

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Industrial production
slowly recovers in Cuba

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 61 NO. 28 AUGUST 25, 1997

Socialist: N.Y. 'bomb' raid is attack on rights

The following statement was released on August 3 by Olga Rodríguez, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York.

Working people everywhere should condemn and reject the attack on democratic rights of immigrant workers, Arab-Americans, and other working people carried out by Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and New York City and federal cops, stemming from the July 31 police commando action in Brooklyn. We should stand with the Palestinian people in their struggle for freedom and self-determination and oppose Washington's support to the violence of the Israeli state against that struggle.

Under the pretext of foiling a plot by alleged bomb-making terrorists, the New York city cops and agents of the FBI have run rough-shod over the rights and civil liberties of working people in the Brooklyn neighborhood south of Park Slope. Snipers, helicopters, and riot police armed to the teeth held that community hostage in the heart of Brooklyn. They smashed in the door of an apartment with guns blazing, shooting two of the alleged bomb makers, Gazi Abu

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12,000 attend world youth festival

BY JACK WILLEY
AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

HAVANA, Cuba — Tens of thousands of young people filled the Panamerican stadium here August 5 for the closing ceremony of the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students. Among them were most of the 12,335 delegates from 132 countries who participated in the international youth gathering. Festival attendance surpassed the expectations of the organizers, who were initially projecting that 5,000 delegates would take part.

Opposition to imperialist domination and

Protest harassment of youth returning from Cuba

— pages 7, 14

plunder of the majority of the people's of the world was at the center of the deliberations of the conference, whose official theme was "anti-imperialist solidarity, peace, and friendship." This was reflected in the final declaration of the festival, read at the concluding event by Lehdia Mohamed Dafa, delegate from the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (SADR). The document denounced the expansion of NATO into Eastern and Central Europe, led by Washington, and demanded the dissolution of the imperialist military alliance. It called on young people to support all struggles against colonialism, demand the cancellation of the foreign debt of third world countries, and campaign "for the lifting of the U.S. blockade against Cuba."

The Union of Young Communists (UJC), Federation of University Students, and other host organizations in Cuba dedicated the

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Support UPS strikers!

185,000 Teamsters demand full-time jobs, dignity

BY MARK CURTIS
AND JAMES VINCENT

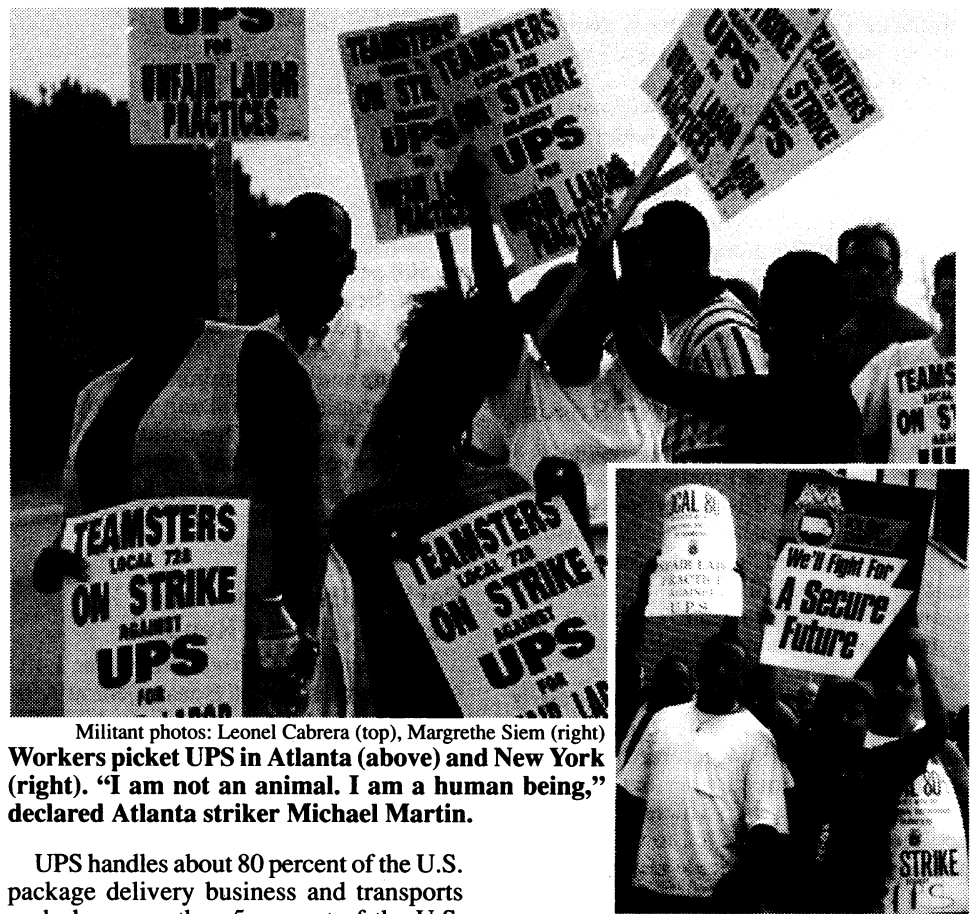
CHICAGO — Across the country 185,000 striking Teamsters at 2,400 distribution depots have shut down United Parcel Service (UPS), the nation's largest delivery company. This is the first nationwide strike against the company in its 90-year history. It is the largest strike against a U.S. corporation in many years.

After months of contract negotiations, the union rejected what the company described as its "last, best and final" offer at 12:01 a.m. August 4. In response, UPS workers set up picket lines throughout the United States.

The central issue in the strike is the fight for better pay and conditions for part-time workers, and the union's demand that UPS hire more workers full-time. Health, safety, and the company's attempt to force workers out of the Teamsters pension plans are also important questions.

Picketing the Pleasantdale UPS facility in Atlanta, where the shipping giant is based, Michael Martin, 32, commented on the stakes in the fight. "Some people say we're going to hurt the country," he said. "I say it will help. The underlying issue is this: I do tremendous amounts of work for UPS. But I am not an animal. I am a human being. A victory in this strike will mean more workers will say it's enough, when it's enough."

In the Chicago area, more than 15,000 UPS workers are on strike. While waving their signs and pumping their fists, strikers at the Jefferson plant in Chicago's South side yelled "Shut down Big Brown" and "We want more money."



Militant photos: Leonel Cabrera (top), Margrethe Siem (right). Workers picket UPS in Atlanta (above) and New York (right). "I am not an animal. I am a human being," declared Atlanta striker Michael Martin.

UPS handles about 80 percent of the U.S. package delivery business and transports each day more than 5 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product. In 1996 UPS had revenues of \$22.5 billion, earning \$1 billion in profits. It has 200 aircraft plus an additional 300 chartered planes serving 400 airports in the United States and 200 over-

seas.

The strike has brought UPS to a virtual standstill. Few UPS workers have crossed picket lines and the 2,000 members of the

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Bipartisan budget attacks entitlements

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

President William Clinton and his Democratic and Republican colleagues reached a "balanced budget agreement" July 28 that gives significant tax breaks for the wealthy while continuing to chop away at the living standards of working people.

The deal, lauded in the bourgeois media as the "first major tax cut since 1981," increases inheritance tax exemptions from \$600,000 to \$1 million after 10 years and reduces the capital gains tax on profits from the sale of investments from 28 percent to 20 percent.

The pact slashes \$115 billion from Medicare and \$13 billion from Medicaid over the next five years. The budget would cut payments to hospitals, doctors, and other health care facilities. Medicare recipients will be required to pay \$4.50 more in monthly premiums by 2002; current payment are \$43.80 per month for all Medicare beneficiaries. Some 38 million people who are elderly or disabled receive Medicare benefits. Medicaid provides means-tested medical coverage to low-income workers.

Hospital administrators say the reductions in these programs will lead to layoffs and cuts in medical services. The proposed bill contains two new options that weaken Medicare as an entitlement. One would allow individuals to drop out of the standard Medicare program if they can afford to pay extra fees for private contracts with physicians for medical service at higher prices. The other option permits individuals to enroll in programs with no limits on premium charges by paying the amount over what Medicare will cover. Currently, doctors can be prosecuted if they charge Medicare recipients more than the amounts allowed by the government — even if patients can pay more.

During the course of the budget negotiations, capitalist politicians and the big-business media floated a proposal for means-testing Medicare benefits by imposing higher payments for wealthy beneficiaries. The Senate voted June 24 to raise the Medicare eligibility age from 65 to 67, increase monthly payments, and impose a \$5 fee for each home care visit. The means-testing plan was shelved, however, after the House of Representatives voted July 10 against increasing the eligibility age.

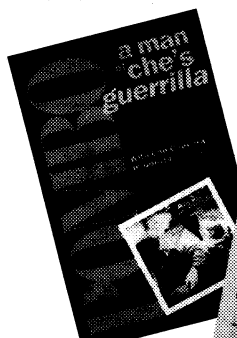
"In principle, I support means-testing" of

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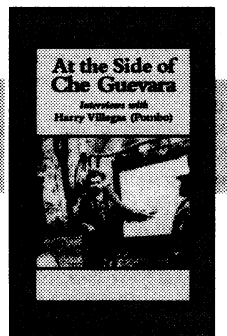
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Pol Pot on trial in Cambodia

Cambodia's prime minister, Hun Sen, has consolidated power after ousting co-premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh on July 6. Citing the coup as unstable for investment, the Association of South-East Asian Nations (Asean) reneged Cambodia's invitation to the Asian trade bloc. Meanwhile, Pol Pot, the leader of the Khmer Rouge guerrillas, has reportedly been put on trial by members of his group and given a life sentence. Hun Sen told reporters that the trial was a "trick" by the Khmer Rouge, and that he believed Pol Pot remains in command.

U.S. state department spokesman Nicholas Burns also stated disbelief in the trial and hypocritically added that the sentence of Pol Pot's life imprisonment was not sufficient for his crimes. The Pol Pot group, which killed more than 2 million people while in power from 1975 to 1979, was backed by Washington in its subsequent war against the Hun Sen government.

No buying, selling land in Russia

On July 25, Russia's Duma adopted a Land Code that didn't include the right to buy and sell land. Russian president Boris Yeltsin, who has pushed for such measures as part of so-called "market reforms," said he won't sign the bill. Land sales have been banned since the Russian revolution was consolidated and land nationalized nearly 80 years ago.

Meanwhile, the growing economic crisis in Russia, which has meant at times Russian soldiers are not paid, has forced Yeltsin to announce cuts in military personnel of up to one-third. Soldiers earn a mere \$3 a month, and the severity of life led to 500 Russian soldiers committing suicide last year.

French gov't reveals 'jobs plan'

The Socialist Party-led government in France, elected on the promise of creating 350,000 new jobs, announced a draft law July 30 it said would begin to meet that pledge. The measure is supposed to create 150,000 jobs by the end of 1998 for workers under age 26. The jobs will be limited to

five years and pay the minimum wage, with the government subsidizing employers 80 percent of the wage. These workers will not receive benefits normally associated with government jobs. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate rose again in June to 12.6 percent, or 3.13 million workers.

Paris pulls troops out of Central African Republic

Paris has decided to withdraw some 1,400 troops from its base in Bouar, Central African Republic. Defense Minister Alain Richard said that troops are being transferred to the capital city of Bangui and will eventually be withdrawn from the country. Over the next five years, Paris is expected to cut its forces on the continent from 8,000 to 5,000. Since May of 1996, there have been three major rebellions by soldiers and working people in Central African Republic. French troops aided the government in putting down the rebellions every time.

Strike called in Venezuela

The CTV labor confederation in Venezuela has called for a nationwide strike on

August 6 in response to the government's economic austerity measures and a 27 percent increase in gas prices. Several other unions are planning work stoppages for that week. Carlos Navarro, secretary-general of the CTV, said the strike is also pressing demands to increase wages based on an agreement between the union, private companies, and the government signed earlier this year.

Workers protest in Peru over economic conditions

Protests have continued against the Peruvian president Alberto Fujimori. In the largest actions since Fujimori took office in 1990, about 3,000 workers rallied in the capital city of Lima July 17, against austerity measures and attacks on democratic rights by the Fujimori regime. Members of the General Federation of Peruvian Workers chanted "Down with the dictator." On July 28, Fujimori was forced to announce a 15 percent wage increase for public employees, many of whom make \$250 a month. More than half of Peru's 24 million people live below the poverty line, and 70 percent do not have full-time employment.

Promising to clean up of the government, Fujimori dissolved Congress for a period in 1992 and ruled by decree. Recently, however, Fujimori's cabinet has been rocked by five resignations of top government officials. Fujimori's approval rating has hit an all-time low of 23 percent, and scandals including the questioning of Fujimori's nationality, and therefore the validity of his presidency, have also plagued the regime for months.

Italian company pays U.S. ITT for land nationalized in Cuba

The Italian communications firm Stet International agreed to pay the U.S. company ITT \$2.5 million for land that was nationalized after the 1959 Cuban revolution. In doing so, Stet will no longer be subject to

possible sanctions under the misnamed "Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act," commonly known as the Helms-Burton law. It is the first time that a U.S. company has received any payment for land that was nationalized in Cuba.

Mas Tec, the telecommunications and construction firm founded by right-wing Cuban-American Jorge Mas Canosa, had also approached ITT in an effort to buy out its claim.

UN troops to stay in Haiti

The United Nations Security Council decided July 30 to keep its intervention force in Haiti until the end of the year. UN troops arrived in March 1995, six months after U.S. soldiers invaded the island. U.S. ambassador to the United Nations William Richardson told the U.N. General Assembly that the imperialist mission in Haiti had made "impressive strides in bringing the rule of law and an effective justice mission to Haiti." The Haitian police force, which was trained by U.N. instructors and militarily backed by the United Nations, has killed nearly 50 people since July 1995.

Air Force chief resigns post

On July 28, Ronald Fogleman, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, resign his post in protest over the sanctioning of one of his brigadier generals for lax security in the bombing of U.S. barracks in Saudi Arabia last year. Fogleman had backed his officer corps in arguments with Secretary of Defense William Cohen. The main issue, Fogleman said, was the impact of the prosecution on the military brass and "whether or not the power of this government stands behind them when they go out there."

DC gov't stripped of power

White House and Congressional leaders reached agreement July 30 on a plan to strip the elected mayor and city council in Washington, D.C., of most of their political power and put the financial control board in charge for at least the next four years. The board, whose members were appointed by President William Clinton under legislation enacted by Congress in 1995, will now have control over nine major agencies, including Public Works, Human Services, Employment Services, Corrections, Health, Housing and Community Development, the public schools, police, and personnel. The mayor will oversee recreation, cable TV, tourism, and the taxicab commission.

In addition, the financial control board is directed to hire teams of what will be high-salaried consultants to reorganize city government operations. Businesses that invest in the city will receive huge tax breaks.

— MEGAN ARNEY

Brian Williams in Washington, D.C., contributed to this column.



Some 500 peasants demanding land for 1,500 families occupied a General Motors plant in Gravatai, Brazil, July 22. Above, cops surround the facility.

THE MILITANT

Support the Palestinian struggle

Palestinians will not stop fighting Tel Aviv's moves to expand Zionist settlements. The 'Militant' provides ongoing coverage of this resistance and points to the need for workers around the world to support their struggle for self-determination. Don't miss a single issue!



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Floods hit workers, farmers in Europe

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Since early July, severe flooding has devastated large areas in Central Europe, particularly in Poland, the Czech Republic, and Germany near the Oder and Morava rivers. The floods have also hit Austria, Hungary, Romania, and Ukraine to a lesser degree. The direct cause of the flooding has been heavy rain in the area.

In Poland, an area of more than 500,000 hectares (1.2 million acres) is flooded, including 1,100 cities and villages. At least 60 people have died and 140,000 have been evacuated from their homes. Most of the farmers hit by the flood are now ruined. Few had insurance or savings. Their crops are destroyed by poisoned flood water, which has also contaminated drinking water supplies and made it impossible to return.

As of July 27, the 750,000 inhabitants in the Polish city of Wroclaw were still getting their fresh water by lining up with barrels at tank-trucks. The Swedish daily *Svenska Dagbladet* reported that on the night of July 20 angry citizens blockaded a street in Wroclaw to protest the poor government support they have received; police responded by breaking up the blockade. Authorities there have been trying to clear the water treatment plant there by pumping sewage into the Oder river, further contaminating it.

Before the catastrophic dimensions of the flooding became clear, Polish prime minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz publicly criticized the victims for not having proper insurance and threatened to not give any assistance. But soon the Polish government had to promise \$1,000 to each family affected by the flood, plus one ton of grain for each hectare of destroyed farmland. The government in the Czech republic has made similar promises.

Swedish prime minister Göran Persson plans to visit Poland the first week in August to study the situation and promote the use of Swedish construction companies in

rebuilding the damaged areas. A German insurance company has estimated the property damage in Poland, Czech Republic, and eastern Germany at \$5.5 billion. Bonn and Stockholm have given some emergency relief to Poland, and the European Commission decided on to give \$2 million in emergency relief. The World Bank and European Investment Bank each offered Warsaw \$300 million in loans — still far short of the damage.

In the Czech republic 100,000 hectares fertile farmland was flooded, 46 people died, and 2,500 were injured. Some 80,000 have been evacuated and 10,000 are considered homeless.

Even before the flood catastrophe, the economy of the Czech Republic had been in rough shape. A trade deficit had grown, as imports increased while exports slowed down. The Czech crown fell against other currencies and growth rates for 1997 were estimated to be just above zero. Now the figure will surely be negative.

Poland has had the strongest growth among the countries in Eastern Europe — 6 percent annually. That rate is now expected to slow down, but the political crises due to the government's lack of response to the flood catastrophe will be an even more important consequence. Parliamentary elections are coming up September 21 and the opposition is benefiting from the resentment at the government's handling of the flooding.

Meanwhile, German chancellor Helmut Kohl has visited the area in eastern Germany around Frankfurt an der Oder several times, which at the beginning of August was the most threatened by further flooding. The areas around Frankfurt an der Oder, are now the scene of dramatic sandbagging efforts by people trying to protect houses and farmland. The Polish town Slubice in that area, with 18,000 inhabitants, has been evacuated.

Carl-Erik Isacsson is a member of the metalworkers union in Södertälje, Sweden.

20,000 march for Basque rights in Spain



BY MEGAN ARNEY

Some 20,000 people demonstrated in San Sebastián, Spain, July 27 to support the fight for self-determination of the Basque people and demand the transfer of around 600 Basque political prisoners to the northern region. The rally in the Basque region was in response to the reactionary Spanish government-organized mobilizations in mid-July. Those demonstrations protested the kidnapping and execution of bourgeois politician Miguel Angel Blanco by Basque Homeland and Liberty, known by its Basque initials ETA. The government is using the marches to push through laws to crack down on fighters for Basque independence.

The youth organization of the nationalist party Herri Batasuna (Popular Unity Party) led the march. "They wanted to sweep us off the street — here is our answer," said demonstrator Floren Aioiz. Only hours after the march, about 30 hooded thugs firebombed the demonstration's barricades injuring one woman.

The Basque people are an oppressed

nationality who have fought for independence from Spain and France for three decades. Since the death of fascist dictator Gen. Franco of Spain, the Basque people and the region have won some autonomy, including a bourgeois nationalist-run government in charge of "security" in the region, but not full self-determination. Nearly 600 Basque political prisoners are scattered around France and Spain. Madrid has long refused to move Basque political prisoners to the northern region and end the policy of dispersing prisoners across the country.

In its coverage of these developments, the big-business press around the world generally leaves out the recent publicity surrounding what is commonly called the Spanish government's "dirty war."

In a July 11 interview with the *New York Times*, former prime minister of Spain, Felipe González, admitted that while he was in office illegal actions by state-sanctioned and militarily supported death squads targeted and killed Basque militants and supporters. From 1983-1987 so-called Anti-Terrorist Liberation Groups killed 27 people.

Canadian, U.S. rulers escalate fight over salmon

BY PAUL KOURI

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — The conflict is deepening between the Canadian and U.S. governments and fish industry capitalists over who will get how much of the lucrative salmon catch along the northwest coast of North America.

For months Canadian politicians, led by BC premier Glen Clark, have been campaigning against U.S. fishermen and accusing fishers from Alaska of catching "Canadian" sockeye. Worried about a possible trade war with Washington, Ottawa has adopted a less strident tone against the United States.

"We are not going to allow those Americans, those pirates to catch our fish, steal our fish, and take food out of the mouth of

our families," Clark warned reporters July 18. Two Native American fishers were arrested and fined \$4,000 for fishing in "Canadian waters."

After the latest set of negotiations to establish fishing quotas between the two governments failed recently, Canadian Fisheries Minister David Anderson announced a policy of fishing aggressively, putting conservation of the fish stocks at risk, in the name of forcing the U.S. industry to bend to Ottawa's demand for a larger share of the quota for salmon fishing. Clark added, "We can inflict some serious harm on the U.S. catch."

On July 18, about 100 Canadian fishing boats formed a blockade to prevent two U.S. ships laden with salmon from reaching a

Prince Rupert cannery. After the U.S. boats were escorted out of the harbor by Canadian police the fishers decided to move their boats to block the exit of an Alaskan ferry docked in Prince Rupert. In response to the three-day blockade, which at its height involved 250 boats, the ferry suspended visits to Prince Rupert. The Alaskan government has launched a lawsuit against Canadian the participating fishermen.

On July 23 the U.S. Senate passed a non-binding resolution urging President William Clinton to respond to the ferry blockade with "appropriate action," such as boycotting selected Canadian products, blocking Canadian vessels from anchoring in U.S. waters without formal clearance, and banning fish or shellfish taken in British Columbia from entering the United States.

While the ferry blockade made for dramatic coverage across North America and elsewhere, the underlying causes of the crisis facing fishermen have been largely ignored and subsumed by the chauvinist rhetoric on both sides of the border.

The salmon catch in Canada is worth Can\$450 million (US\$326 million). Thousands of workers toil on the boats and in six processing plants. Many are unionized. James Sinclair, vice president of the largest fishery workers union in B.C., the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union, welcomed Anderson's strategy. "We're happy to see we're going to go out and fight this war," he declared.

Several fishermen from Steveston just south of Vancouver explained the desperate conditions many of them are facing. They underlined the "ridiculously low" price that the large processing plants owned by a handful of wealthy capitalists intend to pay for sockeye this year. "They are paying us \$1.10 per pound, and then selling it in the stores for \$7. We should tie up our boats here and refuse to fish until we get a decent price," skipper Aurele Girard told the *Militant*.

The Canadian west coast fishing indus-

try is dominated by a small number of companies who own or control at least half the boats in the BC fishing fleet.

In addition, Ottawa has imposed the "Mifflin plan," which aims to drive even more of the smaller fishermen out of the industry through major increases in the cost and the number of licenses required to fish the entire coast.

While both sides in the dispute blame each other for overfishing, the facts show that the capitalists who run this lucrative industry on both sides of the border and the governments who speak for them are only concerned with maximizing their profits. They express no interest in the conservation of fish stocks. The stocks have been in decline for decades because of destruction of the spawning rivers. In addition to overfishing, destructive logging practices, hydroelectric dams, and pollution of the waters have also taken their toll.

A commission established by Ottawa in 1994 to study the Canadian salmon fishery sharply criticized Ottawa and the fishing industry for the precipitous decline of salmon stocks. It said that incompetence by the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) that year nearly led to the extinction of the Adams River salmon run, the most important salmon stock on the west coast.

The Canadian government and fishing industry have come under closer scrutiny since the destruction from overfishing of the cod species on Canada's Atlantic coast. In 1992, 50,000 fishermen and fish processing workers there and in Europe were thrown out of work overnight when the Canadian government was obliged to declare a moratorium on cod, the most valuable species in the east coast fishery.

Paul Kouri works in a factory making cans for the salmon industry and is a member of the United Steelworkers of America union in Vancouver.

New Zealand: protest answers rightist group

BY RUTH GRAY

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — Over 40 supporters of the rights of women and gays and lesbians picketed the opening night of a Family Life International conference here July 18. Family Life International and its U.S. parent organization, Human Life International, campaign against women's access to legal abortion and contraception, the provision of sex education in schools, and the civil rights of gays and lesbians.

An advertisement placed in the *Christchurch Press* by this organization several days prior to the conference described sex education in schools as "a form of psychological rape." At the conference itself, one of the featured speakers was a so-called "abortion survivor."

As conference participants arrived, they were met by the picketers chanting, "Not

the church, not the state, women must decide their fate" and "Pro-life, your life's a lie, you don't care if women die."

Many of the protesters were young, including a group of students from the University of Canterbury.

Ellen Murray, a representative of Women's Education Coalition, Aotearoa, one of the groups which helped to organize the protest, explained in a press release, "The delegates to this conference will be discussing how to reverse the gains women have made in the last few decades, including their right of access to safe, legal abortion.... We are organizing this picket to tell Family Life International that we will resist attempts to roll back our hard-won rights."

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

Thousands demand rights in Kenya

BY JOHN MUNORU

TORONTO — Workers and students in Kenya have organized mass protests in recent months against government education cutbacks and plans to expel university students who cannot pay school fees. They demanded that the dictatorial regime of Daniel arap Moi agree to a list of reforms including freedom of speech and association, and establishing an independent commission to oversee upcoming elections, as they chanted "Moi must go! Moi must go!"

On July 7, thousands marched to the center of Nairobi demanding the government reform electoral and other oppressive laws. In the outskirts of the city, youth set up roadblocks and street barricades. Similar rallies and protests were held in other major cities.

The Moi regime responded with brutal violence using riot police and elite paramilitary General Service Unit cops, who fired tear gas, rubber bullets, and live rounds of ammunition to break up rallies. Many protesters were severely beaten, and at least 14 people were killed. In Thika township, 20 kilometers from Nairobi, cops attacked a secondhand clothes market injuring several people. The police also stormed the Anglican All Saints Cathedral hurling tear gas, breaking furniture, and savagely beating about 100 demonstrators.

The cops arrested about 155 people throughout the country and charged them

with various offenses, provoking more protests. On July 9 students at the University of Nairobi rallied against the police violence. The Moi government responded by closing the university.

Witnesses said scores of students were injured at the campus as heavily armed riot police moved in to enforce the closing, breaking down doors, looting, and vandalizing student rooms.

On July 14 thousands of students protested at the Kenya Polytechnic and took to the streets to protest the killing of two students at the University of Nairobi by the police a week earlier. They blocked one street for hours with blazing barricades and fought back tear gas and rubber bullets with slingshots and rocks.

In February the government closed the university of Nairobi after students protested the death of one of their leaders in an explosion blamed on the police. This marked the turning point in recent student politics. "Before Muruli's [the student leader] death, many students were saying, 'Let's just finish exams and get on with it.' Now they are saying: 'This is unacceptable. We have to fight,'" Vivienne, a leader of a women's group on the campus told the *Christian Science Monitor*.

The deepening economic crisis in Kenya has been exacerbated by the regime's implementation of austerity measures demanded



Students at University of Nairobi rally July 9 against police violence. Police injured students and caused substantial damage to the campus enforcing an order to close it.

by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) over the last three years.

Early in 1991, the IMF pressed the Moi regime to carry out massive privatization, cut government funding for education and health care, lay off public employees, open Kenyan market for imperialist goods, devalue the Kenyan shilling, and remove food subsidies. The imperialist financial institution suspended its loan program with the Kenyan government August 1 claiming the regime was not doing enough to combat corruption and improve economic management.

Fearing protests might rock his regime, Moi avoided imposing these measures for a few months arguing they were "dictatorial and suicidal." Later he implemented them all with devastating consequences to the Kenyan workers and youth. Tuition fees and medical costs have gone up beyond the means of majority of Kenyans.

Annual incomes in Kenya have stagnated at \$280. Divisions between rich and poor is greater in Kenya than any other country in the World except for Brazil. The top 10 percent of the population controls almost half of all Kenyan wealth.

New UK budget continues cuts in social gains

BY ALAN HARRIS AND IAN GRANT

LONDON — The first budget by a Labour government in almost two decades was presented in Parliament July 2. While claiming to address major concerns voiced by working people — long term unemployment, falling education standards, and a declining level of health care — Anthony Blair's government has maintained the thrust of previous Conservative budgets to cut the social wage won by working people through struggle, and make them carry more of the burden demanded by the capitalist economic crisis.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown described the package as a "people's budget for Britain's future." He presented as its centerpiece a £5.2 billion "windfall" tax. (£1=US\$1.63) This is a onetime levy on public utilities that were nationalized after World War II and sold back to private capitalists under the previous Conservative government.

The new owners of the water, telecommunications, electricity, railway, and other services reaped massive profits, and the top bosses took huge salary hikes. Along with the "windfall" tax, the budget drew £2.2 billion from the government's contingency fund, which exists to cover unexpected shortfalls.

At the same time, the budget cuts the corporate tax rate from 33 percent to 31 percent, and increases taxes on petrol, tobacco, and alcohol. These consumer levies have a disproportionate impact on working people. An article in the July 3 issue of the *Financial Times* pointed out, "As a proportion of their income, it is the poorest who have fared worst — they have lost around 1 percent of their disposable income" under the new budget. The 6 million people who have individual pension plans will have to pay more to maintain the same level of benefits on their retirement.

The budget allocates an additional £1.2 billion for the National Health Service (NHS) next year. Health Secretary Frank Dobson declared that the funding will not take away the need for "greater efficiency and financial discipline, or avoid the hard choices that people in the NHS have to make." The £1.2 billion represents a 2.25 percent increase in health spending — more than last year but less than the 3 percent average over the last 18 years of Conservative governments.

Brown announced July 2 an education program of £2.3 billion. Some £1.3 billion of that — an average of £150 per pupil — is supposed to go toward the £3.2 billion backlog of repairs required to Britain's crumbling schools, over the next five years.

Douglas McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, the biggest teachers union, welcomed the promise of extra funding. He declared, "The chancellor [Brown], having seen the books and listened to advice, knows that the government's passion for education would seem hollow if it did not release extra funding."

Meanwhile, the government is moving to make it easier to ax teachers declared to be "incompetent." The schools standards minister, Stephen Byer, warned that instructors must either get the required number of students passing their exams, or be fired. A new fast track procedure is being introduced that will allow the government to fire teachers for incompetence within four weeks, instead of the current 18 months.

Expanded 'welfare-to-work' scheme

Under provisions outlined in the budget £3.15 billion will be allocated to fund the Government's "Welfare-to-Work" scheme. All youth between the ages of 18 and 25 who have been out of work for more than six months will be required to accept a job with a private employer, work with a voluntary organization, work at improving the environment, or be enrolled in full-time education or training. Failure without "good cause" to cooperate with the program will be grounds for losing benefit payments. Pregnant women, the disabled, and unemployed single mothers will have their benefits cut 40 percent if they don't comply.

Employers who participate in this arrangement will be paid a £60-per-week subsidy for the first six months of employment.

The Blair government has launched a "new deal" it says will help single mothers get work. The budget projects cutting between £300 million and £400 million from benefits for these workers by continuing measures initiated by the Conservatives to cut housing benefits, child allowances, disability living allowances, and other social benefits. Some £200 million will be used to provide job search interviews for lone parents, and £10 million to reduce child-care costs.

Colette Kelleher, director of the Daycare Trust, called this a good move but said, "there is still a long way to go. With only one child-care place for every nine children under eight in the UK and with many families unable to afford quality child care, hundreds of thousands of parents and children are losing out."

Most ruling-class politicians and big-business leaders, while critical to one degree or another of the windfall tax, reacted favorably to the budget overall. Top bosses in British Telecom for example, which will

pay an estimated £500 million as its share of the levy, considered the sum to be "very satisfactory." In fact, the figure is "considerably lower than earlier speculation might have suggested," said BT chairman Iain Vallance. Railtrack, one of the denationalized rail companies, will pay £160 million. Railtrack announced pre-tax profits of £346 million in the year ended March 1997.

In the days following the budget announcement, some left Labour Members of Parliament (MPs) moved to distance themselves from aspects of their government's proposals. Kenneth Livingstone, writing in the *Sunday Telegraph*, claimed, "The discipline of Labour's left in the run-up to the election was absolute, but we cannot be expected to remain silent as we watch the Government sow the seeds of a future Labour general election defeat."

Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn complained there was no mention in the budget of a minimum wage. The landslide victory of the Labour Party in the May 1 election was the product of workers' resistance to more austerity of the kind dished out by the previous Conservative administration.

In the wake of the budget proposals the pound edged up from what was already its highest value against other currencies for five years, leading to speculation that exports would be hit, causing unemployment to rise. The London-based business magazine the *Economist* complained the budget didn't do enough to curtail the threat of inflation. "To do that individuals need to be taxed more heavily.... Alas, Mr. 'Tough Guy' Brown did not have the bottle," it commented.

However, in noting the impact the budget would have on working-class households, the *Financial Times* pointed out that many of the measures in the recent budget "are poli-

cies initiated by the last two Conservative chancellors and now continued by Mr. Brown. The cumulative effects have been considerable."

Renewal Campaign Goals MILITANT/PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL August 2- 24

City/Country	Militant Renewal	PM Renewal
AUSTRALIA	10	2
CANADA		
Montreal	4	2
Toronto	8	2
Vancouver	8	1
ICELAND	9	0
NEW ZEALAND		
Auckland	5	0
Christchurch	4	1
SWEDEN	3	1
UNITED KINGDOM		
London	10	2
Manchester	5	0
UNITED STATES		
Atlanta	9	3
Birmingham	9	1
Boston	8	3
Chicago	18	7
Cleveland	7	2
Des Moines	6	4
Detroit	8	2
Houston	12	3
Los Angeles	25	10
Miami	12	6
Newark	15	8
New York	15	8
Philadelphia	10	2
Pittsburgh	15	1
San Francisco	17	8
Seattle	15	5
Twin Cities	20	5
Washington, D.C.	9	6
U.S. TOTALS	230	84
International Totals	296	95
TRADE UNIONS		
UAW	15	3
UFCW	2	5
UNITE	4	4
USWA	15	3
UTU	12	

SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

New titles sale kicks off

BY GREG McCARTAN

Socialists workers and members of the Young Socialists launched a one-month drive this week to bring several new titles published by Pathfinder to workers in struggle and to youth attracted to revolutionary action and ideas.

The charts published here show goals taken by socialists in cities around the world. In addition, they will be contacting readers of the *Militant* and its Spanish-language sister magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* to discuss with them the many reasons to renew their subscriptions.

The feature title in this campaign is *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'*, recently released by Pathfinder. In this book Harry Villegas, known by his nom de guerre Pombo, tells the story of the 1966-68 revolutionary campaign in Bolivia led by Ernesto Che Guevara. At the time Pombo was a member of Guevara's general staff and in his 20s. Pathfinder published at the same time two new pamphlets in Spanish and English: *At the Side of Che Guevara: Interviews with Harry Villegas (Pombo)*.

Socialists are also making *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* part of the cam-

paign. The book, by Jack Barnes, was recently published in Spanish for the first time as *El rostro cambiante de la política en Estados Unidos*.

Verónica Poses, a member of the National Executive Committee of the Young Socialists, said in an interview from the Chicago that YS members are getting involved in the sales campaign because "We want to do in the United States what Pombo was part of doing in Cuba: leading a revolution that put in power workers and peasants."

"In Pombo you can see the kind of person that they tell us under capitalism cannot make a real difference," Poses said. "But by standing up and fighting they did make a difference. He was a young Black from a poor family who joined the revolutionary struggles that changed the world."

The Young Socialists are "trying to get these books into the hands of revolutionary minded young people and those who are already fighting here in the United States," the youth leader said. "I went out to the Teamsters picket line at UPS today and we talked about Cuba, Ireland, and affirmative action. Some strikers were very interested in what happened in Cuba and wanted to discuss how we can make a change here in the United States. That is the kind of people we want to get these books."

Asked about *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*, Poses said the two books "are very much related. One is the diary of how revolutionaries tried to make a revolution in Bolivia and the kind of disciplined and political leadership they were fighting to forge. What *The Changing Face* talks about is how we can do that in the United States."

Poses said the YS in Chicago "took a goal to sell eight copies of *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'*, three of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*, and two copies of *El rostro cambiante de la política en Estados Unidos*."

Socialist workers in Chicago got a good response calling subscribers in the area. Isom Weems, who works at the fuel systems division of Caterpillar in Pontiac, Illinois invited them to visit him. He explained, "Cat is still trying to break our union. Management has forced some of the workers in the plant onto a 12-hour shift." Weems decided to renew his subscription to the *Militant* and bought *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'* and *At the Side of Che Guevara*. He also became a member of the Pathfinder Readers club and purchased a copy of *New International* no. 10.

Joel Britton, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and its trade union work, said in a phone interview, "The evidence is mounting that the long retreat of the working class in the face of the rulers' drive to increase their profit rates is bottoming out. You could say workers have fought their way onto a plateau, and aren't in a retreat right now."

Britton, a member of the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers in Chicago, pointed out that, "With the numbers of younger workers on strike at UPS, we are seeing a lot of militancy and creativity," he noted. "For example, many workers showed up at company gates early last Thursday when the contract expired to be a part of whatever was going to happen. Millions of working people are watching this strike closely. People who subscribed to the *Militant* last spring will be especially interested in the paper's continued coverage of this fight, as well as the class struggle internationally."

The SWP leader said that "socialist workers in industrial trade unions have found among our co-workers quite a bit of interest in and thoughtful reaction to the strike. There is also a tremendous recognition that the bosses at UPS need to be fought. Many of our co-workers have worked at UPS, often as part-timers, and felt the sting of UPS management's speedup and vicious anti-labor profit drive," he said. "This is an immediate opportunity to get fellow workers involved with us, going to the picket lines, and

throwing in our lot with these fighters."

Over the August 2-3 weekend, socialists who are members of UNITE (Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees) went to Kannapolis to talk politics with textile workers at the Fieldcrest Cannon mills. During the week, we learned that on August 12-13 the more than 5,000 workers at the mills will be voting on whether to join UNITE," wrote Arlene Rubenstein from Atlanta.

"One of the first workers we talked to remembered the *Militant* from 1991 when the paper covered the workers fight for a union, which lost by 200 votes. This worker was fired when the union lost the election, but was reinstated in April 1997 after a union victory against the company," she said.

"I liked the truthful way the *Militant* wrote about what was happening here in 1991, why we felt we needed the union," the mill worker told Rubenstein. "But you know the company lied to us — they told us you were communists," he said. "We are communists," she explained. The worker replied, "Okay. What is a communist then?" he asked as he bought a paper and made a donation.

The team sold seven *Militants* at two plant-gates and several more workers gave their names to stay in touch.

With the 30th anniversary of the death of Che Guevara in October, there are also

Monthly Sales of Pathfinder Books

City/Country	July			Previous Months		
	Goal	Sales	% Sold	June	May	April
FRANCE	25	57	228%	180%	308%	100%
AUSTRALIA	36	64	178%	181%	128%	100%
NEW ZEALAND						
Christchurch	35	60	171%	143%	77%	169%
Auckland	45	63	140%	196%	49%	147%
N.Z. Total	80	123	154%	173%	61%	156%
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	150	252	168%	200%	93%	97%
Manchester	56	34	61%	0%	0%	113%
U.K. Total	206	286	139%	146%	67%	101%
SWEDEN	55	75	136%	115%	224%	214%
ICELAND	5	6	120%			
UNITED STATES						
Pittsburgh	54	127	235%	194%	396%	228%
Des Moines	50	77	154%	404%	333%	196%
Washington, D.C.	64	96	150%	158%	386%	245%
Chicago	77	114	148%	140%	219%	209%
Boston	65	89	137%	163%	260%	234%
Philadelphia	41	55	134%	217%	124%	329%
New York	245	299	122%	96%	134%	116%
San Francisco	200	238	119%	175%	280%	229%
Seattle	80	92	115%	113%	149%	99%
Houston	65	71	109%	103%	122%	125%
Twin Cities	104	112	108%	43%	138%	166%
Los Angeles	120	97	81%	118%	289%	413%
Miami	60	48	80%	73%	251%	198%
Birmingham	40	30	75%	113%	142%	106%
Atlanta	48	33	69%	160%	277%	179%
Detroit	54	33	61%	144%	237%	252%
Newark	171	72	42%	46%	132%	89%
Cleveland	50	19	38%	50%	78%	106%
U.S. Total	1588	1702	95%	114%	174%	168%
Goal/Should be	1800	1800	100%			
CANADA						
Vancouver	41	39	95%	202%	285%	90%
Toronto	80	67	84%	75%	85%	85%
Montreal	80	52	65%	0%	183%	91%
Canada Total	160	119	74%	71%	165%	89%
GREECE*	13	0	0%	100%	146%	100%
*No new report						

proach professors who might consider using the new titles for classes they will be teaching next spring," Lobman added.

Pathfinder will be producing several new pieces of material to aid supporters in the campaign to sell the new titles. They include a brochure featuring the new titles and books on Che Guevara and the Cuban revolution, as well as a poster, promotional photos, and press release on *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'*.

PATHFINDER BOOKS SOLD IN THE UNIONS

Unions	July			Previous months		
	Goal	Sales	Total	June	May	April
AUSTRALIA						
AMWU	4	8	200%	0%	50%	50%
CANADA						
IAM	8	6	75%	63%	50%	38%
USWA	18	2	11%	0%	38%	42%
Canada Total	26	8	31%	19%	73%	38%
UNITED STATES						
UNITE	24	26	108%	47%	177%	138%
UMWA	3	3	100%	133%	33%	33%
UFCW	6	5	83%	67%	583%	83%
OCAW	44	27	61%	27%	50%	43%
IAM	60	29	48%	83%	180%	83%
UTU	64	5	8%	28%	103%	54%
UAW	50	3	6%	110%	93%	62%
USWA	65	0	0%	68%	107%	102%
U.S. Total	289	69	24%	55%	136%	71%
UNITED KINGDOM						
AEEU	5	3	60%	80%	80%	0%
RMT	10	0	0%	0%	10%	13%
TGWU	7	0	0%	29%	14%	114%
Total U.K.	22	3	14%	27%	27%	33%

AEEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AMWU — Amalgamated Metal Workers Union; CAW — Canadian Autoworkers Union; EU — Engineers Union; MWU — Meat Workers Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU — Transport and General Workers Union; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFBGWU — United Food, Beverage, and General Workers Union; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA — United Mine Workers of America; UNITE — Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU — United Transportation Union.

Tel Aviv imposes siege on Palestinians

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Israeli government has instituted a virtual state of siege against Palestinians living in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, citing as its pretext a July 30 suicide bomb attack by two young Palestinians at a Jerusalem market, which killed 15 people.

Israeli soldiers closed the borders into West Bank towns and villages, sealing many entrances with piles of concrete blocks. Tens of thousands of Palestinian workers have been prevented from getting to their jobs. The closing halted the delivery of virtually all goods from Israel into Palestinian-controlled areas. Among those not allowed to leave are individuals who are critically ill.

Israeli warships erected a naval blockade around the coastline of the Gaza Strip, preventing Palestinian fishermen from carrying out their livelihood. Not even newspapers were allowed to enter the Gaza Strip and its border crossing to Egypt was shut down. In addition, Israeli aircraft flew sorties over the area with a military helicopter hovering over Palestinian Authority President Yasir Arafat's headquarters in Gaza City. "We are in a big, unjust prison," said Fraj al-Khairy, the Palestinian Authority's deputy minister of civil affairs.

Since the beginning of the year, repeated demonstrations by Palestinian youth and workers demanding Tel Aviv live up to its commitments under various accords and protesting the expansion of Zionist settlements have provoked a crisis for the Israeli regime.

Conducting daily raids throughout the

West Bank, Israeli police have arrested 145 Palestinians as of August 4 on suspicion of "terrorist activity." Many are first blindfolded and then taken into custody. Soldiers have been arbitrarily searching homes and confiscating anything they deem might "incite violence." Israeli cops raided the Palestinian village of Dahariya, near Hebron, seizing members of two families whose sons the authorities consider missing for the past year. They also shut down a Palestinian office in Jerusalem and demolished a number of houses supposedly built without permits by Arabs in East Jerusalem.

Arafat denounced "the collective punishment that the Israeli government has imposed on the Palestinian people and Palestinian Authority." In further comments to reporters, he stated, "To tell you the truth, what is happening is a blow against the corpse of the peace process, and it is a declaration of war on the Palestinian people."

In light of the latest developments, 16 of 18 members of the Authority's cabinet tendered their resignations. Several days earlier a panel of Palestinian legislators who investigated corruption in the Palestinian government had urged Arafat to dismiss his entire cabinet and that legal action be taken against several of its ministers.

The U.S. House of Representatives quickly adopted a nonbinding resolution calling upon Arafat to bring "extremists" to justice. President William Clinton's national security adviser, Samuel Berger, also put the onus on the Palestinians. In comments to CBS-TV, he demanded that Arafat do more to fight terrorism and safeguard the security of Israel.



Cops detain man they claim is witness in raid in Brooklyn July 31. Authorities there and in Israel are using "antiterror" campaign as pretext for attacking rights.

In violation of the 1993 Oslo accords, Tel Aviv on August 3 suspended reimbursement of taxes and other fees that it owes to the Palestinian Authority. The money accounts for nearly two-thirds of the authority's annual income. The funds add up to nearly \$500 million that Israeli authorities collect each year from Palestinians who work or buy goods in Israel. Prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu has also threatened to jam Palestinian broadcasts that Zionist officials consider "inciteful" and to dispatch its military forces into cities whose control had been turned over to the Palestinian Authority.

"We are not chickens who will stand back and let them do what they want," stated Col. Firas Ameleh, chief of police in the Palestinian-controlled city of Ramallah. "The only way Israel will reenter Ramallah is when we are all martyrs." So far the Israeli government has held back from undertaking military raids into Palestinian-controlled

cities.

Netanyahu announced that Israeli authorities have issued an arrest warrant for Brig. Gen. Ghazi Jabali, the Gaza-based chief of the Palestinian national police. They claim that Jabali had given orders to shoot Israeli settlers in the occupied territories. However, no public evidence of these alleged crimes has been presented. "They cannot arrest me and if they come here to Gaza or to any place where I am, they will not return," stated Jabali. In another development, the Association of Contractors and Builders in Israel said that the building sector will no longer employ Palestinian laborers, even if they are licensed to work in Israel. The group's members employ 20,000 Palestinians, mostly day laborers who rely on jobs in Israel for their livelihood.

Brian Williams is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 2609.

Cops use New York 'bomb' raid to attack rights

BY OLGA RODRÍGUEZ

NEW YORK — Before dawn on July 31, hundreds of local and federal cops carried out what amounted to a commando raid on a working-class community in Brooklyn. The assault — complete with helicopters, massive fire-power, and snipers on rooftops — was ostensibly conducted to foil an alleged bomb plot. With guns blazing, the cops smashed down the door of an apartment and shot two young Palestinian men, Ghazi Abu Maizar and Lafi Khalil.

Acting on a tip from a roommate who claimed that the two were building bombs in their apartment, the cops cordoned off an area of about 18 blocks and ordered about 90 working people to leave their apartments. The authorities also closed down subway service and the Long Island Railroad commuter line in one of the heaviest trafficked transportation hubs in the city during rush hour. Residents were not allowed to return to their homes until 2:00 p.m.

In their rampage through the raided building, the cops also broke the door off its hinges at the apartment of a Pakistani immigrant worker living on the top floor of the building. Masood Mughal told the press that he and his three roommates were roughed up by the cops. "They treated me like a suspect and put me in jail," he said. "They asked my nationality and wouldn't

tell me why I was there." Mughal felt he was detained "because I am a Muslim."

Santiago Velásquez, a driver for the car service doing business on the ground floor of the raided building, had just finished his shift when the cops threw him to the ground and aimed a gun at his head. Max Rodríguez, the owner of the car service, said four of his drivers were caught up in the roundup by the cops and briefly taken into custody.

Federal and local authorities justified their assault on the neighborhood by claiming to have discovered two homemade explosive devices in the apartment of the Palestinian immigrants. Within hours of the raid, they floated the story that the two were suicide bombers set to blow up one of the subway hubs in Brooklyn and the Long Island Railroad station. All of this was prior to the Khalil and Maizar being arraigned or having had secured legal counsel.

Maizar and Khalil were arraigned on bomb-conspiracy charges, surrounded by 15 federal cops in combat gear in a Brooklyn hospital where they are still recovering from their gunshot wounds.

The news media and federal and city authorities immediately tried to link the alleged bomb plot to the bombing of a market in Jerusalem that resulted in the deaths of 15 people. Despite statements by Hamas denying any connection to the alleged bomb plot in Brooklyn, and the lack of any other evidence, federal and local authorities are trying to link the two Palestinians in custody with some sort of international terrorist plot by that Palestinian organization.

Federal and local authorities have also tried to connect the supposed plot by Maizar and Khalil to the latest in the series of frame-up trials stemming from the World Trade Center bombings in 1993. These trials were slated to begin August 4, but have been postponed for several days. Ramzi Yousef is being tried as the alleged mastermind of the bombings, and Eyad Ismoil is charged with assisting in the alleged conspiracy.

New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani and other politicians have been using this case to attack the right of immigrants and refugees. Maizar had been detained when he entered the United States from Canada. According to the *New York Times*, he was given 60 days to leave the United States or be deported. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) officials say Maizar submitted an application for political asylum, based on his fear of repression from the Israeli authori-

ties because he had been picked up in a roundup of Palestinian youth charged with throwing stones at Israeli troops and was falsely accused by Israeli authorities as having connections to Hamas. The INS said he later withdrew his application.

"Just why is it that this person was allowed to come into the country announcing that he is accused of being part of a terrorist group?" the mayor demanded.

The day after the raid, Giuliani was proudly campaigning in Brooklyn. He first went to a Jewish community to express his support for Tel Aviv. He then visited the Arab-American community to do damage control following the racist treatment meted out to Arab-American residents and anyone the cops thought might be Arab or Muslim.

As part of whipping up a vendetta against the accused men, the press here has given top billing to every detail of the apartment that housed Maizar, Khalil, and several other immigrant workers. The August 2 *New York Post* front-page screamed: "Inside the Terror Nest," with a kicker, "Brooklyn suicide bombers lived in squalor waiting to die." The apartment is described as a hovel, with little furniture, crumbling walls, piled up dirty dishes, and a near-empty and roach-infested refrigerator — a description of not

a few apartments in this city. The *Post* also ran a picture of a hand-copied inscription from the Koran that had been taped to the refrigerator, as part of its anti-Arab tone.

The raid took place just blocks from the Pathfinder bookstore and offices of the Socialist Workers Campaign. On August 1, Shoghi Fret, the Socialist Workers candidate for public advocate, and this reporter went to the Arab community around Atlantic Avenue. A Palestinian student said that a regular customer in the electronics store he works at who thought he was Puerto Rican, offered the opinion that all Arabs should be jailed after the incident in Brooklyn.

Fret and a campaign supporter then went door-to-door in the community where the cop raid was conducted. Some workers expressed the opinion that the cops saved them from a horrendous bomb blast. Many, however, were open to listening to the socialists' views. Wayne Watson, a Black youth, said, "I'm not sure what I think about this."

Willie Rios, a 43-year-old Puerto Rican worker, however, expressed outrage at the cops' action. "It was wrong. A lot of people are mad and scared" about what happened, he said. "You can't do it to people who have done nothing. They do it brutally and they are using this for their own ends."

Marines suspend border patrol

BY ALEJANDRA RINCÓN

HOUSTON — U.S. Defense Secretary William S. Cohen announced on July 29 that the Pentagon has temporarily suspended so-called antidrug operations along the entire Mexican border.

This decision followed an outraged response to the May 20 killing of 18-year-old high school student Esequiel Hernández by a U.S. Marine in the small community of Redford, Texas, 180 miles southeast of El Paso.

Public protests in El Paso, by the Redford Citizens Committee for Justice, and in other border towns reflected widespread anger over the killing and the increasing militarization of the U.S. border with Mexico. Another incident in January resulted in the wounding of Mexican immigrant at the border.

The decision was announced the same day that a grand jury convened in Marfa, Texas, to consider whether criminal charges

should be lodged against Corp. Clemente Banuelos, who shot Hernández, or against any of the other three Marines involved. The Marines said they acted in self-defense after the youth opened fire on them. Redford residents said they only heard one shot, suggesting that Hernández, who was herding his family's goats, never fired his 80-year-old rifle, and the autopsy showed the youth was facing away from the soldiers when he was shot.

The Marines admitted that they stalked the youth for 20 minutes before shooting him. They left him to bleed to death over 22 minutes, refusing to provide medical assistance even though one of them was a trained medic.

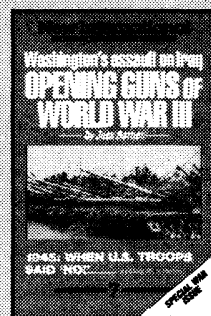
The 12-person grand jury, which will reconvene August 12, includes the Border Patrol's assistant chief agent in Marfa, a retired Board Patrol agent, and two U.S. Customs Service officials. None of the grand jurors are from Redford.

From Pathfinder Opening Guns of WWII

Washington's Assault on Iraq

Jack Barnes

The U.S. government's murderous assault on Iraq heralded increasingly sharp conflicts among imperialist powers, the rise of rightist and fascist forces, growing instability of international capitalism, and more wars. In *New Internationalist* no. 7. Also includes "Communist Policy in Wartime as well as in Peacetime" by Mary-Alice Waters. \$12.00



Available from 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. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover

World youth festival

Continued from front page

festival to Che Guevara, the Argentine-born revolutionary who became one of the central leaders of the Cuban revolution. Guevara was wounded and captured by Bolivian army forces in a CIA-organized operation on Oct. 8, 1967. He was murdered in cold blood the next day by Bolivian army officers in consultation with Washington.

While the festival's International Coordinating Committee did not endorse the dedication of the gathering to Guevara, the decision of the Cuban hosts put its stamp on the conference. Posters, T-shirts, flags, billboards, and other paraphernalia with the revolutionary's image were prevalent throughout the nine-day-long gathering. An exhibit of paintings of Guevara was held at Pavillon Cuba, in central Havana, during the festival. Over 2,000 delegates attended meetings where a number of Cubans spoke who knew Che and fought with him in Cuba's Sierra Maestra mountains during the 1956-58 revolutionary war that led to the overthrow of the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, and in subsequent internationalist missions. Hundreds of delegates also bought books by Che and his combatants.

The festival declared October 8 as an international day of activities by youth in solidarity with Cuba and related to the 30th anniversary of Guevara's death.

Composition of the gathering

The largest participation outside the 1,000-strong Cuban delegation came from the United States, with nearly 850 participants, followed by Argentina (650) and Mexico (630). About half of the delegates came from the Americas. Delegations of several hundred each came from France, Germany, and Spain. Sizable delegations came from most other countries in Western Europe.

Participation was lighter from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Republics. Among the largest delegations from the African continent was South Africa, with about 200 people. The largest delegations from Asia came from north Korea (500), India (176), Vietnam (129), and China (44). A few hundred came from Australia, New Zealand, and other countries in the Pacific.

Among the delegates from the United States, more than 450 traveled with the U.S. Organizing Committee for the World Youth Festival, a coalition endorsed by the National Network on Cuba, Global Exchange, a number of political parties and youth organizations — including All African Peoples' Revolutionary Party, Committees of Correspondence, Democratic Socialists of America Youth Section, Socialist Workers Party, Workers World, and Young Socialists — and dozens of local student and other youth groups.

The U.S. National Preparatory Committee — initiated by the Communist Party USA and the Young Communist League and endorsed by the United States Student Association, Student Environmental Action Coalition, Southern Christian Leadership Conference Youth Section, and other groups — brought 160 delegates.

About 140 delegates from the United States came with the Venceremos Brigade, which arrived in Cuba a week before the

festival and participated in voluntary work projects. Similar brigades came from dozens of other countries prior to the festival. A couple of dozen U.S. delegates came with the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement.

Washington and Seoul were the only two governments that tried to intimidate or prevent young people from attending. The U.S. government denied licenses to 50 people who applied for permission to travel to Cuba, which is severely restricted under government regulations. While several hundred youth who had applied to go to the festival decided not to participate after Washington's decision, most did so. "This was undemocratic and unconstitutional," said Chandra Bhatnagar, a delegate from New York. "We will be organizing to defend anyone the government harasses on the way back."

Addressing the anti-imperialist tribunal at the festival, Im Hil Jung, a delegate from the Kim Il Sung Socialist Youth of north Korea, condemned "the south Korean government's decision to deny exit visas to members of the Council of University Students" in that country. She also said that Seoul successfully prevented south Korean students studying in other countries from traveling to Cuba for the festival. As a result, no one attended from south Korea.

Shifts reflected in the festival

In the majority of countries, the delegations were organized for the most part by youth groups affiliated to Communist Parties. A sprinkling of social democratic groups, such as the Socialist Youth League of Japan and the Socialist Party youth of Austria, also sent delegates. Smaller numbers were organized by some bourgeois parties in a few semicolonial countries, such as the Christian Democrats in Cyprus.

The Asian Students Association, based in Hong Kong, and the All China Youth Federation, affiliated with the Chinese Communist Party, took part as well. In the early 1960s, the Chinese CP youth left the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), the main sponsor of the youth festivals, and has not participated in the recent gatherings.

National liberation movements like the Palestine Liberation Organization and the front for independence of East Timor from Indonesia were represented.

Nearly 100 supporters of Quebec's independence came from Canada. The Irish nationalist party Sinn Fein also sent a delegation of two of its leaders for the first time. A few other groups that had not taken part in previous festivals, such as the Movement of Landless Rural Workers of Brazil, sent delegations as well.

WFDY, which initiated and organized the previous 13 world youth festivals, was formed in 1945 by youth groups affiliated to parties that looked to Moscow. After the crumbling of the Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union that began in 1989, revolutionary minded and other forces within the federation succeeded in changing some of the statutes of the organization. One change ended the former veto power each WFDY affiliate had in deciding whether any other group from their country could join the federation and, in practice, take part in the youth festivals.

The festival opened July 28 with a march



Youth from 132 countries attended the World Festival of Youth and Students in Cuba

of more than 5,000 delegates through the streets of central Havana that ended at the University of Havana for the inaugurating rally. UJC first secretary Victoria Velásquez, Cuban president Fidel Castro, and other government officials and leaders of mass organizations took part. That day delegates were assigned to neighborhoods in the city, where they stayed with Cuban families for the duration of the festival. A number of delegates said this was one of the most interesting aspects of the gathering.

"Staying with Cubans gave me an idea of what daily life is like here," said Brendan Cooper, a delegate from Chicago. "I could see the effects of the economic war by the U.S. government in the lack of certain medicines and other shortages. I also saw capitalist trends around the open markets with all kinds of people looking for ways to make a dollar. But I was surprised to see how many Cubans I met who are strong supporters of socialism despite the economic difficulties."

Impact of events in Eastern Europe

A frequent theme of the discussions was the impact on anti-imperialist youth organizations of the events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union between 1989 and 1991. The big majority of those who spoke said the crumbling of many of the former ruling Communist Parties in that part of the world represented a major setback for the working-class movement and gave new openings to Washington and other capitalist powers for imperialist domination of those countries.

"With the collapse of socialism in Eastern Europe and the return of capitalism in the Soviet Union, western imperialism is now able to direct its fire against any focal point of resistance against its wishes," said Iraklis Tsardaris of the Communist Youth of Greece at the workshop on anti-imperialist struggle. "The plan to expand military alliances like NATO into Eastern Europe is but the beginning of the recolonization of these countries."

Brock Satter, a member of the United Steelworkers of America in New Jersey and a leader of the Young Socialists, was among a small minority who expressed a different view. "The return of Hong Kong to China, opposition by workers and farmers to the capitalist demands for 'sacrifice' in Argentina, the United States, France, and other capitalist countries, and resistance to the effects of 'market reforms' from Albania to Yugoslavia and Russia are signs of the weakness of imperialism," Satter said, at the same workshop. "The U.S. government is using its military might because it lost the cold war. It could not defeat the Soviet Union the cold way and has not been able to reestablish capitalism there yet. Now workers in those countries are linking up more with their brothers and sisters in the capitalist world. Before any new sweep of fascist reaction and imperialist war, working people in a number of countries will have a chance to take power out of the hands of the warmakers and follow the road of the Bolsheviks and Cuban rebels — the road to socialism." Such exchanges of view were rare, however.

Cuban government officials and leaders of the Communist Party of Cuba attended and made presentations at many of these meetings. Ricardo Alarcón, president of the National Assembly, for example addressed the workshop on Democracy and Participation. Abel Prieto, minister of culture, spoke at the meeting on Culture and Social Communication. And foreign minister Roberto Robaina spoke on the panel on human rights.

Anti-imperialist tribunal

One of most popular events was the anti-imperialist tribunal, attended by 1,500 delegates. The two-day event was organized as a mock trial of Washington and other imperialist powers. The final verdict by the panel of five judges found these governments guilty "of all the crimes committed against youth, children, the peoples, and humanity." These included the U.S. embargoes against Cuba, Iraq, Iran, and Libya; continued use of colonialism and countless violations of the right to self-determination; the use of U.S. and other imperialist military bases around the world to terrorize oppressed nations; and flagrant violations of human rights.

Evidence was presented by 79 delegates and other witnesses. Rafael Daussa, Cuban foreign ministry specialist on North American Affairs, said that in the past six years Washington has adopted 61 measures with "extraterritorial reach," including the overtly hypocritical attempts to "certify" whether countries like Colombia and Mexico are doing enough to combat illegal drugs.

Other Cuban delegates detailed the impact on the Cuban people of the 38-year old economic war by the U.S. government. One of the presenters explained the recent attempts at biological warfare by Washington against Cuba and the bombings of two tourist hotels in Havana, where, according to the Cuban government, the explosives used and individuals involved came from the United States.

In the early morning of August 4 a third similar explosion took place at the hotel Meliá-Cohiba on Havana's waterfront. No injuries occurred this time, unlike the previous two bombings, and the damage was reportedly minimal.

Student María Esther Suárez from Puerto Rico talked about the practices Washington has used in its 99-year-old occupation of the Caribbean island to defeat the independence movement there. Hebe de Bonafini of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo spoke about the role of British and U.S. imperialism in supporting dictatorial regimes in Argentina responsible for the disappearance of tens of thousands, and Luis Gómez from Panama detailed the 135 direct and indirect U.S. interventions in Panama.

Gerry Kelly, a leader of Sinn Fein from Northern Ireland, described the recent advances by nationalists there that led to a new cease-fire by the Irish Republican Army and prospects for negotiations that will include Sinn Fein. "We are not naive people, though, and don't trust British imperialism," Kelly said. "Republicans will go to these talks fighting to get the British troops out." Anne Howie, a member of the Transport and General Workers Union and of the Communist League in Manchester, England, presented a rubber bullet used by British forces against Irish protesters as evidence to the tribunal.

After the tribunal concluded its deliberations on the evening of August 2, delegates stayed for an hour to hear presentations and ask questions from four generals of Cuba's revolutionary armed forces who fought with Che Guevara in the Sierra Maestra and during internationalist missions in the Congo and Bolivia. These were division general Ramon Pardo Guerra, and brigadier generals Harry Villegas Tamayo, Enrique Acevedo Glez, and Luis Alfonso Zayas.

Villegas had earlier addressed 50 people at the Middle East regional club about the relevance of the example Che set for young people today. On August 4, Villegas gave a similar forum at the club of the Americas, attended by about 250 people.

Youth harassed on return from Cuba

BY JACK WILLEY

CHICAGO — Thirty-nine participants returning from the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students held in Cuba were detained on August 6 and held for questioning at O'Hare International Airport here.

The youth were returning to Chicago; Madison, Wisconsin; and Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. At about 5:45 p.m., seven participants, including this reporter, were held and later taken to a conference room. At about 7:30, we were joined by 32 others returning on a different flight.

Nearly four hours after the original seven were detained, customs agents began questioning each person individually in a separate room. Customs agents read from a six-page questionnaire of more than 30 questions. These included, "Did any other U.S. residents travel to Cuba with

you?... If so, what are their names and addresses?... What was the nature of their activities in Cuba?... Did you see them spend money in Cuba?" It included detailed questions about who organized the trip, how participants got there, where they stayed and whether they spent any money in Cuba.

Every person was denied a phone call or legal representation during the questioning. Everyone's passport was photocopied and bags searched. The last person was not released until 11:40 p.m., six hours after the first detentions.

The youth were welcomed by a crowd of 20 family members and political activists who cheered as each person exited customs. St. Paul radio station KFAI interviewed Gaetan Whiston, one of the people greeting the festival participants, about the detention and other news media were informed about the incident.

Production slowly recovers in Cuba

Workers confront market pressures, new social inequalities

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS
AND MARTIN KOPPEL

HAVANA, Cuba — "Things are looking a little better," said Regla María Cuesta, 28, a sewing machine operator at the Renato Guitart underwear factory in Minas, Guanabacoa, on the outskirts of Cuba's capital. She was describing the efforts by garment workers there to boost production.

"In the first quarter of this year we made 14,000 pieces of underwear, 2,000 over our goal."

The Guitart plant reopened in August 1996 after an eight-month shutdown, and the production rate has been picking up. *Militant* reporters visited this shop and seven other garment and textile factories in or near Havana in late April. While there, it became clear that the small and uneven recovery in industrial production, which began in early 1995 across the Caribbean nation, is being registered in these industries.

More recently, government and national union officials have pointed to increasing production in nickel, tobacco, fishing, and tourism. Miners in Holguín, for example, announced at the national convention of their union here June 23 that they are on target to produce 60,000 tons of nickel this year — 7,000 tons over last year's all-time record. Carlos Lage, executive secretary of the country's Council of Ministers, said at the end of June that these increases in production will more than offset a decline in this year's sugar harvest and result in a growth of 4-5 percent in Cuba's 1997 gross domestic product (see "Sugar harvest in Cuba falls short of goal, agricultural workers confront challenge," in the July 28 *Militant*).

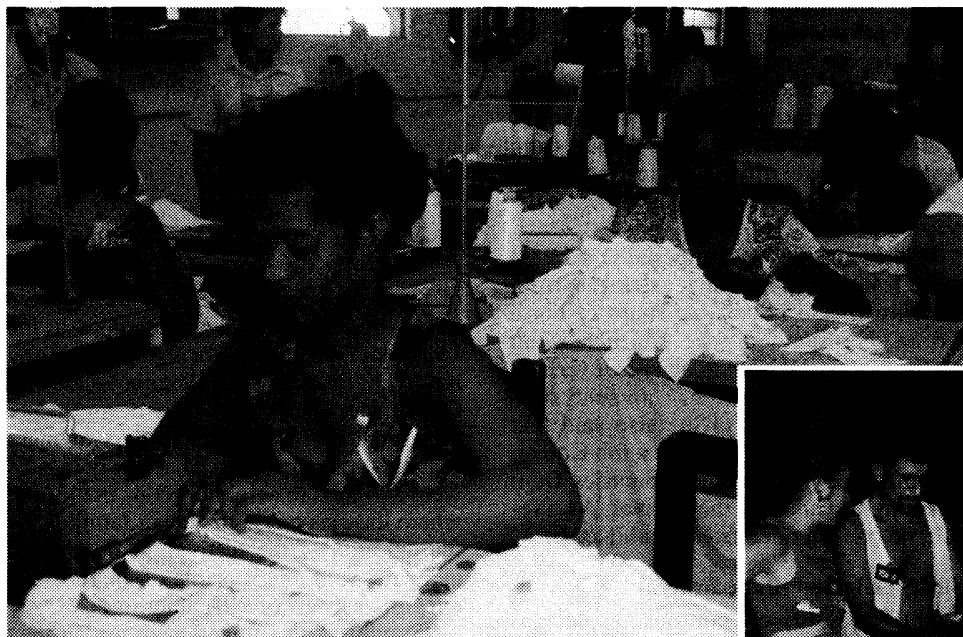
Since the worst period of the economic crisis, which bottomed out in the summer of 1994, food shortages have eased, electricity blackouts that were long and widespread three years ago have diminished, and transportation has slightly improved. As a result, the difficulties of daily life, such as waiting for hours at a bus stop to get a ride to work, have been alleviated to a degree. In the initial years of the "special period," which followed the sudden end of aid and favorable trade relations with the USSR and Eastern European countries at the opening of the 1990s, Cuba's gross domestic product dropped by an estimated 35 percent.

While a number of factories that closed for a period of time have now resumed operation, much of the goods produced are for export or a growing domestic market in U.S. dollars. Most of the shirts, pants, or swimsuits produced in the garment factories we visited, for example, were for trade abroad or for sales in dollar stores that are now spread throughout Cuba.

"The fact that much of the basic clothing we sew can only be purchased in dollars creates friction and inequalities," said Clara Ester Fonseca Tavares at the Luis Fernández Rodríguez, formerly Viti, garment plant in Guanabacoa. "It's not in the spirit of socialism we fought for before the special period.

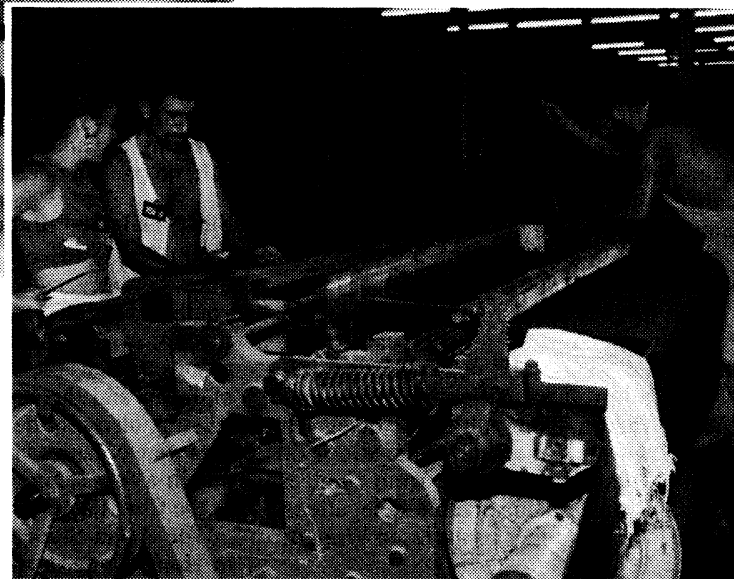
But I know hard currency is needed by the country to benefit everyone in society, especially workers. We now have to use dollars to import medicines, food, oil, machines, or cotton to make fabric for these

industries such as electricity, tobacco, and ports get a small percentage of their wages in hard currency as an incentive. Recently, workers in a number of other industries, such as textile, have been getting a portion



Militant photos by Argiris Malapanis

Sewing machine operator at Vanesa swimsuit factory in Guanabacoa, Havana (above). Weaving cloth at Ariguanabo Textile Mill in Bauta, Havana province (right). Production in garment and textile began recovering recently. Purchasing power of wages has increased somewhat since worst years of "special period." But Cuban working people face growing inequalities as they are forced to compete on world capitalist market. "The only solution is to increase production and efficiency," said one worker at Luis Fernández Rodríguez plant, pointing to workers' collective effort in her factory to solve social and economic problems.



clothes. The legalization of the dollar was a necessary evil."

Magali Díaz, a sewing machine operator at this factory, explained that after the 1959 revolution workers renamed the nationalized plant in honor of Rodríguez, a member of the local militia who died at age 16 fighting the U.S.-backed mercenaries who attempted a failed invasion of Cuba at Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs) in 1961. The Viti family, the former owners, fled to Miami, she said.

Decriminalizing use of dollar

Prior to 1989, 85 percent of Cuba's trade was with the countries of the former Soviet bloc, often at preferential prices. Today the Cuban government has to pay world market prices for everything it imports. Cuba also has to compete on the world market to export its products with a productivity of labor that, while higher than many countries of Latin America, is lower than that of the imperialist world. Efforts to secure credits, find new trading partners, contract shipping, and attract investment are also constantly torpedoed by Washington's unrelenting economic war.

Decriminalizing the possession and use of hard currency, a measure the government adopted in July 1993, was aimed at increasing the flow of dollars into the state treasury and away from the black market. "Under normal conditions we never would have decriminalized" the use of dollars, Cuban president Fidel Castro told the National Assembly in December of that year.

That step and other measures the government adopted subsequently, aimed at curbing inflation and increasing production, did result in a revaluation of the Cuban peso. The peso/dollar exchange rate dropped from a high of 150-to-1 in 1994 to a fairly stable 24-to-1 in the first half of this year.

For those who have access to dollars the measure has taken the edge off shortages of basic necessities like soap, shampoo, and cooking oil, which are virtually unavailable for pesos. At the same time economic inequalities have widened dramatically and once stable social relations have been broadly disrupted.

Today, more than 40 percent of the population is estimated to have access to dollars, according to reports in the Cuban press. One of the main sources is relatives of Cubans living abroad, mostly in the United States. Workers in tourism also receive a portion of their tips in dollars. And workers in in-

dustries such as electricity, tobacco, and ports get a small percentage of their wages in hard currency as an incentive.

The licensing of self-employment in more than 150 occupations and the opening of agricultural and other markets at unregulated prices, enacted in 1993 and 1994 respectively, have also significantly increased disparity in income distribution.

Differences are also growing between city and countryside, as well as between Havana and other cities. While food may be better in the rural areas, access to clothing, shoes, soap, and other daily necessities is easier in the urban centers, especially where tourism creates more opportunities to earn hard currency. Over time, these inequalities create a bias toward individual hustling for dollars, or short of that toward substantially increasing one's income in pesos, through all kinds of petty commerce, legal and illegal. These conditions grind away at the social solidarity that was at the heart of the new social relations that have predominated since the 1959 revolution as private property ceased being the foundation of all relations of production.

At the same time, the most conscious layers of the working-class vanguard are trying to lead a collective effort to raise labor productivity as the only way for the class as a whole to affect the conditions created by being brutally thrust into the world capitalist market.

Discussing these contradictions facing workers today, Fonseca, of the Luis Fernández Rodríguez plant, said, "The solution lies in increasing production and doing it more efficiently in all industries."

Struggle to increase production

"Garment and textile were among the last industries to begin recovering," said Héctor Fajardo, a member of the national staff of the National Union of Light Industry Workers (SNTIL). He accompanied *Militant* reporters during the visits to the six garment plants.

SNTIL organizes 92,000 workers in Cuba, of whom 40,000 work in 14 textile mills and about 25,000 in garment shops. Workers in plastics, furniture, cosmetics, and handicrafts also belong to the union. In 1993, during the worst of the special period, more than half the workforce was idled because of lack of raw materials and spare parts. Cotton, for example, which had been imported from the Soviet Union at \$800 per ton, now has to be purchased at world market prices for \$3,200 per ton.

While many of the factories were shut down or operated at a tiny percentage of their capacity for anywhere from a few months to a couple of years, workers who did not find other employment received 60 percent of their wages until they were called back. Today, 4,000 union members in Cuba's light industries still receive unemployment benefits, Fajardo said.

By late 1995, the government had begun securing some short-term, high-interest loans, contracts to export manufactured garments, and had negotiated a few joint ventures with foreign investors, bringing in newer technology, according to Fajardo. Union members simultaneously went on a major campaign to improve quality "so our

products can compete abroad," as Eulalia Rodríguez Regalado, a floor worker at the Vanesa swimsuit factory in Guanabacoa, put it.

The Vanesa plant was recently relocated to new facilities, which workers cleaned and painted. A volunteer work brigade also built a new cafeteria after regular working hours. The company also replaced old sewing machines with new ones from Japan. The investment in this state-owned plant came as a result of deliberate planning by the government to use some of the limited state resources to start production.

"The improvements in working conditions have helped boost morale and productivity," Orquídea Martínez, 34, the head technician at Vanesa, noted. Workers said they are on target to produce 3,000 swimsuits this year, up from 500 in 1996.

Last year, production of textiles and clothing jumped upward across the country from the earlier near-zero levels. "But it's still an uphill and long-term battle to reach the previous production," Fajardo said. Textile mills in Havana province, for example, manufactured 15 million square meters of fabric in 1996, doubling the previous year's output. Before 1989, however, the same mills produced 80 million square meters of cloth annually.

One of the challenges in the textile industry is replacing antiquated Soviet technology, which consumes inordinate amounts of energy, and restructuring giant factory-cities into smaller and more efficient plants. "We are seeking investments to upgrade or replace the Soviet machinery," said Wilfredo Ramos, 28, a production worker and secretary of the Union of Young Communists (UJC) at the huge Ariguanabo Textile Mill in Bauta, 60 miles southwest of Havana.

The mill employs 3,600 workers and its plants expand over a vast area. Half of the complex has been completely shut down for the last three years, workers said, to conserve energy. While workers are trying to increase production of denim and canvas and improve quality, the union and management are planning to convert the part of the mill that's closed into manufacturing a new product — either a different type of fabric or even shoes.

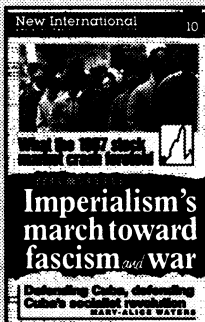
Resisting Washington's economic war

Washington's intensifying economic war is exacerbating the difficulties. Pedro García, manager of the Playa Girón shirt

from Pathfinder

Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution

by Mary-Alice Waters



Background to the political challenges facing the vanguard of the working class in Cuba that are discussed in this article.

In New International no. 10 \$14

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factory in the Old Havana district, said a Canadian company that had a contract to buy half a million shirts produced by the Cuban enterprise Encanto Clothing canceled the agreement last year. The cancellation came after U.S. president William Clinton signed into law the so-called Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, also referred to as the Helms-Burton law.

Encanto is one of the two state-owned garment companies in Havana. It comprises 19 factories employing nearly 3,000 workers, including Playa Girón, Vanesa, and the other clothing plants *Militant* reporters visited.

"The Helms-Burton law is an instrument Washington is using to make its economic blockade against Cuba more brutal," said Pedro Ross, general secretary of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC), in an April 29 interview with *Militant* reporters in Havana. "But this escalation of the imperialist aggression has made Cuban workers more determined to resist, to defend our independence and our socialism."

Many of the garment and other workers interviewed made similar points.

"We know what capitalism is and what Clinton's 'transition to capitalism' is all about," said Roberto Vejo, in an April 23 interview at the Dairy Complex in Cotorro, on the outskirts of the Cuban capital. "Look at Russia and Eastern Europe." He was referring to a January 28 report by Clinton in which the U.S. president offered the Cuban people \$4 - 8 billion if they got rid of Fidel Castro and Defense Minister Raúl Castro, dismantled the revolution's Ministry of the Interior, and began a "transition" to capitalism as dictated by the Helms-Burton law.

Vejo and other union members there described how workers have used their creativity to make up for a shortage of fresh milk. Since 1995, mechanics at the dairy complex have adapted existing technology to produce soy milk and yogurt. (*Militant* reporters have visited this plant twice before and reported on developments there in articles that appeared in the April 11, 1994, and Feb. 6, 1995, issues.) The latest invention is the production of "analogous cheese," said Vejo, who has worked at the plant for 25 years. This cheese, made from a mixture of imported powdered milk and soy products, is now used widely among other things to make pizza in the fast-food restaurants that have proliferated across the island.

Vejo also took *Militant* reporters on a tour of a cooperative farm run by workers from the factory. Union members took the initiative to set up the co-op three years ago on a piece of land they cleared near the industrial complex.

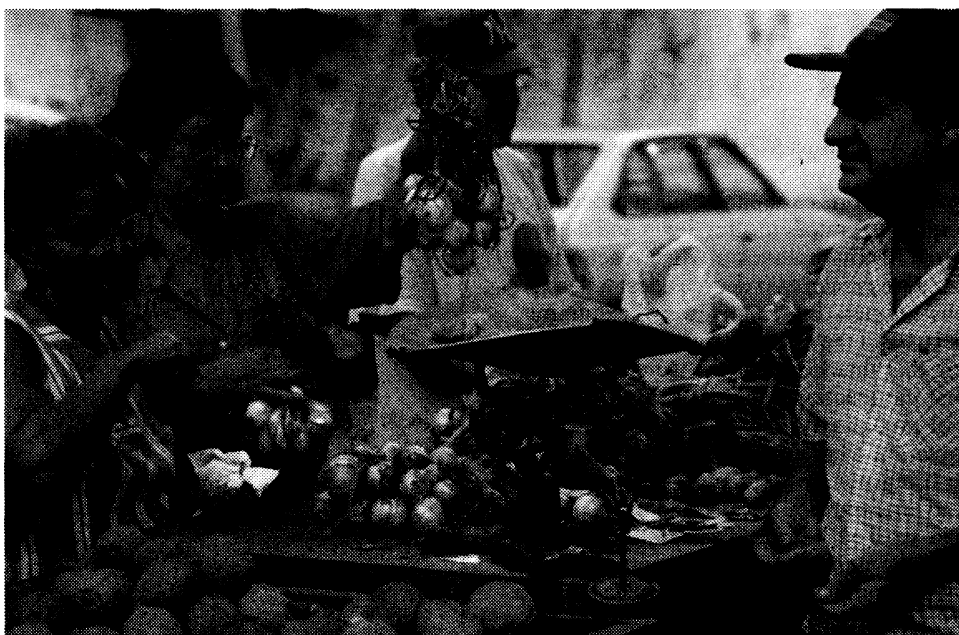
The decision was made after workers in the soy milk products department proposed that those who are not needed in the plant be allowed to organize such a cooperative in order to minimize layoffs and grow some badly needed food. The suggestion was raised by a young worker named Elmer Durán at a workers assembly in the dairy complex on Jan. 31, 1994, which *Militant* reporters attended. At that time, milk production in the factory had fallen from 700,000 to 300,000 tons annually, because of lack of powdered milk that used to be imported from East Germany. At the same time, the workforce had remained unchanged at 1,300, which meant that many workers had little or nothing to do, causing demoralization.

In April, Vejo and other union members were proud to show us the fruits of the workers' initiative. The farm produces a growing portion of the beans, vegetables, and fruit used in the plant cafeteria that provides meals for workers on three shifts. Lunch there costs around 1 peso, an affordable price for workers in the complex, who earn between 180 and 300 pesos per month.

Exchange value of wages diminishing

In the garment plants we visited, wages range between 140 and 250 pesos per month. Since production resumed recently, there has been only one shift and no meals are provided in the cafeterias.

While the purchasing power of the wages has increased since the worst days of the



Militant/Argiris Malapanis
Selling fruit and vegetables at agricultural market in Havana, April 28. Food has become more available in last two years, but prices remain high for most Cubans.

special period, the standard of living for most Cubans remains substantially lower than a decade ago with no rapid improvement on the horizon. "It's not easy to make ends meet," said Fé Boris at the VITI garment plant, pointing to high prices for food at the agricultural markets and the fact that many goods are available only at dollar stores. "Don't get me wrong," she added, "it is better than two years ago when you couldn't find food to buy even if you had the money. Now you can always find food, but it's expensive."

Even with a social wage that is very large compared to any capitalist country, Cuban working people feel the growing pressure of having to compete on the world capitalist market. Medical care in Cuba remains free and accessible to all and education is free through the university level. Most families either own their homes or pay very low rents.

The rationing system, however, which before the special period ensured an equitable distribution of food at subsidized prices, accounts for a smaller and smaller portion of the food Cubans eat. The precipitous decline in agricultural and industrial production has accelerated the breakdown.

Most Cubans today have to rely on the agricultural markets for a high percentage of their food. Rice, a basic staple of the Cuban diet, costs around 9 pesos per pound now at some of these markets. During a visit to several Havana markets in April, pork cost about 25 pesos per pound. For Cubans who have no access to dollars, it means spending most of their income on food, even if they have jobs that provide them with a high peso income.

A professor of social sciences at the University of Matanzas described to *Militant* reporters one such example. He and his wife, who also teaches at the university, take home over 700 pesos per month, but they have no access to dollars. Most of their pay is spent on food, he said, and adults in the family rarely eat meat or any other animal protein, which is usually reserved for the kids. The professor's comments were not a criticism of the measures the government has initiated during the special period, which he thought were necessary. He was simply describing the reality many Cubans face today.

Impact of spreading use of dollar

Those who have regular access to dollars, through relatives abroad, through bonuses earned by family members working in tourism or sectors producing for export, or through hustling for dollars from tourists, do enjoy a much higher standard of living regardless of their job.

To undercut this widening inequality, the unions, with the support of the government, have tried to institute incentives that make some goods sold in the hard-currency market accessible to more workers. One such example is the dollar store at the Ariguanabo Textile Mill.

Workers at the mill who go over their production quotas and have a good attendance record get a percentage of their wages in certificates that are equivalent to dollars at the exchange ratio of one peso to the dollar. These coupons can be cashed in at the dollar store in the textile complex. A bottle of

shampoo there costs \$1.50 and a liter of cooking oil \$2. But only a limited number of workers can use this store, which is subsidized from the revenues of the factory. It's also poorly stocked compared to dollar supermarkets in Havana and other major cities that offer a wide array of goods.

These pressures are registered in the self-employed sector as well. In June of this year, about 180,000 self-employed Cubans were registered with the state, a drop from more than 200,000 in 1996. The decline came after the government began enforcing collection of taxes on the self-employed. This was a popular measure among working people, since some self-employed are able to take home exceptionally large amounts of income. This is especially the case among those with skills like plumbers or electricians with access to spare parts and raw materials illegally "diverted" from various enterprises.

But while the number of self-employed with licenses has dropped, vendors in the streets of Havana, selling everything from juice and pizza to handicrafts, have visibly multiplied. And greater numbers of people repair cars, fix refrigerators, or operate *paladares*, small home restaurants, without a permit to avoid paying taxes, according to many residents interviewed.

Over the last two years, a growing number of Cubans have begun renting out their apartments for dollars to visitors from abroad, a practice that was illegal until recently. The U.S.-based publication *CUBAInfo* published an interview in July with an architect in the Parque Trillo neighborhood of Havana who rents her apartment for \$35 per night to visiting foreigners. "I will do it with or without permission," said the woman, whom the magazine identified only as Myrta. She was very unhappy with new taxes the government was about to im-

pose on landlords like herself.

On July 15, Law 171, approved earlier by the National Assembly, went into effect. The law requires those renting out apartments to pay an initial fee of \$100 and a monthly tax of \$200 if they rent to foreigners, and to register the names of their guests with the National Housing Institute. Those who do not comply could face fines up to \$2,000 or have their licenses revoked. Repeat offenders could have their houses confiscated.

This measure, which has stirred opposition among layers who benefited most from solving their problems individually by such means, is supported by many workers. "Why should someone, just because they rent out their apartment, make in a few days what most workers make in a year?" said dairy worker Roberto Vejo in April, referring to the upcoming implementation of Law 171.

Resisting 'capitalism within'

In an April 4 speech in Havana, marking the 35th anniversary of the founding of the UJC, Castro referred to the debate around this law. "Imagine that someone charges 600 dollars for a house — some people move into the garage or into a neighbor's house. If this person receives 600 dollars, multiply that by 20 [the approximate peso exchange rate]. That person receives 12,000 pesos. That seems just a little bit high. This person would fall into the category of those who have to pay taxes...."

"What cannot be tolerated is the non-fulfillment and the violation of the laws. That does great damage to the country, and the enemy encourages all this and places its hopes in this lack of discipline," Castro said. "The enemy is thinking about Torricelli laws, Helms-Burton laws, to aggravate the difficulties in the country, to promote discontent, to promote disorder in the country."

Referring to the economic and social crisis in the capitalist world, including the United States and other imperialist powers, Castro stated, "We must also be very much aware of the realities of the rest of the world, and aware of the fact that this hard and terrible wave confronting the revolutionary movement will pass, and it will begin to pass as the peoples of the world become aware of what is happening. And capitalism teaches us this every day, capitalism outside and capitalism within, because we undoubtedly have certain forms of capitalism within."

Pointing to that speech, Roberto Vejo said, "This is what Fidel was getting at: we must resist today until the day we can stop using dollars, get rid of the dollar stores, and strengthen the revolution once again."

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Bosses try to blame workers in oil blast

BY JIM ALTENBERG

MARTINEZ, California — A report issued by the Tosco Refining Co. on the Jan. 21, 1997, explosion at its Avon Refinery attempts to place responsibility for the disaster on the seven operators who were working in the unit at the time. The blast took the life of Michael Glanzman, a hydrocracker operator. Forty-six others were reported injured, including maintenance workers, workers employed by contractors in the plant, and supervisors. Following investigations by the Contra Costa County Health Services Department, the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and other government agencies, as well as Tosco itself, two reports were presented to a meeting of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors June 3. One was issued by the company, and the other by Health Services.

While few workers at Avon have actually read the reports, a widely distributed company flyer purporting to summarize the company's findings was met with anger and derision. Many were not surprised when the company tried to pin responsibility for the blast on the operators. A cover letter to the Tosco report began with pronouncements of the company's concern for safety and regret for the tragedy of January 21. It emphasized the report's "comprehensive, very detailed, and by its nature, very technical" aspect, in order to discourage anyone from studying it, and to bolster the image of an objective analysis of the disaster.

Criticism of report

Officials of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union (OCAW) also participated in the investigation. But in the end, they refused to endorse the report's conclusion, charging that Tosco said little about the company's unwillingness to require that workers adhere to established procedures when faced with potential runaway reactions. Union officials also said the OCAW Health and Safety Representative in the plant had been excluded from investigative meetings where the company management's role was taken up.

The County Health Services Department sent a letter to the *Contra Costa Times* protesting the paper's May 30 headline "Workers erred in fatal blast at Tosco." This "draws one to a conclusionary summary of our report that is not accurate," the letter stated. Workers posted up the Health Services letter in control rooms and maintenance shops throughout the Tosco plant.

The Communities for A Better Environment (CBE), a San Francisco-based environmental organization that has spoken out against oil refinery accidents and pollution, also responded to the report. The CBE said Tosco management should have shut down the hydrocracker rather than run with unreliable monitors and leaking equipment. Faced with an increasing number of refinery accidents and leaks, residents of towns near Contra Costa County's four refineries have demanded more stringent laws governing refinery operations and land use. They have also set up their own air monitoring systems to collect independent data on refinery emissions, spills, leaks, and accidents.

Hydrocrackers produce large amounts of high-profit gasoline and diesel fuel from the heavier materials found in crude oil. This is accomplished by combining hydrogen with gas-oil or diesel in catalytic reactors at pres-

sures as high as 1,700 pounds per square inch (psi).

The reports explain that plant procedures require operators to shut down and depressurize the hydrocracker when reactor temperatures reach 800 degrees, lest a dangerous temperature runaway or "excursion" occur. But the operators, apparently believing that their instruments were wrong and that the reaction could be kept under control on January 21, did not shut the unit down. At other times, workers had managed to bring potential runaway reactions back into line, and they made the adjustments that had worked before. Their actions, which kept the unit running, had been condoned by the company over the years despite the dangers involved.

Between July 1996 and January 1997, at least four such events had been reported, and many operators told investigators that numerous temperature excursions had occurred where the unit was not depressurized. But when the reactor could not be controlled January 21, Tosco concluded that the operators were ultimately responsible.

What happened January 21

The reports presented to the Board of Supervisors paint a terrifying picture of the events leading up to the explosion, when a rapid increase in temperatures in the unit's Stage 2, number 3 reactor was masked by poorly designed instrumentation, malfunctioning equipment, false data, and conditions that changed far faster than anyone had previously seen.

Just the week before the blast, the unit had been shut down due to a tube leak on a heat exchanger. While starting up the unit January 17 after the repairs were completed, another leak occurred, this time on a clamp previously installed over a leak on a different reactor. Start-up procedures continued while the clamp was repaired. But on January 20 the reactor was shut down so the clamp, which had started leaking again, could be fixed. By then the plant was running, and the feed, consisting of hot oil and hydrogen, was simply increased to the other reactors to keep production going.

At the same time a new computerized temperature monitoring system for the reactors was taken out of service, after operators complained that it did not work. This equipment had only been in use for a few days, and company officials decided to reconnect the old system, known as a "data logger," while the unit was running so as not to interrupt the start up process. The company had known of problems with the data logger itself for weeks. Three of the five 1996 excursions reported were directly related to data logger failure. A second set of temperature indicators were located outside the control room, on a panel underneath the reactors.

Operators reported that the data logger began showing what they believed to be incorrect and confusing information about 10 minutes prior to the explosion. Temperature indications bounced back and forth, from low to high and back again; alarms indicating high temperatures sounded. The temperature controller, meanwhile, did not indicate abnormally high temperatures. The data logger was set to read "zero" when the top operating limit of 800 degrees was reached, but operators had never been informed of this fact. Because the data logger calculated average figures, these values of

Protesters condemn cop beating in Newark



Fifty angry demonstrators marched on the Newark police department July 28 protesting the cop beating of 18-year-old Yahouda Gibson. The police arrested Gibson that day and took him to the precinct, where they were followed by the crowd. Meanwhile, in Edison, New Jersey, cop Wayne Seich was suspended from the police force July 28 for assaulting 71-year-old Elise Kitchen, who had called the police to complain about Seich blocking traffic while he conversed with another motorist in her neighborhood.

zero were averaged in. It appeared that temperatures had dropped, when in fact the excursion had spread inside the reactor. All this took place within 7.5 minutes.

Meanwhile, the temperature increase produced methane gas in the reactor, which mixed with the hydrogen gas normally in the system. A drop in hydrogen purity can be one indication of a temperature excursion. But the hydrogen analyzer, which would have shown a change in the composition of the gas, ran with a time lag of seven minutes, so up-to-date information that the operators could have used was not shown. When its alarm finally sounded, it was too late.

Between 7:34 and 7:38 p.m., operator Michael Glanzman, left the control room to check the temperature readings on the outside panel. His radio failed when he tried to call the control room from outside. Minutes later a pipe on the outlet of the Stage 2 number 3 reactor ruptured, and a huge explosion occurred. Glanzman was killed. The blast shook the refinery, blew out windows,

and overturned office trailers in a wide area of the plant. While an enormous fire engulfed much of the hydrocracker, operators shut down the unit, depressured and secured it.

Rapid temperature increases have long been known to be a serious hazard of hydrocrackers, since heat is created by the process itself. Yet few such plants, including Tosco's 34-year-old unit at the Avon refinery, have automatic shutdowns that operate when critical temperatures are reached. Such a device, if it worked properly, would most likely have saved Glanzman's life and prevented the explosion. Automatic shutdowns are now being installed. New instrumentation has also been put in. The second set of temperature indicators has been moved from underneath the reactors to the control room. The unit is now up and running again.

Jim Altenberg is a member of OCAW Local 1-5 and an operator at the Tosco Avon refinery.

Rallies celebrate Pratt's freedom

BY PAT NIXON

LOS ANGELES — More than 1,000 people rallied July 26 at Liemert Park to celebrate the release from prison of former Black Panther leader Geronimo Pratt. Jailed for 27 years on trumped-up charges for a murder he did not commit, Pratt was freed from prison in June after an Orange County judge ruled that he did not get a fair trial.

The rally was organized by supporters of Pratt and was built by the Black-oriented radio station KJLH, which is owned by Stevie Wonder. Among the predominantly Black crowd were numerous high school and college students.

Pratt urged people to learn their history and become disciplined. He urged the audience to dedicate themselves to liberation and work to put an end to crack use, disrespect for elders, and to turn the "gangster mentality" into a revolutionary mentality.

Kamal Hassan of the Malcolm X

Grassroots Movement chaired the event. In introducing Heather Martens, who spoke for the group of Los Angeles youth attending the World Festival of Youth and Students in Havana, Hassan said, "Whenever you hear 'Cuba,' you should applaud. Cuba took in Black people who were forced to leave the United States. We have to deal with the beast here so he'll lay off Cuba."

Martens asked for support for the world youth festival. She explained that Cuba has supported the fight for civil rights here and the fight against apartheid in South Africa.

There were also speakers from the Patrice Lumumba Coalition, the New African Peoples Organization, several anti-gang organizations, and U. S. Rep. Maxine Waters. A steel drum band and poetry reading provided entertainment.

Pratt has spoken to large crowds in several cities since his release, including New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C.

Australian gov't harasses Black activist

BY MARNIE KENNEDY

SYDNEY, Australia — A partial victory for democratic rights was won July 11 when visiting U.S. activist Lorenzo Ervin was released after three days in a Brisbane maximum security jail. The Australian government arrested Ervin and began deportation procedures July 8. His visa was unilaterally canceled on the grounds that he was "not of good character." His lawyer, Terry Fisher, said that Ervin was assaulted by prison guards.

Ervin, a former member of the Black Panther Party, began a four-week speaking tour in Brisbane July 7, hosted by Angry People, an anarchist organization.

Protests against his detention took place outside Department of Immigration offices July 10 in Sydney and Melbourne, with 100 people marching in Brisbane.

A High Court ruling on July 11 forced the Department of Immigration to withdraw the visa cancellation after Fisher argued that Ervin had not been allowed to answer the allegations against him. On July 14 Ervin was served with a list of questions from the Department of Immigration about the purpose of his lecture tour and his "criminal background," in an attempt to begin deportation proceedings again. Ervin was convicted in 1969 on charges of kidnapping and hijacking a plane from the United States to

Cuba. He spent 14 years in prison.

The investigation against him started after fascist MP Pauline Hanson called for Ervin to be deported because he was "a known terrorist and gun runner."

On July 25 Ervin left the country, cutting his tour short by a few days, in order to avoid deportation. Canberra subsequently canceled his visa.

The government used the campaign against Ervin to bolster changes previously proposed to its already draconian immigration laws. The proposals include denying any appeal to those it decides to deport, as well as placing the onus on visa applicants to show that they are of "good character."

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UPS workers strike

Continued from front page

Independent Pilot Association (IPA) who fly for UPS are honoring picket lines. Scurrying to continue operations, the parcel giant is using its 75,000 managers and nonunion employees to keep business moving. In addition, 138 pilots within UPS management were scheduled to fly international flights.

In response to the pilots' show of solidarity to the striking Teamsters, UPS management canceled their overseas hotel rooms. As of August 6, 293 UPS cargo pilots were stranded in 54 cities outside the United States. The pilots have been working without a contract for the last 20 months. The IPA is footing the bill for their hotel costs until UPS agrees to fly them home.

"Normally 300 trucks go out each day," said striker Don Cleamon, a driver from Teamster Local 705 in Chicago. "But so far today only 26 have gone out and most of them have been pretty empty. All the trucks have been driven by UPS managers."

UPS management has been campaigning for President William Clinton to intervene against the strike, as he did to halt a walk-out by pilots at American Airlines last February. An August 4 letter sent from the company to its customers urged them to fax messages to the White House asking Clinton to invoke the antilabor Taft-Hartley Act and impose a mediation board. To do so, the president would have to declare that the strike posed a threat to national health and safety. Clinton said he won't do so at this time, saying, "I hope they'll go back to the table" and negotiate.

Part-time workers get half the wage

The biggest issue in the strike is the company's use of part-time workers, who account for 60 percent of the workforce and are paid about half the hourly rates of full-timers. Emma Love, a part-time worker in Chicago, said she earns about \$120 a week. Echoing other strikers, she said she couldn't stand being an "underpaid slave" anymore.

Fiore Auriene, a 23-years-old UPS indoor bulk driver in Chicago, said the company attempted to separate the full-time and part-time workers by trying to establish separate cafeterias and bathrooms. Auriene said these were ignored by all the workers. "We just want full-time opportunities," he said, "there is no such thing as part-time families."

The union is demanding 10,000 more higher paying full-time jobs. UPS says it wants to create just 200 such jobs per year. Strikers on the picket lines report that the overwhelming majority of workers inside the distribution facilities — loaders, unloaders, and sorters — are part-time workers, while most truck drivers are full-time. Since 1993 some 83 percent of the 46,000 new jobs created at UPS have been part-time. According to the union, more than 10,000 UPS employees work 35 hours or more a week but are still paid part-time wages. Starting wages have been frozen for part-timers at \$8 per hour since 1982. The average wage for full-time workers is \$19.95. Part-time UPS workers get no dental, eye, and drug prescription benefits until three years with the company.

Bad working conditions and safety are

also key issues in the strike. Most of the part-timers work odd hours in the middle of the night for three to five hour stints with few breaks. Scott Christoffel, who has worked as a driver at a Chicago-based UPS facility for 14 years, said, "People are getting hurt all the time — pulled muscles, strained backs, banged-up knees, and groin injuries. I was out for five weeks on workers compensation."

Mike Dibucci, a striker in New Stanton, Pennsylvania, commented, "If you get injured you are pressured not to fill out an accident report, or told the accident was your fault for 'not using proper loading techniques.'"

According to a Teamster news release of April 23, the company's own figures show that last year there were 33.8 injuries for every 100 workers — an injury rate 2.5 times the national transportation average. Since 1990 UPS has been fined over \$3.7 million by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the company pays approximately \$1 million a day in workers compensation costs.

In 1994 the company raised the weight limit UPS workers must lift from 70 to 150 pounds. A one-day strike by workers outraged at this back-breaking demand forced the UPS bosses to back off for a while. However, it did not change the weight limit. The company is now demanding that it can increase the weight limit above 150 pounds at any time without the union's agreement.

"The company has a rule that every two steps should take 3 seconds. Try that with a 100 pound package," said Leonard Cornelius, a Chicago-based driver from Teamster Local 705. UPS has dozens of such rules that regiment workers' lives.

"There is a rule that you can request assistance for lifting packages over 70 pounds," said Chad Greenwalt in New Stanton. "But if you do it too much, you get hassled."

Other issues in the strike include UPS demands to expand outsourcing, eliminate family health coverage for all newly hired part tims, and expand the list of infractions called "cardinal sins" where innocent until proven guilty does not apply. The parcel giant is also demanding that it pull out of the Teamster-controlled multi-employer pension fund. "We don't want the company to have any control over our pension plan. The Teamsters have run it for 42 years and we don't want the company getting their hands on it," declared Brian Lovato, a UPS driver on strike in Los Angeles.

Chad Coffman, a 20-year-old striker in Willow Springs, Illinois, said he liked the atmosphere on the picket line, explaining that "in my department the strike has brought a lot of people closer." He said he started "to feel the power of the strike in the week before it happened. In my department the number of packages started to fall from 280,000 on Monday to 215,000 on Friday."

Solidarity from other workers

"We've already gotten lots of support from the community and other unions," said Adam Boothe, a package car driver and shop steward of Teamsters Local 402 in Huntsville, Alabama. Members of the United Auto

Socialist Workers join the picket lines



Militant/Jeff Powers

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Socialist Workers candidates and their supporters around the country have joined striking Teamsters on the picket lines against UPS and are urging other workers to be part of the fight. Among them was Scott Breen (shown above in tie), candidate for mayor of Seattle, who joined a feisty and youthful group of pickets in front of a UPS facility.

Breen, a member of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) union at Boeing, and his supporters are circulating a statement hailing the example of the striking Teamsters. This struggle "deserves the utmost active solidarity from the labor movement," Breen declared. He also urged participation in the August 10 march called by the United Farm Workers in support of the organizing drive by apple workers in Mattawa, Washington.

In Pittsburgh, Socialist Workers mayoral candidate Edwin Fruit, along with Leroy Watson, SWP candidate for city council, were welcomed by a couple dozen Teamsters who gathered at a UPS center July 31 in preparation for a strike.

Earlier that day, Fruit, a member of the IAM, joined with hundreds of county

workers at an informational picket line at the City-County Building organized by the Service Employees International Union to protest the lack of a contract for the past year. Fruit and Watson solidified with these fights at an August 1 press conference when they turned in petitions with nearly 2,000 signatures to qualify for the November ballot. Watson, an activist in the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) also pointed out that the U.S. government serves and protects the employers. "That's why we need a workers and farmers government," he said, pointing to how Cuban working people made a revolution and took control of their country.

The Socialist Workers in Miami also launched their campaign. Janet Post, a Machinist at United Airlines, is running for mayor, and Rolande Girard, a garment worker and member of the USWA, is the party's contender for City Commissioner. Post, a former UPS worker herself, joined with Teamsters getting ready to strike in Miami. The unionists told the socialist workers they were sick of the UPS bosses' use of metal detectors and other attempts to regiment them.

Workers, United Steelworkers of America, postal workers, teachers, and others have stopped by bringing donations of food and drink and offering solidarity, he said.

Boothe and Lisa D'Agostino, a part-time worker with 15 years at UPS, described how strikers there have organized rolling pickets to follow the few delivery trucks UPS management has been able to send out. Strikers in several other cities have carried out similar roving pickets.

In the Chicago area, six UPS strikers set up informational pickets at the Burlington Northern Santa Fe intermodal yard, which handles UPS shipments. The rail yard is the largest intermodal facility in the country.

In the Boston area, police attacked two UPS strikers with pepper spray and arrested four others the first day of the strike. Another 11 unionists were detained in

Somerville, Massachusetts, August 6. Across the country cops have arrested dozens of strikers for alleged picket line infractions. In New Stanton, where 1,200 workers are on strike, police turned out August 6 to enforce an injunction limiting the number of pickets to 10 per gate.

No talks were scheduled for the first three days of the strike; negotiations were set to resume August 7.

Mark Curtis is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. Mike Italie in Atlanta; Susan LaMont in Birmingham; Mary Nell Bockman in Boston; Shelton McCrahey in Chicago; Tim Mailhot in Des Moines; Mark Friedman in Los Angeles; Deborah Laitos in New York; and Salm Kolis in Pittsburgh contributed to this article.

Wheeling-Pitt strikers vote on contract offer

BY TONY DUTROW

STEOBENVILLE, Ohio — Several hundred Wheeling-Pitt strikers packed the hall of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 1190 August 5 to discuss a tentative contract. Similar meetings were being held by all eight striking locals throughout the week, leading up to a mail-in vote on the proposed five-year agreement.

Some 4,500 steelworkers at mills in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia have been on the picket lines since Oct. 1, 1996. Their determined resistance for the past 10 months has dealt a blow to the plans of the Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel bosses and its parent company WHX to deny these workers a guaranteed pension, the central demand of the strike. Following a 1985 declaration of bankruptcy that provoked a three-month strike, the steelworkers lost their guaranteed pension plan, which was similar to that in place at all other unionized basic steel mills.

In an apparent defeat for Ronald LaBow, chairman of WHX, who crowed that he would never again agree to a guaranteed pension plan, the union won a guarantee of

\$40 a month per year of service, plus a modified 30-and-out provision that will allow hundreds of steelworkers to retire at age 55 with full pension benefits. Part of the settlement will lead to the elimination of 850 jobs, through attrition and cutting job classifications. If the contract is ratified, those workers will have the right to pension benefits and severance pay.

Workers at the picket lines and at the union meetings had views ranging from elation at winning the guaranteed pension to skepticism. Tom Ordronoic, who's now 59, with 33 years at the Mingo Junction mill, said, "I'm skeptical [about the proposal]. I won't believe it until I'm back at work." He explained that LaBow has a history of backing out of the negotiations and backtracking on promises.

Anthony Scurti said, "This is a good deal for the older guys in the mill, but for us with 25 years, we have to work another 12 years according to this contract. I think most guys will vote for it."

Scurti said he will vote against the contract because eight workers fired for so-

called picket line misconduct are not rehired. "I think if 4,500 of us go back, the eight fired should go back with us," he said. According to the August 3 *Wheeling News-Register*, "anyone discharged during the duration of the strike will have their situation handled at their home plant on a local level."

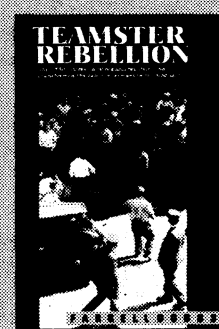
Scurti pointed to the potential power of the 185,000 UPS workers on strike, "Look what we were able to do with just 4,500 of us."

Over the course of the strike no one crossed the picket line. Scores of strikers hit the road in the past several weeks to protest at gatherings of WHX stockholders demanding a contract.

Plant gate collections for strikers took place at mills and factories throughout the country, and bus caravans from many parts of the region brought unionists to the picket lines.

Tony Dutrow is a member of USWA Local 1557. Sheila Ostrow, a member USWA Local 1843, contributed to this article.

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GM strike ends with pledge to hire workers

BY JOHN SARGE

WARREN, Michigan — "It's pretty good now, but we'll have to see how the company lives up to it," is how T. Rogers, a pipefitter with 35 years seniority at General Motors (GM), described the contract he had just voted on. The local agreement ended a six-day strike by 2,800 members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 909 against the auto giant's transmission plant here.

The unionists struck July 23, just days after an 87-day strike ended at GM's assembly plant in nearby Pontiac. The walkouts were over the same issues: staffing levels, intense overtime, and threatened outsourcing. In both cases the company ended up promising to hire more workers.

Within three days of the strike in Warren, the sixth local work stoppage at GM in the United States this year, six assembly plants were closed due to shortages of parts built by Local 909 members. Even with earlier strikes having cost the corporation an estimated \$490 million in lost earnings, the auto giant has some \$14.9 billion in cash reserves.

The tentative agreement distributed by the unions' bargaining committee reports that GM has promised to add 420 new workers to the plant, 315 production, and 105 in the skilled trades. Terry Bush, bargaining committee chairman told the press that the non-skilled jobs were to be filled within 60 days with the skilled trades hiring to be completed within two years.

Management also agreed to keep a wheel production department in the plant that the company had planned to outsource. Each local member will also receive a \$550 payment to settle outsourcing grievances.

Almost 90 percent of the 1,100 union members who attended the meeting voted to accept the agreement. Rich Losiewicz said the deal "is not too bad. We're getting a little bit more than we had and we need to get some younger people in here."

But Fred Adams, a job setter, said he voted no because "it is almost a replica of the previous agreement. There is not much new and I'm somewhat disappointed. The committee talked about restoring dignity and respect, we'll see if this does it."

While UAW officials were claiming victory and most workers in the plant looked at the outcome with guarded optimism, the company was assuring its investors that it planned to stay its course.

The chairman of GM's board of directors, Jack Smith, announced July 28 that the agreement does not interfere with the auto maker's push to cut its work force through attrition. Wall Street responded to the latest agreement by pushing GM's stock price up \$1.75 a share the day after it was ratified.

While GM agreed to either hire small numbers of workers or change production levels to free up enough workers to relieve some of the worst short staffing in the plants, the company continues to cut its hourly workforce.

Since the beginning of 1996, GM's total

hourly workforce has shrunk from 246,000 to 227,000. As recently as 1994 the auto giant employed 262,000 hourly workers.

GM is still the least efficient auto maker in the United States, using more workers per vehicle produced than its competitors. Under its 1996 national contract, GM only has to replace one worker for every two who retire, quit, or die. If the company proves

that jobs have been reduced by productivity gains they don't have to be replaced. This attrition built into the national agreement helped the company to cut the workforce here and in other plants.

General Motors still has nine locations without a local union agreement, seven in the Detroit area and two Delphi plants in Dayton, Ohio. On August 1, UAW Local

22 gave GM notice of its intent to strike August 8 if a local agreement is not reached at the Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly plant, known as Poletown. Again, the main issues are staffing, outsourcing, and health and safety conditions.

John Sarge is a member of UAW Local 900 in Detroit, Michigan.

Bipartisan budget attacks entitlements

Continued from front page

Medicare, said Clinton, suggesting some such arrangement could be worked out in the future. In a July 2 *Wall Street Journal* column, Gerald Seib praised the budget negotiations as "forc[ing] everybody to deal with [Medicare] head-on.... This is how transformations happen. Important changes are often years in the making and involve countless charges up the political hill."

Meanwhile, as part of a much-touted health-care program for children, the bipartisan budget deal deepens the capitalist rulers' attack on women's access to abortion. It would codify into law a ban on state governments using federal funds to "pay for any abortion or to assist in the purchase, in whole

or in part, of health benefit coverage that includes coverage of abortion."

The plan allocates \$24 billion that state governments are supposed to use to provide health care for uninsured children over the next five years. This can include buying private insurance and charge small premiums, deductibles, and other fees to working-class families whose children receive coverage under the program. Clinton initially claimed that up to 5 million children would receive medical insurance from the budget deal, but congressional estimates put the figure at about 500,000. There are an estimated 10 million youth who lack health coverage in the United States.

The framework for the budget pact was

established on May 2 when Clinton and his congressional cohorts reached a consensus on their bipartisan assault on social entitlements. Republican Speaker Newton Gingrich claimed the accord was the completion of his so-called Contract with America.

At the same time Clinton used the deal to burnish his image of "fixing" the welfare law he signed last year, which among other things eliminated the Aid for Families with Dependent Children, a component of the Social Security Act of 1935. The budget restores benefits to 500,000 disabled immigrants with legal documents who were among the 1 million immigrants scheduled to be kicked off the food stamp program.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

ALABAMA

Birmingham

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GEORGIA

Atlanta

Support the Teamsters on Strike against UPS! Fri., Aug. 15, 7:30 p.m. 803 Peachtree St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (404) 724-9759.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Workers and the Global Economic Crisis. Report on an international trade-union conference in Cuba. Speaker: Elizabeth Stone, conference participant, member of International Association of Machinists, Lodge 1427 at O'Hare Airport. Sat., Aug. 16, 7:30 p.m. 1223 N. Milwaukee. Donation: \$4. Tel: (773) 342-1780.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Support the UPS Strikers! Fri., Aug. 15, 7:30 p.m. 87A Halsey St. (1 block west of Broad St., 2 blocks north of Raymond). Donation: \$4. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Report Back from Cuba: The 14th World Festival of Youth. Fri., Aug. 15, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South Street. Donation: \$4. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Black Farmers Speak out on the Fight for Land and against Environmental Racism.

Speakers: Gary Grant, director, the Land Loss Fund, Tillery, North Carolina; Marcus Tillery, chairman, the Land Loss Fund; Charles McCollum, Jr., Concerned Citizens of Tillery. 1930 18th St. NW. (at 18th and Florida, entrance on Florida.) Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

Papua New Guinea — The New Government and the War on Bougainville. Report back by Vikki John, Bougainville Freedom Movement, recently returned from Port Moresby. Fri., Aug. 15, 7 p.m. 66 Albion St., Surry Hills. Donation: \$4. Tel: (02) 9281 3297.

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

Pauline Hanson: Fascist Politician Emerges in Australia. Speaker: Ruth Gray, Communist League. Fri., Aug. 15, 7 p.m. 199 High Street (corner High and Tuam). Donation: \$4. Tel: (03) 365-6055.

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Detroit news bosses face likely setback

BY GARY BOYERS

DETROIT — The newspaper bosses here may face being forced to return to their jobs most members of six unions who went on strike over two years. In June, a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) administrative law judge found that the *Detroit News* and *Free Press* had carried out unfair labor practices that caused and prolonged the strike. After the newspapers refused to recognize that finding, the NLRB went to federal court August 1 requesting an injunction ordering the return of the strikers to their jobs. The judge said he expected to rule within 10 days.

"Rehiring would undo management's strategy and set back years of efforts to lift the papers' profitability," stated an article in the August 4 issue of *Business Week* magazine, commenting on the hearing. "The papers had expected to turn a profit this year because new work rules enabled them to publish with some 400 fewer full-time workers.... The strike may well wind up costing the papers a lot more than they bargained for."

One smart dog — Reiko, a veteran police dog, was kicked off the Great Falls, Montana, force. "He's never bitten a citizen, and he's never bitten a crook," complained the



Harry Ring

chief. "It's always been an officer." Chimed in a captain, "He's taking the action he thinks is appropriate. Unfortunately, that's biting us."

Rolls Royce justice — In Scottsdale, Arizona, Edward

Palenkas, a retired industrialist who drives a Rolls Royce was quickly apprehended and pleaded guilty to manslaughter in the hit-and-run killing of Christopher Turner, 11. Palenkas got five years probation. Plus a \$20,000 donation to anti-drunk driving groups.

McFuture — Reporting on corporate gains in classroom promotion and advertising, *Business Week* told of a Florida elementary school where McDonald's sponsors a seven-week course to give kids a fix on the work world. Students learn how to design a McDonald's restaurant, and how a McDonald's works. Plus how to go about a McDonald job interview.

Serving the public — Unionists at Britain's state-owned BBC got pay increases averaging 2.8 percent. Meanwhile executive wages jumped as much as 39 percent. The director general will now receive £354,000 (US\$531,000) plus benefits, including two cars and a chauffeur.

Another executive perk — A study of British civil service employees found that their risk of heart disease was 50 percent greater than that of their bosses. The researchers attributed this to a feeling of little or no control at work.

That will do it — "Someone who has used other people's money

has an obligation to give it back ... because one cannot leave this world with a weight on his conscience." — Fernando Sáenz Lacalle, Archbishop of San Salvador, whose church was among those taken in a major bank swindle.

They canceled the debt! — The World Bank changed the name of its annual World Debt Tables to Global Development Finance.

A deadly system — Data gathered by university researchers showed that in 1992 some 68,800 people in the United States died and about 14 million others were hurt by or ill from work-related causes.

'Wanted' — A San Francisco *Chronicle* article said that when the World Food Summit met in Rome last winter, the chief U.S. delegate declared Washington could not support a declaration recognizing the right to food. Such a stand, she explained, would mean that the new U.S. welfare 'reform' statute would then be in violation of international law.

Thought for the week — "Peter Middleton earns at least £1 million a year as European chief of U.S. bank Salomons. A former monk, he believes it is 'immoral and unjust' to deny people the fruits of their labor." — The *Guardian*, London.

'Palestine and the Arabs' Fight for Liberation'

Palestine and the Arabs' Fight for Liberation, by Fred Feldman and Georges Sayad, provides an overview of the Palestinian struggle as part of the fight against colonialism and imperialist oppression in the Middle East. It spans the period from the opening of World War I to the *intifada*, or uprising, of the Palestinian people that began in December 1987. The excerpts below describe the process that led to the formation of the state of Israel in 1948. The pamphlet is copyright © 1989 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOK OF THE WEEK

In 1916 the British rulers signed a pact with their French counterparts dividing the Arab region between them. Lebanon and Syria were to be turned over to France, while Iraq and the territory called Transjordan (today Jordan) would be under "direct or indirect [British] administration and control." Parts of Palestine would be placed under "an international administration."

Dismissing their promises to the Arabs, the British and French imperialists began carving up the region along these lines following the end of the war in late 1918....

The billions to be made from Middle East oil greatly raised the stakes for the imperialists in opposing the aspirations of the Arab peoples for independence and social progress....

Following World War I there was a major alteration in the British-French pact of 1916. The British rulers took Palestine as part of their share of the booty. British rule was formally authorized by a 1922 mandate from the League of Nations, a body set up after the war by the victorious imperialist bloc.

In order to create a powerful new obstacle to the Arab independence struggle, Britain backed plans of the World Zionist Organization to colonize Palestine with European Jews. The British rulers hoped colonial settlers would feel they had a stake in helping combat the Arab democratic movement....

Backed by the British colonial administration, the World Zionist Organization's Jewish National Fund stepped up purchases of land from Arab landowners in Palestine after World War I. Purchase was often followed by expulsion of Arab peasants from

the land, which was then turned over to Jewish settlers, set aside for future settlers, or used to foster Jewish-owned industry. The British authorities imposed restrictions on the rights of Arab landlords and peasants to expand their holdings.

Between 1922 and 1939 the amount of land held by the fund rose from 150,000 to nearly 400,000 acres. The massive infusion of capital from abroad to purchase land in Palestine caused a boom in real estate prices that encouraged the expropriation of ever more Arab peasants. Zionist organizations campaigned for the dismissal of Arab workers from jobs in Jewish-owned businesses and their replacement with settlers. Arab-made goods were boycotted. The flow of capital from the Jewish National Fund and other backers of colonizing Palestine spurred the growth of a strong capitalist class among the settlers.

A system of segregation took shape, directed against the Arab population, including wage differentials and other privileges for the settlers. To protect these privileges, the settlers formed armed units that eventually contributed to forging the Haganah and Irgun armies. These armies waged the wars that established and expanded the State of Israel in 1948. The British collaborated with the Zionist organizations as a means of reinforcing their own rule. The two often worked closely together, especially against the growing Palestinian national struggle. But conflicts also arose between British imperialism and the settlers because the British opposed the Zionist goal of transforming Palestine into an independent, exclusively Jewish state.

Resistance by Palestinians to colonization of their homeland spurred the development of national consciousness and opposition to British rule. In 1921 huge protests against British rule and Zionist colonization greeted a visit to Palestine by Winston Churchill, then the minister of colonies in the British cabinet. An Arab general strike greeted [British foreign minister] Arthur Balfour when he visited Palestine in 1925.

In the 1930s the growing national movement exploded into a popular revolt against British rule. This coincided with unrest across the Middle East as an uprising challenged the British in Egypt, and a general strike shook the French grip on Syria. Britain conceded formal independence to Iraq in 1932 and ended its protectorate over Egypt in 1937.

A general strike swept Palestine in 1936 and Arab National Committees were formed across the country. The strike demanded the suspension of Jewish colonization. For the next three years Palestinian peasants waged a guerrilla war against the British occupiers. In 1938 liberation fighters controlled the whole Arab area of the country, establishing an unofficial administration that, only with considerable difficulty, was finally rooted out by British troops. The British imperialists enlisted the Zionist militia to combat the Arabs. A twenty-thousand-member Jewish Settlement Police was established, as well as joint British-settler night patrols.

At the height of this anti-imperialist upsurge, half of the British army was tied down in the Middle East. Official, understated British figures reported that two thousand Arabs were killed in suppressing the rebellion. Some one hundred Arabs were hanged.

The crushing of the 1936-39 Arab revolt made it possible for the colonizers to press the Palestinian people harder....

A 1940 diary entry by Joseph Weitz, one-time head of the Jewish Agency's Colonization Department, stated this goal frankly. The Jewish Agency was an organ of the World

Zionist Organization. Weitz wrote, "Between ourselves it must be clear that there is no room for both peoples together in this country.... The only solution is Palestine, at least Western Palestine, without Arabs.... And there is no other way out but to transfer the Arabs from here to the neighboring countries; to transfer all of them; not one village, not one tribe should be left."

In the course of World War II, anticolonial struggles gained steam in many parts of the world. The European imperialist powers emerged from the war in a weakened condition. In the Middle East, Syria and Lebanon became independent of France. British rule ended in Transjordan, which later adopted the name Jordan, British forces had to pull out of Egypt and Iraq. The Arab League, a bloc of governments of Arab countries, was founded in 1945. But the newly independent states were weak and backward, dominated by landlords and ruled in many cases by monarchies set up by the imperialists.

U.S. imperialism, the principal imperi-



Youth demonstrating during *intifada*, West Bank, 1989.

alist victor in World War II, moved rapidly to replace the French and British capitalists as the dominant power in the Middle East. With direct colonial rule and occupation of the region in decline, the U.S. rulers viewed Zionist colonization as a potentially powerful weapon against anti-imperialist struggles in the region. Where London had resisted Zionist demands for independence, Washington emerged as the strongest backer of the drive to create an Israeli capitalist state in the Palestinians' homeland.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

September 8, 1972

NEW YORK, Aug. 23 — Three thousand five-hundred young Puerto Rican militants marched from 43 Street to 47 Street and rallied at the United Nations Plaza on Aug. 18, demanding independence for Puerto Rico.

The spirit of the demonstration was indicated by a variety of militant chants shouted in unison: "A Vietnam yo no voy, porque yanqui yo no soy" [To Vietnam I'm not going, because I'm not a Yankee]; "Si los yanquis no se van, en Boricua morirán" [If the Yankees don't leave, in Puerto Rico they will die].

The action was called by a coalition of pro-independence organizations to coincide with the discussion of the colonial status of Puerto Rico by the United Nations committee on colonialism. This committee, composed of 24 member-nations and headed by Tanzania, is now considering whether to discuss the question of placing Puerto Rico on its list of colonial territories.

In the past, attempts to have Puerto Rico's colonial status reviewed have been blocked by a U.S. veto on the grounds that in 1953 the UN declared Puerto Rico a "free associated state" of the United States.

The pro-independence movement sees the UN discussion on the status of Puerto Rico as a means to publicize the struggle against U.S. domination of the island. Cuba's ambassador to the UN, Ricardo Alarcón Quesada, submitted the original resolution to the committee. The representatives from Ecuador, China, USSR, Bulgaria, Syria, Iraq, and Czechoslovakia have spoken in favor of the resolution.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

August 25, 1947

The second anniversary of the Republic of Indonesia passed Aug. 17 with Java in flames as the Indonesian freedom fighters continued putting the torch to immense stores of rubber, oil and other products to prevent them from falling into the hands of imperialist Holland's armed forces.

The cynicism of the Dutch despots can be judged from the lying affirmation of Dr. Eelco van Kieffens, Queen Wilhelmina's chief delegate to the United Nations, that "all we want is to end anarchy and chaos." Van Kieffens, obviously imitating Nazi propaganda techniques, accused the Indonesian people of the very crimes committed by the Dutch imperialists — "rape, murder and arson."

He made this accusation while theaters in the United States began running newsreels from Indonesia.

The scenes of bombed villages show what the Dutch can accomplish with American planes and tanks. The long lines of starving Indonesian children, who look more like skeletons than living beings, rival any of the horror scenes ascribed to the Nazis.

The Dutch capitalists, equipped with the most modern instruments of slaughter turned out by American factories, have made swift gains against the ill-armed Indonesians. But they have far from won the war they started.

The resistance of the Indonesian people, particularly as they begin hearing of acts of sympathy from the labor movement abroad, will stiffen and gain in strength.

From Pathfinder

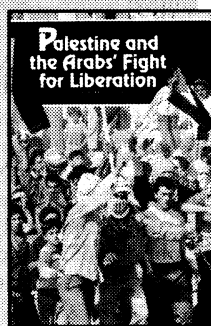
Palestine and the Arabs' Fight for Liberation

BY FRED FELDMAN AND GEORGES SAYAD

An overview of the Palestinian struggle from World War I to the beginning of the *intifada* in 1987.

\$4.00

Available from 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. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.



No more 'Under-Paid Slaves'

The strike by 185,000 Teamsters against United Parcel Service is giving the bosses a little more than they bargained for. The thousands of drivers, sorters, and loaders who have shut down the package delivery giant are in a fighting mood. They view their strike as a chance to assert their rights and humanity. Seeing UPS rake in \$1 billion in annual profits at their expense, the workers sensed they were in a good position to launch a fight and win broad support.

The striking Teamsters justly declare: "We reject being 'Under-Paid Slaves.' We need full-time jobs, with decent pay and benefits, now!" But their fight goes deeper too. They are standing up for all working people to say: "We are human beings, not animals or machines to be disposed of."

This fight has struck a chord in the working class. Many have experienced the growing reality of companies hiring workers part-time to establish a second-class category of workers with much lower wages and few or no health benefits, and who can be forced to work unsafely. It's not uncommon for workers to hold down two or three such jobs to make ends meet. And employers use the part-time setup to foster divisions, pitting older and younger workers against each other. At UPS, this ploy has exploded in the bosses' face.

The unionists are sick of UPS's regimentation, where the bosses want to control every minute of workers' lives on the job with a sea of rules. "The company has a rule that every two steps should take three seconds. Try that with a 100-pound package," said Chicago driver Leonard Cornelius.

It was this back-breaking pace of work and callous disregard for safety that led to the one-day walkout against

UPS in 1994, when the company arbitrarily raised the weight limit UPS workers had to lift from 70 to 150 pounds. That job action caught the bosses by surprise.

The UPS strike is part of a bigger pattern of resistance and combativity by our class today. After more than a decade and a half of retreat by a weakened labor movement, workers around the country are saying "no" to continued demands for belt-tightening or for postponing what's rightly theirs. This resistance ranges from the militant steelworker strike at Wheeling-Pittsburgh to the recent strike skirmishes at General Motors to the farm worker organizing struggles around the country.

Despite President William Clinton's pious statements, the government is not neutral in this conflict. It is working hand-in-glove with the UPS bosses short of directly intervening against the strike. In several cities the cops, whose job is to serve and protect the rich, have arrested strikers. The federal government's criminal investigation directed against Teamsters president Ronald Carey is simply a justification for intervening in union affairs — it's like putting a fox in charge of inspecting the chicken farm.

With the collaboration of airline and rail bosses, the U.S. government will seek to use its power, through the postal service and other means, to keep nationwide package delivery service from overloading and thus make it easier for UPS to take a strike.

The Teamsters strike is the fight of all labor. Workers should encourage their co-workers to go with them to visit the picket lines and help organize activities to get out the truth about the fight against Big Brown. For other unionists engaged in struggle, backing and linking up with the UPS strikers is the best way today to strengthen their own fight.

Oppose Cuba travel ban

Defend the right to travel. That's what is needed as part of welcoming back the hundreds of young people returning to the United States from the world youth festival in Havana. At least 39 were interrogated and harassed by U.S. customs agents on their return, and threatened with prosecution under Washington's draconian restrictions on travel to socialist Cuba.

The travel ban is one of the weapons in the U.S. government's permanent cold war against the Cuban revolution. Along with a nearly four-decade economic embargo, tightened by the Clinton administration, the capitalist rulers try to prevent workers and rebel-minded youth

from meeting fellow workers and farmers who have made a socialist revolution and established their own government.

The Cuban example of standing up to Uncle Sam and winning is a dangerous one to the bosses and their political representatives in Washington.

All those who support freedom of speech and the right to travel must be vigilant against any attempts to prosecute the participants in the world youth festival.

Report-back meetings and articles on the gathering will offer a good opportunity to get out the facts and expose Washington's undemocratic restrictions.

N.Y. raid is attack on rights

Continued from front page

Maizar and Lafi Khalil. They also smashed down the door of at least one other resident, a Pakistani, throwing him to the floor and handcuffing him. In their zeal to catch would-be Arab terrorists, the cops roughed up and held four Latino workers of the car service in the building where the alleged bomb factory was. The city then shut down mass transportation in the area, and blocked traffic. The cops and Giuliani later put out the story that the arrested Arabs were planning to bomb the trains and subways, not just in the neighborhood, but all over New York.

Anyone who looked Arab was fair game for attack. The big-business press has joined in Giuliani's campaign to paint all immigrant workers as potential terrorists and people who are less than human. Federal and city authorities handling the case have tried to link the alleged bomb plot to the trial of Ramzi Yousef, who is facing charges along with Eyad Ismoil — the latest victims in the series of frame-up show trials stemming from the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. The Palestinian youth charged with the alleged bomb plot in Brooklyn have already been tried and convicted in the big-business media even before they go to court. Like the defendants in the World Trade Center bombing trials, the presumption of innocence for Maizar and Khalil has been thrown out the window.

Our campaign also condemns the attempts by the mayor and others to use this case to attack the rights of immigrant workers — particularly the right to seek asylum.

The city and federal authorities' aim in their assault was not to protect working people in the area, but to intimidate and silence anyone who dares to speak out for immigrant rights, against the abuse of democratic rights, against police brutality, for workers who strike for a decent contract, and against Washington's support for the Israeli state's violence against the Palestinian people.

As working-class resistance to the attacks on our living standards and rights mounts, as opposition to U.S. foreign policy grows, the capitalist rulers and their cop agencies will move to curtail our rights. That is why working people have a vital interest in speaking out against any attack on the rights of any oppressed or exploited sector in U.S. society and the world.

My campaign demands that Mayor Giuliani call a halt to the NYPD [New York Police Department] and the FBI attacks on the Arab community. I also pledge my campaign's support to the Palestinian and Arab peoples' fight against the continued theft of Palestinian lands through the illegal Israeli settlements.

The Israeli government's use of recent bombings in Jerusalem to justify its intensified assault on the rights of Palestinians in the occupied territories should be condemned in speak-outs, pickets and other protests. The terrorists in the region are not the Palestinian freedom fighters, but the U.S. government, their client state in Israel, and their cops in every corner of the United States.

Stop anti-Arab attacks! Solidarity with the Palestinian people's struggle for their homeland! Equal rights for immigrants!

CORRECTION

The article "Boeing merger almost sparks trade war," which appeared in the August 11 *Militant*, incorrectly stated that workers who struck McDonnell Douglas in St. Louis last year were members of the United Auto Workers. That plant is organized by the International Association of Machinists.

Why workers should never back 'their' gov't

Readers Loren Meyer and Lars Erlandsson ask the *Militant* to clarify its stand on imperialist trade and economic agreements (see letters on opposite page). Erlandsson says he agrees with the *Militant's* opposition to workers supporting their capitalist government's entry into the European Union (EU). But he thinks we may have been inconsistent in how we have approached this and other trade pacts in the past. Meyer agrees with the *Militant's* opposition to the EU and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), but thinks the door should be left open for supporting "progressive" capitalist trade pacts.

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

I urge Meyer, Erlandsson, and other interested readers to look at the document "Imperialism's march toward fascism and war" that appears in the Marxist magazine *New International* (No. 10). This report by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, was adopted by the SWP's 1994 national convention. It has served as a guide to the *Militant's* editors on this and other questions.

Washington, Barnes points out, claims it's for free trade and less protectionism. But, he adds, "None of this has anything to do with advancing free trade, remedying unfair competition, or any of the other high-flown rationalizations emanating from the White House and bipartisan Congress. It's the use of power to drain surplus value from wherever it's produced by workers and toiling farmers into the pockets of capitalists in the United States."

Washington's political and military clout has given it an edge in imposing what it wants in recent trade deals, but every capitalist government is attempting to improve the competitiveness of the dominant capitalists in their countries. This involves trying to protect goods that have difficulty competing in the world market and breaking down the obstacles to getting more competitive goods into other countries. Both aspects become intertwined in all trade agreements. And by strengthening themselves against their rivals, each capitalist class is also trying to improve its ability to exploit working people at home.

Barnes points to the experience with the North American Free Trade Agreement. This, he says, was neither about free trade nor a plot by Yankee capitalists. Rather, Barnes states, "it is the codification of an agreement between capitalists in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, among other things, to carry through the wrenching, violent transformation of a still largely agricultural country into one that will serve as a platform for exporting manufactured goods. Capitalists on both sides of the border will profit."

Working people clearly cannot be neutral toward a pact with such devastating consequences for exploited producers. "But this does not mean," Barnes states, "there was anything at all progressive about the anti-NAFTA campaign waged over the past few years by the union officialdom, a minority of business interests, and capitalist politicians of both liberal and ultraright stripes in the United States and Canada. Often shedding crocodile tears over the low wages and poor working conditions of workers in Mexico, these 'America-' and 'Canada-firsters' warned against the 'flight of capital' abroad and in fact counterposed defense of 'U.S.' or 'Canadian' jobs to the jobs of Mexican workers. On the part of the labor officialdom, this is nothing more than another rationalization for their class collaborationist course of refusing to organize workers *anywhere* — on either side of the borders — to defend our living and working conditions against the capitalist rulers in all three countries and beyond."

Meyer calls for a "neutral" position on capitalist trade pacts, but in point of fact, doesn't take a neutral stance in practice. Our reader opposes many, if not most, capitalist trade deals, while possibly backing others. It would be helpful, however, if Meyer pointed to a specific example of a capitalist trade pact that workers and farmers should be neutral on or endorse. I can't think of any. If working people in the United States, Japan, Sweden, or any other capitalist country get behind a trade deal being pushed by a section of the capitalist exploiters in their nations this can only lead to collaborating with "our" employers against "their" employers. We become accomplices in helping to squeeze more surplus value out of workers and farmers in other countries. It's by getting workers to accept the framework of the "national interest" in the economic field that the employers and their governments prepare the ground for defending the "national interest" when they go to war. This is what the experience of working people has clearly shown in relation to the EU, NAFTA, and other such accords.

— DOUG JENNESS

Women miners hold conference in Canada

This column is devoted to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standards, working conditions, and unions.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about

was noted that the UMWA has had an 80 percent success rate in its organizing attempts. Diane Johnson, a Navajo miner, reported on her recent participation in a successful drive to organize 300 government workers on the Navajo Nation into the UMWA.

Gabriele Glaubrecht of the Indus-

The managers had also farmed out some of the work that the union members had started, creating a situation where the returning workers had nothing to do. The company's solution was to force the workers further down the assembly line to take their vacations and threaten layoffs until production could be restarted.

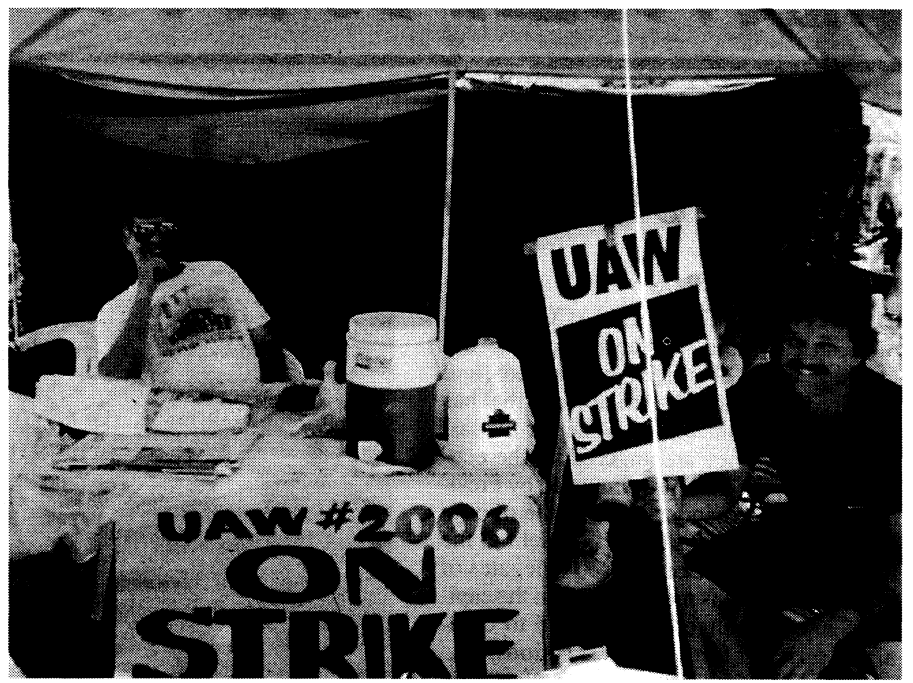
Verson, a division of the Allied Corp., builds stamping presses for the automotive, home appliance, and agricultural implements industries. The strike, the first in the local's 20-year history, remained solid. After nearly a month on the picket lines, only three members had crossed.

The key issues in the strike included the pension plan, which has been frozen since 1984 at \$16 per year of service, a cost of living allowance frozen since 1982, a company demand for forced overtime even though most production workers had been "voluntarily" working 53 hours per week, and the company's demand to add a fourth tier to the pay-scale. Details of the settlement were not immediately available.

Communication workers picket Sprint in San Juan

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — About 20 communications workers staged a picket line here July 14 in front of the offices of the telecommunications giant Sprint. They demanded that Sprint pay \$10 million in back wages to workers in California who were fired when they tried to organize a union. The picket line was part of coordinated protests in front of Sprint offices in the United States, Mexico, and Europe.

In 1994 the workers at a Sprint office in San Francisco were trying to organize a union. The job of the workers was to recruit Spanish-



UAW members picket Verson Corp. in Chicago, during their 29-day strike. Militant/Cappy Kidd

speaking customers for Sprint's long distance services. Eight days before the union vote, Sprint closed the office and fired the 177 workers. The National Labor Relations Board took two years to decide in the workers' favor, but the company still has not paid.

New union vote set for N. Carolina textile mills

Some 5,500 workers at six Fieldcrest Cannon mills in the Kannapolis, North Carolina, area will vote August 12-13 on whether to join the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE). A 1991 organizing drive at the plants lost by just 200 votes. Since then the National Labor Relations Board ruled that the company violated federal labor laws in its antiunion campaign. The new vote is mandated to take place off company property, several workers fired in 1991 were reinstated, and union organizers have unprecedented access to workers on the job as part of the court-ordered remedies. A UNITE spokesperson said that in a July survey conducted by the union, nearly 3,000 workers responded in support of the union and

less than 300 said they were opposed.

Mechanics vote for union at Continental Airlines

A majority of the nearly 5,000 mechanics at Continental Airlines voted to affiliate to the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, union officials announced July 23. These workers have been unorganized since 1983, when then-Continental CEO Frank Lorenzo succeeded in busting the unions at the airline. The recent vote leaves Delta Airlines as the only major U.S. carrier where mechanics are not unionized. In the recent period Continental has moved to outsource maintenance work and closed maintenance bases in Los Angeles and Denver, laying off nearly 2,000 mechanics.

Peggy Kreiner, member of United Steelworkers of America Local 1211, in Pittsburgh; Mary Zins, member of USWA Local 447 and the CEP; Cappy Kidd, member of UAW Local 890 in Chicago; and Ron Richards, member of the American Federation of Government Employees in San Juan, contributed to this column.

ON THE PICKET LINE

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

EDMONTON, Alberta — The 19th National Conference of Women Miners and Supporters, held here June 27-29, drew some 80 people from the United States and western Canada. Several participants were attending their first conference, including two young women open pit miners, members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) from nearby Hinton. The conference was sponsored by the Coal Employment Project (CEP) and endorsed by the UMWA. It was co-hosted by the Canadian Women Miners Support Group.

A featured workshop was on sexual harassment. Speakers included Lois Jensen, who worked at the Eveleth Taconite Mine on the Mesabi Iron Range in Minnesota. She and other workers there filed a class action lawsuit in 1988 against the company charging sexual harassment at the mine. The decision in late 1991 that the women miners could sue as a class served as a precedent for the more recent Mitsubishi case.

A report-back from the International Conference on Women and Mining, held in the Philippines, discussed the impact on villages and the environment where gold-mining companies moved in as a result of 1995 legislation favorable to the companies.

At the "Organizing" workshop it

trial Union of Mining, Chemical, and Energy Workers in Germany addressed the conference and described increasing attacks on health care, retirement benefits and other social gains, as well as government attempts to restrict trade union rights. UMWA president Cecil Roberts, AFL-CIO executive vice president Linda Chavez-Thompson, and Audrey Cormack, president of the Alberta Federation of Labor, also spoke.

The conference discussed CEP's "On Target for Jobs" campaign, which was adopted at last year's conference. A few women did get hired in Pennsylvania and Illinois as a result, but these mines have since laid off or are no longer hiring new workers. Participants were urged to contact CEP if they hear of any hiring.

UAW members settle strike at Verson Corp.

CHICAGO — After voting July 21 to settle their 29-day strike against Verson Corp., some members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 2006 found themselves forced back out "on vacation." Throughout the strike, management asserted that they were maintaining normal production levels and meeting all their scheduled deliveries using supervisory personnel. Upon returning to work, however, the 460 production workers were able to confirm that the supervisory workforce had produced nothing. "They only managed to ship out the work that we had already completed before we went on strike," said Roosevelt Garret III, shop chairman of Local 2006.

LETTERS

Why oppose trade blocs?

In the story "SWP holds national convention," which appeared in the July 14 *Militant*, you mentioned that "revolutionaries must take a clear position rejecting all imperialist trade and economic pacts," citing the European Union and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) as examples.

I believe workers everywhere should reject the European Union as an attempt to gain a competitive edge over American and Japanese rivals, an excuse for government austerity measures, and a hostile move against the workers' states of Eastern Europe. I also oppose NAFTA because its aims are to assure American hegemony and to deepen the exploitation of workers, especially Mexican workers.

However, some economic pacts reflect the interests of a "liberal" sector of the bourgeoisie, and lead to such progressive measures as the elimination of tariffs and other trade restrictions which usually harm all workers, the relaxation of harsh immigration laws, and even the cancellation of the foreign debts of semicolonial countries.

To me, it makes more sense to maintain a neutral position regarding capitalist economic pacts, and to judge each one by its effects on the working class. If it has the intended effect of strengthening the national bourgeoisie at the expense of workers and/or foreign capitalists, workers should reject it. How-

ever, if it was created to help one layer of the national bourgeoisie gain a superior position to another, we should judge it more carefully, and if its effects coincide with the goals and aims of the working class, we should collaborate with the bourgeois layer which supports it, while seeking further concessions in exchange for our support.

I know you have a good reason for rejecting all capitalist economic agreements. Please explain why more carefully in a future issue.

Loren Meyer
Helena, Montana

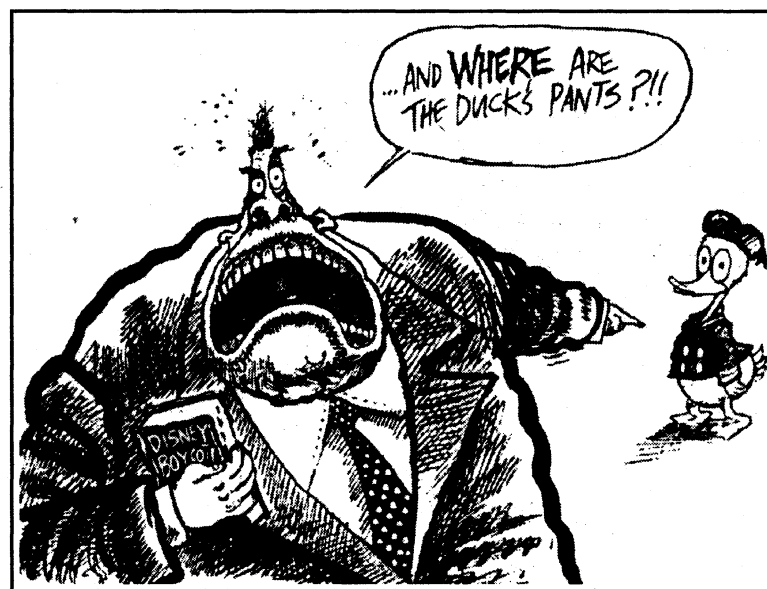
Trade blocs II

In the editorial in issue no. 24 you [call for] "opposition to entry by any country into the European Union, NATO, or any other imperialist institution."

If I'm not wrong, I've read articles in the *Militant* which have a neutral or "we don't take a position on this non-working-class question" position. At least in the EU and U.S.-Canada-Mexico questions. Different kinds of nationalist movements often campaign against membership by their own country.

My position has been to oppose any such imperialist block. The anti-EU campaign in Sweden was not against NATO. I never supported them and I didn't vote for their anti-EU bill. I abstained.

Lars Erlandsson
Stockholm, Sweden



From a prisoner

I begin in salutations of respect to you in the strength of comrade spirit. Recently I became aware of your publications and commend the stance you have taken in the good fight. The issues you report on and bring to the rest of the world's awareness is a step all to the good.

In my present misfortune I find myself being held prisoner (against my will) here in Pelican's Bay infamous segregated housing unit.

It is California's most high-tech and state of the art human warehouse. There's no other confinement like it, not in this state anyway. I'm housed on a tier which consists of 4 separate cells, and I'm

continuously confined in my cell except for that 90 minutes a day I'm locked in the "yard"—which resembles nothing more than a dog-run made for vicious attack dogs.

This "pod" where I am housed is completely isolated from the rest of the prison population, and so other human contact, beside those here with me, is virtually nonexistent. And there are 2 facilities here of these identical pods. Many individuals have been confined "indefinitely" like this for years for nothing more than having known or associated with a person who was accused by prison officials as being gang affiliated.

The recent victory of "Geroni-

mo" [Pratt] is a victory for all in allowing the American people to see the exposure of the injustices that have taken place, and perhaps allow them to understand that those injustices have never stopped taking place. I wasn't politically aware in the 1960s, but my experience has been first-hand in the 1980s and 1990s. I'm Mexican-Indian who grew up in the streets of Los Angeles, and I've witnessed the brutality and roundup of the financially poor to be sent to prison to feed the demand for labor in the million dollar industries.

Publications such as yours are what's needed to open the people's eyes and add numbers to the team. Perhaps I can only join the fight in spirit, but if you find it possible I'd really like to receive a subscription or some issues at least to spread the awareness. I understand the financial burden of a publication and I completely understand if my request isn't possible, but either way I thank you as a comrade of a most worthy cause. Stay strong and straight forward always.

A prisoner
Crescent City, 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.

Protests rock Dominican Republic

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN FRANCISCO DE MACORÍS, Dominican Republic — Working people demanding water, electricity, better roads, and health care, launched a strike wave that has swept the Dominican Republic for the last two months. They are angered by the economic austerity measures imposed by President Leonel Fernández in the name of paying the government's \$4 billion debt to the imperialist banks. Some 1,000 delegates of mass organizations met August 3 in the capital, Santo Domingo, and decided to organize a series of further protest actions.

One of the first strikes was in Nagua on June 9 and 10. Nagua is a rice-growing region on the north coast of this Caribbean nation. Organizers spray painted a call for the strike action on walls throughout the city.

After the strike in Nagua, protesters organized a march June 25 in San Francisco de Macorís and later called for a strike. The three-day work stoppage began July 1. They circulated leaflets in the name of the Coordinating Committee of Popular Organizations with the demand, "Against the poverty and the abandonment of Duarte Province." San Francisco is the capital of Duarte Province and with 300,000 people it is the third-largest city in the country. The largest cities are Santo Domingo and Santiago de los Caballeros.

One of the organizations calling the strike here was the Union of Neighborhood Councils. Merejo Santos, the secretary general of the organization, told this reporter that the principal demands were water, repair of streets, a hospital for children, and industry to process agricultural products to provide jobs. Santos said that the national and international press had distorted the workers' demands when they said that the strike was to insist that an airport be built. During the election campaign a year ago, President Fernández had promised Duarte Province an airport, but once in office the promise was forgotten. Santos said that while there was support for the airport, the other demands were more important.

The government did little to try to stop the strike in Nagua. In San Francisco the government moved in police and military forces, including elite airborne units.



(Photo above) Rafael Alvarez
Above, June 25 march in San Francisco de Macorís demands better living conditions and democratic rights. Right, youth burn tires in the neighborhood of Bombita de Azua, during strike there.

Rafael Alvarez, a national leader of the Dominican Teachers Association, described the strike. Just north of downtown, a working-class neighborhood of wooden shacks climbs up the hill and sprawls into the next valley. The supporters of the strike gathered on the hill while the police and soldiers massed at the bottom to try to keep the main avenue open to traffic. Both participants and newspaper accounts agree that the strike was 100 percent effective and there was no traffic flowing on the streets of San Francisco. For three days there was no work, shopping, public transport, or government services.

The strikers marched down the hill to try to block the avenue and were stopped by the police. The police tried to advance up the hill by firing tear gas and rubber bullets, but were stopped by barricades and a hail of rocks. Protesters also used homemade firearms in the confrontation with the police and military. A committee was named to mediate between the strikers and the government. The committee included union leaders like Alvarez, religious leaders and others who were respected by the strikers.



The strikers agreed to stop the protests for 40 days, while the government agreed to free all the people arrested and to use the time to develop a plan to deal with the issues of the strike.

After the strike in San Francisco, the wave of protests spread to other areas of the country. In San Juan de la Maguana, about 140 miles west of Santo Domingo, demonstrators set up flaming tire barricades and battled the police July 8-9. José Cabrera, a 62-year-old resident who suffered from asthma, was killed when police threw tear gas bombs into his home on the second day of the strike.

During a two-day strike in Barahona and Azua, two cities in the southwest of the island, protesters placed logs in the streets to block the flow of vehicles and masked youths built flaming barricades. Like the ear-

lier actions the strike was total and normal life came to a halt. On July 22 in Barahona a policeman, Wellington Peña, was killed. The police say that Cristián López fired the fatal bullets. His family told the press López is a strike leader but not a murderer. They believe that the cop may have been killed by bullets fired by other police officers. The police insist they are using only rubber bullets and deny that any police officers were armed with the caliber that killed Peña.

The protest movement has not been led by the trade unions. In fact, on July 17, leaders of several unions signed an agreement

with the Fernández government promising to do nothing to damage "the necessary climate of harmony." In return the government agreed to raise the monthly pensions of bus and truck drivers to the minimum level for government workers of RD\$1,014 (US\$72.43) and to build union offices and some housing for union members. Signing the agreement were Mariano Negrón of the National Confederation of Dominican Workers, Rafael Abreu of the General Workers Federation, Gabriel del

Río of the Autonomous Confederation of Class Unions, and Eulogio Familia of the Central Union of Workers.

Meanwhile, on August 3 the Dominican daily *Listín Diario* reported that the government was lowering the price of gasoline from RD\$24.70 per gallon to RD\$23.60 (US\$1.69). Two days before, the president had rejected calls for a 30 percent cut in gas prices, saying it would hurt the government's ability to pay the foreign debt.

Ron Richards is a member of the American Federation of Government Employees in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

March for immigrant rights set for October 12

BY PACO SÁNCHEZ

NEW YORK — Plans are under way here to build an immigrant rights demonstration scheduled for October 12 in front of the United Nations. The demonstration, called by Coordinadora 96, is being organized out of the offices of the Immigrant Workers Association, explained Mónica Santana, one of the local organizers. Santana, also a leader of the Latino Workers Center in New York, explained the importance of the next event. It will be "a press conference at the United Nations on August 29 to help to publicize the demonstration." Along with several other immigrant rights organizations in the region, they are collecting signatures on a petition in support of a bill in Congress "to reinstate benefits for legal immigrants who are not citizens," and for "a new general amnesty for all undocumented people."

Santana added that on August 30 there will be a meeting in New York of organizers of Coordinadora 96 from around the country. The meeting will be open to all those who want to help build the October 12 demonstration at the United Nations. Coordinadora 96 is the coalition that built the 20,000-strong march for immigrant rights in Washington, D.C., last October. There are also plans for a "Continental Conference" on immigrants rights in the Dominican Republic late in September. For more information on all these upcoming events call Miguel Maldonado at the Immigrant Workers Association in New York at (212) 505-0001.

Nicaragua erupts with youth protests

BY RÓGER CALERO

NEW YORK — Thousands of university students and supporters have taken to the streets in Nicaragua for more than two months. They are protesting the National Assembly's May 26 decision to authorize \$9 million in university budget cuts. The students are also insisting that the funding remain at 6 percent of the budget.

On June 25 about 1,000 students protested outside the National Assembly building in the capital city of Managua where the majority of deputies approved a motion by Nicaraguan president Arnoldo Alemán to distribute the budget directly to each individual university.

The National Council of Universities (CNU), composed of faculty, administration, and student organizations, demand that the budget be given to them directly to oversee.

Alemán declared, "There are no reasons for the students to be protesting, because the national universities will receive the 6 percent of the general public budget, but in a direct form to each university." He demagogically added, "We want to know how that money is utilized, to then inform the people." Some administrators have been accused of using the state's money to fund activities organized by supporters of the Sandinista National Liberation Front. The Sandinistas led the revolution that estab-



Armed with homemade mortars, students confront cops in Managua.

lished a workers and farmers government in Nicaragua in 1979, and were the ruling party until 1990.

After the police tried to clamp down on the protesters, student demonstrations escalated from daily skirmishes with the police to fierce street battles.

The avenue that runs in front of the campus of the Central American University and the National Engineering University has had the largest concentration of protests and is an organizing center, but students have built barricades with the paving stones from the

streets in several points of the city. They also shut down Managua's airport for several hours.

The cops have attacked the actions with tear gas and mustard gas. On July 7, when the cops stormed 500 demonstrators in front of the Central American University, they were caught in full view of TV cameras, kicking and beating Adrián Meza with a rifle butt. Meza, a university administrator, was looking for his daughters. The students responded with homemade mortars, molotov cocktails, and slingshots. Some 150 people were arrested at the action, and 73 stu-

dents and 5 cops were injured. "We condemn this outrageous and inhuman act of repression," declared a statement issued by the CNU in response.

The transport workers union, sugarcane workers who are currently fighting for land titles, and other sections of the population have backed the students' demands. This, together with the outrage against Alemán's repression, has forced him to back down. In late July Alemán reportedly ordered the police to refrain from the massive arrests and violence against the demonstrators.