

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

'The more Cuba resists, the more it is respected' — Castro

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China forum succeeds in spite of U.S. gov't attacks

BY LAURA GARZA
AND MAGGIE TROWE

HUAIROU, China — Amid an attempt to portray the massive forum on women taking place here as an event plagued with repressive interference by the Chinese government, more than 20,000 women have proceeded apace in holding discussions, workshops, marches, processions, debates, and distributing and selling literature on the fight for women's rights. Banners, posters, and notices of workshops drape the walls, fences, and building entrances.

Daily protest actions have occurred on the conference grounds of the forum of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) on women, from numerous marches against nuclear weapons testing led by Japanese and Pacific Island activists, to a demonstration protesting discrimination against lesbians, and another demanding an end to the U.S. government's economic blockade of Cuba.

A large number of women at the NGO forum are from Asian countries. Prior to the conference about 6,000 registered from Japan, 2,000 from the Philippines, and hundreds from other countries in the region, including 600 from South Korea and a few dozen from North Korea.

"This has done away with the myth of the meek Asian woman," said one participant in a spirited march demanding justice for former "comfort women." A number of other protests and workshops were organized by Japanese and Korean women on the issue of the comfort women — those pressed into sexual slavery by the Japanese military during World War II.

Among the several workshops organized on this topic was a meeting organized by women from North and South Korea. This was a historic event, since the

Continued on Page 12

Dozens write parole board: 'free Curtis'

BY JOHN COX

DES MOINES, Iowa — Supporters of imprisoned union and political activist Mark Curtis met September 5 at the Forest Avenue Library here to discuss final arrangements for a delegation to the Iowa State Board of Parole demanding that Curtis be freed. The committee meets weekly to discuss the progress of the defense campaign, answer the mail, and organize for the next week's work.

On September 7 Bill Kutmus, Curtis's attorney, will lead the delegation of Des Moines area unionists and political activists to meet with the board. They will carry hundreds of letters from around the world, along with a special bundle of 5,000 letters from landless peasants in Brazil, petitioning the board for Curtis's release.

Over the past week, committee coordinator John Studer reported to the meeting, dozens of new letters have come by mail and by fax into the defense committee of-

Continued on Page 4

Mass picket line stops Detroit newspapers

BY HOLLY HARKNESS

STERLING HEIGHTS, Michigan — Striking newspaper workers scored a victory here September 2 when mass picketing delayed the shipment of the Sunday edition of the combined *Detroit News* and *Free Press* for 18 hours.

Some 3,000 strikers, family members, and supporters from other unions used the power of their numbers to frustrate the police and the company goons who had been moving scabs and scab papers in and out of the plant every hour since the strike began. From Saturday afternoon to 8:30 a.m. Sunday morning nothing moved.

"It was an extremely successful action," said Al Young, president of Teamsters Mailers Union Local 2040. "We sustained the picket line long enough to make the Sunday paper useless." Don Kummer Jr., a striking mailer, commented, "We're used to losing. It's about time we won one."

The strike began almost two months ago after the owners of the *Free Press* and the *News* reneged on their promise to negotiate jointly with all six newspaper unions on economic issues. The company wants to impose drastic job cuts, contract out union work, increase the workload without adequate compensation, and hire nonunion labor at lower wages.

The strike quickly won support from working people in and around Detroit. The *Free Press* and *News* virtually disappeared from the lunch tables and work benches in the massive auto plants organized by the United Auto Workers (UAW) throughout the region.

The same thing happened in many other factories, steel mills, and rail yards. Thousands canceled their subscriptions. Workers convinced many storeowners not to



Militant/John Sarge

Striking newspaper workers and supporters at Labor Day march in Detroit

carry the scab paper. Many major retailers also canceled their advertising.

Despite the strong support from workers and the unity of the strikers, the newspaper unions found they were not strong enough to prevent the company from printing and distributing a daily paper. Frustration grew on the picket lines in Sterling Heights, a few miles north of Detroit, as workers carried out an agreement to step aside every hour to allow the police to escort a caravan of vans, cars, trucks,

and buses across Mound Road and into the plant. Trucks and vans filled with the papers printed inside were allowed to leave the same way.

As Labor Day drew near, strike leaders, with the support of the national AFL-CIO, issued a call to use that weekend to mobilize strikers and other unionists in a show of strength at the Sterling Heights plant.

Saturday was planned with a rally at a UAW local hall one mile north of the plant

Continued on Page 13

NATO bombing escalates Bosnia war

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

NATO warplanes, most of them from U.S. forces, resumed bombing raids September 5 against positions held by Serb troops loyal to Belgrade. U.S. officials said they will broaden the air strikes near Sarajevo and other cities in Bosnia substantially beyond those of the previous week, using vastly increased firepower.

The military action, spearheaded by Washington in order to expand its influence in the region, began August 29. The U.S. government is bent on imposing a "peace plan" that would set the partition of Bosnia in stone. The plan could require 25,000 ground troops from the United States to enforce it, as part of an imperialist occupation force of 50,000.

Some 60 combat aircraft flew more than 1,000 sorties in the first 50 hours of the bombing operation. NATO officials suspended the raids September 1, giving Gen. Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic, the main rightist Serb leaders in Bosnia, three days to withdraw heavy weapons from around Sarajevo and accept a cease-fire.

In a message to former U.S. president James Carter, Karadzic said he accepted NATO's demands. Mladic, however, in a letter to Lt. Gen. Bernard Janvier, the UN commander in the former Yugoslavia, stated, "No one, not even myself has the right to order the withdrawal." As the September 4 deadline passed, only a few pieces of artillery had been removed from

the hills around Sarajevo.

Mladic maintained his defiant stance. "If you bomb us, we will defend ourselves. The more they bombard us, the stronger we are," he told Reuter television in Pale, his stronghold near Sarajevo, just before the bombing resumed.

Fighter bombers from the NATO base in Aviano, Italy, and the aircraft carrier *USS Theodore Roosevelt* off the Bosnian coast began pounding what NATO officials described as military targets, not only in Lukavica and other suburbs of the Bosnian capital, but several other towns as far away as the area of Tuzla in northeastern Bosnia. Larger U.S. aircraft, AC-130 gunships, were used September 6 for the first time. British gunners from the UN Rapid Reaction Force on Mt. Ingman outside Sarajevo joined the fray, firing dozens of cannon rounds per day at positions held by Mladic's army.

During the first two days of the renewed bombing raids, no NATO losses were reported. Returning U.S., French, Dutch, and British pilots said they encountered only light antiaircraft fire. At

the same time, Karadzic's troops pumped dozens of artillery shells into central Sarajevo, wounding several people.

Bosnian Serb officials say non-military casualties are increasing as a result of the NATO raids, including three civilians wounded and one killed in the community

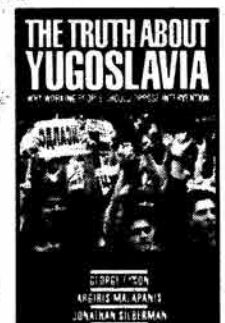
Continued on Page 3

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'Militant' subscription drive to begin September 23 — page 4



VW workers strike in Germany

Some 15,000 Volkswagen workers in Germany conducted warning strikes August 29 for a 6 percent pay hike and against an increase in working hours. On September 4, some 70,000 workers held brief strikes at all of the company's six German plants. The unions are pressing their demands at the same time as the employers are asking for overtime with only slight increases in pay.

In a report approved by the German government and published August 29, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development criticized bosses in Germany for giving workers "excessively generous" pay hikes. Officials of the OECD expressed "regret" that the unions had not agreed to "significant provisions" for flexibility in increasing working hours.

Shevardnadze seeks presidency

Only 24 hours after surviving an assassination attempt, ex-Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze announced August 30 he would run for president of Georgia in the November 5 elections. Shevardnadze was wounded August 29 when a car bomb exploded near his motorcade while he was en route to sign a new constitution for the country.

Shortly after the attempt on his life Shevardnadze met with Col. Gen. Vasily Lapshin, an advisor to Russian defense minister Pavel Grachev. The Georgian politician has called for more military cooperation between Tbilisi and Moscow.

Israeli gov't lifts Palestinian ban

The Israeli government ended a ban imposed on Palestinian workers entering the country from Jericho August 31. The ban was instituted after a suicide bomber killed five people in Jerusalem August 21. Lifting the closure was initially contingent upon the Palestinian Liberation Organization handing over two suspects wanted in connection with the bombing. Palestinian authorities refused to extradite the men but jailed them in Jericho.

Palestinian officials said the 20,000 residents in the area suffered from the lack of fuel, food, and medicine during the shutdown. Hundreds of people in Jericho demonstrated against the ban August 28



Striking Volkswagen workers in Germany walk out of factory August 29 for a demonstration demanding wage increases and against longer working hours. The banner says, "Time for living, loving, and laughter...that's what we want for our Saturdays."

and threw stones at Israeli soldiers stationed at a checkpoint at the edge of the town.

Tokyo starts up nuke plant

Japanese officials turned on the switch for the Monju nuclear reactor August 29, while some 100 people protested outside the plant gate. The protesters said they had collected about one million signatures on a petition opposing the fast breeder reactor, which produces plutonium. About \$6 billion was spent to construct the reactor. It has been shut down twice this year because of technical problems.

"Monju is a Japanese nuclear test," said one poster at the demonstration drawing an analogy to Paris's planned nuclear weapons tests in the Pacific. The Japanese government has opposed those tests and recently cut off a number of aid grants to Beijing because of its recent nuclear tests.

Cease-fire signed in Liberia

Liberian military commander, Charles Taylor, and several rivals signed a truce in late August to halt the six-year civil war that was responsible for upwards of 150,000 deaths. A new coalition govern-

ment was scheduled to take the reigns September 1.

International aid organizations say they found almost 60 percent of the population suffering from severe malnutrition in the central and northern regions of Liberia, which was controlled by Taylor's National Patriot Front of Liberia. Pressure to stop the fighting came from all sectors of society. "Man this war has got to end now. We have no schools, no homes, no food and no money, and if it doesn't stop now we will all die," Capt. J.R. Benson, an 18-year-old soldier in Taylor's forces, told the *New York Times*.

Managua offers to buy back debt

Sergio Blandón, Nicaragua's deputy minister of foreign co-operation, said his government is offering to buy back its recognized commercial debt of \$1.3 billion for a maximum of eight cents on the dollar. Blandón said the deal will be financed by loans of \$80 million at 2 per cent interest from the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. The governments of Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Germany will loan \$30 million.

"This is a unique opportunity," Blandón said of the proposal. "If our creditors don't accept, Nicaragua will not be able to pay." Most of the debt was originally incurred during the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza, who was overthrown by the Sandinista revolution in 1979.

Retarded inmate executed

Barry Fairchild, a retarded prisoner, was killed by lethal injection August 31 for the murder of a nurse who was shot 12 years ago. Charles Baker, his attorney, said Fairchild had an I.Q. of 60 to 80, "depending on who gives the test." Although Fairchild did not fire the shots that killed the woman, Arkansas law allows for the execution of accomplices to murder.

Before his trial, Fairchild gave a state-

ment to the cops saying he participated in the kidnapping and rape of the victim, but not in her death. Later he recanted and insisted he had no connection to the crimes. The only evidence linking Fairchild to the crime was his statement to the cops in a videotaped interrogation in which he continually looks away from the camera and appears to be responding to prompting.

Sex offenders law overturned

U.S. district judge John Coughenour ruled August 25 that a sex offenders law in the state of Washington was unconstitutional because it punishes inmates twice for a single crime and violates the right to due process. The 1990 law, the first of its kind in the country, allowed a civil jury to jail for unlimited periods those convicted of violent sex crimes who had already served their sentences. Prisoners were confined to the Special Commitment Center in Monroe, Washington, where they would undergo indefinite counseling and therapy. "The statue has been a sham all along," Russell Leonard, a lawyer with the King County public defender's office told the *Washington Post*.

Increase in book banning

Elliot Mincberg, legal director of People for the American Way — a civil liberties organization — announced August 30 that there was an increase in books banned from public school libraries and classrooms this year. Among the books challenged were such classics as *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck and *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou.

"The attacks are bolder, broader, and more organized than ever before," said Mincberg. "When parents have input on what local officials do in the schools, that's democracy," declared Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council in Washington D.C. defending the rightist probe of censorship.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

THE MILITANT

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Korea marks 50-year fight for sovereignty

SWP leader condemns U.S. imperialism's role in partition of peninsula

BY STEVE CLARK

The annual celebrations of the founding of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on September 9, 1948, are taking on added significance in Korea this year, which marks the 50th anniversary of the liberation of that country from decades of brutal and degrading Japanese colonial rule.

Just a few weeks ago, on August 5, the capitalist government of South Korea assaulted some 5,000 students who were marching north to the border with the DPRK. The students were planning to participate in a joint rally with citizens of the DPRK in the border village of Panmunjon to celebrate Korea's liberation from Japanese colonial rule and to protest the ongoing efforts by U.S. imperialism to perpetuate the forcible division of their country.

According to an Associated Press dispatch, several students were injured when South Korean police sought to block the march by firing tear gas into the crowd. A number of cops were injured as the marchers resisted.

U.S.-imposed partition

The partition of Korea was imposed by the capitalist ruling families of the United States in the wake of World War II.

Following Tokyo's surrender to its imperialist rival in Washington in August 1945, people's committees rapidly spread throughout the Korean countryside and major cities. A government was formed on September 6, closely linked to these committees and other organizations that had been involved in the anticolonial struggle and defense of worker and peasant rights. The new government announced plans for a sweeping land reform; nationalization of factories and transportation; broad democratic rights, including universal suffrage; and other radical measures in the interests of the toiling majority of Koreans.

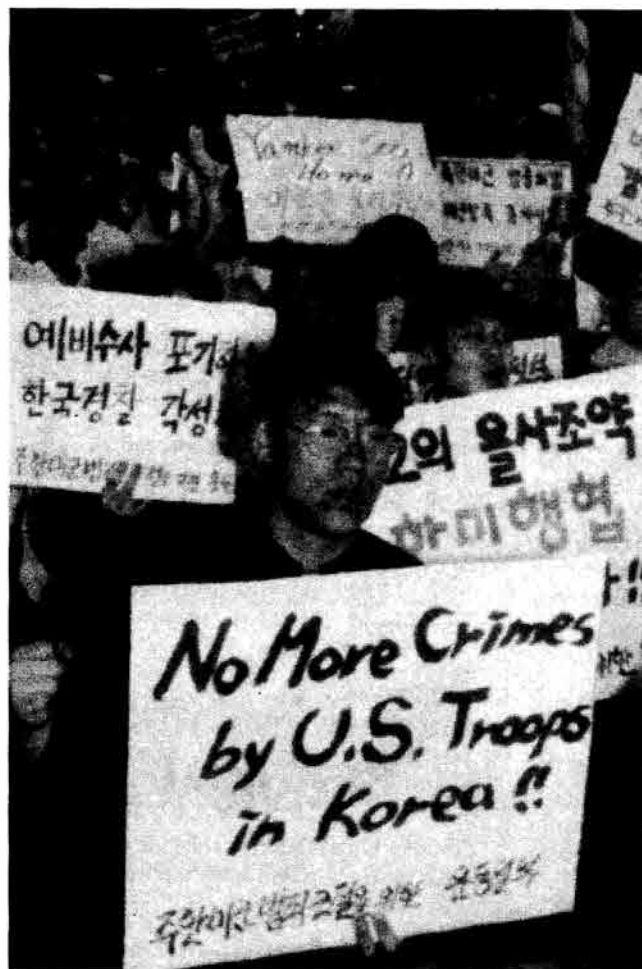
Aiming to block these anti-imperialist and anticapitalist mobilizations, the U.S. government landed its troops in Korea on September 8 and declared that it would accept the surrender of Japanese forces south of the 38th parallel. The U.S. occupation army proceeded to crush workers and peasants organizations in the southern half of Korea and imposed a reactionary government, subservient to the class interests of Wall Street and Washington. The U.S. rulers feared above all that a victory for worker and peasant forces in Korea would encourage revolutionary-minded working people in China and hasten the day when that country, too, would be freed of imperialist domination and exploitation.

In this effort to deny Korea's right to national self-determination, the U.S. rulers had the de facto cooperation of the regime headed by Joseph Stalin, which had usurped power from the working class in a political counterrevolution in the Soviet workers state in the late 1920s and 1930s. Moscow agreed to accept Tokyo's surrender north of the 38th parallel. The U.S. and Soviet governments had already tacitly agreed on the division of Korea into "spheres of influence."

Hundreds of thousands of Korean peasants, workers, and youth refused to go along with the deal, however. Washington succeeded in brutally quelling much of the resistance in the south. But in the north, rule by the landlords and capitalists was broken and organized opposition to imperialist domination continued. In September 1948 the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was founded, and from the outset that government declared its determination to win the reunification of the country.

In 1950 the Democratic administration of President Harry Truman launched a war to preserve the partition of the country following the crossing of the 38th parallel by troops of the DPRK. Washington conducted this assault on Korea's sovereignty under the auspices of the United Nations Security Council, but U.S. armed forces made up the decisive majority of the so-called UN forces waging the war.

Washington's bombers leveled Pyongyang and other cities, using napalm extensively and on several occasions threatening to employ atomic weapons. It



Students demonstrate in Seoul in June. This year marks 50 years since liberation of Korea from Tokyo.

is estimated that 4 million of the 30 million people in Korea were killed in the war.

But the U.S. rulers immediately encountered big obstacles to their assault. A year earlier, the Chinese revolution had triumphed. In late 1950 when U.S. forces attempted to occupy the entire peninsula and threatened to push on into China itself, hundreds of thousands of Chinese volunteers came to the aid of their Korean brothers and sisters.

What's more, the Korean War was unpopular among the majority of working people in the United States, despite the anticommunist witchhunting and hysteria that both Democratic and Republican politicians were attempting to whip up in those years.

By July 1953, Washington had been fought to a stalemate and forced to sign a cease-fire agreement with the DPRK. To this day, however, the U.S. government has refused to sign a peace treaty and remains officially at war with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Some 35,000 U.S. troops remain on Korean soil below the 38th parallel. These U.S. forces — despite the Pentagon's "refuse-to-

confirm-or deny" disclaimers—are well known to be equipped with nuclear weapons.

"We will not enter into any talks with North Korea on a peace treaty," U.S. ambassador to South Korea James Laney recently told the *New York Times*. Washington hypocritically claims that signing a peace treaty with the DPRK is the business of the capitalist government the U.S. rulers imposed on the southern half of Korea half a century ago and propped up ever since.

Shortly after the U.S. government launched its war against Korea in June 1950, the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States, James P. Cannon, sent a letter to President Truman and Congress condemning the U.S. intervention as "a brutal imperialist invasion" and calling for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops and the right of the Korean people to national self-determination. Cannon's letter was featured on the front page of the

Militant.

On the 47th anniversary of the founding of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the SWP's current national secretary, Jack Barnes, sent a message to the Korean people reaffirming the party's unconditional support for that country's national sovereignty. That message, addressed to Kim Jong Il, president of the National Defense Commission of the DPRK, is published below.

Our party reaffirms our solidarity with your struggle to end the forced division of your country and condemns Washington's decades-long effort to politically and economically isolate the DPRK.

Last month, representatives of our party were in Japan with thousands of others from across Asia and around the world to participate in activities marking the fiftieth anniversary of the U.S. government's heinous atom bomb assault on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Several hundred thousand residents of Japan were killed or maimed in those bombings, including many Korean immigrants. In the wake of these commemorations, we particularly con-

demn Washington's record of nuclear blackmail against Korea — from the 1950-53 war to reimpose an imperialist boot on your neck, to the deployment of U.S. nuclear-tipped warheads aimed at the DPRK to this day.

In marking the 47th anniversary of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, we join with the thousands of students in South Korea who attempted to join their brothers and sisters in the North for a rally on August 15 commemorating Korea's liberation from Japanese colonial rule half a century earlier. We condemn the brutal crackdown on the students by Seoul's cops, carried out with Washington's complicity and approval. And we join with the tens of thousands of women who — from Korea to the Philippines and China — continue to demand justice and reparations for the crimes of Japan's capitalist rulers who forced them into sexual slavery during World War II. The U.S. officer corps continues to organize such degrading practices on a massive scale throughout Asia and elsewhere to this day — one small part of the trafficking in women for domestic and sexual servitude that is part and parcel of the capitalist profit system worldwide.

This year's anniversary of the founding of the DPRK comes at a time when dozens of U.S. planes are carrying out NATO bombing raids in Bosnia, pursuing Washington's attempt to expand U.S. imperialism's influence in the former Yugoslavia. We support the people of Bosnia in their fight to defend their right to self-determination, halt the reactionary "ethnic cleansing," and oppose the partition of their land. At the same time, we condemn imperialist military intervention in the former republics of the Yugoslav workers state. Such aggressive actions are a danger not only to all the peoples who had lived and toiled side by side for decades following the Yugoslav revolution — Bosnian, Serb, Croat, and others — but to all those the world over who refuse to live by the dictates of Washington and its imperialist allies.

The Korean people in particular have bitter experience with the outcome of U.S.-organized "peacekeeping" operations carried out under the United Nations flag.

The Socialist Workers Party pledges to continue telling the truth about the aims of U.S. and Japanese imperialism in Korea and to join with other working people and youth to fight all efforts by the U.S. government to maintain the division of the peninsula.

We look forward to the day when we can join the Korean people in celebrating a united Korea, free from imperialist domination.

NATO bombing escalates Bosnia war

Continued from front page

of Hresa, near Sarajevo. Slavko Zdrle, a medical doctor at a hospital in Lukavica, told the *New York Times* September 5 that three patients and two nurses were wounded by a bomb that landed in front of the building. Another rocket fired by U.S. planes destroyed a large underground water storage tank that provided water for this hospital and several thousand homes.

U.S. president Bill Clinton, British prime minister John Major, and French president Jacques Chirac all lent full support to the renewed NATO bombing. Chirac even tried to take credit for the assault, a stance that underscored the tensions and rivalry between the imperialist allies. "It was probably me who brought about a general consensus for a strong military response," he said.

German government officials have been more cautious in their attitude toward the NATO bombings. "Bonn is anxious that Bosnian government forces do not use the NATO air strikes as an opportunity to launch their own attacks against the Bosnian Serbs, nor postpone participation in any peace talks," the *Financial Times* of London reported. German chancellor Helmut Kohl visited Moscow September 2 and held talks with Russian president Boris Yeltsin on the conflict in the Balkans.

Subsequently, the Russian government, sharpening the tone of its earlier protests against the NATO offensive, said it "resolutely condemned" the resumption of air strikes.

Washington is using its military might in Bosnia to force the warring regimes in the former Yugoslav republics to accept a version of its "peace plan." U.S. assistant secretary of state Richard Holbrooke has continued negotiations with Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade.

Milosevic's regime is the main culprit in the drive to carve up Bosnia's land and resources. He is attempting to broker a deal with U.S. imperialism in the name of the Bosnian Serbs. Milosevic has spoken favorably of the U.S. proposal of granting control of 49 percent of Bosnian territory to his allies and 51 percent to what is termed a Muslim-Croat federation. At the same time, Milosevic is planning to present demands such as widening the strategic northern land corridor that joins Serb-held territory in eastern and western Bosnia, the partition of Sarajevo, and access to the Adriatic sea.

The Bosnian government, on the other hand, has rejected several of the U.S. proposals. Bosnian president Alija Izetbegovic held talks September 4 with Richard Holbrooke and Turkish officials in Istanbul. Izetbegovic said his government

would not agree to the U.S. suggestion for a widening of a corridor linking Serbia with territory held by Karadzic's forces in Bosnia. He also ruled out Washington's proposal that Bosnian territory held by Belgrade's allies should be allowed to have confederal relations with Serbia.

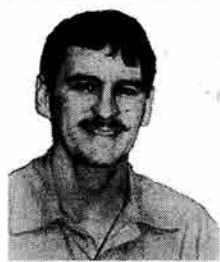
"We will never accept any kind of Serbian republic or confederation," said the Bosnian president. He also stated that his government will not reconcile itself with the loss of Zepa and Srebrenica, majority-Muslim cities that were overrun by Karadzic's forces in July.

After taking those cities, Karadzic's troops carried out a wave of "ethnic cleansing," expelling 55,000 Muslims from their homes in eastern Bosnia.

In early August, the Croatian army with 100,000 men backed by tanks, warplanes, artillery, and helicopters blitzed through the Croatian region of Krajina, capturing the territory from pro-Belgrade troops in less than a week. During this assault, carried out with the blessing of Washington and Bonn, Croatian troops expelled 150,000 Serbs, who fled to refugee camps inside Serbia. On May 1, Zagreb had captured Western Slavonia, "ethnically cleansing" it of thousands of Serbs. These military victories have left only Eastern Slavonia, a sliver of Croatian territory adjacent to Serbia, under Belgrade's control.

Iowa governor and prisons exploit fear of crime

"From behind prison walls" is a regular column written by framed-up political and trade union activist Mark Curtis. To write to Curtis, send letters to him at #805338, Iowa State Penitentiary, Box 315, Fort Madison, IA 52627.



Mark Curtis

FORT MADISON, Iowa — A prisoner here at the Iowa State Penitentiary (ISP) has been accused of escape, kidnapping, and sexual abuse and Governor Branstad has seized on the incident to call for longer sentences and an end to paroles for many prisoners.

Prison officials have placed the man, Todd Heard, in cellhouse 97 (the old death row) where he is in isolation on orders from higher up.

Once again a single individual has become a scapegoat at the disposal of a politically motivated campaign. Although the accused man is a long way from even having a trial, the governor has already judged

him and the prison staff has circled the wagons.

In a press conference Branstad called for an end to parole for anyone convicted of a violent crime. He also favored life sentences for second time offenders and demanded a "full investigation" into why Heard was placed at the ISP Farm. The governor said no one convicted of rape should be housed in a minimum security facility.

None of the governor's proposals will lessen the crime problem. Instead, longer sentences and fewer paroles mean more crowded prisons, which in turn will lead to even more of them being built. These will be paid for at the expense of schools, health care, and other community-funded programs. The tax bite on working people will grow.

Crime cannot be solved by making prisons worse places than they already are. Denying the men and women behind bars their due process rights and access to education and humane treatment will not aid their reentry into society as better human beings. Nor will lengthening their time spent in jail.

Todd Heard should be accorded the presumption of innocence. He should not be used by politicians and the prison administration to exploit the fear of crime for their own ends.



Militant
Martin Koppel, editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*, at rally outside U.S. embassy in Brazil with stack of 5,000 letters from Brazilian peasants urging parole for Curtis.

Curtis supporters to give letters to parole board

Continued from front page

face to make it in time for the delegation to deliver them. The committee will continue to gather and deliver letters through October 1.

Studer pointed to a number of the new letters as examples of the expanding support for Curtis.

"On behalf of the Coal Employment Project, a group of women miners, we want to ask you to grant Mark Curtis a parole hearing and to release him from jail," he read from one letter. "We feel he has been unjustly jailed for all this time, and now is the time to do the right thing." The letter was signed by Cosby Ann Totten, Director of the Coal Employment Project.

Bill Breihan, president of United Steelworkers Local 1343, and Stan Yasaitis, president of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 82 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, sent a joint letter, noting that they both learned of Curtis's case in 1988 after he was arrested and became convinced that he was not guilty.

"Imagine our shock and disbelief when we discovered recently that Mark Curtis is still in prison. Can this be? So many years behind bars... for crimes many believe he did not commit. Literally hundreds of thousands of people in this country and around the world know of Mark Curtis's plight and must be asking the same question, 'Just what goes on there in Iowa?'"

"We have only one request to make of you: Let Mark Curtis go! Grant him parole," the two union officers conclude.

A number of letters, Studer noted, have

come from unionists around the world. "I am writing in respect to Mark Curtis, an inmate at Iowa State Penitentiary," wrote J.R. Evans of the Meat and Related Trades Workers Union of Aotearoa Inc., in New Zealand. "I understand that he meets the requirements for release on parole and has done so for some years. Further to my earlier requests I would urge you to grant him parole this time."

Thirteen members of the New Zealand Meat Workers' & Related Trades Union in Auckland, including the branch secretary and site delegate at the Astelys Tannery, wrote on union stationery: "We the undersigned, members of the above union, ask that you give a fair and open-minded hearing to Mark Curtis and his legal representatives when they present the case for your granting him parole."

Gertraud K. Weber, vice president of

the United Transportation Union local in Elma, New York, ended her letter to the board by saying, "Hoping you will finally see to it that Mark will receive justice."

Studer also pointed to growing support for Curtis's fight for freedom among activists in the movement to end British occupation of Ireland. One recent letter to the parole board came from William Hughes. "I believe that Mark Curtis, a union organizer and fighter for human rights, has suffered enough. The facts and circumstances surrounding his arrest, indictment, conviction and sentencing cry out for justice from this honorable Board."

"There is ample evidence on the record that Curtis was targeted for prosecution because of his political activism. The fact that he could win a civil rights suit against some of the policemen, who brutalized him after his initial arrest, is convincing

proof that the cards were stacked against him almost from the beginning.

"I believe this honorable Board, in the name of decency and fair play, should grant Curtis a full parole," Hughes says.

On his weekly radio show on WBAI in New York City September 2, Hughes started the program: "Free Mark Curtis: Political Prisoner. Mark Curtis, whose name is very familiar to our WBAI audience, is a union organizer, in the mold of our own James Connolly. He is also a fighter for human rights. Curtis was wrongfully convicted in Iowa, in 1988, on trumped up sexual abuse and burglary charges. He recently won a civil rights case against the police who brutalized him. Curtis is up for parole. Anyone who would like to help him, please send a fax to the Iowa Parole Board, c/o Mark Curtis Defense Committee at (515) 243-9869."

'Militant' sales drive set for September 23

BY NAOMI CRAINE

At Labor Day events, opening sessions of universities, and activities in defense of the Cuban revolution, supporters of the *Militant* are warming up for a subscription drive to win new readers. The international sales campaign will begin September 23 and last eight weeks, through November 19. During this period supporters of the socialist press will focus their political efforts on meeting workers, farmers, students, and other political activists who have never been introduced to the so-

cialist press before, and sign them up for a subscription to the *Militant*, or its Spanish-language sister magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, as well as sell them a copy of the Marxist magazine *New International*.

Militant supporters in many cities have already taken goals for the drive; others are still discussing them. Now that the dates are set, activists in local areas have an opportunity to review their plans and make sure they have come up with a challenging goal for the eight-week drive. The international goals for this campaign will be announced in the issue of the *Militant* printed September 21, together with a chart of local goals and targets adopted by supporters in the trade unions.

Sales of the *Militant* were especially high in Detroit over the Labor Day weekend, as thousands of unionists rallied to support striking newspaper workers. Distributors report sales of 126 copies of the *Militant*, the big majority at strike-related activities. Two unionists bought introductory subscriptions, and another asked to be called back about a sub.

Supporters in Des Moines also report a good response at the Labor Day celebration there. They are petitioning to put the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor, John Cox, on the ballot. Campaigners staffed a booth at the event, where they got 82 signatures and sold several copies of the *Militant*.

Workers at these events and others across the country were interested in the *Militant*'s working-class perspective on everything from the Detroit newspaper strike to the war in the former Yugoslavia, the women's conference in Beijing, and the Cuban revolution.

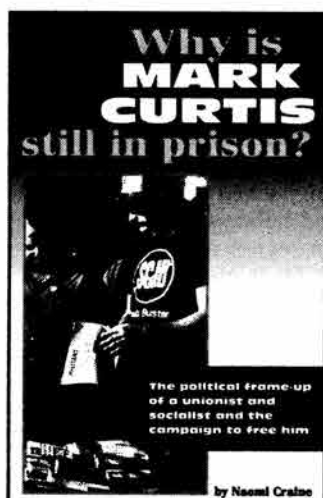
In Chicago, *Militant* supporters have decided to organize several regional sales trips over the fall to two universities in Indiana where there are members of the Young Socialists. One team has already hit the road. It is helping to build a September 6 public meeting at Indiana University in Bloomington and a September 7 event at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, featuring speakers who attended the Cuba Lives International Youth Festival. The teams will be setting up literature tables and introducing many new people to the socialist press.

Militant correspondents Laura Garza and Maggie Trowe, who are in Beijing at the United Nations Conference on Women, have so far sold 12 *Militant* subscriptions to participants in that gathering, as well as more than \$150 worth of socialist books and dozens of copies of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. They report a lot of interest in Cuba and in the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal. New subscribers are from Bangladesh, South Africa, Canada, Finland, the United States, and elsewhere. Two women from Brazil subscribed to *Perspectiva Mundial*.

The first week of the drive, September 23 to October 1, will be a target week, with the aim of starting the international sales campaign with a bang. We ask distributors to send in their goals for selling introductory subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* and copies of *New International* by Friday, September 15, at noon E.S.T. Reports on sales so far, plans for the subscription drive, and photographs of sales teams in action are also needed, so they can be shared with others through the pages of the *Militant*.

Why Is Mark Curtis Still in Prison?

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



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.

'The more Cuba resists, the more it is respected'

Following is the speech given by Cuban president Fidel Castro at the closing ceremony of the Cuba Lives! International Youth Festival on August 6. The day before 500,000 people, including festival participants, rallied in Havana in support of the Cuban revolution. This English-language translation appears in the Aug. 23, 1995, issue of the weekly *Granma Internacional*. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

Dear Comrades and Friends from Home and Abroad:
It seems to me, in all honesty, that there is nothing left to say here; everything has already been said, and expressed much better than I could have expressed it. But I was put under great pressure by the organizers, and Vicky [Victoria Velázquez, first secretary of the Union of Young Communists] in particular, to come here and say a few words. [Prolonged applause] And as a further inconvenience, with a voice that has practically gone on strike. What shall we do? We can't start throwing tear gas bombs at it or try to put it down with pumpers and all those devices we see used every day in other parts of the world. So I will have to carry on regardless, and try to accomplish the task as well as possible.

There are two groups here today: one that has been here all day and is familiar with the issues covered, what has been said, that is, the arguments, the ideas put forward; and another which wasn't here during the day.

We are also honored with the presence of the diplomatic corps. What a headache it must be to be a member of the diplomatic corps at an event like this! I know from experience, because if they applaud, it is reported that they applauded; if they don't applaud, it is reported that they didn't applaud; if people get to their feet and they remain seated, it's reported: The diplomatic corps remained seated. That is precisely what happened when you started to shout "Cuba Lives!" and, of course, out of discipline, the diplomats remained in their seats; though I am sure that none of them would want Cuba not to live. [Applause]

In his speech this afternoon, Robertico [Cuban foreign minister Roberto Robaina] really gave a brilliant explanation of the fundamental ideas and concepts related to our Revolution in the present context. I think Vicky's speech was magnificent as well, and very few chinks are left to fill in this evening.

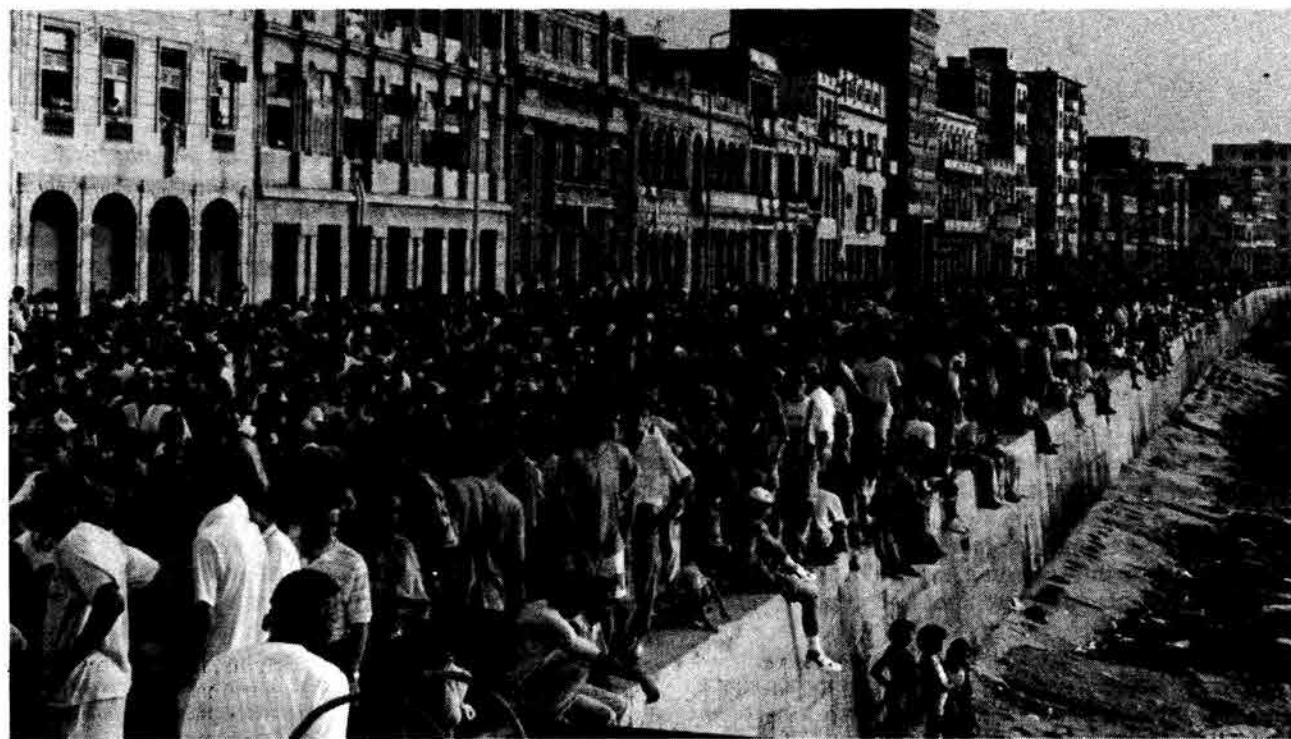
I would rather reflect on the world that is yours to live in, the young people represented here, and to whom my words are principally addressed. In our view — that is to say, in the view of revolutionaries and people who are not pessimistic, we can't afford to be — it is a very difficult world.

Challenge to new generations

The approach of the year 2000 and another century is spoken of joyfully. That is only natural; the last thing human beings lose is hope. But as we see things, it seems that the new generations that you represent, in Cuba and the whole world, will have to tackle very serious problems on all fronts. I am not just talking here about environmental issues. Really, for the first time, the possibility of the world surviving the destruction that is taking place in the natural environment and to humanity's ways of living has been questioned, an issue that has been much talked about; however, the effects are becoming increasingly obvious, visible, and worrying.

For example, for a few years now there has been talk about the famous greenhouse effect, the ozone layer, and other such problems; however, we are already experiencing the greenhouse effect, Cuba is experiencing it, we are aware of it, the world is witness to what is happening: terrible heat waves all over the place; nearly 1,000 people died from heat exposure in the United States, as they have in England, in almost all parts of Europe, everywhere.

According to records, the last few years have been the hottest for a hundred years, we are already seeing the consequences of these effects; but they are by no means



MILITANT/ROSE ANA BERBEO

More than 500,000 turn out in Havana August 5 to support revolution, including Cuba Lives! participants.

the worst we are going to see. There are strange atmospheric phenomena of all kinds. We have just had the case of a cyclone or hurricane which, while passing through Florida, caused some extremely heavy rainfall in our country, from hundreds of kilometers away.

We have had recent proof of man's destruction and over-exploitation of natural resources in the conflict which arose between Canada and the European Union over the Atlantic halibut species — we know of it since we have heard a lot about this virtual fishing war during the last few months.

The number of fishing zones, not only there but also in the South Atlantic, are fast being exhausted; and yet the world population is already approaching 6 billion inhabitants. By the famous year 2000 the world population will already have reached the 6 billion mark, if I am not mistaken, because I have three of those devices, given to me as presents, which you can sit in front of and see how the population is growing per second and per minute.

The phenomena of drought is being experienced all over the world, either severe drought or excessive rainfall — tremendous floods in China — that cause so much damage, that kill thousands of people in other parts of the world, or long months without rainfall. It has been confirmed that sea levels are rising every year.

What I want to say is that humanity is clearly starting to experience the effects of the destruction of the environment. It is horrifying to hear of the number of species being destroyed, both from the plant and animal world, every day throughout the world. And it's perceptible, the phenomenon is visible. There is no doubt that this growing population will have to confront massive ecological problems, and you will be witnesses to that.

But I would like to refer fundamentally to another aspect of the issue, the political aspect, the social aspect. Will the coming century, so much talked about, be the century of unipolar hegemony, the domination of world politics by one single country or group of countries? Will it be the century of economic globalization, of the outright triumph of the transnationals, and the imposition of a new world order far worse than the one we have today?

What will be left in this world for the countries that constitute the overwhelming majority of humanity? What guarantees do they have, what security? Will they by any chance be able to compete with the latest and most developed technology? Where will their markets

be? What will be the prices of their products? What place will they have in the world? And this issue is not only about the countries formerly referred to as the Third World, it is also about countries which were not viewed as being part of the Third World — the Soviet Union and ex-socialist bloc countries — which have, in effect, now become part of the Third World in terms of their economic indices, gross domestic product, their competitiveness, their ability to find markets, and as such, have increased the number — we could say — of the world's poor.

Growing trade conflict

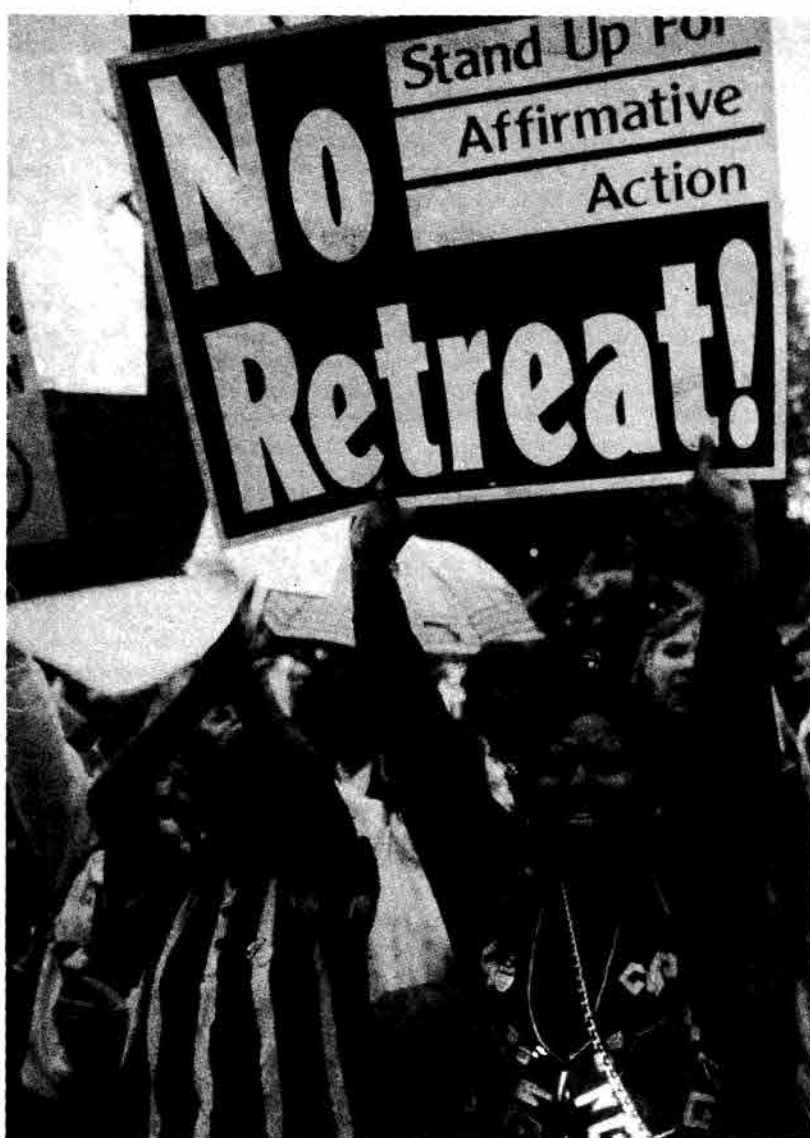
Agreement has just been reached on the norms that should regulate international trade as laid down in the Uruguay Round, the GATT [General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade] — currently the WTO [World Trade Organization] — and already, in practice, big powers are beginning to ignore these norms. We have seen the methods used by the United States to resolve its differences with Europe and Japan: threats of trade wars, extremely high tariff barriers, through which it is imposing its conditions on the rest of the world, including the developed world.

New theories have arisen, the order of the day is no longer imperialism, which is almost as old as Methuselah, we could say, in its modern form; although the world has already known an empire in the past which lasted for many years, the Roman Empire whose Capitol, I believe, served as a model for the Capitol of the present-day empire which is the United States.

During the Cuban revolutionary process which began in 1959, people spoke of imperialism, colonialism, and neocolonialism. On the international scene there was much talk about these ideas, these concepts, they were studied, analyzed; now the reference is neoliberalism and some claim that the coming century will be the century of neoliberalism.

In fact, when the socialist camp and the Soviet Union collapsed, all these imperialist theories made great advances; in reality, the time had come to settle accounts, to take control of the world economy, and all the international credit institutions and the developed world imposed neoliberal policies. We are already beginning to see the consequences.

I do not find it very pleasant to mention countries by name, nor do I want to offend anyone of those present



Demonstration for affirmative action in the United States. Capitalist politics in a number of countries in the world has shifted to the right, Castro said, and attacks on basic democratic rights are increasing.

here, or the representatives of certain countries. You referred to them this morning. The monstrous consequences of neoliberalism are already appearing in many parts of the world.

Barely two years ago other problems were being discussed: the social problems resulting from neoliberalism. The universal complaint of teachers, doctors, and professionals who attended congresses here in Cuba was the suppression of credits and the budgets allocated to education, health care, social security, social development, for all those activities. But the economic crisis of neoliberalism could still not be seen clearly, that crisis which is now being manifested in the form of high unemployment figures, which in some regions have tripled in scarcely two years, or serious financial problems which could ruin any country overnight. There are also countries with vast natural resources and huge incomes, which are on the verge of a social explosion resulting from daily battles between workers, the police, and other repressive forces, in Central America, in South America, and in other places. We are already seeing the consequences, and there are countries which have clearly stated that they are not going towards neoliberalism, that they are going to avoid it at all cost.

Problems of capitalism

Friends of ours, important figures, have sent messages to us saying: "We do not know where you are headed" — a good question, and linked to some of the concerns raised here — "but we advise you not to go where we are going." These are the words of friends who are caught up in this wave of neoliberalism and are now committed to that policy.

The effects are already such that even international organizations such as the IMF [International Monetary Fund] and the World Bank are talking of social development and of giving credits for social development. They are beginning to take serious note of the time bomb that is ticking away everywhere and in Latin America in particular. In spite of all this talk of macroeconomic indices, everyday reality is confronting them; it is a terrible and desperate situation.

Everything has to be privatized! Well, they have already privatized almost everything. They solved budget deficits with the revenue from privatizations, but the state's private properties are now gone; properties built up over decades are fast disappearing in the name of that practice and that philosophy. Soon there will be nothing left to privatize.

One of the results of such privatizations — I was reading about it in a recent wire dispatch — in a South American country where an aircraft factory was privatized, was that a transnational came along and its first move was to reduce the number of workers in that industry from 1,200 to 400. It can't be said that they are going to solve the problem of unemployment in this way.

Now neoliberal theoreticians are trying to work out how to combat unemployment in the same way that the large banking institutions are discussing what to do in

terms of social development. But the fundamental problem is this: capitalism and social development always have been, always are, and always will be irreconcilable. [Applause] Capitalism and plunder, plunder within and outside the country, are inseparable. Capitalism and unemployment are inseparable; try to tell Europe it's any different.

There are countries in Europe with more than 20 percent unemployment and the famous industrial restructuring as a means of increasing competitiveness has brought further unemployment. Certain countries in Europe have been forced to uproot thousands of olive trees, producing an excellent cholesterol-free oil, something the rich are very concerned about these days; the poor virtually lack those cholesterol problems.

Millions of grapevines, millions of hectares of land left uncultivated; subsidies given to *campesinos* [peasants] so that they do not produce food; millions of heads of cattle sacrificed to increase the milk prices; FAO [Food and Agriculture Organization] statements on the fall in cereal production, implying an increase in the prices of all the cereals bought by Third World countries, because as is well known, wheat is not grown in tropical countries. Corn is also produced under very different conditions, that is nothing new for Cubans, we have to cope with cyclones, droughts, plagues, etc. Cereals are mainly produced in temperate climates. Only rice, which is low in protein, grows easily in the tropics.

Slaughtering animals means starving people to death. Destroying plantations, limiting and subsidizing the nonproduction of grains — where is the logic behind all this in a growing world which is enduring increasingly greater food problems? This is not good news for the poor countries of the world.

What would happen if NAFTA covered all the Latin American countries, if they were yoked to the economy of the United States? No one knows the consequences that could have! But there are countries that historically have cultivated corn, which will no longer be producing it, because now the crop is produced more cheaply in the United States, and they can't compete with U.S. corn. In this way, a whole series of mechanisms and plans are being interlinked, designed to serve the interests of the world's most developed nation, which already has a hundred times greater development than the other countries of the world, opportunities to compete, the experience to compete, ultramodern technology, financial resources to offer credits, which all the other countries lack. This is a problem which they will have to confront in the near future; they are already facing it.

In the information field, as you mentioned in one of the commissions, the production of audiovisual material for the entertainment industry is currently monopolized almost exclusively by the United States, which has practically taken over the European market and that of the rest of the world. Some of their productions, as we know, are good, but there is a huge volume of poison in every shape and form.

Many U.S. citizens are becoming alarmed at the quantity of violence being generated, inspired by those television programs containing violence and sexual abuse, as has already been said. Legislation is being discussed and technical mechanisms are even being invented to oversee the selection of films, and how to create a system in every household so that certain movies can't be viewed — it must be very complicated. I believe the television networks can do this with the sole aid of electronics and computers, they have an extraordinary technical advantage at their disposal.

They're worried, but who's worried about us, what they transmit to us, what they sell us?

Now there's talk of information highways, new aspects that, through their propaganda and influences on the human mentality, will serve to prop up the economic order they want to impose on the world. These are important changes that have taken place which we have had the privilege of observing during these 36 years of Revolution.

A world entering into crisis

But it is a real fact that solid foundations do exist to support the conviction that the world that is being designed for us in the next century has no future whatsoever. It will enter into crisis, it will have to enter into crisis, and it will be in that world where you will have to try to take forward the ideas contained in the commission reports on education, health, the environment, women, children, culture, employment, democracy, and participation. And I'm not telling you these things to discourage you, far from it, but to give you full credit for

the questions you have raised here. Because it can safely be said that in this International Youth Festival you have drawn up a program of work and struggle, and an inventory of the problems in the world today.

Added to this, there are clear indications in certain important countries of a political shift to the right, a turning towards reactionary positions, not everywhere, but in a few very important countries, among them the United States, which plays a decisive role in the world of today and will inevitably play it in the world of tomorrow. There is a tremendous shift which has shocked those who at some time or other received news and information on the big crisis of the '30s, Roosevelt's efforts of the time to save capitalism, the socially oriented measures to reduce unemployment, to improve people's living conditions, their education and health care.

It must be said, there have been struggles within the United States itself, over several years, which led to a series of social conquests: the Black population's battle for their rights, a historic battle; the national minorities' struggle, and the struggles of the unemployed, of the poor, and of women to win a series of advances. Today, all this is clearly in danger as a consequence of the shift to the right in U.S. politics, to the extent of reaching really extreme right-wing positions.

Every day wire dispatches report on an agreement in the U.S. Congress to overturn some measure, some act, some budget, or resources across the board. Nobody knows how long the U.S. population will stand for this, but a war is being waged against social gains; even the affirmative action programs, measures adopted to protect the weakest and most vulnerable sectors in society, so that they could obtain jobs and certain benefits, they also want to do away with those affirmative action programs.

This would need a lengthy explanation, but super-reactionary forces, spawned throughout the cold war period, have emerged, with a very reactionary political thinking which has tremendous force and tremendous resources, and this explains those phenomena taking place in the United States, which today is not a model to follow, far be it, but which could be far worse than it is. This is the country that has blockaded us over all these years.

The extreme right could come to have almost total control of power in the United States. This is a factor which is very important to keep in mind, because the world situation could worsen and U.S. imperialism could become more aggressive and much more dangerous for the world.

Suffice it to say that, in relation to the United Nations,

"The problem is capitalism and social development always have been, are, and will be irreconcilable. Capitalism and plunder are inseparable..."

there are currently two theories: one held by those who want to use the United Nations as an instrument to "sanctify" their interventions in any part of the globe and their foreign policy, but hiding behind a fig leaf, which is the United Nations — it's now called the United Nations but it wasn't always like this — and those who want to make it disappear so as to exercise direct power in the world, those who want to get rid of the stumbling block in the United Nations. [Applause] These are two schools, I repeat: one, those who want to use it as an instrument; the other, those who want to make it disappear because they see it as a stumbling block. These are the theories that are being discussed.

Two theories about Cuba

In relation to Cuba, two political theories are also under discussion: the one of those people who wish to destroy us from outside — that is to say, with more hostility, with more threats of aggression — and that of the "noble and generous gentlemen" who want to destroy us from within, but both of them using the blockade; both theories are supported by the blockade.

However, some people think: this blockade is enough, but we have to add this and that to destabilize and destroy the Revolution; as if we were fools or sucked our thumbs, because the famous Torricelli Act's "track two" could have some potentiality and some effect on stupid people. You don't even have to be a genius to know that we can't be caught by that policy, and in the same way we have to have sufficient serenity to resist the other variant.

If we found out tomorrow that the extreme right had conquered not only the U.S. Congress, but also the U.S. government, this wouldn't scare us, we have already been through similar periods, although it could be worse in terms of hostility and threats from abroad. And, as

Vicky said, none of those factors dishearten us; but they remain theories; there are theories for the world and theories for Cuba.

It seems Cuba has become important, given that we are the only country to be blockaded by the United States. In relation to our country the harshest restrictions are being maintained. They can have completely different ideas on any other country, but as far as Cuba is concerned they are not giving in yet. Because of this we have been resisting for 35 years, and I also said that we have to be prepared to resist for another 35 years or longer. Really, our country has fought for almost 130 years in defense of its independence, and I believe that the values handed down to us by our forebears are very present in our people.

It is appropriate for our friends throughout the world to know that, and also that our people know it, and our people do know it. And since we are optimists, I am certain that there are reserves within the people, reserves within the country, it is possible for our country to resist, and to even continue to move forward.

When I say we have to resist, examples of what has happened in some other countries always come to mind, and I am going to recall one, making an exception; what happened in Guatemala in 1954, already 41 years ago.

Guatemala had a revolutionary political movement, which represented a hope for Latin America and Central America; the Guatemalan people had hope through an agrarian reform law and certain social measures, and a mercenary expedition like that of the Bay of Pigs was immediately organized in the United States.

The country was invaded, the Guatemalan revolutionaries had no chance to defend themselves and to crush that invasion. A representative government was established, organized and created by the CIA and the U.S. government. During these 41 years, in that country of less than ten million inhabitants — there may be that number now, the population must have doubled in 41 years — an incredible total of over 100,000 persons have disappeared. That was the result of the mercenary victory.

What would have happened to Cuba if the Bay of Pigs invasion had been successful in 1961? What would have become of this country if we'd had to endure a victorious counterrevolution? The history of the Paris Commune would be tame in comparison. All Cubans know what ceasing to fight, ceasing to resist would signify, and we know perfectly well what it would mean. I think that yesterday was an objective proof of that, the spirit shown yesterday by our people here in the capital, where we have greater difficulties.

Helms-Burton bill threatens Cuba

Now think about it. And this is no secret, because the famous Helms-Burton bill, yet another on the list, aggressive, repugnant, is so brutal that it virtually threatens our country — as [Ricardo] Alarcón [president of the National Assembly] has explained on various occasions — with depriving the people of everything they have. They will be left with virtually no schools, no day-care centers, no special education centers, no hospitals and no family doctors. When they come to apply the measure they have demanded of other countries, it is possible that 100 percent of family doctors will be jobless, because how and for what will they be paid?

Practically all the agricultural workers of this country would lose their lands, except some who already owned land, since the overwhelming majority own land because the Revolution gave it to them. All the UBPCs [Basic Units of Cooperative Production], all the cooperative workers would lose everything they have.

In a country such as Cuba, where 85 percent of families own their homes, by virtue of the Revolution's laws and work, all those families would lose their ownership. The whole thing is so ludicrous that we were almost at the point of sending a telegram of thanks to [U.S. congressmen] Helms and Burton saying, "Oh, by the way, thanks very much, just look how you are helping us."

According to the Helms-Burton bill, as Clinton himself has said, compensation payable by Cuba on former U.S. properties would amount to more than five or six billion dollars. It would have to be argued, moreover, as this is not our figure. And even if we were to accept it, it does not take into account the tens of billions of dollars they owe us in compensation due to the blockade. [Applause] If we received compensation, we would even be prepared to pay out on U.S. properties. I was going to tell you that, according to Clinton's calculations, this bill demands payments of \$100 billion, taking into account properties belonging to Cubans who subsequently became U.S. citizens, and according to the bill, the blockade will continue until the \$100 billion are paid. It seems



Farm workers in Holguín province, Cuba. Most farmers "own land because of the Revolution."

that they're realizing this and some people are beginning to talk of a few modifications being made to its monstrous contents; but for us the result is exactly the same. We are fully aware of what it would signify if this country were to fall once again into the hands of the United States, with or without the Helms-Burton bill. Reports of what happened in Indonesia would pale into insignificance, and in Guatemala, not worth thinking about.

However, the ultimate, the inconceivable, is to believe that Cubans would act like the slaves who were taken to the Roman circus and who shouted: "Long live Caesar! We who are going to die salute you!" As if one Cuban here would be prepared to say: "Long live the emperor" or "Long live the empire! We who are going to die are going to bow down our heads so that you can wipe us out!"

They have to know that everyone here would take up arms and fight until the death, until a truly glorious death. What is ignominious is for someone to place their head on the chopping block for the United States to cut it off. [Applause] They realize that this cannot and will never happen, despite the idiotic things they say — so contemptuous! — they should have learned something from all the years of Cuban resistance and struggle, because we will never accept that fate.

A worthwhile fight

You, our friends, can understand that we have solid and profound reasons for thinking as we do; but if it wasn't a question of defending the lives of the citizens of this country, if it was only about defending the ideas that the Revolution defends, it would be worthwhile to fight once and a thousand times to the death. [Applause]

At a certain point in history the Christians were the first communists — because, as the Bible tells us, the early Christians, as we have read and were told so many times, were sent to the circus, to be devoured by the lions — they allowed themselves to be devoured without renouncing their Christian faith. We will not be lesser than them, because we believe that the values signified by the ideas that we are defending are comparable to the best ideas for which people have been prepared to die, and we will always prefer to die rather than to renounce our revolutionary faith. [Applause]

The Revolution is our religion, which does not exclude anyone, including revolutionaries, from holding

another. We are not expecting any reward, because I believe that being a revolutionary — as Che said — is the highest level humanity can attain. [Applause]

Revolutionaries do not expect anything in return, which means that revolutionaries have to dedicate themselves totally to a cause, to their ideas, to their noble objectives, without expecting anything in return. I would say without in any way diminishing any other conviction, that this is really what makes a genuine revolutionary conviction, the noblest and deepest conviction which has ever existed. I'm referring to the revolutionary and communist conviction, I'm not talking about other convictions. [Shouts and prolonged applause] I am genuinely talking to you from the heart.

This leads on to some of the issues which have been mentioned here and which have worried you, which I partly covered on July 26, concerning what we are doing and how we are doing it.

Comrade José Luis [Rodríguez, minister of the economy and planning] had the disagreeable and difficult role of explaining what we are doing and how we are going about it, in the economic terrain, in order to move forward.

Vicky told me that many of our visitors were anxious about the risks inherent in the measures that we are taking. This concern is expressed clearly in a paragraph in one of the resolutions.

Justifiable worries

I believe that those who are worried have reason to be, in the first place because it is a worrying issue. What effect will these market openings, these measures we are taking, have on the future of the Revolution? As a consequence of all this, are we going to be different in the future, are these measures going to corrupt us?

I have said that we are introducing elements of capitalism into our system, into our economy; this is a fact. We have also discussed the consequences we have observed from the employment of those mechanisms. Yes, we are doing this.

I have already spoken to you about the world we are living in. Don't forget that we are an island surrounded on all sides, even from above, by capitalism; let's say from outer space, which is full of satellites and goodness knows what else, over which we have absolutely no control. You can be sure that if a dog goes to the park to do its business, the U.S. satellites will be aware of the fact, will observe it and take photos of it. [Laughter and applause]

They have the world surrounded by satellites spying on everything; of course, this makes them the masters of the communication systems. If we talked over the telephone with some country and said things that shouldn't be said over the phone we would be big fools. There is no official telephone call from this country that isn't picked up by them; the same applies to conversations with political leaders or with important companies. They monitor everything, because the blockade is much more than a prohibition on buying and selling, you can't possibly imagine the extent of it. The blockade is a never-ending persecution levied against any commercial activity the country attempts to engage in.

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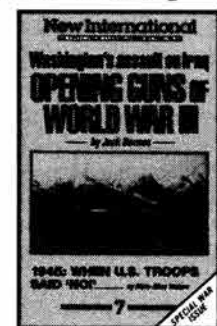
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With the capitalists who visit us here — as I recently said some come with their corrupting habits, but many are serious capitalists. I mean that they don't try to bribe or cheat people; they argue, you have to argue a lot with them because, logically, it is the law of capitalism, every business deal is tightly argued — you have to speak softly and whisper in their ears and say: "Listen, don't talk on the telephone to another country about this."

I don't know to how many people we've given this advice and they don't take any notice, they make a phone call, send a fax, etc., and a few days later the U.S. ambassador, or the consul, or an official is paying them a visit; usually it's the ambassador.

When they are aware of any negotiations we're having, don't think for one moment that it's easy. Pay no heed. It wouldn't be so easy for us to take the capitalist road because the Yankees would take it upon themselves to prevent us, they don't want that. [Laughter and applause] When I say Yankee I am using the word in a pejorative sense, referring to those who wish us harm, never as a means of describing the U.S. people. [Applause]

They do not want us to do any business, nor invest in anything, nor have access to credits, nor to privatize anything, they don't want any of that — we are perfectly aware that all they want is our head and they've not even bothered to discuss the price, [laughter and applause] but the blockade is very serious, it is an unending persecution which makes everything more expensive. We have to look for merchandise thousands of miles away; the ships cannot make stopovers in any U.S. port, so transportation is more expensive; short-term commercial credits are extremely expensive, everything is difficult for Cuba. This is what the blockade means, really it is much more than it seems. And, of course, it is putting obstacles in the way of these measures which we are taking and which we have to take.

Actually, if we were one of those countries with abundant natural resources, and they do exist, and which have millions or billions of dollars in the banks of the developed countries, because they have easy access to capital....

For example, we know what it is to produce one ton of sugar, when you have to sweat to do it. Of course, when the Revolution triumphed, one ton of sugar bought — I don't want to get this wrong — about seven or eight tons of oil at least. So that means that, at the price sugar had at the triumph of the Revolution, we could satisfy the country's entire oil requirements, from the sale of one million tons.

Special period in peacetime

Now, during these years of special period, sometimes we have only been able to buy 1.4 tons of oil for one ton of sugar; that's almost putting sugar and oil on a par, and look at the hard labor that goes into producing one ton of sugar! In many places, including at sea, the transnationals arrive and succeed in setting up oil production at really low costs in areas of high yields.

The oil crisis has affected very few countries in the world to the extent that it has affected Cuba, and today the bulk of the country's exports are devoted to buying oil; that's to say, circumstances are not easy for us: we are putting a lot of effort into exploring for oil, we are looking for national sources.

The special period came about as part of the country's defense plans for war situations: what to do if there was a total blockade imposed on Cuba by the United States and nothing could enter, how we could survive under

suffered is a double blockade. U.S. pressure on the former socialist countries was such, that it has resulted in trade being suspended almost 100 percent.

We had to cope with this overnight, by ourselves, without a single cent from any world banking institution such as the Inter-American Bank, the World Bank, or the IMF. Absolutely no one! We had to manage with what we had.

As was said a short while ago: we lost 70 percent of the country's imports, and a country that had supplied

"There are clear indications in certain important countries of a political shift to the right, among them the United States..."

those conditions? It is called special period in wartime; but the collapse of the socialist camp and the USSR obliged us to experience the special period during peacetime, because, abruptly, almost overnight, all trade with the socialist bloc and with the Soviet Union disappeared.

Prior to this, they were paying us reasonable prices for our sugar and they were not the only ones. Even the Lomé Convention does not pay for sugar at the world market rate, it pays at a much higher rate. We call the

electricity to over 90 percent of the population was suddenly left with 40 percent of our fuel requirements.

I don't know if there is any other country in Latin America or in the world that could have resisted the massive blow that Cuba received, and this with an intensified blockade, because, while we had good economic relations with the socialist camp and with the Soviet Union we were able to defend ourselves much better against the blockade, producing sugar and various other products in a context of increasing trade with those countries, which was abruptly lost.

Can you believe that the people of any Latin American country, or anywhere in the world, could have survived such a blow? For how many days, or weeks, if at all? Could a different kind of society be able to do so? This is also related to another question on political themes approached in the commission on democracy and participation.

Could Cuba have resisted without its socialist system, without the political and economic system existing in our country when this occurred?

I talked to you before about the economic question, so it's better to continue on this theme.

Loss of markets

We lost all opportunity for obtaining capital for investments, technology, our markets; we lost all our markets. In fact, what would a genuine revolution have done under those circumstances? What should a Marxist-Leninist revolution have done? We have no fear of pronouncing this word. [Applause]

We could ask ourselves: what would Marx have said? It's almost certain that he would have said: "Listen, don't take

it upon yourselves to make a socialist revolution in a Third World country, wait until capitalism has been fully developed and then, when the forces of production and all the rest have been developed, the moment will come for making the socialist revolution." This is perhaps what Marx would have said to us. Of course, we would have to see what he would have said if we'd asked him what to do, after we'd already made a socialist revolution here, right on the doorstep of the United States. I believe he would have said: "Fine, I'm happy to have had such outstanding disciples over there in the Caribbean." [Applause]

You are all aware that the whole question of whether socialism in one country is possible or not has been amply discussed, or if it is possible once the revolution has broken out in the most industrialized countries; in relation to Germany, England, or in the European nations. This was discussed over many, many years, but Marxism didn't stop with Marx, and the doctrines of socialism moved on from Marx and Engels. Other great figures came along, great personalities in political and revolutionary thinking, there was Lenin, and it has to be said that Lenin and those who made the October Revolution all believed that the European revolution was a prerequisite for creating socialism. When the European revolution didn't take place, there came the moment when they took the decision that had to be made: "Well, we can't surrender, we have to create socialism in one country."

Of course, talking of one country is relative, given that it was one country of 22 million square kilometers — we are one country of 111,111 square kilometers, according to a geographer, so that the young people will remember Cuba's land surface area in square kilometers — and the construction of socialism was begun, in the midst of a blockade, the enormous historic feat of building socialism in one country. But Lenin was already thinking of the revolution in China, and revolution in the colonized countries. Marxist thought gave him a tremendous impetus and enrichment. And indeed, a force was created which fulfilled an extraordinary role in the world, and served as a balance.

The capitalist world, terrified by socialist ideas, began to be concerned about social problems, about the situa-



Workers rally outside hospital in Córdoba, Argentina, to protest cuts. Capitalist governments are imposing austerity, while in Cuba workers' power is key to resisting economic crisis.

world sugar market the sugar waste bin, where all sugar is sold very cheaply. The United States itself previously used to buy Cuban sugar, and then, as a reprisal, they reduced to zero the three million or so annual tons they bought from us. They pay for their sugar quotas at a slightly higher price. We have to sell our sugar at world market prices.

From one day to the next we lost all our oil supplies, all our supplies of raw material, of foodstuffs, of spare parts for our factory machinery which came from the socialist bloc. This has happened to us twice in our history: when the U.S. blockade started nearly all our machinery and motor transport were of U.S. origin, and now the same thing is happening again, because what we have

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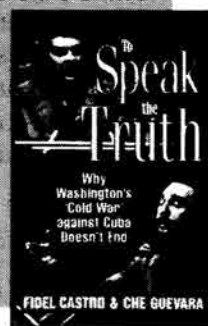
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tion of the workers, etc., concerns that never troubled them before. The services lent to the world by the existence of the socialist camp, and particularly the Soviet Union, are not known.

Commemorations of World War II

Recently the end of World War II was commemorated and in fact, the whole world should remember and did remember that the Soviet Union lost 27 million people in that war. I will go further and say that, without socialism, the Nazi regime would have taken power in the world within a period of time impossible to precisely estimate — this is for historians to conjecture about; but, really, it was that socialist country which checked them, which destroyed Hitler's best armored and motorized divisions, [applause] and the country that offered resistance — the facts are irrefutable — because when the tanks appeared behind the Soviet lines, the people continued to fight.

In that war, which was initiated with new techniques and tactics, resistance collapsed within a matter of weeks. Let's say that the English resisted the bombings, which were very heavy, and entrenched themselves behind the maritime barrier with its powerful squadron; other countries lacking a natural barrier of this nature and those means of protection were invaded and controlled. Let's mention the noble people of Yugoslavia who also fought so hard against Hitler's divisions, that Yugoslavia which today is destroyed and caught up in an absurd war, incomprehensible, apparently insoluble, victim really of the longing to dissolve everything smelling of socialism.

The Soviet Union resisted, which I believe was a great feat, and we know the story of all the errors and all the barbarities — to put it in strong language — that were perpetrated in that process, ranging from the personality cult to terror, abuses of power, and forced collectivization.

Socialism needed to be perfected, not destroyed; the only countries who stood to gain from the destruction of socialism were the imperialist countries. At first it was a big celebration, but now many western politicians are afraid because they don't know what's going on over there. It's a Third World country, an exporter of raw materials, with extremely powerful nuclear weapons and with great internal risks, as we have seen very recently. For what? I believe that peace and disarmament had been fought for and I think that a wiser world would have sought to achieve via negotiations what could have been attained without the dissolution and disintegration of the Soviet Union.

It was said here that this occurred because of errors within the model. It wasn't only that — it can't be described in one word — they allowed themselves to be infiltrated from within, they allowed themselves to be influenced by the propaganda of the consumer society, forgetting that for centuries this was the fruit of colonialism and the plunder of the peoples. They allowed themselves to be blinded by capitalism, and there were many people who believed that any day they would be living like people in Paris, London, all those places, that's the reality. We are now seeing the results, there was ingenuousness, incompetence, a total recipe for the destruction of that which millions of Hitler's soldiers were unable to destroy, to destroy that which cost 27 million lives in the war. The objectives and ideals for which they fought were well worth saving.

I say that peace was conceivable, but of course there was competition between the United States and the Soviet Union in terms of the arms race. And today everyone knows that Reagan's strategy was to ruin the Soviet Union, by imposing on it an arms race which was beyond its economic potential.

It wasn't only the Soviet leaders who were mistaken, world leaders were also at fault, because they were incapable of fighting for a real peace without breaking up entire countries, the consequences of which are still unknown. For the moment, it constitutes tremendous hardships for the world economy, which has to find tens of additional billions every year to try to salvage the situation there, without anyone knowing exactly what is going to happen.

In the former USSR we now have the situation where an economy, which was being formed over more than 70 years, collapsed. Without doubt it will recover one day. The desire to recreate, albeit only a common market, can be seen in many of the countries that formed part of the Soviet Union, not exactly in all of them — very strong nationalist sentiments and hatred have been unleashed in some of the countries.

But the fact is, as I told you, that we have lost a market, we lost our trade, we lost everything and, in all events, we had to find a solution.

I was speaking of this when I asked how Marx would



Crowd at opening plenary of Cuba Lives. 1,300 participated in international festival.

have responded, and now I'm asking how Lenin would have responded, and I'm sure that Lenin would have said to us: "Do what you're doing, continue doing what you are doing." This is why I said on July 26 that a true Marxist-Leninist will do what we are doing.

New Economic Policy

They had to do it, they had to move towards a new economic policy, the famous NEP, during one historic period. But there is something more, at certain points Lenin also planted the idea of building capitalism under proletarian leadership. For your peace of mind, of course, I can tell you that we aren't thinking doing anything of the kind [applause], and it's not because we are in disagreement with Lenin, but because circumstances are different, since our process, which was able to rely on assistance from the socialist camp and from the USSR, has made great advances, it has very strong forces and does not have to raise the question in those terms.

I have already said, or tried to tell you before, that if we were a country with significant oil or similar resources, perhaps we wouldn't have gone for large-scale tourism development. From experience, we know all the consequences of large-scale tourism development; however, given the existing conditions in our country, we couldn't do without it, since given those conditions we

"The ideas we are defending are comparable to the best ideas for which people have been prepared to die..."

couldn't do without foreign investment.

Although prior to the collapse of the socialist camp we were considering certain forms of foreign investment for joint enterprises in certain sectors where there was no other solution, we are well aware that over several years we fought against foreign investments, that over several years we felt proud of the fact that the people were the owners of all their resources, of all their industries and all the country's wealth. However, given the existing conditions we couldn't do without foreign investment to a larger scale because we needed capital, technology and markets. These are the determining factors; the opposite would be paralysis and stagnation for a very long time.

Investments are costing dearly

All this is costing us dearly. I already told you that any loan we take out is very expensive and we have to discuss everything in very difficult conditions and in the face of very strong resistance from the United States, but we have to do it; there's no alternative.

Some of our friends have advised us to say no, that we are doing this because it's a very good thing. We have to be honest, we have gone down this road basically because it was the only alternative for saving the Revolution and saving the conquests of socialism. [Applause]

We had to establish joint ventures in a relatively short time period, we had to accept foreign investment, we had to do what we did in respect to the decriminalization of convertible currency, and you can be sure that doing the latter pained us greatly, very greatly. We are aware

of the inequalities that it created, the privileges it created, but we had to do it and we did it.

José Luis explained that today we are virtually operating in two currencies, that the day will come when we'll be operating in only one currency. There's no need to rush because this day will come, we have to proceed with calmness and patience until only Cuban currency is in operation. We already have the convertible peso, so we are working in that direction. In the existing conditions we couldn't rule out those possibilities.

It really is a great privilege for those who have a family relative abroad who is able to send \$500, \$1,000, or whatever, to have this available when many humble workers in the sugarcane industry, in agriculture and in other places do not have that possibility. But we had to do it; we had to adopt measures of this kind, which I know trouble you. And we didn't take them as an opportunistic action, we took them as a revolutionary action [applause], as we have explained to our people once and a hundred times.

Whatever income the country obtains via any of these routes is not to enrich any individual, nor is it to line anyone's pockets, it is for the people, right to the last cent to buy foodstuffs, and medicaments, to buy fuel for electric power, to buy indispensable raw materials for production, so that the country can advance. [Applause] And whatever the difficulties may be, the country will advance in an orderly fashion. And the people, whatever the sacrifices may be, understand that this was the correct road, that this was the revolutionary road. And, of course, without the blockade, there would have been a lot of investment in Cuba.

Look what has happened in China, look what has happened in Vietnam — there's been a flood of investments. Here there's been a flood of interested people, but there has also been a tremendous barrier of opposition to investment in our country.

Sensitive to inequality

In fact, I believe that it is very important, crucially important, that we have done this, as always, with the consent of the people; it cannot be explained any other way. Everything that displeased us also displeased the people, who are very sensitive, ultra-sensitive to any inequality, any privilege, since the Revolution educated them to think in this way; however, it also educated them in the idea that the nation has to be safeguarded, that the Revolution has to be safeguarded, that the gains of socialism have to be safeguarded, independence has to be preserved, and our rights to a future have to be maintained. That is absolutely irrevocable, and it is really very encouraging for all of us to grasp the extent to which the people have shown their capacity to understand all this. Only a people with a political culture like the one we have in our country today would have been capable of understanding that, and would have been capable of struggling and resisting.

Are we by any chance fooling someone? No, we're absolutely not fooling anyone. What we can state is that all the land in this country is in the hands of Cuban campesinos and agricultural workers. [Applause] What we can say is that every house, almost every factory, every hospital.... Not one hospital, not one single school has been privatized here [applause], and the country owns the overwhelming majority of its wealth. [Applause]

So, what were we to do? We had to choose; before a factory remained shut down, deteriorated completely, or was lost, if some capitalist entrepreneur appeared who was willing to become our business partner it would have been absurd not to have accepted, not to have gone ahead. When the socialist camp collapsed, thousands of factories were without fuel, without electricity, without raw materials, without spare parts. If the opportunity arises, even if only half of this factory stays in our hands — and frequently we retain the factory intact, when the association is commercial in character — we have to take it, it's logical to take it, it's the rational thing to do, and it's beneficial for the people to do so. [Applause]

We cannot let ourselves be guided by what pleases or displeases us, our criterion has to be what is useful or not useful to the nation and the people at this highly decisive juncture in our country's history.

If there are kilometers of beach that can be utilized and we lack the capital to build the hotels we need in those areas, if we can form some kind of joint venture or admit an investment, we'll do it.

The hotels existing in Cuba today are the property of Cuba, or of joint ventures, and there are not many of the latter. It's a fact that the work of our adversaries has influenced the number of joint venture hotels we have; however, in spite of everything, we have been able to

build hotels in the special period.

During the special period, using our own resources, we have constructed important scientific research centers, another of the country's economic sectors, and every one of these scientific research centers is the property of the nation. [Applause] The country will preserve everything that can be preserved [applause], and we will negotiate anything that can be negotiated.

The entire banking system in the country is national property. [Applause] As I already said, practically everything is in the hands of the nation. But if we have to introduce a specific amount of capitalism, we'll introduce it; we are introducing it, with all its inconveniences.

I'm going to say one thing here: it could come to the point where we have an investment which is 100 percent capitalist. If some capitalist has all the necessary capital, has the market, has the technology we lack, there can even be cases of a company based on 100 percent foreign capital; in such a case we would be left with the workforce and the taxes payable: we would have to resign ourselves to this.

It is preferable that the factory should remain ours, completely ours; it's preferable that the country reaps all the income, and that ownership remains with the country. We have seen this already, when everything belonged to the country.

At best, 50 years, or 100 years, will have to go by, or however many years, but always, if the country can retain something it must retain it; preserve something, it must preserve it. This is a basic principle; but we're not afraid, and we don't have a complex. I believe that we are doing what revolutionaries have to do at this moment; anything else would be an absurdity, a dream, an impossibility.

Question of power is key

The key, comrades and friends, the key to all this is power. Who holds power, the big landowners, the bourgeoisie, the wealthy? I mention the big landowners at this point because that's what we had before; there are no big landowners here now, the only landowners we have here are the cooperative workers and members of the Basic Units of Cooperative Production, etc., they are the only ones. Together with the tens of thousands of



Workers in Spain strike against layoffs in 1994. "Capitalism and unemployment are inseparable," Castro said. "Try to tell Europe it's any different."

cate them elsewhere. We have jobs, but not everyone is prepared to do just any job; however, we maintained protection for the workers.

When our levels of production abruptly fell, and money continued to circulate and grow in quantity, this led to a very damaging phenomenon for us which could not be allowed to go on indefinitely. In the early stages we applied the principle that nobody should be left unprotected. As a consequence of this we began to swim in money, there were rivers of money in the streets, and we had to begin collecting this money, because although during these years the overwhelming majority of people worked, you could say, from a spirit of patriotism, in fact there's always a certain percentage who doesn't have the same attitude. So when there begins to be a surplus of money coming into the home, over and above need, to buy the products on the ration book, if there are two people working, one tends to give up his or her job. At best, the person might have been a teacher, a professor, a nurse, a skilled technician who was needed in the factory, or in the health services, in the schools, in the hospitals.

Let's suppose that a hospital begins to lose staff: although 80 percent of the personnel continues to work there in a disciplined manner, 20 percent has no need of

"All land is in the hands of Cuban campesinos and agricultural workers.... Not one hospital, not one school has been privatized, and the country owns the overwhelming majority of its wealth..."

small independent farmers.

Who holds the power? Is the power in the hands of the bourgeoisie, wielded by the bourgeoisie and for the bourgeoisie? [Shouts of "No!"] Is the power in the hands of the capitalists, wielded by the capitalists and for the capitalists? [Shouts of "No!"] The question of power is key.

I must say also that we are doing some of these things to have economic efficiency and to improve our socialism. Obviously, my friends, it's pretty difficult to socialize or collectivize shoe repairers, for example.

There was a time here when there was such a battle, when everything was nationalized; but within society, and this will always be the case, there are several tasks that are really more appropriately carried out by a self-employed individual or various self-employed individuals, rather than the state attempting to undertake them. We have come to this conclusion.

This is in connection with self-employed work, born of specific needs, and not just to create employment or promote additional sources of income for workers, although these are fundamental objectives in the current circumstances.

So, before returning to the earlier theme, I'm going to continue with the question of employment.

In the situation of several factories being without raw materials, or without a domestic or foreign market, a huge number of unemployed people would be the result. What would the theoreticians of neoliberalism have advised? Turn all these people out onto the street, close down those factories and condemn millions of people to hunger, without receiving a cent. We couldn't do that. And not one worker has been left abandoned; they continued to receive their wages, or a percentage of their wages when there was no work available for them. If there was a surplus in one workplace, we tried to relo-

money, lacks a strong spirit of sacrifice, understanding, or conscience and begins to miss work.

When a hospital begins to be short of nurses, or technical staff, or cleaning workers, that hospital starts to have problems, and the situation is the same in schools or other public services. We confronted all those problems surrounded by those rivers of money, and we had to start collecting that money, applying a large-scale austerity policy, of saving money, reducing the deficit, reducing subsidies, because the situation had reached the point where anybody could get 150 pesos for one dollar.

We began to implement measures, but they weren't edicts dictated from above. We had to increase the prices on nonessential products, we had to introduce taxes, to suspend some gratuities. All those measures were discussed in the National Assembly, and subsequently in discussions with all the country's workers, then once more in the National Assembly, then back again to be debated by workers, students, campesinos; in every single sector it was discussed once, twice, three times, up to a fourth time, explaining it all, and a group of measures was adopted, based on discussions with and the consensus of the people.

The measures were applied in various sectors and the results are palpable. In one year, approximately 2.7 billion pesos have been collected, from a total of over 11 billion. People who had left their jobs began to resurface and return to work in the hospitals, the schools, and the public services. We had to create the need for money and a wage; otherwise the service sector and production sectors, all the sectors, would have gone into serious decline. What was important was the method used to collect the money, and the results are those I have just outlined to you.

There is something more: today anyone with a dollar would find it difficult to get much more than 35 pesos

for it. We could say that we are one of the few countries in the world whose national currency has gained in value [applause], and we're beginning to benefit from the measures we've been implementing. These measures are stimulating the economy and we are really getting ready to confront the situation. In the name of whom? In the name of the people. For whom? For the people.

That is why I would like to return to the idea that I interrupted some moments ago. This is the key, because if the people have power, if the workers have power, not the rich, not the millionaires, then policy can be made in favor of the people, while respecting the commitments made to specific foreign companies, respecting everyone and the interests of everyone, because we are not thinking of nationalizing anyone.

All our business deals have been decided through a contract which stipulates everything, the number of years, and so on. But while the people have power, they have everything. The one thing that the people should

never lose is power, not today, not tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow, not in the year 2020, 2050, or 2100. [Prolonged applause]

This key idea is linked to the question of democracy and participation. If we say: "Look, we are of the opinion that our political system is better than in any other part of the world," there are people who would smile to themselves, who would think it was a joke.

They are so addicted to political toxins, like the heavy smoker who gets through four packs of cigarettes or ten cigars a day, gets addicted to the nicotine, or others get addicted to heroin, cocaine, marijuana, or any of those substances. They want to impose a historical system on us in the name of who knows what principle, because until the middle of this century the world was full of colonies, and at that time there was little talk in the West of human rights or representative democracy.

Colonial revolution

I remember a map of the world from when I was a child: Britain's African possessions were highlighted in red, and those of France in another color. France and Britain covered almost the whole continent between them — my apologies to the ambassadors here, both of whom I esteem and respect. I am talking of the past, ambassadors, not the present — and I could see on the map that there was not one independent country, I don't recall any, only the Spanish, Belgian, Portuguese, French and British colors. I then looked at Asia, and it was the same; China had its own colors but everyone knows that it was a semi-colony.

We were all aware of what prevailed in the world 50 years ago, and it was after World War II that the liberation movement in the colonies began. We know what Latin America was, without exception, and I include us, "yes men" or "yes sir," as Robertico was saying this afternoon. The orders arrived and, in general, were respected and complied with without discussion. However, we had our own colors on the map. Afterwards came the cold war and all the demagoguery over representative democracy and various theories which emerged from the fight against the Revolution and socialism. Their allies, living under shocking regimes of terror were, of course, excluded.

Now, I am not saying that our model can claim to be the best model for everybody. No, I wouldn't dream of saying that. I believe that our model or many of our experiences could be useful to certain countries. I also believe that every country should create its own model, and should have the right to create its own model, and that no one can come along, in the name of whatever, wanting to impose whatever model they like on any country. [Prolonged applause] It is as if we were to send a message to the Queen of England stating that a republic should be established there, because, if they don't, we'll establish a blockade of Great Britain; or to tell his Holiness, the Pope, that he should establish a house of representatives or a senate, or universal suffrage for all the priests in the world.

I have used these examples because they demonstrate how absurd it is that there are so many people telling us what we have to do. Well, we learned to say: "We'll do as we like, and that's that!" [Applause] Sometimes, it's useless to be reasonable; they keep coming back with the same old tune, over and over again. What we say is that our model is right for us, it is as simple as that, and we are not defending our model, we are defending our right to have a model. Now, if they want to, we can make comparisons and that's that. [Applause]

One of the tragedies of this hemisphere is that during its independence wars models were brought in from Eu-

rope and the United States. Here they didn't only bring us the model, but they even brought us the Capitol — I don't know if any of you have passed by there, it was based on the Washington Capitol building — and is now a scientific research center, because our National Assembly meets in the international Conference Center, or here, not in that Capitol.

The Capitol has become a historic monument, we see it as one of the architectural jewels of Old Havana; it is even a source of hard currency. But it is now a science and technology center, a library, that building which was once full — with all respect to some exceptions — of thieves and bandits of all kinds now has many, many things. [Applause and shouts]

Every day there is a scandal somewhere in the world: in Europe, Latin America, Asia: the political parties have robbed, have received millions, or have bought votes; the transnationals or big business have given that much, or so much. As a general rule, I would say to the world's most splendid representative democracies: "Let he who is free from sin cast the first stone." [Applause]

Now, is there a single assembly within these splendid democracies that does not have just one millionaire, that does not have just one multimillionaire, that does not have a tremendous lobby from big business and the transnationals? Is there one assembly that has not spent one cent on elections; that has not collected funds in some way or another?

How can you be a representative without money? Is there one assembly in the world that can say that not one of its representatives — and we have over 500 of them — did not spend a cent on their election campaign? Is there one among those splendid representative democracies? I don't want to point the finger too much so as not to cause offense.

Elections in Cuba

In our country we have an Assembly with unique characteristics: in our country the Party does not stand for election. Is there any country in the world whose parties don't stand? Yes there is one, it is called Cuba. [Applause] It is the people that stand! The people! Let's say it is a type of Athenian democracy, aside from the fact that in Athens there were patricians and slaves. The patricians had all the rights and the slaves had none, nor did other categories of citizens. For every freeman there were at least two slaves; those with political rights were about 30 percent. A Greek democracy, then, without slaves and without citizens deprived of their civil rights.

It is the people that come together. Flesh and blood, men and women meet in their constituencies and propose the slate for their constituency delegates; it is they who elect them, and it is those delegates from the constituencies that are the members of the municipal assemblies, and they are the ones who elect the deputies to the National Assembly, it is not the Party.

The National Assembly elects the government. The streets are not filled with posters and placards and all that filth that we see in other parts of the world every time there's an election campaign.

In our country the ruling principle is that the people stand and the people elect. There are many countries called democracies where it's the parties that stand for election: they draw up a list, and it's already known from surveys that one, two, or three from the list are going to be elected, and that's it. It is the parties that stand whereas in our country they do not intervene. We do not have a multiparty system, but a millions-party system, because every one of this country's 11 million inhabitants has the right to stand and to elect. [Applause] Nobody tells them: "Propose this one," "Propose that one," "Vote for this one," "Vote for that one"; here, everyone knows it by heart.

And how can the miracle that 97.1 percent of the population went to the polls be explained? What do we see throughout the rest of the world? No one else has such a figure. There is no fraud of any kind here, and it is the children, the Pioneers who look after the ballot boxes. Is there any country in the world that doesn't have a police officer or a soldier with a fixed bayonet guarding the ballot boxes to ensure that they are not stolen between one point and another, that the voting slips are not switched, that the votes are not changed, that nothing is tampered with? Here, even the foreign press are first in line at the polling stations when they are counting the votes.

Ah! and if a counterrevolutionary slogan should appear, a smile this wide — on the faces of some, not all — they are waiting to see how many blank votes appear, how many counterrevolutionary votes and so on. You should see them there. They go there, they're present, there's no restriction or controls at vote counting.

It's our system and the people turn out to vote. Why don't they turn out to vote in the United States? Only half go. The president is elected with 25 percent of the vote. What a splendid democracy! And from then on, they forget about the citizens; you can get them involved in a nuclear war without them even hearing about it. A U.S. citizen gets up in the morning, reads the paper, and finds out that they are invading some country or another. [Prolonged applause]

Ah! That's how it is, that's it, because the president goes around with a briefcase. Or rather the nuclear powers go around with briefcases. I remember asking myself in the days of the cold war: "What if the moment of crisis caught someone on the toilet?" [Laughter] And if by chance he was attending to his marital duties on that day? [Laughter] Hey! The briefcase and the rapid response. Not even the Roman emperor had that power. A briefcase he uses to trigger off the missile launchers, because he gives the signal. That's a very representative democracy! That's a miracle without any doubt, my friends. That's why nobody goes to vote, or believes in the elections, or the people, or in the politicians.

Elected by majority vote

Throughout the world there is a crisis of confidence in the political parties, and there are many people who are standing as independents, and get results. Now, could a humble farmer, teacher, university professor, without one cent in the bank, be a deputy or a senator, for example, in the United States? Could he or she? What a difference! Here our deputies do not have a single cent, nor do they need any money, and they have to obtain over 50 percent of the valid votes to be elected. So, the people have faith, and they vote.

The last elections were an example. In the middle of the special period, the number of people who voted and the way they voted was really impressive. Why should we change that? Why should we fragment the country into a thousand pieces?

To whose advantage is it to fragment the country into a thousand pieces? That is what has happened in the former socialist bloc countries: 25 parties, 35 parties, 45 parties, it makes one want to say: well, that's not the concept of the multiparty system, it's a crazy party system. [Laughter and applause] It's unbelievable.

So, why has Cuba resisted? Because of its socialist system, because of its political system. Those who predicted Cuba's collapse should take a look at what has happened over the last five years. The more Cuba resists the more it is respected, and Cuba is ready to win the respect of the whole world. We will not be ridiculed or be made fools of.

Among the qualities of this people are not only its joyful, humorous, and rebel spirit, but also its acumen. The Cuban people are all an intelligent people. Or it would be better to say a people whose intelligence has been cultivated, because there are many intelligent people in the world who have not had the opportunity to learn to read or write. It is a national characteristic that the people are clever, they think, they reflect. Our people can not be underestimated.

This is our system. Why should they change it for us? I repeat, why should they change it for us? What we have to do is improve it, which is what we are doing and what we've done with the latest reforms of the Constitution.

Some people say: "No, you have to adopt transitional measures." We have already made the transition. We made the transition 36 years ago and all the changes that had to be made. [Applause] A transition to what, towards capitalism? No, there will be no transition towards capitalism. [Applause]

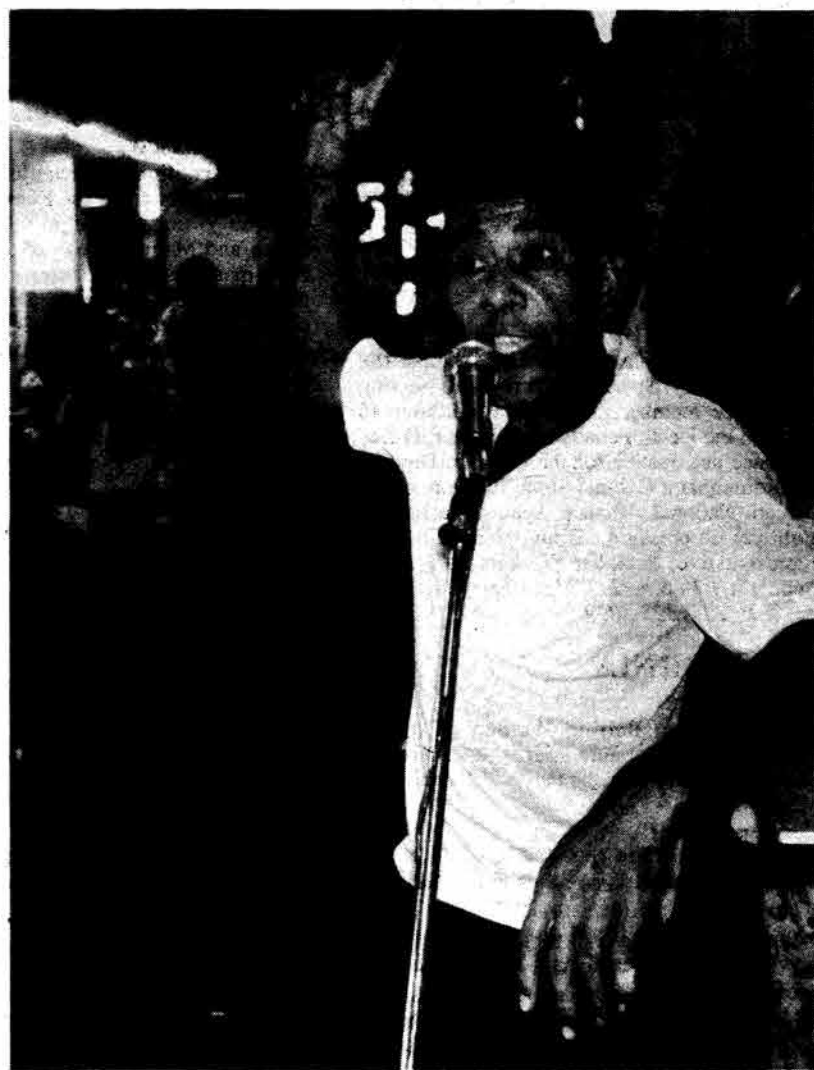
It was said here today that Cuba is neither a heaven nor a hell. So, let's say that it's purgatory [laughter], where they say that people go, and from where with a little patience and the help of a few prayers and whatever else can be done for the poor souls in purgatory they can move on to heaven.

They say that there is a way out of purgatory, but there's never any way out of hell. [Applause] If we are in purgatory, we are not going back to hell, at least we have escaped from Satan [laughter and applause], and are patiently waiting for the moment of reaching heaven. Isn't that the case Robertico, isn't that better? [Laughter] That is more or less what was said in the final declaration: "It is not as good as they say, nor as bad as it's painted."

I'm going to be honest: I think that we are far better than our enemies paint us and not quite as good as our friends say we are; in other words. I totally agree we're not so perfect.

Depends on new generation

In all honesty, I couldn't say that we have reached half way along the revolutionary road in this country, even after the work that has been done by our people, even after the resistance that we have put up over the last five years, even after having stood up to the great colossus to the North, in what has become a unipolar world, even



MILITANT/AARON RUBY

"Workers parliament" meeting at cigar factory in Havana, February 1994. These assemblies are one way Cuban workers have participated in the fight to defend the conquests of their revolution.

after we were left on our own, that is to say, practically without the support of any other country. I think there is a great merit in that.

If you have a sense of history and I think the youth is sufficiently capable — and will be more than sufficiently capable — then history will have to accredit this great endeavor, the great page that our country is writing in history at this moment. [Applause]

It won't be heaven, but they'll have to give you an Olympic medal, for you, not for us, because it depends on you, above all the new generation, to ensure that our Revolution reaches where it has to go, to that heaven that we were talking about earlier, although I know that Robertico disagrees with that, because he's already said three times that perfection would be the most boring thing in the world; true? [Laughter]

But to think that perfection exists, Robertico, is the most illusory thing in the world, because what is perfected today is no longer perfect tomorrow. Didn't that Greek philosopher say that nobody bathes twice in the same river? [Laughter] So today's perfection is tomorrow's imperfection. It's true, we should be modest, we should be humble, but we should not underestimate ourselves. That is what I believe, and I'm not speaking in defense of my part in this question, I am guilty of many things, or of errors that could have been made, I am defending you. [Applause]

Dear comrades, respected friends:
You wanted me to speak, didn't you? I have spoken. [Applause and shouts of "Fidel, Fidel!"]

I join those who have expressed their deepest and most sincere gratitude for your presence; we truthfully feel honored, we feel happy and we feel encouraged.

We will now continue our fight with greater confidence than ever, knowing that there are so many good and honest people in the world who understand us, who wish us success, who want to help us, and to put a grain of sand here and there.

We won't forget this meeting, and we'll be ready, on the orders of the world's youth, if it's needed, as we said yesterday, to organize not an international but a world festival. [Applause] This time some 1,200 to 1,300 of you have come; with 10,000 it will be a world event. We have the organizational ability to hold it in this country.

We have an excellent youth; you've met with them over the past few days. They have organized everything, really. They sought the help and cooperation of anyone who could provide it; but they were the ones who came up with the idea, and the ones who organized it.

If it's been a success, it is fair for us to recognize our heroic youth's organizational ability. [Prolonged applause and shouts]

After what I have explained to you today, it comes as no surprise that I should also conclude by saying with great conviction:

Socialism or death!
Patria o muerte! [Homeland or death]
Venceremos! [We shall win]
We'll see each other again!
[Ovation]

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

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

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

ALABAMA

Birmingham

Justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Death Penalty. Speakers: Chris Byrd, steering committee member, Alabama Committee to Abolish the Death Penalty and director, Office of Peace and Justice for the Catholic Diocese of Birmingham; Colonel Stone Johnson, chairperson, National Alliance Against Racial and Political Repression, Birmingham Chapter; representative, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Sept. 15, 7:30 p.m. 111 21st Street. Donation: \$3. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Reportback on Beijing Women's Conference. Speakers: Laura Garza and Maggie Trowe, Socialist Workers Party, Militant corre-

spondents at Beijing conference. Meeting will kick off national Militant Fund campaign in Los Angeles area. Sun., Sept. 17, 4 p.m. Reception 3 p.m.

The Mark Fuhrman Tapes and the Fight Against Police Brutality. Panel discussion. Fri., Sept. 22, 8 p.m.

Both events held at 2546 W. Pico Boulevard. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

SAN FRANCISCO

The International Struggle for Women's Rights. Report from the Fourth UN Conference on Women in Beijing. Speakers: Laura Garza and Maggie Trowe, Socialist Workers Party members, Militant correspondents at Beijing conference on women. Sat., Sept. 16, 7:30 p.m. 3284 23rd St. (near 24th and Mission BART). Dinner 5:30 p.m. Donation: \$10.00 dinner and forum; \$5 forum only. Tel: (415) 285-5323.

FLORIDA

Miami

Socialist Workers Campaign Meeting. Speaker: Seth Galinsky, Socialist Workers candidate for City Commission. Fri., Sept. 15, 7:30 p.m. 137 N.E. 54th St. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

The Fight for a New Trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal. Speaker: Maceo Dixon, Socialist

Workers candidate for Boston City Council at large, member, International Association of Machinists Local 1726. Fri., Sept. 15, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Reportback on the Cuba Lives International Youth Festival. Sat., Sept. 16, 7:30 p.m. Dinner 6:30 p.m. 141 Halsey (corner of Raymond Blvd.). Donation: \$4. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

The Real Philadelphia Police Scandal: Standard Operating Procedure. Panel discussion. Sat., Sept. 16, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

Pittsburgh

Privatization and Vouchers: Public Education Under Attack. Speakers: Eugene Beard Jr., chair, education committee, Pittsburgh NAACP; Edwin Fruit, Socialist Workers Party, member, International Association of Machinists. Fri., Sept. 15, 7:30 p.m. 1103 E. Carson St. on the south side. Donation: \$4. Tel: (412) 381-9785.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

Meet Socialist Workers Mayoral Candidate

Nelson González. Fri., Sept. 15, 7:30 p.m. Reportback from Hiroshima. Fri., Sept. 22, 7:30 p.m. Both events held at 147 East 900 South. Donation: \$3. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

The Russian Revolution, Ukraine and Anti-Semitism: The Politics of the "Demidenko Affair." Speaker: Doug Cooper, Communist League, member AWU-FIME union. Fri., Sept. 15, 7 p.m. 66 Albion St., Surry Hills. Donation: \$4. Tel: 281 3297.

BRITAIN

London

No to the Death Penalty! Justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal! Panel discussion. Fri., Sept. 15, 7 p.m. 47 The Cut. Donation: £2. Tel: 0171-928 7993.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Eyewitness Report from Tahiti: The Protests Against French Nuclear Testing in the Pacific. Speaker: Malcolm McAllister, recent visitor to Tahiti. Fri., Sept. 15, 7 p.m. 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

China forum succeeds in spite of U.S. gov't attacks

Continued from front page

government in Seoul bars visits and contact with North Korea.

Many of the Japanese women made a point of condemning Tokyo's role as a colonizer of other Asian peoples. At a workshop on the impact of occupation on Palestinian women, Miki Iwakuni, a lawyer who works on the case of the comfort women explained that the Japanese government justified its occupation of Korea and China in the 1930s and 1940s by saying that the Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese were fellow Asians who could live in harmony together.

The truth, however, Iwakuni added, was that the Japanese rulers colonized Korea and China by military force. "No country has the right to occupy another people's

land," she said to the applause of the Palestinian women and others in the workshop.

Women from the Philippines led a number of workshops on the situation of migrant workers. In a workshop called "Garment Workers Worldwide: the Global Assembly Line," women from the Philippines, Bangladesh, the United States, and Thailand compared the experiences of garment and textile workers in those countries. Seatin Wilaiwan, a member of the Textile Workers Federation in Thailand, said fires in the sweatshops are common, like the one that killed 188 women in the Kitatoy factory in 1993. Employers ignore labor laws and try to fire militants, she said, but the federation members in different factories compare experiences and work to build solidarity and confidence among workers to fight back.

No to nuclear testing in the Pacific

At a plenary session on the opening day of the forum, Winona LaDuke, a Native American activist from the White Earth reservation in Minnesota, condemned the planned testing of nuclear weapons in the Pacific by the French government. Women from Asia and Pacific took the lead in organizing protests and workshops against the tests at Mururoa in French

Polynesia.

Susanna Ounei-Small, an activist from the French colony of New Caledonia, spoke at another conference plenary session and called for an end to the testing and to colonial domination. "If we were not a colony of the French, they would not be able to conduct nuclear tests in our area. The only way to put an end to nuclear testing in the Pacific is to decolonize the Pacific," she said. In an interview she explained that the French government had prevented a woman from Tahiti and a woman from New Caledonia from attending the conference.

Cuban women led a workshop on the impact of the world economic crisis that also involved participants from Mozambique, Brazil, Argentina, Spain, Guatemala, China, and the United States. Women cited high unemployment and low wages, the employers' increasing use of part-time work, and the growing number of women and men forced to work as street vendors with no job security or benefits as some of the major problems they confront.

Cuban women also sponsored workshops on the situation in their country. Organizations from the Philippines, Canada, and elsewhere joined in sponsoring meetings against Washington's embargo of

Cuba. On September 5 a march of several hundred against U.S. policy on Cuba wound its way through the grounds of the nongovernmental forum. Demonstrators chanted "Cuba Sí, Yanqui No."

Chinese women joined in all the workshops. The thousands of Chinese volunteers also perused the exhibits, goods for sale, and freely discussed with other participants the status of women in their countries.

The story of a Chilean woman who suffered a botched abortion, lost her arm from a gangrenous infection, and was then jailed for having the abortion was featured at the tribunal on human rights. While the topic of abortion rights was discussed in many workshops it has not been a prominent theme here.

Muslim women

A discussion on Muslim women, Islamic fundamentalism, and the source of the rise in rightist attacks on women has also run throughout the conference. A number of workshops focused on the situation facing women in countries with large Muslim populations. A group of women from Iran spoke out against secularism and defended the policies of the Iranian government, which restricts some of the

Continued on Page 14

CALENDAR

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Classes on the Cuban Revolution. 1) What is Behind U.S. Government's Hatred of Cuba. Sun., Sept. 10, 2 p.m.; 2) Why Working People and Youth Should Support the Cuban Revolution. Sun., Sept. 17, 2 p.m. 141 Halsey (corner of Raymond Blvd.). Sponsor: Young Socialists. For more information call: (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Reportback from the Cuba Lives International Youth Festival. Sat., Sept. 16, 7 p.m. Speakers: Leslie Cagan, Cuba Information Project; representative, Casa de las Américas; other participants in festival. Initial endorsers: Cuba Information Project, Casa de las Américas, Cuba Lives Outreach Committee, Socialist Workers Party, Young Socialists. Casa de las Américas, 104 W. 14th St. For more information call: (212) 675-2584 or (212) 227-3422.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

Cuba Sí, Embargo No! Eyewitness accounts from members of the Pittsburgh Cuba Coalition who recently traveled to Cuba. Thurs., Sept. 14, 7 p.m. The Community of Reconciliation Church, 100 N. Bellefield at Fifth Ave. Sponsored by the Pittsburgh Cuba Coalition. For more information call: (412) 363-9042.

CANADA

Vancouver

Cuba Today. Break the Information Blockade! Hear firsthand reports on recent trips to Cuba by participants in Pastors for Peace Friendshipment, Canada Cuba Volunteer Work Brigade, and Cuba Lives International Youth Festival. Sat., Sept. 23, 7 p.m. Riley Park Community Centre, corner of Ontario and 30th Ave. (2 blocks west of Main St.). Sponsors: Amigos de Cuba, (604) 254-0663, Canadian Cuban Friendship Association, (604) 940-0420, Cuban Youth Tour Committee, (604) 327-6224, and Vancouver-Cuba Friendshipment (604) 737-1299. For more information call the above numbers.

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

You thought he was a cop? — "Evil in porcine form...a grotesque and noxious appearing wild boar." That's from Hormel, the meat packers. They're suing



Harry Ring

the producers of the upcoming movie *Muppet Treasure Island*. They claim that the character, Spa'am, the boar, "falsely disparages" their Spam.

Racist dog of the week —

Marta Laureano, who is bilingual, speaks Spanish to her daughter, 5, so that she too can be bilingual.

In a custody case, Texas judge Samuel Kiser told her, "You're abusing this child and you're relegating her to the position of housemaid. Now get this straight. You start speaking English to this child...because it's not in her best interest to be ignorant. The child will only hear English."

Right — I felt like I was being denied my rights, one of which is to speak my native language. —Marta Laureano.

'You can't cheat an honest man' — Braxton Bumpers, a Virginia prison inmate, planted a rumor that he had inherited \$1 mil-

lion. With that, he enlisted the assistant warden and staffers to smuggle him in liquor, Chinese takeout, and even a cellular phone. Officials soon caught on, but he persuaded them to turn the scam into an anti-corruption sting and to keep circulating the rumor. The assistant warden has been suspended.

Sheer coincidence, no? — In Los Angeles, some 600,000 people live within half a mile of a hazardous waste site. Of these, a study found, 493,000 are Black, Latino, Asian, and Native American.

Clearly, well worth saving — "A bold battle plan for reclaiming society by inflicting Pain, Stigma,

Shame, Disgrace, Ridicule and Public Punishment on its wayward members." —Blurb for its book, *This Will Hurt* in right-wing *National Review* magazine.

Give that guy a drink — "The hangover will be terrible, the temptation to take another drink overwhelming. But the alternative is dissolution.

"To recover, the patient needs a relentless driving will. And he must accept extreme measures, such as total abstinence...." —From new book calling for total moratorium on immigration. By Peter Brimelow, senior editor of *Forbes* magazine, self-styled "Capitalist Tool."

Maybe it feels like they're

there — According to a recent Harris Poll, more than a third of U.S. adults worry "a lot" about not having enough money and health insurance. Less than 10 percent of those quired worry about going to hell.

Tough situation — Dove Books, which is turning out "insider" books about the O.J. Simpson trial, scrapped a deal for a book by ex-cop Mark Furhman. Apparently unnerved by public revulsion over Furhman's taped, firsthand account of cop brutality and racism, Dove offered a delicately balanced explanation: "There was a general sense, for both commercial and ethical reasons, that it was not appropriate...at this time."

Strikers and supporters stop Detroit newspapers

Continued from front page

followed by a march that would end at the picket lines. The rally platform included top union officials including Thomas Donahue, president of the AFL-CIO, and John Sweeney, president of the Service Employees International Union, who is challenging Donahue in the next presidential election of the AFL-CIO; Stephen Yokich, president of the UAW; Ron Carey, president of the Teamsters union; and Richard Trumka, president of the United Mine Workers of America.

Ready for picket line duty

But the workers who turned out that day had not come to hear speeches. Many skipped the rally and went directly to the picket lines. By 2 p.m. there were enough pickets in front of the gate to prevent the police from clearing a path for the scabs. But at about 5 p.m., before the marchers had arrived from the rally, the police sought to force their way into the crowd to open the gates. The workers pushed them back and the retreating cops sprayed pepper gas into the crowd. The line held.

As news of the police attempt reached the rally one mile away, the crowd grew impatient with the rally speakers. Everyone wanted to get to the plant as quickly as possible. A chant of, "Go, go, go!" arose spontaneously. The union officials got the message and ended the rally.

The police, wearing riot gear, lined the median strip facing the picket line at the main gate. Some of them carried plastic fasteners to use in place of handcuffs.

Hour after hour passed. Reinforcements poured in from police departments in surrounding areas. One picket was able to cross behind the cops and counted 21 different police departments on hand. At the height of the police presence nearly 200 could be counted on the median strip. The marshals — strike picket captains and recruits from other unions — maintained discipline on the lines. They countered potential provocations with persuasion and, if that failed, calm but direct orders. For example, a man shouting sexist epithets at women cops was told to stop or be separated from the picket line.

A number of people came by the line when they saw the confrontation shaping up on the evening news. Ryan McClymont, 19, whose father is a UAW member at Chrysler, was among them. "I was having a birthday party when my friends and I saw it on TV. So we left the party — I'll open my presents later — and came down here to show our support."

At about 3 a.m. the cops across the street began to stir. Everyone who was sleeping woke up and joined the line. Then the marshals began asking for help at Gate 3, because the company was trying to move trucks out of the plant.

"We could see them getting ready to come out. The security guards had on riot gear," recounted one member of Teamsters Local 372. When they couldn't open the gate "they just gave the go-ahead and drove a semi and a van right through the fence at about 20 or 30 miles per hour.

"We couldn't believe it. There were about 40 pickets at the gate. When they hit the gate it sprung open. That's when people converged on the truck and forced them back.

"There were 10 people sitting on a log

in front of the gate. They were designated to be arrested. If the trucks had kept going they would have been killed." This reporter reached the scene just after this attack. The Vance Security goons were right up against the fence with their helmets and shields. The pickets were furious, "Shame, shame!" they yelled.

The strikebreakers began driving a second truck toward the opening in the fence and the picketers moved forward. The truck was quickly disabled and the guards retreated far back onto company property.

An attempt was made to move a single truck out of Gate 1 a few minutes later. But the driver was forced to go into reverse as workers rushed toward it with whatever they could find to prevent it from moving.

After the attempt to move the trucks failed, the police gradually began to leave. There were no more provocations from within the plant. By 8:30 a.m. the union leaders declared a victory and stepped aside to allow 80 trucks out of the plant. Across the street about 15 cops looked on.

Frank Vega, president of Detroit Newspapers, Inc., frustrated by the union action, responded by violence-baiting the workers, "Mob rule and lawlessness took over what had been touted as a peaceful demonstration."

Labor Day rally features strikers

The newspaper strikers were able to savor their victory two days later as they marched at the front of the Detroit Labor Day Parade. Most union contingents in the parade carried banners or signs in support of the strikers.

"The Sunday paper is 75 percent of the company's income. The goal should be to stop the Sunday paper as often as possible," Young told the *Militant*.

Some of the union officials speaking at the Labor Day event pointed their fire away from the Detroit newspaper management in discussing the strike. John Peralta, Teamsters Local 2040 vice president, opened the rally by putting the blame on Mexican workers who are being used as strikebreakers. "This company is bringing in foreigners to break our strike. They're bringing in Mexicans," he told the crowd. "We're not against workers, just against import workers."

Congressman John Conyers joined in with a pledge to call in the Immigration and Naturalization Service to enforce the law and deport the scabs.

This anti-immigrant rhetoric, which divides workers, was answered at least in part by Joseph Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, who urged the unionists to "make sure our hands are clean and our house is in order. We must not let any racism or sexism interfere with our goal. We need the talents and skills of everyone. We need to stick together."

The big business media attempted to paint the show of labor strength over the Labor Day weekend with a violence brush, taking advantage of a provocative action organized by an outfit calling itself the "Strike to Win Committee." This group, led by the Revolutionary Workers League, distributed a leaflet at the Labor Day parade demanding, "Shut the plant down after the parade!"

Union leaders announced from the plat-



Militant/John Sarge

Union members show support for newspaper strike at Labor Day event

form that no action was planned for that night and that regular pickets should report for duty. Evening TV newscasts, however, announced that an action had been called. About 200 people showed up at the picket line Monday night.

Sensing that the picket line did not represent a broad mobilization of the labor movement the police ordered dispersal and moved in quickly attacking the

demonstrators with tear gas, pepper spray, and clubs. Security guards from inside the plant gate also threw metal and rocks at pickets.

The police arrested 23 people from the picket line and injured another 5. Following the arrests, the cops "quarantined" the area around the plant and the regular pickets were not allowed to set up until noon the next day.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT
Published in the Interest of the Working People
September 18, 1970 Price 10¢

SEATTLE — On Sept. 4, 30 families walked out of the largest of the Yakima Chief ranches, the largest hop growers in Washington State. At a meeting in Granger that night, approximately 150 voted unanimously to go on strike, demanding a wage increase and the right to unionize.

Two more ranches were struck the morning of Sept. 7. Now 250 field workers and their families are involved. Ninety percent of them are participating in the picket lines. A temporary kitchen has been set up, and attempts are being made to establish a child-care center in order to free the Chicanas so they can join the picket lines.

The ranch has hired high school workers over the Labor Day weekend, but this has not been successful, since the output has been less than half what it was before.

Conditions in the Yakima Valley have helped lay the basis for this kind of action for a long time.

Not only do Chicanos suffer low wages and terrible living conditions, but when they have complained about it they have been attacked. In the past month alone, three have been attacked by Anglo foremen.

In a move to break the strike Granger High School in Yakima Valley released its students to help harvest the crops.

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

September 15, 1945

SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 3 — Demonstrating a revival of their militant spirit of the prewar years, some 30,000 CIO workers here today marched down Market Street to demand action from the government against mass layoffs and for an effective full employment program.

"Jobs For All" was the slogan of the day, blazoned on placards and streamers carried by the long lines of marchers. The slogan was echoed by the additional thousands who viewed the parade.

Returned veterans, members of the CIO, were in the line of march and pointed to the fact that only "Jobs For All" would solve the veterans' problems. Thousands of Negro unionists marched with their white brothers and the slogan of "Outlaw Race Discrimination" was combined with "Jobs For All." Seamen demanding a living wage and a 40-hour week participated prominently.

Although the AFL had requested its members not to participate in the parade but to "go to church and pray" on Labor Day, thousands of workers wearing AFL buttons thronged through the line of march and cheered the protesters.

The speakers at the reviewing stand offered nothing by way of an effective fighting program to match the militant spirit of the marchers. But underlying the "peaceful" surface of the parade itself was an awareness that jobs and decent wages would be won only through struggle.

Stop NATO bombing in Bosnia

Much newspaper print and television time is being used to push the view that the NATO bombing campaign under way advances the cause of the Bosnian people. The *Militant* has taken a stance — and urges its readers to do so as well — that the imperialist military intervention in the former Yugoslavia holds no benefits for working people in the region or anywhere else.

Far from ending the conflict, the use of military force and threats of wider war set back the fight by the Bosnian people for self-determination and national sovereignty.

The White House and U.S. Congress justify the bombing by citing humanitarian concerns for the besieged people of Sarajevo and other Bosnian cities.

Many working people and youth are swayed by such claims because of their natural human sympathy for the plight of the people of Bosnia. But the government of the United States, as well as those of Britain, France, Italy, Germany, and Japan, have a long history of professing humanitarianism to carry out brutal assaults, and using their massive armed forces to advance their imperialist interests and trample on the rights of working people the world over.

The U.S. invasions of Haiti (1994), Panama (1989-90), and Grenada (1983); London's war against Argentina to maintain its colonization of the Malvinas islands (1982); and the U.S.-led war against the people of Iraq in 1990-91 are some of the most recent examples. They were carried out under the pretext of defending human rights and democracy.

Imperialist intervention is often disguised with the fig leaf of the United Nations. That was the case in Somalia (1992-94); during the overthrow of the government of Patrice Lumumba in the Congo (now Zaire) by UN forces in 1961; and in the 1950-53 Korean War, when Washington used the blue flag of the United Nations to carry out its massive invasion and partition the peninsula against the will of the vast majority of the Korean people.

The rival imperialist powers of North America and Europe are seeking ways to intervene in the Yugoslav war, place their stamp on the outcome of events, and thus increase their influence in the Balkans. They are driven to do this by increased conflicts among themselves in the context of a world capitalist economy marked by declining profit rates and stiffening competition for markets. They seek to reinforce the fracturing of the former Yugoslavia and eventually overturn the nationalized property relations and re-establish capitalism.

In Bosnia, the U.S. government is using its military might to set in stone what has been already carved out by the massive spilling of blood of the Bosnian people — the partition of that former Yugoslav republic.

Washington is doing so to increase the edge it has already gained over its imperialist rivals in the Balkans. It has outdistanced Bonn in its support for the regime in Croatia. And NATO, the U.S. military arm in Europe, is currently calling the shots over decisions for military intervention in Bosnia.

Now the Clinton administration is peddling the idea of using up to 25,000 U.S. ground troops as part of a 50,000-strong occupation force to enforce its "peace plan." This is simply naked imperialist military intervention in the former republics of the Yugoslav workers state. The "humanitarianism" of Washington and other imperialist powers is exposed as crocodile tears by their backing of Zagreb's "ethnic cleansing," and the shutting of their borders and mistreatment of hundreds of thousands of refugees from the war.

The chief culprit for the murderous conflict in the former Yugoslavia is the regime of Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia. This gangsterous regime of would-be capitalists and its allies in Bosnia pioneered the "ethnic cleansing" in their drive to grab land and resources. The regime of Franjo Tudjman in Croatia followed suit.

The petty-bourgeois and aspiring bourgeois layers in Belgrade, Zagreb, and elsewhere are interested only in safeguarding their own privileges, diverting workers from acting in their own class interests, and continuing the fruitless attempt to be welcomed as equal partners into the world capitalist system.

But because of the historic conquests of the Yugoslav revolution in the 1940s, many working people in all the republics — Serb, Croat, Bosnian, and others — oppose being forcibly divided along national lines. From the beginning of the bloody war in 1991, many workers, farmers, and youth in Yugoslavia have shown by their own actions the potential they possess to resist the slaughter.

Tens of thousands of people in Bosnia have taken up arms to defend their right to self-determination, halt the horrors of "ethnic cleansing," and put an end to the onslaught. They are not helpless victims who must rely on Washington for salvation. Working people the world over should support this fight, including the right of the Bosnian army to obtain weapons wherever it can. But the NATO bombings, and the support for Washington's military assault by the government of Alija Izetbegovic in Sarajevo, set back this fight.

Instead, the labor movement should demand:
Stop the NATO bombing and end all plans for further military intervention!

Support Bosnia's self-determination!
Lift the arms embargo and economic sanctions against all the former Yugoslav republics!

Open the U.S. and other imperialist borders to the refugees from the Yugoslav carnage!

Newspaper strikers win one

"It's about time we won one," said a striking mailer from Detroit, referring to the successful labor mobilization on September 2 that halted shipment of scab papers. The 3,000 strikers and supporters from other unions showed what's possible when working people organize and use the strength of their numbers against company union busting and cop provocations.

The mass picketing at the Detroit newspapers' printing plant was one of the widespread solidarity actions taken by thousands of working people throughout the area. Not only do many unionists visit the picket lines, but thousands of working-class families refuse to buy the scab paper the company is publishing. Even the big-business press admits tens of thousands of subscriptions have been canceled.

Workers can see that the bosses are dead serious about breaking the strike and will use any means at their disposal. They attempted to drive a truck into unarmed pickets and called up hundreds of cops in riot gear to intimidate the strikers or crack their heads if they could get away with it. The behavior of the cops in Detroit is no different from that of their cohorts in Los Angeles or Philadelphia. Their function is to protect the property of the rich and terrorize working people when we get "out of line" by fighting for our rights.

But the Detroit newspaper strikers refuse to back down or be intimidated by the viciousness of the police. Like the Caterpillar strikers, they are determined to stand up and fight back against the bosses and the cops and win broader support. Unionists from other areas should build solidarity for these strikers. Students and other

young fighters, including those involved in the struggle against the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal, should visit the picket lines.

Some union officials have aimed their fire at immigrant workers who management is using in its attempt to break the strike. This is wrong and deadly for the labor movement. Anytime the bosses can foster divisions among working people, it weakens the labor movement as a whole. Trade unionists must reject this scapegoating.

While the big-business media attempts to brand the strikers as violence-prone, the labor movement must put its weight behind this struggle. The record in Detroit shows that it is the boss class, with its private goon squads and friendly assistance from riot police, that is responsible for violence. The employers are squealing like pigs now because the strikers have scored some gains through mass picketing and other effective methods of struggle.

One popular sports writer who crossed the picket line wrote a column declaring, "Enough" to explain why he had given up the struggle. The writer told the *New York Times* he did not want to be seen as supporting either side and that both sides in the dispute were wrong.

Well he may cry "uncle," but millions of working people around the world want to be treated as human beings, not beasts of burden. They have little trouble seeing the differences between the two sides of the newspaper battle. Those strikers who are continuing their fight for justice will inspire others to take on the bosses' union-busting and assaults on workers' standard of living.

China forum

Continued from Page 12

rights of women. They also helped lead a small march against abortion and homosexuality.

While U.S. bombs were being dropped over Serb-held positions in Bosnia at the time, there were only a few organized discussions of the war in that region. At a workshop on Bosnian Women and Their Families sponsored by the Iranian-Bosnia Friendship Association, Hadzic Munira-Beba from Bosnia-Herzegovina said, "We are being killed because we want to live together in a society where it doesn't matter what nationality you are, what religion you are, where it only matters if you are human." Later in the workshop another view was expressed by a woman who said the fighting in Bosnia was a problem going back centuries, and was part of an attempt to liquidate Muslims in Europe. After the meeting, a march to support the people of Bosnia was held.

With the arrival of Hillary Clinton in China, the leadership of the U.S. delegation widened its no-holds-barred attack on China. At the main United Nations conference in Beijing, Clinton charged that Chinese authorities had harassed large numbers of forum participants. Many women at the NGO forum, which Clinton spoke at the next day, saw her appearance as a victory over conservative opposition to the conference.

But after days of news coverage in which factual reporting of events at the forum was mostly absent, conference participants were less inclined to follow the lead of Hillary Clinton, Geraldine Ferraro, and other members of the U.S. government delegation who have spearheaded the attack on China as a major violator of human rights in the world, while portraying the U.S. government as a great defender of women's rights.

Reports on China forum differ from real events

BY SHELLIA KENNEDY
AND MAGGIE TROWE

HUAIROU, China — For many participants in the Fourth World Conference on Women Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) Forum, the difference between the conference they are experiencing and the one portrayed in the U.S. media is striking. To read the U.S. daily *International Herald Tribune* or to watch TV coverage on CNN, you would think the conference is an organizational nightmare and that the Chinese government is making it impossible for conference participants to exchange ideas freely. But by the sixth day of the conference, this campaign of slander had begun to offend thousands of participants. In an article in the September 4 *International Herald Tribune*, Geraldine Ferraro, the 1984 Democratic Party candidate for vice president of the United States, said of the Chinese hosts, "What they are doing outside the conference is appalling."

More than 100 workshops take place every day on numerous topics followed by open discussion. Debate is common, and is usually quite civil. Women from every continent introduce themselves with ease and exchange ideas and experiences about the different struggles they are involved in. Marches and protest rallies are common.

Chinese security officials put some restrictions on march routes, and some surveillance was reported by supporters of Tibetan independence from China and initially by lesbian activists. At the same time, Tibetan and Taiwanese participants who oppose Chinese policy have been given visas and accredited for the forum, while women organizing the lesbian tent are now functioning without restrictions.

Silvia Cerqueira, a member of the Brazilian Association of Lawyers, said, "We couldn't do the conference in my country better than the Chinese are doing it here.... I think the Western media is attacking China because it is a communist country and because they don't want a successful conference on women's rights to take place."

Others at the forum were more critical of China. Ruby Beltran, president of the Policy Research Center for Migrant Workers of the Alliance of Women in Politics, from the Philippines, said, "By putting the conference in Huairou, the Chinese government gave pariah status to women. By having the NGO forum so far from the UN conference, our advocacy activities have been limited and we lack satellite TV to follow the deliberations."

"But on the other hand, we are having no problems giving workshops here in Huairou," she added.

Activists staffing the Lesbian Tent explained that there had been some incidents they considered harassment by Chinese forum officials the first few days of the conference. Monika Reinfelder, a member of the Lesbian Caucus of the National Women's Network in Britain, said, "They took some photos after we explicitly asked them not to, and they took a stack of Chinese-language leaflets on lesbian rights. But the problems have been resolved, and now conference participants of every nationality, including Chinese, are visiting the tent to chat and take literature without restriction." Reinfelder was opposed to singling out China for violations of human rights. "Which country hasn't had human rights abuses?" she asked.

Several thousand Chinese delegates circulate freely at the conference, participating actively in most workshops. Hundreds of students from Beijing-area universities who volunteered as interpreters for the conference mingled with women from other countries, and some Chinese workers at the forum site took their break time to do the same.

A great resource for learning communism

Pathfinder Press, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom, publishes books and pamphlets by revolutionary and working-class leaders. Pathfinder bookstores are listed in the directory on page 12.

The Education for Socialists series, distributed by Pathfinder, is a great resource for those interested in learning the history

bulletins to members of the Pathfinder Readers Club. In addition to special discounts like this, members of the Readers Club receive a 15 percent discount on all Pathfinder publications at any of the Pathfinder bookstores around the world. Membership in the Readers Club is \$10 a year.

Four Education for Socialists — *The Workers and Farmers Government* by Joseph Hansen, *Workers and Farmers*

The Socialist Workers Party in the United States, as well as communists in other parts of the world, were quick to embrace the Chinese revolution and to organize support for it against the attacks by the imperialist powers and capitalist and feudal forces in China itself. But the revolution there, like those in Eastern Europe, also posed important theoretical questions. How was it possible for working people to take power and begin to reorganize society in their own interests under the petty-bourgeois leadership of Stalinist — and, in the case of China, peasant — parties?

The Cuban revolution, which burst on the scene in 1959, made it possible for the first time since the Soviet Union in the early 1920s for communists to defend and learn from a revolutionary leadership in power.

By looking at all these revolutions together, communists were able to gain a clearer understanding of the irreplaceable power of the workers and farmers government as a tool in the hands of working people. This conquest remains crucial to understanding developments today in the workers states in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China.

Several other Education for Socialists take up the experiences of the workers and farmers governments in Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada. *The Chinese Revolution and its Development* includes several interesting selections, including "The Third Chinese Revolution and its Aftermath," which was approved by the 1955 Socialist Workers Party convention, and "The Chinese Communes," an article on agrarian reform in China.

Selected Speeches of Fidel Castro contains several talks by the Cuban leader not available in other books and pamphlets published or distributed by Pathfinder. These include early speeches like "I Will Be a Marxist-Leninist to the End of My Life," and "The Revolution Must Be a School of Unfettered Thought." In the first, given in December 1961, just two months before the Cuban people declared the socialist character of their revolution at a mass rally where the Second Declaration of Havana was read, Castro noted, "The more we learn what imperialism is — and not by word, but in the flesh and blood of our people, ... the more convinced we become of all the truths [Karl] Marx and [Frederick] Engels wrote."

Several Education for Socialists bulletins focus on the history and lessons of the fight against fascist movements in the United States from the capitalist crisis and labor radicalization of the 1930s through the anti-communist crusade led by Sen. Joseph McCarthy in the 1950s.

Counter-mobilization: A Strategy to Fight Racist and Fascist Attacks draws on the experiences of the Minneapolis Team-

sters movement, which successfully took on the fascist Silver Shirts in Minneapolis in the late 1930s. The discussion by leaders of the Young Socialist Alliance and the Socialist Workers Party in 1975 was organized at the YSA's request after a professor at San Francisco State University invited a member of the National Socialist White People's Party to speak to his class.

In the discussion, Farrell Dobbs, a central leader of the fight to organize the Teamsters Union in the Midwest in the 1930s explains how they had defeated the fascists at that time. The union didn't threaten to bust up the fascist's gathering or argue against their formal right to hold a meeting. Instead, they built the broadest public mobilization possible to isolate the rightist thugs. "What we said is that we're organizing a union defense guard and the guard is going to so conduct itself that it will show the fascists that they can't operate in Minneapolis without a fight," Dobbs said.

For the entire list of Education for Socialists, write to Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

By Sara Lobman

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This question, first posed directly by V.I. Lenin and other leaders of the Communist International following the victory of the Russian revolution, was pushed to the fore again by the revolutions in China and Eastern Europe following World War II.

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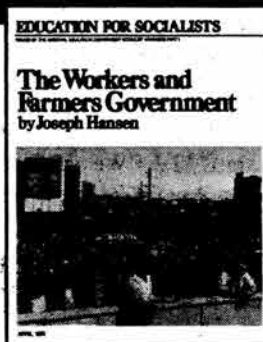
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LETTERS

Million gallon hog spill

Here's an update to the informative article you ran recently on the 25 million gallon hog waste spill in eastern North Carolina. Last week the state Division of Environmental Management fined Oceanview Farms, site of the spill, \$110,000. DEM spokesman Don Reuter said, "We found that most of Oceanview's actions in the immediate wake of the spill were to keep their operations going. We found their reaction to our directions to clean up waste on adjacent lands and nearby creeks to be unsatisfactory."

Although the DEM called this a "severe" penalty, it's barely a slap on the wrist against the giant Purina Corporation, which backs Oceanview. Who'll actually pay the penalty is less clear. A recent article in the Greensboro *News and Record* explained that Oceanview is managed by Coastal Ag-Development, Inc. which owns 1 percent of Oceanview. The newspaper quoted Bill Johnson, vice president of Coastal, "The other owners are individual people located in various locations within the U.S. They're just individual investors in the project, 11 other investors." He added that he

"didn't wish" to release the names of these other investors, who are also not listed with the North Carolina secretary of state.

But the secretary of state does list the principal officers of Coastal Ag-Development — three individuals with the same address in St. Louis, Missouri. The address is that of Purina Mills and the three individuals are the president and CEO, executive vice president, and legal counsel for Purina. Given their track record, it's no surprise these capitalist owners would rather working people be kept in the dark about their identity.

Jane Roland
Greensboro, North Carolina

Irish political prisoner

Behind the brick walls and triple razor wire fencing of the federal prison in Fairton, New Jersey, an Irish political prisoner is being held. Gerry McGeough joined the Republican movement in 1975 at age 16 and since that time has lived a life of activism broken by periods of imprisonment, torture, and exile. In 1988 Gerry was arrested on frame-up bombing charges in Germany. After four years of pretrial imprison-



ment, Gerry was acquitted and extradited to the U.S.A. on a warrant dating back to the "Freedom Five" case of the early 1980's.

While out on bail, McGeough toured as a speaker, organizer, and fund raiser for Republican causes in North America. In 1994 he was sentenced to three years in prison and will face deportation when he is released in 1996. Like the other 26 imprisoned Irish activists in the U.S.A., Gerry is very much a vic-

tim of collusion between the British secret police and the FBI. When British and American imperialism are getting along well, indictments, provocations, and frame-ups rain down on Irish activists in the U.S.A. However, when U.S. — British relations cool, Gerry Adams gets invited to the White House.

Taking advantage of the political situation, Brian McElduff, Sinn Fein's Justice spokesperson,

visited Gerry McGeough as part of his East Coast tour. The Sinn Fein representative and Gerry O'Hare of the New Jersey Irish Unity Coalition were passed through the gun towers, electric gates, and walls to meet with their imprisoned comrade.

The visitors told McGeough of the unfolding campaign of mass street actions in Ireland to press the British to begin peace talks. The various advances in the Saorise (Irish for freedom) campaign for the release of Irish political prisoners in England, Ireland, and the U.S.A. were reported and discussed.

Like other political prisoners, Gerry would appreciate letters and political discussion with other fighters on the outside. His address is: Gerry McGeough, # 37768-053, unit CR, F.C.I., Fairton, PO# 420 Fairton, NJ, 08320. Roy Inglee
Wilmington, Delaware

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.

Canada cops threaten Natives

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO
AND JOE YOUNG

100 MILE HOUSE, British Columbia — The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) are surrounding a group of about 30 Natives and their supporters at Gustafsen Lake, about 500 kilometers north of Vancouver. They are threatening to use force to end the occupation of about two square miles of territory the Natives, who call themselves the Defenders of the Shuswap Nation, consider sacred.

In an ominous move, the cops brought in at least four armored vehicles September 5 to reinforce their siege, which began three weeks earlier.

For a number of years, Natives have been using the area to carry out a sun-dance religious ceremony. Until this year they had an agreement with Lyle James, the rancher who owns a 180,000 hectare cattle ranch in the area, which is in the traditional territory of the Canoe Creek band of the Shuswap nation.

On June 13, James and 12 of his employees stormed the Native campsite and attempted to serve an eviction notice. The day after, two employees of the Forestry Service claim, the Natives fired on them. James demanded that the RCMP clear the Natives off the site.

The confrontation at Gustafsen Lake followed a series of Native roadblocks in this province over land claims in the past few months. In British Columbia, except for a small area, treaties were never signed with Native people. For several years now negotiations have been taking place between many Native bands and the federal



Militant/Cheryl Pruitt

Mohawk supporters march in Montreal August 28, 1992. Meetings in support of Native claims to occupied lands have taken place across Canada.

and provincial governments, but not a single land claim has been settled.

"We don't endorse taking up arms, but these (the Gustafsen Lake group) are frustrated people like many of our people," Frank Bucher, vice president of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, said.

Government officials have threatened the occupiers. Federal Indian Affairs Minister Ron Irwin said, "They cannot behave with this illegal activity in Canada." B.C. attorney general Ujjal Dosanjh insisted,

"This is an issue of law enforcement and I speak as the top law enforcement officer in the province."

The big-business media campaign against the Natives and their supporters has heightened a sharp polarization in the area for and against the Natives at Gustafsen Lake. On August 27, about 25 local residents demonstrated against Bruce Clark, the occupiers' lawyer, carrying signs like, "We support the RCMP."

In an August 24 press release signed by

faithkeeper Percy Rosette, the occupiers outlined their proposals for a "peaceful resolution to a crisis which has been going on for 139 years." They said they would agree to lay down their arms after receiving a guarantee of diplomatic immunity from prosecution for all members of the camp, and audiences between their lawyer Clark and the Queen's privy council and the governor general of Canada to achieve a ruling on the legitimacy of their claims.

On August 26, the RCMP cut off all radio and phone communications for those in the encampment. The following day the RCMP alleged that protesters fired on and hit two RCMP officers in the back, but because the officers were wearing flak jackets they received only bruises. However on August 31, Clark was allowed into the camp and emerged with an affidavit by Tonde Halle, a freelance camera operator who has been staying in the camp. Halle says the police fired first.

Protests against an RCMP attack and in support of Native claims to the occupied land have taken place in cities across Canada. In Washington, D.C., Natives from several tribes demonstrated August 29 in front of the Canadian embassy. One demonstrator carried a sign that read, "Honor native treaty rights — No Waco at Gustafsen Lake."

Activists opposed to police intervention have been gathering in 100 Mile House, 35 kilometers from the occupation. Neither the press nor anyone else are allowed past a police barricade about 20 kilometers from this site. Outside the Red Coach Inn in 100 Mile House, Shari Bondy, whose husband is in the encampment, showed *Militant* reporters the bulletin board where messages of support from the Canadian Federation of Students, Canada Alliance in Solidarity with the Native Peoples, First Nations Environmental Network, and other groups are posted.

Beverly Bernardo is a laid-off member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees and Joe Young is a member of the United Steelworkers both in Vancouver.

Abu-Jamal sues over prison abuses

BY KATE DAHER

PITTSBURGH — A civil suit hearing into charges that prison officials violated death row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal's rights to legal counsel and access to the media began here September 5.

Abu-Jamal was convicted in 1982 of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner and has been on death row for the past nine years. On August 7, Common Pleas judge Albert Sabo issued a temporary stay of execution as national and international pressure calling for a new trial and lifting of his execution mounted.

According to the suit, prison officials unlawfully confiscated and photocopied Abu-Jamal's legal mail; denied him access to paralegals functioning on behalf of his chief-counsel, Leonard Weinglass; and illegally filed disciplinary charges against him in retaliation for the publication of his book *Live From Death Row*.

Weinglass, who has represented Abu-Jamal for the last three years, was the first

witness called. He explained that the paralegals have not been able to meet with Abu-Jamal since February, when the Department of Corrections (DOC) reversed its earlier practice of allowing visitations and demanded that the paralegals supply proof of credentials or employment. "There is no provision to license paralegals in the state of Pennsylvania," Weinglass stated.

Weinglass, who is a New York-based attorney, relied on the paralegals to ensure lawyer-client confidentiality. The suit charges that documents sent by mail were opened and "...confiscated by prison personnel without justification."

A Friend of the Court brief filed by the state American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of Abu-Jamal says the DOC's policy to deny prisoners access to the media acts to "...chill free expression."

"Such a chill works to the great disadvantage of the general public by suppressing prisoners' artistic expressions, as well as valuable information about the operation of Pennsylvania's prisons," the brief states.

A second Friend of the Court brief filed by Prison Radio Project, *Nation* magazine, and author John Edgar Wideman, challenges the violation of Abu-Jamal's constitutional rights to meet with journalists. The brief charges that "...the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections not only have violated his [Abu-Jamal's] First Amendment rights, but also have unconstitutionally denied the public access to vital information about perhaps the most controversial issue of our day — the death penalty and its targets."

About a dozen or so supporters from Philadelphia traveled to Pittsburgh to attend the hearings, which are expected to last three days, and to help build solidarity for Abu-Jamal in the Pittsburgh area. Nearly 75 people turned out at a rally held on the University of Pittsburgh campus. "This is not just about Mumia," said Pam Africa, addressing the audience. "It is about what they do to people every day." Referring to the public outcry against his

execution she added, "Mumia has put a face on the death penalty in this country."

Also speaking were South African poet Dennis Brutus, Noelle Hanrahan from the Prison Radio Project, Mumia Abu-Jamal's son Jamal, and Pittsburgh defense committee representative and paralegal Jamilla Levi.

Maori activists discuss land occupation in New Zealand

BY JOAN SHIELDS

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — Fifteen participants in a 79-day land occupation earlier this year at Moutoa Gardens in Wanganui took part in a public meeting here August 29.

Some 120 people attended the meeting, which was addressed by three leaders of the occupation — Niko Tangaroa, Tariana Turia, and Ken Mair.

Members of the Whanganui River Maori tribes and their supporters occupied Moutoa Gardens February 28 to press their demand for the return of the two-and-a-half-acre public park area near the center of Wanganui. The land protesters erected tents and buildings, built a wooden fence, and renamed the site Pakaitore, the area's Maori name.

Turia described how 86,000 acres of land had been stolen from Whanganui River tribes by the New Zealand Company and the colonial-settler government last century. "We have been in litigation for 118 years" trying to get the land returned, she said.

The land occupation at Moutoa Gardens dominated politics in New Zealand for months and inspired Maori occupations and protests in other centers. Turia told the meeting that during the three months of the occupation more than 30,000 people from around the country visited Pakaitore and the protesters received NZ\$74,000 (US\$48,000) in donations.

Over the course of the occupation, she said, they gained a better understanding of the role of the police, whose actions were provocative and racist.

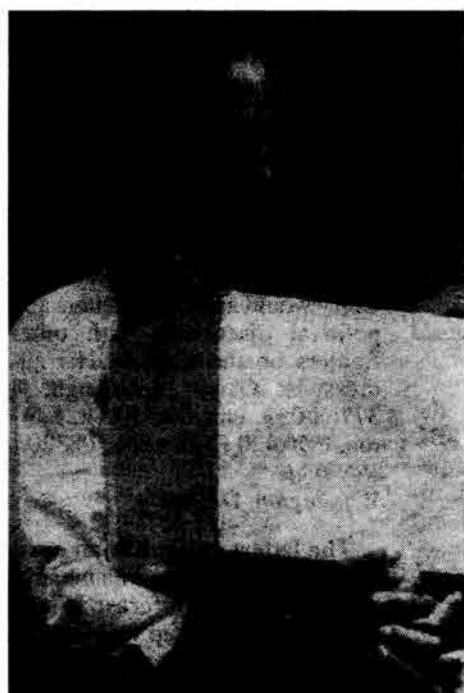
Turia described two incidents that reflected these attitudes. The first was a bomb scare. Six policemen with torches turned up at midnight to search the site for a bomb. Some weeks later, she said, 80 police in full riot gear, backed by the armed offenders squad, turned up at 5:30a.m. to investigate some allegedly stolen building materials. "That shows their concern for human life," she commented.

Mair described the decision to end the land occupation May 18. "We were surrounded by 1,000 cops looking for a scrap," he explained. "We realized the state had come to the point that they wanted us off." The protesters decided to leave "with dignity and discipline."

Describing his own views, Mair said he wanted to see a society where there was "respect for each other, for the collective, and for the natural environment."

"This country has been taken over by a small group of madmen — capitalists," he commented. "I want a society where everyone can fit in, has a say, and is accountable."

Joan Shields is a member of the Meat Workers Union at Alliance Sockburn in Christchurch.



Mumia Abu-Jamal leaving court