

THE MILITANT

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INSIDE

Ricardo Alarcón speaks
on elections in Cuba

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Curtis gets another 30 days taken off lockup

BY JOHN STUDER

DES MOINES, Iowa — On June 20, political activist Mark Curtis received notice from authorities at the Iowa State Penitentiary that his one-year sentence to segregated lockup has been reduced another 30 days "based on his above average behavior."

Curtis was framed up and sentenced to 25 years in prison in 1988. When he was arrested, Curtis was involved in a fight to win freedom for 17 co-workers at the Monfort meatpacking plant in Des Moines. The 17 workers, immigrants from Mexico and El Salvador, had been seized and jailed in a raid on the plant by immigration cops. A few hours after speaking out in Spanish at a public meeting to press for their freedom, Curtis was arrested, charged with rape, and brutally beaten by the Des Moines police. He has been in prison for almost seven years, where he remains a political activist, including writing a regular column for the *Militant*.

Prison authorities have repeatedly turned Curtis down for parole, despite the fact that he meets the usual criteria. Last fall, as Curtis and his supporters were preparing to press the Iowa State Board of Parole for his release, he was thrown into segregation and sentenced to one month in the "hole" and a year in lockup for allegedly striking another inmate. The real purpose of the charge and victimization

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UAW Caterpillar strike stands firm at one year

Thousands join labor solidarity march in Decatur

BY GREG ROSENBERG

DECATUR, Illinois — Members of the United Auto Workers (UAW) on strike against Caterpillar, Inc. took advantage of the one-year anniversary of their walkout to show their determination to continue the fight against the earth-moving equipment company. Several days of expanded picket-line activity and other events were followed by a march and rally of 3,000-4,000 in this central Illinois city June 25.

Caterpillar strikers and their families marching from the UAW Local 751 union hall joined two feeder marches that made their way through downtown Decatur in the baking sun. The strikers linked up with members of United Paperworkers International Union (UPIU) Local 7837, who have been locked out by A.E. Staley Mfg. for two years, and members of United Rubber Workers (URW) Local 713, whose strike recently went down to defeat when URW officials declared an unconditional back-to-work offer and took down the picket lines against Bridgestone-Firestone Corp.

"To tell you the truth," said Caterpillar striker Glen Waters of UAW Local 974 in Peoria, Illinois, as he watched hundreds of

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Militant/Greg Rosenberg

Participants in labor solidarity march in Decatur, Illinois, supporting Caterpillar strikers and other union fighters June 25. "I knew it would be a hard fight," said one striker.

Union protests erupt in Córdoba, Argentina

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Córdoba, Argentina's second-largest city, has been shaken by a new wave of union protests, including a June 24 general strike by public employees. Angry workers ransacked and set fire to the headquarters of the governing Radical Civic Union (UCR) after the legislature approved a "financial emergency law" that raises taxes and allows the provincial government to pay wages and retirement pensions with government bonds instead of cash.

Unionists report that cops arrested 250 people and fired tear gas, water cannon, and rubber bullets at demonstrators, leaving two dozen wounded, including a 75-year-old retired worker.

"Most state workers here are owed wages for April and May," said teachers union spokesperson Mario Rojas in a phone interview. "The bonds the government will pay are almost worthless for buying basic goods like food and clothing; they're only redeemable for things like paying taxes."

The Argentine economy has taken a nosedive since the beginning of the year, following the collapse of the Mexican peso last December. The resulting flight of \$8.5 billion in capital precipitated a credit crunch, a rash of bankruptcies, plant shutdowns, and record unemployment levels. President Carlos Menem's administration has cut off credit to the provincial governments — especially those led by the opposition UCR — to press them to impose harsh austerity measures on working people.

After several days of demonstrations, state employees, backed by university students, surrounded the provincial parliament

to try to block lawmakers from entering and voting on the measure. Cops dispersed protesters with tear gas and the legislators adopted the bill in a late-night session.

In response, Rojas reported, "The Coordinating Committee of State Unions called a 24-hour general strike by the eight member unions," which include the electrical workers, sanitation workers, teachers, and hospital workers. In a show of solidarity with teachers, parents kept their children from going to school.

"Five thousand workers marched peacefully on the governor's palace but were met with violent repression by the police," Rojas said. "It's the first time they've used rubber bullets against demonstrators in Córdoba." Groups of workers and youth erected street barricades but were dispersed by the cops. Some downtown shop windows were smashed.

Those who attacked the UCR headquarters included many youth and workers from the slumdwellers' organizations, who were demonstrating to demand jobs and government relief. Unemployment is rampant in the *villas miseria* (misery-villes) that surround Córdoba.

Walter Grahovac, head of the teachers union, and José Pihén, of the Union of Public Employees, condemned the administration of Governor Eduardo Angeloz for the repression. New union and student protests were planned for June 29 to demand repeal of the new austerity law and payment of public employees.

Meanwhile, in Tucumán province, police attacked a June 13 union rally when 100 workers refused to vacate the offices of the soon-to-be-privatized water utility.

Cuban youth and students invite the youth
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Cuban youth leader Alfredo Diaz (left) in Brazil building festival among oil workers who occupied refinery in a 31-day national strike.

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Okinawa: 50 years resisting U.S. military bases — page 6



20,000 Tamils march in Canada

Some 20,000 Tamil immigrants marched in downtown Toronto June 17 to show their support for Tamil self-determination. "We are asking for recognition of our own state in Sri Lanka," said Nehru Guna, a member of the Federation of Associations of Canadian Tamils. Tamils, who comprise 3 million of Sri Lanka's 17 million people, are protesting longtime political and economic oppression. Protesters said the Sri Lankan government is using international aid money from Ottawa and other regimes to finance a military campaign against Tamils. More than 35,000 people have been killed in the struggle and 125,000 refugees have immigrated to Canada since 1983.

Real wages dropped in past year

The U.S. Labor Department confirmed June 22 that wages fell 2.3 percent or 30 cents an hour — after adjusting for inflation — during the 12 months through March. The Labor Department said it was the largest drop in the eight years it has calculated these figures.

At the same time the number of workers seeking jobless benefits increased in mid-June to the highest levels in 17 months — a seasonally adjusted 395,000 people. That was the highest level since the 401,000 claims reported for the week ended Jan. 29, 1994.

D.C. inmates hold strike

Some 1,300 inmates at the Washington, D.C., prison at Lorton returned to work June 23 after holding a four-day work stoppage to protest their conditions. The strike ended after prison director Margaret Moore said she would address their demands on food preparation, visitation rights, education, and medical services. Prisoners in the U.S. capital produce \$8 million worth of clothing, license plates, and decals for fire departments in several municipalities.

Court rejects Haitian children

The U.S. Supreme Court on June 19 rejected an appeal of Washington's decision to repatriate Haitian children held at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. Lawyers from the Haitian Refugee Center charged the U.S. government with



March in Lima, Peru, protesting amnesty law signed by President Alberto Fujimori June 15. The law exonerates government authorities of human rights atrocities committed during 15 years of war against workers and peasants. Protests, including one of 2,000 June 23, demanded Congress rescind the act.

"nakedly discriminatory decisions, dressed in the guise of political expediency." Washington imprisoned nearly 17,000 Haitians at Guantánamo after they fled the military regime in their country in the spring and summer of 1994. According to the U.S. Justice Department, 362 Haitians remain in detention camps at the base, including 165 minors.

Unions strike in St. Lucia

Public service workers and teachers in the Caribbean country of St. Lucia decided June 16 to continue their strike for higher wages. The unionists are demanding a 30 percent pay hike over three years.

The chair of the government's negotiating team, Gregory St. Helen, said its offer of a 6 percent increase retroactive to 1993 would not change. St. Helen tried to pressure the unions to end their strike, saying it put negotiations under "duress." He

claimed they "should always take place in an atmosphere of calm."

General refuses arrest in Chile

The Chilean military permitted the arrest of Brig. Gen. Pedro Espinoza June 20, after initially preventing police from entering the barracks where he had taken refuge. Espinoza, sentenced to six years in prison for ordering the 1976 assassination of Chilean ambassador Orlando Letelier in Washington, D.C., was taken to a special prison for military officials convicted of human rights abuses. Gen. Manuel Contreras, who was given seven years in prison for the same crime, remained holed up in a hospital refusing arrest.

Letelier was Chile's ambassador to the United States under the government of Salvador Allende, who was overthrown in a 1973 U.S.-backed coup. Gen. Augusto Pinochet, who ruled Chile from 1973 to 1989 in a dictatorship that murdered thousands of civilians, remains head of the armed forces.

Shell drops plans to sink oil rig

Royal Dutch Shell announced June 21 it was dropping plans to sink an aging oil platform in the North Sea. The company faced protests from environmental groups and several European governments. Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor, and Margreth de Boer, the Netherlands environment minister, criticized the company. The environmental group Greenpeace said the 19-year-old rig has tons of pollutants in its rotting core.

Paris announces 'jobs' plan

French prime minister Alain Juppé an-

nounced June 23 that his government plans to eliminate social security and health benefits paid by bosses on wages of less than \$385 a week. This measure, he claimed, is to help pull the country out of the "minefield" of more than 12 percent unemployment. Among other measures that will hit working people disproportionately, Juppé also announced plans to increase taxes on consumer goods.

Hungarian minister fired

Hungary's trade and industry minister, Laszlo Pal, was fired June 22 in a dispute over the sale of the state-owned electric company MVM to international investors. Pal had spoken against the government's plans, approved last November, to break up MVM into smaller parts to sell off.

Trade unions have denounced the plan and an opinion poll released June 22 showed that 85 percent of Hungarians did not approve of the privatization plans for the energy suppliers. According to the London *Financial Times*, the government also plans to sell off the nation's gas and oil companies.

Tehran finds other oil buyers

Since U.S. president Bill Clinton's March 15 executive order prohibiting U.S. companies from commercial dealings with Tehran, the government of Iran has found new buyers for the 500,000 barrels it previously shipped to U.S. customers, according to officials of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Two huge oil corporations, French-based Total and Royal Dutch Shell, owned by British and Dutch capitalists, are competing for a billion-dollar offshore development project the U.S. company Conoco was forced to give up.

"The only question around OPEC now is who's next on the U.S. sanctions list. No one here is going to encourage, support, or go along with this kind of economic war," an unnamed Arab oil minister told the *New York Times*.

Telecom workers strike in India

Telecommunications workers in India struck for four days in mid-June against the government's plans to open the state-run telecommunications industry to private and international competitors. Unionists fear the move will mean job cuts for the 450,000 workers in that industry. India's media reported disrupted services in several states and demonstrations across the country.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

THE MILITANT

Class struggle in South Africa

Hundreds of thousands of workers marched across South Africa June 19 demanding passage of a new labor law that advances the interests of all workers. The 'Militant' provides coverage on the battles for equality as working people struggle to wipe out the legacy of apartheid. Don't miss a single issue!



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'We have taken up our children's banner'

Argentina's Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo continue fight against 'dirty war'

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL
AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina — "They talk about releasing a list of the disappeared," said Hebe de Bonafini. "We already know who the disappeared are — our children and the other 30,000. What we demand is the list of the torturers."

De Bonafini, interviewed here June 8, is the president of the Association of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, which has been fighting to expose the crimes of the military regime that unleashed a reign of terror against working people in Argentina from 1976 to 1983. The U.S.-backed dictatorship was responsible for "disappearing" and killing some 30,000 people, many of them unionists and politically active youth.

The controversy over the reign of terror continues to plague the government of President Carlos Menem. Widespread anger at official cover-up attempts is magnified by the current economic crisis and government austerity policies.

"Now they may not be torturing, but they're starving people to death. There's a lack of jobs, decent education, and health care," said Inés Ragni, a member of the Mothers from the southern province of Neuquén. She was addressing a June 8 rally at the Plaza de Mayo. The group has held vigils and rallies at this square every Thursday without fail for the past 18 years.

Exposure of 'death flights'

The latest crisis for the government erupted in March when former navy captain Adolfo Scilingo publicly admitted he had taken part in the now notorious "death flights." The military murdered hundreds of political prisoners by throwing them alive from airplanes into the ocean. A major torture center was the Navy School of Mechanics.

Menem, who has previously praised the military for their so-called dirty war, asked former torturers not to "rub salt in old



Mothers of Plaza de Mayo hold their weekly protest June 8 in Buenos Aires

wounds" by publicly confessing their crimes. Instead, he said, they should confess to their priests.

But a huge national debate broke out. To defuse the public outrage, the government announced it had a list of 1,000 disappeared and released the names of 537. A procession of other army, navy, and police officials then issued confessions. Gen. Martín Balza, the army chief, admitted the military had used methods such as "the suppression of life," as he put it, "to obtain information" from detained political activists. Some Catholic officials apologized

for the support the church hierarchy had lent the dictatorship.

"We won't accept their list of the dead," said Mercedes Meroño, a member of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, in an interview. "If they're dead, we want to know who killed them, where, and under what circumstances. And we want those murderers to pay by going to jail."

Evel Petrini explained, "My son Sergio was 21 years old. On July 13, 1977, plainclothes agents from the joint security forces broke into my house. I saw them take him away."

Government officials, Petrini said, "want to give us money for our children. They want to buy our consciousness. We won't sell ourselves."

Meroño added, "Balza isn't a democrat, he's a murderer. Let's call things by their real name."

"They talk about a 'dirty war.' But there was no war," Petrini said. "It was state terrorism. If there really had been a war, the story would have had a different outcome."

"Our children were raising a banner to end state terrorism. We have taken up their banner. Our children died for a beautiful cause," she explained. "Now we are no longer fighting for our own children. We are fighting for all 30,000."

Balza has sued de Bonafini for libel because she called him "an assassin" and said he was "covering up human rights violations." At the June 8 rally de Bonafini told the crowd, "What we're doing hurts them. It shows we're on the right track."

A weaver by occupation, De Bonafini is one of the founders of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo. Her two sons, daughter-in-law, and nephew were kidnapped, tortured, and disappeared during the dictatorship. She joined with other women who demanded to know the whereabouts of their kidnapped children, many of them students.

The military harassed and arrested the Mothers. "Three of our own members were disappeared," de Bonafini noted.

Group denounces official pardons

But they refused to be cowed or get demoralized. Their vigils grew and the organization expanded. After the collapse of the dictatorship, they denounced the pardons of military officials issued by the governments of Raúl Alfonsín and Menem.

Under pressure to accept the government's apologies and settlement offers, the group did not buckle. But some of their professional and middle-class members
Continued on Page 12

Clinton's Japan bashing no answer for workers

BY ROBERT MILLER

EDISON, New Jersey — Just a few days before Washington's trade representatives signed an agreement with their Japanese counterparts, U.S. president Bill Clinton made a campaign stop at the Ford assembly plant here where I work. The president's speech was aimed at enlisting us in his anti-Japanese crusade, and despite all the media hoopla it fell short.

"I think you can compete with anybody

chair Earl Nail who concluded his remarks saying, "We're in total support of the president, and all I ask is get us more jobs — take on the Japs." This racist anti-worker slur became the point of departure for the next day's *New York Post* headline "Prez hailed for 'taking on Japs,'" and numerous other news articles.

Racist statements of this sort weaken the union movement by breaking down solidarity among working people of different nationalities in this country and throughout the world.

Not in workers' interests

Trade "disputes" or trade wars between the imperialist powers like Japan and the United States are not waged on behalf of working people anywhere. These governments are doing the bidding of the corporations, like the Big Three auto companies in the United States.

Over the last 20 years the Japanese have shipped some 40 million automobiles to the United States, compared to the 400,000 U.S.-made cars and trucks that have been sold in Japan, according to Clinton. "It's not fair," he said to a booing crowd at the Ford plant.

But at the same time, Japan imports more U.S. goods than any country in the world except Canada. The U.S. capitalists are just not satisfied with their share of the market and they're determined to fight for more. The president of the United States does not care one bit for working people here or in Japan. By presenting half the picture, posing as the champion of jobs, and scapegoating the Japanese Clinton is setting us up to make it easier for the bosses here to attack our wages and working conditions.

These demagogic appeals are made to fuzz up the picture, to make it harder for us to see the real enemy, the real source of the attacks on our standard of living. The U.S. economy has grown for four years, productivity was up 2 percent last year and 2.7 percent so far this year, profits are near record levels, stock prices have

surged 15 percent since January. But for workers, average wages and salaries fell by more than 2 percent. The response to this needs to be struggle against the U.S. employers, not attacks on Japanese workers.

While many co-workers were taken in by the president's appeals to protect "U.S. jobs" many at this plant, which makes Ford and Mazda trucks, were not falling all over themselves to hear the president's message. Hardly any workers in my department stayed around to listen to his

speech at the staged company meeting.

Clinton is sounding more and more of the themes of the rightist campaign of Republican presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan — Japan bashing and more "America first" nationalism. Auto workers in Japan and the United States need to work toward our own deal — solidarity whenever we are under attack by the profit-hungry auto bosses.

Bob Miller is a member of UAW Local 980 at the Ford plant in Edison.

AS I SEE IT

as long as you have a fair shot," Clinton told hundreds of auto workers and management personnel June 21. He claimed that, "what I'm trying to do is not just good for the United States; it's good for them," referring to the "average working stiff in Japan."

Before Tokyo and Washington agreed to make a deal June 28, the U.S. government was set to slam 100 percent tariffs on \$5.9 billion of Japanese imported luxury cars. The sanctions would have been the largest trade retaliation in U.S. history.

The week preceding the June 28 deadline, the Japanese government drafted lists of U.S. exports on which to slap punitive tariffs as payback. The United States exports \$64 billion worth of goods a year to Japan including machinery, computers, electrical equipment, food, pharmaceuticals, and lumber.

Trade shot fired

"The U.S. government doesn't think we'll retaliate," one Japanese official told the *Wall Street Journal*, "That's not true. We're considering everything."

"Imposition of sanctions is a shot fired in one direction. When the shot is fired back, that's a trade war," a Washington trade economist cautioned to the *Journal*.

Clinton began his talk at the Ford plant after being introduced by United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 980 bargaining

Tory head maneuvers to salvage party

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — British prime minister John Major resigned as leader of the Conservative (Tory) Party June 21 and called a leadership election. To win the election in the first round, Major needs the votes of 65 percent of the Tory members of Parliament. Failing this, a second or third round will be held.

By calling a leadership contest now Major has forestalled an almost certain challenge to him in November. His move is intended to force his critics to "put up or shut up" and — he hopes — settle the internal warfare that is tearing the ruling Tories apart — particularly over the party's stance toward closer economic integration with other capitalist powers in Europe through the European Union (EU).

The last Tory party leadership change, from Margaret Thatcher to Major, was also over the question of Europe. At that time, Michael Heseltine and other senior Tory politicians moved against Thatcher because she was damaging the interests of British capital with her anti-European stance.

Opposition to Major from within the ranks of Conservative members of Parliament and party activists has intensified following the local election results in May, which resulted in a Labour Party landslide.

The first round of the Tory ballot will take place between Major and John Redwood, one of Thatcher's stalwarts, who resigned his cabinet post as secretary of state for Wales in order to run on a pro-monarchy, anti-EU ticket. But the battle has already begun among the heavyweight contenders. So far, Heseltine, president of the Board of Trade, and Michael Portillo, employment secretary, have made it known that they stand ready to run in the second round.

The Conservatives' crisis is one expression of the long-term decline of the fortunes of the British ruling class, which is wracking all the institutions of capitalist political rule in the United Kingdom. The days when Britannia ruled the waves are long gone, but adjusting to life after the empire is still something British capitalist politicians cannot face with equanimity. Hence the strife over what attitude to take toward the EU.

Big business cast its view on hopes that electing a new leader will resolve any of the problems facing the British rulers by sending the equity markets and pound sterling for a sharp fall.

On Redwood's announcement, London's main stock exchange index fell 70 points in one day. The pound hit an all-time low, falling especially heavily against the German mark.

Mark Curtis defense wins new supporters

BY BECKY ELLIS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — "Putting Mark Curtis in jail did not end the government's attempt to silence him," said John Studer, coordinator of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee from Des Moines, Iowa. Studer told 40 people attending the June 17 Militant Labor Forum here that the state of Iowa considers Curtis a "dangerous man," because after seven years in jail — the last seven and a half months in lockup — he remains an active political person.

Studer said the defense committee plans to organize a campaign during the summer and early fall to get workers, students, political activists, and human rights advocates around the world to send letters to the Iowa State Parole Board urging them to grant Curtis a parole hearing and free him. "Each obstacle that the government puts in the way of Curtis being freed makes it clearer that what they are trying to do is to silence him and intimidate other fighters," Studer explained.

Native American artist and activist Chris Spotted Eagle told the forum that he concluded from his research and experience in making a film about Indians in prison that prisons are designed to destroy the souls and break the spirits of those behind bars. He said newer facilities are designed to keep prisoners isolated so they can't organize and that the officials are constantly changing the rules to make it harder for inmates to keep a clean record.

Jeff Grab, a member of the United Transportation Union and participant in the strike against the CP-Soo Line railroad last year, sent a written message to the meeting. "I read my first Mark Curtis pamphlet right there on the picket line," he said. "Mark Curtis took a stand against this corporate tyranny and made a difference.... You can only conclude that this was the most glaringly obvious of political frame-ups that's ever been perpetrated."

Supporters of Curtis can also make use of *Why is Mark Curtis Still in Prison?*, a pamphlet recently published by Pathfinder

Press, said Tony Lane, who spoke for the Socialist Workers Party at the forum.

"The pamphlet explains the attacks that are taking place against workers today and how we can unify to defend ourselves," said Lane. "It shows the kind of political party Mark is a member of. And it shows the kind of fighter that Mark is and why he is an inspiration to other fighters."

He said that supporters of the *Militant* in Minneapolis-St. Paul sold 36 copies of the pamphlet during the recent drive to sell subscriptions to the socialist paper.

Messages were read at the forum from the Twin Cities Young Socialists, who applauded Curtis for "your tenacity, fighting spirit, and continued political work," and from Peter Rachleff, a professor at Macalester College, who said "We must stand with our brother Mark Curtis, until he breathes the air of freedom and is able to participate freely in the struggle for a new and better world." Forum participants contributed \$1000 to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

BY DANNEN VANCE

DECATUR, Illinois — The ongoing fight to free Mark Curtis found an attentive forum at actions in solidarity with Caterpillar strikers and other fighting workers here. In the course of discussions about the case many workers described



Militant/Argiris Malapanis
Cubatão refinery strikers in Brazil discuss Curtis's fight for justice May 30 after learning of it from *Militant* reporter Martín Koppel (seated second from right).

their own experiences of attacks and intimidation by law enforcement.

These struggles by the fighters attending the June 25 solidarity march and rally, and a labor conference the day before, help to show that what happened to Curtis is not unique; this is the general treatment given by the cops and courts to those who stand up for their rights. Workers' exchange of these experiences helps to build increasing support for Mark Curtis around the world.

During the two days of activities, 14 people bought copies of the pamphlet *Why*

Is Mark Curtis Still in Prison? Supporters of the defense campaign also sold a copy of the video *The Frame-up of Mark Curtis* and three copies of the pamphlet *Freedom and Justice for Mark Curtis*. Seven people endorsed the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, and nearly 50 signed up to receive additional information on the case in the future. Curtis supporters also collected \$36 in donations to the defense effort.

"The bosses will use anything they can to divide us," said Granite City steelworker Randy Troxell. "People are starting to understand this."

Curtis gets 30 days reduced from lockup

Continued from front page

was to derail Curtis' fight for parole and to attempt to break him and demoralize his supporters.

For the first seven months Curtis was held in lock up — confined to his 5' by 7' cell 23 hours a day — prison authorities refused to grant any time off his sentence to segregation. Each month he would meet with a prison classification committee to discuss his status, and each time except one the committee recommended a reduc-

tion in his sentence to lock up. The prison security director and warden rejected these recommendations. In May, for the first time, Curtis was granted a 14-day cut.

Curtis met with his classification committee again May 31. In the month since the last meeting, his counselor had died and was replaced by David Babcock. Prison psychologist Nikola Brown and Babcock met with Curtis. The third member of the committee, Mack Turner, Curtis's unit manager, was not there.

Babcock, the new counselor, started the meeting by telling Curtis that he would refuse to recommend any time reductions because of the alleged severity of the assault. Curtis pointed out that even the prison guards who filed the charges against him admitted that there were no injuries to anyone. Babcock insisted he knew better.

In the "Time Reduction Classification Review" filed with prison authorities after the interview, Babcock wrote, "This writer does not recommend a time reduction based on the seriousness of the report the subject received to take him to lock up."

In fact, the same form, given to Curtis approving the 30-day time cut, noted, "There were no injuries because of this and no one required medical treatment."

Babcock continued, "The psychologist, however, recommends a time cut. Mark Turner, Unit Manager, was contacted after the committee. He indicated that he would recommend a time cut due to subject's continued good behavior. Subject has been meeting or exceeding all unit expectations. He maintains his cell and personal hygiene in an above average manner."

With this reduction, Curtis is now scheduled for release from lockup on August 9.

Protests condemn Abu-Jamal death order

BY AL DUNCAN

NEW YORK — More than 250 mostly young people marched and rallied in Harlem June 24 to oppose the scheduled execution of political activist Mumia Abu-Jamal. The Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition of New York called the action.

Some onlookers joined the march once they learned what it was about.

Speakers at rallies before and after the march included, journalist Rosemary Mealy of WBAI radio, Conrad Mohammed of the Nation of Islam, Conseula Africa of the Philadelphia MOVE organization and the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Brock Satter from the Young Socialists, Dred Scott of Refuse and Resist, and Ed Jarvis of the Partisan Defense Committee.

"They've got courts, they've got judges, they've got jails," said Africa. "But they ain't got enough of them, be-

cause we've got the people on our side."

Africa explained the facts of the case — how as a result of a frame-up, Abu-Jamal has been sentenced to die for the 1981 murder of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. Pennsylvania governor Thomas Ridge signed Abu-Jamal's death warrant, and set August 17 as the date of execution.

Mealy also got a warm response for her remarks at the rally. "He was the voice of the voiceless, who stood up for us. Now we need to stand up for him," she said.

"I want to encourage you all to come to the August 1-7 Cuba Lives International Youth Festival, which we can use to internationalize this issue even more," said Young Socialists representative Satter. "I know in Cuba we will find thousands ready to join us in winning this fight."

In Berkeley, California, more than 600 people crowded into the auditorium of the

Martin Luther King, Jr. Junior High School June 25 to hear performances and speeches by musicians, poets, journalists, and political activists supporting justice for Abu-Jamal. Sponsored by Equal Justice USA/Quixote Center and local radio station KPFA, the event drew activists from all over the Bay Area to demand an end to the death penalty.

Al Duncan is a member of United Transportation Union Local 1445. Ellen Berman in San Francisco contributed to this article.

John Enestvedt, communist and farm activist for seven decades, dies

BY DOUG JENNESS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — John Enestvedt, a communist and farm activist for nearly seven decades, died June 14 in Renville, Minnesota. He had celebrated his 89th birthday a couple of weeks earlier.

The grandson of Norwegian immigrants who farmed in Minnesota, Enestvedt farmed in Renville County in the southwestern part of this state for most of his life. He was also a very skilled craftsman who took great pride in a number of spiral staircases he had built, especially one located in the Pathfinder Building in New York.

Enestvedt began his political activity in the 1920s as a supporter of the main organization of fighting farmers at that time, the Non-Partisan League. He also was active in Minnesota's Farmer-Labor Party. In the 1930s John was a local leader of the Farmers' Holiday Association.

Later he participated in the "withholding actions" organized by the National Farmers' Organization and in the protest activities of the American Agricul-

ture Movement.

In 1934 Enestvedt helped organize support among farmers for the Teamster strike battles in Minneapolis. Through that struggle he met the leaders of the Communist League of America who were the central leaders of the Teamster strikes. He joined the communist movement and was a delegate to the founding convention of the Socialist Workers Party in 1938.

Enestvedt remained an SWP member for as long as he was able to be active on a regular basis and continued to support the party until he died. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the Cuban revolution and continued to follow its development in the pages of the *Militant* and *Granma* to his last days.

A memorial meeting organized by his wife Edythe on June 24 drew 75 relatives and friends from the Renville area. The Socialist Workers Party will hold a meeting to celebrate Enestvedt's life and his many contributions to the struggle of working people on Sunday, July 23, 4:00 p.m., at the Pathfinder bookstore, 2490 University Ave. in St. Paul.

Why Is Mark Curtis Still in Prison?

The Political Frame-Up of a Unionist and Socialist and the Campaign to Free Him

by Naomi Craine

Mark Curtis is a union activist and socialist who was framed up by police on false charges of rape and burglary in March 1988. At the time he was involved in a struggle to defend 17 Mexican and Salvadoran co-workers arrested in an immigration raid at the packinghouse where he worked in Des Moines, Iowa.

This new pamphlet explains what happened to Curtis, and the stakes for workers, farmers, youth, and other democratic-minded people in demanding his release.

Pamphlet, \$6

Available at bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax (212) 727-0150. Or contact the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa, 50311. Tel: (515) 246-1695.

Seattle supporters raise \$\$\$ for SWP

BY KATHY WHEELER
AND SARA GATES

SEATTLE — At its June meeting, the active supporters auxiliary of the Socialist Workers Party here welcomed two new members. One is a machinist at the Boeing aircraft plant and the other an assembly worker at a food equipment factory.

The group here now consists of 11 members who meet monthly to organize political projects in support of the SWP's program and campaigns.

The meeting discussed the party's national campaign to increase monthly contributions from supporters, sympathizers, and friends to an annual level of \$150,000 by July 12 and \$200,000 by October 1. Systematic work by the active supporters group here over the past few months has resulted in 10 new contributors. Together they give \$850 per month, raising the monthly donations to \$1,570. Several longtime contributors have also raised their pledges.

The supporters group works with the Seattle SWP to reach out across the Pacific Northwest. As a result, a number of new contributors are from Portland, Oregon. Two longtime friends of the party, a social worker and a doctor, now give \$300 each month. One supporter, who donated a computer to the party a year ago, is now also contributing a monthly pledge of \$75. Another Portland contributor has suggested names of



The displays for the Pathfinder bookstore in Seattle are newly designed each month. Supporters contribute to the socialist movement through projects like this and fund-raising efforts.

others to contact for pledges. The June supporters meeting discussed ways of regularizing political contact with friends in Portland. Following the SWP's July convention, a visit will be organized there to

report on the convention's decisions and projected activities.

Mark Downs, one of the new monthly contributors, has worked as a Seattle longshoreman since 1963. Over the past year

he has demonstrated the political openings that exist to distribute Pathfinder press titles on the job. Downs has sold 18 copies of *Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs. He was inspired to sell these books to co-workers after attending a class on the book a few years ago. He said his favorite book is *Labor's Giant Step*, by Art Preis, the story of the rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO).

"I've read it three times," Downs said, "and have sold about six copies on the job. It's about resisting and fighting. It shows a way out — what a small determined leadership can do; how it can involve the whole population in the struggle, by building an alliance between the workers and the unemployed."

At its June meeting the supporters group decided to reprint a recent *Militant* article about the national fund-raising campaign and send it, along with a thank-you letter, to all monthly contributors in the region. The letter will also solicit suggestions of others who can be approached for donations.

A central aim of the active supporters auxiliary is to expand the reach of the communist movement. Jim Miller, one of the supporters, takes responsibility for such a project: making the *Militant* available on a weekly basis to people who are blind or otherwise visually impaired.

Another member of the Seattle group, Rachel Knapik, a machinist at the Kenworth truck plant, is part of the regular weekly effort to keep the Pathfinder bookstore open. She also creates a new window display each month for the bookstore. Stuart Crome, a Kenworth worker, is planning to participate in the upcoming International Youth Festival in Havana, Cuba.

Louise Goodman is the active supporter who takes responsibility for convening the monthly meetings. Commenting on the scope of the active supporters auxiliary, Goodman remarked, "Most important are the projects that we take on as a group that raise money for the party and its campaigns. We are more than individuals who do specific projects on our own."

The group's next project is a rummage sale to raise funds to help young activists in the region attend the SWP convention July 8-12 in Oberlin, Ohio.

Workers, activists snap up 'Militant'

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

"Are you with the *Militant*?" asked a Caterpillar striker at a United Auto Workers Local 974 picnic in Peoria, Illinois. "I used to get the paper and I want to renew my subscription." He pulled out \$15 and renewed on the spot.

His response illustrates the opportunities to keep getting the socialist press into the hands of fighting workers and youth.

Supporters of the *Militant* sold 138 single issues, 13 subscriptions, and 1 copy of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* at the June 25 solidarity march and rally in Decatur, Illinois, and the labor conference there the day before.

Strikers and their supporters bought several Pathfinder Press titles as well, including *Labor's Giant Step* by Art Preis, which details the rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations. Participants at the events bought 15 Pathfinder catalogs. Supporters of the *Militant* from Toronto and Montreal participated in the People's Summit (P-7) organized in Halifax, Nova Scotia, as a week-long counter-action to the G-7 Summit. They sold 15 subscriptions and 5 copies of *New Internationalist* in English and Spanish at the events.

Many participants bought the subscriptions to get the *Militant*'s consistent coverage on Cuba. NSCuba, the local solidarity committee, hosted a Cuban delegation of Barbara Sarria and Paulino Mesa from the Cuban Communications Workers Union and Clara Alonzo from the Federation of Cuban Women. The Cubans spoke at several workshops during the P-7 events. Eight young people there signed up for more information on the Cuba Lives youth festival.

Two supporters of the socialist press in Atlanta, Georgia, traveled to Ashland, Alabama, June 15 to sell at the Tyson poultry plant where Christopher Johnson works. Johnson, a 25-year-old Black worker, was indicted on June 1 on a federal charge of arson in connection with the Aug. 6, 1994, fire that destroyed Randolph County High School in Wedowee, Alabama.

The team talked to a couple dozen workers and sold six issues of the *Militant*. Several workers said they thought Johnson was getting a raw deal. That evening the sales team went to a candlelight vigil in Wedowee and sold several more copies of the *Militant*.

Supporters of the *Militant* from Newark, New Jersey, participated in the Eighth Annual Peace Action Congress (formerly Sane/Freeze) at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey. They sold three *Militant* subscriptions and four single issues. Conference participants bought

\$70 worth of literature, including *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism* by Carlos Tablada and *The Jewish Question* by Abram Leon. Six Pathfinder catalogs were also sold at the conference.

A 14-year-old high school student decided to purchase a subscription when she saw the paper again at the peace conference. She had purchased a single copy of the *Militant* at the April 9 Rally for Women's Lives in Washington, D.C.

At the June 25 Gay Pride parade in New York supporters from Newark sold nine single issues of the *Militant*, one subscription and two Pathfinder titles — *To Speak*

the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' Against Cuba Doesn't End and *Why Is Mark Curtis Still In Prison?*

We invite our readers to continue helping to get out the truth about working-class struggles — from supporting the Caterpillar strikers, to building the Cuba Lives youth festival, to joining the campaign to prevent the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal — through the pages of the *Militant*.

David Marshall in Peoria, Mary Ellen Marus in Toronto, Linda Joyce in Atlanta, and Eric Simpson in Newark contributed to this article.

Summit supports Nation of Islam march

BY SAM MANUEL

HOUSTON — Support for a Nation of Islam-sponsored Black males-only march on Washington, D.C., dominated the discussions at a conference of the National African American Leadership Summit (NAALS) held here June 9-11. The 100 participants in the meeting also launched an emergency protest effort to halt the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal by the state of Pennsylvania. Jamal was framed up and convicted for the 1981 fatal shooting of a Philadelphia cop.

At an opening press conference, NAALS convenor Ben Chavis said the march of Black men would be "a powerful response to the right-wing direction" of U.S. politics and to the Republican "Contract with America."

Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan has traveled the country for more than a year now speaking to all-male audiences to gain support for the march. The Nation of Islam has said it will organize 1 million Black men to go to Washington for the October 16 event.

This was the fourth meeting of NAALS. The group was first convened last August by Chavis, then executive director of the NAACP. Its meetings have been picketed by some Jewish organizations that charge that the inclusion of Farrakhan legitimizes anti-Semitism.

Chavis was fired and several of his supporters were removed from their positions last fall by a majority of the NAACP board members who opposed his political alliance with Farrakhan. Several prominent Black politicians and labor and civil rights officials who attended the first meeting of NAALS have been absent at its subsequent meetings.

Farrakhan was the featured speaker at a

public rally held in conjunction with the conference. In his speech to a crowd of 600, Farrakhan focused on the Washington march. The event has not received the support of any other national civil rights or labor organizations, or of any liberal capitalist politicians to date. "We will organize the masses whether others come along or not," Farrakhan declared.

"We owe it to our women to be on the front line of battle," Farrakhan told the rally. Black women could show support for the march by "staying home and teaching our children about our true history," he added.

"I am also calling upon Black men to

register to vote," Farrakhan told the rally. "But we must register to vote as independents and give our votes to those who support our interests," he said. The Nation of Islam leader called on those present to support the legislative proposals of the Congressional Black Caucus on government reparations to Blacks for slavery, and in opposition to the crime bill. He also said the government should make idle lands available to Blacks to farm and build factories for manufacturing. Farrakhan demanded that the government "halt the export of jobs and manufacturing to Third World countries and make them available to the Black community."

NOW prepares for July conference

BY PAT SMITH

Abortion clinic defenders, supporters of affirmative action, and other women's rights activists will meet July 21-23 in Columbus, Ohio, for the 1995 National NOW Conference. The National Organization for Women gathering will mark the 75th anniversary of the constitutional amendment that guarantees women the right to vote and will continue discussions on the organization's campaign for an Equal Rights Amendment, defense of abortion clinics, and the 1996 elections.

Organizers expect 2,000 participants to take up these issues at more than 30 workshops and programs. The event follows the successful April 9 Rally for Women's Lives, which drew tens of thousands to Washington, D.C., and a NOW-sponsored Young Feminist Summit beforehand that hundreds of youth turned out to.

The Columbus NOW chapter is organizing a march and rally Saturday, July 22,

demanding: end violence against women, stop antiabortion violence, stop the war on poor women, and stop the "Contract on America."

"Ohio NOW activists and abortion rights supporters are already working hard to defeat House Bill 135 in the Ohio Senate, which is designed to outlaw a medically safe and necessary abortion procedure used in emergency situations to save the life of the woman," said Ohio NOW president Betsy Marshall.

Ada Deer, assistant U.S. secretary for Indian affairs; Angela Jorden Davis, Rainbow Coalition board chair; and NOW president Patricia Ireland will be speaking.

Registration fees are \$65 for NOW members and \$75 for non-members, with a sliding scale available for members.

For more information, contact Columbus NOW at (614) 276-5017, NOW's Action Center in Washington, D.C., at (202) 331-0066, or your local NOW chapter.

Okinawa: 50 years resisting U.S. bases

BY HILDA CUZCO

The unveiling of a black granite monument in Mabuni, Okinawa, June 23 marked the 50th anniversary of the fierce, three-month battle that ended with Washington's seizure of the island from Tokyo toward the end of World War II. The granite markers, engraved with the names of 234,183 people killed, include not only Japanese names but also those of U.S. soldiers who died in combat. In contrast, only the names of U.S. troops appear on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington.

Okinawa, less than half the size of Rhode Island, had been a colony of Japan since the late 1800s. Under direct U.S. occupation from 1945 to 1972 the island was turned into Washington's strongest military bastion in the western Pacific. Today, 27,000 U.S. troops remain on bases that take up 20 percent of Okinawa. For decades the island's residents have resisted this occupation of their home.

Some 545,000 U.S. troops, backed by 12,000 aircraft and 1,600 ships, stormed in Okinawa in April 1945. They fired 7.5 million shells and 30 million bullets over three months, in an invasion bigger than the D-Day assault in Europe. Most of the more than 200,000 Japanese and other residents of Okinawa killed during the invasion were civilians. Those who hid in caves and refused to come out were burned out with flame throwers or buried alive when the U.S. troops used explosives to seal them inside. Korean and Taiwanese immigrant workers were among those slaughtered. Some 14,000 U.S. troops also died in the fighting.

History of imperialist domination

The bloody battle of Okinawa came shortly before Washington ordered the atomic bombing of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, where nearly 150,000 people perished instantly.



Police in riot gear attack a student demonstration in Japan, 1968. The student movement in Japan demanded an end to U.S. war in Vietnam and return of Okinawa.

Far from serving the interests of workers and farmers in Japan or the United States, the war in the Pacific was a struggle for political and economic domination of the region between the ruling families of those countries. Tokyo had seized the Ryukyu Islands, which include Okinawa, from China in 1874; won the Kurile Islands from Russia in 1875; and colonized the Bonin Islands in an agreement with the United States and Britain in 1875 on its road to becoming an imperialist power.

In 1894, after a war with China, the

Japanese government took Formosa, the Pescadores Islands, and the Liaotung Peninsula in south Manchuria as colonies. The Liaotung Peninsula was later returned to China. Taiwan was formally annexed to Japan in 1895, and Korea in 1910.

The U.S. rulers also targeted the Pacific for their colonial expansion. Washington invaded Hawaii in 1893 and formally annexed the islands in 1898. During the 1898-99 Spanish-American War, Washington grabbed Wake, Guam, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. It took almost 10 more years and 40,000 lives for the U.S. government to crush the Filipino guerrilla struggle for liberation.

After capturing Okinawa at the cost of the lives of one third of the civilian population, the Pentagon built 120 bases and

stationed tens of thousands of troops there. Nuclear arms and other heavy weaponry, as well as nerve-gas, were stockpiled on the island. In the late 1960s there was an upsurge in resistance by Okinawans to their country being used as a garrison and weapons dump. Under pressure, the U.S. government announced it would begin removing the nerve-gas in 1969.

Resistance by workers and youth

Labor struggles intensified under the occupation despite repressive laws. The U.S. government imposed a law denying 20,000 workers directly employed at the U.S. bases the legal right to strike, or up until 1968, even carry out collective bargaining. In one 1969 incident, U.S. military police, armed with bayonets, wounded 10 strikers from the All Okinawa Military Employees union during a one-day work stoppage by 30,000 demanding a wage increase and the reinstatement of 150 fired workers.

A growing Japanese student movement developed as well. The youth opposed the U.S.-Japan Security treaty, demanded the return of Okinawa and removal of U.S. bases from Japan, and protested the war in Vietnam. In 1969, student actions in Japan closed 46 colleges and universities with seizures, strikes, and blockades. Fearing more explosive demonstrations, the Japanese government passed a law cracking down student protests.

Under the pressure of these struggles, the Ryukyu Islands were reverted to Japan on May 15, 1972. However the terms of the reversion did not give Japan the complete sovereignty over the area. Several thousand demonstrated outside the official ceremony protesting the terms of the agreement.

Many Okinawans continue to oppose the presence of the U.S. military forces and bases. "I want to erase war by all means. And for that, I want to see the removal of the American bases," Choji Kobashigawa, a survivor who spent a month during the invasion hiding in a culvert with his family, told reporters on the 50th anniversary of the battle.

Nagasaki survivor denounces nukes

BY ROBERT MILLER

MADISON, New Jersey — Shigetoshi Iwamatsu, who survived the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, Japan in 1945, spoke at Drew University here June 24. He was participating in Peace Action's three day national conference, "50 Years After the Bomb: Empowering the mandate for peace and justice at home and abroad."

Iwamatsu is the chair of Japan's largest anti-nuclear organization, Gensuikin, the Japan Congress Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs.

More than 100,000 people were killed in the Aug. 6, 1945, atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Three days later U.S. planes dropped another bomb on Nagasaki, killing up to 40,000. An additional 100,000 people later died due to effects of the bombings.

Iwamatsu was 17 in 1945 and "compelled to work at a factory producing military goods for the government," he told the New Jersey audience of 200. At 11:02 a.m. on August 9, an extremely bright flash of light burst through the factory, one tenth of a mile from the epicenter. "All the windows were smashed and fragments flung everywhere. Many were killed instantly, most died later that night," he said.

In a 1982 issue of the *Bulletin of the*

Atomic Scientists, Iwamatsu wrote, "The American crime of dropping atomic bombs on two Japanese cities is without parallel in world history." Iwamatsu also wrote that "imperialist Japanese attacks on Southeast Asia were extremely serious war crimes, which cannot be nullified by the US crime of dropping atomic bombs." Because of his views, Iwamatsu has received threats from ultra-nationalist and right wing extremists in Japan.

"It was impossible for us to inform the rest of Japan" of the full horror of the atomic bombing in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, he continued, because this was against the U.S. occupation policy. "We tried by word of mouth — in vain."

Iwamatsu explained that the anti-nuclear movement in Japan really started in 1954 in response to nuclear weapons tests in the Bikini islands. Radioactive fallout, he said, began to show up in the bluefish set on tables in Tokyo.

Iwamatsu said nuclear weapons must be abolished and nuclear testing suspended. He pointed out that Koreans, Chinese, and former war prisoners are not covered by compensation laws. Among those killed in Hiroshima were 30,000 Koreans forced to work in munitions factories.

The veteran activist concluded, "No nuclear weapons, no nuclear plants."



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

By Sara Lobman

Pathfinder is reissuing several out-of-stock titles with new covers and new type. *The Case of the Legless Veteran* by James Kutcher has been completely redesigned and is now available for shipping. Kutcher, a worker who lost both legs in World War II, was fired by the Veterans Administration in 1948 for being a member of the Socialist Workers Party. The attack, part of the government's anti-communist witch-hunt, sparked an eight-year battle that drew support from thousands of unionists and other supporters of democratic rights. In 1956 Kutcher won back his job and pension, along with back pay.

In *The History of American Trotskyism*, which will be available in early July, James P. Cannon recounts an important chapter in the effort to build a proletarian party in the United States. In this series of 12 talks given in 1942, Cannon focuses on the period following the expulsion from the Communist Party in 1928 of those who supported the fight led by Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky to continue V.I. Lenin's communist course. He takes the story up to 1938, when these communists joined with other working-class fighters to found the Socialist Workers Party.

Marxism and Terrorism, formerly *Against Individual Terrorism*, will also be off the presses in early July. In four selections written between 1909 and 1939, Trotsky answers those who slander the revolutionary working-class movement as "terrorist."

He explains that it has been the capitalist rulers—whether through fascist tyranny or the use of their police forces and armies under bourgeois democracy—against whose terror an outraged majority eventually rises; why the work-

ing class is the only social force capable of leading the overthrow capitalism and beginning the construction of a new society; and why acts of individual terrorism, whatever their intention, relegate the true makers of history to the role of spectators and open the workers movement to provocation and victimization.

Pathfinder's French- and Spanish-language publishing program is also moving ahead. *En defensa del marxismo* (In defense of Marxism) by Leon Trotsky will be off the presses by the end of June, as will the French-language *La deuxième déclaration de La Havane* (The Second Declaration of Havana).

Dag Tirsén, a Pathfinder sales representative from Stockholm, made a recent sales trip to Lund, Sweden, and Copenhagen, Denmark. In all, some 10 bookstores and libraries ordered 87 books and pamphlets. "*Lenin's Final Fight* got a good reception. One or two copies were included in most orders," Tirsén noted. "*Out Now! A Participant's Account of the Movement in the United States against the Vietnam War* was a good seller, as well as *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*."

The top 25 best sellers for the first half of 1995 include: *Lenin's Final Fight*; *Why Is Mark Curtis Still in Prison?* by Naomi Craine, in both English and Spanish; *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels; *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* by Engels; *From Lenin to Stalin* by Victor Serge; *Nothing Can Stop the Course of History* by Fidel Castro; *Malcolm X on Afro-American History*; and *Fascism: What It Is and How to Fight It* by Leon Trotsky.

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James P. Cannon
WRITINGS AND SPEECHES, 1942-43
The Socialist Workers Party
in World War II

NEW INTERNATIONAL
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A MAGAZINE OF MARXIST POLITICS AND THEORY

Imperialism's march toward fascism and war
Defending Cuba, defending Cuba's socialist revolution
MARY-ALICE WATERS

Communists meet in Canada, defend Cuban revolution

BY ROBERT SIMMS

TORONTO — Union members, students, youth, and other political activists gathered in this city May 20-22 to participate in the fourth convention of the Communist League in Canada. In addition to the 34 convention delegates, international guests came from the United States, Britain, and France.

Michel Prairie, editor of the Marxist magazine *Nouvelle Internationale*, gave a report proposing measures to strengthen the League's capacity to fight together with others against the capitalist rulers' attacks on working people, advance the party's work in the unions, and win a new generation of young fighters to the communist movement. A supplementary report by Susan Berman centered on defense of Cuba's socialist revolution, the single biggest opening for building the communist movement today.

Prairie pointed to a series of recent events that showed the worldwide resistance of working people to the capitalist rulers' attacks, from the 30,000 strong nine-day rail strike in Canada to the growing mass participation in the freedom struggle in Northern Ireland.

These new political developments are not simply conjunctural, Prairie said, but reflect the mounting class tensions and volatility of world politics that is rooted in the economic and social crisis of the capitalist system. Despite the fact that the organized labor movement is still in retreat, Prairie added, these developments attest to the modest but important increase in openings to participate in political protest activities with others and recruit to the communist movement.

Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the *New Internationalist* magazine, was the featured speaker at a Militant Labor Forum on the eve of the convention on "Cuba and the 'Special Period': How Workers Use Their Socialist Revolution to Fight the Effects of the International Crisis of Capitalism."

Defending socialist Cuba

Berman, an auto worker in Toronto and member of the Communist League Central Committee, pointed out in her report that it is workers and youth involved in fights against the rulers' attacks who are most open to looking to the example of working people in Cuba and their achievements. Berman gave the example of gold miners in Yellowknife, Northwest Territo-

ries, who while on strike for 18 months in 1992-93 were brutally attacked by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the capitalist press and the government.

"When members of the Communist League worked with them to oppose the frame-up of miner Roger Warren, falsely accused and convicted on murder charges, several former strikers pointed out that Cuba got the same treatment from the ruling rich as they had," Berman said. Several of the unionists bought copies of the Pathfinder book *To Speak The Truth*, a collection of speeches by Cuban leaders Fidel Castro and Che Guevara.

U.S. imperialism will be hostile to Cuba as long as its revolutionary working class and communist leadership continues to stand up against Washington and defend Cuba's socialist character, she pointed out. That's why attacks against the Cuban revolution, like the bill sponsored by Sen. Jesse Helms in the U.S. Congress to further tighten the trade embargo against Cuba, will continue.

Ottawa hostile to revolution

"The Canadian government and Canada's capitalist ruling families are just as hostile to the Cuban revolution," Berman affirmed. "Their willingness to trade with Cuba reflects only a difference in tactics on how to undermine the revolution and at the same time protect their worldwide commercial interests."

Some forces in the Cuba solidarity movement argue against the Helms bill on the grounds that some of its provisions threaten to punish other capitalist countries that trade with Cuba and are an "attack on Canada's sovereignty," Berman said. But "workers have no interest in defending the sovereignty of imperialist Canada's billionaire ruling families," she noted. Their interest is in defending revolutionary Cuba's sovereignty from imperialist attacks.

In many cities across Canada there are several Cuba committees working on specific projects. "Whenever possible, we should work for their success, take on responsibilities, and help lead them," said Berman. "At the same time," she added, "our long-term goal is to overcome the fragmentation of the Cuba solidarity forces through united, broad, and non-exclusionary actions, and the development of citywide and regional coalitions."

The convention voted to make building



Militant/George Rose

Toronto picket against Washington's policies toward Cuba, August 1994. Convention participants reaffirmed their commitment in defense of the Cuban revolution.

the largest possible contingent from Canada for the "Cuba Lives" International Youth Festival its top priority. This event will be held from August 1-7 in Havana and other Cuban provinces.

In his report Prairie explained that "taking full advantage of these openings is the biggest challenge facing the communist movement internationally today." The 15-year retreat of the unions and social protest movements in the imperialist countries in face of the rulers' attacks has had an impact on the communist movement and how it is organized.

Prairie's report outlined a shift in how local units of the Communist League are organized in order to better meet the new political openings.

He proposed that meetings of local branches be moved off the weekends and that Communist League members work together to get out of jobs that require permanent afternoon shift work.

These two measures, he explained, will open the door to all branch members participating in political activities and coalitions that usually take place during the evenings and on weekends. They will also enable party members to spend more time in informal discussions with youth and co-workers interested in socialism.

Prairie also proposed that branch members renew their efforts to get industrial jobs where two or more communists can work together in the same plant and union local in order to strengthen their capacity to function collectively.

And finally, he proposed that branch executive committees meet a day or two after branch meetings to ensure the implementation of membership decisions — instead of concentrating their work on preparing the next branch meeting as had become the norm. This shift can help the branches to break away from routinism and collectively draw on the political imagination, initiative, and activity of the entire membership.

One proposal adopted at the convention gave the Montreal branch political responsibility for organizing the international team of volunteers working to expand the publication of French-language communist literature, a crucial aspect of building a revolutionary party in Canada.

"Taken together, these steps amount to a 'second turn,'" Prairie said, referring to

the decision made by communists in the late 1970s to have a large majority of their members focusing their work in industry and being members of industrial unions.

"In our movement, this radical reorganization was called the turn to industry. The second turn, like the first, is essential to our strategic goal of building a mass working-class party capable of leading our class in the struggle to take political power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers and forge a revolutionary government, like that in Cuba, that fights to build a world free of exploitation and oppression."

Talking socialism on the job

A delegate from Montreal described some of the openings at the Canadair aircraft plant to bring the political activities socialist workers are participating in into political life in the factory. "Two of our co-workers took part in the demonstration against the rightist Human Life International, we had all kinds of discussions about the action, and our sales of the *Militant* really jumped," she said. Some 10 copies of the socialist weekly were sold in that week, along with one subscription and a copy of the *Communist Manifesto*.

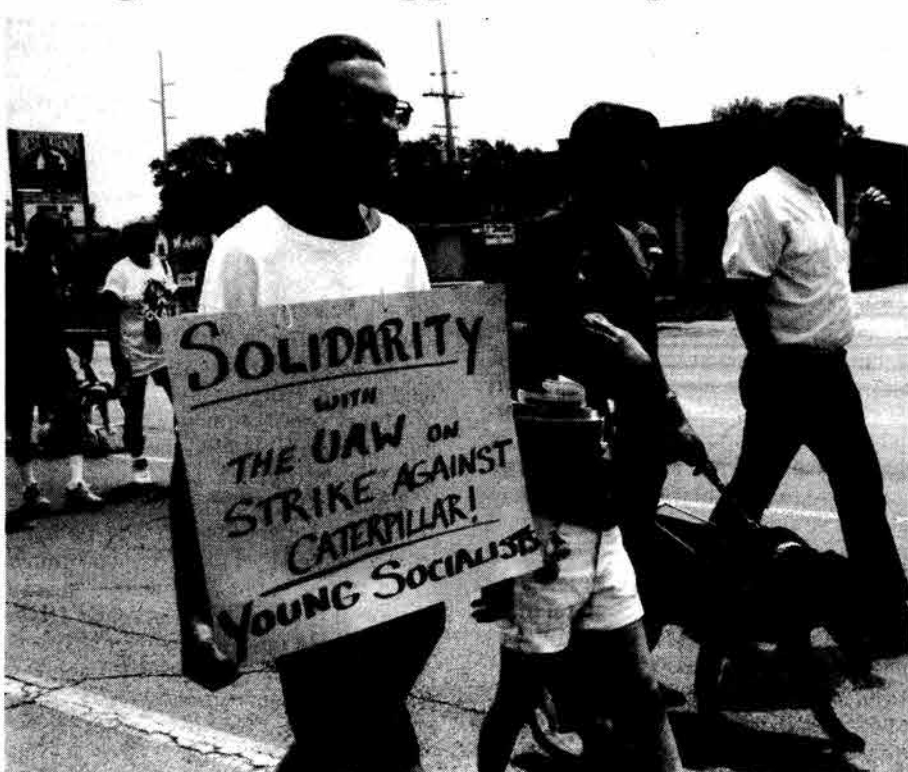
That delegate pointed out that most of the coalition's activities took place in the evenings. Communist workers at Canadair and elsewhere will have to make whatever adjustments are necessary to overcome the obstacle permanent afternoon shift jobs create to participating in such activities, she stressed.

A special event was held to celebrate the publication of the fifth issue of the French-language magazine *Nouvelle Internationale*, containing the articles "Imperialism's March Toward Fascism and War" and "Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution."

A Socialist Publication Fund of CAN \$16,000 was launched to run from May 21 to September 4 in order to help cover the editorial costs of producing five new pamphlets in French by Pathfinder Press.

The convention sent greetings to the Cuban Communist Party and the Union of Young Communists in Cuba, to framed-up unionist and jailed socialist activist Mark Curtis in Iowa, and to framed-up and jailed unionist Roger Warren and his fellow victims of capitalist injustice in Yellowknife, Al Shearing and Tim Bettger.

Young Socialists support Caterpillar strike



Militant/Greg Rosenberg

Members of the Young Socialists from throughout the Midwest, and as far away as Seattle, traveled to Decatur, Illinois, with others that they have been working with for a June 25 march of several thousand in solidarity with the United Auto Workers strike against Caterpillar. Starting off the weekend with a barbeque in Bloomington, Illinois co-hosted by the the Socialist Workers Party, YS members also participated in a "War Zone" labor conference.

Protests hit plan to close L.A. hospital

BY CRAIG HONTZ AND HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — Responding to Wall Street demands, Los Angeles County officials are moving to "balance the budget" with staggering cuts in social services. These include the proposal to shut down the Los Angeles County general hospital. With a staff of 9,000 the facility handles 60,000 patients a year, 40 percent of whom are uninsured and unable to pay for their care. It has the busiest emergency room in the nation.

County workers responded to the announcement with a picket and rally of 1,500 at the hospital. In a follow-up action, 1,000 marched in downtown Los Angeles and then jammed into a public meeting of the county's Board of Supervisors.

The county projects laying off 18,255 workers — 12,627 from health services and 2,339 from social services. Welfare offices would be closed one day of the

week. Officials said this would mean an 18-week wait to get an appointment to apply for assistance. More than a dozen county libraries and 30 county parks will be closed.

"I have coverage, and my parents have a medical plan," said a demonstrator who works at the medical center. "But my one daughter doesn't have a job and neither she nor my other daughter have medical insurance. The county general means a lot. People who don't have money have no place else to go."

One demonstrator, walking with obvious difficulty, said he's a jobless maintenance engineer and his legs have been damaged by diabetes. He came in a union bus caravan with several hundred workers from High Desert Hospital at the northern tip of the county. "If High Desert closes, I'd probably have to do the 60 miles down to here to continue my rehab treatments," he explained.

Conference on Che held in Matanzas

BY LUIS MADRID

MATANZAS, Cuba—"Che has often been known as a virtually sacred, inaccessible human being," said Diosmedes Otero at the opening session of the "International Scientific Workshop: International Dimension of the Life and Work of Che," held here June 19-22. "But what interests us," continued Otero, who chairs the Social Sciences Department at the University of Matanzas, "is to discuss Che's work, his life. In history one cannot project toward the future without knowing the past."

Argentine-born Ernesto Che Guevara became one of the central leaders of the July 26 Movement and Rebel Army, which led Cuban workers and peasants to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictatorship on Jan. 1, 1959. In the early years of the revolution he took on some of the most important responsibilities in the new government, including heading the National Bank of Cuba and the Ministry of Industry.

In the mid-1960s Guevara left Cuba to help advance the anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggle developing in the Southern Cone of Latin America. He was captured by the Bolivian army in a CIA-organized operation on Oct. 8, 1967, and murdered the following day. In the course of his work Che always sought to organize Cuban workers and farmers along a line of march that could lead to increased communist consciousness and self-confidence, as well as growing productivity and a higher standard of living.

It was this rich legacy that the nearly 40 participants in the Matanzas conference, including professors and supporters of the Cuban revolution from Argentina, Canada, Ecuador, Italy, and the United States, drew on in their four days of discussion.

One of the themes that ran through the conference debates concerned the "crisis of values" in Cuba today, particularly among youth. Delia Reyes, who teaches at Havana's José A. Echeverría Higher Polytechnical Institute, argued that its roots cannot simply be traced to the collapse of the regimes of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

This crisis did not "begin with the special period" either, she added. "Special period in peacetime" is the name given to the measures put forward by the Cuban government and Communist Party to try to meet the economic and social conditions created by the severe decline of production that followed the abrupt cutoff of aid and trade at preferential prices with the former Soviet Union.

The collapse "has shocked our youth; we are disoriented," stated Reyes, warning that in Cuba there were some who "would like us to go as a herd of sheep toward

capitalism." Other participants raised similar concerns in their presentations, as they debated how to defend the socialist foundations of the revolution.

The "negative effects that result from the introduction of capitalist mechanisms" into Cuba's economy, the "rescue of Che's legacy," and "the crisis of dogmatic Marxism" were among the themes that permeated all the discussions and were debated in exchanges during the conference.

"Social values are an expression of class interests, they cannot be abstracted from the property relations we defend," said Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *New Internationalist*, published in New York. Values are not simply ideas, she argued, adding that the new man and the new woman so often talked about in Cuba aren't created by being taught a set of lessons. They create themselves in the course of the struggle to transform society—that is what Che understood and fought for. At the conference Waters also presented a paper entitled "Che and the Imperialist Reality."

Cuban army brigadier general William Gálvez, author of several books on Guevara, spoke at the gathering of the upcoming release of his newest title, *El sueño africano del Che* (Che's African Dream), based on major excerpts from Che's diary during the months he spent in Africa in 1965. "It describes the history of a deception," said Gálvez, arguing that at



Militant/Luis Madrid

Conference participants: army general William Gálvez, left, and Diosmedes Otero.

the heart of the difficulties faced by the Cuban internationalists led by Guevara in the Congo three decades ago was an organizational "chaos" and the absence of most leaders of the liberation organizations from the front lines of battle. Given the revolutionary upsurge of anticolonial struggles on the African continent and elsewhere at the time, Gálvez explained, Che was still convinced he "had to fight alongside these comrades."

Also featured at the conference was a biographical video entitled *Che: amigo, compañero* (Che: Friend, Comrade) by Roberto Massari.

"Che's thought and the current he developed" are essential to effectively combat capitalist domination, said Fernando Martínez, from the Center for Study of the Americas, in his presentation. But they are also essential for the transition to socialism, he added.

"Now more than ever it is necessary to reconquer Che's example, his action, and his thought. But I also think it is more likely that today we can do it," Martínez stressed. Noting the discussion's breadth and forthrightness, he underlined, "it would have been impossible to hold it eight years ago."

Workshops in Cuba discuss economy

BY ERNIE MAILHOT

CAMAGÜEY, Cuba—The "University of Camagüey International Workshop on Social Sciences and Humanities" was held here June 19-21, with several dozen professors and students from the University of Camagüey and 11 participants from the United States.

A keynote talk on José Martí, a leader of Cuba's final war of independence against Spain, was given by Luis Alvarez, director of the Nicolás Guillén Center. This was followed by four workshops on themes that included culture and national identity, education, and contemporary social and political thought.

Some of the North American participants in the discussion on social and political thought expressed the view that capitalist economic methods are both necessary and desirable in today's Cuba. Others rejected this view. A presentation on the U.S. rulers' attacks on working people and how this affects Cuban-Americans, who are in their vast majority workers, also elicited much interest.

In a separate discussion, Flor de María Fernández, a University of Camagüey professor who chaired the "Contemporary Social and Political Thought" workshop, said she had noticed a slightly higher interest in the study of Marxism among her students. She and other Cuban teachers said that since the collapse of the Soviet and Eastern European regimes they have revised their courses and the discussions are now more lively. This increased interest among some has occurred at the same time that other students very openly express their dislike for the required courses on "scientific socialism."

The high point of the conference came when it moved for a day to a cooperative farm on the outskirts of Camagüey.

Mario Meléndez, from the cooperatives' regional leadership, explained that this credit and service cooperative is made up of 47 private farms whose owners pool their labor and equipment. The 97 members work mainly in dairy production.

In their last production year the cooperative produced 300,000 liters of milk to fill its state quota, which is used mainly to supply day-care centers and schools.

The cooperative also produces milk, cheese, butter, and other dairy products for its own use.

The limited supplies of milk are made available to children and the elderly. For this reason the sale of milk is not allowed on the agricultural markets. Other crops from this cooperative, such as root vegetables and fruits, are sold there, however.

Since the former Soviet Union cut off most of its aid to Cuba and trade at preferential prices in the early 1990s, the lack of fuel and spare parts has forced these farmers to use 40 oxen in place of the five tractors used previously.

There is also a serious shortage of fertilizer and veterinary services. Previously provided free of charge by the state, there is now a small charge. The state still covers 50 percent of these costs.

Julio Bernardo Adán, one of the small farm owners, explained that despite Cuba's economic problems the cooperative has been able to produce its state quota and enough beyond this to meet the basic needs of its members. His family has owned their farm since 1913.

It is only in recent years, Adán stated, that family members have been able to receive a university education. His three

children work as a veterinarian, a doctor and a mathematician. In a heartfelt comment on his life and his children's education, Adán said, "I owe everything I have to the revolution."

The final day of the Camagüey conference featured a discussion with leaders of several nongovernmental organizations.

The liveliest discussion was with leaders of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC). An FMC representative explained that many more women are part of the workforce today, allowing them financial independence for the first time.

Differing views were expressed as conference participants tried to explain the recent increase in prostitution in Cuba. One person from the United States argued that this was not fundamentally due to the economic difficulties in Cuba today; another called for repressive action by the police against prostitution. Some of the Cubans replied by describing the economic difficulties that they face in Cuba and noting that in dealing with prostitution they were relying more on education and persuasion.

James Munro contributed to this article.

BY JAMES MUNRO

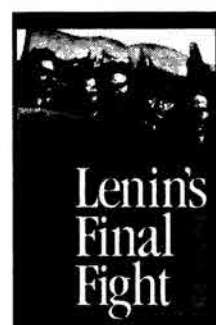
HOLGUÍN, Cuba—A contingent of seven North American academics who attended the Seventh Conference of North American and Cuban Philosophers and Social Scientists in Havana in mid-June also took part in a mini-conference here.

Located in the eastern region of this island nation, Holguín province is the center of nickel production in Cuba, and ranks third in tourism behind the city of Havana and Varadero Beach.

About 40 Cubans participated in the June 22-23 gathering. Nelson Labrada, a leading member of the province's ministry of economy, gave a presentation on the economic situation in Cuba and Holguín province. He described a slight growth in the economy as a whole, with some sectors such as tourism showing a stronger rate of growth. This trend is expected to continue, said Labrada.

After one North American presented a talk on the various forms of socialist state organizations, a member of the Cuban contingent suggested a conference focused on this topic next year, inviting international participation. There was significant interest in this proposal.

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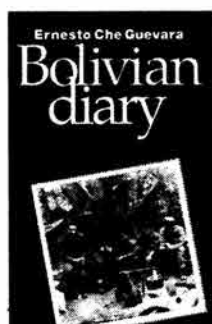


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Actions oppose U.S. gov't Cuba policy

BY LAURA GARZA

The fifth U.S.-Cuba Friendship Caravan crossed the border from Buffalo, New York, to Canada on its way to Cuba June 23. Caravan organizers said the U.S. Customs service had earlier threatened to arrest those carrying aid bound for Cuba across the border. About 150 caravan participants crossed the bridge with medical supplies, vehicles, computer equipment, and solar energy equipment to be donated to churches, schools, and hospitals in Cuba. Computer equipment had been seized from previous caravans, but FBI and Treasury agents who gathered at the crossing point chose not to stop any of the humanitarian aid from being allowed through.

A week prior to the border crossing, U.S. Treasury officials issued a warning to the Youth Friendship Delegation against traveling to Cuba. The 40 participants decided to proceed with their June 23-30 trip to the island anyway. The delegation was organized by the Freedom to Travel Campaign in San Francisco, which has sponsored several trips challenging the U.S. government's ban on visits to Cuba. They are scheduled to return to the United States on June 30 through Houston and Nassau, Bahamas.

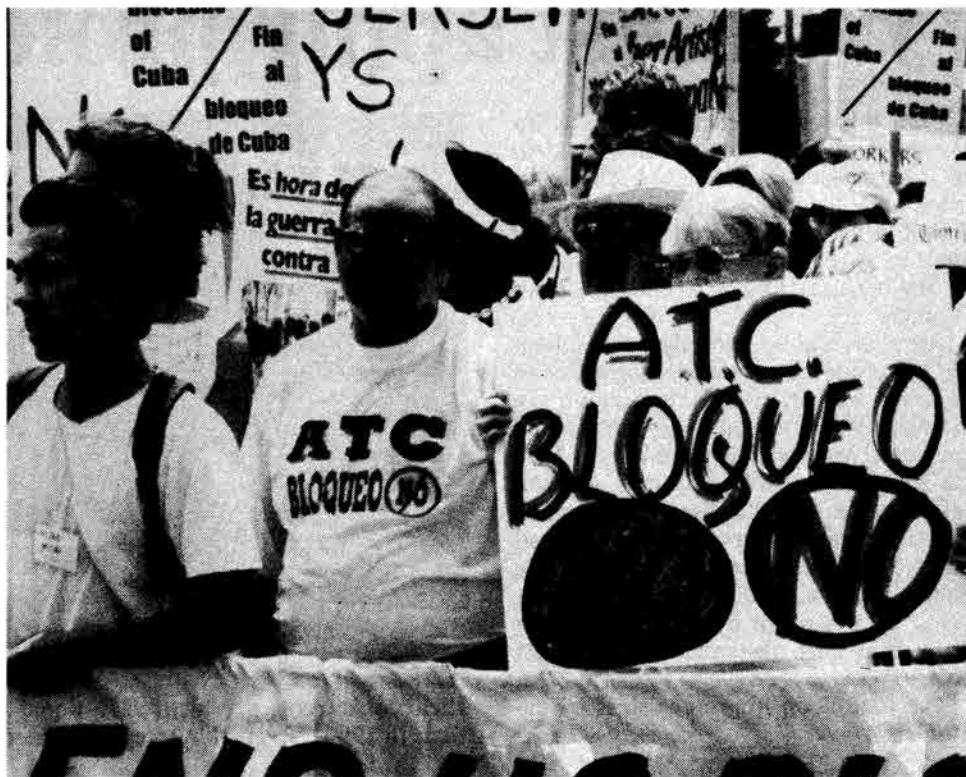
The Freedom to Travel Campaign encouraged everyone who supports the right to travel freely to call or fax Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin — before the group returns — to express support for the Youth Friendship Delegation and demand travel restrictions to Cuba be lifted.

Participants on the fifth Friendshipment

Caravan will return to Canada from Cuba on July 5 and cross into the United States on July 5 and 6. Supporters are organizing to meet them at the different points they are expected to cross the border.

Caravan participants joined a march and rally timed to coincide with their arrival in Washington, D.C., before the border crossing. About 500 people participated in the June 17 action, including a busload of Cuban-Americans from Miami, and others from New York and New Jersey. The event protested the U.S. government's embargo against Cuba and called for the defeat of the Helms/Burton bill, a proposal to tighten the embargo against Cuba being discussed in Congress. It also called for universal free health care and opposed the cuts in social services proposed in the Republican "Contract with America."

The march passed D.C. General Hospital, one of the places that has been hit by the rounds of cuts in social services the city administration claims are necessary. Some march participants presented a few boxes of medical supplies to a small delegation of hospital workers that greeted the march outside. Lucius Walker, director of Pastors for Peace, which sponsors the caravans to Cuba, said, "We couldn't in good conscience go to Cuba and give material aid without realizing there are needs in our own country." He added, "D.C. General is a symbol of what's happening to health care; we commend the staff for the excellent service they give. We are as opposed to cutbacks as we are to the blockade. In



Militant/Sam Manuel

Members of Alliance of Cuban Workers in the Community joined June 17 protest opposing Washington's embargo of Cuba. Sign says "Blockade No."

spite of the blockade Cuba never closed a single hospital."

As the march proceeded people chanted "Save D.C. General," and "Health care for Cuba and the U.S." Winding their way through the streets of the capital, marchers also chanted "Cuba si, bloqueo no!" (Cuba yes, blockade no).

At the rally Walker stated, "We are winning the struggle," against the embargo, citing recent editorials in major media calling for some change in Washington's embargo policy. This, he said, reflected a change in public opinion. He called for free health care, an end to capital punishment, and for freeing all political prisoners. Many speakers mentioned the case of

political activist Mumia Abu-Jamal, whose execution date is set for August 17.

Among other speakers at the rally were former U.S. attorney general Ramsey Clark and Ben Chavis, convenor of the National African American Leadership Summit. Chavis noted Cuba's role in helping to defeat South Africa's invasion of Angola saying Cubans "shared their blood for freedom. We should raise our voices to demand and end to the blockade."

Representatives from two Miami groups active against the U.S. embargo also spoke — Elizardo Bascoy of the Antonio Maceo Brigade and Wilfredo Moreno of the Alliance of Cuban Workers in the Community.

Cuba Lives Festival attracting youth

BY LAURA GARZA

From New Zealand to St. Lucia young Cubans have been traveling the world telling the truth about their revolution and inviting those listening to visit the island to attend the Cuba Lives International Youth Festival August 1-7. The *Carib News* reports Juan Carlos Frometa, of the Union of Young Communists (UJC) of Cuba, is touring the English-speaking Caribbean to promote the festival.

The Cuban youth organizations sponsoring the event are calling on all those opposed to the U.S. government's embargo and policy of hostility toward Cuba to come and stand with others in defense of the country's sovereignty, dignity, and independence. The festival occurs as the U.S. Congress is discussing a proposal, the Helms/Burton bill, to tighten the existing embargo.

The event is an opportunity for youth from around the world to get a look at life

today in a Third World country where the working class holds power and is able to deal with an economic crisis in an entirely different manner than the governments of Mexico or Argentina, for example.

Many of those planning to participate in the festival from the United States have been active in opposing U.S. government policy toward Cuba. Others heard about it from Kenia Serrano when she spoke in several cities earlier this year. Serrano is a leader of the Federation of University Students, one of the Cuban youth groups hosting the festival.

Two students who heard Serrano at the University of Houston are among those planning to make the trip. They helped put out a fund-raising mailing to 300 people and are selling raffle tickets to raise the money to attend.

A video of Cuban president Fidel Castro's speech at a November 1994 solidarity conference in Havana will be shown in Toronto at a July 15 fund-raising barbecue building the festival. A June 18 showing attracted 35 people, three of whom signed up to go.

In Atlanta a July 1 yard sale and a fund-

raising party organized by the Atlanta Network on Cuba will help get a delegation of about half a dozen people to the event. The Salt Lake City Coalition in Solidarity with Cuba had a garage sale to help raise funds to get three local youth to Cuba.

In many cities groups are planning activities to mark July 26, the date in 1953 when Fidel Castro and others led an assault on the Moncada barracks against the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista.

The National Network on Cuba is urging everyone to join the efforts to publicize four regional demonstrations on October 14 to oppose the U.S. government's embargo against Cuba. The protest actions will take place in Atlanta, Chicago, New York, and San Francisco around the demands: end the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba, respect Cuba's self-determination, normalize relations, and lift the travel ban on Cuba.

T-shirts, buttons, and flyers are available to build the demonstrations. For more information call in your region: East Coast 212-227-3422; South 305-757-3113; Midwest 312-663-0527; West Coast 415-267-0606.

Fifth Meeting of The Peoples of America and the Caribbean

Four earlier conferences were held in Quito, Bogotá, São Paulo, and Havana gathering activists from throughout the region.

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Cops guilty in Montreal beating

BY GRANT HARGRAVE

MONTREAL — "David has triumphed over Goliath," was the reaction of Claudette Barnabé to the guilty verdict against four of the five Montreal Urban Community police officers charged with beating her brother Richard in December 1993. A fifth cop, the only woman charged, was found not guilty.

Richard Barnabé, a 39-year-old taxi driver, has been in a "neuro-vegetal state" since his arrest and beating. Working people in this city followed the trial closely. The verdict was a surprise for many as the cops have generally been exonerated in cases of police brutality.

Barnabé was arrested after a car chase for allegedly breaking a church window in an attempt to wake a priest. Testimony at the trial indicated that the cops threw him flat on his face on the pavement. As a result, his nose was broken in several places; two teeth were loosened and a third was found in his throat; his left sinus was also fractured.

The trial centered on what happened to him at the police station. "Enormous pressure" was applied to Barnabé's back while he was lying on the floor of his cell with

hands and legs tied, being "brought under control" by the officers. The force snapped at least two ribs free from the spinal column. The broken ribs along with the broken nose and blood from his fractured sinus partially blocked his respiratory system. This brought on cardiac arrest and led to permanent brain damage.

The four cops found guilty insisted that they were just doing their job as they had been trained.

Claudette Barnabé said that "citizens are sick and tired of police brutality. If there are permanent changes, rather than the punishment of individuals, then Richard's death will not have been in vain."

Noel Alexander, a leader of the Jamaican community in Montreal, commented in a radio interview that "the Black community has suffered for a long time, now we see it's much broader." Barnabé is white. Alexander called for the cops to receive the maximum possible sentence, which the prosecutor has indicated he will not demand.

Grant Hargrave is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 7599.

Help the 'Militant' provide eyewitness reports from Cuba to the Philippines

Dear Reader,

This week we feature eyewitness coverage on discussions and developments in Cuba by a team of *Militant* correspondents that included Mary-Alice Waters and Luis Madrid from New York and Ernie Mailhot from Miami. A *Militant* reporting team of Marnie Kennedy from Sydney, Australia, and Aaron Ruby from Houston covered the speaking tour of Alejandro Herrera, a leader of Cuba's Union of Young Communists, in the Philippines.

We continue coverage from a recent trip to Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. These trips make possible the kind of unmatched coverage the *Militant* has been able to

consistently provide on Cuba and working-class struggles throughout the Americas and beyond. The cost of these trips exceeds \$16,000, so your generous help is needed. The *Militant* depends on contributions from our readers to make these trips possible. Please send yours today!

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'We must apply proletarian spirit' in Cuba

Printed below are excerpts from an interview with Ricardo Alarcón, president of Cuba's National Assembly. The interview, conducted by Frank Agüero and Julio García Luis, appeared in the April 10 issue of *Trabajadores*, weekly newspaper of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers.

Elections will be held July 9 throughout the island for the municipal assemblies of People's Power, Cuba's legislature. In February 1993 elections were held for the provincial and national assemblies of People's Power. In this interview, Alarcón refers to the fact that the 1993 vote, in which record numbers of Cubans turned out to the polls, took on the character of a referendum for or against the revolution, given the campaign by Cuban-American rightists urging abstention or a protest vote.

The translation from Spanish is by the *Militant*.

With the preparatory process for the election of delegates to Municipal Assemblies now under way, we discussed with [Ricardo Alarcón] this and other relevant issues.

Question: Alarcón, since these are the midterm elections at the local level, could you say they are simpler than the 1993 general elections?

Answer: I would say these elections are in a certain sense more complicated. In the last general elections, there was, of course, a national mobilization; Fidel was involved in the entire process. The people felt they were voting for the homeland, for the revolution, more than for any particular candidate.

The process we are going to carry out now doesn't have those features. It's as we've always done. There cannot be a united vote. We must go there, to the neighborhood, with all of the tensions we are living through, to elect a fighter from the grassroots who is struggling with problems that in many cases have no answer, and also with all the subjective deficiencies we still have. Maybe it would be easier if we were voting for a national figure, for a deputy.

For the same reason, these elections have a tremendous political importance.

More thorough work is needed to explain things. We must prove the merits of our political system in the elections for district delegates, at the most complicated moment and at a national and international conjuncture that focuses attention on it.

Q. On what does the hoped-for success depend?

A. We must search for higher quality in the nominations, which is a feature that doesn't exist in other systems — the people themselves propose the candidates. We must ensure a truly collective deliberation and consider those members of the community who are best suited.

We must also achieve maximum participation in the voting. And, lastly, to strengthen Peoples Power as we all wish, we need the closest links between these delegates — and all our organizations — and the masses.

Q. How do you conceive of those links?

A. I believe we have a clear example, which the labor movement has been demonstrating with the [Workers] Parliaments and the Efficiency Assemblies.¹ Likewise, we must turn this movement into a real force. We must bring into the community the same spirit as the vanguard workplaces. In other words, we must truly apply the proletarian spirit to our institutions.

Q. Can this be taken to mean that there is dissatisfaction with the work of the delegates?

A. We can't ignore the concrete results that have been achieved and the selflessness with which the delegates work.

There are material limits to the effec-

¹ Meetings called "workers parliaments" took place in 80,000 workplaces around Cuba in early 1994, where workers debated a series of proposed measures before the country's National Assembly to confront the country's economic crisis. Later that year, these discussions were followed up by nationwide workplace meetings called economic efficiency assemblies.



Ricardo Alarcón, president of National Assembly, representing Cuba at United Nations in 1990. "Everything we do is aimed at saving gains of socialism," Alarcón said.

tiveness of their work, and in our society there continue to exist problems that are due not to resources but to people, problems of sloth and bureaucratism.

Delegates are involved in a constant struggle against all this. They are a force that must be mobilized, strengthened, and educated. So it's not enough to express the dissatisfaction with which we always view all human effort.

We must continue developing the concept of People's Power as participatory democracy, in which the people are the protagonist. If this is approached passively, as occurs in some places, and the delegate is viewed as a conveyor of complaints, we'll never get to the heart of it. The key is that the people must consider themselves as part of the solution to the problems, where it's not the individual delegate but the community acting — that's the power of our democracy.

Q. Do you remember some example or experience that illustrates this?

A. Of course. I've been at an assembly where an administrative leader was absent, and there it was decided: "let's send a commission of neighbors to see this administrator." It's not the same as complaining, taking note, and later filing a report. The same happens when the people themselves decide to organize a repair brigade to solve a problem. As a rule, the more proletarian the district, the higher the

level of action.

Q. You mentioned at the beginning the internal circumstances that underline the importance of these elections. How are they related?

A. Our society is still going through serious difficulties, and at the same time there are changes that are introducing elements of private property and capitalism. How can we continue to overcome these difficulties? With the organized people, of course. And what is People's Power but the combination of institutions created for this purpose?

Perhaps there is some idiot who believes we're headed toward capitalism, but everything we're doing is aimed at saving the gains of socialism and laying the basis to continue building it when we are able to do so.

That's why it's so important to block the advance of capitalist ideology, and to see this process and its objectives as part of the political work we have to do, now under more complex conditions. And that's why it's so important, right now, to hold elections that are better than ever.

Now we will need to be concerned about those who face difficulties, the jobless, the youth who need support and guidance. We will need to protect families with lower incomes, to seek solutions and relief for these problems, and to strengthen the sense of human solidarity.

Filipino youth discuss Cuban revolution

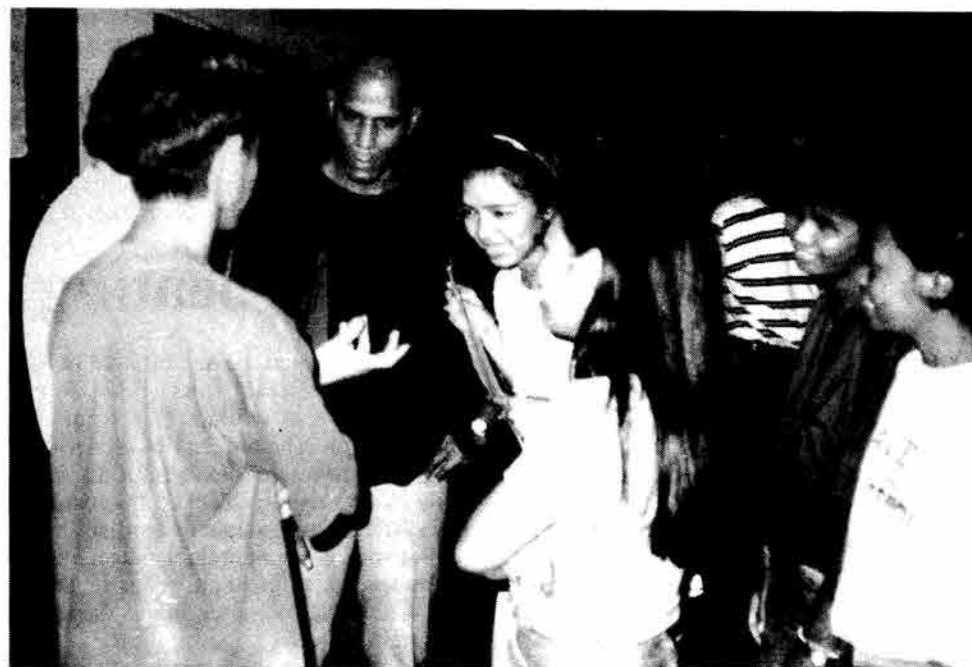
BY MARNIE KENNEDY AND AARON RUBY

MANILA, Philippines—"In Cuba before the revolution there existed a similar situation of poverty to the one you're discussing in the Philippines. It was only by carrying out a deep-going social revolution that we were able to turn the situation around," Alejandro Herrera Agete told an assembly of urban activists in Manila who fight for housing, health care, and basic social services.

Herrera, a leader of the Union of Young Communists (UJC) of Cuba, was on a seven-day tour of the Philippines in mid-June. The League of Filipino Students; SANLAKAS, a coalition of left-wing organizations; and Amistad, the Philippine-Cuba Friendship Society, invited Herrera.

The Cuban youth spoke at four universities here. At the University of the East in Manila, 50 students crammed into an overflowing room bedecked with a banner reading, "Down with the U.S. Blockade of Cuba!" Echoing a commonly raised question during the tour, one student asked, "If Cuba is anti-imperialist, why did it join GATT?" The government of the Philippines has signed on to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which is sharply criticized by a number of left political parties.

Herrera responded by pointing to the sharp economic crisis in Cuba caused by the collapse of trade with the former Soviet Union. "Sometimes we have no choice but to use certain mechanisms in order to assure food for the people," he emphasized. "The important difference is that we have a socialist government that will use these mechanisms to benefit the people."



Militant/Marnie Kennedy

UJC leader Alejandro Herrera, (center in black T-shirt) talks with youth in Manila.

Herrera was invited to give greetings at a protest rally at the Polytechnical University of the Philippines, called by the League of Filipino Students and other student groups. The rally was organized to oppose the tuition increases and privatization of education envisioned by the government of Philippine president Fidel Ramos in its austerity platform, "Philippines 2000." Herrera had the opportunity to meet youth activists at a reception organized by Amistad. They included representatives of organizations fighting on behalf of political prisoners and the disappeared. A reception for Herrera was also

Q. Alarcón, how has the recall [of delegates to] People's Power worked so far?

A. The number of cases is quite high. There have been both grassroots delegates as well as municipal and provincial leaders recalled. The interesting thing is that they have resulted not only from instances of errors, incompetence, or immorality. It's another proof of the superiority of our system.

There are also cases of comrades who have been recalled, in a natural way, as a result of the assessments made by those in the place where they work. In the Plaza de la Revolución municipality where I serve as deputy, the president of the People's Power body has been changed three times during this period. And they are magnificent, patriotic, and selfless comrades, who continue working with the others there.

These are principles that we must maintain as precious things: nomination, election, accountability, ties with the masses, and recall.

Q. Will the method of public hearings held by the National Assembly be extended to new areas? Which ones, for example?

A. Through the commissions on foreign relations and legal affairs, we plan to hold public hearings on the Helms-Burton bill [that would tighten the U.S. embargo on Cuba]. The first will be May 3.

Our people have the right to understand that document better and to express their opinions about it. Many more, I assure you, will participate than the ultrarightists who were summoned for the hearing held in the U.S. Congress. This relates to everything we are doing, from the sugar harvest to the elections, because at this same time, in Washington, they will be studying this annexationist plan, which is a plan for the recolonization of Cuba.

Consider the fact that, for the first time, a bill has been proposed for the U.S. government to establish the return of nationalized property, both of U.S. citizens and companies as well as of associates of [former dictator Fulgencio] Batista, the embezzlers and exploiters, as a condition for lifting the blockade. So, for added reasons, these elections must be a categorical assertion that no one is going to impose the past on us or destroy the revolution. We must show that here we're the ones who determine our destiny. And that there is plenty of will to resist, to prevent such an alternative from ever being imposed.

hosted by the president of SANLAKAS, a recently elected member of the Philippine Congress.

Other questions asked Herrera during the tour included: Are there human rights in Cuba? Is Fidel Castro a dictator? What do you of the current policies in China and Vietnam? Are women in Cuba totally liberated? Are there still indigenous people in Cuba?

Responding to an invitation extended by Herrera, students at a number of the events expressed interest in attending the international youth festival, "Cuba Lives" in Havana in August.

Caterpillar strike

Continued from front page

red-shirted unionists lining up for the march, "I never thought about how long we'd be out on strike. But I knew it would be a hard fight."

In nearby Peoria, the center of the national walkout, strikers held a series of rallies and mass pickets during the week of June 19 to remind Caterpillar that the UAW members intend to go back to work with a contract. The events included a one-year strike anniversary rally of 2,000 in front of the company headquarters on June 21.

Following the successful blocking of a Caterpillar factory gate at the Mapleton foundry June 20, strikers organized by word of mouth to do more of the same.

As the 11 p.m. shift change approached at the KK gate in East Peoria June 21, some 50 strikers and supporters gathered there. Unlike earlier in the week, an ample police presence was on hand to make sure scabs could whiz through the gates while strikers jeered. As one cop, with his back to scab traffic, attempted to corral the strikers back from the driveway, a line crosser's car hit the officer from behind, bouncing him toward the crowd. As the scab sped away unhindered, the officer screamed at UAW members, "Get out of my street!" "Your street?" they replied and continued to demonstrate until midnight. Expanded pickets crowded the dozen or so other East Peoria gates as well. On June 22 similar actions took place at Mossville, Illinois.

Police target 'troublemakers'

On June 24, the "Illegally Terminated" Caterpillar strikers held a solidarity picnic in Peoria. At that event, UAW Local 974 members Ron Heller and Steve Cordle explained that strikers have discovered the Illinois State Police maintain a "troublemakers" list that local police departments use to harass striking workers and their families. A tape of a police conversation that Heller obtained through the Freedom of Information Act captured a police officer's remarks as he was following Heller's car. "Ron Heller... He's on that 'troublemaker's list' they sent out... He's doing everything by the book so I won't pull him over... I might stop him for driving too slow and impeding the flow of traffic."

After initial denials, Washington city officials now admit to the use of the list but refuse to release it to strikers. Heller

has filed a lawsuit demanding the list be turned over. "We want to get to the bottom of this," said Cordle. "Where did this list come from? From Cat?"

The Peoria *Journal-Star*, despised by many strikers for the role it plays as a Caterpillar mouthpiece in that city, was forced to acknowledge the upturn in activity in its June 22 issue, which featured several prominent articles. Nonetheless, the editors, citing Caterpillar's five quarters of record profits, headlined the June 20 business section article "Cat strike is a non-factor." "Our strike," smiled UAW member Glen Waters, "is the factor."

'Scabs out, union in!'

"Scabs out, union in!" chanted the thousands of marchers winding their way past the A.E. Staley plant toward the Decatur Civic Center June 25. On June 30, that company, at the union's request, is scheduled to present its best offer — the first since October 1993 — to the UPIU bargaining committee. That offer will be presented to the membership in early July for discussion and vote.

"I personally don't think anything will come of it. After two years of this, I don't get excited," said Lorell Patterson, a UPIU "Road Warrior" who has traveled around the country building support for the Staley workers' struggle. In Patterson's view, to win battles like these "you have to involve the entire working class, not just union people. Once you've heard both sides, you have to pick, and if you're a working-class person who wants a better life for you and your kids you'll choose the right side."

The march and rally drew a small number of buses from union locals in the Midwest, including three from the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union in southwestern Michigan, a bus from United Steelworkers of America Local 1010, and a bus from UAW local 599 in Flint, Michigan.

A substantial number of unionists, however, made their way here in cars and vans from as far away as Ravenswood, West Virginia, and Cardinal, Ontario, along with dozens of cities and towns throughout the Midwest. Five members of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) union from the Shell refinery in Houston made the trip, as did four members of the International Association of Machinists who work at Northwest Airlines in Los Angeles.



Militant/Greg Rosenberg

Members of Ravenswood, W. Virginia, steelworkers support group at Decatur rally

"Unions need to start supporting each other," said one of the airline workers, James Hicks. "If we all stick together with this kind of solidarity, the companies will think twice about busting our unions. We'll be going back and telling our co-workers that what's happening here will happen in Los Angeles."

Several members of the United Mine Workers of America from southern Illinois attended. Students from different organizations throughout the region also joined the march.

Like other Caterpillar strikers this reporter spoke to, UAW member Gary Garner was happy to see fellow strikers and other unionists turn out for the march. Garner, who travels with the Road Warriors, pointed out that workers from cities they had visited were turning up at the action. "Money is not the important thing. It's treating people like people," he said. The battle with Caterpillar, "has begun to wear on people, but we are hanging in, including the families and the community."

'Not without a contract'

Garner responded to recent speculation that the election of Stephen Yokich as president of UAW might bring a quick end to the strike. "The people are giving them a pretty strong message. Yokich announced the need to settle. But the people said we 'won't go in without a contract. Don't tell us to go in without it. We'll go as long as it takes.'"

Marchers proceeded to the civic center

for a rally, where top international union officers pledged support. Little direct mention of the Caterpillar strike was made by these speakers. Instead they emphasized electing "friends of labor" to office.

Speakers included presidents of the three Decatur locals, UPIU president Wayne Glenn, URW president Ken Coss, United Steelworkers of America vice president Leon Lynch, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees president Gerald McEntee, OCAW president Robert Wages, Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastic and Allied Workers International Union president James Hatfield, and Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union president Lenore Miller. U.S. Rep David Bonior also spoke.

Dozens of financial contributions were received from unions around the country at the spirited rally.

UPIU Local 7837 president Dave Watts was the only speaker to point out that members of the URW suffered a defeat when union officials ended the strike against Bridgestone/Firestone. "The labor movement let them down," he said. "They have been permanently replaced."

Watts urged participants to "stop whining about PATCO" and turn to support the struggles going on today to make sure they do not suffer the same defeat. He welcomed the international presidents and other officials to the gathering, but said "We need a plan that works... and the help that we're getting [from the labor movement] is not enough." His remarks were met with loud applause.

The rally served in part as a platform for the union officials running for the AFL-CIO presidency. AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer Thomas Donahue, who is in the race, spoke at the rally. Richard Trumka, president of the United Mine Workers union and a part of the slate headed by John Sweeney of the Service Employees International Union that is opposing Donahue, also spoke.

Jesse Jackson was the final speaker of the day. His remarks were laced with Japan-bashing comments. Jackson's denunciations of the Republican "Contract with America," and statement that "workers are under assault," brought strong applause.

Jenny Benton, Stephen Bloodworth, Martin Dunne, Frank Forrestal, and David Marshall contributed to this article.

Meeting discusses AFL-CIO, union battles

BY STEPHEN BLOODWORTH
AND GREG ROSENBERG

DECATUR, Illinois — Some 125 people gathered here June 24 for the "War Zone Labor Conference," held at the United Paperworkers International Union (UPIU) Local 7837 hall. The event was sponsored by three locals that have been involved in fights to defend their unions against company assaults.

Several dozen unionists from the sponsoring locals attended the meeting — members of the United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 751 on strike against Caterpillar, Inc.; members of the paperworkers locked out by A.E. Staley Manufacturing; and members of United Rubber Workers Local 713 whose strike against Bridgestone/Firestone was recently defeated.

Mike Griffin, who opened the conference on behalf of UPIU Local 7837, said the central purpose of the meeting was to discuss resolutions for presentation to the October convention of the AFL-CIO.

Local union officials from different parts of the United States made up a large percentage of those in attendance. Many of these identified themselves as supporters of radical political groups, Labor Party Advocates, or union caucuses.

Dave Watts, president of UPIU Local 7837, chaired the first of four conference panels, entitled "Lessons of Decatur." Fighters from the three locals took the opportunity to discuss their experiences in waging these struggles and the continuing challenges they face.

In response to a question from the floor on the value of union participation in company "jointness" programs, Gary Lamb, a locked-out Staley worker, said these programs "are something that can really be used by the company, and very little by us.

Jointness ends when it interferes with profits."

"To those who say the Caterpillar strike is over, this week's activities show it's not," said Angel Lariscy, a member of UAW Local 1494 from Peoria, during the discussion period.

Lariscy cited expanded pickets during the previous week in Peoria, and urged participants to build new support for the strike. "If you reach out, you will get a response," she said.

Panelists also discussed the experiences of the Road Warriors, teams of striking and locked-out workers who have traveled nationally and internationally to build support for their struggles.

Moving on from the fight under way at Caterpillar today and the struggles of other workers in Decatur, the next panel discussed "Democracy in Unionism." Several panelists and union officials took the floor here to complain that their memberships were apathetic, while others urged support for the AFL-CIO presidential opposition slate.

Tom Balanoff, president of Service Employees International Union Local 73, addressed the conference on behalf of John Sweeney who is vying for the top spot in the AFL-CIO. "The Sweeney-Trumka-Chavez-Thompson slate will devote one-third of the AFL-CIO budget to organizing," he declared, which would go alongside a "grassroots political movement."

The question of the AFL-CIO election came up earlier during the lessons of Decatur panel. Dan Lane, a locked-out Staley worker, said, "There needs to be change at the top. But we need to talk to our own people. If you change the top, I'm not sure how different it will be. We're going to have to change it, we're the ones who

have to support our sisters and brothers. It's easy to talk about what they're not doing. The question is, what do we do?"

Tony Mazzochi, an official of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union and a leader of Labor Party Advocates, chaired the panel on "Labor and Independent Politics." "Bill Clinton is the first president of the United States in my lifetime who has never mentioned the word 'union,'" Mazzochi said, urging participants to get involved in his group.

Among the resolutions passed by the conference were ones that called for mass picketing worldwide to shut Caterpillar plants, the formation of a labor party, and reforms of AFL-CIO structures.

The Eastern Airlines Strike

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NEW YORK

Brooklyn

Mobilize Now: Save Mumia Abu-Jamal! Speakers: Sheba Haven, former Black Panther, Free Mumia Coalition; Leonard Weinglass and Rachel Wolkenstein, Abu-Jamal attorneys. Mon., July 10, 7:30 p.m. Church of Gethsemane, 1012 Eighth Ave. (at 10th St.). Sponsored by Justice Works Community. Donation: \$5. For more information: (718) 499-6704.

Manhattan

Benefit to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal. Mon., July 10. Speakers and videos, 5:30 p.m.; bands, 7:30 p.m.; and The Last Poets, 10 p.m. Wetlands Preserve, 161 Hudson St. Tickets at the door: \$10. For more information, call (212) 966-4225 or (212) 966-5244.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

We Care if Mumia Lives or Dies. Public meeting to protest scheduled execution of Mu-

mia Abu-Jamal. Thurs., July 6, 8 p.m. St. Mary's House, corner of Walker and Tate Sts. For more information, call (910) 378-1892.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Stop the Murder of Mumia Abu-Jamal! Rally at Liberty Bell. Mon., July 3, 11 a.m. Fifth and Market Sts. Round-trip bus tickets from New York to rally: \$12. Leave 7:30 a.m. from main post office, 33rd St. and Eighth Ave. For more information, call (212) 330-8029.

Free Mumia Conference. All day, working conference. Tues., July 4, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Calvary Methodist Church, 48th and Baltimore. For more information on these events, call (215) 476-8812 (phone and fax).

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Town Meeting on Mumia Abu-Jamal. Speakers: Ramona Africa, MOVE; Mauri

Saalkhan, Coalition Against Political Imprisonment; Noelle Itamarhan, Equal Justice. Sat., July 8, 4 p.m. Metropolitan AME Church, 1518 M St., NW. Bi-weekly Monday protests: July 10, 24, and August 7, 5 p.m. at MLK Library Plaza, Ninth and C St. NW. Events sponsored by DC Coalition to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal. For more information, call (202) 973-2177.

CANADA

Toronto

Cuban Youth Tour Organizing Committee Fund-Raising BBQ. Sat., July 15, 6:30 p.m. Video showing of Fidel Castro Speaks to the World Solidarity Conference from November 1994. Proceeds to promote August 1-7 "Cuba Lives" International Youth Festival and October tour of Cuban youth to Canada. 70 Sorauren Ave. For more information, call: (416) 538-8673 or (416) 536-8901.

JAPAN

Hiroshima - Nagasaki

50th Anniversary International Symposium. July 31 to August 2, Hiroshima. Contact: Japanese Preparatory Committee, c/o Nihon Hidankyo, Gable Bldg 902, 1-3-5 Shiba-Daimon, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105. Fax: 81-3-3438-1169.

50th Anniversary World Conference. August 1-2. Contact: Gensuikin, SF Hitotsubashi K1 Bldg. 3-17-11 Kanda-Jimbo-Cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101. Tel: 81-3-3222-1091, Fax: 3222-1093. E-mail: gensuikin@igc.apc.org

World Conference Against A & H Bombs. Meetings and rallies in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. August 3-9. Contact: World Conference Against A & H Bombs, c/o GENSUIKYO, 6-19-23 Shimbashi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105 Japan. Tel: 81-3-3431-1014, Fax: 3431-8781. E-mail: gensuikyo@twics.com

Argentina group demands justice

Continued from Page 3

bers split in 1985. "Today most of the Mothers are from the working class," de Bonafini said.

The organization has attracted other workers like Roberto Fornari, 65. "During the dictatorship, I didn't know what was going on. Near the machine shop where I worked, dead bodies would be dumped overnight," he explained. "Later I was fired for being rebellious. Years later, I found out what was really happening here, largely thanks to the Mothers. Now I work with them as much as I can."

Besides the weekly vigils, the group has held "People's Trials," with testimony by several Mothers, to demand punishment for top-level torturers. Every year they hold a Resistance March. With the heightened public focus on the military's crimes, last year's drew 70,000 people.

Members of the Mothers have been invited to speak around the world. "The government especially hates it when we denounce them abroad," de Bonafini said. "For us, traveling always reminds us of who we are and what class we represent."

Members of the group have spoken at demonstrations against the 1990-91 Gulf War and at events in solidarity with the Cuban revolution.

"On October 8, we will donate a radio transmitter at La Higuera for the commemoration of the assassination of Che [Guevara]," de Bonafini reported, referring to the Argentine-born leader of the Cuban revolution who was killed at that site in Bolivia in 1967.

Activists of the Mothers association always point to the young people who are drawn to their fight. "These rallies keep attracting fewer old people and more and more youth," de Bonafini told the crowd June 8 at the Plaza de Mayo.

One of these youth, Javier Gerdali, 18, remarked, "My folks are still afraid, but my friends agree with me that the military should be jailed."

Another demonstrator was Pablo Loyola, 18. He is a member of a newly formed group, HIJOS (Children), made up of sons and daughters of the disappeared, which now has chapters around the country.

"High school students invite us to give talks at their campuses," Meroño reported. "We also give classes at universities. At one high school we recently showed a video on our 18 years of struggle. The kids asked a lot of questions. Young people want to know the truth. They're not afraid."

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Speak-Out in Defense of Affirmative Action. Speakers: Sam Mistrano, field and legislative representative, American Civil Liberties Union; Jioni Palmer, editor, *Nommo* magazine, UCLA; Ann Brown, United Farm Workers union; Tyrone Gauthier, co-chair, Civil Rights Committee Sub-District 2, United Steelworkers of America; and a representative of the National Organization for Women. Fri., June 30, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico (2 blocks west of Vermont). Donation: \$4. Translation to Spanish. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

Mothers of Plaza de Mayo back Curtis

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina — "We're not in power — they are in power. But we have the strength of the people, and we all have a common enemy," said Hebe de Bonafini, referring to the Argentine government.

She was speaking at one of the rallies her organization, the Association of the

Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, hold every Thursday to demand that top military officials be prosecuted and jailed for the murders and torture they committed against thousands of working people in this country (see article on page 3). De Bonafini is the president of the association.

Later that evening of June 8, at the headquarters of the Mothers of the Plaza

de Mayo, de Bonafini and other members of the association discussed their 18-year-long struggle with supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

"It sounds like Mark was on the wrong side — actually the right side — of the class struggle," said de Bonafini. "Just like our sons and daughters. To those in power, Mark was a dangerous man," she said. "He fought for justice for other workers."

Curtis is a unionist and political activist in the United States who was framed up by the police in Des Moines, Iowa, on false charges of rape and burglary. At the time of his arrest, he was involved in a struggle with other unionists to defend 17 immigrant co-workers at the meatpacking plant owned by Swift where he worked. The "Swift 17" had been detained by immigration agents in a raid on the factory. Curtis has already served nearly seven years of a 25-year prison sentence.

At the end of the conversation at the office of the Mothers, de Bonafini endorsed the Mark Curtis Defense Committee and dedicated and sent three books to Curtis at the penitentiary in Fort Madison, Iowa, where he is held. Among them is the *History of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo*, and *Life in Words*, which is a collection of short stories told by several of the mothers. "Dear Mark," de Bonafini wrote in her dedication of one of the books, "When you read this, I would like you to think about my sons, who, as you do, had dreams, hopes, fantasies. They were murdered for wanting to transform this system that imprisons us. They fought for their freedom and for your freedom. I know one can be free even behind bars. The jails only imprison the jailers. Thank you for your example. Hebe."



Militant/Brian Williams
Several hundred people attended events in Washington, D.C., June 25-26 to mark 20th anniversary of incident that led to frame-up of Native American activist Leonard Peltier and demand he be granted executive clemency.

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The groves of academia — To expand student enrollment, Mercy College, north of New York City, has enlisted the faculty to double as recruiters. If they boost the number of students to a given

summer months the ozone layer in mountainous Tibet is 11 percent thinner than in other areas in the same latitude. Caused by pollution, a thinner ozone layer means added radiation entering the atmosphere.

The 'civilizers' — In Israel, shaking prisoners violently is a common form of "interrogation" by Shin Bet, the secret police. One Palestinian prisoner recently died of brain damage from such treatment, but it was ruled the cop who did it should not be prosecuted because he couldn't have anticipated the fatal result.

Blow against nuclear ageism — Nuclear Energy Insight is pleased with the revision of the federal rule governing renewal of nuclear plant licenses.

The trade journal advises that the renewal process has been made "more stable and efficient" by "eliminating unnecessary requirements."

"Streamlining" the renewal rule means operating licenses can be extended up to 20 years beyond previous limits.

What was it we do with the lawyers? — In 1986, Dale Tippins drew 18 years to life on a drug charge after being "defended" by a court-appointed lawyer who slept through much of the trial.

Finally, an appeals court judge ordered that Tippins either be given a new trial or be released. The lawyer, Louis Tirelli, was disbarred in 1988 for squeezing \$5,000 out of Tippins's mother, neglecting to mention he was be-

ing paid by the county.

Love those judges — A 1986 California ballot proposition banned release of chemicals that cause cancer or birth defects into "any source of drinking water." Nearly all California homes have brass faucets that contain lead.

Presumably the law would bar such faucets. But a state court has ruled that faucets are not a "source" of drinking water.

Vacation tip — If you're into big-time salmon fishing, check out the special deal on Norway's Alta River, north of the Arctic Circle. Rustic — no electricity or phones, but a wood-burning stove will heat water for a shower. A full week of fishing, \$12,000.

Isn't that beautiful? — Zoran, a New York designer, is doing

nicely selling simple, no-frills, pricey clothes to a select few. His business manager explains their restricted sales strategy: "This is textbook luxury goods marketing. We make it rare. If you make too much, it ceases to be special. It must be scarce so that women will have to look for it. And then they salivate for it."

Thought for the week — "You have people who die after they have been sprayed. Does pepper spray have a role in some of these deaths? I will say yes. It is going to have an effect. These are weapons.... Clearly, this is not a breath freshener or an underarm deodorant." — Steven Beazer, prez of Advanced Defense Technologies, on the fact that since 1990 at least 61 people have died from police pepper spraying.



Harry Ring

goal, they get a 7 percent salary increase. If they don't, they take a 7 percent cut.

But why do anything? — Scientists have observed the thinning of the ozone layer over the Arctic and the Antarctic. Now Chinese meteorologists report that in the

'I'm going to be an activist as long as I'm breathing'

BY PETER THIERJUNG

HAMLET, North Carolina — Eddie Hatcher, a Tuscarora Indian and political activist, was released from prison May 3 after serving seven years. He is under house arrest with a signal radio strapped to his ankle so authorities can track his movements.

State officials "didn't want me to die in prison," Hatcher said, given the international spotlight on his case. In a sharp about-face, after denying Hatcher parole for the seventh time at the end of February, prison officials told him March 1 that he would soon be released. The reason for this, he said in an interview, is not a mystery. After suffering a nearly fatal bout of pneumocystis pneumonia, prison doctors told him that he has AIDS.

Hatcher's struggle for justice has won him support from Amnesty International, the North Carolina Council of Churches,

British parliamentarians, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, Native American organizations, gay rights groups, and others.

Hatcher and Timothy Jacobs were charged by state officials for an armed occupation of the *Robesonian* newspaper offices in February 1988 to protest racist treatment of Blacks and Native Americans. Hatcher said he also came under harassment from authorities for exposing alleged ties of the county sheriff and other officials to the drug trade.

A federal jury acquitted Hatcher of various charges in October 1988. The jury even asserted that Hatcher was justified in his act. State authorities again went after Hatcher by filing kidnapping charges in 1990. State courts denied him the attorneys of his choice and under the pressure of harassment by police and authorities, Hatcher accepted an 18-year sentence in a plea bargain arrangement. Prosecutors led

him to believe that he could be released on parole after two years in prison.

Jacobs pled guilty to kidnapping charges and was sentenced to six years. He was released on parole in 1991.

While in jail, Hatcher continued to fight for justice and was targeted for harassment by prison authorities. At one point he was stabbed by another inmate and placed in lockup for 14 months, ostensibly for his own protection. The attacker was never punished.

Last January Hatcher began to feel ill and despite repeated attempts to get medical attention he was not properly diagnosed or treated. Noting how sick he was during a visit, Hatcher's mother, Thelma Clark, demanded he get treatment.

He was eventually sent to a prison hospital after his temperature spiked to 105. The attending physician's assistant told him, "you have convinced yourself that you are sick. The only thing I can do for you is refer you to a psychiatrist." He was ordered back to his cell.

By the end of February, Hatcher was so sick a nurse told his mother he would die without immediate treatment. Clark made numerous calls, including to the governor's office, to demand action. After trips in and out of the hospital, doctors finally diagnosed him as having AIDS.

"The experiences I had to endure, no human should have to endure," Hatcher said in a letter to supporters. "Had it not been for my mother and a very few others, I would have died."

Hatcher recalls that he tested positive for HIV in 1990, but was not told by prison officials of his test result for several months and only after he asked for it.

"There is no follow-up counseling or



Militant/Jim Rogers

Eddie Hatcher

education" about HIV and AIDS in prison, Hatcher said. This lack of information is a serious concern because there is sexual contact in prison, he said. This is not an easy discussion for inmates to have openly among themselves, Hatcher added. He said about 30 inmates in the prison hospital are there now because of AIDS.

The activist has announced the founding of the Hatcher Center for Human Rights, which will among other tasks investigate cases of people with AIDS who have by mistreated. "I'm going to be an activist as long as I'm breathing," Hatcher said. Correspondence and financial contributions for the Hatcher Center for Human Rights can be sent to 120 Amber Road, Hamlet, NC 28345.

Framed miner released from prison

BY DAVID SANDOR

YOLYN, West Virginia — A federal judge ordered the May 24 release from jail of Jerry Lowe, a coal miner who was framed up and imprisoned in the fatal shooting of Eddie York, a nonunion contract worker. The July 22, 1993, shooting occurred while the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) was in the midst of a seven-month strike against the Bituminous Coal Operators Association. Lowe was a picket captain and member of UMWA Local 5958, which organizes miners at Arch Mineral Corp.'s Ruffner mine.

The shooting occurred in the context of provocations and violence carried out during the strike by private security guards employed by Arch. The guards fired guns into the air, tear gassed a picket shack, and made verbal threats against miners on the picket lines. York was shot in the back of the head as he was driving out of the Ruffner mine toward a picket shack. His truck was part of a convoy of company security vehicles.

Within hours, Arch Mineral vice president Blair Gardner told the press, "This ends the pretense of a peaceful UMWA strike. The circumstances point to a conspiracy to commit murder conceived in a UMWA picket shack."

Local prosecutors declined to file murder charges because of the lack of evidence in the case. A later investigation by the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms led to an indictment. In June 1994 Lowe was convicted on federal charges of conspiracy, interference with interstate commerce, and use of a firearm in the commission of a federal crime. In September he was sentenced to serve nearly 11 years in prison. He has now been released on "home confinement," pending a hearing on the appeal of his conviction. Lowe has steadfastly maintained his innocence.

The government was never able to show that Lowe had a gun in his possession when the shooting occurred. UMWA member Kenneth Maynard testified that he had videotaped security guards carrying guns near the picket line outside the

mine. The judge refused to allow the defense to show Maynard's video.

Seven other miners on picket duty with Lowe the day York was killed were originally indicted along with him. The government dismissed the federal charges against the seven in exchange for guilty pleas to state misdemeanor charges of destruction of property. They were sentenced to serve 120 days in jail. Lowe was tried and convicted on the original indictment.

John Copenhaver, the same judge who presided at Lowe's trial, ordered his release. He said there is a chance Lowe's case could succeed on appeal because there is "a close question of law" regarding the federal government's jurisdiction to try Lowe under interstate commerce provisions — in other words, whether the government had the power to put Lowe on trial to begin with. The appeal hearing is scheduled for July 10 in the Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Virginia.

Eddie York's family has allied itself with Arch Mineral and the prosecution. Wanda York filed a lawsuit against the UMWA, charging that the union's conduct led to the fatal shooting of her husband. The suit names 13 union officers and seeks \$27 million in damages.

The town of Yolyn consists of a post office and a few dozen houses about a mile away from the Ruffner mine, on the road between the highway and the main entrance to the mine. This area, also called Rum Creek Hollow, was strung with razor wire and crawling with Arch Mineral's private cops during the strike.

Many residents of Yolyn have known Jerry Lowe all their lives. A team of *Militant* supporters visited Yolyn and talked with miners and other working people shortly after Lowe was released.

Lowe's defenders stand adamant on the presumption of innocence. Again and again this reporter heard, "They never proved a case against him." The working-class solidarity that prevails here is visible on the half-dozen or so signs that stand in yards or hang on houses: "We support UMWA."

- 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO -



JUNE 30 — Since new disturbances erupted in Northern Ireland June 26, six persons have been killed and close to 300 wounded, orders have been issued to shoot to kill any civilian seen with a weapon, and the ruling Unionist government is seeking to strengthen repressive legislation. British troops in Ulster now number more than 11,000.

The current situation appears to have been sparked by two developments. The first was the jailing of civil rights leader Bernadette Devlin in Londonderry. She was to begin serving a six-month sentence stemming from last summer's rebellion. Re-elected to Parliament in the June 18 elections, she had requested permission to appeal the sentence to the House of Lords, but her appeal was denied.

In Belfast violence was ignited by a parade past the Catholic area of town by the Orange Order, a Protestant secret society similar to the Ku Klux Klan. Parades by the Orange Order are continuing.

British deputy prime minister Brian Faulkner has made clear that the government plans no concessions to the Catholic civil rights movement and that this movement is the target of the government's repressive measures.



July 7, 1945

A wave of strikes, greatest since the heroic days of the "sit-down" struggles of 1937, has been sweeping the country for the past two months. Hundreds of thousands of workers, defying strike-breaking ultimatums of the government and in most instances of their own top union leaders, have courageously snatched up their most effective weapon, strike action.

A virtual general strike of rubber workers is right now paralyzing the rubber center of Akron. Last week 48,000 CIO auto union members in Detroit closed down half a dozen major plants in their five-year battle to win wage equalization. A half a million auto and aircraft workers in Michigan are demanding a strike vote. Western Electric workers in New Jersey have voted overwhelmingly for strike. American labor is once more on the march!

Crimes of imperial 'democracy'

As the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II approached, a *New York Times* editorial condemned "Tokyo's refusal to apologize." By not "facing up to its record in World War II," the Japanese government has "fostered a potentially dangerous psychological breach," opined the editorial.

The pious *Times* editors pointed out that "imperial Japanese forces" slaughtered millions of Chinese workers and peasants, forced thousands of Korean and other women into sexual bondage, and conducted medical experiments on civilians.

While these events are certainly damning for the Japanese government, Washington is in no position to point its finger at the atrocities committed by any government in World War II. President Harry Truman ordered the instant annihilation of 150,000 people in the atomic bombings at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A few months earlier U.S. forces slaughtered more than 200,000 people in the invasion of Okinawa, most of them civilians. U.S. planes firebombed working-class populations of Tokyo and Dresden, Germany. During the war Japanese-Americans were interned in concentration camps. This was Washington's record in World War II.

Touted as the "War for Democracy," this imperialist bloodbath was nothing of the sort. It was a war that grew out of the rivalry between imperialist cutthroats. Washington's competitors in Japan and Germany were encroaching upon territories its ruling class had staked out for exploitation. Both Tokyo and Berlin had their eyes on the super profits U.S. banking combines and monop-

olies were raking in from foreign holdings.

In July 1937, the Japanese military invaded North China. Shortly afterward, Washington's capitalist propagandists began an anti-Japanese barrage. Some within the trade unions promoted "Buy American" campaigns as a way to protect jobs and wages in this country. This was as much a trap for working people then as it is now.

Protection of U.S. business interests was the main concern of the Roosevelt administration as it prepared to pull millions of workers into the war as cannon fodder against Washington's competitors.

Recently, U.S. president Bill Clinton spoke to hundreds of auto workers at a Ford assembly plant. He posed as the champion of jobs, blaming Japan for unemployment and worsening wages and working conditions. Co-signing this reactionary line, a United Auto Workers official stated "total support of the president" to "get us more jobs," and "take on the Japs."

But working people have no stake in the trade disputes among our exploiters. While another inter-imperialist shooting war is not on the horizon in the immediate future, the crisis of world capitalism drags the rulers in that direction.

Working-class solidarity across all borders is the key for working people to resisting the bosses' attacks on our standard of living. It is the only way to build a movement that can prevent a third world imperialist slaughter, by taking power out of the hands of the warmakers. Our future depends on standing together with fellow workers and farmers in Japan and every other country, not on the profits of the Big Three auto barons.

Labor's fight for jobs for all

The question of fighting for jobs for all has become a central concern for working people around the world. From Spain to Argentina, and even Japan, workers face record unemployment. This is a consequence of the worldwide depression that capitalism began sinking into at the beginning of the 1990s. The volatility of the capitalist economy today threatens the future of millions. The collapse of the Mexican peso in December, for example, led not only to mass layoffs in Mexico, but, as the shock waves spread, to bankruptcies, accelerated downsizing of industry, and plant closings in other Latin American nations. The effects of the bankruptcy of Orange County, California, are now being felt there by thousands of working people whose jobs and social rights are in the balance.

In Argentina and other semicolonial nations, the jobs crisis is posed starkly by the demands of imperialist bankers on governments: pay billions on the foreign debt, even if it means not paying wages and throwing tens of thousands onto the street.

Employers rely on the competition for jobs among workers to drive down the price of labor power and bring the dog-eat-dog values of the capitalists into our class. Growing unemployment saps the strength, morale, and fighting capacity of the working class and the labor movement.

In numerous countries, working-class resistance to these effects of the capitalist nightmare shows the way for labor. One outstanding case is the month-long strike waged by 47,000 oil workers in Brazil. The continued

strike by Caterpillar workers in the United States is another good example of workers' capacity to fight. This resistance is decisive in determining how fast and how far the bosses can go in their drive against our right to jobs, dignity, a living income, and a social wage.

The union movement needs an agenda that promotes solidarity within our class. We need to demand:

- A 30-hour workweek for 40 hours' pay, to spread the available work. Fighting for a shorter workweek — across national borders — helps bridge the divisions the employers foster between employed and jobless workers.
- A sliding scale of wages to protect against the corrosive effects of inflation on workers' living standards.
- Provide jobs at union-scale wages through a public works program to build housing, schools, and hospitals.
- Defend affirmative action, with quotas for hiring and training.
- Raise the minimum wage.
- Equal rights for immigrants. Stop the anti-immigrant attacks that bosses use to create a second-class layer of workers.

Today, working people in revolutionary Cuba are leading the international resistance to the effects of the capitalist depression.

They point to the necessary road for the working class to put an end to unemployment and other social scourges — to fight to rid the world of the capitalist system and replace it with a socialist society, organized in the interests of workers and farmers.

Join actions in defense of Cuba

"We are surviving, although many do not admit it or want to admit it," said Cuban foreign minister Roberto Robaina speaking at a June 16 conference in Cienfuegos, Cuba, on participatory democracy. "The revolution lives in Cuba — a small country that has the honor of being and wanting to continue being different from what is sold on television; a country that has not lost its ability to make its voice heard and that has not renounced and never will renounce its socialism."

For some, the fact that the socialist revolution in Cuba exists, has survived, still fights, and is defended by the big majority of working people is a powerful and attractive example. The working class in Cuba is determined not to give up control of the country's land, sugar fields, nickel mines, and beaches — and most importantly determined not to give up their own government — to satisfy the demands of foreign investors and the capitalists who direct the International Monetary Fund. Contrast this to the austerity drive being forced on working people from Argentina to Mexico and India. Cuba looks good — sovereign, independent, and dignified, something the capitalist governments in Latin America don't even pretend to aspire to anymore.

For the representatives of the capitalist class in Washington, though, the example of Cuba is dangerous. The U.S. rulers want to hide it from view, to isolate and eliminate the revolution. That's why they won't give up their policy of unrelenting hostility.

Growing numbers of workers and rebellious youth the

world over want to learn about the revolutionary course Cuban workers and peasants embarked on in 1959. This highlights the importance of taking every opportunity to defend the Cuban revolution and speak out against the U.S. embargo and travel ban. The more people learn about Cuba, the more weight will be on the side of staying the hand of Washington's aggression.

In the next several weeks one of the most important things defenders of Cuba's sovereignty can do is build participation in the Cuba Lives festival. The youth who gather there from around the world will be an important part of the forces defending the revolution. Many can also be won to building a movement to follow the example set by the socialist revolution in Cuba.

Supporters of the Cuban revolution and of democratic rights should also support the right of the participants in the youth delegation organized by the Freedom to Travel Challenge and the fifth Friendship Caravan to return from Cuba free from government harassment.

Cuba activists can get to work right away building the regional demonstrations in Atlanta, Chicago, New York, and San Francisco on October 14 called to oppose the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba. These actions can be built broadly among workers, students, and activists in political protest struggles. With everything the capitalist system is doing to working people today, many will be ready to stand up for a people willing to fight for their sovereignty, independence, and the socialism they freely chose.

What do rightist militias signify?

Reader Jon Hillson, in a letter printed on the facing page, requests that the *Militant* write more on the significance of the Oklahoma City bombing and provide a "balanced analysis of the ultrarightist groups" such as those accused of being connected with the blast. I'm not sure how "balanced" a view there is to provide. Groups like the Michigan Militia — which Timothy McVeigh, accused of setting the April 19 blast, is said to have had links with — are reactionary, fascist-minded outfits that have nothing to do with the working-class movement.

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

Under today's depression conditions, with growing unemployment, economic instability, and social tensions — and with little resistance coming from the working class — the framework of bourgeois politics keeps shifting to the right. The representatives of the capitalist rulers — Democrats, Republicans, and "independents" alike — are driven to attack the social gains and democratic rights of working people as part of the bosses' efforts to boost their profit rates. The rationalizations by these big-business politicians for their anti-working-class course — such as arguing that "too much" is spent on Medicare or blaming immigrant workers and Japanese automakers for unemployment — feed reactionary biases, fears, and resentments and give an impulse to right-wing and fascist-minded forces, from Republican politician Patrick Buchanan to the so-called militias.

The rightist paramilitary groups often use anti-government rhetoric, portraying themselves as standing up for the "little guy" against corrupt, power-hungry politicians and bureaucrats. This, by the way, underlines the importance of communist workers clearly explaining that the economic and social problems we confront are caused by the normal workings of the *capitalist system* as a whole, not just the government.

The militias are not a substantial political force today, however. Contrary to what the semi-hysterical coverage in the big-business press would lead you to believe, the bombing in Oklahoma City is not a sign that the ultraright is surging ahead in strength. They don't get broad support among working people, or in the middle class for that matter. The bombing, which killed 167 people, didn't win them a lot of new recruits either.

The most important fact for working people about the Oklahoma bombing is how the Clinton administration, Congress, and the big-business press attempt to use it to curtail democratic rights. As a statement issued by Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes the day of the bombing pointed out, "All supporters of democratic rights must be on the alert to protest the trampling of hard-won rights that will mark [the] 'investigation' — the presumption of innocence; the right to due process; protection from illegal search, seizure, and wiretaps; freedom of association without infiltration by police informers and agent provocateurs; and many others."

Days after the bombing, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed a resolution calling for the use of the death penalty against those convicted in the bombing. Congress, at President Bill Clinton's urging, used the blast to justify passing an "antiterrorism" package that would grant greater powers to the FBI and other cop agencies to spy on whoever they choose, limit the rights of the accused, and curtail other civil liberties. In the immediate aftermath of the bombing, authorities launched an anti-Arab, anti-Islamic smear campaign.

Big struggles between the working class and fascist forces are not right around the corner. That won't happen until the labor movement begins to fight back on a much larger scale against the impact of the capitalist depression. Then layers of the capitalist class will turn to fascist elements, including some of those in the militias today, to try to smash the organizations and fighting spirit of the working class.

When that happens our class will have its chance as well, to put its stamp on history by overturning the capitalist social relations that breed unemployment, racism, fascism, and wars. The task before socialist workers today is to participate in the resistance that is taking place to the attacks of the employers and their government, and in the process build the kind of communist movement that can help lead the large class battles that will unfold in the future.

Reader R.B.L. asks about the *Militant's* position on gun control legislation. Neither the antiweapons laws advocated by many liberals nor vigilantism under the guise of defending democratic rights, as the right-wing National Rifle Association promotes, have anything to do with stopping crime or acts like the Oklahoma City bombing. Both are often used to attack workers' rights. And both leave the biggest, most violent criminals — the capitalist rulers, their armies, and their cops — free to carry out murderous assaults on working people around the world, from the slaughter of the Iraq war to the stepped-up use of the death penalty in the United States today.

— NAOMI CRAINE

California construction workers win contracts

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 so other fighting workers around the world can read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or

a hefty fee. The demand for training and apprenticeship programs is especially important as the more skilled, higher paid jobs have historically been reserved for white workers.

"Fifty percent of the workers are without documents," said Carpenters business representative Baldwin Keenan, "and the contractors take advantage of this to pay them in cash — and less than what other workers are making."



Striking drywallers in 1992 in Anaheim, California. Their victory inspired framers, most of them immigrants, to win contracts with 20 builders in southern California.

Militant/Elizabeth Stone

ried the bosses will use the non-union workers to introduce unsafe work practices that would be forced on all the workers.

Steve Guest, secretary of the Lyttelton branch of the New Zealand Waterfront Workers Union, commented, "This government wants a pool of unemployed [so they can] do this sort of thing." Two days into picketing the police issued trespass notices to the workers, who took down the picket line and convened a meeting to decide the next step.

More than 200

poultry workers at Tegel Foods Ltd. are also fighting attacks on their working conditions and to maintain a national contract. Workers in Christchurch and Te Horo held a series of 24-hour strikes, and unionists at the company's Manurewa plant walked out for four days in mid-June. Tegel wants to lengthen the "hours of normal work" so that workers can be forced to put in their eight hours anytime between 5 a.m. and 10 p.m., with no shift allowance.

Contributors to this week's column include Mark Friedman, member of International Association of Machinists Local 2785 in Los Angeles; Celia Pugh, member of the AEEU in London; Brian Williams, member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 27 in Cheverly, Maryland; and Dean Hazlewood, member of the Meat Workers Union, and Ruth Gray, member of the Engineers Union, in Christchurch.

ON THE PICKET LINE

other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

A two-month-long strike in southern California by 1,000 workers in the construction trades ended in a victory. Twenty contractors signed an agreement with the Carpenters Union covering 12 counties in southern California.

The overwhelmingly immigrant workforce from Mexico and Latin America was inspired by the successful strike actions and organizing efforts of the drywallers several years ago. Using similar tactics of mass picketing at the construction sites and going onto the sites to recruit new members, 25 percent of the framers are now unionized.

This is the first union contract for these framers. Pre-strike wages for framers, and current nonunion workers, can be as low as \$50 for a 10- or 12-hour day. Wages have dropped 25 percent since 1988. The strike began in Orange County in April and spread rapidly. At its height, more than 800 workers were actively picketing.

They won a minimum rate of \$156 a day (\$19 an hour) for skilled carpenters, optional health insurance, and training. The contract also prohibits the use of labor brokers, who get workers hired for

Rolls Royce workers resist 'flexible' hours

Three hundred fifty workers at Rolls Royce Aero Engine Services, Ansty, in Coventry, England, are in the third month of intermittent strike action. The workers rejected a company offer of a 2.5 percent raise tied to productivity. Rolls Royce insists on steps toward "flexible" work schedules, 12-hour shifts, and one-time payments to replace premium pay for overtime, shift work, and public holidays.

The workers have set up picket lines for two days each week and have the official backing of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union (AEEU) and Transport and General Workers Union.

On June 10, an enthusiastic delegation gave out leaflets and collected donations at the 800-delegate national conference of the AEEU in Blackpool. The leaflet, issued by the joint shop stewards committee, reported that they had received messages of support from across the country.

"If we accept these attacks, they'll want more in the future," said striker Ashley McNaughton. "The change in our hours of work will give the company more control over our lives. They've been pushing us around for years and

unemployment has made people fearful. There have been no strikes at our factory since the 1970s. But now they've gone too far. We're just saying, enough is enough."

Workers at plants near Glasgow and Derby have settled with Rolls Royce by exchanging new hours for supplement payments. Strike action continues at the Coventry and Bristol Rolls Royce.

Gas company locks out unionists in U.S. capital

The Washington Gas Light Co. locked out 1,050 members of the International Union of Gas Workers at their offices in Washington, D.C., and parts of Maryland and Virginia, after the workers rejected a contract offer. The company distributes natural gas to more than 750,000 customers in the capital area.

A worker picketing the company's facility in Chillum, Maryland, explained the bosses are try-

ing to take away everything the union has won in the past 30 years. "They're trying to bust the union," he said. The company wants to gut seniority rights and be able to hire part-time workers and use people on a temporary basis.

About half the workforce belongs to the gas workers union. Management is attempting to keep production going by using retirees, office workers, and contractors. This has already led to disgruntlement among some of the utility's customers and could pose serious safety problems.

Actions by dock, poultry workers in New Zealand

Waterside workers mounted a picket line at Christchurch's Port Lyttelton June 16, protesting the use of casual nonunion labor to load a cargo of apples.

The nonunion workers are being paid about 40 percent less than union rates. Workers are also wor-

LETTERS

Rightist bombing

Mark Curtis, in his recent column on the response of fellow prisoners to the Oklahoma City terror bombing, makes useful points on the depth of anger at the government, and the threat it poses to working people when it takes a rightist form.

Unfortunately, there's been little else in the *Militant's* coverage of the significance of the bombing that probes the development of ultrarightism and fascist elements in the context of deepening social, economic, and political polarization in the United States, the "culture war."

I agree that all defenders of democratic liberties and constitutional rights should be particularly vigilant against attempts by the U.S. government to use the Oklahoma City blast and killings as a pretext to attack freedoms won by working people — a critical point which the *Militant* hammers home effectively.

But the virtual absence in the socialist press of balanced analysis of the ultraright groups is a weakness that ought to be promptly overcome.

The *Militant*, since the 1992 presidential election campaign, has made a point of clarifying the role and place of the incipient fascist project of Republican candidate Patrick Buchanan.

The social forces that vomited up the Oklahoma City bombers, and what they reflect, are nothing but a more rabid, extralegal form of "Buchananism" — not a mass movement or insurgent social



force but something real to be assessed.

The alienation, frustration, and fear of middle-class elements — which will deepen — in the current economic and moral crisis of decaying capitalist society nurtures rightist forces. The lack of a working-class program, voice, and mass party also opens up some layers of working people to such demagoguery, including those in the cities and countryside.

This is where those grouped in the so-called Christian Coalition, Family Forum, and other "broad" rightist operations come from. These elements overlap, and reinforce semi-fascist outfits in the "patriot movement," "militias," "Christian identity" and racist skinhead operations bred by the

decomposition of bourgeois society.

Jon Hillson
St. Paul, Minnesota

Protest of cop brutality

About 50 people gathered in front of the Prince George's County police headquarters in Palmer Park, Maryland, on June 10 to protest police brutality and commemorate the second anniversary of the slaying of 24-year-old Archie Elliott.

On June 18, 1993, Elliott was shot 14 times by two police officers for allegedly pointing a hand gun at them while handcuffed with his hands behind his back and sitting in the front seat of a patrol car. No charges were ever

filed against the two cops. A Prince George's County grand jury ruled that the shooting was justified. The rally demanded that the Elliott case be reopened.

Among those addressing the gathering were Dorothy Elliott, mother of Archie; June Dillard, representative of the Prince George's County NAACP; and Mauri Saalakhian, Coalition Against Political Imprisonment. They were joined by Robert Green, stepfather of Jeffrey Gilbert, who was arrested and charged with the murder of a police officer, brutally beaten, and later released for lack of evidence. Brian Williams
Washington, D.C.

Gun control

Regarding June 5 issue, page 15 from the "Letters" section — I took interest in the note printed under the title "On Gun Control" (from E.M., Caneyville, Kentucky). I too would like to see an article in the *Militant* on your position on gun laws/rights, etc. It's an issue that would make an interesting article.

R.B.L. Lyons,
Rochester, New York

Notes from subscribers

I've been reading the *Militant* for some 50 years; it continues to provide information not available elsewhere.

I'd like to see more discussion about France, and the Trotskyist movement there.

Harry Ring's column is great — humor is a useful weapon in the class struggle.

A reader
Chicago, Illinois

I really enjoy Mark [Curtis]'s column, so down to earth and fruitful. And as always the coverage continues to be great.

A reader
St. Louis, Missouri

Editor's note

Several readers who recently renewed their subscriptions to the *Militant* enclosed a donation to the Books for Cuba Fund. The fund helps cover the costs of donations of Pathfinder books to libraries and institutions in Cuba. Pathfinder publishes books on the history of the working-class movement and struggles of working people around the world.

While there is a great thirst for this material in Cuba, hard currency to purchase it is hard to come by. The Books for Cuba Fund helps defray the cost of meeting some of the requests for such books. You can send a donation, earmarked Books for Cuba Fund, to the *Militant* at the address on page 2.

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.

Pacific protests slam Paris nuke tests

BY DOUG COOPER

SYDNEY, Australia — The June 13 announcement by newly elected French president Jacques Chirac that underground nuclear bomb tests would resume in one of its South Pacific colonial possessions, which Paris calls French Polynesia, has rekindled decades-long indignation and anger among working people throughout the Pacific region.

Washington, London, and Paris have a five-decade history of using the Pacific, especially their colonies, for nuclear tests.

Protests occurred in Australia immediately after Chirac's announcement — 150 demonstrated at French government offices in Perth, 500 in Canberra, and 100 in Sydney. On June 16 many students at the French-Australian Telopea Park High School in Canberra refused to stand for the French national anthem. About 200 boycotted classes starting June 19 and held protests in front of the school.

In New Zealand, the new Greenpeace ship *Rainbow Warrior* — which replaced the ship blown up by French government agents in July 1985 in Auckland harbor, killing one volunteer — was farewelled June 13 by 200 people as it left Auckland en route to the test site at Moruroa Atoll. Students from Massey University and others protested June 16 at a France-New Zealand rugby league game in Palmerston North. More than 1,000 people, overwhelmingly young, marched on the French embassy in Wellington June 26 chanting "Ban the bomb."

Some 2,000 protested in Rarotonga, the Cook Islands, June 24 during *Rainbow Warrior's* stopover. It was the largest anti-nuclear demonstration ever held there.

In the largest protest to date, 6,000 marched in Paris June 21 against the decision.

Nelson Ortas, a member of the pro-independence party Tavini Huiraatira No Te Ao Maohi, the Polynesian Liberation Front, said in a June 22 phone interview that two groups, Hiti Tau and Pomare, had held protests against the Gaullist head of the Territorial Assembly.

Eight tests announced

Chirac announced plans for eight tests between September 1995 and May 1996. After these tests, he said, Paris would sign the comprehensive test ban treaty promised by Washington, London, and Paris in May at a United Nations-sponsored conference on nuclear nonproliferation in New York. The three view the test ban as a way to cajole 170 other governments into backing their right to maintain their nuclear arsenals indefinitely.

Paris has used French Polynesia for nuclear testing for three decades. Since tests began in 1966 at Moruroa and nearby Fangataufa Atoll, it has detonated 177 bombs — 44 in the atmosphere and, from June 1975, 133 underground. Atmospheric tests ended only under the pressure of a half-decade of protests.

President François Mitterrand continued the nuclear tests following his election in 1981. He suspended them in April 1992.

Washington and Moscow — two of the four other declared nuclear powers — quickly issued mild criticisms of Chirac's move. However, on June 19, U.S. defense secretary William Perry floated the idea that Washington was considering resuming tests as well as pressing for an increase in the size of blasts permitted under the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

Paris has never permitted independent scientific investigations within the 12-mile limit of the effects on the atolls nor allowed health records in French Polynesia to be made available.

Radioactive leaks, cancer

Scientific investigations conducted by the governments of Australia, New Zealand, and Papua New Guinea have confirmed that severe cracking to the coral and dolomite layers of Moruroa Atoll has occurred, causing the atoll to start sinking and radioactivity to leak into the environment. In 1983 researchers found radioactive plankton 20 miles off Moruroa.

Rare forms of cancer, such as thyroid cancer, are one of the long-term effects of low-level radioactive fallout. The only exceptions to a worldwide decrease in rates of thyroid cancer in recent decades are in the South Pacific and around Chernobyl.

Traces of radioactive cesium-137 are still found in Australia in monthly samples of milk.

Sensing the widespread outrage among working people, most capitalist politicians throughout the region moved quickly to oppose the French government's decision. Opposition has ranged from muted criticisms, as in the case of some South Pacific governments that receive French aid, to



French-Australians protest atomic tests and anti-French chauvinism in front of French consulate in Sydney June 18.

strong condemnation, as in the case of the conservative National Party government of Prime Minister Jim Bolger in New Zealand.

The rulers of imperialist New Zealand and Australia have long found it necessary and expedient to adapt to mass antinuclear sentiment at home and around the Pacific. Their real worry is that Paris's imperial arrogance will destabilize the region, which they consider to be their "backyard."

Bolger labeled Chirac's decision the "arrogant action of a European colonial power." The *New Zealand Herald* described the "rare show of unity in support of government action" by all six opposition parties, including the Labour Party, to suspend all military cooperation with France. Future purchases of French military hardware were called into question.

The Australian government's initial response was mild. On June 14, Foreign Minister Gareth Evans called the decision "deeply disappointing," but noted, "If people are not prepared to see the signifi-

cance of [the tests'] limits, that is unfortunate."

After initial hesitation, Labor Party prime minister Paul Keating declared a freeze on military cooperation with Paris at existing levels. The Cabinet announced the recall of the Australian ambassador from Paris and suspension of military training exchanges.

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions issued a joint call, June 15, for their respective governments to force Paris to back down. "France...should be made to feel the impact...especially through their economic interests," it said.

ACTU president Martin Ferguson threatened trade union action against Air France and against mail and telecommunications between France and Australia. "If the French want nuclear tests why don't they do them in their own backyards in Bordeaux?" he said.

In response to widespread anti-French chauvinism from the big-business media and politicians, French-Australians in Sydney organized a protest at the French consulate, June 18. "Let us be outraged together" at Chirac's decision, said protest organizer Daniele Caraty. Her sign read: "Media: Why stir up hatred toward all French? Condemn the Chirac government, not its people."

Australian Services Union members in Cairns held a mass meeting June 16 and voted not to handle paperwork or anything else associated with the scheduled arrival of two French air force jets on June 19. Transport Workers Union members in northern Queensland and the Northern Territory have refused to refuel any French military aircraft.

Greenpeace has called "global protests" for July 10, the 10th anniversary of the sinking of the original *Rainbow Warrior*. Antinuclear and environmental groups have called a protest at the French consulate in Sydney for July 14.

Ferguson of the ACTU pledged June 23 the labor movement would hold protests around the country August 6, Hiroshima Day.

Doug Cooper is a member of the Australian Workers' Union in Sydney. Eugen Lepou and Mike Tucker from Auckland contributed to this article.

Irish fighters demand high-level talks with London

BY MAUREEN COLETTA

BODENSTOWN, Ireland — "The British government now stands isolated before a world which expects real progress," said Martin McGuinness. The Sinn Féin leader was addressing a crowd of 4,500 gathered at the graveside of 18th century revolutionary leader Wolfe Tone, often called the founder of Irish republicanism. The marchers came from all corners of the north and south of Ireland to the annual Wolfe Tone commemoration, which was held here June 18.

"The guns are silent now; they have been silent for almost a year," McGuinness said, referring to the cease-fire declared by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in August 1994. "The British government knows that all-party peace talks are the essential step required to translate the present opportunity into a lasting and democratic peace settlement." Sinn Féin has called for its inclusion along with other political forces in negotiations on the future of Northern Ireland.

Condemning the stalling tactics of the British government, McGuinness said ex-

ploratory talks between Sinn Féin and British officials were now over and called for a time frame to be set for an all-party meeting. British prime minister John Major and Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Patrick Mayhew have demanded the IRA disarm before moving to substantial dialogue, a move McGuinness said, "would constitute the actual surrender of the IRA." He characterized this precondition as "a lame excuse which prevents real peace talks."

Explaining that the majority of arms are in the hands of loyalist (pro-British) or British occupying forces, Sinn Féin calls for "a universal decommissioning of arms once an all-encompassing political discussion and framework is agreed upon."

Speaking in South Africa the day before, Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams put the onus on the British government to move toward ministerial-level talks. London's insistence on unilateral IRA decommissioning, he stated, is "an obstacle in the road to a settlement."

Adams and three other representatives of Sinn Féin were on a historic eight-day

visit of South Africa as guests of the African National Congress. Adams met with President Nelson Mandela June 19. "In many ways we have shared a common experience," the Sinn Féin leader said. "You who have successfully negotiated a democratic settlement can teach us much, both in the process of negotiation itself, but also in the difficult task of reconciliation and reconstruction."

In Bodentown, marchers along the country road leading to Tone's graveside held aloft elaborately painted banners with the main demands of the fight for Irish self-determination. "All-party talks now" and "Release all political prisoners" were the most popular.

Many local branches of Sinn Féin and Saoirse were present with banners and contingents from counties in both the north and south of Ireland.

Members of Saoirse, which has been campaigning for the immediate and unconditional release of all Irish political prisoners, carried signs protesting London's handling of the Pvt. Lee Clegg case. Clegg, a British soldier, was sentenced to

life imprisonment for the 1990 murder of Irish teenager Karen Reilly in a roadblock shooting in West Belfast.

British authorities are considering his early release, a move that many say would constitute a double standard, since numerous Irish political prisoners have served up to 20 years. Demonstrators carried signs declaring, "If you release Clegg, release Irish prisoners also" and "He killed Irish children...And he got a slap on the back."

McGuinness concluded the commemoration by pointing to Tone's vision of "an Ireland where nobody would be either privileged or damned on account of his or her religion, where all would enjoy equal rights and where the future of Ireland would be shaped by the people of Ireland alone. That Ireland is coming, make no mistake about it," the Sinn Féin leader stressed. "We are unbreakable, and the tide of history is with us."

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