

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

It's a race to finish drive
with 480 'Militant' subs to go!
— PAGE 5

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 59 NO. 44 NOVEMBER 27, 1995

4,000 rally in Seattle to support Boeing strikers

BY BOB BRUNEAU
AND SCOTT BREEN

SEATTLE — "It's wonderful. Total solidarity all the way around!" is how striking Boeing worker Colleen Decker described the November 12 rally in support of the 32,000 workers on strike against Boeing Company.

About 4,000 strikers, their families, and supporters turned out for the rally at Everett Memorial Stadium. The rally was a show of solidarity that had an important impact on the spirit of strikers like 32-year-old Decker. She has worked at Boeing's Frederickson plant for 11 years. She was confident the striking members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) would win the strike saying, "The longer it goes on, the stronger we'll get."

Workers from a large number of other unions attended the event, showing the widespread union support the Machinists have in their battle with Boeing. Steelworkers, oil workers, service workers, Teamsters, carpenters, operating engineers, government employees, laborers, longshoremen, railroad workers, clerks, meatcutters, hospital workers, and many others came with signs, union jackets, hats and banners.

"I think it's important Boeing employ-



Boeing strikers and supporters cheer at November 12 solidarity rally in Seattle

ees aren't just laying down and taking this," said Beverly Bowers, referring to the unionists' determination to fight any reduction in their health benefits.

Dennys Oban, a member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, said that she joined the rally to support the machinists because "our contract with

GTE is up next spring, and we face the same issues as the Machinists face."

"Boeing's making billions of dollars, but it's labor that gives, always labor," said Dick Hampton, a member of the Transportation Communications International Union (TCU) who has worked as a

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Curtis supporters ready case for parole

BY JOHN STUDER

DES MOINES, Iowa — Activists in the Mark Curtis Defense Committee here are working with the imprisoned unionist this week to finalize plans for his November 21 meeting with the Iowa State Board of Parole.

Curtis, a former packinghouse worker and member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union and a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, has spent the last seven years in state prison on frame-up charges of rape and burglary. He was arrested, framed, and beaten by Des Moines cops while participating in a public campaign to win freedom for 17 Mexican and Salvadoran co-workers from the Monfort packing company who had been seized in an immigration raid.

For the last three years Curtis had been denied a hearing by the parole board. Under a new state law that took effect in 1993, hearings are only granted if the board determines there is a reason to believe some action on a prisoner's parole request is warranted.

This year, pressure mounted on Iowa authorities from the amount of time Curtis has served, which has led more and more

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Saudi bombing sets off political tremors

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

A large bomb destroyed a U.S.-run military training center November 13 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The attack, the first such bombing in that country, highlighted the political volatility throughout the Middle East today.

The events in Saudi Arabia added to the political shock waves caused by the recent assassination of Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. In Tel Aviv, the soon-to-be installed prime minister, Shimon Peres, is moving quickly to consolidate his government.

The huge blast, which ripped through the Saudi National Guard headquarters near a busy shopping center in the country's capital, killed at least six people and injured dozens. Among the dead were a Filipino and five U.S. citizens, including two soldiers.

Two Saudi opposition groups reportedly took responsibility for the attack, Tigers of the Gulf and the Islamic Movement for Change, which has previously criticized the ruling Saudi monarchy and U.S. military presence.

The U.S. government and capitalist media responded with renewed condemnations of "Islamic fundamentalism" and reaffirmations of support to the Saudi regime. President Bill Clinton vowed "to increase our efforts to deter terrorism, to make sure that those responsible for this hideous act are brought to justice." He declared the explosion was a "brutal reminder" that the United States was vulnerable to terrorism at home and abroad.

The Clinton administration said it was sending a dozen FBI agents to Riyadh to investigate the blast.

Washington runs a U.S. Army Materiel Command at the base to train the 80,000-member Saudi National Guard to operate U.S.-supplied weaponry. The program operates on a contract with the Virginia-based Vinnell Corp., which supplies trainers that include Special Forces and "retired" CIA officers.

The nervousness of U.S. and other capitalists was evident in the big-business coverage of the events there. "The attack focused the spotlight on the vulnerability of

Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter and the keeper of Islam's holiest shrines," a *New York Times* news report stated. It added that the Saudi regime, "long considered one of the most stable in the region, has remained a close ally of the United States for half a century."

A *Wall Street Journal* feature, titled "Saudi Bombing Raises Fears of Civil Strife," noted that "in the past, the ruling family [of King Fahd] bought off dissent with petro-dollars. But the kingdom has faced a severe cash shortage in recent years, because of lower oil prices, the

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White House and Congress wrangle over Medicare cuts

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

The wrangling over the federal budget between Republicans in Congress and the Democratic White House dominated the political arena in Washington in the first half of November. While much attention was focused on the shutdown of "nonessential" government services resulting from the budget maneuvers, the main issue at stake is Medicare and other social gains of working people, which both parties are seeking ways to cut.

In late October the House of Represent-

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Ed Shaw: 50 years in fight for socialism

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

Ed Shaw, a longtime leader of the Socialist Workers Party, died in Hialeah, Florida, on November 9. He had been hospitalized for a month with complications arising from chronic emphysema and serious heart problems. He was 72.

Shaw joined the SWP in 1944, while he was a seaman in the merchant marine, and spent the next half century working to build a communist party capable of leading the workers and farmers to power. Elected to the SWP National Committee in 1959, he served on the leadership body until 1981. He was the SWP's organization secretary during the late 1960s, serving alongside the party's national secretary, Farrell Dobbs.

Shaw campaigned for vice-president of the United States in 1964 on the Socialist Workers ticket with Clifton DeBerry, the party's presidential nominee. In the early 1960s, he was a leader and Midwest director of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee.

Meetings to celebrate Shaw's life and political contributions will be held in Miami, New York, and San Francisco on December 3, 10, and 17 respectively.

Born in Zion, Illinois, on July 13, 1923, Shaw grew up in a family of working farmers. In his youth, he rebelled against the narrowness of the fundamentalist religious assumptions

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Ed Shaw speaking at 1983 memorial meeting for Farrell Dobbs in New York City.

Abortion rights supporters score victory in Canada — page 13



IN BRIEF

10,000 protest in S. Korea

More than 10,000 students and others marched November 4 in Seoul, South Korea, demanding a criminal investigation of President Kim Young Sam concerning a slush fund scandal. Thousands more protested in 17 other cities, demanding the arrest of former president Roh Tae Woo, who in late October acknowledged having amassed a slush fund of \$654 million while in office. The protesters also demanded the seizure of Roh's hidden money. Roh was a general in 1980 when the army killed hundreds during the bloody crackdown of student protests in Kwangju.

Feeling the heat, the heads of South Korea's largest business conglomerates, many of whom reportedly funneled millions into the bribery fund, publicly apologized for their links to Roh and vowed to stop making secret political donations. Numerous businessmen are expected to be questioned for their role in the corruption case. Among them is Kim Woo-joong, chairman of Daewoo, the nation's fourth largest conglomerate.

Sanctions renewed on Iraq

The United Nations Security Council decided November 8 to renew trade sanctions against Iraq. The sanctions were imposed as part of Washington's military assault against Iraq in 1990-91, where an estimated 150,000 people were slaughtered and millions were left homeless and vulnerable to disease.

The Iraqi government announced November 9 that shortages of medicine and blood supplies caused by the sanctions have led to a fourfold increase in deaths from cancer, heart disease, and blood-related diseases. The Iraqi News Agency said the deaths soared from fewer than 20,000 in 1989 to more than 80,000 in 1994.

Strike called at Air France

The two main unions representing cabin staff at Air France called a three-day strike beginning November 9 to protest layoffs and wage cuts for new hires. The labor ac-

tion was the eighth strike by the cabin staff in a year. The unions rejected threats by company chairman Christian Blanc to change their contracts and slash their paychecks if they went on strike.

The cabin crew at Air Inter, France's domestic carrier, planned a strike along with the crew at Air France. The USPNT union, which represents pilots and mechanics at Air Inter, is threatening sympathy action with the cabin staff unions.

Turkish immigrants in Germany form new political party

Turkish immigrants in Germany have organized a new political party, the Democratic Party of Germany (DPD), to campaign for changes in the country's citizenship law and electoral system. "Non-Germans" are legally barred from voting in local, state, and national elections; citizenship is granted automatically only if one of the parents is German. The law also prohibits parties from running candidates unless 51 percent of its members are German citizens.

"The current electoral law and the citizenship law is racist," said Sedat Sezgin, a

founder of the new party. "We are easy bait for racists." He added, "If the main political parties are not prepared to represent our interests, we will have to do it ourselves."

Washington halts aid to Haiti

The U.S. government is delaying \$4.5 million in aid to Haiti to pressure the government to sell off state-owned enterprises. "We are encouraging the Haitian government to fulfill its commitments to the international community to meet these conditions, to make the necessary reforms," Nicholas Burns, a Clinton administration official, told the *New York Times*.

In October, Smark Michel resigned as prime minister after many community organizations, trade unions, and political parties expressed opposition to the privatization program. The Haitian parliament is planning to hold a national debate on privatization.

Powell rules out candidacy

Colin Powell announced November 8 that he would not run for president or vice president of the United States in 1996. The former head of the joint chiefs of staff said he would continue to "speak out forcefully" as a "member of the Republican Party" and work to broaden its appeal.

Powell tested the presidential campaign waters for several weeks as he conducted a lucrative promotional tour to sell his autobiography.

Homeless ordered to pay rent

The administration of New York governor George Pataki has ordered homeless shelters across the state to charge rent to residents who have sources of income beyond basic welfare grants. Social workers are given the power to deny shelter to applicants, as well as evict shelter residents, who refuse to attend job training or drug

treatment programs.

"If you're paying money to stay here, how can you save enough to move out?" asked Denettia Dunbar, a shelter resident. "In New York you have the right to shelter," said Patrick Markee, a shelter monitor from the Coalition for the Homeless. "This is about whittling away that right without going to court."

Free speech for immigrants

A three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals in California ruled November 8 that immigrants in the United States have the same right to free speech as U.S. citizens. The ruling stemmed from a case involving seven Palestinians and a Kenyan who were arrested at gunpoint in 1987 and charged with subversion under the McCarran-Walter Act, a thought-control law.

The L.A. 8, as they became known, were ordered deported by the Immigration and Naturalization Service which argued that they were members of "an organization that causes to be written, circulated, distributed, published, or displayed, printed or written matter advocating or teaching economic, international and governmental doctrines of world Communism."

"The court's decision means that immigrants can speak and associate freely as citizens and that they need not fear deportation for their political views," said David Cole, an attorney with the Center for Constitutional Rights, who argued the case on appeal.

Anti-gay measure defeated

A referendum in Maine that would have blocked cities from enacting gay rights laws was defeated November 7 in statewide balloting, 53 to 47 percent.

The campaign for the referendum was spearheaded by a right-wing outfit called Concerned Maine Families. Another organization, Maine Won't Discriminate, led the fight to defeat it. Christian Potholm, from Bowdoin College added, "It shows that if the right wing gets onto a social agenda, if you confront them directly, then you're going to be successful."

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

Writing for the 'Militant'

The *Militant* encourages readers to submit items for the paper. Please include sources — news clippings, leaflets, and other materials — to guarantee accurate reporting. Whenever possible, please send your articles by E-mail. Stories can also be mailed or faxed.

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Internet E-mail can be sent to 73311,2720@Compuserve.com or to themilitant@igc.apc.org

THE MILITANT

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

Cuban youth talk to students in Canada

BY JOHN RIDDELL
AND JOHN STEELE

TORONTO — "We in Cuba are building a socialist society, and that proves to the world a socialist society is possible," declared Joel Queipo Ruiz of the National Secretariat of the Cuban Federation of University Students to a meeting of 145 persons at the University of Toronto November 10.

Queipo is speaking to meetings across Canada with Maria del Carmen Barroso González, a leader of the Union of Young Communists, on a three-week tour organized by the Cuban Youth Tour Organizing Committee. One goal of the tour is to establish formal relationships with student organizations. To that end they will be attending the Ottawa convention of the Canadian Federation of Students, March

17-19.

Tanya Zakrison a representative of the University of Toronto Friends of Cuba committee, welcomed the Cuban youth leaders. Zakrison, who recently returned from a year of study at the University of Havana, contrasted the cuts in education and social services by governments in this country with the refusal of the Cuban government to carry out cuts despite the economic crisis there.

In Cuba since the 1959 revolution, Queipo confirmed, all who desire to study have the right to do so. They have had the right to dismiss, if need be, the university's rector and professors, to participate in national political life, and to receive a job in their field after graduation.

A few years ago, he recalled, "we of the students' federation, looking back at the heroic role of students in overthrowing dictatorships in the 1930s and the 1950s, we wondered when it would be our turn to struggle." Then came 1989 and the 'special period' — the severe economic crisis precipitated by the collapse of trade with the former Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries and intensified by Washington's economic embargo.

"Now, physical conditions of study have become more and more difficult," Queipo explained. "As the economy has shrunk, the guaranteed job has shrunk too. Pressures of all kinds increased in our country. But the government said, 'No cutbacks in education,' and we had to support them in that. So every year we work in agriculture; when there is a call for a special project, we go. We may not have cars or tape recorders. But we have dignity and morality, and no one can take that



Militant/Pattie Kelly

Maria del Carmen Barroso and Joel Queipo (right to left) answer questions during their speaking tour at a meeting at University of Toronto November 10.

away from us, not in any crisis."

Throughout the week-long southern Ontario leg of their tour, Barroso and Queipo spoke to more than 600 people at six meetings. A variety of questions were posed by university and high school students, unionists, Cuba solidarity activists, and others at the different meetings.

In answer to a questioner who expressed concern over increased foreign investment in Cuba, Barroso explained, "It seems there is a lot of misinformation spread by the media in North America. Workers remain the masters in our own country. The workers and farmers dictate what happens in Cuba. These investments simply help us get foreign currency so we can buy medicines and other essentials to maintain social programs and the project of building socialism."

During the course of the week several questions were asked relating to the reap-

pearance of prostitution after its elimination by the revolution. "It would not be true to deny the reappearance of prostitution," said Barroso. "But it is not like prostitution in other countries where women do it to survive. It is a product of the impact of tourism and the economic difficulties. It is an ideological problem," she said, adding, "Prostitution involves a microscopic percentage of the population."

Queipo and Barroso spoke on campuses in Guelph, Hamilton and Toronto in Ontario. In London, Ontario, their meeting was organized by the local Cuba solidarity group and Canadian Auto Workers Local 27. Across the country more than 40 organizations and individuals sent invitations to the Cuban youth leaders.

Robert Simms contributed to this article. John Steele is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 2113.

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Shifting into high gear is essential to meet goal

BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK

BROOKLYN, New York — With only three weeks left in the Militant Fund drive, supporters of the socialist press are stepping up their pace of fund-raising. Shifting into high gear is essential to make our goal of \$125,000 by the deadline of December 3. Two good examples are Houston and Twin Cities, which raised their goals this week by \$750 and \$500, respectively.

As the scoreboard indicates, we are running slightly less than a week behind schedule, having collected about \$77,000 or 62 percent of the goal. Militant Fund campaigners report that one key to closing the gap is not only to collect on existing pledges but to make a wider stretch and solicit generous donations from people who like the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* but who haven't yet been asked to contribute.

The momentum from the eight-week *Militant* subscription campaign can now be carried over effectively into the fund drive. Many new readers are happy to contribute financially to a working class newspaper — when asked.

Ask and ye shall receive

"We discovered that new subscribers are among the most enthusiastic about making a pledge to the Militant Fund," reports John Naubert, who is organizing fund-raising phone calls in Brooklyn. "We have talked with people who have read just a few issues of the paper and have found a new political world opened up to them. They tell you things like, 'The Militant is a breath of fresh air' and 'I love the labor coverage.' Last Sunday, six subscribers made a pledge right over the phone."

"We never realized the potential and there is still more money to raise," is how Jon Teitelbaum describes the efforts of campaigners in Philadelphia to make their goal of \$6,000. They sent a fund mailing to 130 people, followed up with phone calls, and have raised \$665 so far. One person they met with had attended the October 21 demonstration in New York City opposing the U.S. economic embargo of Cuba. He contributed \$50 to the Militant

Fund.

One subscriber sent a note with his \$50 contribution saying, "Just a small contribution to the biggest (and best) newspaper being published today. That is meant not just as a compliment to the *Militant*, but as a tribute to the program it represents!"

Jack Willey, a national leader of the Young Socialists, spoke at a fund-raising rally in Philadelphia November 12. Sharing the platform with him was Jennie Nilson, an activist in the Philadelphia Cuba Support Coalition. The rally raised \$620 plus \$65 in new pledges. Four young people present announced they had decided to set up a new chapter of the Young Socialists after meeting with Willey.

Boston supporters, following a successful November 11 fund event, are sending out a mailing signed by six political activists to raise more money for the socialist press. One of the signers is Earl Camiré, member of AFSCME in Lawrence, Massachusetts, who wrote: "The *Militant* is an excellent newspaper. It needs to be in the hands of as many people as possible."

The fund-raising event in Boston featured David Cagnol, member of the Parti Quebecois at Rosemont Community College in Montreal and a leader of the campaign for a 'yes' vote in the recent referendum in Canada, and Roger Annis, a member of the Communist League in Montreal, who was also part of that campaign. Fifty people attended the meeting, including several Quebecois from the Boston area. A number of participants found out about the meeting from listings in local papers.

We are starting to get more notes and reports on local fund drive experiences. Please keep sending them. *Militant* subscribers are eager to read about the progress of the campaign in your city and learn something from your experiences too.

At press time, there are 18 more campaigning days till December 3. As with the subscription drive, every day now counts in collecting the funds needed to make our goal of \$125,000 and ensuring that the working-class voice of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* continue.

\$125,000

Militant Fund

End of week seven

	Goal	Paid	Percent
\$125,000			
Puerto Rico	\$100	\$100	100%
New Zealand			
Christchurch	\$650	\$496	76%
Auckland	\$2,470	\$1,632	66%
Wellington	\$80		
NZ Total	\$3,200	\$2,128	67%
Australia	\$400	\$337	84%
United States			
Philadelphia	\$6,000	\$5,570	93%
Peoria	\$2,000	\$1,679	84%
San Francisco	\$10,000	\$8,270	83%
\$85,000			
Atlanta	\$4,500	\$3,367	75%
Pittsburgh	\$5,000	\$3,460	69%
Miami	\$2,600	\$1,775	68%
Cleveland	\$2,100	\$1,417	67%
Salt Lake City	\$3,800	\$2,562	67%
\$75,000			
Twin Cities*	\$7,000	\$4,600	66%
Houston*	\$4,250	\$2,710	64%
Morgantown	\$2,600	\$1,633	63%
Birmingham	\$3,700	\$2,296	62%
Seattle	\$7,000	\$4,140	59%
New York	\$7,500	\$4,364	58%
Brooklyn	\$8,000	\$4,601	58%
Chicago	\$7,500	\$4,245	57%
Boston	\$5,000	\$2,490	50%
Greensboro	\$2,100	\$1,040	50%
Newark	\$8,000	\$3,778	47%
Los Angeles	\$10,000	\$4,077	41%
Denver	\$500	\$200	40%
Washington, DC	\$3,000	\$1,177	39%
Detroit	\$6,750	\$2,590	38%
Des Moines	\$3,200	\$1,086	34%
Other		\$945	
\$45,000			
US Total	\$122,100	\$74,072	61%
Britain			
Sheffield	\$175	\$175	100%
London	\$525		
Manchester	\$300		
Britain Total	\$1,000	\$175	18%
Canada			
Vancouver	\$200	\$172	86%
Montreal	\$1,050	\$89	8%
Toronto	\$1,500	\$5	0%
Canada Total	\$2,750	\$266	10%
Greece	\$130		
Sweden	\$750		
Int'l Other		\$105	
\$25,000			
TOTAL	\$130,430	\$77,183	62%
Should Be	\$125,000	\$87,500	70%

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Curtis supporters ready to make the case for parole

Continued from front page

people to question the motives of prison officials for keeping him behind bars. Curtis supporters have stepped up their efforts to make his fight for freedom a public issue. His request for a parole hearing has been covered by all three major television stations in central Iowa, as well as the *Des Moines Register*.

Under the regulations at the Iowa State Penitentiary, Curtis is entitled to have nine people attend his hearing to demonstrate public support for his release. Already approved by prison authorities are Curtis's mother Jane; his wife Kate Kaku; Nick Castle, a filmmaker and director who is flying in from Los Angeles; Frankie Travis, a member of the United Paperworkers International Union locked out by A.E. Staley in Decatur, Illinois; Kitty Loepker, a steelworker at Granite City Steel outside St. Louis; and John Studer and Hazel Zimmerman, coordinator and secretary-treasurer of the defense committee from Des Moines. In addition, Curtis's attorney, William Kutmus, has received approval from the prison to attend.

Curtis supporters have also taken steps to concretize arrangements for Curtis when he is freed, to further bolster his case for parole. Curtis has requested to be released to Illinois, where his wife lives and works as a steelworker.

On November 9, William Taylor, president of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 7-507 in Chicago, wrote the board to explain his efforts to help secure a job there for the imprisoned unionist on his release.

"I am still requesting parole for Mr. Curtis," Taylor wrote the board. "Also, I have spoken to some companies whose workers are represented by this union. I explained the Mark Curtis incident, and asked if they would be willing to interview Mr. Curtis for employment. This local will work to help Mr. Curtis secure employment and become a productive citizen."

Chris Naper, a Chicago-area lawyer, has initiated contact with the Illinois Department of Corrections about Curtis being paroled there. Illinois and Iowa are both member states of a national "Compact," which allows prisoners in one state to be paroled to another.

Hundreds of unionists, farmers, students, political activists, supporters of democratic rights, and former co-workers and neighbors of Curtis have written to the board to indicate their strong support for his release.

Letters keep coming in

On November 13, defense committee volunteers gathered together the mail and faxes sent to them over the Veterans Day weekend for delivery to the board, a total of 24 letters. In addition to the letters, \$200 in donations came in the mail.

"I am writing to urge you to grant parole and freedom to Mark Curtis immediately," faxed Joyce Milgaard, a member of the board of directors of the Association in Defense of the Wrongly Convicted, a group founded by Rubin "Hurricane" Carter in Canada. "My son, David Milgaard, spent nearly 23 years in a Saskatchewan prison for a crime he did not commit."

David Milgaard, who sent a letter to the

board on Curtis's behalf earlier this fall, won his freedom when the Supreme Court of Canada threw out his conviction in 1993 after a nationwide outcry.

"I am familiar with the case of Mark Curtis and I believe an injustice has taken place," she added. "With regard to your deliberations, I ask that you do not discriminate against Mark Curtis because he maintains his innocence, which is his God-given right to do."

"In my son's case, he could have been released on parole many years earlier but was refused each time because he maintained his innocence. Mark Curtis faces the same situation. He has been in prison for more than seven years for a conviction that would have seen others released before now. He meets all the criteria for a parole candidate. Please do not add to the injustice; please grant him his request immediately."

Support grows in Iowa

"I am writing in support of parole for Mark Curtis," wrote Jon Torgerson, chair of the Department of Philosophy and Religion at Drake University, in one of many letters that have come from the Des Moines area. "I believe he has paid his debt to society and should be given the opportunity to prove himself. That he has a job offer and has worked through various organizations such as the NAACP also supports the claim that now is the time to parole Mark Curtis."

"In light of so many recent criminal cases that have recently been overturned, we ask that you take action now on his case," wrote Charles W. Dahm, pastor of the St. Pius V Parish in Chicago. "Too many are required to serve sentences for crimes they did not commit."

"I am writing to urge that the Board grant parole to Mr. Mark Curtis #805338 at his upcoming hearing," wrote David W. Campbell, Secretary-Treasurer of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 1-675 in Carson, California. "Mr. Curtis has many years' experience as a trade union and social activist and I believe the interests of society could best be served by his

release."

"I'm writing to commend your actions in granting a parole hearing for Mark Curtis," wrote Dr. Nancy Winitzky, an associate professor at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. "I encourage you to continue this positive action by releasing Curtis as soon as possible. It is unclear to me why he is still in prison, given the circumstances of his case, the amount of time he has already served, and his behavior as an inmate."

"In fact, if you don't want him in Iowa," Winitzky added, "send him to Utah. We could use someone of his energy, compassion, and intelligence here."

"I strongly urge you to grant Mr. Curtis his parole request at the upcoming hearing," faxed Judy Greenspan, project director of the HIV/AIDS in Prison Project, administered in the Diocese of Oakland, California, by Catholic Charities of the East Bay. "Mr. Curtis has served 85 months. While he has been within his parole guidelines for the past three years, he has not until now been granted a parole hearing. Mr. Curtis is a well-respected political activist and unionist. He has served as an advocate for other prisoners during his period of incarceration."

Volunteers help on fundraising

Efforts to raise much needed funds have also stepped up in the office, to help meet the expenses of organizing the delegation to attend Curtis's parole hearing and the rest of the expanded defense effort.



Militant/Steve Marshall

Curtis case is introduced to workers outside Detroit News building during a Labor Day rally in support of news strikers.

Horace Kerr, a supporter from Denver, Colorado, took a few days off work to drive to Des Moines and volunteer his help. He worked with Barbara Bowman, a committee member, to make fundraising calls. In one afternoon, Kerr got pledges of over \$700 from three supporters.

The defense committee has scheduled a public meeting for 7:00 p.m. the night of November 21 for members of the delegation attending the parole hearing to report back on the results. The meeting is scheduled for the Forest Avenue Library, the public library in Des Moines's Black community.

The committee is planning to deliver the last batch of letters it receives to the parole board members attending Curtis's hearing.

Letters urging parole for Curtis addressed to the Iowa State Board of Parole can be mailed to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311, or faxed to the committee at (515) 243-9869. Tel: (515) 246-1695.

Rally in N.Y. for bilingual education

BY J. LUTHER

BROOKLYN, New York — Workers and others whose children attend schools in the Sunset Park section of this city held a protest October 26 to defend bilingual education. Some 500 people attended the march and rally.

The action was sparked by the remarks of Sisters of the Good Shepherd Mary Paul and Geraldine attacking bilingual courses in New York schools. The two nuns are founders of the Center for Family Life (CFL), which provides religious-oriented services to children with social problems. The center is located in Sunset Park.

"They came up with the idea of teaching bilingualism, which serves no useful purpose at all for children trying to make it in American society," said Mary Paul, in an interview published in the October 8

New York Times magazine. "In Sunset Park, bilingualism is promoted solely to get patronage jobs for Spanish teachers."

These remarks sparked outrage among thousands in Brooklyn, where the proportion of the population whose first language is Spanish is high.

Hundreds of parents with children in at least five public schools, as well as students, teachers, administrators, and other Sunset Park residents took to the streets to protest. They marched from Public School 1 (P.S.1) at 47th St. and 4th Ave. to the offices of CFL at 43rd St.

People carried placards in English and Spanish saying, "Face it you're a racist," "Sisters step down," "Listen, React, we're under attack," and "Ask the Pope about Bilingualism." Music in Spanish was played and speakers talked to the crowd about the history of bilingual education in the community, and the consistent support it has enjoys among the majority.

One woman, speaking in her native Spanish, said, "It is important to human beings for our dignity and morale. When we don't know the native language, we suffer humiliation due to lack of ability to communicate." She said she had been humiliated by some people in this country because she did not speak English well and added that bilingual education has helped her daughter to maintain communication with her Spanish-speaking family.

According to Bilingual Education Coordinator Maria Balducci of P.S.1, the program in her school seeks to make children proficient in the two languages, not to simply assimilate Spanish speakers to an English speaking educational environment.

In an interview with Matilde Torres Maldonado, principal of P.S.1, this reporter learned that bilingual education has a 20-year history in the area. P.S.1, as a result of organizing among immigrant

workers in the community, was among the first schools in the nation to seek government funds to start such a program. It was part of a nationwide fight for government funding to schools for pilot projects in bilingual education.

Maldonado said that in 1970-71, when the program was first implemented, the neighborhood was a mostly Puerto Rican working-class community. Now, judging by the flags from more than ten Latin American countries carried at the march, the composition of the neighborhood has shifted to include immigrants from throughout the continent. It remains solidly working class.

Since its inception, Maldonado said, the bilingual program has grown to include all grades, counseling services in both languages, and special resource rooms.

When asked if bilingual education helps immigrants and their families to exercise their democratic rights more effectively, Maldonado replied, "Definitely so." She blamed for the current controversy "anti-immigrant and anti-Hispanic sentiments" and a view promoted by many politicians of "the less fortunate as the cause of our ills."

The Coalition of Concerned Educators, Parents, and Students of Sunset Park, which organized the October 26 protest circulated a petition with three demands. The group demanded the resignation of Mary Paul and Geraldine from the CFL, a retraction of the remarks printed in the *New York Times*, and a statement by the Catholic Church hierarchy in support of bilingual education.

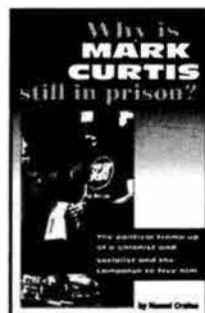
Feeling the heat, the two nuns signed a letter that was distributed at the rally. In it they claimed that Mary Paul never said that "bilingualism is promoted solely to get patronage jobs for Spanish teachers." They didn't retract the rest of their remarks, however. The letter didn't satisfy most protesters.

In French,
& Spanish
too!

Why Is Mark Curtis Still in Prison?

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

by Naomi Craine



Mark Curtis is a union activist and socialist who was framed up by police on false charges of rape and burglary in March 1988. At the time he was involved in a struggle to defend 17 Mexican and Salvadoran co-workers arrested in an immigration raid at the packinghouse where he worked in Des Moines, Iowa. This new pamphlet explains what happened to Curtis, and the stakes for workers, farmers, youth, and other democratic-minded people in demanding his release.

Pamphlet, \$6

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

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S E P T E M B E R 2 3 - N O V E M B E R 1 9

It's a race to the finish with 480 subscriptions to go!

BY LAURA GARZA

It will be a race to the finish line, but supporters of the socialist press organized to speed up for the last mile of the international campaign to get 1,950 new subscribers to the *Militant*. A note faxed in from Des Moines, Iowa, November 15 said supporters there made the goals they took for winning 50 new readers to the *Militant* newspaper and for selling 20 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International*. More than half the magazines sold were Spanish-language editions bought by workers in meatpacking plants in the area.

In one week, supporters of the socialist press in Des Moines sold 12 introductory subscriptions to the *Militant*. They were moving ahead to get the remaining *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions they need and to surpass all their goals. At a reportback meeting on the August women's conference in Beijing in Davenport, Iowa, socialist workers from Des Moines and Peoria, Illinois, joined forces and sold eight subscriptions.

This is what it will take to meet all the international goals — keeping up the pace of selling the socialist press through to November 19, the last day of the drive, and exceeding local goals wherever possible. As we go to press, we need to sell 480 more subscriptions to the *Militant*, 66 to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 275 copies of the *New International* magazine to make the international targets. After seven weeks we have 75 percent of the goal, and we should be at 88 percent. Socialist workers and youth from Brooklyn to Sweden are in the race to close the gap, with plans for persistent sales activity to the end.

Cheers in Brooklyn

Half a dozen teams fanned out in Brooklyn on Sunday, November 12, to show the *Militant* door-to-door in working-class areas. When they returned to the Pathfinder Bookstore and socialist headquarters, cheers and clapping erupted as teams reported their success. In all, 16 new *Militant* subscribers and 3 readers of *Perspectiva Mundial* had been won and Brooklyn was back on target in the drive. Supporters of the *Militant* in Brooklyn immediately began planning a celebration party to start when teams return from a full day of socialist campaigning on the last day of the drive. In the meantime, they are working hard to surpass all their goals.

In Stockholm supporters have gone through student dorms for the last few weekends, netting 5 *Militant* subscriptions and selling 40 single copies of the *Militant*. They report that on the last weekend they began to run out of papers, and were happy to find a great interest among Spanish-speaking students in reading *Perspectiva Mundial*. They have reached the goals they set for selling *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions and *New International* magazines and are concentrating on the



Sales table at protest in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on October 29 to oppose a planned radar installation at U.S. naval base on Vieques.

Militant. For the last week of the drive, they organized a team to the south of Sweden where a young Cuban is on a speaking tour.

Supporters in Morgantown, West Virginia, took two days and set up tables at Virginia Tech and Radford University in western Virginia, gaining 12 new *Militant* readers and selling 2 copies of *New International*. Members of Amnesty International at both campuses helped the socialists get permission for a literature display. They and other students invited the socialists for discussions over dinner and offered to house them.

The interest among students in socialist ideas was also evident to supporters in Washington, D.C., who fielded their first all-day team to American University on November 8. They sold seven *Militant* subscriptions there, one *New International*, and a number of books about Cuba.

Sales to industrial workers

From Salt Lake City we got a note saying that workers at Magnesium Corporation of America had received leaflets produced by striking steelworkers in Warren, Ohio. The same boss owns the Ohio plant and Mag Corp. The coverage of the workers' victory in gaining a new contract was of great interest, and eight copies of the *Militant* were sold at a recent plant gate sale at Mag Corp.

In Canada, eight introductory subscriptions to the *Militant* were sold to unionists attending a national policy conference of the United Steelworkers of America in Vancouver October 30-November 1. Delegates were interested in the coverage in support of sovereignty for Quebec, and on support for the Cuban revolution.

The many workers, youth, students, and activists who have decided to try out the *Militant* in the last seven weeks highlight why socialists organize drives to sell the press. Communist workers and youth have a better idea of what people are interested in discussing and have honed their skills at explaining the working-class point of view on a wide range of topics through selling the paper at events and demonstrations, as well as

speaking with workers in their neighborhoods and on campuses.

After the drive, supporters of the socialist press will continue to have opportunities to meet new people interested in reading a working-class paper and other revolutionary literature. The information on what neighborhoods are good and which campuses have students willing to help get permission for tables to be set up can be incorporated in the regular routine of selling the socialist press every week. While the pace may be more modest than in the midst of the all-out effort made during special subscription campaigns, maintaining a weekly organized schedule of sales activity is a key to being an active part of political life in each city.

Supporters in every area that participated in the sales drive have lists of people who want to be invited to weekly forums, to discussion classes organized by the Young Socialists, and to join in political action, from supporting striking workers to marching against the death penalty.

Events organized around the holidays can allow time for discussions with the youth and workers we met who want to talk about how to fight to change society, and are interested in reading books that have lessons of working-class struggles from the past. Many of them will be ready to come to regional educational conferences that are being planned in several areas in the country over the New Year's weekend.

The final results of the international campaign to win new readers will be published in the next issue of the *Militant*. Because of Thanksgiving, that issue will be printed a day early.

All subscriptions in our office by Monday evening, November 20, will be counted. If you can't get your last subscriptions into our office by mail on time, send us a fax copy of the subscriptions and the checks that you have put in the mail by Monday at 6 p.m. We will count those for the final scoreboard, along with any reports received on the total number of *New Internationals* each area has sold.

END OF WEEK SEVEN

City	Militant goal	Militant sold	%	PM goal	PM sold	NI goal	NI sold
United States							
Indiana	10	10	100%	0		0	
Des Moines	50	46	92%	25	15	20	20
Brooklyn	160	147	92%	50	44	50	51
Peoria, IL	32	29	91%	2	3	8	6
Birmingham, AL	49	44	90%	5	1	15	2
Los Angeles	120	104	87%	75	62	75	56
Salt Lake City	50	43	86%	15	10	15	9
Boston	45	37	82%	13	10	21	10
Atlanta	55	45	82%	18	13	15	12
New York	120	98	82%	75	64	50	31
Seattle	70	57	81%	15	14	20	13
Detroit	65	52	80%	10	5	20	1
Philadelphia	75	59	79%	15	5	15	9
Twin Cities, MN	70	55	79%	12	7	20	10
Washington, DC	45	34	76%	15	9	20	5
Chicago	65	46	71%	20	18	25	14
San Francisco	98	69	70%	30	19	60	26
Miami	60	41	68%	20	17	30	21
Houston	55	37	67%	20	13	16	2
Pittsburgh	65	42	65%	5	1	15	1
Greensboro, NC	55	33	60%	10	9	10	
Newark, NJ	130	76	58%	45	41	40	22
Cleveland	40	23	58%	10	8	15	3
Albany	7	4	57%	1	1	5	
Denver	7	4	57%	3	5	3	
Morgantown, WV	48	23	48%	2	2	16	2
New Haven	5	2	40%	1		2	
Tucson	5	2	40%	2	1	2	1
Cincinnati	8	1	13%	2		2	
Total U.S.	1664	1263	76%	516	397	605	325
Canada							
Vancouver	45	38	84%	6	5	20	9
Montreal	50	33	66%	12	9	30	12
Toronto	50	30	60%	10	7	25	17
Total	145	101	70%	28	21	75	38
Britain							
London	35	34	97%	10	10	25	32
Sheffield	12	7	58%	1		3	1
Manchester	40	19	48%	1	2	20	10
Total	87	60	69%	12	12	48	43
New Zealand							
Auckland	18	13	72%	1	1	15	15
Christchurch	8	3	38%	1		3	1
Wellington	2	2	100%	0		1	
Total	28	18	64%	2	1	19	16
Sweden							
Stockholm	20	14	70%	15	19	20	25
Malmö	2	0	0%	2	1	1	
Total	22	14	64%	17	20	21	25
Greece	5	3	60%	1		4	3
Australia	15	8	53%	3	3	12	10
Puerto Rico	2	1	50%	6	4	4	2
Iceland	10	1	10%	1		3	
France	6		0%	5	1	20	11
Other		1					2
International Total	1984	1470	75%	591	459	811	475
Goal/Should be at	1950	1716	88%	525	462	750	660

IN THE U.S.

Australia							
AWU-FIME	2	1		0		0	1
Canada							
CEP	4			1		2	1
IAM	5	1		2		3	
USWA	5	10		0		2	1
Canada total	14	11	79%	3	0	7	2
New Zealand							
EU	2						
MWU	2			0		0	
New Zealand total	4			0		0	
Sweden							
Metal union		1			1		4
United States							
UMWA	9	7	78%				
OCAW	20	13	65%		1		2
UAW	65	42	65%	10	3	17	7
IAM	59	33	56%	9	1	17	5
UFCW	6	2	33%	10	6	2	4
UNITE	20	6	30%	19	3	8	1
USWA	28	8	29%				
UTU	58	15	26%	3		17	5
U.S. Total	265	126	48%	51	14	61	24

New Zealand gov't cuts mental health care

BY RUTH GRAY

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — Several events during the last few months have put the spotlight on the decline of mental health services in New Zealand.

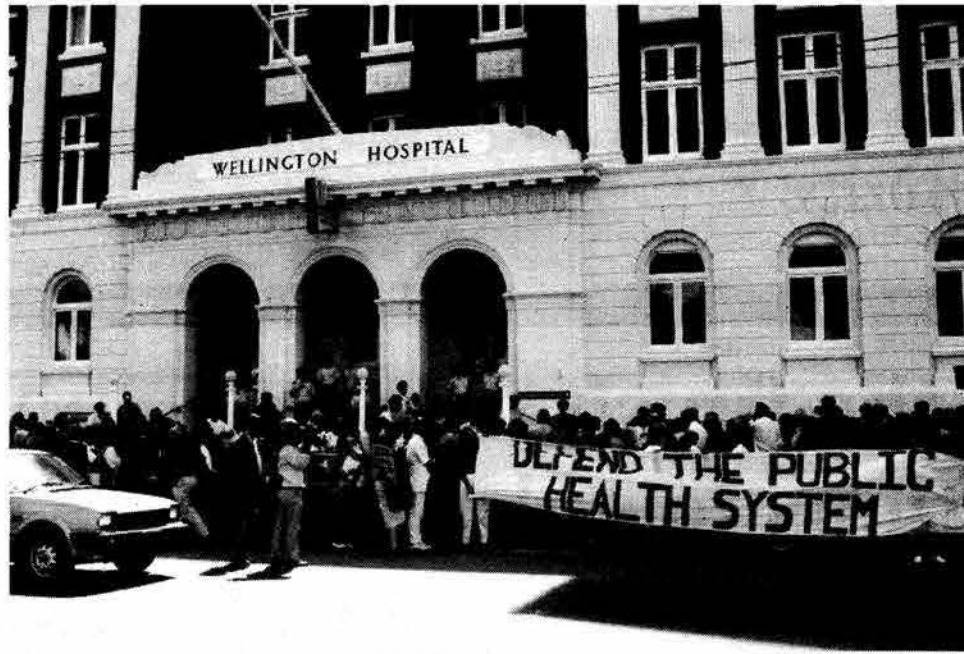
On September 28 Eric Gellatly, diagnosed as a schizophrenic 15 years ago, was shot dead by police after a 21-hour siege in the southernmost city of Invercargill. A couple of weeks earlier, the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) announced the closure of the Templeton Centre, a hospital near Christchurch that houses more than 400 mentally disabled people. Meanwhile at the Christchurch Sunnyside psychiatric hospital, nurses have walked off the job because of dangerous working conditions.

In an interview with the *Press* of Christchurch 10 days after their son's shooting, Eric Gellatly's parents blamed Invercargill's shortage of skilled staff, lack of a permanent psychiatrist, and the lack of secure residential care for the death. The fact that "Eric was left to roam freely, to get tangled up in shooting incidents after earlier brushes with the law says it all," said William Gellatly. "He needed secure care and that doesn't mean a police or prison cell. He should have been in safe psychiatric care out of harm's way."

Some 300 people attended Gellatly's funeral at which participants described his battle with schizophrenia. Two speakers at the funeral said that Gellatly's death highlighted the lack of services for the mentally ill.

A subsequent inquiry into the shooting, commissioned by Southern Health and Healthcare Otago, found that psychiatric care for Gellatly was inadequate. The report blamed a lack of resources, a lack of staff and training, and heavy workloads.

A survey released in October by the Schizophrenia Fellowship clearly shows that the problem of inadequate psychiatric



Militant/Terry Coggan

Protest outside hospital in Wellington, New Zealand, in 1992. Psychiatric services have worsened nationwide as the government cuts back health-care funding.

services is nationwide. Summarizing the results of the survey, the Fellowship said the picture generally is of "hospitals which are hard to get into, overworked community health teams, and general under-resourcing."

Reduction of psychiatric beds

Since 1980 at least 3,836 psychiatric hospital beds have been eliminated following government moves to cut funding, reduce services, and restructure health services along the lines of a capitalist business.

The radical restructuring of mental health care in this country is often presented as a progressive step that takes mentally ill people out of a cloistered environment and puts them "in the community." The reality for many people, how-

ever, was illustrated by a report from Wellington in September. When Wellington landlord Dean Bevan blamed health authorities for the state of his flat, which was rented to a psychiatric patient, the public health body, Capital Coast Health, washed its hands of the matter, declaring that the mentally ill had the right to live as they please. The flat reeked of urine, mold and litter.

In Christchurch nurses at the Sunnyside psychiatric hospital have walked off the job on several occasions recently saying patients and staff are at risk because of overcrowding and understaffing.

John Skinner, a former Sunnyside patient interviewed by the *Press*, said that during his stay there two 27-bed wards had 35 people in each of them. Some patients had to sleep in a waiting room and

Communist League candidate backs jobs fight, opposes hospital closure

BY PATRICK BROWN

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — Ruth Gray, Communist League candidate for mayor of Christchurch, wound up her campaign at a Militant Labor Forum opposing the planned closure of the Templeton mental hospital in this city.

"I support the fight taken on by the parents of Templeton residents, the staff and their union, and their many supporters in this city against this inhumane decision," she stated in opening the event. She urged working people to "organize support for the fight to keep Templeton open."

The evening marked the end of 10 weeks of campaigning for a socialist alternative in the mayoral election in this city, the largest in the South Island with 300,000 residents.

Gray was interviewed on a number of occasions by newspapers and radio stations in the city. She was also the subject of a brief profile on a local television station. The communist candidate was featured on the front page of a local weekly, the *Mail*.

In its roundup of the mayoral candidates the major daily newspaper here, the *Press*, quoted her. "I am standing to present a socialist, working-class alternative in the elections," Gray said. "Workers around the world face attacks on our democratic and social rights by the bosses and their government at both national and local levels."

The *Press* reporter noted that Gray "wanted free health services and education, and a shorter working week with no drop in pay so more people could be employed."

The question of how to fight against unemployment was posed at her workplace when Toyota decided to close down its assembly lines over the next year. Gray works in the paint shop there. The company says it will try to retain and redeploy the 150 workers there, but many are skeptical.

"This highlights for workers there's no such thing as a permanent job," commented the Communist League candi-

date in a press release. "It is this kind of uncertainty that all workers increasingly face under capitalism, whether it be in New Zealand, Japan or elsewhere," Gray said. "Over 100,000 people are without work at a time when the New Zealand economy has been experiencing an upturn." The fight to win jobs for all will require unionists and other workers joining forces across national borders, she emphasized.

Throughout the campaign, Gray, an activist in the Cuba Friendship Society in Christchurch, pointed to the example of revolutionary Cuba. In face of the same worldwide capitalist crisis that is hitting workers and farmers worldwide, she explained, working people in Cuba are in a stronger position because they have a fighting leadership and a government of their own. Despite 35 years of imperialist attack, the Cuban working class remains confident of its own capacities and refuses to get on its knees.

Hospital closure

In response to the planned closure of the Templeton hospital, where more than 400 mentally handicapped people receive specialist care, Gray immediately issued a statement demanding "Stop the closure of Templeton!" Supporters handed it out throughout the city, including at two protests of 100 people against the closure.

In the statement Gray commented that "the decision to close Templeton and the arrogance that marks it fit in with other aspects of the 'health reforms.' The government is determined to cut expenditure on health, and to increasingly rid itself of responsibility for other social services."

"They are reconstructing aspects of the health service along the lines of a capitalist business. The growth of private medical insurance companies and private hospitals, which profit from the decline in the public system, is one aspect of this trend."

"Food banks and charities of all kinds are proliferating as working people find it harder and harder to cope with the rising cost of health and education, the sharp

cuts in benefit levels, and the levels of unemployment, which remain high in a period of recovery of profits," Gray stated. She cited an editorial in the *Press*, which quoted a report by the Fund-Raising Institute that "New Zealand's 26,000 incorporated charities or registered trusts are being increased by 20 a week. Groups are raising funds for many services which were once the state's responsibility."

Nuclear testing

Gray began her campaign in early August at the demonstrations to mark the 50th anniversary of Washington's atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The protests in New Zealand targeted the French government's nuclear test program in the South Pacific. "In protesting at this decision, I oppose the policy of the New Zealand capitalist government that, alongside its Australian counterpart, seeks to advance its own imperialist interests in the region and the world," Gray said in a widely circulated statement.

"The large protests in recent weeks in Tahiti and other colonies and semi-colonies across the Pacific Islands deserve the support and solidarity of workers, farmers, and young people the world over. The demands of these protests combine with the aspirations for national self-determination, independence, and economic and social development in these countries."

"At the same time," Gray noted, "the imperialist rulers in Australia and New Zealand have seized on opposition to nuclear testing as an opportunity to mount a nationalist campaign against their rivals in Paris. Canberra and Wellington are whipping up anti-French sentiments to advance their own interests against workers, peasants, and youth across the Pacific. Their actions have nothing to do with the campaign against the dangers of nuclear radiation, threat of imperialist wars, or colonial domination."

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

office. He said there was little privacy or continuity of care, and that getting admitted was almost impossible until the person needing treatment had reached a crisis point.

Closure of Templeton Centre

In another attack on mental health services, the SRHA has decided to close the Templeton center for the mentally disabled in the face of widespread opposition from parents and staff. The majority of the 400 patients are to be placed into "community care."

A Militant Labor Forum, held in Christchurch on October 13, heard several speakers who have been involved with the protests against the closure — protests which have included two public rallies of around 100 people each. Last year 700 people rallied to protest the possibility of closure.

Heather Absalom-Smith of the Templeton Parents' Association said that "the closure is being sold in a very humanitarian way. We are told that our children can lead better, more fulfilling lives in the community." The reality of this proposal she said, "is that our children are part of the privatization of health services. Instead of being treated according to your needs you will be treated according to what is left over." The Parents' Association has been campaigning for a sheltered village at Templeton which could utilize the extensive recreational and vocational facilities and qualified staff already there.

Another speaker on the panel, Ivan Finlayson, a representative of the National Union of Public Employees (NUPE), agreed that the aim of closing Templeton is to cut costs. "It will allow them to package Templeton residents like commodities and sell care rights to the highest bidder."

Mark Robertson, a staff member and the convener of NUPE at Templeton, told forum participants that government cutbacks during recent years have meant that current funding of the center is lower than in 1989, despite having 25 extra patients. As funding has dropped the center often relies on parents' donations to keep important programs running. Robertson explained that the cutbacks also mean that once a patient leaves the center all contact is cut off after three months and that it is almost impossible to get admitted as a patient.

New prisons

Giving further glimpses of a mental health system in crisis, police in Wellington state that one regional hospital is sending suicidal patients home after getting them to sign a contract promising not to kill themselves.

While closing psychiatric facilities, the government has announced plans to construct special prison wings for mentally disturbed inmates. According to the *Press*, Minister of Justice Doug Graham said the move was "in response to the prison system's having to deal with an increasing number of disturbed people and because the Justice Department was concerned about the suicide rate in prisons."

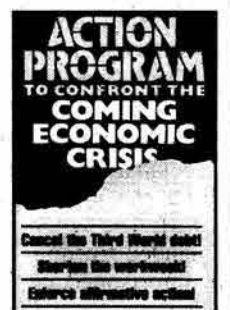
Ruth Gray is a member of the Engineers Union in Christchurch.

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Reactionary Minnesota jobs bill defeated

BY DOUG JENNESS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — A "Jobs and Fair Wage Initiative" that became the most debated issue in the weeks leading up to the November 7 elections here was defeated by a vote of 60 percent to 40 percent.

The ballot initiative would have required all private businesses receiving more than \$25,000 in city aid to hire St. Paul residents through city-designated hiring halls at no less than \$7.21 per hour. This wage is the federal poverty level for a family of four. The proposed ordinance was placed on the ballot last summer through a petitioning effort by the New Party and the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN).

Opposition to the measure was spearheaded by the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce, with big-money corporations such as Northern States Power, US West, 3M, and several big insurance companies bankrolling the war chest. The editors of the St. Paul *Pioneer Press* and the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, the big-business dailies in the Twin Cities, both campaigned against the measure.

Democratic Farmer-Labor Party (DFL)

mayor Norm Coleman was the chief political spokesperson for the big-business drive to defeat the initiative.

The main political voice favoring the ballot measure was City Council president Dave Thune of the DFL. Seven DFL state representatives and senators also sided with the proposal, as did former Minneapolis mayor Donald Fraser. A broad range of religious institutions and liberal activist groups joined the fight for the jobs initiative, including the Minnesota National Organization for Women, Women Against Military Madness, Macalester College Peace and Justice Coalition, and the University of Minnesota DFL.

Both ACORN and the New Party are local units of national organizations and they hoped that a victory in St. Paul would provide momentum for comparable efforts in other cities. A similar measure has been adopted in Baltimore and one is being discussed in Milwaukee. The St. Paul initiative was promoted by the *Nation*, a liberal weekly magazine distributed nationally.

The fissures in the DFL, which has dominated politics in St. Paul for many years, were also reflected in the trade

union officialdom in the city.

The St. Paul Trades and Labor Assembly suffered contortions over the issue, taking different stands at three successive meetings. At its August meeting the assembly voted to endorse the initiative, and its publication, the *Union Advocate*, followed with prominent coverage promoting it. A month later the labor body voted to oppose the measure at a meeting where there was larger than usual participation by representatives of construction unions. The construction union officials argued there was a conflict between the hiring halls they operate and those proposed in the initiative. In October, the assembly decided to be neutral, letting each local take its own stand.

United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789 was among the most ardent supporters of the jobs initiative. Many of its members are grocery and drug store workers making less than \$7.21 an hour. One of the points of contention around the proposed measure has been the development of the Midway Marketplace, a complex of department stores and supermarkets that is getting more than \$11 million in public subsidies, mostly in the form of

no-interest or low-interest loans.

Cub Foods was one of the first enterprises to open, with 320 new jobs. Seventy of the jobs are full time, paying \$12.40, and in accordance with the union contract will be filled by Cub employees from other stores regardless of where they live. The other 250 jobs will be part-time at \$5.40 an hour. If the proposed ordinance had been adopted Cub supposedly would have had to fill those positions with St. Paul residents at \$7.21.

This would have accepted the reactionary notion that certain jobs are reserved for only a section of the working class based on residence — thus strengthening the employing class's attempt to pit sections of the working class against each other on the basis of nationality, sex, citizenship, country of origin, or religion. Moreover, it would have accepted the framework of part-time work and the two-tier wage set-up that is being institutionalized in many workplaces.

Even the Jobs Now Coalition, a liberal lobbying association that favored the ballot initiative, issued a report in October defining a "livable wage" for a family of three as a full-time hourly rate of \$10.23.

The opponents of the measure argued that the \$7.21 wage would discourage businesses from investing in St. Paul and consequently lead to a decrease in jobs. It was a "scud missile" that would have killed jobs, Coleman contended.

Supporters of the initiative accepted the same framework of subsidizing big-business profiteers to provide jobs, but with the stipulation that they hire St. Paul residents, pay poverty-level wages, and prove that they had increased jobs.

The only voice that didn't start with what the employers should do but with what workers, with our own forces and independent perspectives, can and must do was the Socialist Workers campaign. Four days before the November 7 vote the *Pioneer Press* ran a letter from me explaining that as the Socialist Workers candidate for city council, who didn't make it into the run-off after the September primary, I had campaigned for jobs for all through a shorter workweek with no reduction in pay, a public works program, and affirmative action in hiring. I also proposed a big wage increase and cost-of-living escalator clauses to cope with inflation.

These proposals are the basis for workers through their unions to conduct a serious fight for jobs for all at union scale wages. The Jobs and Fair Wage Initiative was a diversion from this course that could only lead workers to count on collaborating with political representatives of the employing class around a very narrow reform orientation. That's why the Socialist Workers campaign called for a vote against it.

Doug Jenness is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 15199 in Anoka, Minnesota.

Ohio SWP candidates meet steelworkers

BY STEVE WARSHALL

CLEVELAND — "The union is even stronger since the lockout. You don't know what a difference it makes for people to come out and support us," remarked Kevin Valot while on picket duty in early October at WCI Steel in Warren, Ohio. Valot spoke with Mike Fitzsimmons, the Socialist Workers candidate for the Cleveland Board of Education, who was making one of his many visits to the picket line.

WCI locked out the 1,700 members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) locals 1375 and 6824 on August 31 and replaced them with scabs. The strike was marked by repeated mobilizations of the union ranks that forced the company to stop production and ship the scabs home. "Solidarity Works" became a popular slogan among the unionists. Workers overwhelmingly approved a contract October 24 that is seen as a union victory.

The socialist campaign was received with interest by many of these fighters during a union barbecue at the USWA hall. Fitzsimmons, a member of the United Auto Workers, addressed a crowd of about 100 steelworkers and supporters during the event, where local elected officials were invited to speak. "By standing up and fighting WCI's lockout, you have inspired workers throughout the area," Fitzsimmons said. "I will continue to tell the truth about your fight wherever I go. The key to your strength and unity has been the mobilizations of broad support through rallies and marches."

Afterward, supporters spoke with union members and circulated campaign literature to the crowd. A campaign brochure calling for "Jobs for all — shorten the workweek with no cut in pay" was one of several issues of interest to the strikers.

Campaigners in Cleveland began in August with a brief petitioning drive to get the Socialist Workers candidate on the ballot. One thousand people signed the petitions — more than three times the required number.

Depression conditions weigh heavily among workers in Cleveland, over 40 percent of whom live below the official poverty level. The proposals to unite the working class around a fight for jobs for all and defense of affirmative action were well received and many signers took campaign flyers or purchased the *Militant*.

Defending Irish freedom struggle

Socialist campaigners participated in a rally at the British consulate here on August 31. The action, organized by Saoirse, demanded freedom for Irish fighters who are imprisoned in the United Kingdom, Ireland, the United States, and other countries. Fitzsimmons spoke to the crowd of 50, saying that the rise in protests against British rule in the north of Ireland and strikes by workers at Caterpillar and the Detroit newspapers pointed to openings to win broader support for the fight for Irish self-determination. He invited participants



Militant/Susan Hope

Fitzsimmons (kneeling) campaigning at rally for WCI strike in Warren, Ohio

to join him at the Labor Day mobilization for newspaper workers in Detroit.

Fitzsimmons used the school board elections to campaign around the major issues facing working people. As part of several panel discussions with all school board candidates present, Fitzsimmons defended school desegregation and busing against most other candidates, who had called for an end to the federal court-ordered Cleveland desegregation plan.

"I reject the idea that segregated education can be equal education and support the use of busing to achieve desegregation," the socialist explained. Fitzsimmons also condemned anti-immigrant legislation like California's Proposition 187 and called for equal rights and access to social services for immigrants.

Steve Warshall is a member of the United Transportation Union.

Philadelphia socialists reach out with campaign

BY JOHN STAGGS

PHILADELPHIA — Before a supportive audience at an election night celebration held at campaign headquarters, Socialist Workers mayoral candidate Deborah Liatos reported on the successes of the socialist campaign in this city.

"Supporters of our campaign reached out widely to workers and presented the socialist perspective. We joined the discussions and debates on how to confront the economic crisis today," said Liatos, a member of the International Association of Machinists who works at USAir.

"The heart of our campaign was to actively join the working-class struggles taking place today and present a program to unite workers and youth in the fight to defend ourselves against the attacks by the bosses and their government," she said.

The November 7 celebration culminated seven months of active campaigning.

In addition to Liatos's mayoral campaign, two other workers ran on the Socialist Workers ticket for city council at-large. They were John Staggs, a Ford Electronics worker and member of the United Auto Workers (UAW), and Hattie McCutcheon, a Boeing worker and UAW

member who, along with 7,000 of her co-workers around the country, was recently laid off by the aerospace giant.

Candidates and campaigners took the socialist alternative to plant gates and picket lines at several workplaces, including to strikers at the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, Caterpillar, and MAB Paints.

In a front-page October 5 story on Liatos's mayoral campaign, the West Philadelphia *Weekly Press* noted that she "advocates defending and extending affirmative action and abortion rights, stopping police brutality, saving Mumia Abu-Jamal, abolishing the death penalty and ending the U.S. embargo against Cuba." That is a good summary of the diversity of political activities in which Liatos, McCutcheon, and Staggs participated during their campaign. The candidates were on the speakers platforms at many of these events.

Campaign teams set up tables dozens of times at campuses in the area. Students arranged to have the candidates speak at four different campuses. Hundreds of unionists where the candidates work heard about the campaign; many read the socialist campaign literature and discussed poli-

tics with the candidates. A number of them bought subscriptions and copies of the campaign newspaper, the *Militant*.

In July, the Socialist Workers campaign stepped up its activity with a petitioning effort that succeeded in winning the candidates a place on the ballot. Campaigners garnered nearly 4,500 signatures, well over the 3,000 required.

At least eight newspapers ran major articles on the socialist campaign, including the two main dailies. The candidates were covered by many television stations and radio programs as well. Liatos participated in two televised and one National Public Radio-sponsored mayoral debates.

The League of Women Voters, which sponsored the main mayoral debate, excluded Liatos while including all three of the other candidates — Democratic incumbent Ed Rendell, Republican Joe Rocks, and Lance Haver of the Consumer Party who, like the Socialist Workers, had to petition to get on the ballot.

The Socialist Workers campaign held a protest news conference outside the debate, which was covered by the press.

During the campaign socialist candidates attended seven other community-organized candidates events.

Ed Shaw: 50 years in fight for socialism

Continued from front page

that surrounded him in Zion. After high school, at the outbreak of World War II, he entered the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago.

There, prodded by schoolmates, he applied for a special scholarship offered by the U.S. Marines that allowed students to finish college and graduate as officers in the Marine Corps. But he failed a test for mechanical drawing because of poor hand printing and was not accepted.

"I was pretty down-hearted at the time, but in retrospect it was a major lucky break," he wrote in a 1993 letter. "It changed the direction my life was taking and opened the way to becoming a Marxist."

Shaw moved to New York City in 1942. There, while still in his late teens, he entered the military-run Maritime Service training school at Sheepshead Bay, where he got his papers as a fireman/watertender in the merchant marine. As more and more merchant seamen worldwide were dying from torpedo and bomb attacks, jobs on cargo and passenger ships were advertised at the time as "a draft-deferred civilian occupation with good pay and possibilities for travel and adventure," as Shaw put it in his 1993 letter.

Union militant in maritime years

On his way to start a job on a boat on the Great Lakes in 1943, Shaw found himself helping a Black worker escape a racist lynch mob during a race riot in Detroit — an act that ended up marking the rest of his life. From that moment on, he identified with, and later became an active participant in, the struggle for Black rights.

Shaw's first ocean voyage took him to the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico on the *Marjory*, a small cargo ship run by the Bull Line company. During that 1943 trip, as part of the "black gang" in the engine room, Shaw was elected union delegate and got his baptism in the labor movement. The crew, mostly Puerto Rican workers, was organized by the Seafarers International Union (SIU), one of the two major unions in the merchant marine on the East Coast at the time.

"I firmly believed in the principle of unionism," Shaw wrote in the 1993 letter, recounting his maritime years. "I never once doubted the crew's right to decide living conditions, etc. For me it wasn't a matter of negotiating with the captain. I just told him what he had to do. I never expected him to refuse a reasonable demand based squarely on the union contract." When the captain refused some overtime pay while the ship was unloading in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Shaw spearheaded a sit-in at the company office by the entire crew. The workers finally forced the employer to give in.

During this trip, Shaw also got his first



SWP and Teamsters union leaders before being imprisoned in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1943 for opposing Washington's drive to drag workers and farmers into the slaughter of World War II. Shaw, as a seaman, was attracted to anti-imperialist stance of SWP and joined party in 1944.

education in the struggles by working people in the Caribbean against U.S. domination. Shipmates talked to him about the fight for Puerto Rican independence and explained how Washington installed and helped maintain in power Rafael Leónidas Trujillo, the military dictator of the Dominican Republic at the time.

As part of his distaste for the attempted militarization of the labor force on the commercial ships, Shaw rejected wearing the uniform given to government-trained seamen. He was not alone. Thousands of other sailors did the same.

On 'liberty ships' in World War II

During World War II, Shaw sailed mostly on what were called "liberty ships." This designation was part of the nationalist demagoguery used to break down doubts in the working class about "sacrifices" for "our" war effort.

In fact, as Shaw explained, these were cargo vessels mass produced by the U.S. government at the end of the 1930s to transport mostly war matériel during World War II. They were poorly and cheaply built and lacked up-to-date equipment available at the time. They often literally came apart at the seams in rough seas, in addition to the hundreds also sunk by Berlin and Tokyo's submarines. Of the 2,600 liberty ships, barely 1,000 were still afloat at the end of 1945.

Thousands of merchant marine sailors were killed as a result. Casualty rates among seamen during the first six months of World War II were three times higher than any branch of the U.S. armed forces.

While in Murmansk, in the arctic region of the Soviet Union in 1943, on a ship carrying arms and supplies, Shaw got his interest piqued in socialism. He got a glimpse

of how the workers and peasants of the world's first workers state — at the time, the only workers state — sacrificed in their millions to turn the tide against German capital's invading armies.

One of the main objectives not only of Berlin and the other Axis powers, but also of Washington and its imperialist allies, above all the United Kingdom, was to roll back the Russian revolution and reestablish capitalism in the Soviet Union. The Soviet toilers prevented the vying imperialist powers from realizing this objective, which none have abandoned from the October 1917 Russian revolution to this day.

Back in New York in late 1943, Shaw decided to learn more about socialism. He found a copy of the *Daily Worker*, the newspaper of the U.S. Communist Party (CPUSA). "I distinctly remember reading the paper in a subway car and, after a while, looking at the first page again to make sure I hadn't accidentally picked up a *Daily News* or *Mirror*," he wrote in the 1993 letter. "I couldn't tell the difference, the war news, the comics, the sports, were all the same to me. So I gave up for the time being."

The CPUSA, following the dictates of Moscow, had thrown its full and finest political support behind the Roosevelt administration's entry into World War II.

A few months later, on a ship in a Philadelphia harbor loading cargo for the USSR, Shaw met a seaman who had gotten to know a member of the Socialist Workers Party on another trip. This seaman told Shaw that 18 leaders of the SWP and the Minneapolis Teamsters had been imprisoned on charges of "conspiring to advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government," because of their opposition to the drive by Washington and Wall Street to drag workers and farmers in the United States into the slaughter of World War II. Their convictions had been the first under the notorious Smith "Gag" Act.

The seaman in Philadelphia gave Shaw three books he had gotten from the SWP member: *Dialectics of Nature* and *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* by Frederick Engels, and *Fascism and Big Business* by Daniel Guérin. Shaw promptly sat down and read them from beginning to end, taking a particular liking to *Dialectics of Nature*. When he returned to New York, he visited the party's office in Manhattan, where he met SWP members and bought the *Militant* and more socialist books and pamphlets. Shaw was especially interested in the broad campaign the party was at the center of to win the release of the imprisoned SWP leaders, many of whom had also been central leaders of the 1934 Minneapolis Teamster strikes and subsequent Midwest organizing drives.

Shaw joined the SWP soon thereafter, in October 1944. He was active for a number of years in New York's Chelsea-based seamen's branch of the SWP and was a member of the party's union fraction in the maritime industry. In 1947 he switched to sailing ships organized by the National Maritime Union (NMU), the other major union in the industry besides the SIU.

In 1949, while unemployed, Shaw was drafted into the U.S. Army. Losing his appeal for deferment based on his time in the merchant marine, he was sent to Fort Dix, New Jersey. The wartime conscription law had been allowed to lapse in 1947 but the Selective Service Act had been pushed through in 1948 as part of the Truman administration's war drive — the first "peacetime" draft in U.S. history.

Shaw served one year in the army, on the eve of the Korean War. When U.S.-organized forces invaded Korea in 1950, Shaw took an active part in the SWP campaign against the imperialist assault.

1953 split and move to Detroit

At the beginning of the 1950s Shaw went to work in Los Angeles for a couple years and was active in the party branch there. In the fall of 1953, Shaw, along with a handful of other SWP members, moved to Detroit to help reinforce the party branch there. The big majority in the branch had abandoned hope of building a revolutionary party, following the political course of a faction in the SWP that was the strongest in Michigan.

Recoiling in face of the anticommunist witch-hunt and softened by the relative prosperity following Washington's victory over its imperialist rivals in World War II, this grouping proposed curtailing or outright doing away with petitioning to put socialist candidates on the ballot, organizing regular public meetings, and conducting subscription drives for new readers of the *Militant*, which they characterized as scattering grains of sand to the wind.

The faction fight culminated in the defeat of this grouping, which walked out of working-class politics by November 1953. Shaw was among the younger cadre of the party who defended the SWP's communist continuity and dug in to help rebuild the Detroit branch.

Square D Strike

In 1954 Shaw got a job as a garment cutter in the Square D Company plant manufacturing seats for automobiles. Fred Halstead, a skilled garment worker in the branch then working in a UAW-organized plant, helped train Shaw and other socialists to get the Square D jobs. While working there, Shaw took part in the Square D strike, which became a well-known labor defense battle during the McCarthy years. About 1,200 members of United Electrical Workers (UE) Local 957 walked out in June 1954, demanding better pay.

In September, one week after the federal Communist Control Act had been signed into law, about 100 police, armed with tear gas, riot guns, and gas masks, descended on the picket line. The cops, outnumbering pickets two to one, herded scabs into the factory — something not seen in Detroit since 1940.

The daily press hammered that this was a "communist" strike, since the UE was one of the unions expelled from the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1950 in a red-baiting purge. The employers had decided to make a showcase of union-busting at the center of the auto industry under the guise of fighting a "Communist-infiltrated" union.

But thousands of United Auto Workers (UAW-CIO) members, as well as workers from American Federation of Labor (AFL) locals, responded to a call by 13 UAW local officials to come to the aid of the Square D workers. UAW flying squads joined the strikers in their efforts to keep the plant shut and stop the scabherding by the cops.

This response by the auto workers finally pushed back the union-busting and red-baiting assault. On September 30, after 108 days of picket-line battles, the Square D workers returned with a contract, although they had been forced to yield significant concessions.

The experience steeled Shaw and other SWP members who worked in the plant for the defensive struggles labor faced. It reinforced their conviction in building a communist party, even under adverse conditions.

That same year, the Detroit branch organized a successful petitioning drive to

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Socialism on Trial

by James P. Cannon

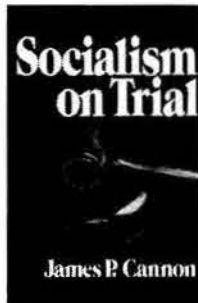
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put SWP candidates on the ballot in Michigan in the 1954 elections. Shaw was among the top petition-getters in the branch, which collected 14,000 signatures in all. This victory was of particular significance because the Michigan state legislature had passed the Trucks bill two years earlier, making it a crime to be a "subversive," punishable by 10 years in jail and a \$10,000 fine. Another provision, stipulating that "subversives" could not be on the ballot, had been used to rule the SWP slate off in 1952.

The Detroit socialists had waged a successful legal challenge and a public campaign against the witch-hunt law. SWP national secretary Farrell Dobbs had gone to Detroit in 1952 to help lead this effort, as part of a nationwide party campaign against witch-hunting attacks on democratic liberties and labor rights through state imposed clones of federal anticommunist, antilabor, anti-civil-rights legislation.

By 1955, a weekly forum series was also established in Detroit. At these free-speech public meetings, socialists spoke along with others on topics of interest to working people — from the fight against the Jim Crow segregation in the South to lessons from the Russian revolution. The Detroit forum series set an example for the party nationwide.

At the end of the 1950s Shaw was chosen by the SWP branch in Detroit as its organizer. He was elected to the SWP National Committee at the party's convention in 1959.

Collaboration with Robert F. Williams

Before moving to Detroit in 1953, Shaw had returned to the New York area from Los Angeles and gotten a job at an aircraft engine plant in New Jersey, along with a number of other former seamen.

While on night shift at the factory, Shaw met Robert F. Williams, a militant from North Carolina who was Black. Williams was an ex-Marine and Korean War veteran. The U.S. Marines, formerly a segregated, lily-white force, had finally taken in a few Blacks by 1950. Another SWP member in the plant had sold Williams a subscription to the *Militant*, and Shaw struck up an acquaintance with Williams after that.

"He was a 'natural born' fighter and anxious to go back home to North Carolina and fight against racism," Shaw said of Williams in a 1993 *Militant* article. "He finally did so, against the advice of many who were afraid his militancy could get him killed."

Williams led the NAACP chapter in Monroe, North Carolina, in struggles to desegregate public facilities and organize armed self-defense against racist night-riders shooting up and terrorizing Black neighborhoods.

In 1958-59 Williams was a central leader of the defense campaign around the "kissing case." Two young boys — one seven years old and the other nine — had been arrested in Monroe in October 1958 for "letting" a seven-year-old white girl kiss one of them. At the trial, the presiding judge convicted the boy who was kissed of "assaulting and molesting a white female" and the other boy as an "accomplice." They were both sentenced to a reformatory.

Their defense case assumed nationwide, and even worldwide, character, and the SWP and Young Socialists helped lead the effort. Shaw, who by then was living in Detroit, was in the front ranks of the socialist workers and youth campaigning for the boys' release, which was won in February 1959.

Williams also organized a "civil defense" unit to defend the Black community against Ku Klux Klan thugs. He discovered that the National Rifle Association had no chapter in Monroe. He applied for a charter and obtained it, since the national organization did not suspect that an ex-Marine would be Black. During these years, rifle clubs were being encouraged by U.S. authorities to form "civil defense groups," and that is exactly what the Monroe club did.

After the civil defense group had trained enough people in the community, the KKK was stopped in its tracks. When the Klan came for one of their customary

"joyrides" — during which they drove in caravans and fired at random as well as at specific targets — they were met by armed residents who had turned the lights off in their houses and began firing into the air.

"In a matter of seconds the attitude of the Klan changed from hilarity to mortal fear," Shaw wrote in the 1993 *Militant* article. "Amidst the clash of fenders and screech of tires they managed to turn around and flee. They did not return."

In retaliation for his civil rights militancy, and with the apparent agreement of the FBI, Williams was framed on charges of kidnapping in August 1961. Holding no hope he would get a fair trial, he fled to Canada the next month and from there to Cuba, where he received political asylum.

The SWP helped organize a nationwide defense effort to stop the railroading of Williams, a campaign in which Shaw was actively involved. In the first half of 1961, prior to the frame-up, Shaw had also conducted a speaking and organizing tour for the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, speaking on the same platform with Williams at each stop.

Partisan of Cuban revolution

On New Year's Day in 1959, the workers and peasants of Cuba, led by the July 26 Movement, overthrew the U.S.-backed tyranny of Fulgencio Batista. The Cuban revolution opened the road to socialist revolution in the Americas and was thus countering the wrath of Washington.

Soon after the revolutionary triumph, Shaw took the initiative to travel to the Caribbean island to find out the truth about Cuba first hand. Upon Shaw's return, the SWP sponsored a nationwide speaking tour for him in late 1959 and 1960, showing slides from his trip and explaining the accomplishments of the revolution.

In the spring of 1960, SWP national secretary Farrell Dobbs and *Militant* editor Joseph Hansen visited Cuba. Dobbs was the party's candidate for U.S. president in the 1960 elections. Defense of the Cuban revolution became the central theme of the Dobbs election campaign, and Hansen's series in the *Militant* helped get out the truth about the Cuban revolution to thousands of youth and working people.

In early 1960 Robert Taber, a free-lance reporter who had interviewed rebel leaders in Cuba for CBS news prior to the revolution, initiated the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. It was the first nationwide group in the United States to organize activities in opposition to Washington's attempts to crush the Cuban revolution. Shaw subsequently became chairperson of the organization's chapter in Detroit and Midwest director for Fair Play.

In June 1961, Shaw was subpoenaed by the U.S. Senate Internal Security Subcommittee to appear before hearings on the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. The subcommittee, the counterpart in the Senate of the House Un-American Activities Committee, was chaired by Senator James Eastland, a notorious segregationist and anticommunist from Mississippi.

"The unspeakable Senator Eastland's Internal Security Subcommittee spent four days last week trying to smear the Fair Play for Cuba Committee but its witch hunt efforts failed miserably," said the June 26, 1961, issue of the *Militant*, describing the results of the hearing.

Eastland had subpoenaed more than a dozen people, including Shaw, after the appearance of an anonymous United Press International dispatch charging that the Communist Party and the SWP dominated the Fair Play committee.

"Following the policy of principled non-cooperation with the witch-hunters, Shaw refused to testify about the activities or members of the Fair Play committee," the *Militant* reported. "Despite hours of bullying by [Connecticut Democratic] Senator [Thomas] Dodd in an executive (secret) session on June 14, Shaw didn't budge an inch. This brought from the near-apoplectic Dodd the shout: 'You're the worst witness I have had in 30 years.'"

At a public hearing session the next day, Shaw read a statement blasting the subcommittee's violations of the Bill of Rights and suggesting that it instead in-



Militant/Joseph Hansen

Picket line of 500 at the United Nations in New York on Nov. 26, 1960. The action was called by the Fair Play for Cuba Committee to protest against ominous moves by the U.S. fleet in the Caribbean. Shaw was the Midwest director for Fair Play.

vestigate the recent invasion of Cuba and Senator Dodd's business dealings with the reactionary regime in Guatemala. The U.S.-inspired invasion of the Caribbean island by Cuban counterrevolutionaries at the Bay of Pigs in April 1961 had been held at bay by the Cuban militia and crushed swiftly by the revolutionary armed forces. The Fair Play for Cuba Committee had organized numerous rallies and picket lines blasting Washington for its efforts to overthrow the revolutionary government in Havana.

Presidential campaign

At the end of 1961, Shaw was asked to organize a session of the SWP's leadership school in the Poconos in New Jersey; he had attended the school as a student at an earlier session taught by Joe Hansen. In mid-1962, he moved to New York City and took an assignment as a volunteer in the party's national office. Since the party treasury was short of funds and he had a family to support, Shaw worked part-time as a compositor for the *New York Times* and a member of the I.T.U. during much of his stay in New York in the 1960s to supplement his income.

In 1964, Shaw was nominated as the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. vice-president and ran on the ticket with Clifton DeBerry. The SWP slate got on the ballot in 11 states. Youth for DeBerry and Shaw campaigned on many campuses, winning new recruits to the Young Socialist Alliance. The YSA had been founded in 1960 by youth who were partisans of the Cuban revolution, active in civil rights actions, and defenders of Leon Trotsky's course to continue the communist line of march initiated by V.I. Lenin and the Bolsheviks. It campaigned against the growing military intervention by Washington in Vietnam.

The DeBerry-Shaw campaign helped increase the political influence of the party among fighters for Black liberation, championing the revolutionary course that was being taken at that time by Malcolm X.

Shaw assumed additional leadership responsibilities over the next decade. He became SWP organization secretary in 1965, an assignment he held through 1968. Throughout this period, Shaw helped facilitate the transition in the party leadership to a younger generation and preparations for the growing trade union work of the party as a whole.

During much of the 1970s, Shaw shouldered numerous responsibilities as a leader of the world communist movement as well. He traveled throughout Latin America, collaborating with cothinkers of the SWP and other revolutionaries. His trips included visits to Argentina and Bolivia during the prerevolutionary upsurges of the early 1970s in these countries, as well as to Peru, Chile, and elsewhere.

Shaw represented the SWP leadership as a fraternal delegate in the United Secretariat of the Fourth International between 1972 and 1977 and spent considerable time in Spain.

In 1977 Shaw moved to Miami and became part of the SWP branch there. After retiring from day-to-day political activity in 1982, he continued to follow the party's press and its work nationally and internationally, and to carry out projects proposed by the party leadership.

Shaw worked as a machinist for 11

years at an aircraft engine shop, before retiring in 1992 at the age of 69.

Since 1992 Shaw has worked along with Tom Leonard, another longtime SWP leader and a seaman in the 1940s, on a project to pull together and write down the party's experiences in the maritime industry and unions, based on their firsthand knowledge. In February 1994 Shaw and Leonard gave classes about party-building during that period at a regional socialist educational conference held in Miami.

Shaw was hospitalized on October 8 with complications from chronic emphysema and serious heart problems. He died four weeks later. Shaw is survived by his wife Mary, who lives in Hialeah; his son Matthew and daughter Wilma by a previous marriage, who both live in the Seattle area; and his sister Lillian Bachelier, who lives in Illinois.

Meetings to celebrate his life and political contributions will be held in Miami on December 3, in New York City on December 10, and in San Francisco on December 17 (see accompanying ad).

Speakers will include SWP national secretary Jack Barnes; Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *New Internationalist* magazine; Tom Leonard; Tony Thomas, a member of the Transport Workers Union Local 291 in Miami who served on SWP leadership bodies with Ed Shaw in the 1970s; former *Militant* editor Harry Ring; longtime SWP member Virginia Garza; and Young Socialists. Messages for these meetings can be sent to the party's national office at 406 West St., New York, NY, 10014. Fax (212) 727-3107.

The SWP has announced a fund in honor of Shaw's life. Contributions can be sent to the Capital Fund at 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. The Capital Fund is used for long-term investments in plant and equipment to maintain and improve the production of the political arsenal of communist books and periodicals.

Celebrate the life and political contributions of Ed Shaw

Miami, December 3

Speakers:

Jack Barnes, SWP national secretary

Tom Leonard, longtime leader of SWP and former seaman

Ernie Mailhot, coauthor of *The Eastern Airlines Strike*

Verónica Poses, Miami Young Socialists

Tony Thomas, member, Transport Workers Union Local 291

Mary Alice Waters, editor, *New Internationalist*

For more information call the Miami branch of the SWP. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

Memorial meetings will also be held in:

New York, Dec. 10

San Francisco, Dec. 17

For more information call (212) 388-9475 for New York meeting and (415) 282-6255 for San Francisco meeting.

Candidate is wealthy rightist demagogue

BY BILL KALMAN

DES MOINES, Iowa — Industrial magnate Maurice Taylor, one of the candidates running for the Republican Party's presidential nomination, is not as well known in the country as other Republican contenders. But his campaign is noteworthy for what it reveals about U.S. politics today.

With demagoguery reminiscent of Ross Perot, Taylor calls himself a "no nonsense entrepreneur" who can unite people of diverse interests with bold action. Appealing to workers battered by the economy as a "shop-floor populist," he rails against a corrupt Washington establishment and promises to "get things done," even if that means sacrificing some democratic rights and social gains.

Taylor, who likes to call himself "Morry," is the multimillionaire chief executive of Titan Wheel International, based in Quincy, Illinois. Titan, the world's largest manufacturer of steel wheels and rims for off-road moving equipment, controls an estimated 80 percent of the construction wheel market and 90 percent of the farm equipment wheel market in North America. Its sales surged 270 percent last year to \$407 million. Taylor's personal fortune is estimated at over \$30 million.

Taylor declares that "good paying jobs, getting rid of [federal government] bureaucrats, and common sense business practices will make a difference in the future of working men and women." As proof that his campaign is in the interests of industrial workers, he notes that his national campaign headquarters is on the third floor of a tire plant in Des Moines.

While running for now inside the Republican Party, Taylor poses as being independent from the "special interests" in Washington. He claims that as a businessman he knows how to deal with cutting bureaucracy and brags, as Perot did in 1992, that he will finance his campaign from his own personal fortune.

"It's time the voters tried some kind of tough sucker like me," he likes to say.

In the name of being "tough" on the budget deficit, Taylor calls for drastic attacks on workers' social gains, from Social Security to occupation health and safety. He also advocates a regressive flat tax, which would hit workers the hardest.

In a full page ad that appeared in *USA Today* in June 1994, which he signed "The American Grizzly," the businessman called for shutting down the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), exempting doctors and hospitals from malpractice suits, and raising the retirement age from

65 to 68. "There is plenty of time after 68 to bask in the golden years," the ad stated. In campaign speeches he also proposes freezing Social Security levels.

In the ad Taylor also advocated mandatory sterilization for workers on welfare, and no tax supported services for children of unemployed parents.

To appear evenhanded, the millionaire calls for reining in military spending. "The Pentagon? Mothball that sucker," he tells campaign audiences.

Joining the "anticrime campaign," Taylor's 1994 ad also supported televised whippings as punishment for simple misdemeanors, saying that this would bring "constructive violence to our televisions, possibly through a new cable network with advertising dollars used to pay for new solitary prison cells." He has since downplayed the ad.

'Hands-on' experience as exploiter

Many workers in Iowa and Illinois have had firsthand knowledge of Taylor's "tough" approach as a businessman.

Taylor's Titan Wheel employs 3,000 workers in 13 plants and 7 warehouses in North America, and another 2,000 worldwide. Only about one-quarter of Titan's workforce is unionized.

In 1993, Titan bought the DICO wheel-

making plant in Des Moines, which was organized by the International Association of Machinists (IAM). The plant had a history of significant environmental problems. Since 1983, DICO had been on the EPA's Superfund list due to pollution caused by the solvent TCE. DICO is located close to the Raccoon River, Des Moines's main water supply.

When Titan bought the plant, the EPA ordered Taylor to pay for additional clean up. He balked and threatened to move the plant out of state. In March 1994, state and local authorities worked out an "economic incentive package" with the company costing between \$1 million and \$1.5 million in public funds to subsidize a \$5 million loan for Taylor to keep DICO in town. This deal was sweetened with concessions by the Machinists union, which was Taylor's main objective. The EPA agreed to back off some of their demands.

Then, in October 1994, Taylor gave DICO's 250 workers 60 days notice of his intent to close the plant, blaming the EPA, whose preliminary testing had found "very significant" levels of chemicals and pesticides in the soil around a storage pond on the plant premises. A week after his shutdown threat, the EPA relented again and the plant remained in operation. Finally, in March 1995, Taylor closed the plant for good.

In July 1994 members of the United Rubber Workers (URW) union went on strike against Pirelli plants in Nashville, Tennessee; Hanford, California; and in Des Moines to protest the company's elimination of health insurance benefits. Taylor immediately offered to buy the struck plant. Pirelli readily agreed, and Titan promptly proposed a back-to-work agreement to the URW.

Taylor's contract proposal eroded seniority provisions, cut all retirement benefits for retirees, reduced job classifications, and authorized higher pay for more skilled workers. The giveback proposals sparked resistance from workers.

After five and a half weeks, however, the local union leadership decided to end the strike and go back to work. When the union advised returning workers to file grievances with the National Labor Relations Board, Taylor retorted, "If they want to get into legalese, I'll just chew them up and spit them out like nothing."

In early 1995 the URW local voted 428 to 10 against Titan's "best and final offer," which included wage cuts and cuts in pension benefits, medical coverage, and vacation pay. But with the continuing threats of a plant shutdown, in April the local voted 343 to 140 to accept concessions.

This and other vicious attacks on unions and workers have earned Taylor the hatred of many workers in the Midwest. As one worker at the Titan tire plant in Des Moines put it, "I've seen what he's done inside the plant, so I know what he wants to do outside the plant," referring to the industrialist's presidential bid. "He's nothing but a vulture."

Bill Kalman is a member of United Transportation Union Local 867 in Des Moines.

'Communist Manifesto' out with new cover

Pathfinder, 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 on page 12.

BY GREG MCCARTAN

The *Communist Manifesto*, by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, will be avail-

tion for their classes.

Pathfinder supporters in several countries have traveled to areas outside the cities where they live to sell socialist literature and reach out to workers and youth.

Norton Sandler reports a three-person team from Des Moines, Iowa, and Peoria, Illinois, visited University of Kansas in Lawrence, introducing students there to the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and the

dent came by," reports Fein, "and filled out a subscription to the *Militant* before we could even explain what the paper is about. When asked how he knew about the paper he replied, 'I work at ABC Books and they carry a lot of the titles you have on this table,' pointing to *February 1965*, *The Final Speeches*, by Malcolm X; *Nelson Mandela Speaks*; and the *Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*. 'I figured any paper connected with these books must be all right.'"

During a two-day sales trip in France, Pathfinder promoters from Britain and France found heightened interest in titles by and about Ernesto Che Guevara, a central leader of the Cuban revolution. Several new titles on Guevara have been published in France this year, and several stores ordered Pathfinder's French-language edition of *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism* by Carlos Tablada. By visiting nine booksellers or distributors in Paris, supporters garnered orders for some 130 books, pamphlets, and copies of *Nouvelle Internationale*.

Supporters of Pathfinder in Quebec have been in the middle of protests, rallies, and discussions on the fight for national independence. Carole Caron, a member of the International Association of Machinists in Montreal, reports a "better than average month of sales from the Pathfinder Bookstore. Many people we met at the rallies had never heard of Pathfinder or our bookstore, and there was interest in our titles, especially among young people." Sixty-five Pathfinder books and pamphlets were sold there during October.

Marxist journal *New International*. Team members also called ahead to set an appointment to show Pathfinder titles to the buyer in the bookstore at the student union.

The team allotted adequate time to prepare for the meeting during their busy swing through Lawrence. The buyer ordered 18 Pathfinder books and a five-pack of the booklet *Genocide Against the Indians*, by George Novack. Among the titles ordered were *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*; *Lenin's Final Fight*; *The Truth about Yugoslavia*; *Teamster Rebellion*; and *New International* no. 9, featuring "The Rise and Fall of the Nicaraguan Revolution."

On a visit to Denver, Colorado, Jill Fein from Salt Lake City teamed up with other Pathfinder backers to visit several chain stores in the area. Afterward they set up a table on the Metro State campus. "A stu-



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

By Greg McCartan

able from Pathfinder in November with a new cover and attractive, more readable typography. Drafted in 1847 as the program of the first international workers organization, the *Manifesto* is essential reading for youth and workers involved in political protest action and labor struggles.

The pamphlet's newly designed cover features a color reproduction of a section of the Pathfinder Mural. Bookstores and individuals can now place orders. The cover price is \$3.95. With this new printing, promoters of Pathfinder literature can approach professors on college campuses who may want to order the Pathfinder edi-

FROM PATHFINDER



The Communist Manifesto

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

Why is communism not an ideological doctrine but a social movement? Why do communists act on the basis not of preconceived principles but of facts springing from the actual class struggle? How can the working class build a communist leadership and fight for political power? How can workers and farmers unite across national boundaries to fight for the common interests of the exploited and oppressed, and struggle for a socialist world?

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels — who drafted this manifesto in 1847 as the program of the first modern communist workers organization — take up these and other questions that are as pressing today as ever. \$3.95

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

YOUNG SOCIALISTS AROUND THE WORLD

Youth found new organization in N. Ireland

BY NATHALIE CAMIER

BELFAST, Northern Ireland — "Crannlach means branch, like the branch growing on a tree," explained Tina Sherlock about the name she and other young members of Sinn Féin have chosen for their newly formed youth organization.

With their past experience of street demonstrations and electoral work, youth in Belfast, Derry, and Tyrone see the need for an organization to educate themselves in politics and the social issues arising from the situation in Northern Ireland. They also want to develop discussions with the youth organizations of other political parties in Ireland.

Two issues facing young people in Northern Ireland dominated our discussion — unemployment and sex education. Statistics issued by the Fair Employment Commission (FEC) show that if you are Catholic in Northern Ireland you are two and a half times more likely to be un-

employed than if you are a Protestant. Established by the British government to tackle discrimination in employment, the FEC has proved inadequate to take on institutionalized discrimination. In fact, cases of discrimination have been taken out against the FEC itself.

In spite of a sharp rise in the number of teenage pregnancies, there is inadequate sex education in schools. Discussion on sexual questions, on abortion, or on contraception is taboo. Even today there are young women who are too frightened or too ashamed to admit to being pregnant.

In this city, the Brook Clinic, giving advice on contraception, has been picketed by forces linked with both the Catholic and Protestant churches. Tina spoke of a young woman she was at school with who had her first baby at 12 years, her second at 14 years, and was dead of a brain tumor by 16 years. This is clearly an issue of concern to all young people. "But," Tina

said, "in a state [like Northern Ireland] founded on inequality, you have to get rid of that state to get rid of inequality."

Tina was interested to hear about a youth brigade to Cuba organized by the Union of Young Communists in Cuba last August, which this reporter took part in. We talked about the way in which young people in Cuba participate directly in the social and economic life of the country.

Seventy young people and others from 11 counties from both the north and south of Ireland attended the West Tyrone Sinn Féin Youth Conference October 21. Participants discussed the role of youth in the republican movement and a range of other political issues. The youth conference received a statement from republican political prisoners in Long Kesh prison.

Nathalie Camier, from Paris, France, participated in an October 17-19 *Militant* sales and reporting trip to Belfast.

Cat strikers fight for their rights

BY ANGEL LARISCY

PEORIA, Illinois — "We're fighting for our rights, and sometimes fighting for your rights doesn't correspond to the laws," said Ron Heller, a member of the United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 974 on strike against Caterpillar Inc.

Heller was reacting to a ruling by Circuit Court Judge Donald Courson finding the union in criminal contempt of a 1992 injunction limiting pickets to 10 per gate. Courson ruled that in 28 cases the union had too many people on the picket line, prevented access to the company's facilities, or both.

UAW lawyer Stanley Eisenstein acknowledged some violations of the injunction, but only three since a November 1994 ruling that the original injunction was still in effect. These incidents occurred on the one-year anniversary of the strike, Eisenstein said, and none were officially sponsored by the union.

Caterpillar claimed the rallies held by strikers and their supporters were "riots." The company is seeking damages for alleged destruction of property and attorney's fees. The second phase of the trial, which will decide if fines and damages will be imposed on the union, will begin December 18. In his ruling, Judge Courson also reaffirmed that the 1992 injunction applies to Caterpillar's main offices in downtown Peoria.

Since June 1994, more than 9,500 workers, most of who are in the Peoria area, have been on strike against Caterpillar. Unionists have been without a contract for over four years since the company demanded massive concessions from the UAW and put forward its "final offer."

Strikers have participated in numerous one-day actions and rallies over the past few years. "I never felt like I was breaking the law when I was on the picket line," said Russell Miller, a striker who worked at the company's East Peoria facility. "I was stating an opinion."

UAW member Heller said that in Peoria, "The laws protect Cat and big business. They use their money to make the laws and control the people."

Recently, police in the Peoria suburb of Creve Coeur arrested the first person under a new Illinois law that makes it illegal to possess jack rocks. Jack rocks are nails welded together in a tripod and can be used to puncture tires.

Charges dropped against socialist in Puerto Rico

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — In a victory for political rights, criminal charges by the police against me were dropped November 10. While selling Pathfinder books and socialist periodicals October 21, I had been arrested for obstruction of justice and selling without a vendor's permit.

The charges were dismissed because the municipal ordinance that governs street vendors contains no provisions for arresting violators. Infractions of the law are supposed to be dealt with by giving the vendor a citation similar to a traffic ticket. The only person who violated the law the day that I was arrested was the policeman.

The law clearly states that newspapers can be sold without a permit as long as the vendor does not sell other products, such as food, clothing, etc. Books and magazines are not mentioned in the ordinance.

Support from several political activists helped me win the battle. Ten people came court to show their solidarity. Historian Pedro Aponte, who has written a number of books about independence fighter Pedro Albizu Campos, attended, as did members of the International Socialist Organization and the Taller de Formación Política (Political Development Workshop). Attorney Arturo Hernández represented me.

UAW Local 974 member Ronald Dobbins was arrested and booked for the misdemeanor charge after police, acting on an anonymous tip, searched his home and found 19 jack rocks in a cardboard box in his garage. If found guilty, Dobbins faces a \$1,000 fine and up to one year in jail.

Is a union contract near?

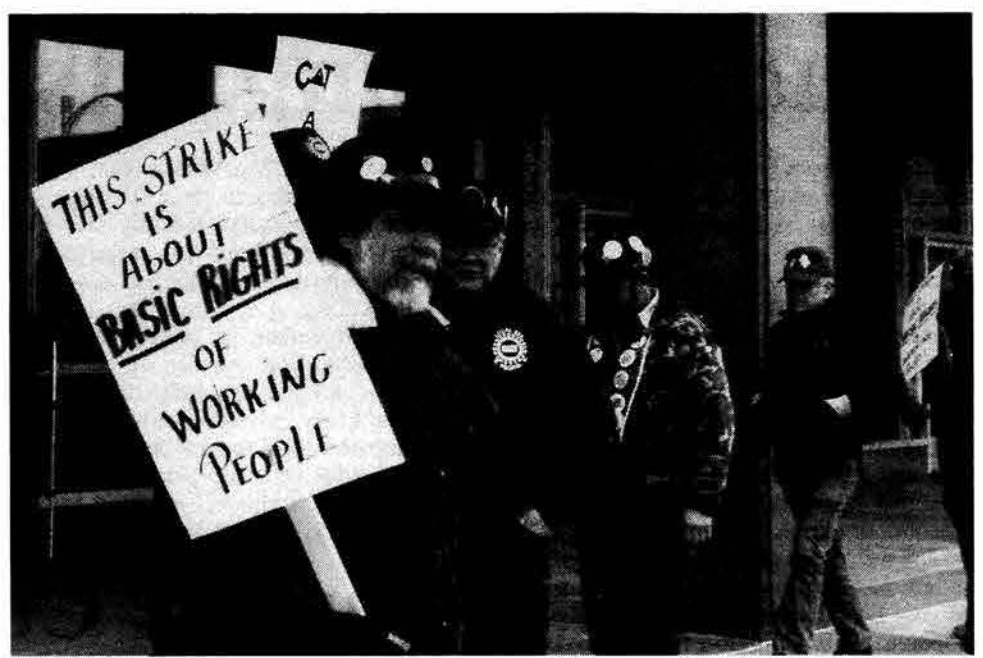
Rumors continue to abound in the local press about an end to the strike being near. Meetings between union officials and the company continue to take place, but no information is available on the status of a contract or a return to work date.

Meanwhile strikers, their families, and supporters continue to make their presence known. Signs bearing the slogans "Proud UAW Family," "We support the UAW," and "Scabs have no honor" are visible in neighborhoods throughout the city and surrounding communities.

At a recent two-day meeting with financial analysts in Arizona, Caterpillar contended it is now in a position to stay "reasonably profitable" in future recessions. But despite Caterpillar's continuing assertion that everything is fine, the company continues to face problems.

On November 8, a temporary worker at Caterpillar's Mapleton foundry was killed when a five-ton pulley fell on him after a safety mechanism failed.

Striker Miller pointed out that the com-



Militant/Jon Hillson

Striking UAW members picket Caterpillar offices in Peoria, Illinois, last March.

pany is either not training people in the proper safety procedures or is disregarding them in the efforts to get out production. "One of the first things you are always taught," he said, "is not to stand under a load."

Five days later a man fell 25 feet from a catwalk at Caterpillar's LL building in East Peoria, suffering broken ribs and a collapsed lung.

After six quarters of record profits, Caterpillar earnings were down the third quarter of this year. The company also announced production cutbacks would be made at a number of its facilities.

A Value Line report noted the quandary the company is in. "We advise investors to

look past the headlines where suddenly volatile Cat shares are concerned," it said.

Pointing to the speculation the strike might soon be over, the report continued, "The bitterness of the struggle virtually guarantees that almost any future mixture of strikers and non-strikers will constitute an angry and divided workplace. Thus, even if the rumors are true, this does not necessarily represent an improvement upon the current situation, and matters could worsen if the former strikers come back in a less-than-cooperative frame of mind."

Angel Lariscy is a member of UAW Local 1494 in Peoria.

Detroit strikers call December 3 rally

BY JOHN SARGE

DETROIT — "We've seen the future and it stinks," Michael Moran, a member of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 58, told the press. Moran and seven other electricians joined the newspaper strike here November 8.

"Detroit Newspapers want to operate a nonunion, antiunion work place. That's unfair and it's unsafe," Moran said, "because we know that if the company succeeds in breaking their unions, we'll be next."

The electricians joined the four-month-old strike by 2,500 workers because safety conditions in the newspaper plant "are deplorable," Moran explained. "The replacement workers have not been properly trained and they are not observing safety rules."

The IBEW has a contract which allows union members to honor picket lines of other unions, but the union's officials have not called the electricians out. About 20 other Local 58 members, along with a handful of members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) and the Operating Engineers, continue to work in Detroit News and Free Press facilities, which are run jointly by the Detroit Newspaper Agency.

The newspapers signed contracts with maintenance workers before they forced a strike on July 13 by members of six union locals from the Graphic Communications International Union, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Communication Workers of America, and Newspaper Guild.

The latest additions to the walkout buoyed many strikers' spirits. Floyd Davis Jr., a striking pressman, remarked, "I love it. Next we need the Machinists to come out; then the newspapers would be in worse trouble."

The striking unions and their supporters have announced a series of actions to win new support for their fight. The Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions has called a strike support rally and concert for December 3. The rally, which will include labor leaders, strikers, and others, is scheduled for 2 p.m. at the State Fairgrounds coliseum in Detroit.

A dinner and dance to raise money for a Christmas fund has been called for November 17 by the Labor/Community/Religious Coalition in Support of the Newspaper Strikers. The unions have stepped up a consumer boycott of retailers who continue to advertise in the struck newspapers. Union locals across the metropolitan area have "adopted" locations and organize leafleting teams at them. The United Auto Workers (UAW) report success in getting about five auto dealers a week to pull their ads.

The strikers have set the Thanksgiving weekend as a target for expanded outreach. Leafleting at stores that continue to advertise will be increased. They plan to be present at the Thanksgiving Day parade in Detroit, which is sponsored by a major advertiser.

Members of the striking unions have also announced that starting November 19 southeast Michigan residents will have a new Sunday newspaper, the Detroit Sunday Journal. The newspaper will be supplied to locations that refuse to sell the two struck papers and will soon be available for home delivery. Some union locals plan to help get the paper sold at large factories in the region.

Stephen Yokich, UAW international president, announced this week that each active striker will receive a \$150 Thanksgiving donation from the auto workers union. "We at the UAW knew that with the approaching holiday, strikers were short of money," Yokich said. "We felt this was the best thing we could do as you continue your struggle."

The strikers continue to organize themselves and their supporters for all-night mass picketing at distribution centers every Saturday. The Sunday edition is the most profitable of the week, and the striking unions want to keep the pressure on by disrupting its delivery.

On Saturday, November 11, over 100 unionists gathered early in the evening to protest the court-imposed limits on picketing at the main newspaper printing plant in the suburb of Sterling Heights.

They then adjourned to one of the two union halls on opposite sides of Detroit that are used to dispatch the picketing teams some time after 11 p.m. Three hundred other unionists joined them. Three distribution centers were picketed until 6 a.m.

A regular feature of these Saturday night mobilizations are the small numbers of unionists from other areas who show up. A group of supporters of gay and lesbian rights in the labor movement, who were in Detroit for a conference, came this week. Workers from California, Pennsylvania, and Ohio were also on hand.

Strikers report that Vance security guards have stepped up harassment and attacks on strikers when the picket lines are small. Larry Dumochelle, a striking Pressman, ended

up with 12 stitches in his head after company goons attacked the pickets in front of a distribution center November 4.

Strikers got a boost when Knight-Ridder chairman and CEO Anthony Ridder told Detroit Free Press scab reporters November 6 that the newspaper likely would not reach its pre-strike circulation levels, even with two years of rebuilding.

He also said he expects Knight-Ridder, which owns the Free Press, to lose at least \$20 million in the fourth quarter due to the strike. This comes on top of a \$36 million loss in the third quarter.

In face of continued working-class support for the strike across the region, the company has waged a violence-baiting campaign against the unions. Every week the company smears the Saturday night mobilizations as violent. Management also claims that pipe bombs are being aimed at newspaper facilities.

Detroit Newspapers president Frank Vega described the November 11 mass picket as "another typical night of union violence. They aren't keeping us from getting newspapers out and they sure aren't getting us any closer to a settlement."

He didn't explain why, as an IAM member who works at Detroit's Metropolitan Airport reported, the scab newspapers were delivered to the newsstands there after noon on Sunday.

John Sarge is a member of UAW Local 900.

FROM PATHFINDER THE CHANGING FACE OF U.S. POLITICS

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JACK BARNES

A handbook for workers coming into the factories, mines, and mills, as they react to the uncertain life, ceaseless turmoil, and brutality of capitalism in the closing years of the twentieth century. It shows how millions of workers, as political resistance grows, will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and all of society. \$19.95

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



Saudi bombing sets off political tremors

Continued from front page
huge expense of the Gulf War, a Saudi defense buildup and bad fiscal management."

Both working people and the middle classes in Saudi Arabia have been squeezed by recent cutbacks in social services, layoffs of public employees, and rising prices. The economic crisis has multiplied popular discontent toward the monarchy, which rules without a legislature and has banned political parties, imprisoned opposition leaders, and stifled freedom of expression and assembly.

The weakened Saudi regime, one of the pillars of U.S. imperialist interests in the Middle East, has become increasingly dependent on Washington for its survival. The U.S. rulers are concerned about growing popular resentment there to the U.S. military presence, which right-wing nationalist groups have effectively played on in their opposition to King Fahd.

Meanwhile, in nearby Israel, the government is attempting to quickly recover from Rabin's assassination and consolidate a new administration. Acting prime minister Peres, expected to be formally installed in office very soon, is putting together a new cabinet.

Peres is pushing ahead with troop withdrawals from the West Bank, in accordance with the agreements signed in September with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Israeli troops pulled out of the town of Jenin November 13 and turned it over to Palestinian forces, touching off jubilant celebrations by residents waving Palestinian flags. Under the pact, Tel Aviv is to turn over control of most West Bank cities by the end of the year.

Likewise, preparations for the first Palestinian elections, slated for January 20, are under way. The PLO and its rival Hamas have announced they will meet in Cairo in November to finalize an agreement to end Hamas attacks on Israeli targets and open the way for its participation in the elections.

All the capitalist parties in Israel have been working overtime to create an atmosphere of "national unity" to counteract the uncertainty caused by the assassination. Labor Party leader Peres met with opposition Likud chief Benjamin Netanyahu, and both agreed to smooth over frictions between the parties. In the previous week, the ruling party had sharply accused its opponents of contributing to the killing through their support to right-wing Jewish settlers in the occupied territories.

Confessed assassin Yigal Amir and six other ultrarightist Jews opposed to the accords have been arrested in connection with Rabin's killing. The government has since imposed official secrecy on the murder investigation.

In the wake of the assassination the La-

bor government has won greater public support for its current policies. Three out of four Israelis polled recently said they support the government's negotiations with the Palestinians. Only half did so before the killing.

The November 4 assassination of Rabin — the first murder of an Israeli leader — stunned not only most Israeli Jews but many Palestinians, who have little sympathy for a regime that has brutalized them for decades. "For many Palestinians it was a shock," reported Michel Warschawsky, director of the Alternative

Information Center, in a phone interview from Jerusalem. "They didn't expect that in Israel, a supposed democracy for Jews, such an assassination was possible," even if the Zionist regime was founded on violence against the Palestinian people.

"It has increased a feeling of fear of destabilization," Warschawsky noted.

In contrast, in refugee camps in southern Lebanon, Palestinian guerrilla groups opposed to the PLO cheered Rabin's assassination. A November 5 political rally in Beirut by the Party of God, which looks to the Iranian government, turned into a

celebration of Rabin's death.

Likewise, while the PLO and the governments of Egypt and Jordan condemned the assassination, the regimes in Libya and Iran applauded it. The regime of President Hafez al-Assad of Syria, which has sought negotiations with Tel Aviv in recent years, is maintaining a studied silence.

Meanwhile, in one of the Peres regime's first actions, Israeli warplanes launched unprovoked bombing attacks November 13 on Palestinian refugee camps south of Beirut — another reminder that the war in that country is not over.

Clinton, Congress play with budget

Continued from front page
tatives and Senate approved similar proposals to cut deeply into social programs under the banner of "balancing the budget" during the next seven years.

The capitalist politicians drafted plans for \$245 billion in tax cuts and a lower tax on capital gains (profits) benefiting the wealthy. At the same time they proposed to cut \$270 billion from Medicare, the health insurance entitlement that covers 37 million retired workers and others. They would also slash Medicaid, the health insurance for workers who are poor, by \$170 billion.

Later, the Senate and House agreed to raise Medicare premiums, paid by beneficiaries, by 15 percent to \$53 a month.

Both houses also approved a measure to gut welfare programs, which 36 million workers rely on. The joint bill would eliminate the federal mandate of providing assistance to every family that meets eligibility requirements and would instead issue "block grants" to state governments, giving them the power to cut benefits and restrict eligibility even more.

Among other things, the measure would junk the food stamp and school lunch programs; allow states to deny funds to unmarried mothers under the age of 18; cut off payments after five years, and after two years if adult recipients remain jobless; and deny food stamps and other benefits to most immigrants.

President Bill Clinton has demonstratively vowed to veto these measures, warning that the Republicans' budget goes too far too fast.

The Democratic leader, however, has countered with similar proposals to slash workers' social wage. He insisted he would "continue to fight for the right kind of balanced budget."

Clinton has called for reducing Medicare by \$124 billion and Medicaid by \$55 billion, while cutting \$111 billion in taxes

for the rich. He agreed with the demand to eliminate welfare programs, but criticized the congressional bill for cutting too much from school lunch programs, food stamps, and other benefits. "You can have reductions in cost inflation in Medicare and Medicaid, without these Draconian consequences," he stated.

The maneuvering over the social cutbacks heated up in mid-November when Republicans in Congress submitted a stop-gap spending bill designed to press Clinton on their budget proposals. Congress passed a bill to finance government operations through November in the absence of a budget, but tacked on a hike in Medicare premiums. Clinton vetoed it November 14, leading to the closing of "non-essential" federal services and the temporary layoff of 800,000 public employees.

Clinton also vetoed a congressional bill that would have temporarily lifted the government's \$4.9 trillion ceiling on borrowing. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin

took emergency steps — auctioning off Treasury bonds — to raise funds to pay \$25 billion in interests to wealthy bondholders that were due November 15.

Posing as a defender of Medicare, the president has vowed to veto the joint budget proposal that Congressional leaders are hammering out. At the same time, the big-business media has noted that no major differences mark the two sides. Clinton, a *Wall Street Journal* editorial remarked, will "endorse most GOP goals, even if he'll fight over the fine print."

The posturing on both sides reflects the politicians' nervousness about the strong opposition among working people to cutbacks in Medicare or other hard-won social gains. This widespread sentiment has been noticeable at recent union-sponsored demonstrations. Some 10,000 workers marched in New York City November 2 to protest Medicare and Medicaid cutbacks. A similar demonstration of 10,000 took place two days later in Columbus, Ohio.

-MILITANT LABOR FORUMS-

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Support Boeing Strikers. Report on Boeing strike and Everett rally of November 12. Fri., Dec. 1, 7:30 p.m. 3284 23rd St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (415) 285-5323.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Oppose The Executions in Nigeria. Fri., Dec. 1, 7:30 p.m. 545 Roosevelt Rd. Tel: (312) 829-6815.

NEW YORK

Brooklyn

Young Socialists Prepare for the Battles Ahead. Come and hear a panel of youth leaders active in struggles across the United States.

Sat., Nov. 25, 7:30 p.m. 59 4th Av. (corner of Bergen). Donation: \$4. Tel: (718) 399-7257.

BRITAIN

London

Nigeria: End British Government Complicity! Stop the Deportations! Panel discussion. Fri., Nov. 24, 7 p.m. 47 The Cut. (opposite Young Vic theater; nearest tube Waterloo). Donation: £2. Tel: 0171-401-2409.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Quebec Vote: Sovereignty Remains on the Agenda. Speaker: Tony Gibson, Communist League. Fri., Nov. 24, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. (Opposite McDonald's) Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

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AUSTRALIA

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Second National Conference, Abortion Rights Network of Australia. Sat., Nov. 25, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. University of Technology, Room C131, Block C, Markets Campus Building (Corners of Quay St. and Ultimo Rd.).

BRITAIN

London

All Party Talks Now! Release the Irish Political Prisoners! Picket of John Major at Downing Street. Mon., Nov. 27, 5 to 7:30 p.m. Outside Downing Street (nearest tube: Westminster).

Crisis in the Irish Peace Process. Speakers include: Eamon McGuiv TD (Fianna Fail), Sinn Fein. Tue., Nov. 28, 7:30 p.m. Hammersmith Irish Centre, Blacks Rd. (nearest tube Hammersmith). Tel: 0181 563 8232.

Actions called by the Irish Peace Initiative c/o Roger Casement Centre, St. John's Way N19.

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Harry Ring

'Militant' subscription anyone? — A publishing company survey found scant international news reporting by the U.S. media.

The winner for noncoverage of world events was Channel 3 in Philadelphia which averaged less than one international item a week. According to AP, the study found that "American news media largely ignore the rest of the world, except for hot spots and places with a strong U.S. connection."

P.S. — Another survey found that consumer satisfaction with goods and services dropped 1.1 percent in the past year. The sharpest decline — 5.6 percent — was in satisfaction with the quality of newspapers.

Class rules — An interesting fact, new to us, was buried in a

story about that secret bunker built in the '50s to shelter members of Congress during an atomic war. It nestles under the Greenbrier, a very classy West Virginia hotel (rooms up to \$2,600 a night.) During World War II, the Greenbrier was used to intern Japanese diplomats. That, of course, was while others of Japanese origin were herded into shacks in desert camps.

Proud legacy — West Virginia Penitentiary in Moundsville was built in 1866 and the last inmates were transferred out of it in March. The state has turned it over to the town for use as a tourist attraction. Visitors will see the 5'x7' cells in which inmates were caged.

Ex-guards will spin stories, including, perhaps, that of the 1986 uprising in which inmates controlled the prison for three days. Highlight of the tour — "Old Sparky," the electric chair.

Easy, just lock everyone up — The Immigration and Naturalization Service is providing Iowa cops with an on-line computer service to check if suspects or those convicted of crimes are "illegal." Gov. Terry Brandstad conceded that law-breaking by Iowa undocumented immigrants was not a big deal, but added: "We want to nip the problem in the bud before it becomes a big problem."

Meanwhile... — The INS put

on a conference for Iowa cops on the theme, "Illegal Immigration and Criminal Aliens," including "profiles" of gang members of various nationalities. Responding to charges of racist stereotyping, INS official Neil Jacobs declared it to be a fact that "certain nationalities are into certain crimes."

At least for jollies — Defending spankings, John Rosemond, family psychologist and syndicated columnist, notes that in response to humanity's misdeeds, the Almighty "destroyed cities... flooded the whole world... turned people into pillars of salt." Declares Rosemond: "I can't imagine God has any problem at all with a well-administered spanking."

Abortion rights supporters score victory in Canada

BY ROGER ANNIS

MONTREAL — Another provincial government in Canada has lost an attempt to place restrictions on women's right to abortion. The Alberta government announced on October 10 that it was abandoning plans to restrict public funding of abortion.

The government had declared on September 22 that it would seek to limit state funds to abortions deemed "medically necessary." The plan, it said, depended on the cooperation of doctors in coming up with a definition of what constituted "medically necessary."

The doctors refused to go along. The Alberta College of Physicians and Surgeons, the governing body of doctors in the province, took just 15 minutes to unanimously reject the government's request at a meeting on October 5.

The Alberta Medical Association took a similar stance one day later. "Decisions about what types and levels of [health] care should be funded are societal decisions," stated the association president, Dr. Guy Gokiart. "It's a moral issue, it's an ethical issue, it's not really a medical issue," he said.

"They (the doctors) have in effect set one broad guideline," said Dr. John Dossetor, who teaches medical ethics at the University of Alberta. "It's a decision between a woman and her doctor. It's hard to think of what other guideline one could use." About 9,000 abortions were performed last year in Alberta.

The government's plan ran into a wall of opposition from supporters of a woman's right to choose abortion. Additionally, the government was wary about entering into a dragged-out dispute on a health care issue at a time when there is growing dissatisfaction with its cutbacks to health care funding.

Victory in New Brunswick

Women's rights supporters won another victory on August 17 when the Supreme Court of Canada refused a request from the government of New Brunswick for help in obstructing an abortion clinic operated by Dr. Henry Morgentaler in the provincial capital, Fredericton.

Following the opening of the clinic in June, 1994, the New Brunswick College of Physicians lifted Morgentaler's license

to practice medicine in the province. It did so at the urging of the provincial government. The college threatened similar reprisals against any other doctor performing abortions outside of hospitals.

A New Brunswick Supreme Court decision struck down the provincial law which gave the college that power. The federal court refused to hear an appeal of that decision. It gave no explanation for its decision.

In New Brunswick only three hospitals offer abortion services — in Fredericton, Moncton, and Bathurst — and there are many restrictions, including limits on the number of procedures performed and the requirement of written approval by two doctors. No abortion service is available in Saint John, the largest city in the province. Despite the court decision, the provincial government is continuing to deny funding of abortions performed outside of hospitals.

The government in the neighboring province of Nova Scotia, meanwhile, announced on October 25 that it was ending all funding of facility fees at a Halifax abortion clinic, the only clinic in the province. Henceforth, the government-run health plan will pay only doctors' fees at the facility. Patients will have to pay from \$300 to \$600.

Currently, only the health plans in British Columbia and Ontario cover the full cost of abortions performed in clinics. Quebec covers a portion of facility fees as well as doctors' fees.

Ottawa wants to control cutback pace

The issue of facility fees at private health clinics has emerged as a dispute between Ottawa and the provincial governments. Federal Health Minister Dianne Marleau announced in September that, as of October 15, services at private health clinics must be funded either entirely by provincial health-care plans or not at all. After that date, provincial governments would lose health care funding by amounts equivalent to any facility fees paid by clinic patients.

The Nova Scotia decision on abortion fees, for example, will cost the province approximately \$130,000 in withheld federal money. Marleau's directive has been sharply criticized by most provincial governments.

At issue is who will control the pace and scope of health care cuts. Under the government-run health care system in Canada, provincial governments administer health care. Funding is provided from general tax revenues of both federal and provincial governments. The Canada Health Act empowers the federal government to establish national standards if it so chooses.

Ottawa has cut billions of dollars from health care funding (so-called "transfer payments") to the provinces in recent years. The provincial governments have been carrying out their own funding

cuts.

Ottawa wants a hand in the pace and scope of the cuts because it shares the repercussions of cutback decisions in any one province.

Cutbacks are putting wind in the sails of capitalist forces that advocate allowing private health care services to expand. They argue demagogically that private clinics will free up resources in an increasingly burdened public system.

A dual health care system — public and private — is proposed in the program of the rightist Reform Party, the third largest party in the Canadian Parliament.

Ottawa is posturing as a defender of the public system. On October 17, Marleau mused that she might even outlaw altogether the operation of private clinics. But her government's cuts are actually undermining public health care and converging with the Reform Party position.

Marleau's directive on private clinics is a threat to the abortion clinics in Canada because these constitute most of the private clinics currently in operation. The private facilities exist because only one third of hospitals in Canada offer abortion services.

Abortion clinics and health care

Any move against the abortion clinics would be a blow to health care because they have played an important role in making abortion safer and more accessible in Canada.

Statistics Canada reported in March that the number of second-trimester abortions had declined from 21 percent of all abortions in 1974 to 10 percent in 1991. The complication rate of second-trimester abortions compared to first-trimester ones, according to the agency, is a whopping 13 times higher.

Wayne Millar, a co-author of the study, attributed the improved safety of abortions to easy access to clinics and women's greater knowledge about complications caused by later abortions.

Thirty percent of abortions in Canada in 1992 were performed in clinics. In 1994, there were more than 100,000 abortions in the country.

An historic victory for women's rights was registered in 1988 when the Supreme Court of Canada ruled as unconstitutional a law that restricted access to abortion. The ruling followed years of mass struggles by supporters of women's right to choose. A subsequent attempt by the federal government to recriminalize abortion fizzled out in the Canadian Senate in 1991.

The 1988 ruling meant that abortion became a decision between a woman and her doctor. Subsequent court decisions have ruled that governments must treat it as a medical service to be funded through the public health care system.

Roger Annis is a member of Local 841 in Montreal of the Communications, Energy, and Paperworkers Union of Canada.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interest of the Working People

November 27, 1970

Price 10¢

EVANSVILLE, Ind. — More than 5,000 members of Local 808 of the International Union of Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO, have been on the picket line since Oct. 18, when they met here in a football stadium and voted overwhelmingly to strike Whirlpool Corporation, the largest single employer in southwest Indiana. Only four voted against the strike.

The central issue is wages. The union is asking for a modest \$1.81 cents per hour increase over a three-year period. Whirlpool management refused to negotiate this offer and finally made its counter offer of 66 cents just two days before the contract deadline.

The meager Whirlpool offer is not even enough to cover the added costs of living over the next three years. In addition, Whirlpool is trying to rob its workers of rights already won. The new contract offered by management contains a clause which, in effect, deprives many workers of their right to a paid vacation. Now, anyone who has worked a full year receives a one-week vacation. After 10 years of service, a worker has a three-week vacation.

Through a new method of measuring length of service, the corporation is hoping to rob all new workers hired this year of their right to a paid vacation next year. The new contract management is trying to force on the union provides that any worker who has not completed one full year of service by

January 1971 cannot expect a vacation next year. (Formerly, the eligibility date was July 1, the end of the fiscal years.)

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

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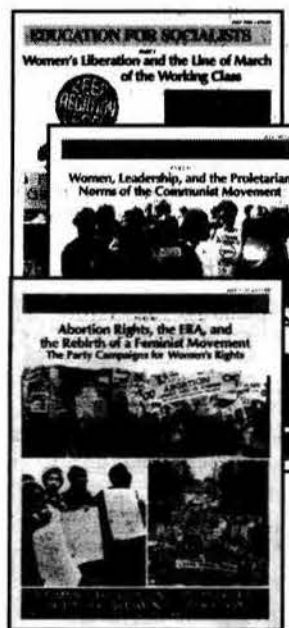
November 24, 1945

BALIKPAPAN, Borneo, Oct. 25 — In this village of 14,000 there is only one dispensary. Its small staff is capable of administering only first aid and yet it must handle advanced cases of tuberculosis, beri-beri, elephantiasis, venereal diseases, and a thousand and one other serious cases.

More than 1,500 patients daily line up for "treatment." To take care of the hospital and the "more serious cases" there are one Chinese doctor and two Dutch nurses. The hospital is usually the last resort. So long as a man is able to stand on his feet and walk to the dispensary he's well enough to remain out of the hospital. The toll of deaths is frightful. Mass graves are dug to bury the dead.

Australian soldiers here are well aware of the stakes in the present conflict. Like their brother dock-workers on the mainland they resent the policy of the Australian government which is helping to restore Dutch colonial exploitation.

In Australia they refused to load Dutch ships with supplies and troops destined for Java. In the Indies, soldiers have signed petitions demanding that the Australian government recognize the Indonesian independence movements. Signs were painted by Australian soldiers amid the ruins of war-bombed oil refineries in Balikpapan. They expressed the sympathy of Australian troops with the independence movement.



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Win support to parole Curtis

Iowa authorities have decided to allow union and political activist Mark Curtis to appear before the state Board of Parole on November 21, the first time in three years. This decision is the product of growing pressure on the state as more and more people are asking, "Why is Mark Curtis still in prison?"

Even though Curtis has met the requirements for release on parole under Iowa law for a number of years, the authorities have refused to let him go. Curtis has served more than seven years in state prison. Two years ago he served out his frame-up conviction of rape. He is now being held solely on a charge of burglary, tacked on by county prosecutors weeks after his arrest to add the threat of a longer sentence.

For the last seven years, prison and parole officials have treated Curtis as a "dangerous man." Their goal has been to break him, to destroy his defense, and to set an example to intimidate others who are active in their unions and coming into politics today.

The decision of parole officials to grant Curtis a hearing November 21 is a break with this pattern. Under the pressure of the length of time Curtis has served, the fact he has remained a political activist and has won respect defending the rights of prisoners, and the growing public attention to his case, parole officials have been forced to initiate the process that will ultimately lead to Curtis's freedom.

The stakes in this fight are important for unionists, working farmers, and all fighters. The rights and conditions of immigrant workers—from Proposition 187 in California to raids in the packinghouses of the Midwest—are becoming an increasingly important question for working people.

In Grand Island, Nebraska, for instance, workers at IBP struggled for years to organize into the United Food and Commercial Workers, to protect their health, wages, and working conditions. As the workers got close to forcing a vote in 1993, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, in collusion with the company, organized

to raid the factory, seize hundreds of workers from Mexico and other countries, and deport them. The organizing drive had to start over and confront divisions in the workforce sown by the raid. Finally last month, despite the raids and fierce resistance by IBP, they succeeded in voting in the UFCW.

This question is at the heart of the Curtis fight. He was arrested hours after speaking out in Spanish in defense of 17 coworkers from Mexico and El Salvador who had been taken into custody in an immigration raid on the Monfort packing plant in 1988. When he was taken to the Des Moines City Jail, he was brutally beaten by city cops who yelled at him that he was a "Mexican lover, just like you love those coloreds."

Curtis is still in prison because he is an example of what the rulers fear today, a rank-and-file militant worker who is willing to fight to unify the working class—native and foreign-born, Black and white, women and men—against the employers' offensive.

In addition to Curtis's refusal to be broken by the bosses' prisons, state officials must take into account the impact of this year's widespread revelations concerning cop beatings, racism and frame-ups. From Mark Fuhrman in the O.J. Simpson case to revelations of cop frame-ups in Philadelphia and Atlanta, police victimizations like that of Curtis are more difficult to defend politically.

In response to the stepped-up economic and political offensive of the rulers, new layers of activists have entered politics. Curtis's fight has won a response from those who stepped forward to demonstrate October 14 and 21 against the U.S. embargo against Cuba; who have been forced on strike by the *Detroit News*, Firestone, and Caterpillar; and who have moved into action to defend abortion rights, among others.

The fight to win freedom for Mark Curtis has reached a new stage. Let's use the last few days before the November 21 hearing to put more pressure on the authorities by demanding: Parole Mark Curtis now!

The bipartisan budget charade

The big-business media portrays the current wrangling in Washington as a sharp ideological face-off, with Bill Clinton in one corner defending Medicare and the Republican-led Congress in the other corner fighting for a "balanced budget." But the theatrical presidential vetoes and shutdown of government services are a charade. The Democratic White House and the Republicans have exactly the same goal. As loyal representatives of the superrich, they are both pressing to erode many of the fundamental social gains of working people.

The Clinton administration made its priorities clear when Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin took emergency steps—tapping federal employees' retirement funds—to circumvent the national debt ceiling in order to pay \$25 billion in interest to multimillionaire bondholders. Interest payments are the third biggest item in the federal budget, but for Democrats and Republicans the capitalist bondholders are sacred.

Because of their historically sagging profit rates, the U.S. employers are compelled today to try to roll back the social entitlements workers have won through decades of struggle, such as Medicare, unemployment benefits, workers' compensation, and Social Security. Clinton, like the Republicans in Congress, is proposing to slash hundreds of billions from Medicare and other

programs.

The debate in Washington is strictly on tactics, not fundamentals: how far and how fast can they get away with cutting social programs. The big obstacle facing the employers is that the working class considers these basic social rights, and both Republicans and Democrats are nervous about sparking widespread opposition to such attacks. But attack they must, so their probes against the social wage will continue.

Today there is a modest but palpable resistance by working people to the employers' onslaught on wages and living standards. It is evident in the strikes by tens of thousands of unionists at Boeing, the *Detroit News*, and Caterpillar, among others. Workers in these three fights have stood their ground for weeks or months. The determination displayed by 32,000 Boeing strikers in protecting their health-care benefits and other hard-earned gains does not go unnoticed. These are real factors the capitalist rulers must take into account in deciding how hard they can press their assault.

These labor fights, the recent demonstrations in defense of affirmative action, and similar struggles by working people and youth are the most effective way to resist today's assault on our rights by the employers and their bipartisan gang in Washington.

Close all U.S. bases in Japan!

Vice president Al Gore, filling in for Bill Clinton, will try to justify to the people of Japan why they should support maintaining thousands of U.S. troops and massive military bases on their soil when he meets with Japan's prime minister. Washington wants to reaffirm the terms of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, in place since 1960, and is pressing hard to hold off any changes. Big-business politicians and the media in the United States have expressed irritation that more of their counterparts in Japan have not pitched in to counter publicly the rising tide of sentiment there against the U.S. bases.

On a recent visit to Japan, U.S. defense secretary William Perry pointed to North Korea as a threat to the region, declaring that Tokyo and Washington had to be firm allies in "facing one of the post Cold War [era's] most dangerous threats: a rogue nation with nuclear weapons." This hypocrisy comes from the very imperialist power that dropped nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and that today maintains troops and a nuclear arsenal in the south of the Korean peninsula.

Washington has its bases in Japan to maintain the imperialist exploitation and domination of the peoples of the region. It also has divergent interests from those of the Japanese capitalist class. Having a massive military presence on Japan's soil gives it an upper hand in the inevitable and growing competition that is a part of the

crisis of the capitalist economic system.

The hesitancy of capitalist spokespeople in Japan to defend the status quo reflects Tokyo's growing need to defend its own interests directly, including through military power. That is why some politicians there call for reexamining the long-standing pact with Washington.

But the protests against the U.S. military show that millions of working people in Japan reject the idea that the bases and the troops have anything to do with aiding the peoples of Asia.

On Okinawa especially, the legacy of decades of direct rule by the U.S. military and the occupation of one-fifth of the island by the bases has led to deep-going opposition. The recent kidnapping and rape of a schoolgirl by three U.S. soldiers touched off a huge response because of the history of abuse at the hands of the occupying military forces. It is also true that, wherever the U.S. military sets up, centers of prostitution are organized around the bases. This is what many Okinawans, and others throughout Japan, are demanding be brought to an end by ousting the bases.

Removing the bases would be a step forward for all working people by limiting the ability of the world's number one warmaker to use its forces against workers and farmers in Asia. We should join with those in Japan demanding: U.S. Bases Out! and Yankee Go Home!

Boeing strike rally

Continued from front page

clerk for Burlington Northern Railroad for 28 years. "It's happening in every industry, they're taking everything away that workers have won."

The strike at Boeing began October 6, after workers rejected a contract that would impose increases in health-care costs, inadequate retirement increases, and give small lump sum bonuses the first two years of the contract in lieu of wage increases. It also failed to satisfy union demands for job security.

Many strikers interviewed said they voted against the contract largely because they object to being forced to pay more for health care, while the company is raking in profits. "Most people I've talked to would have accepted the contract if Boeing had not made the changes in medical benefits that it did," explained Al Doll, who was out on a Seattle picket line. Doll is a machinist who has worked at Boeing for 11 years.

The rally featured newly elected AFL-CIO officers John Sweeney, Richard Trumka, and Linda Chavez-Thompson—president, secretary-treasurer and executive vice president respectively. The day before, they spoke at a similar rally in Wichita, Kansas, where 7,000 Machinists are on strike against Boeing.

One of the best-received speakers of the day was Kate DeSmet, a member of the Newspaper Guild on strike against the *Detroit News* Agency. "I bring greetings from 2,500 workers on strike against *Detroit News* and *Detroit Free Press*," she told the crowd, which gave her a standing ovation.

She explained that the newspaper publishers are all declaring that their strike is over, and that the workers have lost. "But I'm telling you today, this strike ain't over 'til we say it's over!" she said to thunderous applause. She led the gathering in chanting, "We are the union! Mighty, mighty union! Mighty! Union!"

Others who spoke were Rosalinda Guillén, of the United Farm Workers of America; Roy Wise, secretary-treasurer of the United Auto Workers; Brian McWilliams, president of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union; Joel Parker, vice president of TCU; and Bill Johnson, IAM District Lodge 751 president.

IAM officials push protectionism

The IAM officialdom has centered its fire on foreign subcontracting and offset agreements as the cause of declining jobs. "The Machinists Union seeks a full review of U.S. commercial and trade policies to promote continued world leadership in aerospace. It does our nation no good at all, if an airplane bears the name Boeing or McDonnell Douglas, but was built in China," said the IAM informational leaflet distributed at the rally.

Boeing says only 1,900 jobs in the U.S. have been eliminated by subcontracting, out of the 60,000 that it has eliminated since 1990. It also says it must make offset agreements with other countries in order to successfully compete for their airplane orders.

George Kourpias, international president of the IAM, laid out the labor officialdom's view at the rally. "If protectionism means protecting ourselves from a greedy global marketplace, then yes, we are protectionist," he declared. "Of course," he added, "we want Boeing to sell planes, but we want to be the ones who build them."

Many strikers echoed the union tops' position that the strike is about winning job security. At the rally, Decker explained her reason for being there was that she "has two boys and I have to think about their future. Boeing is sending our jobs to foreign countries to save a buck."

This issue of subcontracting work was highlighted by a front-page article appearing the day of the rally in the combined *Seattle Times/Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, entitled "When Jobs Go South." The article compared the lives of Vickie, whose job at Boeing's Auburn plant sewing and cutting insulation blankets is scheduled to be eliminated; and a Mexican worker, María, doing exactly the same job for a Boeing subcontractor in Mexico. Vickie makes \$18 an hour while María earns \$6.10 a day. "It is not enough to live well," María says. According to the article, Boeing will save about \$50 million by shifting the work to other plants.

On the picket line at the Everett plant Bud Adams, who has worked at Boeing for 17 years, said, "It doesn't make me proud that Boeing is paying people \$6 a day in Mexico. I don't blame Mexican workers, they are just trying to make a living. I blame the company."

Responding to demands that workers accept less to help Boeing compete Doll said, "Being competitive is just an excuse to make extra profits." He added, "We can compete ourselves down to slave labor and the company will still try to find ways to remain competitive."

In the week before the rally, the IAM filed four new charges of unfair labor practices with the National Labor Relations Board. The charges allege that Boeing withheld vacation pay from striking workers, attempted to coerce laid-off workers to cross the picket line, failed to bargain in good faith on health-care issues, and provided misleading information to striking employees regarding extended medical benefits.

Many workers believe they will get a better picture of how much a fight they are in for after the first 45 days of the strike are up. Boeing has a clause in many of its contracts with customers allowing up to a one-year delay in delivery of a jet without penalty if it was caused by a strike lasting more than 45 days.

Bob Bruneau is a member of IAM local 751-A at Boeing's Renton plant and is on strike. Scott Breen is a member of IAM Local 289.

Mazda workers in Japan describe job conditions

BY ROBERT MILLER

NEWARK, New Jersey — I was part of a team of socialist workers who traveled to Japan in late July and early August to attend meetings and conferences organized around the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Washington's atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As an auto worker at the Ford assembly plant in Edison, New Jersey, and a member of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 980, I had an interest in learning about the work-

preferential rights due to seniority. They get three weeks of vacation a year, all on national holiday weeks. Currently, the shifts are eight hours or less and there has been no overtime since 1992.

The plant manager said there have been no layoffs of full-time workers. Instead, all the in-plant subcontractor workers and seasonal workers, who have historically been a part of auto plants in Japan, have been tossed out. The workforce also declined in three years by 3,000, or 10 percent, through

tion of All Mazda Workers' Unions (AMW) — is not an industrial union but part of the automobile federation, which is essentially a coordinating body of company-based unions. As in virtually all Japanese factories with a union, all employees are members of the same union, including engineers, accountants, office staff, and production workers.

I met the vice-president of AMW, Mikio Ohara, at an August 6 rally of 6,000 people against nuclear weapons. He explained that the union does not have a contract with the company. Each spring there are negotiations on wages called "base-up," he added, noting that the last increase was paltry and "bonuses" were equivalent to two or three months' wages, half what they used to be.

I also met six Nissan auto workers before another anti-nuclear weapons rally in Nagasaki on August 9. A forklift driver, Masatoshi Sakanoshita, quizzed me about my union contract. All these workers were somewhat astonished when I related what I consider are some of the modest protections and rights that we have wrested from the bosses and that are in the local and national UAW contracts. These include job bids, choosing vacations, and health and safety provisions that at times enable the union to shut the line down. We agreed that international solidarity was necessary for the fight against nuclear weapons and against the auto bosses.

Women in the workforce

Yoko Kawahara, who has been working at Ishizaki Honten, a Mazda subcontractor, since 1981, explained some of the conditions women workers face. The company where she works manufactures car glass, used in sun roofs and rear defrosters, and employs some 500 workers, with 350 in the car division.

Pointing to the uneven effect of Japan's prolonged recession on men and women, Kawahara explained that in 1981, 90 percent of the workers in the car division of

Ishizaki Honten were women and only 40 percent are today. As the openings for higher paying jobs for men are sharply reduced, they remained at Ishizaki and women are increasingly pushed out of the workforce.

"From 1981 to 1992 the company was always hiring," Kawahara said. In 1990, she added, women stayed for 7.2 years on the average and men only 2.1 years, before moving to better jobs. "Since 1993, there is no more hiring and the men stopped quitting," she said.

Kawahara explained how the union was set up at Ishizaki in 1984. When Mazda built a new plant in Hofu, Japan, Ishizaki set up shop there too. "But the bosses at Ishizaki were afraid the Communist Party might set up a union at the new plant so the company bosses went to the Mazda Hiroshima union, Mazda Roren. The union leadership [at the new plant] was hand-picked and one day a lead man all of a sudden announced there is a union."

In 1986, Kawahara became a member of the union executive committee, and she also began to try to address the wage disparities between men and women. Although women at her plant tend to remain in the workforce longer and their average ages are higher, "women's wages are seen as 'supplementary' income and do not increase according to the 'curve' [of the seniority wage system] as men's wages do," Kawahara said.

In 1990, Kawahara initiated a suit against the company for wage discrimination against women. Union officials demanded she drop the suit, saying it would hurt the company, and she was expelled from the union executive committee.

Support from some co-workers, especially women, has helped Kawahara withstand the pressure to quit or drop her legal challenge. She noted that most men are at grade 4, most women at grade 3, and, in retaliation for her fight against discrimination, she remains stuck in grade 2.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

ing conditions and the state of unions in Japan.

Some of the light pick-up trucks that members of my union local produce are sold as Mazdas, so I arranged to tour the plant in Hiroshima. One-quarter of the working population in Hiroshima prefecture works for the Mazda auto company, its subsidiaries, or subcontractors.

The Hiroshima factory spans three kilometers east to west, and close to a million cars are produced there a year. Of the 27,000 employees at the plant about half are production workers, only 50 of whom are women, the plant manager said.

Eleven different cars are built at the complex, which includes engine and stamping plants. I was struck by the large number of operations done by robots on the assembly line. The assembly operations were similar to those where I work, but I noticed that no smoking or refreshments are allowed on the factory floor — very different than my plant.

Production workers get only two 10-minute breaks compared to the 48 minutes UAW-organized assembly workers get in the United States. Workers have no rights to choose shifts based on seniority. Nor is there any job bidding where workers have

"voluntary" early incentive retirements. There has been no hiring of production workers in recent years and the average age is over 40.

While I was in Hiroshima, an article appeared in the daily paper *Asahi Shimbun* noting that some 33 Mazda subcontractors have gone bankrupt since the onset of the economic downturn in Japan in 1990-91.

Minoru Matsumoto, who I met at the World Conference Against A & H Bombs, worked for 25 years at Mazda and is currently on staff for the Communist Party. He said average wages are 280,000 yen a month (\$2,800) for a worker with about 20 years' seniority, noting that pay for the same job is based on a curve according to the number of years of service. The seniority-based wage system is prevalent in Japan and acts as a heavy discouragement from switching jobs.

Smaller bonuses reported

While Matsumoto was on the job, from 1960 to 1985, about a third of workers' income was from bonuses equal to five or six months' wages. In recent years, the company has decreased the bonus while making puny increases in the base wage.

The union at Mazda — *Roren*, or Federa-

LETTERS

Cuba unionist in Belfast

"Workers have discussed in detail how to resolve the daily problems of the people in Cuba with just 30 percent of the resources compared to 10 years ago," said Danilo Sánchez Vázquez. "Their aim has been to do this without closing schools, hospitals, or affecting pensions."

Sánchez, head of the International Department of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers, said this when speaking to an audience of mainly trade unionists at the headquarters of the Transport and General Workers Union in Belfast.

Sánchez explained how important it is for people from Ireland to visit Cuba and invited everyone in the audience. He asked trade union leaders to raise with the members of the Dail, Ireland's parliament, opening trade and diplomatic links with Cuba and reconsidering their position of abstention on the U.S. embargo at the UN.

In answer to a question on the role of the trade unions in Cuba, especially in the areas of joint capitalist ventures, he explained, "The law defends workers, it says the investor must recognize trade unions, wages and conditions. Sometimes the investor refuses to allow the trade union in the enterprise although the law is very clear. The trade unions are central in negotiating union recognition and ensuring the law is obeyed."

He went on to explain that the trade union leadership takes part with more than three million workers in workers' parliament discussions on the day-to-day problems. In the factories workers discuss how to manage the factory and how to solve job loss; in the countryside workers discuss food grown for the cities given the lack of fuel.

The leadership is responsible for expressing these decisions and

views at government level and meets directly with the directorate of the revolutionary government and Cuban president Fidel Castro. "The government responds to these views as it did over the workers' opposition to paying social security payments and postponed implementation of that tax," Sánchez said.

Joe Bowers of the MSP (Managerial and Scientific Staff Association) and former chair of the ICTU (Irish Confederation of Trade Unions) said, "the courageous struggle of this nation [Cuba] should inspire any people fighting for freedom....These people are entitled to our support."

He pointed out that trade unionists in the six counties were in the position of being able to put pressure on both the British and Irish governments to oppose the U.S. embargo against Cuba and encourage investment.

He called on those at the meeting to raise their voices for Cuba when Clinton visits Ireland.

Douglas Hamilton, who chaired the meeting for the Cuba Support Group Ireland, announced the Cuba Solidarity Group would call a picket outside the U.S. consulate during Clinton's tour of Belfast. This trip is scheduled for November. After discussion from the floor, all were in support of the proposal.

After the meeting activists in support of defending the Cuban revolution and of the fight for Irish national self-determination discussed the implications of the picket for the national struggle.

Activists explained that Sinn Féin defended the Cuban revolu-



tion and opposed the U.S. blockade. Douglas said, "I think the two struggles are part of the same struggle and do not conflict." Another activist said, "Not everyone agrees with us but I think defense of the Cuban revolution is central for winning self-determination today."

"We will invite all trade unions to support the picket," said Hamilton.

Ann Fiander
Belfast, Ireland

Alternative library

My short trial subscription to the *Militant* has expired. Recently, a couple of guys set up a table on campus and displayed copies of the *Militant* and other books put out by Pathfinder Press. I am impressed especially with your stand on Cuba. I have written articles and letters, and spoken out in class in support of the Cuban people and socialist revolution. I had an idea that I presented to one of the guys at the table and he suggested that I write it to New York:

As I am sure you are aware, most mainstream libraries have

made the ideas espoused by leftist causes inaccessible for the masses. While spouting First Amendment pieties, the bourgeoisie, especially in its radical (property-)rightist expressions, hypocritically blocks alternatives to the dominant capitalist beliefs. I have taken the initiative, therefore, of initiating a group entitled the Left Alternative Media Project, or LAMP.

LAMP's first priority is to make available to students and our community those leftist publications not carried by the University of Oregon Knight Library. We should begin with newspapers, such as the *Militant*, and then move into other efforts still to be planned.

I would consider the media in general, but at this moment I recognize such a grand endeavor as beyond my own single and meager capabilities. The project is picking up enthusiasts as the Fall Quarter progresses. I have put together a set of magazine racks in the office of our leftist student newspaper *The Student Insurgent*. I have been putting my copies of

the *Militant* in the rack. Folks are reading the material.

Activists should recognize that LAMP has the potential to introduce leftist, and Marxist, concepts, and ultimately praxis, to young workers of the future and our society at large. As such, I would entertain no restrictions on any similar projects appropriating the LAMP name and operating in a similar fashion. I would ask only that other operations who utilize the name remain open to the entire left (for practical purposes) and use the name with the attachment of their location to distinguish their work from LAMP, Eugene.

Chris Brady
Eugene, Oregon

Was Simpson jury right?

The *Militant* should not have commented that O.J. Simpson's trial jury did right by acquitting him. The LAPD and DA in reality blew the opportunity to convict him. Where was Orenthal Simpson between 10:10 and 10:50 June 12, 1994?

Derrick Hall
East Los Angeles, California

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.

The *Militant* receives many requests from readers behind bars. The *Militant* Prisoner Subscription Fund makes it possible to send reduced-rate subscriptions to prisoners who can't afford to pay for them. To help us respond to requests for subscriptions please send your contribution to the *Militant* Prisoner Subscription Fund, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

U.S. gov't feels heat on Okinawa bases

BY LAURA GARZA

The visit of President Clinton to Japan for a November 20 summit meeting with Tomiichi Murayama, the country's prime minister, was intended to provide an opportunity to reaffirm the security arrangement pact between the two governments with much fanfare.

Instead, the review of the accord takes place amidst a heated debate, with more and more Japanese working people raising their voices against the U.S. military presence in Okinawa and throughout Japan.

The largest mobilizations against U.S. bases in decades have taken place in Japan recently. They were sparked by the September 4 rape of a 12-year-old Okinawan school girl. Three U.S. soldiers entered guilty pleas on November 7 to conspiring to abduct and rape the girl. Marcus Gill, one of the GIs, pleaded guilty to charges of beating and raping her.

Washington's defense of the U.S. bases has not been helped by the facts that have emerged so far. The incident was sparked, according to one defense lawyer, because Gill just wanted to "have fun," but didn't have enough money to pay a prostitute. The other two soldiers charged pled guilty only to conspiracy, claiming they didn't succeed in raping the girl, and one denied he had hit her.

U.S. military authorities initially refused to turn the soldiers over to Japanese officials. They were forced to do so after massive protests swept Okinawa when the three GIs were indicted. In a new bilateral agreement, Washington agreed for the first time to consider requests to turn over soldiers accused of crimes. But the decision remains in the hands of the U.S. military brass. The Status of Forces Agreement, outlining the rules under which the U.S. forces operate, has not been changed.

U.S. defense secretary William Perry visited Japan in the wake of the largest protest in 25 years. Between 60,000 and 85,000 people marched in Okinawa October 21, with another 10,000 demonstrating in Tokyo. Among the slogans the protesters shouted was "Yankee go home." Perry tried to placate the growing anger in the population with promises that Washington would consider some "adjustments" and work to "reduce the intrusiveness" of the 47,000 troops stationed in Japan.

Stating his remarks were a "preview" of what Clinton would say, Perry also stressed the U.S. government had no intention of reducing the number of troops stationed there. He stated the Japanese have to accept some inconvenience in order to have the "credible security guarantee" provided by U.S. troops. Perry also said that his government hoped Tokyo would "renew its commitment to U.S. troops" during Clinton's visit.

All three capitalist parties in Japan's governing coalition support the presence of U.S. troops and maintaining the secu-

rity treaty. But the massive protests and growing sentiment against the bases have sent capitalist politicians scurrying to deliver some kind of change that will give the appearance of responding to the demands for cutting back the U.S. presence, especially in Okinawa.

In the wake of the protests, the daily *Asahi Evening News* ran a front-page column chiding Murayama for holding to the "stupid misconception" that maintaining the Japan-U.S. security treaty is realistic.

On October 19 a government spokesperson said Murayama would raise the question of reductions in the size of the bases with Clinton at their meeting. The pressure to do so was highlighted by Murayama's statement that "the issue of Okinawa will be the issue that determines the fate of this cabinet."

The U.S. military concentrates 75 percent of its bases in Japan on the island of Okinawa, along with 29,000 troops. The



Protesters march through central Okinawa October 21

island, which has its own distinct culture, was occupied by Japan and then by the U.S. military at the end of World War II, after a battle in which one in every three

Okinawans died. It was returned to Japanese administration in 1972, and is the poorest prefecture in Japan. Some 47,000 U.S. troops are in Japan, and 13,000 more are on ships off the country's coast.

The U.S. bases occupy 20 percent of Okinawa's main island, and bring with them hazards, including target practice over highways and abuse by soldiers. There have 36 aircraft crashes since 1972, the latest being an F-15 jet that crashed off the island on October 17.

The governor of Okinawa, Masahide Ota, has refused to sign documents to extend leases on land used for the U.S. bases, some of which come up in March. Ota became governor four years ago after publicly campaigning to remove the bases, but he signed to renew the leases shortly after. Now, under pressure from the public mobilizations, he is refusing to budge. In an effort to resolve the crisis before Clinton's visit, Murayama met with Ota on November 4 to pressure him to reverse course. The leases can be forcibly renewed by Murayama. But he also campaigned in the past against the bases and wants to avoid being directly responsible for imposing the extensions.

A top Defense Ministry official, Noboru Hoshuyama, who headed the agency that oversaw all defense installations — including those used by the U.S. government — was forced to resign after he was quoted as calling Murayama "stupid" for his response to the situation. He stated his view that Murayama should have been more forthright in defending the U.S. bases and the security agreement.

Nine rights activists hanged in Nigeria

BY DEREK BRACEY

The military regime in Nigeria hanged Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other men November 10. The nine, members of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), said they had been framed up for their opposition to the dictatorship and to the pollution of their region by Shell Oil, which produces half of Nigeria's crude oil. A court had convicted them of the murder of four Ogoni politicians just 10 days earlier.

The executions sparked worldwide outrage at the regime of Gen. Sani Abacha. Human rights activists accused Shell Oil of using its influence to slander Saro-Wiwa, contributing to his arrest and execution.

Washington, London, and other governments reacted by withdrawing their ambassadors and issuing protests. Some governments and organizations have called for punitive measures, ranging from trade sanctions to lesser actions.

At their meeting in Auckland, New Zealand, the British Commonwealth governments voted to suspend Nigeria from

the organization.

South African president Nelson Mandela, who attended the Auckland meeting, called on the organization to expel Nigeria "pending the installation of a democratic government." The South African government subsequently recalled its ambassador from the country.

Most governments in the European Union and the United States pulled their envoys out of Nigeria. UK prime minister John Major announced that London would tighten an existing arms embargo and would not rule out other sanctions, including on oil.

Shell sticks with Nigerian military

At the same time, nearly all the multinational corporations with investments in Nigeria, including the most prominent, Royal Dutch Shell, have announced that they have no plans to pull operations out of the country.

In many European and other countries, picket lines have been organized at Shell corporate offices demanding the company pull out of Nigeria.

The Nigerian government has defended the killings and denounced the international criticism of its actions. On November 13, Idris Kpaki, the Nigerian foreign minister, directed the country's ambassadors to return home. The government insisted that the executed activists were convicted solely for murder.

Saro-Wiwa and the others were given scant opportunity to appeal the October 31 convictions. The nine were hanged in Port Harcourt in the Niger River delta, and promptly buried in a cemetery in the town, which has since been sealed off by the police.

MOSOP had been formed to press for the rights of the Ogoni people, one of the national minorities who live the Niger delta region. Some 2 million barrels of oil a day are produced in that area by six major companies in joint ventures with the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation. The Ogoni people are among the most exploited and face poor living conditions.

The delta region is underdeveloped and exposed to significant pollution by the oil companies. Many the delta's 6 million

people lack power, clean water, roads, and other basic amenities.

Meanwhile the oil companies, as they suck huge amounts of wealth from the ground and from the labor of Nigerian workers, burn unprofitable gases in the atmosphere. Spills and pipeline leaks make the water dangerous for residents. Earlier this year, a fire in a creek near Nembe burned for several days. Villagers complained that vegetation was destroyed and no fish were left in the creek, their main source of livelihood.

In recent years MOSOP became one of the most prominent organizations fighting for better conditions. The organization pressed demands for compensation from Royal Dutch Shell and the Nigerian government for environmental damage and community neglect.

Abacha, who took control of the government shortly after the military annulled the June 1993 elections, organized an aggressive campaign against the Ogonis. This included launching a series of raids on villages beginning in August 1993, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds.

In May 1994 four traditional Ogoni leaders who sought dialogue with the government and did not favor MOSOP's militancy were murdered. The government claimed that Saro-Wiwa and other MOSOP leaders organized the killings. The MOSOP leaders were tried and convicted before a civil disturbances tribunal. But witnesses said the trial was a mockery of justice, since government officials had announced the defendants' guilt before the tribunal was convened.

Critics of the military regime accuse Shell of complicity in the arrest and execution of Saro-Wiwa. They say the oil company, concerned about growing protests by Ogonis against its polluting plants, fingered the activist to the cops, who have a history of brutalizing anti-Shell demonstrators.

In a front-page feature titled "Did Shell Oil help execute Ken Saro-Wiwa?" the November 21 issue of the *New York Village Voice* reports that affidavits signed by two key prosecution witnesses against Saro-Wiwa state that Shell offered them bribes to testify against the activist.

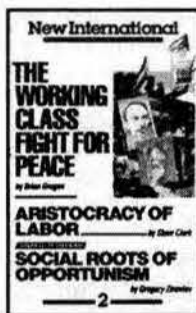
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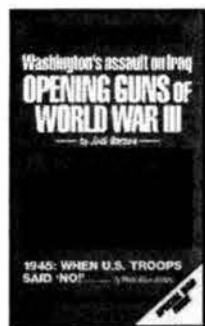


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