

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Judge rules against  
Detroit newspaper workers

— PAGE 4

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 61/NO. 29 SEPTEMBER 1, 1997

## UPS strikers: 'We won!'

### Teamsters score victory for all working people

BY DANNY BOOHER  
AND FRANK FORRESTAL

CHICAGO, Illinois — "We beat Big Brown! We beat Big Brown!" chanted many workers at an impromptu rally of 100 the morning of August 19 as Teamsters members gathered to picket the UPS depot in Maspeth, Queens, one of the largest company facilities in New York. They broke into cheers after Tony Gallo, trustee of Teamsters Local 804, gave a brief report on the tentative settlement between United Parcel Service and the Teamsters union that had been announced hours earlier.

The 185,000 Teamsters members at UPS struck the world's largest parcel delivery company and set up pickets at its 2,400 delivery centers nationwide for 15 days, bringing operations to a virtual halt. The sentiment that workers scored a victory for the union was widespread at picket lines throughout the country.

"After two weeks on strike the tentative agreement sounds pretty good," said UPS striker Stacey Stenson, 21, in front of the  
Continued on Page 6



UPS workers celebrate news of victory over "Big Brown" in New York August 19

## 20,000 rally for Irish freedom in Belfast

BY TONY HUNT  
AND SHELLIA KENNEDY

BELFAST, Northern Ireland — "We have not dropped our vision of a united Ireland, an end to partition, and an end to British rule," said Sinn Fein leader Caoimhghin O'Caolain, to loud applause at a rally here August 10. O'Caolain won a seat in the Irish parliament June 6 and was the keynote speaker at the end of a lively demonstration of 20,000 in support of Irish independence. The annual march was held to commemorate the introduction of internment without trial by the British government in 1972.

His remarks answered the assertion in the London *Financial Times* and other big-business papers that Sinn Fein "had softened its stance on Irish unity" in a meeting with British secretary for Northern Ireland Marjorie Mowlam on negotiations over Ireland's future. The document presented by Sinn Fein in that meeting actually stated, "We want an Ireland free and independent." It explained that the party's goal in the talks was "to promote the broad nationalist objective of an end to British rule in Ireland. Partition is wrong.... Political independence, a United Ireland, offers the best guarantee of equality and the most durable basis for peace and stability. The status quo is unworkable."

The British government is set to convene the talks September 15. Under the pressure of the unbroken resistance to British rule in Catholic areas, the Labour administration has overturned previous government policy and removed preconditions on Sinn Fein's involvement. This led to the decision by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) to renew its cease-fire on July 20. O'Caolain, a member of Sinn Fein's negotiating team, described the planned talks "as a new phase in the struggle" for Irish freedom.

The Belfast rally reflected the gains fighters for Irish freedom have registered in the preceding months. Before introducing O'Caolain, Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams, a member of the British parliament

Continued on Page 10

## 7,000 protest torture by N.Y. cops

BY AL DUNCAN

BROOKLYN, New York — Nearly 7,000 protesters waving signs and placards marched on the 70th precinct of the New York Police Department here August 16 to

### Jail the brutes in blue!

— Socialist Workers statement, page 10

voice their anger over the heinous torture of Abner Louima, a Haitian immigrant, at the station house a week earlier.

Several cops arrested Louima outside a night club in Brooklyn on August 10. Yelling racist epithets at him, the cops beat Louima with their radios at a nearby alley and then drove him to the 70th precinct. There, at least two cops pulled the man's pants down, walked him into the station's bathroom, and shoved the bathroom plunger

up his rectum and then into his mouth. Louima is hospitalized with a pierced lower intestine, torn bladder, and broken teeth.

"Seven O — gotta go," and "What do we want? Justice! When do we want it? Now!" the demonstrators chanted as they marched through the heart of Brooklyn's Haitian community.

Hundreds of people joined in as the protesters made their way down Flatbush Avenue on the way to meeting others already at the 70th precinct.

While the demonstrators were overwhelmingly Haitian, a significant number of other working people from New York also participated. Many of the protesters were young. The march was called by dozens of Hai-  
Continued on Page 8



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

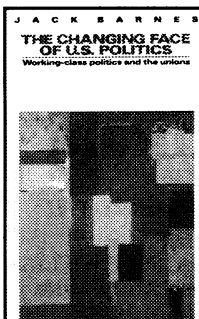
Protesters march against cop beating in New York

## Video exposes abuse by guards in Texas prison

BY LAURA GARZA

HOUSTON — A videotape of prison guards brutalizing inmates in the Brazoria County Detention Center in Angleton, Texas, has evoked widespread condemnation. The tape was shot for possible use as a training video and depicts a shakedown of inmates in a search for alleged drug violations on Sept. 18, 1996. In the video riot-clad guards kick prisoners lying prone on the floor, including in the groin, and force them to crawl while hitting, kicking, and using an electric prod and a dog on them.

The video was released after an inmate filed suit over this treatment. The inmates involved were housed in a section of the prison that was rented out for use by the state of Missouri and run by a private corporation, the Capital Correction Resources, Inc. In the wake of the video being widely shown on television on August 18 and 19, Missouri canceled its contract to house 415 inmates at the prison and began busing them out.



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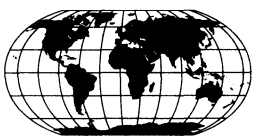
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German gov't faces setback over anti-worker budget — page 3



## Romanian gov't okays austerity

The Romanian government, under pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), approved an austerity budget August 6 in order to receive another piece of a \$430 million loan. Earlier this year trade unionists won wage concessions from the government, disrupting previous austerity plans. The economy has also been hurt by the floods that hit Eastern Europe this summer. According to the IMF, Romania must bring its budget deficit down to 4.5 percent of gross domestic product.

Romanian finance minister Mircea Ciumara assured workers that health, education, and labor allocations in the budget would not be cut, but said all other departments would face cuts and unprofitable state enterprises would be sold or closed down. The IMF also pushed for the Romanian government to suspend its \$1.5 billion purchase of "Supercobra" attack helicopters. In line with this, the IMF also rejected the Romanian government's request to substantially raise its international borrowing limit.

## Washington uses famine as club against Pyongyang

The food crisis in north Korea, caused by two years of flooding followed by this year's crop-destroying drought, is deepening. As of August 8, the United Nations agency Unicef said that 80,000 children in north Korea are in immediate danger of dying from hunger and disease, while 800,000 more suffer from serious malnutrition. The U.S. government is pushing to have so-called peace talks and will not even discuss aid until after they begin. North Korea accuses Washington of using food as a "political weapon." When a U.S. congressional group toured north Korea with a stated aim of surveying food distribution, they took the opportunity to complain about alleged arms sales to Iran and other military issues. The officials also accused the north Korean government of shady handling of aid.

Pyongyang is not backing down from its peace talk demands, which include the withdrawal of U.S. troops from south Korea and a bilateral treaty with Washington.

Meanwhile, Malaysian foreign minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi stated August 10



Some 2,000 workers in Romania shouted antigovernment slogans in the town of Ploiesti as they rallied August 8 against the closing of two oil refinery plants. Finance Minister Mircea Ciumara vowed to close unproductive plants to meet IMF demands.

that political differences would not prevent his government from extending aid to north Korea.

## Imperialists 'bail out' Thailand

The IMF and capitalist governments in Asia offered a \$16 billion "bailout" loan to the Thai government August 11 in an attempt to stabilize the currency there. After years of being touted as the world's fastest-growing economy, the Thai baht lost 20 percent of its value in July. Tokyo is putting up a quarter of the loan, the International Monetary Fund another fourth, and the rest is being picked up by six other governments in Asia.

In order to receive this package the Bangkok regime must implement tough austerity measures, which threatens to rile up

an already discontented population. Although Thai prime minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh was elected last November on a promise to cure the country's economic ills, calls for his ouster have already begun.

Meanwhile, the Indonesian rupiah and Malaysian ringgit hit new lows against the U.S. dollar August 15, as the currency crisis shaking the region continues.

## Anti-imperialist action in Manila

Marking the 99th anniversary of Washington's 1898 capture of the Philippines, some 200 protesters staged a rally at the U.S. embassy August 13, posting an eviction notice on the building. Even though the U.S. government pulled out its last military base from that country in 1992, "the American imperialists are still here," commented Manuel Sarmiento, a leader of the May 1 Movement (KMU) labor federation. He was referring to the influence the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have on the government of the Philippines.

## Zambian gov't attacks vendors

Cops in the Zambian capital, Lusaka, attacked unauthorized street vendors the night of August 13. This provoked resistance from the vendors. The government deployed helicopters and cops used tear gas and live ammunition to quell the rebellion, killing at least 1 demonstrator and arresting 56.

Richard Sakala, a spokesman for President Frederick Chiluba blamed the protests on opposition parties "aiming to cause an-

archy and chaos." Earlier that week vendors demonstrated against the government's plan to reduce the sites for trading.

## Brazil judge reduces charges for youths who killed activist

Four teenagers admitted in a Brazilian court that they intentionally doused 44-year-old Galdino Jesus dos Santos with gasoline as he slept on a bus stop bench, and the set him on fire burning him to death. But Judge Sandra Mello ruled that the teenagers, two of whom are related to current or former judges, did not intentionally kill dos Santos. A leader of the Patato tribe, dos Santos had come to Brasilia for an indigenous rights demonstration.

Mello reduced the charges against them from homicide, which carries a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison, to committing bodily harm resulting in death, with a maximum sentence of 12 years. Mello rejected the prosecution's contention that the sleeping man was defenseless. The dos Santos family lawyer Roseane Lacerda called the ruling "a passport to impunity — a license to kill." Edwin Ressink, speaking for an Indian rights group said the decision "sets a dangerous precedent."

## Prison riots erupt in Honduras

A series of prison rebellions began on August 11 in Santa Bárbara and Trujillo, Honduras. Long-standing anger at overcrowded prisons, terrible conditions including lack of medical assistance, and long waits in jail before sentencing culminated in 700 prisoners burning down the two facilities and escaping. The Associated Press reports that by August 13, the bulk of the escaped inmates were captured.

By this time though, mass uprisings had spread to at least three other facilities, where some 1,150 inmates were demanding a blanket release based on time already served. Cops and army troops surrounded the prisons. In the eastern town of Danli, two prisoners were wounded by police gunfire.

## Washington designs new nukes

In 1996 U.S. president William Clinton signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, barring the creation or testing of nuclear weapons. But a formerly secret federal document reveals that the U.S. government has been remaking thermonuclear arms, including the W-87, a warhead for MX missiles; the B-61, a bomb for planes; and the W-76 and W-88, warheads for Trident missiles launched by submarines.

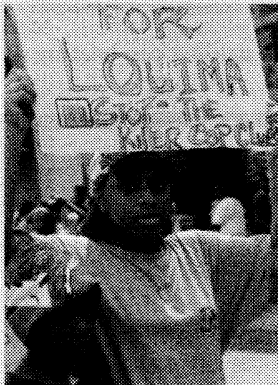
The document, according to an article in the August 17 *New York Times*, shows plans to upgrade the Trident missiles. The energy department, which is in charge of the nuclear arms, denies that it is making new weapons or increasing power on old ones; it is merely making slight upgrades to improve the safety and life of the warheads. Some \$4 billion is allocated to the weapons work.

—BRIAN TAYLOR

# THE MILITANT

## Protest police brutality!

*The cops' assault on a Haitian man in New York highlights once again the bestial nature of police in capitalist society. The 'Militant' provides coverage of protests against this barbarism and explains why the labor movement must champion demands to jail the brutes in blue. Don't miss a single issue!*



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# Kohl backs down over German budget

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — German Chancellor Helmut Kohl suffered a political setback when he was forced to back down from proposed tax reforms by the social democratic opposition. The measures were supposed to be Kohl's platform for the upcoming elections next fall. Kohl and his minister of finance, Theodor Waigel, touted the tax changes as a way of boosting economic growth and creating jobs for the more than 4 million unemployed workers there.

Waigel's original tax proposal would have reduced the national tax bill by some DM30 billion (\$16.4 billion) in 1998-99. The social democrats rejected the proposals, arguing that it is "hardly any tax reduction for a normal employee, while the top tax rate would be drastically reduced." On August 14 Kohl stressed his willingness to compromise on the budget, saying, "If we can't do everything at once, that let us do at least a part."

Also on the point of collapse are plans to supposedly boost job creation by cutting statutory social security contributions by employers, which cover benefits such as unemployment insurance and pensions. That could foil government plans to shift the financing of the state pension system by reducing employers' contributions and increasing the value added tax (VAT), a form of regressive sales tax. Any VAT increases would have to be approved by the Bundesrat, the upper house of parliament, where the opposition Social Democratic Party (SPD) holds a majority.

Kohl opened the election campaign for his Christian Democratic party by accusing the social democrats of "treason" against the unemployed. He vowed to go "from village to village, from city to city" in a year-long campaign to denounce the total blockade of his proposals by the opposition. Capitalists and their spokespeople in Germany accused the politicians for having buried Germany's chances to emulate the kind of "supply-side" tax remedies that have benefited the economies of the United States and Britain — that is cutting taxes on the employers.

In mid-July the German government had to present a supplementary budget for 1997, in order to reduce the budget deficit to 3.0 percent of gross domestic product, as stipulated in the convergence criteria for the projected European monetary union (EMU). To meet this aim, the new budget included increasing state borrowing from DM53.3 billion to DM71.2 billion. Other measures include selling off more of the state-owned communications company Deutsche Telekom and selling some of Bonn's oil reserves. Because it would push borrowing to DM20 billion more than state investments, the budget is unconstitutional if the government isn't able to prove that it is due to a temporary "socioeconomic unbalance."

Kohl's argument is that the increase in unemployment meets this criteria, but the economy is now back on track for growth and for the next two years the amount to be borrowed will fall to about DM58 billion. The supplementary budget for 1997 and the budget proposal for 1998 will be debated and decided in the lower house of parliament, the Bundestag, early this fall.

## French gov't raises corporate tax

The French government also has problems with the deficit criteria. The government of Socialist Party leader Leonel Jospin announced measures July 21 that would reduce the deficit by 0.4 percent, or \$5.3 bil-

lion — leaving it slightly above the 3.0 percent. French minister of finance Dominique Strauss-Kahn said the corporate tax rates would be raised to 41.6 percent from 36.6 percent for companies with annual sales of over \$8.3 million. The increase will apply to this year and 1998. The tax will then gradually be lowered again. Corporate capital gains, previously taxed at 19 percent, will be permanently taxed at the same rate as profits. This "euro-surcharge," as it has been dubbed by commentators, will bring in two-thirds of the \$5.3 billion. The rest is projected as spending cuts in the military budget and as a special contribution from the profitable state-owned electric utility.

In his election campaign Jospin criticized sales of state-owned enterprises, promised to shorten the workweek to 35 hours with no cut in pay and create 700,000 jobs. He is now retreating from these promises.

French capitalists reacted angrily to the tax increases. "Raising taxes will slow growth," said Georges Jollés, vice president of the employers' union. "France already taxes too much, and the state spends too much." The French government has not set a specific target for the deficit, and it is likely to be 3.1 to 3.3 percent, still above the Maastricht criteria.

If that is enough for France it will be hard to deny the governments of Italy, Spain and Portugal the same treatment when they try to enter the monetary union. All three seem likely to come just above the 3 percent target. Already the prospect of a European Monetary Union that includes a wide range of states and points in the direction of a weak euro has raised opposition within the ruling class in Germany. Proposals for a controlled delay of the project have increased lately.

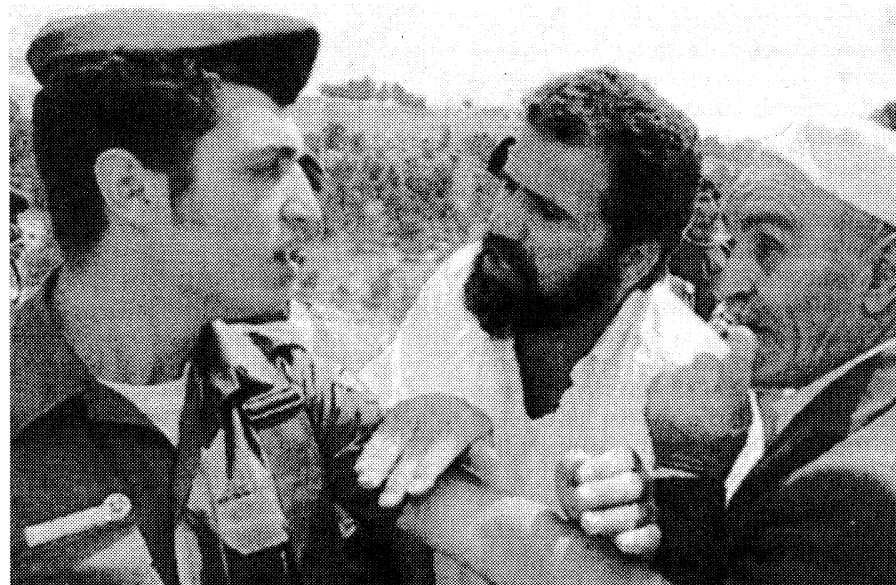
Since last August, the D-mark has dropped about 18 percent against the dollar and 32 percent against the pound. Many capitalists view the British currency as a haven from "euro-related turbulence," because London has indicated it will not join the euro at its projected start in 1999.

## Growing gap between east and west

In early August the German central bank, the Bundesbank, began hinting that it might raise interest rates. That would put upward pressures on interest rates throughout Europe, potentially devastating economic growth throughout the region.

The official unemployment figures in Germany rose from 11.0 percent in June to 11.4 percent in July. Joblessness grew from

## Tel Aviv continues attacks on Palestinians



Tel Aviv announced August 18 a slight easing of its economic blockade against the Palestinian Authority, but is still demanding Palestinian officials take more steps crack down on alleged terrorists. Above, an Israeli border cop fends off two Palestinians as they try to prevent the demolition of a house near Bethlehem by Zionist forces. Meanwhile, fighting has intensified in southern Lebanon between Israeli forces and their allies and the Hezbollah guerrillas, who are fighting to end Tel Aviv's occupation of a portion of their country.

9.5 to 9.7 percent in the west, and from 17.3 to 18.1 percent in the east. The gap between the west and the east is increasing. While the weakening of the D-mark has stimulated exports, activity in the domestic market is low, especially in construction. In the west 30 percent of the goods produced are exported; in the east it is just 10 percent. The part of the GDP that accounts for construction is as high as 14 percent in the east, compared to 7 percent in the west.

Productivity in the east for 1996 is estimated at 60 percent of that in the west, and wage costs per unit are still 20 percent higher than in the west. The München-based Ifo financial institute is proposing a wage freeze, or even wage cuts, as way of making the east competitive. They estimate that unemployment will rise to 18.4 percent in the east in 1998, or 1.35 million workers.

Interviewed in the German weekly *Der Spiegel*, German finance minister Waigel stated that Germany has become a poorer country since reunification and can no longer pay the lion's share of the European

Union budget. He threatened to block the EU funds for weak regions. Waigel said that Bonn annually contributes DM20 billion to the net costs of the European Union budget, and proposed reducing that to DM7 billion.

Helmut Kohl recently welcomed President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland with the words "Poland is without doubt a part of Europe" and continued, "But an even more important point is that one must realize that without Poland the European Union is nothing but an incomplete torso."

Relations between Bonn and Moscow also play an important role in the enlargement of NATO. According to the *Herald Tribune*, senior chancellery officials say that Kohl has promised that Bonn will do nothing to harm Russia's security interests. This new "Ostpolitik" is being pursued both by Kohl's governing coalition and by the opposition social democrats and many Green party members.

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

# Albanian gov't tries to 'restore order'

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN AND NATASHA TERLEXIS

ATHENS, Greece — Most of the 7,000 Italian and other foreign troops occupying Albania since April 15 left the Balkan country by mid-August. The Italian, Greek, and Turkish governments, however, are maintaining small detachments of "advisers" and other troops to monitor the situation and report home if reinforcements are needed. Rome announced recently it plans to send back 600 troops by the end of August under the pretext of training Albania's police and army, which were largely dissolved during the working-class revolt against the former procapitalist regime of Sali Berisha that erupted at the beginning of this year.

Meanwhile, the new Albanian government, headed by prime minister Fatos Nano of the Socialist Party (SP), has sent Interior Ministry troops to the southern cities of Vlore, Tepelene, Sarande, and Gjirokaster, the main centers of the rebellion. Nano's regime is trying to restore government authority throughout the country, rebuild the armed forces and the police, and disarm the population.

On August 14, the government announced that newly reconstituted police units had taken control of the southern port of Vlore, the hotbed of the revolt, after neutralizing the forces of Lefter Zani, an alleged "gang leader." Interior Minister Neritan Ceka had stated the day after he was sworn in, "We shall restore order very soon, within weeks we shall restore security on the national roads and within a few months all around the country, in the towns, everywhere." Ceka subsequently said that some agents of the secret police, SHIK, who are loyal to Berisha, are working with Democratic Party officials in trying to form armed commit-

tees and refusing to yield to the government control of Shkoder, the main city in northern Albania 75 miles north of the capital Tirana.

Berisha's Democratic Party was soundly defeated in elections held June 29 and July 6 under the supervision of the Italian-led occupying forces. The Socialist Party won 101 seats in the 155-member parliament and the Democratic Party 27 seats. After a fruitless three-week effort to hold on to power, the hated Berisha resigned July 23. The next day, parliament elected Rexhep Mejdani as president, a 53-year-old physicist and SP general secretary.

The elections were called by a coalition government of the SP and Democratic Party, which Berisha hastily put together in March when the armed uprising threatened to sweep him from power through revolutionary means. The SP was instrumental, in collaboration with the former president, in inviting imperialist troops to intervene and help authorities to quell the rebellion. The leaders of both of these parties come from the former ruling Communist Party and represent rival layers of the bureaucratic caste that has been in power in this workers state for nearly half century. The SP presents itself as a social democratic party, while Berisha's group has espoused openly right-wing views and calls for the speedy restoration of capitalism and imperialist domination of Albania.

Working people took to the streets in January after pyramid schemes, fraudulent investment funds promoted by the government, collapsed and more than 500,000 people in a population of 3.2 million lost their life savings. Workers and peasants, who were also protesting the disastrous effects of Berisha's "market reforms," took up arms

at the end of February as the government responded with a state of emergency, police repression, and press censorship.

According to the August 18 Greek daily *Eleftherotypia*, the government in Tirana has ordered that all heavy weaponry seized from the armories since March be returned by August 30. Light weapons are to be turned in by September 30.

Meanwhile, using the pretext of armed attacks across the Greek-Albanian border by Albanian "gangs," the government of Greece has announced new military measures to provide a "protective umbrella" at the border. Greek border patrols have been reinforced by helicopter units and special forces from the Greek army. In late July, Athens expelled 3,500 Albanian immigrants who crossed the border allegedly without proper documentation.

On August 5 Greek foreign minister Theodoros Pangalos led a delegation of his government to Tirana that included the Greek minister of public order. The two governments announced subsequently agreements on military and financial cooperation and on employing Albanian workers in Greece on a seasonal basis.

Athens will maintain an unspecified number of troops in Albania to help reorganize Tirana's army and police. The announcement deepened a row between the Italian and Greek governments over which will wield more influence in Albania and elsewhere in the Balkans. Rome, which led the invasion force and then said it will send back its own troops also to "retrain" the Albanian military, complained that it was not consulted.

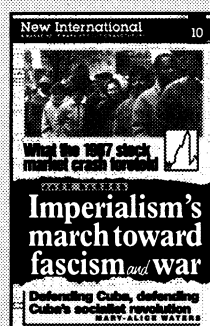
Natasha Terlexis is a member of the Foreign Airlines Workers Union in Athens, Greece.

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# Judge rules against Detroit news workers

BY JOHN SARGE

DETROIT — Coming down squarely on the side of big business, U.S. District Judge John O'Meara refused to reinstate workers locked out by the Detroit *Free Press, News*, and their joint business operation in an August 14 ruling.

O'Meara denied a request by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) that the newspapers be ordered to immediately reinstate more than 1,000 members of the six unions who went on strike over two years ago. The unions made an unconditional offer to return to work last February. The companies have only called back 276 former strikers, at least two of whom have since been fired. The injunction sought by the NLRB was supported by the unions.

Rallies in support of newspaper workers in Detroit and Monterey, California, will be held August 21 in cities where Knight-Ridder, owner of the *Free Press*, has newspapers.

"I'm stunned, shocked," said James Selley, a member of Teamster Local 372. Selley's reaction captured the sentiments of the scores of unionists gathered along with some supporters from other unions at a press conference held at the Teamster Joint Council Hall August 15.

In justifying his ruling, the judge criticized the slowness of the NLRB in dealing with unfair labor practice charges related to the strike. "The board has had unfair labor

practice charges before it in this case since even before the strike commenced," O'Meara wrote in his opinion. "The board now asked the court to plunge into this difficult and, in many ways, tragic labor dispute and impose a final remedy.... Not good process."

An administrative law judge had ruled in June that the management was guilty of numerous unfair labor practices. A few days later tens of thousands of unionists from across the country rallied in Detroit in support of the newspaper workers, reflecting broad support for their fight in the labor movement. The case now is in front of the full NLRB and any ruling will be appealed to the federal courts, taking years.

The O'Meara claimed he couldn't order the company to rehire the former strikers until the courts rule whether the strike was over economic issues or unfair labor practices, because "part of the economic weaponry given by the law to an employer in an economic dispute is the ability to 'permanently' replace striking workers." Early in the strike, the newspapers began hiring replacements, who now number 1,250. The bosses have vowed not to dismiss any of these workers in order to reinstate strikers. Although strikers consider the use of replacements "one of the most odious and inflammatory uses of an employer's economic weaponry," O'Meara said, its legality "is beyond serious dispute."



Militant/John Sarge

Unionists march in Detroit on June 21 to support newspaper workers

The employers' stakes were high in this case. An article in the August 4 issue of *Business Week* magazine noted that "Rehiring would undo management's strategy and set back years of efforts to lift the papers' profitability."

The NLRB's general council stated August 15 that "an appeal is necessary." An appeal of the ruling will go to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati.

Al Derey, chairman of the Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions, told the press, "We are disappointed. But this is a setback, not a defeat. Judge O'Meara's ruling does not change anything. The Detroit *News*, the Detroit *Free Press*, and Detroit Newspapers are still guilty." He said the

unions would be discussing what to do next and urged continued support for the advertiser and reader boycott that the unions have had in place since early in the strike.

Newspaper workers in Monterey also face union busting by Knight-Ridder. The newspaper giant just acquired the Monterey *County Herald* and announced that all current employees will be terminated when it takes control. Present employees were invited to apply for jobs at the paper, but management is advertising for other applicants. Three newspaper unions at that paper approved a strike vote August 8.

John Sarge is a member of the United Auto Workers.

## Socialist protests cop harassment in Des Moines

BY ANTHONY PEREZ AND SOPHIE BROWN

DES MOINES, Iowa — "I am here today protesting the abusive treatment my companion and I received at the hands of four FBI agents and two Des Moines cops," said Ardella Blandford, Socialist Workers candidate for Des Moines City Council, at an August 19 news conference in front of Des Moines City Hall. "They barged into our home without showing us their search warrant until after they had forced Rick to the floor, handcuffed him, and handcuffed me. When I questioned them about why they were there and their right to handcuff us, one agent said, 'You have no rights right now! Sit down and shut up!'"

The previous evening, FBI agents and Des Moines police forced their way into the home of Blandford and Rick Haines. After manhandling the two, the cops ransacked the apartment without explanation. They searched kitchen cabinets, living room shelves, and the bedroom. The cops took photos of the apartment, and a number of items were put in evidence bags, but appar-

ently nothing was taken when the cops left.

Fifteen minutes into the raid one of the cops dropped a search warrant on a coffee table; Blandford and Haines were still handcuffed, however, and could not read it. The police said they were looking for two articles of clothing that were allegedly related to a crime. Later one cop admitted, "This doesn't have to do with you. You're not under arrest." They asserted that the search had to do with Haines's brother, who they claimed was a suspect in an armed robbery.

Blandford learned several hours later that Haines's brother had faced the same abuse by FBI agents across town. His home was searched but agents released him after the raid without charges.

"The way they treated Rick and I is the cops' standard operating procedure for working people," Blandford charged. "I protest this abuse not just for myself but for all working people who are beaten up, framed up, and treated like animals by cops everywhere." The candidate is a member of United Auto Workers Local 270. Blandford announced, "Today I am filing a complaint

against the FBI and the Des Moines police" for their conduct.

Attorney Sally Frank, a member of the National Lawyers Guild, sent a message to the conference stating, "I would hope that incidents like this do not recur."

Earl Simes, a farmer from Radcliffe, Iowa joined with those protesting the police harassment. In a statement sent for the news conference he said, "Who should worry? Absolutely each and every one of us.... This is deplorable to treat Ardella this way."

Socialist Workers mayoral candidate Tom Alter told the press, "Our campaign calls on working people, farmers, and youth to reject and protest the attack on the democratic rights of my running mate and the two other workers involved in this outrageous police abuse." Alter, who is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers, pointed to other cases of brutality like the attack on Abner Louima by New York police. He added that the victory of the Teamsters who struck against UPS should be celebrated by all working people. Both he and Blandford had been out to the picket lines earlier that day. The socialists have been the only candidates in the city election to join with protests against the police killing of Charles Dudley, Jr. in Des Moines in June.

The news conference was covered by Channel 8 TV news and *Cityview*, a weekly newspaper. Another radio interview was done by phone later in the day, and another



Militant/Sophie Brown

Ardella Blandford

is scheduled later in the week.

Two college students who met supporters of the socialist campaign petitioning to put Alter and Blandford on the ballot, attended the event. Laura Schacherer, one of these youth, said in an interview, "I think it is absolutely ridiculous that the police think that people have no rights and that they are not accountable to working-class people."

## Irish activists fight U.S. deportation

BY NORTON SANDLER

SAN FRANCISCO — On August 11 a federal judge here ordered the extradition back to Northern Ireland of Terry Kirby, Kevin Barry Artt, and Pol Brennan. The three Irish freedom fighters had their bail revoked and were jailed within hours of Judge Charles Legge's ruling.

Kirby, Artt, and Brennan were among the 38 Irish freedom fighters who escaped from the H-blocks of Long Kesh (also known as Maze) prison near Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1983. Along with a fourth escapee, Jimmy Smyth, they were arrested by the FBI in the Bay Area in the early 1990s.

The U.S. Justice Department, working closely with the British government, has been pressing the extradition of the H-block defendants for more than five years. The activists have instead demanded that they be allowed to remain in the United States. Smyth was extradited back to Northern Ireland in 1996 and beaten by prison authorities earlier this year.

Kirby and Artt were convicted of murder in a special British court without a jury present. Both were tortured to extract "confessions." Brennan was convicted of possessing explosives in the same type court, referred to as Diplock courts.

In his ruling Judge Legge claimed the three "were convicted because they committed serious crimes, not because they are

Catholics or nationalists or republicans."

In a statement released to the press in response to the extradition orders, Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams expressed "deep disappointment" at the decision. "Today's judgment should act as a spur on Irish America and all those concerned with truth and justice, to redouble their efforts to prevent the extradition and deportation of Irish political refugees," Adams stated.

Andrew Somers, national president of the Irish American Unity Conference, an organization that has been leading the defense of the three activists, added, "We disagree strongly with Judge Legge's decision.... They were interrogated in a center which was condemned by the UN Human Rights Commission, beaten, and convicted by one judge with no jury and without substantial evidence."

The three activists are planning to appeal the ruling and their attorneys are trying to have the three released on bail while the appeal is pending.

Bay area chapters of the Irish American Unity Conference have called for a protest over the extradition orders at the San Francisco Federal Building at 4:30 p.m. on August 22.

Norton Sandler is a member of the International Association of Machinists Local 1781 in San Francisco.

## Palestinian activists in L.A. win another round against U.S. gov't

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — The government suffered another setback in its drive to deport the Los Angeles 8 when a federal appeals court panel upheld two key decisions won earlier by the activists. For a decade, the Justice Department and its Immigration division have been trying to deport seven Palestinians and a Kenyan on the claim that their political solidarity with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) constitutes support of "terrorism."

Early on, the eight filed a federal suit to stop their deportations on the ground that they had been politically targeted for selective prosecution. Recently, Justice Department lawyers moved to have this case thrown out of court arguing that such suits were retroactively barred by the 1996 "Illegal Immigration Reform and Responsibility Act."

Judge Stephen Wilson rejected the gov-

ernment lawyers' argument, ruling that the new law cannot stop immigrants from taking the government to court when constitutional issues are involved. The Justice Department took its case to the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. On July 11 a three-judge panel of the appeals court unanimously upheld Wilson's ruling.

The panel also upheld Wilson's ruling that immigrants and citizens alike have the right to support the legal activities of the PFLP. It noted that despite its assertions about "terrorism," the Justice Department did not challenge Wilson's finding that the organization engages in a range of legal activities.

The Circuit Court decision also backed Wilson's finding that the LA 8 had been targeted for selective prosecution. It pointed to the evidence introduced by the activists that the government had not acted against individuals who raised funds for the counterrevolutionary Nicaraguan contras.



# SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

## 'I want to buy that *Militant*'

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

"By the time the last discussions ended with UPS strikers checking out our book table, we had sold 57 copies of the *Militant*," reports Floyd Fowler, who participated in an August 14 rally organized by the Teamsters union in Atlanta. *Militant* supporters joined in rallies to back the UPS strikers across the country that week.

Participants at the Atlanta event bought three Pathfinder titles, including *The Eastern Airlines Strike*, *The Great Labor Uprising of 1877*, and *Teamster Rebellion*. Dan Fein, a *Militant* supporter who sold 34 copies at the demonstration said, "I just held up the paper among the packed crowd and people said, 'I want that.'"

At a rally in Jersey City, New Jersey, socialists sold one subscription to a striker and

30 copies of the *Militant* to other participants. A few days later, socialists sold 24 *Militants* and 75 Pathfinder books at a Brooklyn rally protesting the brutal cop assault of Abner Louima.

"The Teamsters strike at UPS sparked more interest in the socialist press, as workers compared the *Militant's* coverage with the daily newspapers here," said Barry Fatland, a member of the United Transportation Union (UTU) in Los Angeles. He reported 13 people renewed their subscription to the *Militant*, including seven members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) and the UTU. "We sent in two *Perspectiva Mundial* renewals; one from an IAM member, the other from a Teamster."

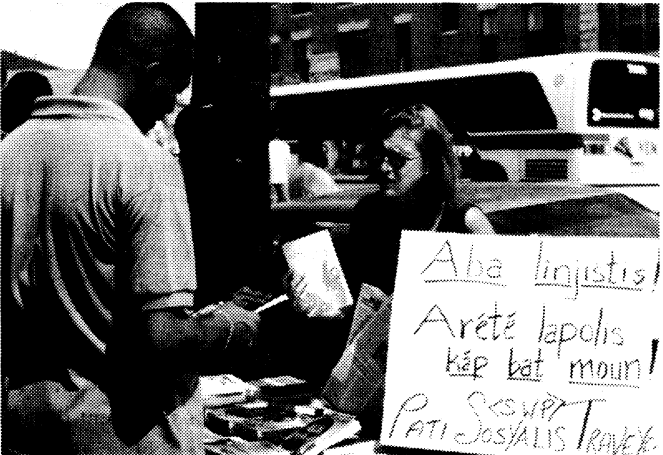
Martin Hill in London reports socialists there sold seven copies of the new Pathfinder pamphlet *At the Side of Che Guevara*, which includes two interviews with Harry Villegas and a copy of *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'* at a picket outside the Colombian embassy there August 19, protesting human rights

abuses in Columbia.

*Militant* supporter Mike Fitzsimmons from Cleveland reported, "One of the renewals we've gotten so far is from a young woman who just moved to Yellow Springs, Ohio to attend Antioch College. She wanted to renew for a longer period (six months) this time so she could rely on the *Militant* coming to her through the school year."

To build on the momentum of sales over the last couple of weeks, the *Militant* is extending its renewal drive for one week, through August 31. This effort and the completion of the campaign to sell the new titles from Pathfinder Press will launch the sales effort to win new readers to the socialist press. That eight-week campaign will begin August 30 and end October 26.

Renewal Campaign MILITANT/PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL August 2- 31						
City/Country	Militant			Perspectiva Mundial		
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	%
Australia	10	5	50%	2	0	0%
New Zealand						
Auckland	5	2	40%			
Christchurch	4	1	25%	1	0	0%
N.Z. totals	9	3	33%	1	0	0%
Canada						
Montreal	4	2	50%	2	3	150%
Toronto	8	1	13%	2	0	0%
Vancouver	8	2	25%	1	0	0%
Canada totals	20	5	25%	5	3	0%
United States						
Cleveland	7	6	86%	2	0	0%
Miami	12	9	75%	6	2	33%
Atlanta	9	5	56%	3	2	67%
San Francisco	17	8	47%	8	0	0%
Boston	8	3	38%	3	1	33%
Los Angeles	25	8	32%	10	1	10%
Seattle	15	4	27%	5	0	0%
New York	15	3	20%	8	0	0%
Des Moines	6	1	17%	4	0	0%
Houston	12	2	17%	3	0	0%
Detroit	8	1	13%	2	0	0%
Washington, D.C.	9	1	11%	6	1	17%
Philadelphia	10	1	10%	2	0	0%
Newark	15	1	7%	8	1	13%
Pittsburgh	15	1	7%	1	0	0%
Chicago	18	1	6%	7	0	0%
Twin Cities	20	1	5%	5	0	0%
Birmingham	9	0	0%	1	0	0%
U.S. Totals	230	56	24%	84	8	10%
United Kingdom						
London	10	3	30%	2	0	0%
Manchester*	5					
U.K. totals	15	3	20%	2	0	0%
Iceland*						
	9	0	0%			
Sweden						
	3	0	0%	1	0	0%
Int'l totals	296	72	24%	95	11	8%
Should be	295	148	50%	95	48	50%
TRADE UNIONS						
United States						
USWA	15	2	13%	3	0	0%
IAM*	33			10	0	0%
OCAW*	10					
UAW	15	0	0%	3	0	0%
UFCW	2	0	0%	5	0	0%
UNITE	4	0	0%	4	0	0%
UTU*	12					
U.S. Totals	91	2	2%	25	0	0%
* no report submitted						



Sales at Brooklyn action against cop brutality August 16

## Youth at festival snap up Pathfinder titles

BY ESTELLE DEBATES AND BRIAN TAYLOR

HAVANA, Cuba — Hundreds of participants in the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students returned home with books and pamphlets published by Pathfinder Press. Members of the Socialist Workers Party from the United States, the Communist League of Canada, and Young Socialists from both countries were among the delegates who staffed a table at the regional club of the Americas, selling nearly 500 books and pamphlets there.

Members of the Movement or Landless Rural Workers (MST) of Brazil and dozens of other groups had their own literature tables at the club of the Americas, which was a center for informal political discussion and debate. Young Socialists collaborated with MST members to distribute literature asking for support in the defense campaign of MST leader José Rainha, who has been framed-up by the police in Brazil for his involvement in the fight for land.

Best sellers at the Pathfinder table were the newly released *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'* by Harry Villegas, with 20 copies sold; the pamphlet *At the Side of Che Guevara: Interviews with Harry Villegas (Pombo)* with 39 copies sold in English and Spanish; and *The Changing Face of U.S.*

*Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* with 20 copies sold in English and Spanish. Books by Malcolm X in Spanish and French were among the most popular titles. Most books and pamphlets by or about Ernesto Che Guevara were snapped up quickly.

Delegates from Australia and New Zealand set up similar literature displays at the Asia and Oceania regional club and delegates from Britain, Iceland, and Sweden sold Pathfinder books at the Europe regional club.

Another 200 books and pamphlets, and dozens of copies of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, were sold by Young Socialists and other delegates, who had knapsacks full of revolutionary literature, on the way to and back from Cuba. Tom Alter, from Des Moines, Iowa, sold over 20 titles this way. "I concentrated on promoting *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* and the new book by Villegas," said Alter. "But the political discussions led to sales of a range of titles. On two occasions I sold *Fascism What It Is and How to Fight It* by Leon Trotsky, both times to delegates from East Germany who were involved in protests against rightist attacks in that country." Alter also sold out the five copies he brought of the YS Organizer, as he discussed the political perspectives of the YS with delegates from around the world.

Heather Wood, a new YS member from Minneapolis, concentrated on sales to members of the delegation of nearly 50 youth from Minnesota. "Among the most popular titles," said Wood, "were *To Speak the Truth*

PATHFINDER NEW TITLES CAMPAIGN						
<i>Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla,' At the Side of Che Guevara, The Changing Face of U.S. Politics, and El rostro cambiante de la Política en Estados Unidos</i>						
Units	Pombo		At side of Che		Changing Face	
City/Country	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
United States						
Atlanta	20	5	20	3	10	3
Birmingham*	20		20	0	5	0
Boston	25	9	15	17	5	1
Chicago	40	8	30	18	8	2
Cleveland	20	6	10	3	5	0
Des Moines	15	3	15	5	8	3
Detroit	15	3	15	4	8	1
Houston	15	0	25	0	8	0
Los Angeles	20	7	30	14	10	0
Miami	30	8	20	8	8	3
Newark	30	6	30	10	10	4
New York	25	2	30	16	20	4
Philadelphia	10	6	15	8	5	2
Pittsburgh	30	8	30	8	10	0
San Francisco	15	8	20	10	10	3
Seattle	20	7	30	2	12	4
Twin Cities	25	7	30	4	12	2
Washington, D.C.	15	8	10	10	8	3
Other		20		39		20
U.S. totals	390	121	395	179	162	55
Australia						
	15	7	15	13	5	1
Canada						
Montreal	7	4	10	7	5	1
Toronto*	15		15		8	
Vancouver	10	1	10	2	6	
Canada totals	32	5	35	9	19	1
Iceland*						
	0		0		0	
New Zealand						
Auckland	10	3	10	1	5	0
Christchurch	9	5	8	6	3	3
N.Z. totals	19	8	18	7	8	3
Sweden						
	6	0				
United Kingdom						
London	10	4	20	22	5	1
Manchester*	10		12		5	
U.K. Totals	20	4	32	22	10	1
Int'l totals	482	145	495	230	204	61
Trade Unions						
United States						
IAM*	21	0	33	0	12	0
OCAW*	5		5		10	
UAW	15	1	15	2	5	1
UFCW	4	0	12	3	3	1
UNITE	4	1	8	1	4	1
USWA	16	0	19	2	8	0
UTU*	15				15	
U.S. Totals	80	2	92	8	57	3
AUSTRALIA						
AMWU	1	0	2	2	1	1
*no report submitted						

with speeches by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara and *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*." Wood said as she got into debates about what caused the break up of the Soviet Union and other issues, she became more interested in reading several of the books.

Several delegates sold copies of the Marxist magazine *New International* during heated political discussions. Rafik Benali from France sold 51 Pathfinder titles and copies of the magazine, mostly during breaks at festival sessions. "I sold 21 copies of *Nouvelle Internationale* [the French-language sister publication of *New International*]," he said. "The Haitian delegates bought the most, but I also sold to others from Malawi, France, and elsewhere."

Several U.S. delegates related discussions with youth from Nicaragua, many of whom were active in recent protests against attacks on education in that country.

# UPS strikers win

Continued from front page

Jefferson facility in Chicago. "From the beginning we were willing to stay out as long as it took to get a fair contract."

The morale of strikers on the line here was high. Most felt they won this battle. Some were a bit cautious, however. "I hope we got what we struck for," said Lamont Beck, a sorter and part-time UPS worker with three years on the job at the Jefferson plant. "I imagine there was some compromising on both sides. I won't go back without a contract. Even if I were a full-timer I'd be out here on the line. We'll have to see what the agreement says." A few Federal Express truck drivers drove by honking in support. There were a lot of thumbs up and victory signs.

Teamsters Local 705, the largest among UPS workers with 11,500 members in the Chicago area, has a separate contract with the company. Local 705 officials were still negotiating with UPS August 20, two days after the nationwide settlement was announced. Strikers said they expected an agreement would be reached soon, patterned after the national deal.

Discussions on the settlement began late at night on August 18 on the West Coast. Outside the UPS terminal in San Francisco, strikers plugged in a radio to get the latest information as news of the tentative accord broke out. Soon local television crews began ascending on the picket line. Billy Ragsdale, a UPS striker there, told *Militant* reporters, "The strike itself has unified labor in the United States. A lot of the middle class in America realize there is a shift in the making in resisting corporate greed."

Picketing continued at the San Francisco facility through the morning of August 19. Workers began autographing picket signs and strike T-shirts they said they planned to keep as gestures of solidarity with one another. Around 9:30 a.m., a Teamsters union official spoke to the crowd from the back of a flatbed truck. He urged workers to spread out in the city and visit UPS customers telling them they would be back at work soon and thanking them for their support. He also encouraged strikers to come to a union meeting that evening where contract details would be spelled out. The crowd began dispersing shortly afterwards.

"I would call the settlement a victory," said Craig Nelson, a UPS striker in Atlanta. "When the company saw we had the majority of the public behind us, they wanted to end the strike. I'm glad to hear we will be getting 10,000 new full-time jobs. We won on the pension too. But I don't like the five-year contract, that ties us up for too long."

## Terms of settlement

After five days of negotiations, with the direct involvement of Labor Secretary Alexis Herman, Teamsters officials announced a tentative agreement with UPS by midnight on August 18. The union's 50-per-

son bargaining committee and officers from 200 Teamsters locals ratified the accord next day. Union members, who began returning to work August 19, will vote on the contract in a mail-in ballot that could take several weeks. Although the details of the settlement have not been released as we go to press, here are some of the highlights reported so far:

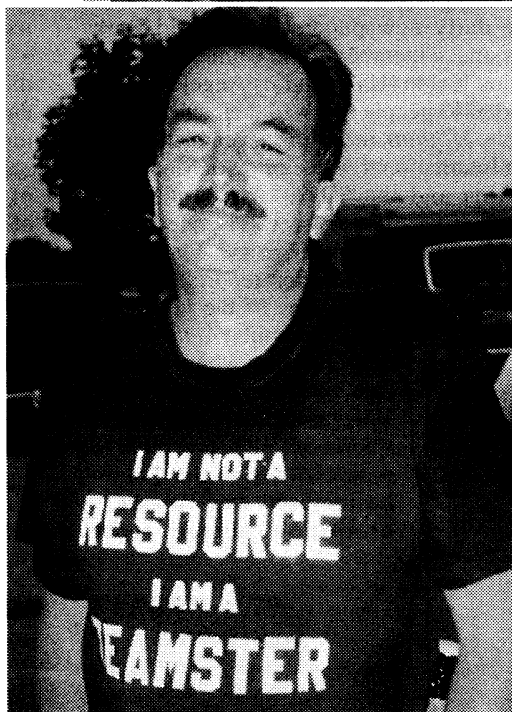
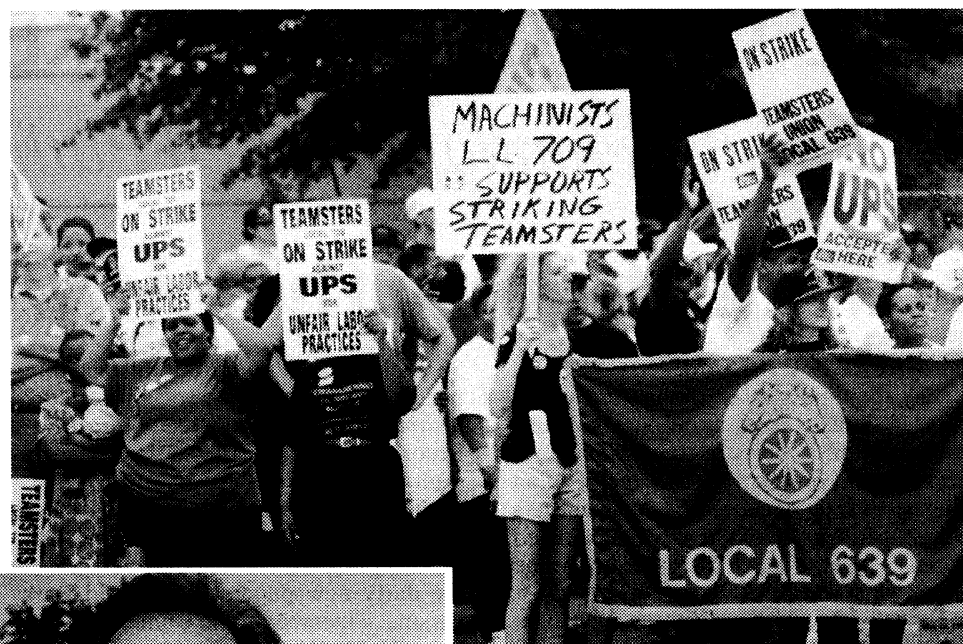
Workers held back the company attack on the union pension plan and made some headway on the wage package, which narrows slightly the gap in hourly pay between part-time loaders and sorters and full-time drivers. They also got a company pledge that 10,000 new full-time positions will be created over the life of the contract. The agreement is for five years, instead of the three or four Teamsters negotiators initially sought.

The starting hourly wage for part-time loaders, who currently earn \$8 per hour, a rate that hasn't changed since 1982, will be immediately raised to \$8.50 per hour. Roughly 60 percent of UPS jobs are filled by part-time workers. Wages of part-timers — who average \$11 per hour — will be raised by \$4.10 per hour over five years. According to strikers, part-time workers average between \$6,000 and \$15,000 a year.

Full-time employees — who average \$19.95 per hour — will get a \$3.10 hourly increase over the same period. The contract does not include cost of living adjustment provisions to make up for losses from future inflation. The August 20 *Investor's Business Daily* said the raise for full-timers is "3.1% over five years, which is in line with inflation" at the moment. The company initially offered raises of \$2.50 per hour for part-time workers and \$1 an hour for full-timers plus bonuses.

The union was demanding the company create 2,500 new full-time jobs per year, while the company had offered a mere 200 such positions annually. The tentative settlement requires the company to convert 2,000 part-time jobs to full-time positions each year for five years, for a total of 10,000. "But the fine print in the contract allows UPS an out if sales don't grow enough to support full-time positions," according to the August 20 *Investor's Business Daily*. "The biggest gain the company made was to prevent any effort to limit its ability to hire new part-time workers. There are no such restraints under the pact."

Management did abandon what it had declared as one of its top goals. That was to pull out of the Teamsters multi-employer pension plan and create one just for UPS workers. More than 8 million workers participate in such plans, mostly in trucking, construction, and other highly fragmented industries. Teamster members were adamant in fighting this assault for a good reason. Workers in single employer plans who



Militant/Left: Michael Pennock. Above: Rich Stuart. Solidarity among other unionists was widespread throughout the UPS strike. Above, Machinists join rally to support the UPS strikers August 14 in Atlanta. Union pride among the Teamsters was apparent at every picket line. Left, a striker sports his T-shirt at a rally also on August 14 in Eagan, Minnesota.

you're a piece of s — t. Be glad you have a job and shut up. In October 1995 we went on strike against UPS for one day here over 100 unsettled grievances."

Boettinger described how the packages UPS workers lift don't indicate weight. "It could weigh 50 pounds, or it could weigh 100 pounds. I got a hernia lifting one of them and was out for six weeks." Concerns over health and safety on the job were high among strikers.

Before the strike, the company sought to implement speedup by timing workers. Drivers, for example, are expected to walk at a pace of three feet per second. "So, based on the number of packages they have to deliver and the distance they have to walk from the van to each delivery point, supervisors can work out exactly how long they should take to complete their rounds," said an article in the August 16 *Financial Times* of London.

Roger Ellias has worked at UPS's Jefferson terminal in Chicago for six months. "They are like slave drivers in there," he said. "When you first start they time your work. You're supposed to do so many by the second. You have to keep up with the belt. UPS is the tightest slave ship in the business."

## Tensions high back at work

As Teamsters members got back to work, many reported a very tense atmosphere with supervisors. "The harassment continues," Mathew Patterson told *Militant* reporters as he got out of work the night of August 20. He is a part-time sorter for ten years and union shop steward at the Hialeah UPS center in Miami. "About 100 warning letters" were given to workers by the company, including one to himself, Patterson said. About 800 people work in that depot. After two warnings, the company can suspend a worker; after three warnings the employee can be fired.

"I found out today for the first time in four years that I can't wear an earring," said Tom Oliver, a young part-time UPS worker, coming off the 4:00 a.m. shift August 20 at the Maspeth facility in Queens, New York. "Every rule there has to be followed now. That's the way it's going to be for a couple of months."

Oliver said Teamsters members will strike again if the 2,000 UPS pilots who have not settled with the company yet decide to walk out. Other workers expressed similar views. "If the pilots hadn't honored our picket lines, UPS would have kept more of their business going," said Mike Wolf, a striker at the UPS center in Burtonsville, Maryland. "With a possible strike looming the pilots can count on our support."

## Big business is not pleased

Big business was not pleased with the outcome of the Teamsters strike. The capitalist media tried to downplay its implications for capital-labor relations, but could not hide the obvious concerns of the ruling class that this victory for labor may boost the confidence of other workers to resist employer demands for "belt tightening."

At an August 19 news conference at UPS headquarters in Atlanta, company chairman

switch jobs end up with smaller retirement checks because their pension from the first company is frozen and they must start over again. Under federal pension rules, an individual who works for nine such employers over 40 years can end up with no pension.

Union officials interviewed on CNN said the tentative pact pushed back the company's drive to expand subcontracting.

Teamsters president Ron Carey said the biggest concession the union made was agreeing to a five-year contract. He also said, "This is not just a Teamster victory, this is a victory for all working people." Carey said the Teamsters will now try to organize workers at Federal Express — one of the main competitors of UPS — and at other companies.

## Battle will continue on the job

In 1994, the union staged a one-day walk-out to protest UPS's unilateral decision to increase the maximum weight a worker could handle from 70 pounds to 150 pounds. The July 30 "final offer" by UPS said the "company can increase weight limit above 150 pounds at any time without the union's agreement." Associated Press reported that the new contract would require the company to bargain with the union before any future increases in weight limits.

Many disputes over speedup and other working conditions will probably have to be fought out on the job as the new relationship of forces unfolds. It's not clear, for example, what the new pact says regarding "cardinal sins," that is infractions of company rules where innocent until proven guilty does not apply. Management was seeking to expand the list of such regulations.

"One of the rules the company wants to impose is that anyone who yells back at a supervisor will be fired," said Kirk, a striking loader on the picket line at the Newark, New Jersey, airport, who gave only his first name. He added that he thought the company would face a lot of resistance from workers if they tried to implement such a rule, especially with the confidence they had gained during the strike.

On a recent visit to the UPS hub in Wil- lows Spring, Illinois, the largest UPS center in the world, there was barely any business going in and out of the sprawling complex. The plant sits right next to the largest truck-rail facility in the world. "UPS employs between 5,000 and 6,000 workers here, nobody knows exactly," said John Boettinger, a part-time worker there for eight years. "This an oppressive place to work. There is one supervisor for every 20 workers. UPS's philosophy is simple:

## How Washington tried to break UPS strike

BY NORTON SANDLER

SAN FRANCISCO — August is a very busy month for U.S. airlines with vacation travel at a peak. This year the "high season" workload for ramp workers at United Airlines here has been far rougher than usual. In addition to the big volume of luggage, the airlines bosses have been trying to fill every available inch on their planes with substantially increased amounts of mail and parcels shipped through the U.S. Postal Service as a result of the UPS strike. While U.S. president William Clinton preached neutrality on the strike, the post office, working with the major airlines, was one of the main vehicles the wealthy in this country used to try to relieve some of the pressure on businesses generated by the strike.

Airline workers felt this speedup in numerous ways. There is always pressure to get planes unloaded and loaded rapidly for "on time departures." But during the strike, inbound flights took longer to unload because of the mail packed into them. Then ramp workers would have to deal with getting the lug-

gage loaded as well as trying to jam the containers and piles of mail sacks waiting for them at the gates onto the planes.

Making this far more complicated than usual, ramp workers had to scramble to find carts and containers to load luggage on because so much of the already short supply of this basic equipment had been diverted to moving mail.

I was assigned one day during the strike to United's postal operation at the San Francisco airport Post Office. An announcement over the Post Office loud speaker announced that all days off for U.S. Postal Service employees at that terminal were being canceled until further notice.

Olga Rodríguez, a ramp worker and Machinist union member at Northwest Airlines at Newark International Airport, reports that workers there "got beaten to a pulp with lots of overtime" loading planes in recent days.

"At several points over the last week the air mail facility at Newark got so bottled up with semi-trailers that they had to shut the facility and regroup," Rodríguez explained.



# Bosses fear UPS wage settlement may set precedent

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

The fears among many in the ruling class in the United States that the Teamsters strike against United Parcel Service could set a dangerous precedent on wages turned out to be true. Union members, both full-time and part-time workers, won substantial raises in their hourly wages and a pledge for a not insignificant increase in the number of full-time jobs.

"UPS faces huge rise in annual labor costs," was the headline of an article in the August 20 *Wall Street Journal* that described the terms of the UPS settlement. "It appeared that it was UPS that blinked in the face of revenue losses totaling more than \$600 million since the start of the strike Aug. 4," the *Journal* article said.

A substantial section of the employers and their spokespeople in the big-business press were concerned about the impact that a wage settlement favorable to UPS workers may have throughout the economy, given the stagnation in labor productivity and the volatility of the speculative bubble on Wall Street. For many among the rulers the wage package was more important than the dispute over part-time work or pensions.

## Higher wages will cut into profits

An article in the Sunday, August 17, *New York Times*, titled "Labor showdowns: The effect on stocks," pointed precisely to this fear among the bosses. It quoted David Wyss, director of research at DRI/McGraw Hill, an economic consulting service, saying, "Currently, with labor markets so tight, the questions have more to do with what the agreements will contribute to wage pressures, not other union concerns."

The article ended by saying, "Byron Wien, United States investment strategist at Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, said investors should be concerned about the impact a U.P.S. settlement might have on wage costs.... Markets have been looking for signs of higher inflation, and since labor represents about 70 percent of manufacturing costs, the importance of this strike will be if it is the first in a series of efforts by labor to be better compensated."

"If employers are pressured to move more workers [into full-time positions], a significant inflation effect will occur across the economy," John Challenger, executive vice president of an outplacement firm, told the August 20 *Christian Science Monitor*.

These fears contributed to the loss of confidence among a number of speculators on Wall Street that resulted in a substantial drop in the value of stocks during the UPS strike. The Dow Jones industrial average dropped 247 points on August 15, the steepest one-day decline in points since the plunge of 508 points on Oct. 19, 1987 — the last stock market crash. "The strike by employees of United Parcel Service might also be worrying investors who fear that stepped-up demands from labor could hurt corporate profits and create inflationary pressures," said the lead front-page article in the August 16 *New York Times*.

Even after the Dow Jones regained over 100 points on August 18, hours before the UPS settlement was announced, big business was still queasy. "The economic horizon is suddenly filled with August clouds," began the lead editorial in the August 19 *Wall Street Journal*. "The stock market will always fluctuate, but not always in such a dizzying way. It rallied yesterday, after careening nearly 7% from its August 6 record of 8259. The fall of the Thai baht on August 2 set off a round of competitive currency devaluation in Asia. The August 4 United Parcel Service strike threatens a new and unsettling era in labor relations."

During the strike, a debate broke out among financial "analysts" and other bourgeois commentators over whether the recent boom of stock prices and rising money profits of U.S. big business can be sustained. One school among the ruling class states that the explosion of paper values in the stock and bond markets is not sustainable. They

talk about manipulating interest rates and taking other steps to slow economic growth and bring the economy to a "soft landing" in order to avoid a rise in inflation or a sudden deflationary collapse. "We'd better hope [Federal Reserve Board chairman Alan] Greenspan can land softly on a dime," concluded Kathryn Welling of *Barron's* in an interview with James Paulsen, chief investment officer of Norwest Investment Management, published in the July 28 issue of the financial weekly.

The other school argues that capitalism is in a new period of expansion fueled by computerization and other technological advances and the boom-and-bust business cycles are a thing of the past.

## Stagnating productivity fuels debate

Recently released figures that point to a further stagnation of labor productivity are feeding this debate. According to the government's Bureau of Labor Statistics, growth of labor productivity slowed to a mere 0.6 percent in the second quarter of 1997 — significantly below what the rulers need and hoped for. This came on the heels of a rise of labor productivity by only 1.4 percent in the first quarter of this year, not the 2.6 percent that had been earlier reported by the Labor Department. In contrast, the productivity growth rate nationwide averaged 2.8 percent annually between 1947 and 1973 — that is during the post-World War II capitalist boom. Since the worldwide recession of 1974-75, the rate has averaged 1 percent or less. Those in the "everything is



Militant/Margrethe Siem

Rally in solidarity with UPS strikers in Jersey City, New Jersey, August 13.

new" school reacted with disbelief. "The numbers must be wrong; they must be understated," Bruce Steinberg, chief economist at Merrill Lynch, insisted in an article published in the August 13 *New York Times* that reported the Bureau of Labor Statistics findings. "There is no way we could have had the outstanding economic performance this country has had over the last couple of years if those numbers were remotely accurate."

Bourgeois economists like Steinberg argue that the official data is failing to capture technology's growing contribution to productivity, the hidden output generated by computer software, or the true efficiency of workers in the service sector of the economy, the *Times* article said.

"The opposite side in this debate says the contribution of computers to productivity is greatly overstated," the article continued, "the service sector includes areas of inefficient labor and much production today is often labor intensive."

Behind this stagnation in productivity are the deflationary pressures building in a

world capitalist economy mired in depression conditions. The average rate of industrial profit has been in a long-term decline, which has led big business to shy from expanding productive capacity by investing in new plants and equipment. Instead money capital is pouring into the stock markets.

One sign of the approaching deflation was the recent announcement that the Producer Price Index, that is wholesale prices, declined for the seventh consecutive month in July, unprecedented in the 50-year history of the measure. Real earnings in retail sales also fell 1 percent in July, ending a quarter with an anemic 0.2 percent rise.

An article in the August 14 *Washington Post* that reported on these figures stated, "The nation has not experienced full-scale deflation — price level drops, asset value declines, and a contraction in gross domestic product — since the Eisenhower administration, said Joseph Abate, an economist at Lehman Brothers Inc.... At its worst, Abate said, deflation 'could turn a recession into a full-blown depression.'"

# Union vote fails at Fieldcrest Cannon, but textile workers vow to keep fighting

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

ATLANTA — On August 12-13 textile workers at the six Fieldcrest Cannon mills in the Kannapolis, North Carolina, area voted whether to join the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE). The union lost by 369 votes, with 2,563 workers voting against and 2,194 in favor. The union is now challenging the eligibility of 378 voters.

The *Atlanta Journal Constitution* crowed the next day that the election was a "bitter setback for the textile labor movement in the South." But at Plant 1 in Kannapolis, three days after the vote, Ronald Rice, a platform truck operator with almost 25 years at the mill, stated, "I know I voted yes. I know it's the third or fourth time. So I'll just have to do it again. And I will do it again."

Gene Clark, a towel doffer with seven years at the mill agreed. "When I heard the results, I felt like someone had taken the air out of me. I thought the union had it this time for sure. So I'll wait — and then vote yes again." Clark was wearing a T-shirt distributed by the company that read: "Exercise your right to vote; No Union," but had crossed out the "No." Other workers going in and out of the plant at the 3 p.m. shift change were wearing UNITE hats.

A 1991 UNITE organizing drive at the plants lost by just 199 votes. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) set the results of that election aside after ruling that the company violated federal labor laws in its antiunion campaign. The company was cited for 150 unfair labor practices in the 1991 ballot.

As part of the court-ordered remedies in the current election, the company was mandated to mail out, post, and attend readings in the plants of the NLRB order forbidding the company from repeating its 1991 violations — intimidating, harassing, and firing union supporters to name a few.

Among the long list of violations the company was sanctioned for were threatening "employees with plant closure if they select the union as their representative" and threatening "Spanish-speaking employees with

deportation or imprisonment if they sign union authorization cards." The company was also mandated to hold the election off company property. UNITE was allowed to hold meetings in the plant to talk with workers about joining the union.

But as the current election approached, and as a union victory appeared likely, the company more and more flagrantly violated the NLRB order. On August 8, the company mailed a video titled "What could our future look like if the union got in?" to the over 5,000 workers employed at the mill. The antiunion "video drama" depicts UNITE organizers gloating they got a contract, while 1,800 workers are laid off.

In the last week of campaigning the labor board filed an emergency petition asking the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Virginia, to appoint a judge to intervene and oversee the voting to "maximize the chances for holding a fair rerun election." The labor board also asked that Fieldcrest be held in contempt of court for violating the NLRB order. UNITE is now asking the NLRB to set aside the current election.

## Impact of UPS strike

The strike by 185,000 Teamsters against UPS became an issue in the election. The company seized on confusion around the strike among the workers. A company leaflet distributed on the first day of voting read in part "UNITE is already talking about promoting a strike at Fieldcrest Cannon. We would never knuckle under to strike pressure, even if we had to hire replacements, something which we would not want to do."

"The company made an issue of strikes in this election," Bruce Raynor, southern regional director and executive vice president of UNITE, told the Kannapolis *Independent Tribune*. "They threatened workers that if you vote for the union, you will have to go out on strike; and they used the UPS strike as an example. I am sure that in the face of what the company was saying the UPS strike had a negative impact on the outcome."

Union literature printed before the Team-

sters strike began, stated, "There can only be a strike if union members vote to strike. The union can't make you strike. 98% of all union contracts are settled without strikes. And once Cannon workers join the thousands of Fieldcrest workers already in the union, you'll have the strength to win what you need without a strike." The union literature closed by arguing, "Not having a union because you don't want to strike is like never going outdoors because you don't want to be hit by lightning."

On the UPS picket line in Kannapolis, Teamsters expressed disappointment in the outcome of the election. One striker, a former employee at the mill, said that Fieldcrest Cannon had belittled the Teamsters \$55 a week strike benefit. He answered this argument by asking whether it was better to have \$55 a week as a strike benefit while you fight, or better to have a \$50 a month pension, which is what his mother got when she retired from the mill. Other strikers said several workers from the mill had stopped by the picket line to get answers from the Teamsters about their strike.

Cynthia Haynes, who works as a clerk at plant 6 and is a long-time union activist at Fieldcrest Cannon, agreed that the UPS striker was right on the money about the textile giant's pension plan. "My mother worked for 35 years in the mill," she said. "When she died in 1984 her pension was \$13 a month. She used to tell me 'I buy my bread with my pension money.'"

Referring to the Teamsters strike against UPS, Haynes stated, "I admire them. I'm with them 100 percent. Every time I go by the picket line I blow my horn. The company used the strike to hurt the people here who know the least about unions. Maybe the union could have explained what the strike is all about better."

Haynes is determined to win a union at Fieldcrest Cannon. "Well, we lost a battle this time, but not the war," she said. "We're going to win the war sometime."

Arlene Rubinstein is a member of UNITE in Atlanta.

# N.Y. cop brutality

Continued from front page

tian and other organizations — including Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees, Haitian Constituency-USA, Haiti Support Network, Haitian-American Juvenile Foundation, Connecticut Haitians for Justice, Haiti-Progress, Radio Peuple, National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights, Asian-American Legal Defense Fund, Center for Constitutional Rights, December 12 Movement, Free Mumia-Abu Jamal Coalition, Socialist Workers Party, and Workers World Party.

Demands included the immediate firing of all police personnel from the 70th precinct implicated in this act of brutality, trial and conviction of all cops involved, an end to police brutality, and U.S. and all foreign police out of Haiti.

Several of the demonstrators carried bathroom plungers — in a dramatic enactment of the vicious assault by the cops.

Signs carried by a number of marchers bore pictures of officers Justin Volpe and Charles Schwarz, two of the four cops who have been indicted for the inhuman attack so far, with horns drawn on their heads above the slogan “devil in a blue suit.” Others carried placards that described the NYPD as the Ku Kux Klan.

The sheer barbarity of the attack has angered many working people in the New York area.

“I’m very mad,” said Rheza Boucard, who works as a nurse in New York. “I find it difficult to express my feelings. If this is the world’s first city, if this is [New York mayor Rudolph] Giuliani’s time, how can they be giving this kind of example? This isn’t a Black thing, it’s a human thing. The Ton Ton Macoutes [rightist paramilitary thugs who terrorized the population under U.S.-backed military dictatorships in Haiti] were sent by the American government to Haiti. Only when they train the macoutes to go to a country this happens.”

Many at the protest expressed their dissatisfaction with the fact that only two cops had been indicted in the case as of the time of the march, when as many as eleven or more officers were probably implicated.

“All the cops involved should be jailed and fired,” Harvey Coty, 36, said. “All those responsible should be prosecuted. This why they need to hear our voices.”

Louima moved to New York from Haiti six years ago. He lives with his wife and one-year-old son in Queens and works as a security guard.

## What happened on August 10?

According to an interview Louima gave that was published in the August 13 *Daily News*, this is how the events unfolded on the early morning hours of August 10.

Around 4:30 a.m. that day, Louima was outside the Rendez-Vous Palace nightclub near the corner of Glenwood and Flatbush Ave. after a party. As the club emptied out, a fight broke out between two women. “I

didn’t know the women,” Louima said. “I was there with my brother and my cousin.” Soon the cops arrived.

“The white cops started with some racial stuff,” Louima said. “They said, ‘Why do you people come to this country if you can’t speak English?’ They called us niggers.”

“A cop said to shut up. I didn’t think he was talking to me. He pushed me to the ground and handcuffed my hands. Two cops put me in their patrol car and drove me to the corner of Glenwood and Nostrand. There was another car there. They kicked and beat me with their radios. They were yelling, ‘You people can’t even talk English, I am going to teach you to respect a cop.’ None of the cops had their nametags on. They put me back in the car and drove me to the corner of Glenwood and Bedford. They met two other cops and beat me again.”

Then, he said, he was driven to the 70th precinct, led to the duty sergeant’s desk and strip searched.

“My pants were down at my ankles, in full view of the other cops. They walked me over to the bathroom and closed the door. There were two cops. One said, ‘You niggers have to learn to respect police officers.’ The other one said, ‘If you yell or make any noise, I will kill you.’ Then one held me and the other one stuck the plunger up my behind. He pulled it out and shoved it in my mouth, broke my teeth and said, ‘That’s your s — t, nigger.’ Later, when they called the ambulance, the cop told me, ‘If you ever tell anyone I will kill you and your family.’”

As is usual in such cases, the cops tried to make the victim look like the criminal. They charged Louima with assault, resisting arrest, obstructing government administration and disorderly conduct. These charges were subsequently dropped without further explanation.

## NY mayor acts to defuse anger

Meanwhile, New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani — who is running for a second term — has been working overtime in an effort to diffuse the anger and limit the damage to his police forces.

Besides the two cops who have already been indicted, New York police commissioner Howard Safir has relieved a number of senior officers from their posts at the 70th precinct and reassigned a number of other cops to modified tasks pending the outcome of what he claims is an open investigation by the police internal affairs department.

Complicating things for Giuliani is his record of defending cops accused of brutality and killings. The most recent occasion was his support for police officer Anthony



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

“Seven O—gotta go!” yelled the angry crowd outside 70th police precinct, August 16.

Pellergeri who shot in the back and killed 16-year-old Kevin Cedeno.

Two weeks before the assault on Louima, New York cops and FBI agents terrorized residents of the Park Slope area of Brooklyn, who are of Middle-Eastern decent, claiming they were after “suicide bombers” in the area.

According to press reports, the 70th precinct has a higher average number of police brutality complaints compared to other cop stations in the city.

Louima reported that officer Volpe, who is charged with forcing the plunger in the man’s rectum, shouted as he was carrying out the assault, “This is Giuliani time, not Dinkins time.” Volpe was referring to former New York mayor David Dinkins who is Black.

“This is not a corruption case,” said Brian Figeroux, one of Louima’s lawyers. “This is a torture case. Cops are going to jail.”

When asked by this reporter if he thought

actions like the August 16 demonstration could make a difference in bringing justice against the cops in this case, Jean Laguerre, a 34-year-old roofer who lives in the area of the incident, said “Of course. But we have to keep marching because this is what they want — for us to stop. We have to keep the pressure on.”

Another demonstration has been called for Friday, August 29, at 10:00 a.m. Protesters will assemble at Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn, walk across the Brooklyn bridge, and march to the city hall to “Demand Justice for Abner Louima!” In addition to Haitian and other organizations, this action is also endorsed by David Dinkins, Democratic Rep. Charles Rangel, and Rev. Herbert Daughtrey.

*Al Duncan is a member of the United Transportation Union in Newark, New Jersey. Ruth Nebbia, who is also in the UTU in Newark, contributed to this article.*

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

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#### Birmingham

**Report Back from New York: Outrage Explodes Over Cop Torture of Haitian Immigrant.** Speaker: Clay Dennison, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Steelworkers of America. Fri., Aug. 29, 7:30 p.m. 111 21st St. South. Donation: \$4. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

### CALIFORNIA

#### Los Angeles

**UPS Strike: Victory for All Labor!** Panel dis-

cussion. Speaker: Craig Honts, Socialist Workers Party, member United Transportation Union. Fri., Aug. 29, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

### AUSTRALIA

#### Sydney

**Report Back from Members of Australian Delegation to the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students in Havana, Cuba.** Sat., Aug. 30, 7 p.m. Refreshments 6:30 p.m. 66 Albion St. Surry Hills. Donation: \$5. Tel: (02) 9281 3297.

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## Sinn Fein leaders tour U.S.

### New York City

Gerry Adams, MP  
Martin McGuinness, MP  
Caoimhghin O’Caolain, TD  
Friday, Sept. 5, 7:00 p.m.  
Roseland Ballroom 239 52nd St.  
Donation: \$10.

### San Francisco

Martin McGuinness, MP  
Saturday, Sept. 6, 8:00 p.m.  
The Russian Centre 2460 Sutter St.  
Donation: \$20.

### Chicago

Caoimhghin O’Caolain, TD  
Saturday, Sept. 6, 7:00 p.m.  
Local 134 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Hall  
600 W. Washington St.  
Donation: \$20  
Special from 9:00-10:00 p.m.  
presentation will be in Irish.

For more information call the Sinn Fein offices in Washington, D.C., at 202-547-8883.



**The system that works** — “The UK has become ‘massively’ more unequal than it was 20 years ago, with the income of the richest tenth of the population equal to that of



**Harry Ring**

the entire bottom half.... One in five people live in poverty.” — The *Independent*, London.

**They’re on the case** — Anthony

Blair, Britain’s new Labour prime minister, has given members of Parliament a three-month summer holiday, two weeks longer than previously.

**Read-it-and-retch dep’t** — With many Spanish-speaking customers, Allied Insurance in Amarillo, Texas, hired Rosa Gonzales and Ester Hernández, both of whom are bilingual. Then they fired them for speaking Spanish to each other. Co-owner Linda Polk said they were “very rude for speaking a language we don’t understand.” They were hired, she declared, “to speak Spanish to non-American-speaking

people,” not to each other.

**It figures** — Addison, a Chicago suburb, settled a bias claim by Latino families targeted for urban removal to make way for a condo and town house development. Those being pushed out will receive up to \$7,000 each, for a total of \$1.8 million. Their lawyers will receive \$2.5 million.

**‘Racist? Us?’** — “I don’t think it’s a racial issue; it’s a cultural issue. We have our well-established Hispanics that have lived here for years that are the average American type. And then, there is the im-

migrant group that has much closer ties to Hispanic culture.” — The mayor of Addison.

**One of them safety nuts** — The Labor Department ruled that Steven Jones had been illegally terminated as safety manager at the Army’s Utah incinerator for burning obsolete, deadly chemical weapons. Jones was bounced for refusing to certify that 3,016 hazards at the incinerator were an “acceptable” risk.

**Can drive you crazy** — With the employment rate up, there were fewer applicants for jobs at next month’s Puyallup state fair in west-

ern Washington. Bleated Richard Johnson, a state jobs director: “This is awful.... Last year they were wrapped around the building and half way down the block.... People already have jobs this year. That’s a scary thing for us.”

**Gotcha** — British regulations stipulate that truck drivers can’t be made to work more than 10 hours in a 24-hour period. But, the Dept. of Transportation admits, a loophole makes it possible to require workers to put in 20-hour stretches — ten at the end of one 24-hour period, plus 10 more at the start of the next.

# Changing the face of U.S. politics, trade unions

Below are excerpts from the introduction to *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by Jack Barnes. This book aims to show why only the working class can lead humanity out of the social crisis endemic to capitalism in its decline. It shows how millions of workers, as political resistance grows, will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and all of society. Pathfinder has just published a Spanish-language edition of the book, *El rostro cambiante de la Política en Estados Unidos*. Both the Spanish- and English-language editions are on sale right now (see offer on front page). The excerpts below are copyright © by Pathfinder Press, 1994, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

## BOOK OF THE WEEK

BY JACK BARNES

These pages describe the changing face of U.S. and world politics since the curve of capitalist development turned downward in the early 1970s after the long post-World War II economic expansion. An acceleration of that slide was signaled by the crash of the New York stock markets on October 19, 1987, the steepest one-day plunge this century. Literally overnight it became worldwide. By the opening years of the 1990s the capitalist system entered a worldwide depression. So long as capitalism exists, and despite ceaseless ups and downs of the business cycle, these depression conditions with their wearing deflationary bias will not be reversed unless the most powerful ruling classes in North America, Europe, and Asia and the Pacific are able to deal major defeats to the working class and labor movement and, through sharpening cutthroat competition and trade battles, destroy masses of commodities and capital. The inevitable companion of such an outcome would be devastating financial collapse, growing fascist movements, and world war.

Declining profit rates worldwide are intensifying capitalist competition for markets, sources of raw materials, and domination of low-wage “export platforms” in the semicolonial world. Many capitalists have slashed prices to the point of near-bankruptcy to push their rivals to the wall. In the United States beginning in the late 1980s, “downsizing” and “re-engineering” have become the code words under which the superrich owners of industry and the banks are waging a ruthless cost-cutting drive. They have been laying off middle managers, technicians, and office employees, as well as industrial workers; simplifying production and administrative routines through computerization; and shutting down obsolete plants and equipment and dumping less profitable divisions. They are restructuring production lines and imposing “just in time” inventory balances and delivery schedules of parts and raw materials—in the process making factories much more vulnerable to stoppages.

The capitalists are carrying out unremitting warfare—sometimes open, sometimes disguised—against the health and safety, the unionization, and the very humanity of the working class. The employers keep pushing to cut back wages and benefits. They are expanding overtime work, as well as part-time and “temporary” jobs with low income and

no benefits. They are intensifying speedup, increasing differentiation among employees hired for the same jobs, and raising the eligibility age for pensions. The ruling families throughout the imperialist world are conducting a fierce assault on the social wage—the elementary, government-funded social security programs the working class has fought for and won in order to safeguard the class as a whole by protecting its most vulnerable members....

### Bosses seek to divide workers

The capitalist rulers seek to free their hands to deepen this anti-working-class offensive by chipping away at the rights working people have conquered on and off the job. Management seeks to restrict workers’ right to act as unionists and political people in the workplace and uses “drug testing” and other ploys to victimize militants. The employers and their government, seeking to weaken the unity and striking power of the working class and labor movement, try to roll back affirmative action gains won by Blacks, women, and the unions. To curb the rebelliousness of young workers and press them to conform to capitalist discipline and values, the bosses target young people with “anticrime” campaigns and more draconian punishments. The cops, courts, and Congress crack down on the most fundamental rights of both the accused and convicted.

Working farmers, capital’s rural debt slaves, continue to face attacks on their right to a living income and on the viability of their efforts to till the soil to produce food and fiber. The rulers’ drive to maintain profit rates multiplies their disregard for measures to protect the environment.

In the closing years of the twentieth century, the evolution of the capitalist crisis is giving new force to the conclusion of Karl Marx some 130 years ago that this exploitative system of production “simultaneously undermin[es] the original sources of all wealth—the soil and the worker.”...

The capitalists and their spokespeople project onto the working class their own class-biased, self-serving, and self-deceiving notions about workers, who they in fact consider trash. To the employers, workers are simply objects—tools of a special kind to be used, used up, and then tossed as others are hired on. The bosses count on the corroding effects of the competition for jobs and divisions among working people bred by the market system and its dog-eat-dog values. They assume that the employed will never take up as their own the cause of the unemployed. The rulers believe that racism, discrimination against women, chauvinism against immigrants and workers in other countries, and generational conflicts will, in the final analysis, keep the working class and labor movement weak and divided. The capitalists are surprised when human solidarity—of which the working class is the bearer for the future of all humanity—comes together in explosive and unexpected resistance to assaults on the living standards, job conditions, and democratic and social rights of working people.

Young people who are coming into the factories and other workplaces today find themselves alongside workers from several previous generations. New hires can and do learn from these experienced workers about the blows that have been dealt to wages, working conditions, and the unions over the past two decades. These attacks are also detailed throughout this book.

But these setbacks and their consequences do not bear down on the young generation of workers as they do on those who waged a

strike battle some years ago and lost....

Free from demoralization born of past setbacks and standoffs, and not yet “socialized” by more privileged layers in the plants, younger workers can explode into resistance regardless of moral lectures from preachers and pundits, rationalizations by the labor officialdom, or promises by the capitalists and their government of what “we” can accomplish if “you” sacrifice just a little bit longer. In the process, many older workers will reach into their reserves and discover they too are different people than they thought they had become.

The key to new advances by the working class and labor movement will be the combination of hard-won experience from years of struggle and the combative freshness and initiative of young fighters....

### Building parties of socialist workers

This book explains the kind of party the working class needs in order to prepare for the coming class battles that will decide whether humanity’s future will be marked by fascist tyranny and war, or by revolutionary victories by working people over the horrors of a moribund capitalism and the reconstruction of the world on new, socialist foundations. If proletarian commu-



Militant/Harvey McArthur  
Young miners on strike in Sullivan, Indiana, May 1993.

nist parties are not being built long before the decisive battles are joined, it will be too late; workers and their allies among the toiling majority of humanity will go down to defeat.

From its origins in the mid-nineteenth century, the modern communist movement has put at the center of its efforts something new in human history: building parties whose leaders as well as members are, in their big majority, workers. With the worldwide expansion of capitalist industry in the twentieth century, communist parties—from the Bolsheviks under the leadership of V.I. Lenin, to the Socialist Workers Party of the United States and its cothinkers in communist organizations in other countries today—have worked to anchor their activity in the most strategically central and powerfully organized bastion of the working class, the industrial workers and their unions.

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



September 8, 1972

Thousands of activists in more than 20 cities across the United States participated in antiwar actions between Aug. 5 and 9 to commemorate the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The actions were called by the National Peace Action Coalition and the Student Mobilization Committee. NPAC and SMC also issued a joint call for international actions together with GENSUIKEN (the Japan Congress Against A and H Bombs).

A common theme of the actions was the comparison between the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 and that caused today by U.S. bombing in Indochina. The weekly tonnage of U.S. bombing over Vietnam now equals many times the tonnage dropped on Hiroshima.

The Aug. 5 New York action began with a picket line in Duffy Square, followed by a march to the Bandshell in Central Park. Five to six hundred people participated.

An Aug. 5 action of 400 in San Francisco began with a commemoration ceremony for the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki held at the Japanese Trade Center Peace Pagoda. About 100 Asian-Americans participated, and representatives of the Japanese-American community addressed the ceremony.

In Japan, several hundred Tokyo dem-

onstrators tried to block the shipment of U.S. tanks to Vietnam on Aug. 5. More than 40,000 people gathered in Hiroshima on Aug. 6 to commemorate the 1945 bombing.



September 1, 1947

PARIS, France, Aug. 14 — Theses adopted July 8 by the Provisional Central Committee of the League of Internationalist Communists, one of the groups fighting in the Viet Nam Republic of Indo-China against French imperialism, have been received here. Excerpts from the theses follows: (1) August 1945, sounding the death-knell of Japanese domination, marked the birth of the Viet Nam revolution. It was born in the vacuum created by the disaster which befell the Nipponese military and which at the same time found the Allies unable to send relief troops in time.... The Viet Nam revolution was truly national and popular. It established the democratic Viet Nam Republic with its own government, National Assembly, army and finances.

(3-A) Dominated, however, by the policy of the Indo-Chinese Communist (Stalinist) Party, the strongest and best organized of all the parties composing the Viet Minh — a policy of a bloc of many classes — the policy of the Viet Nam republican movement was above all to defend the class interests of the bourgeoisie and the landlords.

# UPS strike is example for labor

The victory by 185,000 striking Teamsters over United Parcel Service is a victory for all working people. Our class won one against the employer class. That's the accurate assessment that many strikers are explaining as they return to work stronger and with added confidence after having shut down Big Brown.

The Teamsters demonstrated that, despite banal sermons of "labor experts," the strike weapon is not dead. It's one of the most powerful weapons workers have. The victory against UPS was won by the rank-and-file fighters on the picket lines and in the streets, where all labor battles are decided.

It's clear the bosses underestimated the capacities of the UPS workers to think more broadly than themselves and put up a fight. They believed their own propaganda, which seeks to pit workers among themselves: between full-time and part-time, between veterans and new hires, between UPS workers and other Teamsters sharing the same pension plans. But "we" prevailed over "me." Working-class solidarity rolled over the company's ridiculous fraud of the "UPS family."

Their expectations buoyed by hefty company profits and relatively low unemployment, the striking unionists pushed back most of the UPS owners' aims. They won significant wage increases for both part-time and full-time workers, showing the potential for reversing the general decline in workers' real wages in the United States. The Teamsters won a company pledge to convert 10,000 part-time jobs into full-time positions over the life of the contract. They pushed back the parcel giant's reactionary attempt to pull out of a multi-employer pension plan — which gives Teamsters greater protection — and create one solely for UPS workers. The main concession by the union is acceptance of a five-year contract instead of the previous four-year term. As Atlanta Teamster Craig Nelson put it, "It ties us up for too long."

The biggest worry for all employers is the impact the wage settlement won by the Teamsters can have on the national economy, especially in view of today's stagnant labor productivity and the volatile bubble of paper values on Wall Street, whose jitters were felt in the August 15 stock dive. For the U.S. ruling class, it is crucial that average hourly real wages continue to decline as they have for the last quarter century. Despite what we're told by the bosses' propagandists, wage increases don't cause inflation. Higher wages come out of the employers' profits — all of which is value produced by workers' labor. The proportion of wages and profit depends to a large degree on what workers are able to wrest from bosses in the class struggle.

Warnings of inflation notwithstanding, it is *deflationary* pressures that are growing in the world capitalist economy today. This economy, mired in depression, is marked by the long-term decline in corporate profit rates and the resulting intensification of price competition among capitalists.

## Jail the brutes in blue!

**The following statement was issued by the New York city Socialist Workers campaign. The candidates are Olga Rodriguez for Mayor, Wendy Lyons for Comptroller, Shogi Fret for Public Advocate, Brian Taylor for Manhattan Borough President, and Margarethe Siem for Manhattan District Attorney.**

The Socialist Workers Party candidates demand justice for Abner Louima. All the cops who were involved in Louima's torture, his beating, and those who allowed it to take place should be jailed and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Mayor Rudolph Guiliani and Police Commissioner Howard Safir are crying crocodile tears over the sadistic sexual torture carried out by the cops of the 70th precinct. But they, together with the Democratic Party politicians, have given the green light to the cops by defending them in face of the killings of Anthony Baez, Librado Sánchez, and Kevin Cedeno to name just a few of the recent victims of "justice" handed out by "New York's finest."

Our campaign calls for more protests to demand jailing the guilty cops, like the thousands-strong march on the 70th precinct that took place August 16. A number of Haitian workers carried signs saying "Tonton Macoutes, New York Police Department — Same Thing." The Tonton Macoutes were the Haitian secret police force that carried out torture and terror of workers in Haiti to maintain the dictatorship of the Duvalier family.

Indeed, the torture of Abner Louima lifts a corner of the veil covering what the U.S. ruling class has in store for workers here as the crisis of their system deepens. For decades U.S. government agencies have cooperated with, and even helped train, death squads used to keep workers

In this volatile situation, a reversal of the pattern of wage decline that the bosses counted on can upset their apple cart. In the lead article of issue 10 of *New International* magazine, titled "Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War," Jack Barnes points out, "We should always remember that big political explosions in the world — not just stock market collapses, banking crises, sudden shortages, and so on — will continue to trigger economic and social catastrophes in the capitalist world...politics is concentrated economics; economic phenomena don't simply run their course irrespective of class struggles, wars, and revolutions."

It is because of these problems they face that the U.S. rulers targeted the Teamsters in the hope of dealing the entire labor movement a big blow. In this conflict, the Clinton administration was not neutral, much less a friend of labor. The U.S. government, faithfully representing these billionaire families, came to the aid of the UPS owners. Instead of overt strikebreaking measures like the anti-union Taft-Hartley law, which carried political risks, Washington resorted to more disguised intervention — the U.S. Postal Service, which sought to ease the strike-induced burdens on business and thus protect UPS from pressures to settle quickly. But the strikers held firm and dealt a crippling blow to the package bosses, forcing them to back off.

The power of the Teamsters' example won them deep support throughout the working class, as well as widespread sympathy among professional and middle-class layers such as the pilots union at UPS and even some small businesspeople. Their action inspired greater willingness by many postal, airline, and rail workers — subjected to overtime and speedup in order to deliver extra packages — to put up some resistance themselves.

Now, as the loaders, sorters, and drivers return to work, the company is trying to intimidate them with threats of 15,000 layoffs. They are warning workers to cooperate with management to bring back "our" lost business and not get too uppity. With the workers back on the job, the bosses will try to undercut the gains won through the strike, such as the number of full-time jobs created. A number of issues will be fought out on the job.

The employing class will continue to counterpunch against labor, as the recent court ruling against the newspaper workers in Detroit and boss offensives against organizing drives in North Carolina and California demonstrate.

The *Militant* salutes the Teamsters as they continue the fight to assert their dignity on the job. This newspaper will continue to spread the truth about their ongoing struggles. It will open its pages to reports sent in from UPS workers on what they face today. We urge working people everywhere to continue to talk to Teamsters at UPS, to exchange experiences in our common fight against the employers' assaults, and to join together in other working-class fights and battles for social justice.

down in other countries, for the profit of U.S. business. At the same time the capitalist politicians preach about "American democracy." Haitians recently highlighted the CIA connections of the former head of the death squads, who now lives in Queens, when they demonstrated for his extradition to Haiti.

Now torture is revealed Brooklyn, and the problem is not just Guiliani. The cops in the 70th precinct were emboldened to carry out such acts by the relentless assault taking place against the rights and standard of living of workers by the ruling rich and their two parties—the Democrats and Republicans. Just a week before the attack on Louima, Brooklyn police were commended by the city administration, with bipartisan support, after they brutalized and smashed in the doors of innocent workers who "looked Palestinian" in search of an alleged bomb plot. The same week the Clinton administration cut off benefits to 95,000 disabled children.

But workers are mounting resistance to the assaults by the rulers. The Teamsters have stood up to UPS. The Louima family joined others who have refused to accept police brutality and organized a response.

As the cops attacked Louima they told him, "You niggers have to learn respect." The racist and anti-immigrant assault on Louima carries a message to the whole working class: "Submit!" That's what they would have liked the striking UPS workers to do also.

Our campaign pledges support to all those who are resisting the ruling class offensive from unionists on strike to those who are standing up against racist attacks and police brutality. All workers have a stake in demanding justice for Abner Louima and joining protests to demand:

**JAIL THE GUILTY COPS!**

# Irish struggle

Continued from front page

since May 1, thanked "the people of Belfast for making Sinn Féin the largest party in Belfast" following recent local elections.

Following the IRA cease-fire, Saoirse was relaunched. The organization, whose name is the Irish word for freedom, campaigns for the release of political prisoners. Many children of prisoners carried Saoirse placards on the march or wore T-shirts with the slogan "Bring all Irish Prisoners Home from England."

Other marchers carried banners calling for the disbanding of the mainly Protestant Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), the semi-militarized police force, which is one of the main props of British rule. Also visible on the march were supporters of independence for the Basque country and Catalonia from the Spanish state, members of the Troops Out Movement from Britain, and Irish Northern Aid (NORAI) from the United States.

Bridget Mataer, 48, a veteran of the struggle for Irish freedom, summed up the confident mood of the demonstrators. "We are not stopping now," she said. "There has been a lot of changes in the past year... There has been a breakthrough with the Orange Order," she said, referring to concessions made by the leaders of the loyalist organizations, with the prompting of the British government, to reroute sectarian marches away from Catholic areas. These concessions were forced by the determined resistance of nationalists to the imposition by British forces of the provocative rightist parades through their neighborhoods.

## Cautious optimism among workers

Before the August 10 demonstration *Militant* reporters spoke to workers heading for a supermarket at the Kennedy Centre on the Falls Road in west Belfast — a predominantly Catholic area. None would give their names for fear of reprisals by British forces and right-wing loyalist thugs. A heavily armed British Army foot patrol, from a nearby barracks, had just passed down the street. The comments of most indicated a cautious but confident mood among working people in the Catholic areas.

Welcoming the cease-fire and the prospect of talks, a building worker said, "I still don't trust the British government. The [British] troops have to get to go and the prisoners must be released — they are not terrorists, they would not be in prison but for the war."

A hospital secretary also welcomed the talks, "but all the parties have to talk," she said. "The troops should be off the streets and get back to barracks — back to the barracks in their own country," she added.

At the rally O'Caolain said, "Unionists must be at the talks table, that is our clear message here today. It is all our futures that we seek to address." The main pro-British party, the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), has yet to decide whether to participate in talks with Sinn Féin.

As the September date approaches for the talks the Unionists continue to be divided over how best to defend their privileges. In response to O'Caolain, UUP negotiator Reg Empey said, "Are we seriously to believe that having fought a vicious terrorist campaign for 25 years that all republicans want to do is sit down for a quiet chat?" However, two days later UUP security spokesperson Ken Maginnis debated Sinn Féin chief negotiator Martin McGuinness face to face on BBC television. This was the first time a Unionist had publicly appeared on television at the same time as a Sinn Féin leader.

Ian Paisley Jr. of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) declared, "O'Caolain made a direct appeal to [UDP leader] David Trimble to come to talks because he was a weak link in the union. He knows the DUP will stand by its work and not negotiate with a terrorist organization."

However, the pressure to accept Sinn Féin at the negotiating table is growing. The Ulster Democratic Party (UDP), which is linked to the Ulster Defence Association — a rightist terror organization responsible for many sectarian murders — stated it will be at the table.

On August 9 leaders of the Apprentice Boys, an organization similar to the Orange Order, made a series of concessions rerouting feeder marches to their main annual parade in the overwhelmingly Catholic city of Derry. The RUC prevented a rightist parade through the Lower Ormeau Road in Belfast. Because of these concessions, the Bogside Residents Group in Derry agreed to allow a parade to pass close to their neighborhood on condition that bands were silenced and banners lowered as it passed by. However, many rightists on the main parade lashed out at onlooking Catholic residents. One gang of thugs used musical instruments to simulate shooting nationalists, assaulted bystanders — a child holding an Irish tricolor was attacked with an umbrella — and shouted abuse.

The previous week a Catholic taxi driver in Craigavon was nearly killed by a new terror gang known as the Loyalist Volunteer Force. Because of incidents like these, residents group leaders have reacted cautiously to concessions made by sectarian organizations. On August 17 the Royal Black Preceptory decided to cancel planned marches through the Lower Ormeau in Belfast. Gerard Rice, a leader of the Lower Ormeau Concerned Community, welcomed the decision, but told the *Irish News* that the issue of sectarian parades had to be settled for good. Earlier, Rice told the *Militant*, "These organizations exist to divide our community. They haven't gone away so we are not dropping our guard."

Meanwhile, on August 14 the U.S. State Department approved a visa for Sinn Féin president Adams. Adams, O'Caolain, and McGuinness will be speaking in several U.S. cities in early September (see details on page 8).



# UPS strikers win

Continued from Page 6

James Kelly said, "The bottom line is that we have a contract that is good for our people, gets back in business, and will keep us competitive in the coming years." UPS said it may now have to lay off 15,000 workers as a result of the strike, claiming it may have lost up to 5 percent of its business to competitors because of the walkout. Kelly was quoted in other publications less upbeat. "There are nothing but losers," Kelly told the August 20 *Wall Street Journal*. "We lost. Our people lost, our customers lost." According to CNN, the company lost \$640 million during the strike.

Other big-business dailies tried to downplay the significance of what's registered in the settlement by claiming UPS is very different than other companies. "There are special features of this dispute which limit its broader significance," quipped an editorial in the August 20 *Financial Times*.

"UPS pact fails to shift balance of power back toward U.S. workers," was the headline of a front-page article in the August 20 *Wall Street Journal*. But its kicker continued, "Still, it's important to labor after two long decades of waning influence." "Ever since [former U.S. president Ronald] Reagan hired nonunion workers to replace air-traffic controllers, management's hiring of non-union members has been a regular and successful strikebreaking weapon," the article said. "UPS didn't seek that option."

"Public opinion also helped the Teamsters. The UPS strike is the first major labor battle for years in which polls favored the picketers."

## Widespread solidarity for strike

Widespread working-class solidarity was evident in the spirited strike support rallies, "walking" and "roving" pickets that followed management-driven UPS trucks, and in the growing numbers of other unionists who visited picket lines. Support from the central leadership of the AFL-CIO was a weighty factor in this process.

Some 1,500 strikers and supporters rallied August 18 in Burtonsville, Maryland, for example, at one of the UPS hubs. The rally included contingents from a dozen unions and was sponsored by the D.C.-Maryland AFL-CIO. Many similar actions took place throughout the country during the 15-day walkout.

One event that captured headlines was the marriage of UPS striker Deborah Burdette on the picket line in Anderson, South Carolina. When the couple learned that many of their guests would be on the picket line, "she decided to take the wedding to them," reported the Associated Press.

Robert Miller, a production worker and member of the United Auto Workers at the Ford plant in Edison, New Jersey, said, "At least half a dozen of my co-workers visited strikers on the picket lines during the strike. Some joined with me when I invited them to go together, and others went on their own." Miller is the Socialist Workers candidate for governor of New Jersey.

In many cities Teamsters members reached out and got support or sympathy among small businessmen who are UPS customers.

Feeble attempts by the company to hire

scabs also fell apart. In Philadelphia, for example, UPS organized homeless residents to work at their facility for \$5 per hour. In response, Kensington Welfare Rights Union (KRWU) and the Teamsters Local 623 held a press conference to denounce the move. "The KRWU stands in unity with organized labor and the striking Teamsters and calls for an end to using welfare recipients and homeless people to replace union labor," a statement said.

"Organized labor is going to benefit from this strike, both inside UPS and outside," striker Craig Nelson said in Atlanta. "UPS wants eight hours work done in four hours. I'm going to make it my business that everyone knows their rights."

Mary Martin, member of the International Association of Machinists, and Candace Wagner, member of United Food and Commercial Workers in Washington, D.C.; Mike Italie, member of Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in Atlanta; Norton Sandler, member of International Association of Machinists in San Francisco; Michael Pennock, member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers in Minneapolis; Ruth Robinett, member of United Transportation Union in New York; and Rollande Girard in Miami contributed to this article.

## 1,600 meatpackers strike in Canada



Members of the United Food and Commercial Workers who struck Cargill's meatpacking plant in High River, Alberta, on July 11 approved a contract August 2. It includes a \$1.50 wage increase over three and a half years, instead of the four years offered by the company, and a guaranteed 36-hour workweek. Hundreds of strikers mobilized daily in response to the company's decision to bring in replacements, carrying signs in Chinese, English, Arabic, and Amharic.

# Antiunion rally in Watsonville draws 1,200

BY BARBARA BOWMAN

WATSONVILLE, California — On August 10, some 1,200 antiunion, pro-grower demonstrators marched through a working-class neighborhood here, retracing the route of last April's 25,000-strong pro-United Farm Workers (UFW) march. The Watsonville area is the center of the UFW's effort to organize the state's 20,000 berry pickers in the Pajaro and Salinas valleys.

The antiunion demonstration, dubbed the "March for Truth," was almost exclusively Mexican and Chicano, with a handful of Anglo growers participating. The event was organized by the Agricultural Workers Committee (AWC). This group includes farmworkers, gang bosses and other supervisors, and some of the growers themselves.

The demands of the march included: 1) an end to visits to homes and work places at lunch by UFW organizers and supporters. 2) That employers not be required to turn over employee names and addresses to the unions. 3) That union workplace access only be allowed for 30 days instead of 120 days.

Signs identified groups as work crews from over a dozen local farms. Many were joined by family members. Other participants were identified to the *Militant* as supervisors or growers by Thomas Alejo, a well-known community activist and UFW supporter. Many of these bosses were once farmworkers themselves. They have become growers under a contract system through which the big cooler companies organize the production of the majority of strawberries.

*Militant* reporters talked to demonstrators at a rally before the march kicked off and asked why they were against the UFW's attempt to organize them. A number of work-

ers from E.K.T. Farm said they had worked steadily for 5-15 years. "We don't want the union," said one. "It tells lies. It says we work with bloodied-hands, that we live in junky cars. Maybe the Indians do, but we're treated good." This comment was a reference to many recent immigrants to the area who have roots in Mexico's indigenous population. Many of these farmworkers speak Spanish as a second language.

"We have benefits like insurance," said another. "We have clean water and bathrooms in the fields. Students are organizers for the unions; we are the real farmworkers."

Rosio Alanic works at Coastal Berry, formerly Gargiulo's Inc., the state's largest strawberry producer and a major target of the UFW organizing efforts. "We're not against the union," she claimed. "We want the union to stop bothering us at work. We make \$350 a week and if the union wins the company will close and we'll lose our jobs."

Following speeches by leaders of the Agricultural Workers Committee and the singing of the U.S. and Mexican national anthems the march stepped off. Unlike the April demonstration, where the response of the spectators along the march route was spirited and supportive, most people who watched the August 10 march did so in silence with crossed arms and grim expressions, letting pro-union signs on their lawns and in their windows proclaim which side they were on.

Paula Hernández, a member of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), told the *Militant*, "I think it's sad. They have good organization, but for the wrong cause.... They're being used by the growers. They're misinformed and misled."

The United Farm Workers had appealed

to their supporters not to confront the anti-union marchers, but a few young people grabbed signs from windows and lawns and formed spontaneous clumps of counter-demonstrators along the route.

Students from Watsonville High School manned a small picket line protesting the Police Department's issuing a permit to the Agricultural Workers Committee while denying the student group a permit to hold a "Watsonville Peace and Unity March."

A few days earlier, UFW organizers attempting to speak to workers at one of Coastal Berry's fields, were confronted by a group of 50 led by AWC thugs and forced to retreat from the field. A union election is expected to be held at Coastal Berry, California's largest strawberry grower, between now and the end of September.

The day before the pro-growers mobilization, some 60 supporters of the UFW gathered at Teamsters Local 912 union hall in Watsonville. Among those participating were UFW-organized mushroom workers, some strawberry pickers, students from several Bay area campuses and trade unionists from a handful of unions. The task for the day was to discuss with community residents the UFW's fight to organize a union. As part of this, residents were asked to put pro-UFW signs on their lawns. A group of six were laying a driveway for one of their homes. "I picked strawberries for five years and its hard work," one man piped up. They planted a sign by where they were pouring cement.

Barbara Bowman is a member of United Transportation Union Local 1732 in San Francisco. Omari Musa and Kate Irakawa contributed to this article.

## LETTERS

### Strike in Vancouver

Eleven hundred Vancouver city workers, members of Canadian Union of Public Workers Local 1004, are continuing to staff picket lines across the city. The garbage collectors, gas, sewer and maintenance workers, and road crews rejected the city offer for a second time at a mass meeting attended by 800 members August 10.

CUPE members organized a wildcat strike on August 7 after hearing that the city offer was 0 percent, 1 percent, and 1 percent over three years, plus 10 hour shifts for the water works department workers, and taking away overtime pay for the weekends.

The membership rejection came despite urging of support by the union leadership.

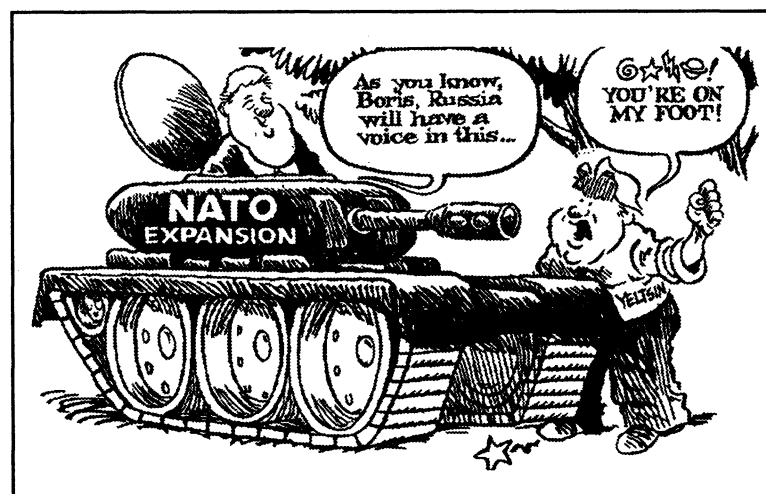
"We're fighting because were sick of employers pushing us around. Sometimes you have to take

a stand," explained CUPE local 1004 striker Joe Chamberlain. "In 1993 we had the same offer of zero, zero, and one and it was accepted at that time. We should have taken a stand against it then."

"All we're doing is trying to keep up with the rising cost of living. Our benefit premiums, taxes, and other deductions keep on going up and up. We're getting smaller checks every year," added CUPE striker Ernie Dickson.

Garbage collector and striker Doug Storey said, "I support the UPS strikers in the United States because they face the same kind of problems as we do — employers that don't want to share the wealth."

At the August 10 meeting, 58 percent of the members accepted the offer but because collective agreements have to be ratified by a two thirds majority the offer was rejected. "They don't tell you that we gave a 95 percent strike mandate,"



explained Chamberlain. Ned Dmytryshyn, Vancouver, British Columbia

### In defense of cigarette tax

I just read in your "Militant"

newspaper that you folks are against taxes on cigarettes and denounced the agreement between the tobacco industry and government. Either your brains are full of cigarette smoke or full of leftist rhetoric. I think human lungs are the same for

both a left-winger and a right-winger. We are trying to combat cigarette smoking and you people are against taxes on tobacco plus the agreement. No wonder leftist philosophy is so discredited around the world.

Mr. Ortiz  
San Juan, Puerto Rico

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## Argentine strikers protest austerity

BY HILDA CUZCO

A general strike paralyzed much of Argentina August 14. Participants in the 24-hour work stoppage demanded an end to President Carlos Menem's austerity policies and denounced antilabor bills proposed by Menem. Protest actions included marches and roadblocks in many provinces and larger cities including the capital, Buenos Aires.

According to the Buenos Aires daily *El Clarín*, demonstrators blockaded the highways at close to 70 sites around the country. The strike was strongest in industrial areas such as Rosario and Santa Fe. In the industrial regions worst hit by the economic crisis, such as Neuquén, Jujuy, and Tierra del Fuego, activity came to a halt. The labor action had an impact in other provinces as well, including Tucumán, Entre Ríos, and Chaco.

The rate of unemployment in some provinces is as high as 40 percent, especially where previously state-owned industries now under private ownership have slashed jobs in the name of competitiveness. Such is the case in Rosario, an industrial center that today has one of the highest rates of unemployment in the country, as well as Tierra del Fuego, where many factories have recently closed. Nationally unemployment stands at 16 percent, slightly less than two years ago, when it peaked at 18 percent.

In Cutral-Có and Plaza Huincul, in the province of Neuquén, *fogoneros* (fire starters) led the actions by blocking the high-



Unemployed workers in Buenos Aires, Argentina, supported the strike August 14.

ways. Thousands have lost their jobs in those towns since the state oil enterprise YPF was sold to private capitalists. The *fogoneros* got their name last April, as groups of masked youth and workers blocked the roads in Neuquén with barricades and burning tires. That rebellion was detonated by a local teachers strike against a 20 percent wage cut. During the latest strike actions, more than 3,000 people demonstrated in Neuquén. Their action was disrupted by the police.

The day of protests was the "least suc-

cessful and the most violent strike," Minister of Interior Carlos Corach declared, attempting to downplay the impact of the demonstrations and roadblocks. The most violent attacks were by the cops against demonstrators in Buenos Aires, La Plata, and Cutral-Có. Meanwhile, *piqueteros* (pickets) blocked highways in Jujuy, Tierra del Fuego, Santa Fe, Entre Ríos, Neuquén, and Río Negro.

In the Buenos Aires area, groups of unemployed workers joined with the striking

unionists. Around 150 pickets blocked Highway 3, chanting slogans against the government and demanding jobs. Soon after they lit bonfires and began burning tires, the police arrived. The cops fired rubber bullets and chased the protesters, who responded by pelting the police with sticks and other projectiles. One cop and 10 demonstrators were injured in the clash. Two people, including a wounded protester, were placed under arrest.

The unions organizing the strike — the Confederation of Argentine Workers, the Movement of Argentine Workers, Combative Current, and the metalworkers union UOM — declared the actions a success. These unions are critical of the General Labor Federation (CGT), which supports the government and its package of "labor flexibilization" bills. Under this legislation, trade unionists would lose collective bargaining rights and employers would have greater leeway to dismiss workers.

The strike received verbal backing from a newly formed electoral bloc of the two main bourgeois parties opposing Menem's Peronist party. The alliance, made up of the Radical Party and the Front for a Country in Solidarity, or Frepaso, responded to the recent upsurge of working-class protests in Argentina by posturing as a friend of labor and critic of the Menem regime's austerity measures, hoping to channel the social demands of the workers into capitalist electoral politics. The aim of the alliance is to win a majority in the October congressional elections and position itself to run against Menem in the 1999 presidential campaign.

The most popular signs carried by strikers reflected their total rejection of the austerity and other criticisms against the government. Signs reading "No to corruption," "No more impunity," "Jobs for all," and "Decent wages" were common.

President Menem received a visit from 100 demonstrators at the main entrance of the presidential residence of Olivos, in the outskirts of Buenos Aires. The protesters shouted slogans against his government of austerity, disrupting a cabinet meeting. In the afternoon 40 young people blocked a main avenue in the area for about three hours and painted "Freedom for the *fogoneros* in Jujuy" on the street as well as other anti-Menem slogans.

In La Plata, police attacked the roadblocks set up by about 200 strikers, arresting 79 and wounded a young woman with a rubber bullet.

## New Zealand strikers score a victory

BY PATRICK BROWN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Striking workers shut down the Godfrey Hirst carpet factory here for a week at the start of August, maintaining their picket line in spite of police action, including 20 arrests. On August 8 the 60 strikers won a victory when the company agreed to negotiate a collective contract.

"The workers currently are on individual contracts," explained a leaflet issued jointly by the National Distribution Union and the Engineers Union, the two unions present in the plant. These individual agreements contain "low pay rates, flat-rate overtime, no separate bereavement leave and no redundancy provisions. Furthermore, the employer now wants to make staff have their 10-minute morning and afternoon smoke breaks without leaving their machines!" This latter demand was featured in the considerable media coverage of the strike. Pickets told *Militant* reporters of other grievances, including over service pay, shift allowances, and safety issues.

The strike began August 1. The 60 Auckland workers quickly organized a 24-hour picket roster. With "Fort Knox," a converted bus provided by the unions, a tent, a 40-gallon drum for burning wood on the winter nights, and wooden chairs arranged across the driveway into the plant, the pickets were well set up to discourage drivers from entering the premises.

They held placards with slogans such as "Godfrey Hirst workers stand strong," "Godfrey Hirst, you don't scare us," and "Give us a break — two tea breaks." They sang songs to the accompaniment of a guitar and waved at the many drivers who tooted their horns in support at the busy industrial area.

A number of workers from other plants joined the picket line. They came from carpet factory Bremworth Cavalier, nearby cool stores for meat storage, the Yellow Bus company, the waterfront, and other workplaces.

Workers from Babcocks, a firm contracted to run the New Zealand Navy's dockyard in Auckland, visited the picket line and donated food left over from their own dispute. Some 272 tradespeople and laborers were locked out after 91 percent rejected company demands attacking their allowances and conditions. The workers, organized by the Public Service Association, the

Engineers Union, and the Amalgamated Workers Union, started picketing on July 28 and organized a lunchtime march the following Friday through the nearby shopping center of Devonport. After 11 days Babcocks lifted the lockout and negotiations resumed.

On the sixth day of the strike at Godfrey Hirst, the cops blocked off the road, warned the workers to move, and then moved in without provocation. Fourteen were arrested, taken to the cells and released with a warning. A few hours later the police repeated the maneuver, this time arresting six strikers whom they held for three hours. One of the workers, a young woman who asked that her name not be used, told the *Militant* two days later that she still had swollen wrists after "they put handcuffs on us and

strip-searched us. It was humiliating."

The arrests made the main television news. The workers' response to the assault was summed up in a new placard that appeared: "20 arrests and we're still here!"

Union officials called for reinforcements for the picket line two days later, expecting the police to break the line and allow trucks to deliver yarn and pick up carpet made before the strike. More than 50 strikers and supporters assembled in the morning. While *Militant* reporters were there, two trucks turned away when the drivers refused to cross the picket line. At around midday the company told union representatives that they would negotiate a collective contract. This announcement was greeted with loud cheers and singing by the picketers, who then voted to end the strike.

## 1,000 protest fascists in Denmark

BY DAG TIRSEN

ROSKILDE, Denmark — One thousand protesters from Denmark, Germany, Sweden, and Norway gathered here August 16 to protest a march, held for the third year in a row, commemorating Nazi leader Rudolf Hess, who committed suicide 10 years ago in Spandau prison in Berlin. Eight hundred cops in riot gear were deployed to protect about 140 fascists. At the last minute, the Nazis changed their minds and instead went to nearby Køge to hold their march.

The cops kept the counter mobilization surrounded and would not let the protesters enter the railway station to follow the rightists. When the crowd finally was allowed into the station, no train in the direction of Køge was allowed to stop until sufficient time had elapsed for the Nazi rally to finish. The fascists were granted a new permit to demonstrate on the spot by the cops, and marched along the central street of Køge, chanting, "Heil Hitler." Speaking at the central square was Danish nazi leader Jonni Hansen, and a nazi leader from Holland.

Roskilde authorities had denied the rightists a permit, but at the last minute the Danish minister of justice approved the rally. The local chief of police in Roskilde, Uffe Kørnerup, went out on a scare campaign and told "the ordinary people of Roskilde" to leave town during the nazi demonstration.

The cops arrested 44 people on the day of the march, almost all of them antifascist protesters. Many was beaten and teargassed.

This reporter traveled to Denmark on a bus from Stockholm, together with more than 30 protesters from Sweden. The bus was stopped by cops at the border, who asked whether we planned to go to Roskilde. All passengers had to show identity cards, and the police wrote down our names and identity numbers.

Some 440 Nazis were arrested in Germany August 16, where their demonstrations were banned, along with some antifascist protesters.

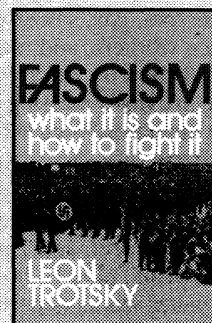
The ultrarightist Sweden Democrats, who had dropped out of sight for a while, started holding public meetings around Stockholm during the summer. The group's meetings are centered around the theme of scapegoating immigrants. One of the meetings was in the center of Södertälje, where many immigrants work at the big Scania truck plant. Another was held on the Rudolf Hess day in the center of Stockholm.

Meanwhile, the main window of the Pathfinder bookstore in Stockholm was smashed at 2:30 a.m. August 15. Someone carried a large paving brick half a block from a work site and hurled through the window. Bookstore owner Birgitta Isacson issued a statement headlined "Defend free speech!" In it,

Isacson condemned the attack and urged all supporters of democratic rights to protest it. The statement, sent to political organizations and supporters of the bookstore, also appealed for contributions to cover the \$600 cost of replacing the window.

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