel to and from Cuba.

Until the latest events, Cuban-Americans were allowed to send up to \$300 every three months to family members living in Cuba. An estimated \$450 million in such gifts were sent to Cuban residents last year.

The Treasury Department's new regulations, issued August 30 on orders of the White House, ban all cash remittances to Cuba "except for purposes of facilitating lawful immigration" or in "circumstances where extreme humanitarian need is demonstrated, including terminal illness or severe medical emergency."

Cubans returning home after visits with relatives in the United States are prohibited from carrying any currency except Cuban pesos, said attorney Michael Krinsky in an interview. To enforce this provision, federal agents are conducting airport searches, including strip searches, of those leaving for Havana, causing anger and indignation among many passengers, he said. Krinsky, a well-known attorney with the Rabinowitz, Boudin & Standard law firm in New York, is an expert on legal matters related to Cuba. He has represented the Cuban government in many cases.

Family visits precluded

Family visits between the United States and Cuba are now virtually precluded. "Cuban-Americans used to be able to send up to \$500 to Cuba in order to pay for a relative's visit," Krinsky stated. "That's been eliminated." While Cuban citizens who can get a visa can technically visit the United States, they must pay their own airfare, which is impossible in most cases. The only exception permitting U.S. relatives to pay is for "extreme humanitarian need," Krinsky said, which the government narrowly defines as cases like terminal illness.

The regulations also prohibit "remittances to Cuba in connection with intellectual property protection and public performances."

Furthermore, Cuban-Americans are banned from visiting relatives on the island, except in death-bed circumstances. Some 50,000 people traveled from the United States to Cuba last year, most of them Cuban-Americans. Charter companies are now slashing their flights between Miami and Havana from 10 to two per week. The Treasury Department's orders do not restrict the ability of licensed carriers to charter flights to Havana. But the new rules mean there are very few passengers.

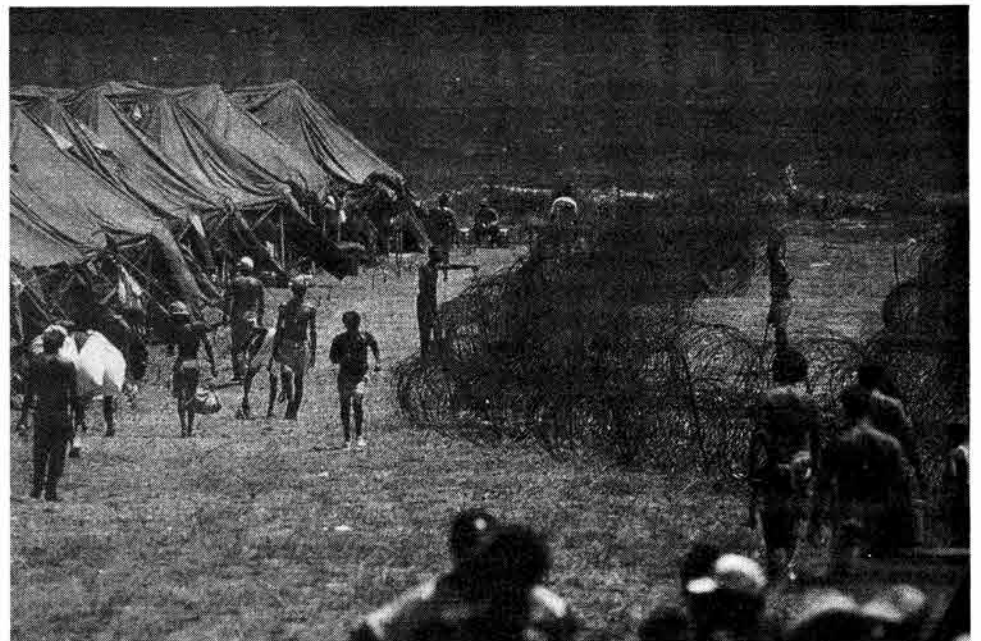
Tightening up of restrictions

Washington is cracking down on other travel to Cuba as well. Since 1961 the U.S. government has barred most travel by prohibiting U.S. residents from spending money in Cuba, with a few exceptions for educational, research, and journalists' trips.

Those who wish to travel for professional research must now apply directly to the Treasury Department for a specific license to visit Cuba, which will be examined on a case-by-case basis. Previously, the government granted blanket exemptions for these type of trips.

"Persons are considered to be engaged in professional research," the regulations state, "only if they are full-time professionals who travel to Cuba to do research in their professional areas, their research is specifically related to Cuba and will constitute a full work schedule in Cuba, and there is substantial likelihood of public dissemination of the product of their research."

U.S. officials will now scrutinize the schedule of anyone applying for a license for this kind of trip to make sure they don't have much free time they can spend on the beach, since regulations prohibit recreational travel within Cuba, Krinsky said. "And early indications are that the government will substantially narrow interpretation of what constitutes professional research," he added.



Cubans incarcerated at U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. On September 9, some 2,500 Cuban detainees began protesting their confinement. U.S. soldiers attacked the protesters, stabbing one Cuban and injuring others.

Similar pressures are mounting in the separate camps where 14,000 Haitian refugees are imprisoned. The *Miami Herald* reported September 9 dozens of angry outbursts, including detainees pelting the military police with rocks.

Even before reporters' access to the camps was cut off, details about the protests were hard to come by. The *New York Times*, for instance, carried very short articles written in Miami and based on statements by U.S. military officials. Aside from the major media, very few news organizations had been given permission by the U.S. Atlantic Command to send reporters to Guantánamo.

Another potential problem for Washington is the supplemental detention camps set up on U.S. bases in Panama. The Panamanian government agreed to allow up to 10,000 Cubans to be held there for up to six months. Their legal status in Panama is

a point of contention. If they are considered refugees, under Panamanian law they are supposed to be allowed to move freely about the country. U.S. officials are calling the Cubans "migrants under detention" as a way to try to avoid this issue.

The policy of not granting visas to the detainees at Guantánamo has drawn criticism from Cuban-Americans, including many who had previously supported Washington's policies toward Cuba. "The community is incensed," said Rafael Penalver, a lawyer in Miami. "It's an immoral policy that cannot continue."

Debate over immigration accord

Various U.S. politicians and commentators have been debating whether the immigration agreement between Washington and Havana and other Clinton administration policies toward Cuba are the best means to try to bring down the socialist government in Cuba.

The *New York Times* in a September 10 editorial called the accord "a good beginning." The *Times* editors called for further negotiations to try to get concessions from the Cuban government.

Liberal columnist A. M. Rosenthal, on the other hand, criticized the agreement September 13. Rosenthal asserted that the accord made the U.S. government "Fidel Castro's partner in violation of international codes on human rights," ignoring the fact that it has been Washington, not Havana, that has strictly limited immigration from Cuba to the United States. In the same column he urged for better war preparations against Haiti.

In a September 3 column published in the *Conservative Chronicle*, Samuel Francis condemned the Clinton administration for even negotiating on the immigration question. Francis preferred the earlier policy of "stash[ing] the Cubans at Guantánamo."

He complained that any agreement would give implicit recognition to the Cuban government. "As a result, this country will be stuck with even more immigrants it can't afford, and the Cubans' country will be stuck with an even more deeply entrenched dinosaur dictatorship."

The common thread from all these quarters is hatred for the Cuban revolution. As a news analysis in the September 11 *New York Times* put it, "all the potentially contradictory veins of American policies agreed on one point: Trying to make the crisis Fidel Castro's."

GRAMME

INTERNATIONAL

Subscribe

Published weekly in English, Spanish, and French.
Subscriptions \$40. To subscribe send your check or money order made out to PATHFINDER, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

☐ IN ENGLISH ☐ EN ESPAÑOL ☐ EN FRANÇAIS

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE/PROV _____ ZIP _____

An essential source of information on the Cuban revolution.

Caterpillar charged with toxic dumping

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

PEORIA, Illinois — United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 974, the UAW International, and Citizens for a Better Environment — a Chicago-based environmental group — filed charges September 1 with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) against Caterpillar Inc., for improper handling of up to 33,000 tons of contaminated soil at the company's East Peoria complex. Thousands of UAW members have been on strike for 13 weeks against the giant earthmoving equipment manufacturer.

Thirteen thousand tons of toxic dirt, known to contain chemicals that cause or are suspected of causing cancer, are piled inside and outside Building X on the complex. The UAW lawsuit accuses Caterpillar of storing another 20,000 tons elsewhere throughout the facility. It seeks civil penalties of \$34 million. Caterpillar issued a written statement charging that the suit is "another UAW-inspired diversionary stunt." But the facts show otherwise.

In a 1992 study, the IEPA rated air quality in Peoria as the worst in the state except for the Chicago and East St. Louis areas. Nearly half of the chemicals released into the air and water in Peoria and Tazewell counties have been termed carcinogens by government agencies. Another one-third are believed to cause birth defects or human reproductive problems.

A history of polluting

Caterpillar contributes generously to this environmental disaster. The East Peoria complex was in first place for toxic emissions in Tazewell county, and Caterpillar's Mossville engine plant ranked fourth among Peoria's industries. In 1991 alone the two plants released a combined total of 367,649 pounds of toxic chemicals into the environment.

In 1993, Caterpillar was fined \$75,000 for violating water pollution regulations at the Mapleton foundry. While the company paid the fine, a consent order stipulated that Caterpillar did not admit violations. Since 1990, the company has exceeded the legal limit for dumping contaminated water into the river. Caterpillar officials claim the water is cleaner than when it entered the plant.

The earthmoving equipment manufacturer is currently seeking to delay meeting new and stricter requirements on an 83-acre landfill it operates at Mapleton. Tests of the water runoff from the landfill released high levels of benzene, which is known to cause cancer in humans. Caterpillar says the sample was not representative.

The company has been negotiating with the IEPA for four years about what to do with the hazardous dirt it stashed in, around, and under Building X. Environmental regulations allow temporary storage of hazardous waste for only 90 days without a permit.

The IEPA claims a permit is not necessary because Caterpillar is "working on a remedy." Thomas Childs, a member of UAW Local 974, however, pointed to the IEPA's kid-glove treatment of the company, which is the largest private employer in the state of Illinois.

In a letter to the Peoria Journal Star, Childs asks, "Am I allowed not to pay my bills because I am working on a remedy?... Have the people working in these areas been informed of the hazards they face as they try to make a living?"

'Not Caterpillar's backyard'

Members of the UAW discovered the problem because of noxious odors at their workplace. "All Cat did was move the problem from building FA to Building X," said Gary Romans, who was illegally terminated by Caterpillar for alleged picket line misconduct. "This is not Caterpillar's backyard; this is our community. Building X is at the back door of Walmart's and a block away from Hardee's restaurant. On a hot day the dust from that building just blows in the air."

Caterpillar's assurances that "neither plant nor public health, safety or drinking-water supplies have been affected by the excavated soil" have not diffused suspicions about the scope of this problem.

"I think it's very serious, very serious," warns Leon Decker, a part-time librarian at the Peoria public library. Decker was fired from his job at Caterpillar's technical library in 1989 for insubordination. He described himself as "not being as malleable as they wanted me to be."

Decker refused to abide by Caterpillar's "document retention policy" — the deliberate destruction of any records that could damage the company's ability to make a profit. "They said I was a tool of the union, but I didn't even know them at the time," he stated.

Veterans of Building X express concern



Militant/Kathy Mickells
Caterpillar workers and supporters in York, Pennsylvania, September 5. Thousands of UAW members in three states have been on strike for 13 weeks.

that the runoff from the toxic dirt is in the sewer system. "With the thunderstorms and the rains, I've seen manhole covers pop up with the force of the water through the building. The building is old, antiquated, and it's like a sieve," explained Romans, who has worked more than 25 years at Building X.

On the picket line, one striker who worked at Building X for more than 20 years recalls when chemicals such as trichloroethylene, a probable human carcinogen were used to "wash our hands, our clothes, and mop the floors. We dumped buckets of it on the floor, because work on hydraulics was so oily. It's a bad feeling

when you look up one day and something you've used all these years all of a sudden has a sticker on it, and no one says a thing to you about it."

According to the UAW lawsuit, Caterpillar has never filed a cleanup plan with the IEPA. The company's proposal is to clean the soil by exposing it to the air, and then using it for backfill.

"Isn't it ironic that Don Fites is Cat's CEO and on the board of directors of Keep America Beautiful," laughs Lynn Tolson, a member of Families in Solidarity, which is organizing support for the strike. "Fites has not shown any concern for his employees or the community."

Socialist candidate for Illinois governor discusses Cuba with striking workers

BY CINDY JAQUITH

PEORIA, Illinois — The Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Illinois, Cathy Sedwick, kicked off a tour of this strike-filled region September 9 with a news conference on the courthouse steps here. Sedwick is a steelworker and a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 1011 in East Chicago, Indiana.

The *Journal Star*, Peoria's daily paper, carried a prominent article on Sedwick's campaign the next day.

"Sedwick is the Socialist Workers Party gubernatorial candidate, who is on a weekend tour of west-central Illinois," the paper reported, calling her message "as radical as Thomas Jefferson's when he wrote the Declaration of Independence."

"Her appeal, however, is not to overthrow British rule but the current 'ruling rich and their political parties, the Democrats and Republicans,'" the article continued. "In East Peoria, Mossville, Mapleton and Decatur, [Sedwick] will talk with UAW members on strike against Caterpillar Inc., United Rubber Workers members on strike against Firestone, and United Paperworkers International union members locked out for more than a year

by A.E. Staley Export Inc.," the paper said.

"The Socialist [Workers] Party's primary focus is to get workers, not only in Illinois but around the world, to realize their need for solidarity," the paper quotes Sedwick as saying. She "said the area's strikers are making headway and should 'continue their struggles,'" the *Journal Star* added. "She encouraged UAW strikers to hold out for their demands."

Among those attending the news conference were two Caterpillar strikers. They said they had come because they appreciated the truthful coverage given their strike by the *Militant* newspaper.

'Shorter workweek; no cut in pay'

Channel 31 TV, which also covered the press conference, featured a clip on the 6 o'clock news of Sedwick explaining the socialists' demand for a 30-hour workweek at 40 hours' pay to create more jobs and halt the exhausting overtime imposed on many workers.

Following the news conference, Sedwick traveled to Decatur, Illinois, to talk with striking workers at Caterpillar, Staley, and Firestone. At the UAW Local 751 hall, Sedwick distributed campaign brochures to Caterpillar strikers who had stopped by for a bowl of chili, to chat, and help out on whatever needed to be done. Three strikers at one table took a piece of campaign literature and read it through.

"It'll turn people off," one said. "I support what you're doing, but you're making a mistake," said another man. "You shouldn't call yourselves socialists."

Sedwick responded, "But I am a socialist. And I'm proud of it. I believe workers and farmers should run this country."

Example of Cuban revolution

The discussion quickly turned to what countries in the world Sedwick would hold up as an example of socialism. She pointed to Cuba's revolutionary government as the one government in the world consistently acting in the interests of working people.

One striker smiled and acknowledged that since going on strike and experiencing the harassment and victimization of Caterpillar management, he had begun to de-

velop more respect for Cuban president Fidel Castro — who has been a target of slanders, lies, and even assassination plots by the U.S. government.

Cuba was also a big topic of discussion between Sedwick and strikers at Firestone and A.E. Staley.

When the socialist candidate told a picketer outside Firestone's gates that halting Washington's drive against Cuba was a major concern of her campaign, the striker replied that the U.S. government is hostile to Cubans "because they established communism."

"But what does communism mean?" asked Sedwick. "To Washington, it means wherever workers or farmers decide to fight for their rights, set up their own governments, and end the exploitation of capitalism. As a matter of fact, if you all keep fighting here, pretty soon they'll label you communists, too!"

One man picketing A.E. Staley, upon learning of Sedwick's support for the Cuban revolution, said, "Well I don't know. They have a different form of government over there — it's a dictatorship."

Sedwick noted that contrary to the lies peddled in the major media, the Cuban people elect their government, including President Fidel Castro. But more important than elections, she continued, is understanding how the Cuban revolution came about and why it has been able to withstand a more than 30-year war by the U.S. government.

"Cuban workers and farmers rebelled in 1959 to get rid of a real dictatorship — the Batista dictatorship imposed from Washington — so that they could have land, decent jobs, and their own government," she explained. "They threw out the Mafia, the U.S. sugar companies, and everything else that came with being in Washington's so-called backyard."

The discussion on Cuba continued for about half an hour. At its conclusion, the striker did not agree with Sedwick but was convinced he needed to know more about the Cuban revolution. He purchased a copy of the *Militant*.

Cindy Jaquith is a laid-off member of the United Auto Workers in Detroit.

THE CHANGING FACE OF U.S. POLITICS

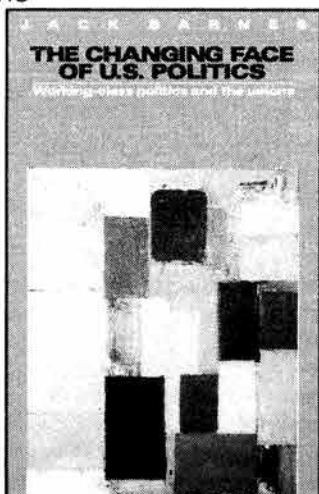
Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions
by Jack Barnes

A handbook for workers coming into the factories, mines, and mills, as they react to the uncertain life, ceaseless turmoil, and brutality that will accompany the arrival of the twenty-first century. It shows how millions of workers, as political resistance grows, will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and all of society. \$19.95. (special offer \$14.95)

25% OFF

for members of the
Pathfinders Readers Club

Available at bookstores, including those on page 12, or from
Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Fax:
(212) 727-0150. If ordering by mail, add \$3 to cover
postage and handling.



'Railtrack treats workers with contempt'

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

MANCHESTER, England — "Railtrack treats workers with contempt," said Paul Wood, a member of the Manchester signal workers strike committee. Wood, a regional representative for the National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers (RMT), is one of 4,600 signal workers who have been involved in 24-hour strike actions for the past 13 weeks against Railtrack. Signal workers are fighting for an 11 percent wage raise. Their struggle is the first sustained national industrial action since the 1984-85 miners strike.

Railtrack is one of 25 separate business operations set up by the government to replace the state-run British Rail network. Each operation is under government pressure to limit state funding and cut costs in preparation for privatization of the rail industry. Railtrack has control over track, stations, and operating companies.

"They would be prepared to shut the rail network down and lock us out in order to starve us back to work — if they thought it would work," stated Wood, who was speaking at a September 3 Militant Labour Forum here. "But we're stronger now. There's not even been a trickle back to work. We've gotten stronger as the strikes have gone on. I now believe that if we escalate the action it would bring it to a more rapid and successful conclusion."

An important change

"The action by the signal workers marks an important change," noted another forum speaker, rail worker Debbie Delange. "In 1992 there were fewer days lost due to strike action in Britain than in any year since records began in 1890. In 1993, there were even fewer. But in June of this year, when the signal workers struggle was beginning, there were five times as many days lost due to strike action than in June 1993."

"A trade union struggle is back at the center of speeches by government representatives. It's featured on newspaper front pages. John Major complains about 'old fashioned strikes.' But this strike isn't about the past. It's about the present, and a foretaste of the future as workers relearn how to use union power to defend our interests," Delange said.

Paul Wood agreed. The origin of this dispute "goes back eight years, when the union demanded that signal workers be regraded," he said. "The employers took seven years to come back with a response. By that time the privatization process had been started and the new company, Railtrack, said that British Rail, our old employer, should have paid! They said that if we want more money then we'd have to make concessions on productivity."

Railtrack is demanding compulsory Sunday work, 12-hour shifts, and a range of measures under the heading of "flexibility."

Union members voted 4 to 1 in favor of industrial action to secure their demands. Soon after the vote Railtrack officials offered a 5.7 percent wage hike. However, the government stepped in, withdrew the offer, and fired the chief negotiator. Signal workers were then formally offered 2.5 percent — in line with the government's ceiling on pay raises in the public sector.

'New faces on picket lines'

"We started out with one day of strike action per week. We thought that would be enough. Then, in order to increase the pressure, we started action spread over two days. People predicted that the two-day action would erode support for the strike," Wood recalled.

"But that hasn't happened. The strike is 98 percent solid in the Manchester area and 90 percent solid nationally. Last week there were new faces on the picket lines. Locally we've formed a strike committee of six strike leaders. We've been organizing pickets, speaking at meetings, taking collections. We've met no adverse reaction from the passengers and we've had great support from other unions in the Manchester area," he said.

Another strike committee member present at the forum, Paul Laycock, echoed Wood's view that the union was stronger today. "What surprises me is that it's been going on for quite a long time now — three months — and it's still pretty solid even

though some workers are suffering real hardship."

The two strike leaders spoke of the measures used by Railtrack to try to break the strike. These include:

- the use of managers and supervisors to staff signal boxes on strike days at a serious threat to rail safety;
- offering managers holidays in Paris and Brussels if they're prepared to break the strike;
- involving British Rail staff, either no longer employed in signaling operations or who never have been, to staff boxes — with a further threat to safety.

With computerized consoles and electronic equipment, a signal operator can be in the position of controlling 15 miles of track, dozens of junctions, and up to 15 high speed trains simultaneously traveling in different directions.

Rail bosses get rougher

The employers have campaigned through the press to convince signal workers that their fight is unwinnable. "Rail workers drifting back," headlined the *Independent* daily newspaper on August 23. Management claims that 20 percent of strikers crossed picket lines that week. Scare stories assert half the rail network may close down because of the strike. Senior managers are anonymously quoted in the media saying up to 3,000 of the 4,600 signal workers could lose their jobs.

The *Independent* recently published extracts from a Railtrack legal department letter to a firm of solicitors indicating that Railtrack boss Robert Horton favored instant dismissal of strikers.

A public discussion has broken out over the increasingly "get tough" attitude of the employers and the government in face of the signal workers' unbroken resistance. "Signal workers are coming under increasing pressure on the days when we're at work," reported Paul Wood. "And there's been tougher policing on the picket lines on strike days."

Other union activists on the railway have also been targeted. In Sheffield, Gerry

Hitchen, a track worker and union shop steward, was suspended for two years. The company is using the pretext of an injury he suffered in 1987 to now say that he is unfit for work. Another union official in Sheffield, Jim Lennon, was disciplined three times in four days before being sacked in early September. Lennon collects union dues at Sheffield station.

In Manchester, union and political activist Shellia Kennedy was suspended from her track job in late August without any charges being filed. She was then summarily evicted from her workplace. Management claimed that they were carrying out an investigation into unspecified "safety" violations that Kennedy may have been involved in.

Strike sets back bosses' plans

"Time to end the rail dispute" was the lead of a September 6 *Financial Times* editorial, adding its voice to the "get tough" chorus. The influential business daily counseled that "inviting individual signalmen to accept the offer on the table, sacking strikers, and re-employing those who wish to return on individual contracts... is a price that Railtrack — and the government — may have to pay."

The editorial explained that "the government fears that a higher offer — even if self-financing — would be seen as a defeat for its public sector pay policy" and warned that "the dispute will also make it much harder for the government to privatise British Rail."

Roger Brooke, chairman of the capital venture group Candover, which is set to get involved in the privatization of British Rail, said that if the union wins "you can kiss good-bye to sensible levels of manning" in the industry, and that this would scare off private capital.

It is estimated that seeking to impose individual contracts through mass dismissals would cost Railtrack £16.5 million (1£=US\$1.50) in compensation, added to the estimated £130 million that the strike has already cost in lost revenue. "This compares to the £4.9 million that the origi-

nal 5.7 percent offer would have cost," Wood explained. "But it's not about money, it's about politics. Railtrack and the government are prepared to spend a great deal and jeopardize people's lives to secure their objectives — if they can."

At a Trades Union Congress (TUC) rally in support of the signal workers, RMT general secretary Jimmy Knapp countered Robert Horton's claims that the company was able to run 57 percent of trains on the September 8 strike day. A document submitted by Railtrack to the Health and Safety Executive proved that British Rail's figures were inflated, Knapp said. The document said that the company normally runs 23,689 trains a day. British Rail claimed that 7,500 ran on September 8, about one-third.

At their recent national congress, the TUC voted to back the signal workers and called for a national solidarity demonstration in London. The union body also called for a full-scale public investigation into safety on strike days, given the growing number of "irregularities," misrouting of trains, and dangerous incidents at level crossings. Lew Adams, general secretary of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, the train drivers union, said that there was little doubt that it was less safe to travel on strike days.

In contrast to the broad support from working people across Britain for the signal workers, newly elected Labour Party leader Tony Blair has refused to endorse the weekly strike actions of rail workers. The Labour Party leader proposes instead third-party arbitration.

Blair said, "This dispute has got to be negotiated between management and the unions... free from external political interference." He added, "Labour has to govern in the interests of the country as a whole."

The RMT leadership called a 48-hour work stoppage for September 14-15 and a further 24-hour strike on September 23.

Jonathan Silberman is a member of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union in Manchester.

Framed-up miners in Canada win release

BY NED DMYTRYSHYN

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — After spending eight months in the Yellowknife Correctional Institute on trumped-up charges resulting from participation in the 18-month strike against Royal Oak Mines, Tim Bettger and Al Shearing were released on bail June 22 after a preliminary inquiry. In a victory for the former strikers, the judge threw out five of the eight charges against Shearing and three of the 11 charges against Bettger. Their trial will be scheduled for March or April 1995.

At the time of the strike, which ended in December 1993, Bettger and Shearing were members of the Canadian Association of Smelter and Allied Workers (CASAW) Local 4. The strike against Royal Oak Mines became an important battle against union-busting for working people across Canada. In May 1994, CASAW affiliated to the Canadian Auto Workers union (CAW). Local 4 is now CAW Local 2304.

The gold miners in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, beat back the company's attempt to slash safety inspections, discipline injured workers, and roll back seniority rights. Royal Oak hired replacement workers and used a cop presence and police violence to try to bust the union. After a determined struggle and solidarity from unionists across Canada, they returned to work with a contract and their union intact.

Union member Roger Warren remains in prison facing nine counts of first degree murder for the deaths of nine replacement workers who were killed in an explosion in the mine on Sept. 18, 1992. Since that time, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), the mine bosses, and the big-business media have been conducting a vicious frame-up campaign, without a shred of concrete evidence, to blame Warren for the tragedy. Warren's trial begins September 6 in Yellowknife.

Bettger said in an interview that "eight months in jail did nothing to weaken our resolve. You have to stand up for what you believe no matter what the price because you have to be able to live with yourself."



Royal Canadian Mounted Police confronting CASAW picketers in June 1993

The fact that the judge dropped so many charges shows that the RCMP doesn't really have a solid case and that we were right all along."

At the preliminary trial the judge set 16 bail conditions and the RCMP added 3 more. These include:

- Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. they are to report to the RCMP;
- They are to be confined to their homes between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., and cannot leave Yellowknife;
- They are not allowed to attend union meetings or have any union business with CAW Local 2304;
- They are not allowed to have alcohol in their homes, nor can they frequent bars;
- And they must abstain from contact with workers who appeared at the preliminary hearing.

If any of these conditions are violated a \$25,000 bond has to be paid.

Bettger explained the history of harass-

ment he faced as a result of standing up to the Royal Oak bosses. In March 1993 the RCMP searched and destroyed part of his home. The police paid a visit to his mother after Bettger and his wife moved their children to Saskatchewan to avoid the harassment they were facing at school. In June, during one trip to Saskatchewan with his wife to pick up the children, they were followed by an unmarked RCMP car.

"I believe that what our strike and what we've been up against is a well-orchestrated campaign by Royal Oak that influenced all levels of government against us," stated Bettger.

He and Shearing remain fired from Royal Oak Mines pending the outcome of their court case. They are aided by the adopt-a-family program started during the strike.

Ned Dmytryshyn is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 692 in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Protest letters to Iowa warden

Continued from front page

fore Mr. Curtis even lays out his case before the Parole Board appears to point to one conclusion: that there is a concerted effort by corrections to prevent Mr. Curtis from ever getting a parole on the merits."

"As a long-time supporter of Mark Curtis it has come to my attention that Mark has been placed in 'Lock up' for some disciplinary action," wrote Larry Ginter, secretary of the American Agriculture Movement of Iowa. "I find that very interesting since Mark has exhibited excellent behavior in prison and for him to jeopardize his chance for possible parole just doesn't fit the pattern at all.... Please Mr. Hedgepath, I ask that you give this matter your personal attention," Ginter urged.

"Mr. Hedgepath, release Mark Curtis from segregation and restore his 'gate pass,' which I understand is a step toward future release," Julia Terrell, Curtis's former next door neighbor, wrote.

Supporters 'will not go away'

"I have witnessed with dismay the way some prison and state authorities have misused their power in continuing to incarcerate and harass Mr. Curtis because he has the strength to demand his democratic rights while in prison," wrote Nick Castle, a Hollywood motion picture writer and director whose credits include "Hook" and "Dennis the Menace."

"This latest charge of assault on a fellow prisoner smacks of the same kind of harassment," Castle added. "It seems curious to me that this charge comes at a time when there is increasingly less and less reason to keep him behind bars, and right when his defense committee is gearing up to demand a parole hearing.... This letter is simply to confirm that we, his supporters, will not go away and will not be satisfied until he is removed from prison lock up, removed from Fort Madison, removed from incarceration altogether and returned to his family and friends."

"An increasing number of people of all races and fields of work, inside and outside the United States, are following this case very closely," wrote Alejandra Aranovich, educational psychologist at San Marcos High School in Santa Barbara, California. "Expecting them to believe that Mark would engage in a physical altercation with another prisoner is absolutely ludicrous. Such a futile act would be completely out of character, and dissonant with Mark's extensively documented past behavior."

"Please have Mark released immediately from his lockup placement," she concludes. "We will continue to have our eyes focused on this case."

Outside the borders of the United States, letters have come from Sweden, Britain, Canada, and The Netherlands.

"I have been informed that Mr. Mark Curtis has recently been moved into solitary lock-up on the basis of unsubstantiated new charges," faxed Cees Flinterman Professor of Law at the Maastricht Centre for Human Rights, University of Limburg, The Netherlands. Flinterman was first introduced to the Curtis case while serving as an "expert" for the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva. "I would like to urge you to release Mr. Curtis from lock-up immediately. I do hope that the Iowa State Board of Parole will grant Mr. Curtis a hearing later this year and will grant him his freedom."

Locked-out at A.E. Staley...
On strike at Caterpillar...
On strike at
Bridgestone/Firestone...

**COME
RALLY IN
DECATUR,
ILLINOIS!**

**October 15, 1994
12 Noon**

Nationwide Rally in Support of
Locked-Out and Striking Workers
Non-violent Direct Action

Meet at: UAW LOCAL 751 • 2365 EAST
GEDDES AVENUE. For information,
CALL (217) 872-2205 OR (217) 876-7006.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

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

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

FLORIDA

Miami

Fascism: What It Is and How To Fight It. The Rise of Rightist Forces Today. Speaker: Janet Post, Socialist Workers Party, member of IAM Local 368. Tues., Sept. 27, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation \$3. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Crime and Violence: A Working Class Response. Speaker: Brian Taylor, Illinois Socialist Workers candidate for comptroller, member of Young Socialists. Sat., Sept. 24, program: 5 p.m., dinner: 7 p.m. 545 West Roosevelt Rd. Donation \$4. Tel: (312) 829-6815.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

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.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Defend a Woman's Right to Choose! Defend Abortion Clinics! Discussion on how to defend women's rights. Speakers: Bruce Gilson, member of Washington Area Clinic Defense Task Force; Brad Downs, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress. Sat., Sept. 24, 7:30 p.m. 1802 Belmont Rd., NW (in Adams Morgan). Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

The new 'Clinton Crime Bill' an Attack on Working People! Speakers: Stuart Adams, staff attorney with the National Prison Project of the ACLU; Greg McCartan, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Virginia. Sat., Oct. 1, 7:30 p.m. 1802 Belmont Rd., NW (in Adams Morgan). Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

BRITAIN

London

Report from South Africa. Speakers: James

Harris and Greg Rosenberg, *Militant* reporting team just returned from COSATU conference in Soweto. Sat., September 24, 6 p.m. 47 The Cut (nearest tube Waterloo). Donation: £2. Tel: 071 401 2409.

Manchester

Troops Out of Northern Ireland. Speakers: Judith Ward; Anne Howie, Communist League, member of Amalgamated Engineering Union. Sat., Sept. 24, 6 p.m. 60 Shudehill, Manchester. Donation £2. Tel: 061-839-1766.

CANADA

Vancouver

The Myth of Overpopulation and the U.N. Cairo Conference. A Working-Class View. Speaker: Bonita Murdock, member, Communist League. Sat., Sept. 24, 7:30 p.m. 3967 Main (between 23rd and 24th). Donation: \$4. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Strike Wave Rolls Across the United States: An Eyewitness Report. Speaker: Colin Parker, recently returned from the United States, where he met with striking workers in several cities. Sat., Sept. 24, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Rd. Donation \$3. Tel: 379-3075.

Rubber workers in Iowa stop scabs

BY ANGEL LARISCY

DES MOINES, Iowa — Members of United Rubber Workers (URW) Local 310 on strike against Bridgestone/Firestone organized a mass picket at 4:30 a.m., September 12, to stop scabs from entering

the plant here. The 125 workers allowed cars carrying supervisory and office personnel to enter the plant. But they massed in the driveway — shouting "Go home scab!" — to block the entrance of cars containing people they didn't recognize.

Police attempted to get strikers to move for one vehicle but the workers refused to budge and the car was forced to drive off to the cheers of union members. In all, strikers turned away six automobiles. Vance security personnel videotaped the protest from company property.

Later in the morning, when there were only a handful of pickets remaining, police escorted cars in to the Firestone parking lot. But in the afternoon, dozens of workers returned in an effort to slow the exit of those working in the plant. Many strikers report that although they expect Firestone to get an injunction to limit pickets, they plan to continue the mass protests.

More than 4,000 members of the URW have been on strike against the company since July 12 when they rejected Firestone's "final offer," which demanded, among other things, 12-hour shifts with no overtime, a seven-day-a-week production schedule, a 30 percent pay cut for new hires, and a \$5 pay cut for some jobs.

Workers on the line reported they had been told that their health insurance will run out at the end of the month. Firestone hopes such rumors will cause workers to cross the line. A URW member with 16 years seniority said the company underestimated workers' willingness to fight. "We'll stay out as long as it takes," he said.

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

CALENDAR

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

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

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis

Come Hear Cuba's Side. Speaker: Alfonso Fraga, Cuban Interests Section, Washington, D.C. Sat., Sept. 24, 5 p.m. Resource Center of the Americas, 317 - 17th Ave. SE (between University and 4th). Sponsoring organizations: Haiti Solidarity Committee, Pastors for Peace, Resource Center of the Americas, St. Joan of Arc's Church, Socialist Workers Party, Twin Cities-Cuba Friendship Committee, Veterans for Peace, Walker Community Church. For more information, call (612) 378-0062.

OHIO

Columbus

Anti-Fascist Conference. Midwest Anti-

Fascist Network (MAFNET) Founding Conference. Sat., Oct. 15 and Sun., Oct. 16. North High School. For more information, call (614) 294-5226 or write to Anti-Racist Action (ARA) P.O. 02097, Columbus, OH 43202.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Rally to End the U.S. Blockade Now! Mon. Sept. 19, 6 p.m. Teresa Hotel, 125th and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd. Sponsored by the Emergency Committee to End the US Blockade of Cuba. For more information, call: (212) 614-6432.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

End the U.S. Blockade of Cuba. National March on Washington. Sat., Nov. 12, 11 a.m. Malcolm X Park, 16 St. & Euclid St. NW. Welcome U.S.-Cuba Friendship Caravan. 12:30 p.m. March to White House. 2:30 p.m. Rally at Lafayette Park. Sponsored by November 12 Cuba Coalition, c/o Washington Peace Center, 2111 Florida Ave., NW. For more information, call (212) 620-0072.

IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

Where to find Pathfinder books and distributors of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *New International*, *Nouvelle Internationale*, and *Nueva Internacional*.

UNITED STATES

ALABAMA: Birmingham: 111 21st St. South. Zip: 35233. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles: 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Zip: 90006. Tel: (213) 380-9460, 380-9640. **San Francisco:** 3284 23rd St. Zip: 94110. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

CONNECTICUT: New Haven: Mailing address: P.O. Box 16751, Baybrook Station, West Haven. Zip: 06516. Tel: (203) 688-5418.

FLORIDA: Miami: 137 N.E. 54th St. Zip: 33137. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

GEORGIA: Atlanta: 803 Peachtree NE. Zip: 30308. Tel: (404) 724-9759.

ILLINOIS: Chicago: 545 W. Roosevelt Rd. Zip: 60607. Tel: (312) 829-6815, 829-7018. **Peoria:** P.O. Box 2187, East Peoria. Zip: 61611. Tel: (309) 672-6443.

IOWA: Des Moines: 2105 Forest Ave. Zip: 50311. Tel: (515) 246-8249.

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston: 780 Tremont St. Zip: 02118. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

MICHIGAN: Detroit: 7414 Woodward Ave. Zip: 48202. Tel: (313) 875-0100.

MINNESOTA: Twin Cities: 2490 University Ave. W., St. Paul. Zip: 55114. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

MISSOURI: St. Louis: 1622 S. Broadway. Zip: 63104. Tel: (314) 421-3808.

NEW JERSEY: Newark: 141 Halsey. Mailing address: 1188 Raymond Blvd., Suite 222. Zip: 07102. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK: Albany: P. O. Box 2357, E.S.P. Zip: 12220 Tel: (518) 465-0585. **Brooklyn:** 59 4th Avenue (corner of Bergen) Zip: 11217 Tel: (718) 399-7257; **New York:** 214-16 Avenue A. Mailing address: P.O. Box 2652. Zip: 10009. Tel: (212) 388-9346; 167 Charles St. Zip: 10014. Tel: (212) 366-1973.

NORTH CAROLINA: Greensboro: 2000-C S. Elm-Eugene St. Zip 27406. Tel: (910) 272-5996.

OHIO: Cincinnati: P.O. Box 19484. Zip: 45219. Tel: (513) 662-1931. **Cleveland:** 1855 Prospect. Zip: 44115. Tel: (216) 861-6150.

PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia: 1906 South St. Zip: 19146. Tel: (215) 546-8218. **Pittsburgh:** 4905 Penn Ave. Zip 15224. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

TEXAS: Houston: 6969 Gulf Freeway, Suite 250. Zip: 77087. Tel: (713) 644-9066.

UTAH: Salt Lake City: 147 E. 900 S. Zip: 84111. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 1802 Belmont Rd. N.W. Zip: 20009. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

WASHINGTON: Seattle: 1405 E. Madison. Zip: 98122. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

WEST VIRGINIA: Morgantown: 242 Walnut. Mailing address: P.O. Box 203. Zip: 26507. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 19 Terry St., Surry Hills 2010.

Mailing address: P.O. Box K879, Haymarket, NSW 2000. Tel: 02-281-3297.

BRITAIN

London: 47 The Cut. Postal code: SE1 8LL. Tel: 071-928-7993.

Manchester: Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Postal code: M4 4AA. Tel: 061-839-1766.

Sheffield: 1 Gower St., Spital Hill, Postal code: S47HA. Tel: 0742-765070.

CANADA

Montreal: 4581 Saint-Denis. Postal code: H2J 2L4. Tel: (514) 284-7369.

Toronto: 827 Bloor St. West. Postal code: M6G 1M1. Tel: (416) 533-4324.

Vancouver: 3967 Main St. Postal code: V5V 3P3. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

FRANCE

Paris: 8, allée Berlioz 94800 Villejuif Tel: (1) 47-26-58-21.

ICELAND

Reykjavik: Klappartíg 26. Mailing address: P. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik. Tel: (91) 17513.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Postal Address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

Christchurch: 199 High St. Postal address: P.O. Box 22-530. Tel: (3) 365-6055.

SWEDEN

Stockholm: Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

And still those Cubans defend socialism — "Farmers...create a world of agriculture weighed down by puzzling contradictions: Enough crops are produced to feed everyone on Earth. Yet 700 million



Harry Ring

people face starvation every year, and most of them are poor farmers." — The Los Angeles Times.

With big dividends — The U.S. military says it hopes to set up

limited self-rule for Cuban inmates in the Panama prison camp, with the inmates perhaps electing "mayors." Explained Lt. Col. Jim Greenwood: "Our goal is to get them involved in the camp infrastructure. We want them to feel ownership of this."

Think you've heard everything? — MONTREAL — "Smoking may be bad for your health but it aids the economy because it kills people before they become a health care burden, according to a study commissioned by Canada's largest tobacco manufacturer. 'A person who dies of lung cancer...will not be hospitalized later with another disease,' said a study commissioned by Imperial

Tobacco." — Reuters

The way it works — The Burlington Northern Railroad is suing relatives of two trainmen killed in a rail collision. The families charged intimidation, but the railroad responded it was simply a standard defense. Said a company lawyer: "A defense in these cases is that the individual brought the accident on himself or herself."

Watch your first pay stub — Air New Zealand backed off on charging a \$25 fee to applicants for international flight attendants jobs. The company said it would make refunds to those who already paid. A spokesman said, "The reaction is negative, the perception of it is negative, so clearly it's not work-

ing for us."

Lemon squeezers — California officials said Chrysler resold 118 cars it had bought back under the state lemon law, without disclosing they were defective. Chrysler responded that they had bought back the cars without formally acknowledging they were lemons so they had no need to tell new buyers what they were.

A law with teeth — Under California's lemon law, a manufacturer has the right to reject a claim and submit it to arbitration. The manufacturer also has the right to select the arbitration panel. Curiously, buyers lose about two out of three arbitration cases.

Coltrane? Man, forget it — "Bill Clinton Jam Session — The Pres Blows," a 17-minute CD recorded live when Clinton sat in with a Czech jazz group in Prague. Billboard magazine predicts it will bypass gold and platinum and "go aluminum." In one New York Tower Records shop it's available in the Comedy section.

She never takes the train? — In the San Francisco Bay Area, Margaret Pryor, president of the board of directors of the BART transit system, was found to have been driving without a license for the last four years and illegally using a "disabled" parking placard issued to her elderly mother.

Why U.S. cold war against Cuba doesn't end

Printed below are excerpts from the introduction to the Pathfinder book *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End* by Ernesto Che Guevara and Fidel Castro (see ad on front page). Copyright © Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

For more than thirty years, Cuba has been the target of an unremitting effort by the government of the United States to rid the Americas of the revolutionary government that came to power in January 1959 with the armed popular overthrow of the Batista tyranny, a regime long nourished and protected by Washington....

The obvious question is *why*. Why this thirty-plus-year history of implacable hostility that has no parallel in modern times?...

The reasons are nowhere explained more clearly than in the four speeches that follow in the pages of this book.

These speeches were delivered over a twenty-year period before bodies of the United Nations by the two most authoritative international representatives, and individual products, of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro and Ernesto Che Guevara. The issues they address—and the answers they give—are as timely today as they were when Castro and Guevara originally disrupted the diplomatic decorum of those halls by speaking the truth....

In September 1960, in the address that opens this collection, Cuban prime minister Fidel Castro refers in passing to John F. Kennedy, then the Democratic Party candidate for president of the United States, as an "illiterate and ignorant millionaire" who doesn't understand that "it is not possible to carry out a revolution over the opposition of the peasants." He then quickly adds, to general laughter, that such opinions about Kennedy do not imply any preference for his opponent Richard Nixon, then the vice president of the United States.

Speaking to toiling humanity

Interrupted by the president of the General Assembly and asked to consider whether it is "right and proper" to express such views at the rostrum of the United Nations, Castro promises his full cooperation in abiding by the conventions of UN debate. "I have no intention of offending anyone," Castro insists. "It is somewhat a question of style and, above all, a question of confidence in the assembly."

As such exchanges confirm, the appearances of Guevara and Castro before the United Nations are marked above all by the absence of empty diplomatic formulae, boring and ritualistic statements for the record, or mock-serious bombast. From the rostrum of the United Nations they speak not to the rich, powerful, and cynical of the world, but for and to the immense majority of toiling humanity, defending the "righteous rebellion of the peoples" who have been "denied the right to life and to human dignity."

At the center of all four speeches is the character, history, and centrality of United States commerce and foreign policy in relationship to Cuba, to Latin America, and to the rest of the semicolonial world exploited for so long by the imperialist world order. The reader is struck by the fact that



Fidel Castro and Cuban delegation host a luncheon for workers at the Hotel Theresa in Harlem, while in New York in September 1960 to address the United Nations.

the "new" world order proclaimed by Washington following the collapse of the old Stalinist regimes of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union has brought no relief from the economic and social realities documented by Castro and Guevara. The instability, inequities, and explosive social conflicts of the disintegrating old world order have only sharpened.

Turning point in revolution

Castro's trip to the United States in September 1960 to address the United Nations General Assembly coincided with a decisive turning point in the revolution.... The transition to a planned socialist economy had begun. Castro's defense of the revolution before the General Assembly captures the power—and tension—of this historic moment, as Cuba's working people took their own future in hand, knowing full-well the confrontation that lay ahead.

As the Cuban leader explains to the world through his address before the General Assembly, the conflicts with Washington began in the first months of the revolution over payments and indemnities to the U.S.-owned telephone and electrical monopolies and for land holdings affected by the first agrarian reform law adopted in May 1959....

The choice before the revolutionary government, Castro notes, was either to betray the interests of the Cuban people by abandoning the land reform, or risk aggression by the powerful northern neighbor. "As far as the president of the United States [Dwight D. Eisenhower] is concerned, of course, what we have done is a betrayal of our people," Castro says. But "he surely would not have considered it a betrayal if, instead of being true to its people, the revolutionary government had rather been true to the monopolies that were exploiting Cuba."... That was the origin of the course that Washington has pursued for more than thirty years.

In his 1964 address to the United Nations-sponsored conference on Trade and Development in Geneva, Switzerland, Ernesto Che Guevara quotes then U.S. secretary of state Dean Rusk as saying there could be no improvement in relations with Cuba so long as it represented a threat to the Americas. "That threat can be ended to Washington's satisfaction only with the overthrow of the Castro regime by the Cuban people," Rusk had said. "We regard that regime as temporary."...

Guevara's 1964 address to the Geneva trade conference details in clear and scientific terms the meaning for the great majority of humanity of the international economic institutions established at the end of World War II under the guiding hand of the all-powerful imperialist victor, the United States. Guevara's explanation of the workings of the International Monetary Fund, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank), the Inter-American Development Bank, and other such entities reads like a primer for understanding the interimperialist trade wars, the monetary and banking crises, and the political antagonisms sharpening today.

Guevara presents the inevitable economic and social consequences for countries dominated by imperialism and predicts the crushing impact of the approaching foreign debt crisis facing the underdeveloped countries. Guevara needed no crystal ball, however. He simply describes how finance capital works. The debt crisis would not be an aberration, a momentary pathological condition, disfiguring an otherwise "healthy" and beneficial relationship between the major capitalist powers and the semicolonial world, he explains. Finance capital cannot act otherwise.

Using Cuba as an example, Guevara documents the fundamentals of imperialist exploitation, explaining why "the penetration of capital from the developed countries is the essential condition" for economic dependence....

Reading this volume today helps us to better understand and act in the increasingly apocalyptic world we live. It also explains why Washington's unending "cold war" and inhuman economic embargo against Cuba go on — a backhanded tribute to the fact that the Cuban revolution lives.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interest of the Working People
September 26, 1969 Price 10¢

LOS ANGELES — Alfredo "Bear" Bryan, a 16-year-old Chicano, and Richard "Richeo" Ortiz, 15, face murder charges.

Alfredo Bryan was shot five times — three times in the back, once in the groin and once in the leg — when cops invaded the Pico Gardens housing project Aug. 19. Richard Ortiz' mother described what happened to him: "The police took my boy across the railroad tracks and beat him, and when I saw him again he was in a daze; he couldn't understand what I was saying."

A cop named Jerry Maddox died during the police invasion, and the police arrested Bear and Richeo as well as Jaime Rodríguez, John Fernández, and Marco Gutierrez. The other three were released for lack of evidence after being held for three days, but Bear and Richeo were charged with murder.

While Alfredo Bryan lay in the hospital in serious condition, about 50 Chicano residents of Pico Gardens met Aug. 23 to form the Bear and Richeo Defense Committee. A leaflet had been distributed calling for a meeting of all community residents and asking, "What really happened at the shooting?" and, "What are you, as part of the concerned community, going to do about it?"

About 600 families live in Pico Gardens, estimated by the defense committee as 70% Chicano, 20% Black and 10% Indian, Samoan and poor white. The pattern of police harassment there is well-known. Says a 28-year-old law student who lived for 14 years in the project and then returned to join the defense committee:

"You have to be careful about noise here. If your boy is in 'gang activity,' they can kick you out. You give up your privacy and personal liberty in order to live here. Not only the project cops, but also the LA police department are always hanging around, hassling you.... I was 21 before I realized the cops had no right to beat us."

THE MILITANT

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

September 23, 1944

The predatory and reactionary character of the war on the part of the imperialists and the extent to which the rotten Kremlin gang have become the imitators and accomplices of the imperialist bandits, are revealed once again in the armistice terms imposed on Rumania by the Allied governments, including the government of the Soviet Union.

Signed in Moscow on September 12, the armistice pledges Rumania to fight with the Allies until victory over Germany is won, for which purpose Rumania is required to put twelve infantry divisions in the field under the general direction of the Soviet High Command. Rumania is also required to pay to the Soviet Union, over a period of six years, an indemnity of \$300,000,000 (with further indemnities to be fixed later for the rest of the United Nations), and return all property taken from the United Nations. Further, Rumania has agreed to recognize the 1940 frontier line which gave Besarabia and northern Bukovina to the Soviet Union. These are the main points of the armistice.

Lucretiu Patrascanu, who negotiated the armistice in Moscow for the reactionary government of King Michael, said "we don't have a right to be dissatisfied with the terms." *The N.Y. Times* described the armistice as "lenient." Actually, the terms are oppressive in the established imperialist tradition.

U.S. hands off Haiti!

Continued from front page

economic and military domination of the hemisphere, and keep it safe for big-business interests.

The treatment of thousands of Haitian refugees fleeing the military thugs in Port-au-Prince — returning many of them to the hands of the Haitian military, or locking them up at the Krome detention camp in Florida and the Guantánamo prison camp at the U.S. naval base in Cuba — is the real testament to Washington's regard for the human rights of the Haitian people.

The sanctions that Washington has put in place as part of its campaign to pressure the military regime primarily hurts working people, while the wealthy profit by taking advantage of the scarcities.

Clinton is attempting to take advantage of the nearly universal condemnation of the brutal Haitian military, which is largely a creature of U.S. foreign policy, to make Washington look like the protector of the downtrodden. The White House hopes an image of defending democracy in Haiti would aid in its efforts to eventually crush the socialist revolution in Cuba. Secretary of State Warren Christopher made that clear on "Meet the Press" when he said, "We have objectives, the same objectives in those two places."

While some in capitalist circles may be nervous about the outcome of going to war against Haiti and frankly prefer the military leaders to exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, there is no disagreement among ruling-class politicians that Washington has a "right" to impose a government on Haiti that fits its strategic goals in the region. The debate is about which government — the military rulers or Aristide — can best serve the interests of imperialism and keep working-class struggle in check.

Clinton's policy toward the Haitian people can only be

described in one way — hypocrisy. On the one hand the administration denounces the Haitian government for some of the worst human rights abuses in the world. Yet, when thousands of Haitians risk their lives to flee the repression, Washington slams the border door in their face.

And who are the U.S. military planners looking to for the police force that will maintain order after U.S. invasion troops have taken over in Haiti? Many of the very same security forces responsible for the brutality in that country today. No one in Congress is calling for opening U.S. borders to Haitian refugees. And there has been no voice in government circles speaking out against the aggression aimed at undermining the socialist revolution in Cuba, which is tied to Washington's policy toward Haiti.

Working-class opposition to an invasion of Haiti has nothing in common with the Republican politicians who say that it is "not worth risking American lives" for the people in Haiti. Democratic and Republican party politicians only refrain slightly from expressing openly Ross Perot's view that Haitians would rather live under military dictators; after all, they are a people who "prefer a single, strong leader for reasons that we cannot understand." Working class opposition to U.S. war in Haiti is an expression of solidarity between fighting workers in this country and the masses of Haitian workers and peasants whose interests we share and whose struggle to rid their country of a brutal regime and bring back the Aristide government we support wholeheartedly.

Every step that the White House takes toward an invasion sets back the struggle of the Haitian people to determine their own destiny and should be met by worldwide protest. Workers and fighting youth should demand:

U.S. hands off Haiti!

Open the U.S. border to Haitian refugees!

Halt provocations against Cuba

The Pentagon just shut reporters out of its naval base at Guantánamo, Cuba, stating bluntly that the U.S. military brass will use it as a staging ground for Washington's invasion of Haiti. A few days earlier U.S. soldiers stabbed a Cuban detained there and injured others, after 2,500 people began protesting their incarceration. More than 28,000 Cubans picked up at sea are now detained at Guantánamo under inhuman conditions—on Cuban soil held by force against the wishes of the Cuban people—along with 15,000 Haitian refugees.

The already tense situation at Guantánamo Bay could become explosive as Clinton dispatches his imperial fleet off the coast of neighboring Haiti. Any incidents on the naval base or across the heavily mined border with the Republic of Cuba are more likely to be used by Washington as a pretext for military action against socialist Cuba. And U.S. federal agents are also enforcing Clinton's measures tightening the travel ban and economic embargo against the Cuban people.

In short, the White House is continuing to act on the U.S. rulers' strategic goal — unaltered for nearly 35 years — to weaken, divide, and ultimately overthrow the revolutionary government and communist leadership in Cuba.

Washington remains unwavering from this course after signing an accord on emigration with Havana.

For decades the U.S. government has used its immigration policy alongside its embargo and travel ban to squeeze Cuba economically, promote provocations like the recent hijackings and killings of navy and police officers, and attempt to foment rebellion against the government headed by President Fidel Castro — alas unsuccessfully. Washington never honored the 1984 immigration accord with Havana, while it encouraged and welcomed thousands who left Cuba illegally.

As Ricardo Alarcón correctly explained, the new immigration accord contains significant changes in U.S. immigration policy. Washington put on paper and pledged publicly to give visas to at least 20,000 Cubans wishing to emigrate per year — nearly 20 times the visas it granted yearly on average over the last decade. This eases some of the tension on the question of immigration between the two countries. The Cuban government scored some gains.

In the week-long negotiations in New York, Cuban diplomats did their best within the current relationship of forces to defend the revolution. They made some propaganda gains by countering the lies and slanders about Cuba peddled by the big-business media. They spoke on television and radio explaining the facts on Washington's latest provocations and decades-old hostile policies. They demanded the lifting of the economic and information embargo, travel ban, and Clinton's most recent measures. The White House unequivocally refused even to discuss these policies.

No wonder. The Cuban government is not about to follow the path of the regimes in Eastern Europe, Russia, or China — that is to initiate capitalist market reforms that open the door to eradicating the socialist character of the revolution and returning Havana to its "pre-Castro" status as a source of superprofits for the few through the exploitation of the vast majority. This is what Wall Street demands.

Washington knows, however, that Castro speaks for millions when he explains that "socialism or death" is the only line of defense of the Cuban revolution. The U.S. rulers main problem remains that the working class in Cuba is confident in itself and its communist leadership. The mobilizations of hundreds of thousands of Cuban working people and youth since August 5, show that the working class in its majority is capable and determined to defend the revolution and its government.

For the same reasons Wall Street hates Castro and the Cuban workers and peasants, working people the world over should defend Cuba's socialist revolution.

As U.S. aircraft carriers steam in the Caribbean off the coast of Cuba, and Cuban soil is being used to stage Washington's invasion of Haiti, supporters of the Cuban revolution must redouble our efforts to tell the truth about Cuba and build actions demanding:

U.S. out of Guantánamo!

Release all Cubans and Haitians detained at prison camps!

End the brutal economic embargo!

Repeal the unconstitutional travel ban and all restrictions in sending money to Cuban citizens!

End all immigration restrictions!

Stop the lies about Cuba!

Farm workers wage strike in South Africa

Continued from page 16

"industrial lemmings," and argued that "predictably, there are no winners."

COSATU officials complained that they were not being consulted by government ministers on matters related to the labor movement.

On September 5, Manuel announced the scrapping of a 15 percent surcharge on imported cars, and the cutting of import tariffs on the cars by 20 percent.

"We declare that tariff reform that is not preceded by proper negotiation with trade unions, agreed social adjustment programs, and a restructuring package...will be vigorously resisted," said a COSATU resolution.

Resolution on Cuba

Following a solidarity message from Salvador Valdés Mesa, second secretary of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions, delegates passed a resolution opposing Washington's embargo of Cuba.

"Comrade Nelson Mandela, during his visit to Cuba three years ago, expressed that Cuba occupies a special place in the heart of the peoples of Africa," Valdés said. "Your cause is also ours," he told the South African unionists, adding that Cuba's working people will continue to defend their revolution.

"The Cuban people have played an important role towards achieving democracy in our country," the COSATU resolution said. It called for the embargo to be lifted, and pledged that the union federation would participate in a November 21-25 solidarity conference in Havana. Among other activities, it said COSATU would "organize pickets and demonstrations at U.S. embassies to create awareness of the Cuban peoples' plight." It also called for the South African government to help COSATU with a vitamin campaign for the island.

The trade union conference vowed to make the federation financially self-sufficient. Currently, donations from unions in other countries help cover a budgetary shortfall.

The keynote international speech was delivered by Yngve Hagensen, president of the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions.

The broader demands of the working class also made their way into the convention. The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) circulated materials on September 8 — International Literacy Day — demanding "the right to learn and be trained!"

"More than half of the workers who mine South Africa's wealth are illiterate," stated a letter from NUM president James Motlatsi. "More than half the potential work force of this country is illiterate. It is a scandal, a crime of immense proportions perpetuated on black people through the apartheid system. And it is still with us."

"People aren't going to wait very long for what they need," said one delegate from the South African Democratic Teachers Union, who works in the Northwest province, formerly the Bophuthatswana Bantustan. "People want to be on par with their white counterparts who are serving in the same capacity, to be equal. I make 2,464 rand a month. White teachers in South Africa are making 4,464 rand."

"People will be patient but they also don't want talking in the sky," the teacher said. "We want to know about housing, not legal frameworks."

All COSATU national officers were reelected unopposed, including President John Gomomo and General Secretary Sam Shilowa.

All out effort needed to defend Mark Curtis

The conviction of Mark Curtis by prison authorities in Ft. Madison, Iowa, on the charge of assaulting another inmate has raised the stakes for defenders of democratic rights everywhere. This verdict is based on trumped-up evidence. The sentence is arbitrary and unusually harsh. The goal of prison authorities is clear: to break Curtis and to send a message to workers and young fighters that this is the treatment we will receive if we stand up and fight for justice. This outrage demands an immediate response.

Mark Curtis, who was framed-up by the cops for his union and political activity on false charges of rape and burglary, stands on his record of six years in prison. He is overdue for parole. The new charges against Curtis, his conviction, and the harsh penalties exacted against him are simply a means to extend the time Curtis must spend

inside prison walls, and to derail his fight to win release on parole. This is the latest attempt to break him and to demoralize his supporters around the world.

Prison officials have already received some 150 messages from unionists and political activists in the United States and around the world protesting these charges and the placement of Curtis in lockup. This kind of public scrutiny has put pressure on penitentiary officials, who dropped three of the four charges originally brought against Curtis. But the assault charge pinned on him was the most serious of them all, according to the prison rule book, and the authorities are trying to mete out as much punishment to Curtis as they can get away with.

Curtis has appealed the sentence but remains in lockup. Prison officials have less than two weeks to respond.

Now is the time for supporters of Curtis's fight for justice to reach out broadly with his case and step up the emergency effort to send protest messages to prison officials.

Striking workers and other unionists, working farmers, young activists, and other supporters of democratic rights can be convinced to shine as big a spotlight as possible on the authorities at the Iowa State Penitentiary at Fort Madison.

Supporters of Mark Curtis need to act rapidly to organize to send faxes, telegrams, and letters to the acting warden, Paul Hedgepath, and to Sally Chandler Halford, director of the Department of Corrections, demanding:

Overturn the conviction!

Release Curtis from lockup!

Parole for Mark Curtis now!

Massachusetts garment workers walk off the job

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

worker "owes the company" for not producing the quota. One woman said that on her last paycheck she had a \$27 refund. Any worker who gets too many of these can be fired.

No talks have been scheduled between the union and the company. Many workers think this could be a long strike.

than a year against the Buck Creek Coal Company.

UMWA Local 4358 strike coordinator Rudy Riva reported that the company is now negotiating with the union weekly. On August 5, a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) administrative law judge ruled that the strike at Buck Creek was an unfair labor practices strike. "The company came into court and pleaded guilty," Riva said. "Hopefully we will be going back to work October 5."

Some 80 replacement workers remain at Buck Creek, Riva told the *Militant*. According to company representatives both the striking members of Local 4358 and the 80 who are presently working will have jobs once a settlement is reached.

Although the NLRB ruling places the local in a stronger position, Riva pointed out that the real work will begin once the UMWA members return to work. "We're going to try to win some of those guys who went in to the union," he said. "Of course, some of them you'll never win. But we're confident we can win most of them."

"Today makes 523 days that we've been on strike. And we'll be there if it takes 523 more."

Vancouver city workers conduct rotating strikes

Some 3,400 members of the Vancouver Municipal and Regional Employees Union (VMREU) have been conducting rotating strikes since late June. Each day 250 members set up



Militant/Greg Rosenberg

UMWA members on strike against Buck Creek Coal Company in Indiana. After nearly a year and a half on the picket line, miners say recent ruling by National Labor Relations Board against the company may end walkout.

picket lines at specific locations in the Vancouver, British Columbia, area. Their collective agreement expired Dec. 31, 1994.

For the past three months, VMREU members at the Vancouver Museum have been on a full strike. Their picket line is reinforced daily by fellow unionists conducting the rotating strike.

At an August 30 rally attended by 600 people in support of the museum workers, representatives of the British Columbia Federation of Labor, the British Columbia Teachers Federation, Hospital Employees Union, and the Vancouver and District Labor Council brought support from their organizations to the VMREU strikers.

"What we are fighting for is basic equality in benefits and other conditions with other public sector workers," stated Michael Carney, president of the VMREU. "The problem we are running into with our employers, the city administration, is not that they don't have the

ability to pay but an unwillingness to pay. They are promoting a corporate agenda at the expense of the workers."

VMREU members have no long-term disability and employers only pay 40 percent of health benefits. Management also wants to impose a seven-day workweek, change hours of work, and is demanding what it calls flexible hours. VMREU members are fighting to defend job security and seniority rights plus win parity on pay, benefits, and vacations with other public sector workers.

The following people contributed to this week's column: Karen Ray, member of International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union Local 311 in Lawrence, Massachusetts; John Hawkins reporting from Boonville, Indiana; and Ned Dmytryshyn, member of International Association of Machinists Local 692 in Vancouver, British Columbia.

ON THE PICKET LINE

struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

One hundred eight-five members of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) Local 377 employed by Cliftext in New Bedford, Massachusetts, walked off the job September 1 after voting down the company's final contract offer. The workers rejected the proposal by a 2-1 margin.

One young stitcher, who has worked for the company the past five years, described the contract as a "slap in the face." The company's offer was a 4-cent-an-hour raise during the one-year pact. Carlos Visinho, an international representative heading up negotiations for the union, said that ACTWU offered the company a new health insurance plan that would have saved them 6 cents a hour. "We wanted that savings from the insurance given back to the workers," he stated.

All union members do picket duty every day. Most of the 185 workers are women, many from Portugal. The picket lines are large and spirited with workers chanting, "No money, no work."

Some strikers said that they can't always make the piece rate. If they don't meet the assigned quota for the week, their pay checks list what is termed a refund. This indicates how much the

The union plans to organize a leafleting campaign in front of Anderson-Little retail outlets. Cliftext manufactures men's suits under the labels of Anderson-Little, Town and Country, and Gentlemen's Wear-House.

Miners rally at Indiana Labor Day parade

More than 1,500 unionists rallied on Labor Day in Boonville, Indiana, September 5. Hundreds more lined the streets of this coal-field town to cheer the marchers on. Signs posted in yards along the route read "Union Yes" and "Labor Solidarity."

The largest contingent came from area locals of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), United Mine Workers retirees, and family auxiliaries.

The miners' determination to hold the line against company demands was evident. Many expressed concern over the coal companies' implementation of aspects of the new contract.

Elmer Brown, a member of UMWA Local 1907 at the Amax Ayrshire mine, pointed out that miners are paying more for medical coverage now than before. "They took taxes out of the \$1,000 that was supposed to cover your first \$1,000 in medical bills. After taxes you got around \$650, but you still have to pay \$1,000," he said.

One of the larger UMWA contingents came from Local 4358, which has been on strike for more

LETTERS

Questions about Russia

I would like to see more coverage in the *Militant* on economic developments in the former Soviet Union. It is hard to get any serious analysis of the extent of the changes in the basic structures of the economy in Russia since the downfall of the Stalinist regime there.

A few short items in the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* over the summer cite figures like 75 percent privatization of Russia's 20,000 medium and large firms and a projected 80-85 percent privatization of small enterprises, with 60 percent of gross domestic product coming from private enterprise. Do these figures exaggerate the impact on the economy and the state these changes are having or will have? How deeply have things like education, health care, social security — the social wage — been cut back? Are there any reports of organized resistance to these attacks?

Is there enough remaining of the economic foundations of the workers state — state ownership, centralized planning, monopoly of foreign trade, etc. — to cushion the Russian working class from the world capitalist crisis, as was the case to an extent even under bureaucratic Stalinist rule? Do Russian and Eastern European workers now face capitalism more directly, without the bureaucracy as an intermediary, essentially in the same way as workers in the capitalist countries do?



An analytical article in the *Militant* addressing these and other questions, as well as more news reports, would be very helpful.

Steve Craine
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Socialists well received

Some 1,000 farm workers and supporters attended the United Farm Workers convention in Fresno, California, September 3 and 4. Delegates came from California, Arizona, Florida, Texas, Oregon, and Washington.

The California Socialist Workers Party Campaign table was greeted enthusiastically by a number of delegates. A large sign in Spanish stating, "Stop the U.S. war drive against Cuba" drew a lot of attention. A woman from Miami bought several pamphlets on Cuba and plans to check out the Pathfinder bookstore in Miami for more information.

Several students from Fresno State stopped by to discuss politics and working together with the Young Socialists. One of them plans to drive three hours to San

Francisco September 8 to join a protest against the embargo.

The U.S. dollar circulates freely here now and the prices of many items of daily consumption approach or even exceed U.S. prices. During the 1980s the prices of basic necessities like transportation and rice and beans were kept low by government subsidies, but these subsidies have all been lifted.

Almost everything except fruits and vegetables is now imported

from elsewhere in Latin America or from the United States. Cotton, once one of the leading crops, has virtually disappeared, as a result of a sharp fall in world market price and an increase in the cost of production here. Nicaragua's foreign debt has reached \$12 billion, six times the value of everything produced in the country in a year. According to the Rector of the Central American University here, this is the highest debt-to-GNP ratio in the world.

Nicaragua

The economic crisis that many Latin American countries are suffering seems to have hit Nicaragua with special brutality. This is what I observed during a recent trip to Nicaragua. Unemployment is officially estimated at 60

percent, and in some areas, such as the Atlantic Coast, it is upwards of 90 percent. Even those with jobs often cannot survive on their wages.

The approach of both the current government of Violeta Chamorro and the Sandinista National Liberation Front is to try to reactivate the economy through foreign aid and investment and the "privatization" of those services that used to be under state control. There have been scattered protests of barrio residents and students opposing electricity bills that are 10 times higher than any received before, amounting to several weeks' wages.

Not everyone in Nicaragua is suffering, however. The owner of the Toyota dealership says he is selling one top-of-the line Land Cruiser a day in Managua.

Matilde Zimmermann
Managua, Nicaragua

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.

Farm workers strike in South Africa

BY GREG ROSENBERG
AND JAMES HARRIS

ZEBEDIELA, South Africa — "We are fighting for a living wage, for a better life for all, whether you are Black or white," Mike Thupi said. Thupi is one of 1,030 farm workers on strike here against Zebediela Citrus, a vast estate of orange groves and processing plants located in Northern Transvaal province in what used to be the Lebowa Bantustan, one of the phony homelands set up under apartheid rule.

"I'm prepared to put my uniform down only when the struggle is over," said Thupi, in response to a question on how long strikers are willing to stay out. "Tell the workers on strike in the United States we are with them," he added.

South Africa's working class is fighting to break up the racist organization of labor that was imposed under apartheid rule. A wave of strikes and protests has opened in the past several months as working people demand rapid measures to eradicate discrimination against Blacks, higher wages, vital services denied under apartheid, land, and housing. In the next several weeks protests are planned by miners, municipal workers, and others.

The Zebediela strike began August 31. The primary issue is the fight for higher pay and keeping the government-owned estate open against the bosses' attempt to close it. The Food and Allied Workers Union (FAWU), which organizes the workers, is demanding three new wage grades of 600 rand, 800 rand, and 1,000 rand per month, with the majority falling into the 600 rand classification. (1 rand=\$0.28.)

After a series of protests over the summer, including a sit-in at the Lebowa Agricultural Cooperative, which is nominally in charge of the estate, the employers agreed that all workers would be paid 593 rand per month, and said they would submit to further negotiations.

George Potlaki, a FAWU official in the Northern Transvaal, said that the bosses reneged on the agreement, claiming poverty. At the end of August the employers decided to lock up the offices located on the farm. A supervisor switched off the main electricity controlling the water pumps and motors on September 1. Hundreds of workers marched to the gates to prevent supervisors from taking equipment out of the farm, which they knew would later be blamed on the workers.

Boss murders worker

Zebediela supervisor Dick Pretorius drove to the gate, refusing workers' demands that he open his vehicle for inspection. Pretorius then took out his gun and opened fire, hitting Chauke, a temporary worker, who later died from the wounds.

On that day, workers began occupying management offices on the grounds of the estate. Members of the regional government, in which the African National Congress holds a majority, began meeting with representatives from the union and

management.

"The government elected by the people is committed to work towards a better life for all the people of the province," said a report issued by a member of the executive committee for agriculture from the African National Congress (ANC). "But it will take time to eradicate all the injustices of the past, which have made the province very poor. The situation was further aggravated by the terrible drought. That is why the new government has no money."

"Nothing has changed since the new government started," said Thupi. "If only president [Nelson] Mandela can just come down here, he can address the problem. The people [provincial delegates] taking information to our leaders aren't telling the truth. If Mandela knew, he'd come."

"When we tried to speak with provincial officials, they told us Zebediela is independently owned," said Robert Makhubele, chairman of the shop stewards at the farm. "But it's a government-owned institution. The government has to do something about it."

A majority of the Zebediela workers live on the farm in decrepit housing. Small concrete huts are topped with leaky, thatched roofs sitting on dusty courtyards. Until May, most workers earned an average of 279 rand a month. Many young people are forced to leave school to work on the estate when their parents can no longer afford to send them to school.

'They call us baboons'

About 600 workers gathered on the grounds of the administration offices here September 13 to greet the *Militant* reporters. After a series of songs in support of the ANC, workers began describing their fight.

"The bosses say we are baboons," said 63-year old Samuel Mphahlele, who has worked inside the packing facility since 1981. "These whites do not treat Blacks as human beings. When we are working, they undermine our rights. When their friends need jobs, they give them jobs. If you are injured, they don't look at you. Income benefits only management. We want an end to this. And we want a living wage."

A group of children farm workers, hopped off the back of a truck and began toying-toying, directing a chant to the boss of the farm. "Kotze has no chance," they sang. "He must give our parents a minimum wage."

"Now that we have a democratic government, there is a difference," said 23-year-old Christina Ramello, who picks oranges in the fields. "People aren't as oppressed anymore. If we had met like this before, the police would have come with dogs. Now we feel protected." Ramello completed a fifth grade education before she had to come work on the farm. She pointed out that many workers don't know how to read.

Some 775 workers are classified as permanent, the rest are temporary. Temporary workers receive even less pay than their permanent counterparts, even though they often work for months at a time. All of top management is white. There are a couple of token Black supervisors. The workers, who are all Black, speak a combination of Shongan, Shona, Northern Sotho, and Xhosa.

Production at the farm is completely halted. Railroad cars sit idle, stacked with boxes of oranges. Cleaning tubs remain filled with rotting fruit. Managers indicate they are unwilling to pay what workers demand, and intend to close the farm. Workers say they want to produce food to help feed South Africa.

Potlaki said the union rejects revenge against the bosses, who live on the farm in expensive houses surrounded by gardens. Workers have organized about 50 of their own ranks to be marshals. Their duties include preventing theft or sabotage of pumps and other equipment used in the production process.

Many of the challenges the farm workers face were discussed at the national con-



African National Congress

The more than 1,000 farm workers on strike against Zebediela Citrus are part of a wave of protests that have swept South Africa as workers demand higher wages and an end to discrimination. Above: sugar cane cutter in Natal province.

vention of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) a few days earlier. The 1,700 delegates to COSATU's congress concluded their four-day meeting in Soweto September 10. COSATU's member unions include 1.3 million workers. The Food and Allied Workers Union is one of its affiliates.

COSATU Congress

The economic devastation left in apartheid's wake was one of the issues discussed. Unemployment currently runs more than 50 percent in South Africa. Land reform has yet to begin, and some 87 percent of land remains in the hands of whites. Massive illiteracy stalks the country. Millions of working people still live on the barren stretches that were formerly apartheid's Bantustans.

Government ministers from the ANC addressed a September 8 forum during the meeting to explain their stance on the implementation of the ANC's Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP), which includes plans to build housing, carry out a land reform, and other measures demanded by the working class and peasantry.

Deputy Minister of Finance Alec Erwin, minister without portfolio Jay Naidoo, and Trade and Industry Minister Trevor Manuel all emphasized that in order to implement the RDP the government would be required to exercise fiscal restraint and workers would have to hold their demands in check. "If your finance committee is popular there is something wrong with your finances," said Erwin. "No matter how unpopular, we are going to put this country on the right track."

Unless South African industry became more competitive," emphasized Manuel, "more and more jobs will be lost."

Their speeches were met with polite applause. The Johannesburg *Star* found the mood "vibrant," but puzzled that the "predicted heated debates fizzled out."

Addressing delegates on September 9, South African Communist Party (SACP) general secretary Charles Nqakula said, "The SACP and COSATU have been together in the forefront of the struggle against the gravy train in the upper echelons of government."

"The bosses failed to elect the government they wanted," he continued. "Now they want to infect the government we elected. If we are not careful we will go quickly from a majority elected government, to a minority infected government....We are not saying that this has happened here yet. It has certainly happened in many other countries. We have a duty to make sure it doesn't happen here."

Pointing out that COSATU and the SACP will jointly convene a Socialist Conference for Reconstruction and Development in November, Nqakula said, "Socialism is about transforming the power on the markets. ...Let us use the RDP to empower workers, poor communities, rural people, and many others on the markets."

Labor Minister Tito Mboweni of the ANC received warm applause as he announced that a new labor law will be placed before Parliament shortly. The legislation calls for reducing the basic working day to eight hours and the workweek to 40 hours; no dismissal of pregnant workers; allowing workers to examine all records related to their employment; incorporating agricultural labor under the law; and granting annual vacation leave to part-time workers. If passed, the law would replace a patchwork of labor legislation set up under myriad homeland governments and provinces with one national code.

Congress resolutions emphasized the right to strike. This discussion followed outrage in the big-business press over the successful strike by 25,000 auto workers. A September 9 editorial in the *Star* referred to the ranks of the unions as

Continued on page 14

□ **The Coming Revolution in South Africa**
by Jack Barnes

□ **The Future Belongs to the Majority**
by Oliver Tambo

□ **Why Cuban Volunteers Are in Angola**
two speeches by Fidel Castro
In *New International* no. 5. \$9.00

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

