

THE MILITANT

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domination of Caspian Sea oil
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 61/NO. 30 SEPTEMBER 8, 1997

NATO steps up aggression in Bosnia

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Imperialist occupation forces in Bosnia are expanding their military operations there after NATO troops took over six police stations in Banja Luka. Some 350 British and Czech soldiers stormed the facilities August 20 unannounced, while U.S. Apache helicopter gunships hovered overhead.

The attack came one week after Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon announced a buildup of 11,000 – 12,000 U.S. GIs in Bosnia. "It's a planned increase, and it's done for a reason," he asserted August 14. Bacon said advanced units of the U.S. Army's Second Armored Cavalry, based in Fort Polk, Louisiana, would begin moving from a staging base in Hungary into Bosnia in time for the mid-September municipal elections there.

The NATO troops confiscated assault rifles, rocket launchers, and hand grenades in a drive to disarm the Bosnian Serb military forces. U.S. Gen. Eric Shinseki, commander of NATO forces in Bosnia, had announced a plan for the Serb units to disband or face arrest. U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke, who helped organize the imperialist intervention, said that not having control over the paramilitary units "was a failure on our side."

Clinton administration officials said the
Continued on Page 14

Use 'Militant' to reach out to fighting workers

Dear reader,

As you read this issue, socialist industrial workers, members of the Young Socialists, and other *Militant* readers are kicking off a drive to win 1,300 new subscribers to our newsweekly and 400 to our sister

Open letter to our readers

publication in Spanish *Perspectiva Mundial*. Our supporters also aim to sell 600 copies of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* during the eight-week subscription drive that begins August 30. We urge you to join them and use the *Militant* to reach out to fighting workers and youth with the tools that provide the facts, a Marxist analysis of world politics, and a revolutionary perspective. There are plenty of opportunities every day. Here's what some of our readers have told us they are planning for the first ten days of the circulation effort.

In Detroit, large contingents of unionists are expected to participate in the Labor Day Parade there September 1. They include Detroit *News* workers who are fighting to regain their jobs, and members of the Detroit Federation of Teachers, who are demanding a new contract. Many Teamsters, still fresh from their victory against UPS, will join the march. Contingents of United
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Stop police brutality!

Abuse of Haitian immigrant is aimed at workers

'Jail all the
guilty cops!' say
SWP candidates

The statement below was released August 28 by Olga Rodríguez, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of New York City, and Robert Miller, Socialist Workers candidate for governor of New Jersey.

We salute Abner Louima for standing up to fight the horrendous brutality that New York cops inflicted upon him. We call on all working people to join our Haitian brothers and sisters on Friday, August 29, to march in New York City in the Day of Outrage Against Police Brutality, demanding "Justice for Abner Louima!" We will use our campaign to press for jailing all the cops involved in Louima's torture and beating and all those who allowed it to take place. They must be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Workers of oppressed nationalities and immigrants are special targets of cops in a social system that profits from fostering racism and anti-immigrant hostility to maintain layers of workers in pariah status. These divisions among workers are perpetuated and used by the employers to make money for themselves and their class. In capitalist society wages are set from the bottom up, not from the top down. By dehumanizing Hai-

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Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Seven thousand rallied against cop brutality in Brooklyn, New York, August 16.

N.Y.: Thousands protest torture of Louima

BY GLOVA SCOTT

BROOKLYN, New York — "The best way to apply anger is to go to the march," said Abner Louima, referring to a protest against cop brutality planned for August 29 by the Haitian-American Alliance and a coalition of other organizations. "It will send a strong signal to people in charge that we deplore police brutality.... It's intolerable. I

think everyone should be an advocate against police brutality."

The action comes on the heels of a 7,000-strong march August 16 and subsequent mobilizations demanding justice in this case.

Louima, a victim of cop torture, spoke from his hospital bed during an interview with the *New York Times*. The 30-year-old

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UPS workers defend rights on job

BY FRANK FORRESTAL
AND CAPPY KIDD

CHICAGO — "I've never been so happy driving a UPS truck," said Juan Campos, a full-time UPS swing driver from Northbrook, Illinois. Campos is one of the 185,000 Teamsters who recently scored a victory against UPS, the largest package handler in the country, after a 15-day national strike. "People look up to us like we

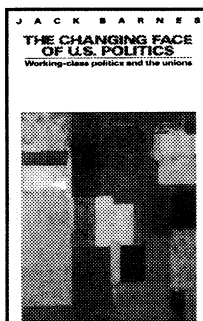
did something for the little guy. Everybody was honking and giving us the thumbs up."

Along with Campos, who is 29-years-old with eight years on the job, *Militant* reporters interviewed two former UPS strikers from the Chicago area. Eugene Phillips, 43, is a full-time feeder driver, with 25 years seniority. Fiore Auriene, 23, works part-time at UPS's hub in Willow Spring as a bulk package handler. Willows Spring is the larg-

est UPS hub in the country, employing 5,000 to 6,000 workers. Only a handful of the sorters and loaders inside the depot, however, work full-time.

These former strikers are members of Teamsters Local 705. This union local, the largest nationally organizing 11,500 UPS workers at 12 different worksites in the Chicago area, has a separate contract with the

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and the Trade Unions

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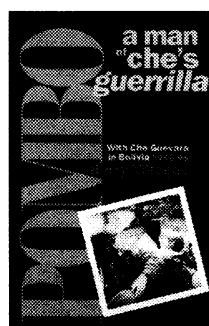
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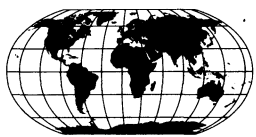
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Basque fighters deported

On August 9, on request from Spanish prime minister José María Aznar, the government of the Dominican Republic turned over three members of Basque Homeland and Liberty, known by its Basque acronym ETA, for prosecution. The move by Madrid provoked an angry response, including cars being burned and a bomb detonated at a police barracks near the Spanish-French border. Eugenio Etxebeste, the highest level captive of the three, represented ETA in the last talks with Spanish officials in Algeria in the 1980s. Recently, following new mobilizations by Basque nationalists demanding independence from Spain, Madrid's interior minister Jaime Mayor Oreja called Etxebeste "completely useless and sterile." The Spanish government denies that the seizure is connected to Oreja's comments.

Irish inmates off high security

London announced August 19 that 13 Irish Republican Army (IRA) political prisoner would receive a downgrade in their security status leaving zero IRA members in the "exceptional risk," maximum security category. This takes place as Sinn Féin, the main nationalist organization fighting to end British colonial rule of Northern Ireland, has made gains in the independence fight. The IRA declared a new cease-fire July 20, after the British government invited Sinn Féin into peace talks. The prisoners will now have greater freedom of movement and more contact with other inmates. They can also have physical contact with visitors, now that a glass barrier has been removed.

S. African toilers make demands

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) organized a 100,000-strong march in Johannesburg August 21. Workers demanded that the Basic Conditions of Employment Bill — soon to be sent to the South African parliament — include a six-month maternity leave with at least four months of it paid, a minimum working age of 16, and a 40-hour workweek phased in over five years. Police said only 15,000 people took part in the action. COSATU also organized a 24-hour strike in central Pretoria, which many workers joined.

Ukrainians protest NATO expansion



Ukrainians in Crimea, opposed to closer ties between former Soviet republic and NATO pushed by Washington, protest NATO expansion eastward August 24.

Employers are pushing for a 45-hour workweek and a four-month maternity leave, which are the provisions in the bill at the moment. South African Chamber of Business (SACOB) representative Raymond Parsons, who claimed the actions cost millions of rand in lost production to employers, said, "In SACOB's view, this series of regional strikes has been an inappropriate and regrettable way for COSATU to pursue its objectives." The demonstration ended a four-day national labor action campaign.

Beijing warns Tokyo on Taiwan

Chinese premier Li Peng denounced remarks by Japanese government official Seiroku Kajiyama that a U.S.-Japan security pact would possibly include Taiwan. Li said the idea is "utterly unacceptable" and warned that Beijing remains "vigilant" in defending its interests in relation to Taiwan. Chinese officials also demanded "an explicit and clear-cut clarification" on exactly what Kajiyama's comments meant. Kajiyama said

Tokyo should side with Washington if a conflict over Taiwan occurred. The Japanese government has not retracted the statement.

Panamanians demand 'U.S. out'

High school and university students poured into the streets of Panama City August 14 to denounce negotiations between the governments of Panama and the United States. The talks centered on the so-called Multi-National Counter-narcotics center, where police and military officials from all over the hemisphere could meet to allegedly direct and coordinate "antidrug" efforts. Negotiations between the two governments broke down soon afterwards.

The Panamanian government has been insisting that the center, which is to be housed at the Howard Air Base on the Pacific side of the Panama Canal, not include any kind of military base. Washington has pushed for maintaining 2,500 troops in the country, housed at this "antidrug" center, after the Panama Canal reverts to Panamanian sovereignty in 1999. During the August 14 protests, 100 students blocked traffic for hours on Martyrs' Avenue, which links the capital to the western part of the country. At a similar action a day earlier, activists burned a dummy resembling U.S. president William Clinton, while demanding U.S. troops get out of their country.

States reaffirm 'Megan's Law'

Federal appeals courts in New Jersey and New York upheld so-called Megan's Law on August 20 and 22 respectively. The law calls for publishing the names of those convicted of sex abuse after serving their sentence. A three-judge panel in Philadelphia that dealt with the challenge to the law in

New Jersey ruled that spreading information about the crime a person is convicted of after they serve their sentence does not constitute further punishment.

In New York, a similar panel rejected the argument that the law opens up parolees to potential vigilante violence. The law gives the government the right to publish the name, address, age, criminal history and photograph of the parolee. The statute in both cities allows for a "risk assessment" of the parolee, in which the severity of the notifications is decided by the state. In California, state officials are trying to have convicted sex offenders names and information put on a CD-ROM, available for public use in police departments. In Louisiana paroled individuals must inform their neighbors of sex-abuse convictions by postcard.

Proposition 209 upheld

A U.S. federal appeals court gave the state of California the green light to dismantle state-run affirmative action programs for women and oppressed nationalities. The mis-named California Civil Rights Initiative, known as Proposition 209, which will cut such programs, could take effect as early as September unless a new injunction is passed. In 1996, when the law was passed in a state referendum, thousands of students and workers, many of them Chicanos, held protest actions throughout California against Proposition 209, pressuring the government to suspend implementation of the law.

EU-U.S. trade conflict escalates

An ongoing conflict over poultry trade between the European Union (EU) and the U.S. government escalated August 18 when EU officials brought the dispute to the World Trade Organization (WTO). EU officials claim that Washington is unfairly banning exports of European poultry on alleged product safety concerns. Poultry barons from both countries have been charged with shirking health standards in markets abroad. The EU and Washington will have 60 days to resolve the conflict before WTO officials are appointed to mediate. The WTO now has 100 different trade conflicts to arbitrate.

Plant with poisoned beef closes

Hudson Foods announced August 21 it will shut down its meat processing plant in Columbus, Nebraska, after an investigation revealed the plant processed beef contaminated with bacteria. The government ordered the inquiry after several people got sick with the Escherichia coli (E. coli) virus, after eating beef shipped from there. The virus, which can cause bloody diarrhea, dehydration and in some cases kidney failure, is often found in the feces of cattle. Some 25 million pounds — 27 percent of the plant's annual production — have been recalled by the company on the order of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Hundreds of stores, like Burger King, Boston Chicken, and Walmart, ran out of meat as a result.

— BRIAN TAYLOR

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The Militant

Vol. 61/No. 30

Closing news date: August 28, 1997

Editor: NAOMI CRAINE

Business Manager: MAURICE WILLIAMS

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Published weekly except for one week in December and biweekly from mid-June to mid-August by the Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Telephone: (212) 243-6392; Fax (212) 924-6040.

The Militant can be reached via CompuServe at: 73311.2720 or via Peacenet at: themilitant

Internet: 73311.2720@compuserve.com or: themilitant@igc.apc.org

The Militant can be accessed on the internet at: gopher://gopher.igc.apc.org/11/pubs/militant

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The Militant Business Office, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

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Washington pushes for domination of Caspian Sea oil

BY MEGAN ARNEY
AND MA'MUD SHIRVANI

On July 18, U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns announced that an upcoming "important Administration statement" would be delivered at "an on-the-record event."

Burns was referring to the speech U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott delivered three days later at the Central Asia Institute of John Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Talbott's presentation outlined a major foreign policy shift for Washington — a drive to establish unquestionable U.S. domination over the huge oil reserves and other natural resources in the Caspian Sea region, Caucasus, and Central Asia.

Talbott described in some detail the measures the Clinton administration is preparing to accomplish this goal. The U.S. rulers will use their economic superiority over competing imperialist powers and their military muscle to speed the reestablishment of capitalist social relations in these former Soviet republics on Washington's terms.

The Caspian Sea, Caucasus, and Central Asia are some of the world's richest regions in natural resources. In Kazakhstan, for example, reserves are estimated to be more than 2 billion barrels of oil and 18,000 cubic feet of natural gas. Azerbaijan's Oguz field reportedly contains 40 million tons of crude; the Nakhichevan field could prove to be even larger; and another unnamed Azeri field is said to have 115 million tons of oil. U.S. oil moguls Exxon, Mobile, and Chevron have recently just signed a \$10 billion deal for the exploitation of 250 million tons of Caspian crude.

In total, oil industry experts say the Caspian Sea region contains up to 200 billion barrels of oil, worth as much as \$4 trillion, plus comparable reserves of natural gas.

Major imperialist investors include Texaco from the United States, the British BG Exploration and Production, and Agip from Italy. All of these companies have, or are seeking to get, major stakes in the oil and gas-rich region.

U.S. gov't plan to dominate oil reserves

Talbott began his speech by referring to the recent NATO summit in Madrid, where the Atlantic imperialist alliance invited the workers states of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to join NATO despite Moscow's strong opposition. "It was in Madrid, at a meeting of the 44 countries that make up the new Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council," Talbott said. "President Clinton found himself seated between the prime minister of the United Kingdom and the foreign minister of Uzbekistan, and directly across from the foreign minister of Armenia and the president of Azerbaijan. The protocol may have been an accident of the alphabet, but it was symbolically appropriate nonetheless."

"The Euro-Atlantic Community is evolving and expanding," the U.S. government

official continued. "It stretches to the west side of the Atlantic and to the east side of the Urals. The emergence of such a community represents a profound break with the past for all the peoples involved."

Talbott pointed to openings for foreign investment and attempts by the ruling regimes to integrate the economies of these former Soviet republics in the world capitalist market.

"The United States has a stake in their success," he said. "If reform in the nations of the Caucasus and Central Asia continues and ultimately succeeds, it will encourage similar progress in the other New Independent States of the former Soviet Union, including Russia and Ukraine. It will contribute to stability in a strategically vital region that borders China, Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan, and that has growing economic and social ties with Pakistan and India. The consolidation of free societies, ... stretching from the Black Sea to the Pamir mountains, will open up a valuable trade and transport corridor along the Silk Road, between Europe and Asia."

In a threatening tone Talbott pointed to the challenges Washington faces along this road. "The ominous converse is also true," he said. "If economic and political reform in the countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia does not succeed ... the region would become a breeding ground of terrorism, a hotbed of religious and political extremism and a battleground for outright war."

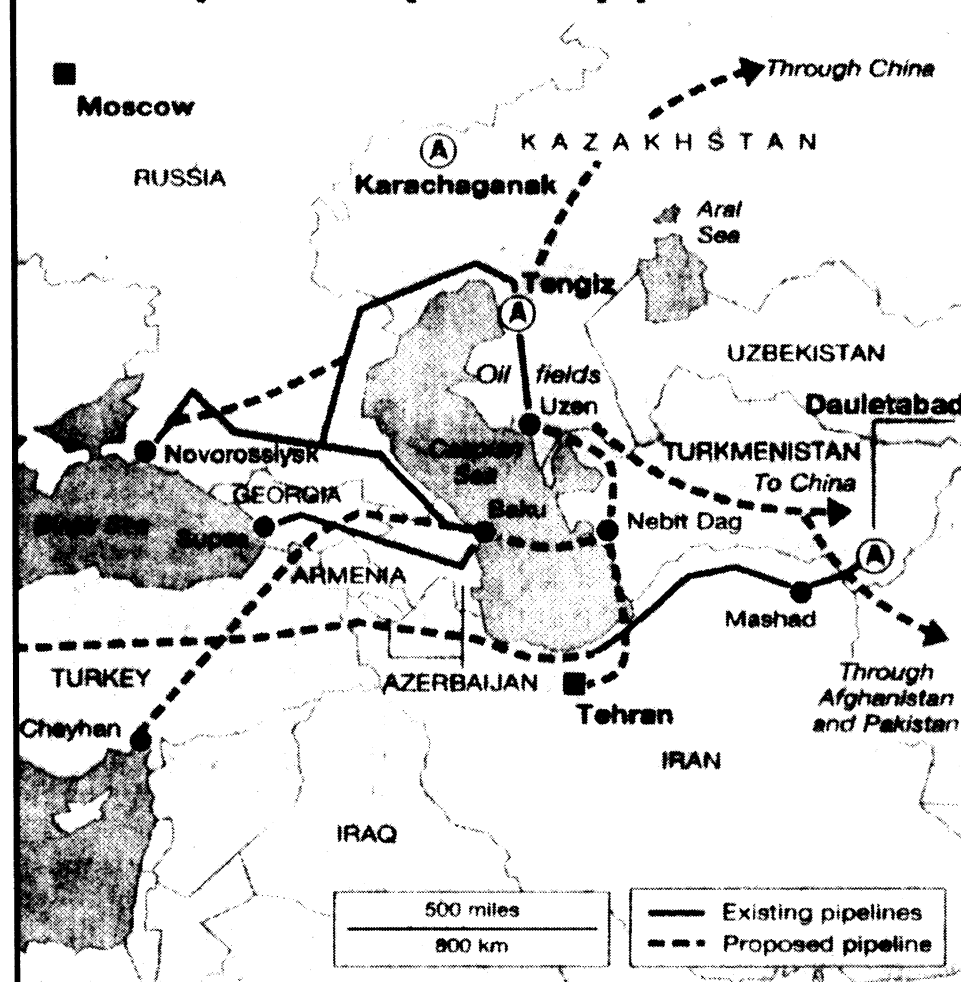
"It would profoundly matter to the United States," he continued, "if that were to happen in an area that sits on as much as 200 billion barrels of oil. That is yet another reason why conflict resolution must be Job One for U.S. policy in the region."

The big-business media — from London's *Financial Times* to the *Wall Street Journal* — have written extensively about the possible openings for investment in the area. In an article in the August 25 *Forbes*, Caspar Weinberger, the magazine's chairman and a former adviser in the administration of Ronald Reagan, was even more blunt about Washington's goals.

"One of the U.S.'s major foreign policy priorities should be to have a firm, unwavering and clearly understood program that enables us to import oil and gas from the Caspian Sea region," Weinberger wrote. "The U.S. currently consumes more than a quarter of the world's oil, even though we have only about 2% of its proven reserves." The U.S. population today represents barely 5 percent of the world's people, a fact Weinberger failed to mention.

"We cannot run our economy or defend our nation without an assured supply of oil," Weinberger continued. "As it happens, there is another supply available — in the Caspian Sea area. If we were to take the proper steps, this region could be far more stable than the Middle East.... Azerbaijan, which borders the Caspian, has one of the area's largest supplies. Cultivating and strengthening our relationship with this former Soviet republic must become a priority. This should not

The Caspian Sea: possible pipeline routes



Map of the Caspian Sea region shows proposed pipeline that would run through Iran

prove difficult. Azerbaijan welcomes Western investment and has signed many contracts with U.S. energy companies, although competition from others is increasing. Azerbaijan is the only former Soviet state to refuse Russia's demands to deploy soldiers there — part of Russia's greater plan to regain control over these republics. Azerbaijan has also resisted Iran's pressure to be allowed to take Azerbaijan's oil."

Weinberger pointed to Talbott's speech as a welcome policy shift, but argued for an even more confrontational approach to prevent Moscow, Teheran, and other governments from hampering U.S. goals in the region. "What about Russia and Iran's June 1996 statement that they should jointly cooperate with states in the Caspian Sea region to prevent the U.S. from gaining a sphere of influence there?" he asked. "We cannot continue to whimper about 'conflict resolution.'"

Talbott's four-point program

"Thanks to the prompt and farsighted response of the Bush administration," Talbott said in his July 21 speech, "we were the first country to open embassies in every capital" of the region's republics since the break up of the USSR. The Pentagon used these embassies to immediately seek military-to-military contacts, he noted. "In the four-and-a-half years since the Clinton administration came into office, our message to the states of the region has been simple: as long as they move in the direction of political and economic freedom, of national and international reconciliation, we will be with them. That is what President Clinton told Eduard Shevardnadze of Georgia last Friday. It is what Vice President [Albert] Gore told Akar Akayev of Kyrgyzstan earlier in the week. It is what President Clinton will tell President [of Azerbaijan Heydar] Aliyev next week. And it is the message that the First Lady [Hillary Clinton] will carry directly to the peoples and governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan this fall."

Talbott then outlined the four-point program the Clinton administration will try to impose on the region's republics. It consists of "The promotion of democracy; the creation of free market economies; the sponsorship of peace and cooperation within and among the countries of the region; and their integration with the larger international community."

Talbott made it clear that rapid progress in implementing measures that could bring back capitalism is at the heart of U.S. policy. "Only if the citizenry and the growing private sectors in these states have a say in the policies of the government will reform have the necessary backing; and only if these countries develop the rule of law will they attract the foreign investment they so desperately need."

To further U.S. interests along these lines, Talbott said, Washington has been providing financial and other backing to nongov-

ernmental organizations in the area, such as the Young Lawyer's Association in Georgia, the Association of Youth Leaders in Kazakhstan, and an "association for the defense of women's rights in Azerbaijan." It is also providing training and assistance to leaders of nascent procapitalist political parties.

Talbott pointed to the examples of Armenia and Georgia as "pace-setters in fiscal stabilization, privatization, and progress toward real growth." He then complained that other republics have not made much headway toward reestablishing capitalist economic relations.

Since 1992 the U.S. government has disbursed \$2.2 billion in "assistance" to the eight republics in the Caucasus and Central Asia, the State Department official said. "But we are now shifting our focus in the region from humanitarian to development assistance. That is the priority in the plan." That means Washington will now focus on trying to acquire state-controlled industries and invest elsewhere in the region.

Talbott announced that the Clinton Administration is asking Congress for an additional \$900 million this year, a 34 percent increase over previous budget expenditures, to carry out its plans. He also said the administration will work "close with the major international financial institutions ... to allow us to leverage our scarce aid dollars." Washington is seeking membership in the World Trade Organization for Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan, Talbott stated, "to develop a Eurasian transportation corridor ... and create a region-wide market through the Central Asian Free Economic Zone."

Realizing these goals, however, will not be easy as working people in the region continue to resist demands for "sacrifice" prescribed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other imperialist financial institutions as preconditions for loans. In Armenia, for example, a demonstration took place recently in reaction to IMF-ordered austerity measures.

Instability worries Washington

"For the last several years, it has been fashionable to proclaim, or at least to predict, a replay of the 'Great Game' in the Caucasus and Central Asia," Talbott said. "The implication, of course, is that the driving dynamic of the region, fueled and lubricated by oil, will be the competition of the great powers to the disadvantage of the people who live there...."

"Let's leave Rudyard Kipling and George McDonald Fraser where they belong — on the shelves of historical fiction."

These comments were directly related to the official title of Talbott's speech: "A Farewell to Flashman: American policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia." Harry Flashman was the main character in a series of mystery novels, authored in the mid-1800s by British writer George McDonald

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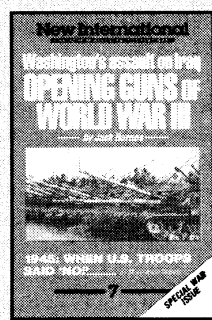
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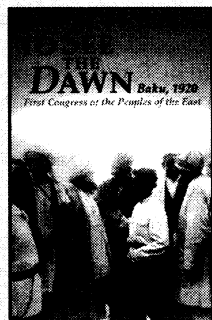
The U.S. government's murderous assault on Iraq heralded increasingly sharp conflicts among imperialist powers, the rise of rightist and fascist forces, growing instability of international capitalism, and more wars. In no. 7 of Marxist magazine *New International*. Also includes "Communist Policy in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



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Workers launch Pathfinder fund

BY LUIS MADRID

Pathfinder Press supporters around the world have launched a nine-week fund drive to raise \$125,000. The fund, which runs September 1 – November 1, will make possible the publication of several new books by the end of this year and keeping in print the complete back list of Pathfinder's 300-plus titles.

The accompanying chart shows goals adopted in local areas around the world so far amount to \$114,288. With only a handful of areas pending to adopt quotas, special attention must be paid over the next days to obtain new pledges and increase existing ones so that local goals exceed the international target of \$125,000 before the end of the first week of the drive.

Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla' by Harry Villegas, and *El rostro cambiante de la política en Estados Unidos*, the Spanish-language edition of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* by Jack Barnes, are two of the six new titles the New York-

based publisher has issued this year alone. The recent victory the Teamsters scored in their strike against UPS has led to increased sales of books on the labor movement, including Pathfinder's series on the origins and politics of that union. Farrell Dobbs's *Teamster Rebellion* and *Teamster Power* will join the more than 40 titles Pathfinder has reprinted so far this year. Six other new books are also scheduled to be off the press before the end of the year (see article on facing page).

Supporters in Seattle, Miami, and Des Moines, among other cities, explain they are organizing fund-raising activities in the context of the shift that has taken place in working-class resistance to the bosses demands for belt-tightening.

"We will concentrate on promoting the fund among coworkers, and fighters we met on the UPS picket lines," said Nan Bailey, who is helping to organize the effort in Seattle. "We should also be able to get contributions from farm workers." To get the campaign going, a mailing that includes a copy

of a "new titles" brochure went out to all potential contributors, urging them to buy the newly released books and chip in for the fund, Bailey said.

Pathfinder supporters in many cities around the world are organizing forums and other meetings in September to reach out to industrial workers and other new contributors. They are also making plans to collect and send in at least half of their goal by the end of that month. "Funds are immediately needed for the publication of the new titles," said Sara Lobman, Pathfinder business manager.

The theme of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* for the fundraiser in Seattle "will help us bring together those we are meeting to discuss U.S. and international politics, especially labor battles going on today," said Bailey. The Seattle meeting has been scheduled for September 16. "The date allows us to publicize the meeting widely during Labor Day weekend and the subsequent days, when many supporters of Pathfinder will be participating in an all-out effort to sell Pathfinder books and subscriptions to the *Militant*" (see front-page article).

Anyone interested in contributing can make checks payable to Pathfinder, and send them to: Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.

\$125,000 Pathfinder Fund September 1 – November 1

CITY/COUNTRY	GOAL	PLEDGED	PAID
Atlanta	3,700	3,650	500
Birmingham	3,500	2,100	0
Boston	5,500	4,255	580
Chicago	11,000	8,230	220
Cleveland	2,400	2,450	30
Des Moines	2,400	1,525	0
Detroit	4,000	2,750	0
Houston	5,500	5,050	0
Los Angeles	10,000	7,435	410
Miami	3,000	2,430	0
New York	12,000	8,850	510
Newark	8,500	6,925	350
Philadelphia	4,000	1,820	100
Pittsburgh		5,275	0
San Francisco	9,500	6,150	300
Seattle	8,000	4,375	0
Twin Cities	7,000	4,575	0
Washington, D.C.	3,000	2,077	77
Other	2,918	2,918	282
U.S. Total	105,918	82,840	3,359
Australia		400	0
Canada	5,300	1,475	10
New Zealand	2,370	225	0
Sweden	700	225	0
United Kingdom		650	75
Other Int'l		160	35
INT'L TOTAL	114,288	85,975	3,479
SHOULD BE	125,000		

Coming soon from Pathfinder

Europe and America Two Speeches on Imperialism

BY LEON TROTSKY \$6.00

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.

Fall 1997 'Militant' Subscription Drive

Country/City	GOALS		
	Militant	PM	NI
AUSTRALIA	16	3	10
CANADA			
Montreal	30	10	30
Toronto	50	10	20
Vancouver	50	5	5
CANADA total	130	25	55
ICELAND	10	1	5
NEW ZEALAND			
Auckland	30	2	10
Christchurch	15	1	5
Wellington	3	1	1
N.Z. total	48	4	16
SWEDEN	16	7	8
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	50	12	35
Manchester	25	2	12
U.K. total	75	14	47
UNITED STATES			
Atlanta	33	12	15
Birmingham, AL	40	5	15
Boston	40	15	35
Chicago	95	30	40
Cleveland	25	7	10
Des Moines	40	20	20
Detroit	35	8	12
Houston	40	15	15
Los Angeles	110	55	55
Miami	40	22	25
New York	140	70	60
Newark, NJ	120	40	60
Philadelphia	25	8	8
Pittsburgh	48	3	15
San Francisco	70	30	35
Seattle	70	20	20
Twin Cities, MN	70	15	15
Washington, D.C.	40	15	15
U.S. total	1081	390	470
Int'l totals	1376	444	611
Int'l goals	1300	400	600

Caspian Sea oil reserves

Continued from Page 3

Fraser. Flashman was a fictional spy used by the British crown and other colonial powers in their designs to dominate the region at the time. Kipling wrote similar stories using a character named Kim.

Talbott boasted that, unlike the 19th century, Washington is the one power that can resolve all the conflicts now. The State Department official was following on Clinton's footsteps, who said in his second inauguration speech in January, "America stands alone as the world's indispensable nation."

Just prior to this point in his speech, Talbott had turned to describing the military steps of Washington's strategy in the region.

"This September," he said, "the Central Asian Peacekeeping Battalion, made up of armed forces from Kazakstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan, will host troops from the United States, Russia, Turkey, and other nations in a joint peacekeeping exercise."

The U.S. government official pointed to three areas that make Washington nervous in being able to realize its plans. The first is the war over Nagorno-Karabakh. This is an area in Azerbaijan where many Armenians live and are an oppressed nationality. Following the October 1917 Russian revolution, led by the Bolsheviks, workers and peasants in Armenia and Azerbaijani took power in 1920. As a result, they transformed social relations and succeeded in living and working together, overcoming divisions fostered by the former tsarist empire. The Bolshevik policy of unequivocal defense of the rights of all oppressed nations was at the center of this success.

After the death of Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin, however, a privileged bureaucratic caste, headed by Joseph Stalin, consolidated its power in the Communist Party and state apparatus and reversed those policies. The Stalinist counterrevolution, which led to the reemergence of national conflicts and divisions, is at the root of the rivalries within and between these republics since the breakup of the USSR.

During the recent conflicts between the regimes in power in Armenia and Azerbaijan, Washington had sided with the government of Armenia. In 1992 U.S. Congress passed the so-called Freedom Support Act, which put in place an economic embargo on Azerbaijan. Talbott called for the repeal of this law, declaring it "limited our ability to provide assistance ... [and] limited our leverage with Baku." A cease-fire has been in place between the two conflicting armies for four years. During the con-

flict, however, Azerbaijan lost 20 percent of its territory, and close to 1 million people — mainly peasants — have become refugees. Talbott said the U.S. government now opposes the Act, and has acted as an "honest broker" between the two countries.

Talbott also pointed to the five-year-long civil war in Tajikistan, "that remains fragile and dangerous," as well as the conflicts in Abkhazia. The instability in these and other republics worries Washington that possibilities of substantial investments by U.S. big-business in the region may be diminished.

Talbott warned Moscow not to interfere in Washington's plans in the region. "Today there are plenty of questions ... about how Moscow will handle its relations with the other members of the CIS," he said, referring to the Commonwealth of Independent States, the loose association of the former Soviet republics that replaced the USSR. "Whether that grouping of states survives will depend in large measure on whether it evolves in a way that vindicates its name — that is, whether it develops as a genuine commonwealth of genuinely independent states," Talbott stated [emphasis in the original]. "If it goes in another direction — if its largest member tries to make 'commonwealth' into a euphemism for domination of its neighbors — then the CIS will deserve to join that other set of initials, USSR, on the ash heap of history."

Washington's watchword in "dialogue with Russia is integration — the right kind of integration," the U.S. official said. "We believe that our presence and influence in the region can itself be a force for the right kind of integration."

Oil, gas pipeline through Iran

Washington's policy shift comes on the heels of a \$1.6 billion gas pipeline deal signed in May between the governments of Turkey, Iran, and Turkmenistan. The pipeline would run from the gas-rich Ashkhabad field in Turkmenistan through 750 miles of northern Iran to Turkey. It will move 28 billion cubic meters of gas a year.

To appease the Turkmenistan government, U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright said July 23 that the project did not violate the U.S. Iran-Libya Sanctions Act, which imposes sanctions on any country investing more than \$20 million a year in Iranian or Libyan oil or gas projects. Albright's justification was that Turkey, a NATO member, would be buying "Turkmenistan gas," not "Iranian gas." This move did not mute Tehran's opposition to the Caspian oil deals that Talbott outlined.

"Iran does not recognize bilateral Caspian accords," read the August 18 headline in *Ettela'at International*, an Iranian daily. Iran's deputy foreign minister Mahmoud Vaezi warned August 7 "that any oil contract between the Caspian Sea littoral [coastal region] states and foreign companies without taking into consideration the interests of other countries ... would be problematic." Vaezi told the Tehran daily that his government had already sent a note to the United Nations stating that any oil contract between the Caspian Sea coastal states and foreign companies lacks a legal basis if it doesn't take into consideration the interests of other concerned countries in the region. Tehran has also notified all coastal states that any measures taken without agreement of all countries involved will be considered in violation of the 1921 and 1940 Soviet-Iranian accords.

Meanwhile, the August 14 issue of *Republika*, a Baku-based newspaper, quoted Azeri deputy foreign minister Khalaf Khalafov as saying that the five Caspian Sea littoral states — Russia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Turkmenistan, and Kazakstan — will hold a meeting in Moscow by the end of August to discuss the legal status of the prospective oil contracts in the Caspian Sea.

Workers states main obstacle

The U.S. imperialists also face a formidable challenge within each of the former Soviet republics in the region. Noncapitalist social relations still exist to one degree or another in all of these states. "Off-shore oil wealth has not yet transformed the economy of this small post-Soviet country," said an article in the August 25 *Christian Science Monitor*, referring to Azerbaijan. "But this is also one of the least-privatized, least-reformed economies of the former Soviet Union. And many people, says a Western diplomat, hope oil wealth will permit them to preserve their Soviet ways."

Azerbaijani oil workers employed in joint-venture companies with foreign capital, which often also employ technicians and others from abroad, are increasingly restive. "Locals employed by the state find that they are being paid a fraction of what the international crews receive," said an article in the July 28 *Daily Telegraph* of London.

"It costs \$300,000 a year to bring in an expat oil worker," said an executive of the AOIC. "Meanwhile, workers on the Azerbaijani rigs are sometimes not being paid at all. This is bound to lead to resentment, and we already see signs of the police harassing foreigners."

SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

Boston bookstores, libraries order dozens of Pathfinder books

BY MARY NELL BOCKMAN

BOSTON — Pathfinder supporters in Boston got a great response during a special week-long effort in mid-August to get the publisher's revolutionary books and pamphlets placed in area bookstores and libraries, making them more accessible to a larger number of working people and youth. The 22 visits with book buyers and acquisitions directors netted eight immediate orders for 174 books. Several other buyers said they planned to place orders after checking their inventories.

Sara Lobman, Pathfinder's business manager, worked with local supporters to do the appointments. Her trip was geared to taking

advantage of the recent publication by Pathfinder of *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'* by Cuban brigadier general Harry Villegas, *At the Side of Che Guevara: Interviews with Harry Villegas*, and *El Rostro Cambiante de la política en Estados Unidos*, the Spanish-language edition of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*. There is also an increased interest in titles by or about Ernesto Che Guevara and the Cuban revolution as the 30th anniversary of the revolutionary's death approaches. Pathfinder plans similar trips to three or four other cities before the end of the year.

The sales people visited a range of bookstores, including college stores, local chains, independent bookstores, shops oriented to the Black community, and university and public libraries. They found interest in Pathfinder's titles almost across the board. "I'm so glad you came today," the buyer at a large university store in Rhode Island commented. "I get so many catalogs in the mail, it's almost impossible for me to keep track of what's out there. We clearly should carry many of your books." He placed an order for 28 different titles, including four copies of *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla.'*

The buyer at a store in Amherst, Massachusetts, had said he wouldn't have time for a visit. But when the Pathfinder team stopped by to drop off a catalog, the young women behind the cash register saw the new book by Harry Villegas. She immediately got on the phone with the buyer. "You've got to see the hard copy," she insisted. He agreed to a visit later in the day and ended up placing an order for 10 books, including titles by Guevara, Fidel Castro, Leon Trotsky, and Jack Barnes.

The acquisitions director at the main library in one city spent 40 minutes reviewing the catalog and highlighting a score of titles. She said she'd place an order as

soon as she checked her list against their current inventory. She also recommended that Pathfinder set up visits with the branch libraries, each of which have their own budget.

Titles sold during the week include four copies each of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* by Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes; *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' Against Cuba Doesn't End* by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara; and *Cosmetics, Fashion, and the Exploitation of Women* by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, and Mary-Alice Waters; three copies each of *Labor's Giant Step* by Art Preis; *In Defense of Socialism* by Fidel Castro; and *The History of the Russian Revolution* by Leon Trotsky.

Altogether, nine copies of *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'* were ordered. In addition, advance orders were placed for five copies each of *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s*, and *White Business, Black Music* by Frank Kofsky; and one copy each of *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics in the Twenty-First Century* by Jack Barnes, and *Europe and America* by Leon Trotsky. These four titles will be published by Pathfinder later this year.

Pathfinder supporters in Boston are now gearing up for the New England Booksellers Association meeting and book fair, scheduled for early October. A dinner held the weekend before the sales visit raised more than \$200 towards the cost of a booth at that fair.

Open letter to readers

Continued from front page

Auto Workers members are also expected, many of whom recently struck General Motors.

Militant supporters in Detroit are organizing classes with members of the Young Socialists over Labor Day weekend that will discuss the latest developments in the Cuban revolution and working-class politics in the trade unions. They have invited readers from Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Toronto to join them. The educational discussions are part of an all out effort to win new subscribers among marchers on Labor Day and elsewhere in the area.

Haitian and other organizations are expecting a sizable turnout for the August 29 march in Brooklyn to demand "Justice for Abner Louima." Buses are coming from throughout the region, including 10 from New Jersey. *Militant* supporters in New York are hosting an open house for participants in the march that evening. They are also organizing door-to-door teams and literature tables to sell subscriptions and Pathfinder books over the weekend. At the end of the day, on Sunday, August 31, they are holding a class on the lessons of the UPS strike.

And the following day, they are planning to set up literature tables at the annual Caribbean Day Parade in Brooklyn. In the past, this festival has attracted up to a million participants. *Militant* readers from throughout the region are joining in the several-day propaganda effort.

Leaders of Sinn Fein will speak in Chicago, New York, and San Francisco September 5-7. These meetings will be a good place to mix it up with supporters of the Irish freedom struggle and others, talk about politics, and win some new subscribers.

This week, socialist workers in Birmingham are also organizing a regional sales team to visit the coal fields in western Kentucky, where the United Mineworkers of America recently scored important organizing victories. Regional sales teams are being planned in California and Washington state, where the United Farm Workers are fighting to organize strawberry and apple pickers. Other activities include a conference of Working Women in Washington, D.C., sponsored by the AFL-CIO.

Around the world, *Militant* supporters are involved in similar activities as the subscription drive gets rolling.

Recent reports indicate that there is a growing receptivity for socialist literature among rebellious workers, working farmers,

and youth.

Socialists in Birmingham sold two subscriptions to the *Militant*, several single issues, and 31 books and pamphlets at an August 15-16 conference of Black farmers in Epes, Alabama. They also sold 20 copies of the *Militant* at three mine portals last week. "Plantgate teams in Detroit found a wide interest in the *Militant's* coverage on the UPS strike," reported Holly Harkness from that city. "Seven copies were sold to steelworkers at the Monday, August 25, shift change at Great Lakes Steel."

We urge all our readers to join this effort. If you are interested, contact distributors listed on page 12 or the *Militant* business office. And send us sales stories and photos from these events every week.

Maurice Williams, Business Manager

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
Australia	15	7	15	13	5	3
Canada						
Montreal	10	9	15	13	5	3
Toronto	15	8	15	11	8	8
Vancouver	10	5	10	3	6	1
Canada totals	35	22	40	27	19	12
Iceland	2	0	4	3	1	0
New Zealand						
Auckland	10	8	10	2	5	1
Christchurch	9	8	10	6	3	4
N.Z. totals	19	16	20	8	8	5
Sweden	6					
United Kingdom						
London	10	10	20	33	5	3
Manchester	10		12	11	5	
U.K. Totals	20	10	32	44	10	3
United States						
Atlanta	20	5	20	3	10	3
Birmingham	20	2	20	1	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	10	30	19	10	1
Miami	30	8	20	13	8	3
Newark	30	6	30	10	10	4
New York	25	2	30	16	20	4
Philadelphia	10	10	15	8	5	4
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	10	10	13	8	4
Youth Festival		20		39		20
U.S. totals	390	132	395	193	162	59
Int'l totals	513	223	520	290	241	125
Trade Unions						
AUSTRALIA						
AMWU	1	0	2	3	1	1
United States						
IAM	21	3	33	6	12	1
OCAW*	5		5		10	
UAW	15	5	15	7	5	2
UFCW	4	0	12	3	3	1
UNITE	4	1	8	1	4	1
USWA	16	1	19	3	8	0
UTU*	15				15	
U.S. Totals	80	10	92	20	57	5
*no report submitted						

Renewal Campaign MILITANT/PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL August 2- 31						
City/Country	Militant			Perspectiva Mundial		
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	%
United Kingdom						
London	10	11	110%	2	2	100%
Manchester	5	5	100%			
U.K. totals	15	16	107%	2	2	100%
New Zealand						
Christchurch	4	3	75%	1	0	0%
Auckland	5	2	40%			
N.Z. totals	9	5	56%	1	0	0%
Australia	10	5	50%	2	0	0%
Iceland	9	4	44%			
United States						
Birmingham	9	8	89%	1	0	0%
Detroit	8	7	88%	2	0	0%
Cleveland	7	6	86%	2	0	0%
Miami	12	10	83%	6	4	67%
Atlanta	9	6	67%	3	2	67%
Philadelphia	10	6	60%	2	2	100%
Los Angeles	25	14	56%	10	2	20%
Newark	15	8	53%	8	1	13%
San Francisco	17	9	53%	8	0	0%
Washington, D.C.	9	4	44%	6	3	50%
Boston	8	3	38%	3	2	67%
Chicago	18	5	28%	7	0	0%
Seattle	15	4	27%	5	0	0%
New York	15	3	20%	8	0	0%
Pittsburgh	15	3	20%	1	0	0%
Des Moines	6	1	17%	4	0	0%
Houston	12	2	17%	3	0	0%
Twin Cities	20	1	5%	5	0	0%
U.S. Totals	230	100	43%	84	16	19%
Canada						
Montreal	4	2	50%	2	3	150%
Toronto	8	3	38%	2	2	100%
Vancouver	8	3	38%	1	0	0%
Canada totals	20	8	40%	5	5	100%
Sweden	3	0	0%	1	0	0%
Int'l totals	296	138	47%	95	23	24%
Should be	295	256	87%	95	83	87%
TRADE UNIONS						
United States						
UAW	15	8	53%	3	0	0%
UNITE	4	2	50%	4	0	0%
USWA	15	4	27%	3	0	0%
IAM*	33	0	0%	10	0	0%
OCAW*	10	0	0%			
UFCW	2	0	0%	5	0	0%
UTU*	12	0	0%			
U.S. Totals	91	14	15%	25	0	0%
* no report submitted						

YS leaders outline orientation to working class

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists (YS), an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS write to: Young Socialists, 1573 N. Milwaukee, P.O. Box #478, Chicago, Ill. 60622. Tel: (773) 772-0551. Compuserve: 105162,605

BY JOSHUA CARROLL
AND VERÓNICA POSES

CHICAGO—“The example set by the 185,000 workers on strike against United Parcel Service poses the most serious threat to the ruling class today,” said Jack Willey in the opening report to a meeting of the Young Socialists (YS) National Committee held here August 16–17. Willey is the organizer of the YS National Executive Committee (NEC).

The Teamsters strike against the nation's largest delivery service was at the center of discussion at the two-day meeting. YS leaders discussed the next steps the revolutionary youth organization can take to respond to workers struggles and use its campaigns to attract, recruit, and integrate young fighters into its ranks.

A representative of the Socialist Workers Party Political Committee and a delegation from the Young Socialists in Canada also attended the meeting.

YS National Committee members discussed the volatility of the stock market and the rapid pace at which it has been rising during the current economic upturn, what spokespeople for the ruling class refer to as the “Wall Street miracle.” In his report to the meeting, Willey pointed to the debate in the ruling class, reflected in the big-business press, over whether the recent boom in the stock market can be sustained.

One part of the ruling class argues that this “boom” is not sustainable. Another school of bourgeois economists advances the view that new economic laws of motion have come into play, that the normal ups and down in the business cycle don't apply anymore, and that the U.S. economy is locked into a pattern of steady growth and rise in productivity.

“The capitalist class has factored into their investments the patterns of the last two decades, that workers' wages will continue to go down and labor productivity will continue rising,” Willey said. “Productivity, however, is stagnating. And there is another thing that threatens all this: the class struggle. The Wall Street ‘miracle’ only works if workers continue to accept take-back contracts, two-tier wages, and less pensions. A victory by the Teamsters against UPS, for example, would go in the opposite direction of what the rulers want and need. It would represent a big setback for them.” The day after the NC meeting ended,

UPS and the Teamsters reached a tentative settlement favorable to strikers.

Willey noted some of the recent developments in the labor movement such as the six local strikes that UAW workers have waged against General Motors since the beginning of this year. The pattern has been that GM has settled quickly in each case and was not prepared to provoke any long walkouts, unlike what the auto giant did a year ago during the 17-day-long strike by auto parts workers in Dayton, Ohio. Willey also pointed to the recent United Farm Workers' organizing drives in California and Washington state.

Lessons of Detroit labor march

At the meeting there was discussion on the 25,000-strong demonstration in Detroit on June 21 in solidarity with workers locked out by the Detroit *News* and *Free Press*. A few days before the march workers received news of a ruling by the National Labor Relations Board ordering the newspapers to immediately reinstate the more than 1,000 union members who have been on strike since 1995. The ruling had an impact on the demonstration, turning it into a victory rally for workers in the six striking unions.

During the NC meeting, participants received news of a ruling by a federal judge denying the request of the NLRB. “This shows that workers have drawn a line and are resisting, but are not on the offensive yet,” said Willey in his summary report to the meeting. “The bosses will continue to try to drive wages and working conditions down. In fact, as workers fight back, polarization will grow as the employers and the government try to run union organizers off the fields and plants, sponsor pro-company rallies that involve some workers — like the one growers recently organized in Watsonville, California — and defeat union organizing drives. This makes it all the more important, and slightly easier, to convince young fighters to join a revolutionary youth organization that's proletarian in character.”

The YS didn't respond to the June 21 mobilization in Detroit adequately, said YS NEC member Verónica Poses in a tasks and perspectives report to the meeting. Only a handful of Young Socialists attended the march. The National Committee pledged to never repeat this again.

“It should be second nature for us to respond when workers are fighting,” Poses said. “Many YS members were recruited through going to picket lines of workers in struggle and seeing the potential that the working class has when it organizes itself to fight back.”

World youth festival

YS leaders also evaluated the work of the organization leading up to, and during the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students,

held in Cuba July 28 – August 5.

“The Young Socialists came out of the festival stronger, more confident, and more competent in functioning on an international level at events of this type, dominated by forces that look politically to the old Moscow Stalinist bureaucracy and others who put forward that the solution to the problems of the world is to reform capitalism,” said Willey in his report. “YS members sought out revolutionary-minded youth attending the gathering, collaborated with other organizations like the Movement of Landless Rural Workers from Brazil and the Union of Young Communists from Cuba in common campaigns, took part in debates raising communist politics, and sold hundreds of Pathfinder books and pamphlets. As a result of this work, and the preparation in the United States before the festival, two young people asked to join the YS during the festival.” A number of other festival delegates requested to join the YS after returning to the United States from Cuba.

Strengthening the YS nationally

The YS National Committee discussed the recent moves made by the SWP and the Young Socialists leaderships to strengthen the communist movement in the coal field regions of Alabama and Western Pennsylvania. A few weeks before the National Committee (NC) meeting, YS NC member Diana Newberry transferred from Morgantown, West Virginia, to Pittsburgh. Meg Novak, another YS NC member, moved from Chicago to Birmingham. YS member Paul Coltrin from the Houston chapter will also be moving to Pittsburgh to help build a YS chapter there.

“It's important that the Young Socialists have strong units of our movement in the coal mining regions to be able to relate to workers in the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) and be ready for when a new generation gets hired in the mines,” said Poses in her report. “UMWA members have a long history of struggle and the coal industry is fundamental to the U.S. economy.”

Meg Novak talked about her experiences selling the *Militant* to mineworkers in the Birmingham area. “We sold six papers at a portal sale and we've run into UMWA members at the Teamsters picket lines at UPS,” she said during the discussion. Novak also noted that coal miners in Kentucky recently

voted for UMWA representation (see box on back page).

National Committee members voted to continue on this course and transfer another member of the Young Socialists to Pittsburgh and another person to Los Angeles. “A move to Los Angeles should be combined with getting SWP and YS members into garment factories organized by the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) in that city,” Poses stated. “Los Angeles has one of the largest concentrations of garment workers in the United States, a very important component of the working class.”

Fall propaganda campaigns

Campaigning to widely distribute socialist literature will be at the center of YS activity over the fall. Participants voted to join with Socialist Workers Party members and supporters in getting subscriptions to the *Militant*, and its Spanish-language sister monthly *Perspectiva Mundial*, into the hands of as many fighters as possible.

The current campaign to get the newly released Pathfinder book *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'* along with *The Changing Face of US Politics: Working Class Politics and the Trade Unions* into the hands of workers and youth will help prepare for the subscription drive in the fall and draw workers and young people closer to the communist movement, Poses said.

As a way of helping chapters carry this out, YS leaders will be available to tour in cities across the country and speak at college and high school campuses, at meetings of youth interested in the YS, and at Militant Labor Forums.

YS National Committee members reaffirmed the decision made by the Young Socialists convention in April to have its members volunteer at the print shop where Pathfinder books and the *Militant* are printed. José Aravena, a YS member from Newark who volunteers in the print shop, talked about the impact the UPS strike has had on sales of Pathfinder books. “We've had increased orders for the Teamster series by Farrell Dobbs and we'll have to reprint them soon,” he said.

The National Committee also elected a new National Executive Committee that will guide the work of the organization for the coming months.

Max Antoine fights cop brutality

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

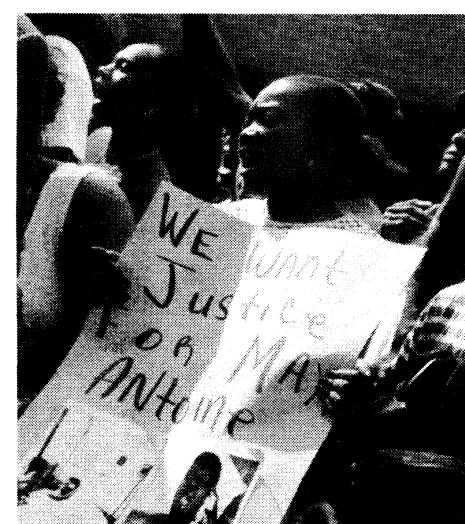
IRVINGTON, New Jersey—“I will teach you the American law.”

That's what cops told Max Antoine, a 29-year-old law student here, as they brutally beat him in his home, in front of his family, and later at the police station. The June 1996 attack, which cops unleashed in response to an alleged “noise” complaint, left Antoine in a wheelchair, partially paralyzed.

The case is scheduled to come to court later this year. Typical of the way cop brutality is defended and covered up, the only charges filed are against Antoine himself. Max Antoine, *not the cops*, has been indicted on a laundry list of 13 counts — ranging from resisting arrest to assault and falsifying medical records.

Joseph Antoine, Max's father, explained the facts in the case to a hushed gathering of more than 60 leaders of the Haitian community here August 24, as he has done recently on a number of local radio stations and on Haitian national TV. The meeting, held largely in Creole, launched the Haitian Social Action Center of New Jersey. It was attended by a range of community and religious leaders, a handful of workers, and a Haitian-born representative of the police commissioner's office. Several were friends of the Antoine family who had known Max Antoine since he was a child.

Many in the meeting clapped and shouted agreement as Joseph Antoine explained the need to protest police brutality and demand justice for its victims. “It's not just Max,” he said. “The entire community is the target of these attacks.” He called for participation in the August 29 march in New York to demand the Brooklyn cops who tortured Haitian immigrant Abner Louima be tried and jailed, and for a protest around Max Antoine's case the following week.



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Supporters of Antoine's fight take part in August 16 Brooklyn march demanding justice for Abner Louima.

Supporters of Max Antoine's fight for justice are planning to march September 5 from Irvington to the criminal court in Newark, where charges against him are scheduled to be heard.

“It's a pattern,” Joseph Antoine, who drives a cab in New York, said of the cop attacks. “The treatment is the same. The only difference, if there is any, is that sometimes it's New York people, sometimes New Jersey people, who are the victims.”

Robert Miller, an auto worker and Socialist Workers candidate for governor of New Jersey, was applauded when he told the Irvington gathering what he was doing to help bring trade unionists and other working people to join these protests. Miller is a member of the United Auto Workers Union and works at the Ford assembly plant in Edison, New Jersey.

Sinn Fein leaders speak in U.S. cities

BY JANE HARRIS

NEW YORK — Sinn Fein leaders Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, both members of the British Parliament, and Caoimhghin O'Caolain, a member of the Irish parliament will speak in the United States September 5–7. At the New York rally, which will be held at the Roseland Ballroom, the fighters for Irish independence will discuss the current issues in the struggle for self-determination. Adams, McGuinness, and O'Caolain, who were just recently granted visas by the State Department, are part of Sinn Fein's negotiating team for talks with Westminster scheduled to begin September 15.

McGuinness, Sinn Fein's chief negotiator, will then fly on to a San Francisco rally on September 6, while O'Caolain will address a Chicago rally the same evening. The theme of these events will be “A New Opportunity for Peace.... Talking about the Future of Ireland” (see ad on Page 16).

At a meeting held here August 2, Joe Cahill, Sinn Fein's treasurer, said that the Republican movement was anxious to speak with its American supporters. “The conflict is far from over, and we can't sit

on our backsides,” he said. “You are the vehicle,” he said, reviewing the importance of international solidarity.

In a related development on August 16, Canadian customs officials seized copies of the recently published book *Eyewitness Bloody Sunday*, by Don Mullan, an author and human rights activist. Mullan was stopped as he arrived in Quebec to attend ceremonies commemorating the Irish famine of 1845–1849. When Mullan asked why he was stopped, customs officials replied that they were acting on instructions to be “on the alert for terrorists.”

Not only did customs take the copies of the book, which is the author's account of the day British troops killed 14 unarmed civil rights fighters in a demonstration, but they also confiscated 160 copies of the Breglio Report and other items.

The Breglio Report alleges that British army snipers, using rifles with telescopic sights, shot at civil rights protesters from the walls of Derry, Ireland, on Bloody Sunday, Jan. 30, 1972. Mullan's book, as well as the Breglio Report contradict the “official” British Widgery Report of the incident.

SWP candidates join fight of UPS workers

BY MICHAEL PENNOCK

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — "Down in Iowa at the beginning of the week, we spoke to 60 different small UPS shippers. We found 59 of them thought the union's position was reasonable and they wished us luck." This was one example Jon Senum used to describe the support the UPS strike was winning to 50 people attending a Militant Labor Forum here August 15. Senum is a part-time loader at the Minneapolis distribution center and a member of Teamsters Local 638.

He also referred to local support rallies. Held in Minneapolis and neighboring Eagan, each drew between 400 and 500 strikers and supporters, including politicians, nonstriking Teamsters, other unionists, and young people.

At each rally there were a dozen or so youth participating in Union Summer activities sponsored by the AFL-CIO. There were also young people who had been to the 14th World Festival of Youth held in Havana, Cuba, in July. Many of these people also attended the Militant Labor Forum.

Also speaking was Doug Jenness, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of St. Paul, and a member of the United Steelworkers of America. He participated in the Minneapolis rally with a number of his coworkers.

Jenness described the Teamster strike as among "the most significant, and the most popular, labor battles of the past 20 or more years. It is significant because it stands to reverse the decades of two-tier wages, downsizing, temporary and part-time jobs, wage cuts and wage freezes, lost pensions, and deterioration of health safety on the job. The Teamsters are fighting to raise wages, protect pensions and job safety, and increase the number and proportion of full-time jobs in the work force at UPS.

"This strike is popular," continued Jenness, "because tens of millions of workers in this country have experienced the same kinds of declines in working conditions over the years as have the UPS workers. And they see that this strike has a very good chance of turning this around for a very large number of workers, and influencing other workers ability to do the same."

During the discussion, a worker mentioned UPS's claim that pensions would dramatically increase if UPS won its demand to have a single employer, rather than the current multiemployer, pension plan.

Senum said the Teamster strikers support the current plan because it protects the pensions of retirees who worked for companies that are out of business due to increased competition after trucking was deregulated in 1978. "Besides," he said, "we can't rely on Social Security alone. Not only is it inadequate, but if our Teamster pension plan was run the way Social Security is, the pension managers would all be in jail! The Federal government raids the Social Security surplus to pay the deficits caused by huge military budgets and the like."

Jenness pointed out that "all pension plans are exposed to the weaknesses of the capitalist system. When, sooner or later, a large economic crash occurs, the pension, which is really just a promise to pay, will go up in smoke." He called for a dramatic increase in the Social Security system, which must be made to cover all workers with adequate old-age security.

BY MEGAN ARNEY

NEWARK, New Jersey — More than 100 people attended the ninth annual Hiroshima Day Observance at the Metropolitan Baptist Church here. The August 7 event was sponsored by the New Jersey Hiroshima Remembrance Committee, New Jersey Peace Action, Womens International League for Peace and Freedom, and others. Ramsey Clark and Congressman Donald Payne were the featured speakers.

Bob Miller, a member of the United Auto Workers and the Socialist Workers candidate for governor in New Jersey, had a campaign table at the event. In addition, Miller set up a display of over 20 reproductions of photos from the Hiroshima Memorial Museum and other materials he obtained while attending conferences in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1995, commemorating 50 years

since the atomic bombings.

Interviewed for a cable TV program, Miller explained, "The fight against nuclear weapons is important today. The threat of a nuclear war is greater now than the past decades as the United States government and other imperialist powers expand NATO, with the aim of going to war against Russia and restoring capitalism there. Washington has thousands of nuclear weapons, is the only government that has used them, and must be disarmed."

Miller also pointed out that over 30,000 Koreans, many of them forced laborers, were among the 200,000 annihilated in the atomic bombings of Hiroshima on August 6 and Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945.

Participants at the meeting bought eight copies of the *Militant* and \$70 worth of Pathfinder literature.

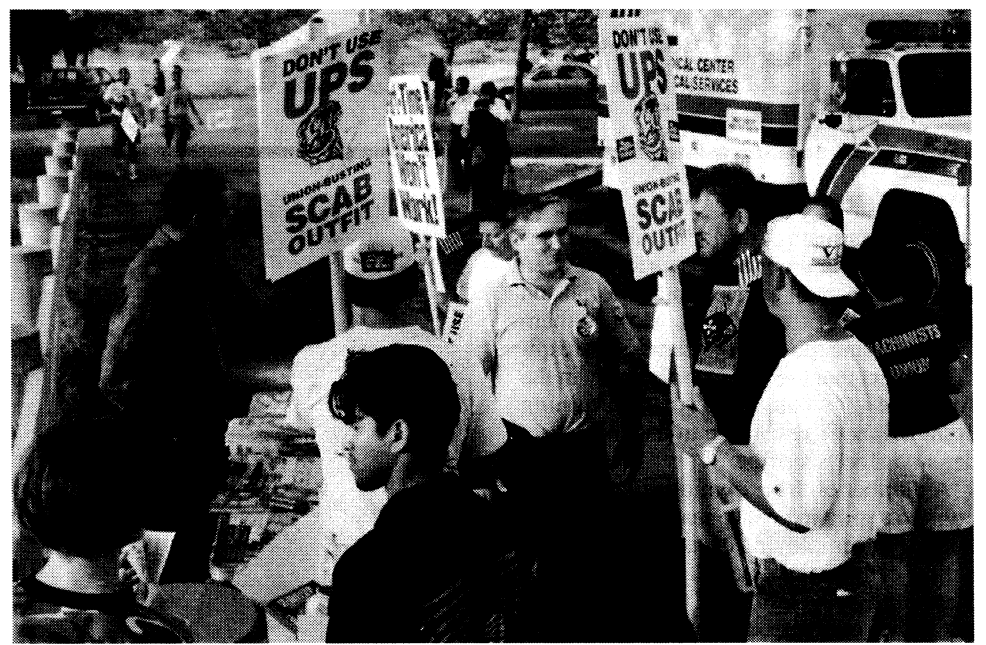
Miller also spoke on a cable television show August 4 in support of the UPS strikers and addressed the thousands who demonstrated August 16 in Brooklyn against the torture of a Haitian man by police there.

Two of Miller's opponents, Gov. Christine Whitman, who is seeking reelection, and James McGreevy, came to the Ford assembly plant in Edison August 18 to drive the first 1998 model Ford Ranger off the line. *The Home News & Journal*, a central New Jersey daily, reported, "Among the crowd of more than 1,000 workers watching the festivities was Robert Miller, an assembly-line worker and the gubernatorial candidate of the Socialist Workers Party.... He also challenged Whitman's claims in her speech about the strength of the economy. 'If it was so wonderful, there wouldn't be a situation where 180,000 UPS workers are fighting for basic dignity.'"

Miller said coworkers snapped up 12 copies of the *Militant* that day and another worker bought *Pombo: a Man of Che's Guerrilla*. After work, he visited the Teamster picket line in Edison, where he sold two copies of the *Militant* and the Pathfinder title *The Eastern Airlines Strike*. The next day, two coworkers decided to renew their subscriptions to the *Militant*.

BY HOLLY HARKNESS

DETROIT — "The Socialist Workers campaign demands that the Wayne County



Robert Miller, Socialist Workers candidate for governor of New Jersey, (center), and campaign supporters join August 13 rally for UPS strikers in Jersey City, New Jersey.

prosecutor's office retry the killer cop, Walter Budzyn, for the murder of Malice Green," Rosa Garmendia, the Socialist Workers candidate for Mayor of Detroit, said in response to the Michigan Supreme Court decision overturning his second degree murder conviction. Budzyn and his partner, Larry Nevers, were convicted of second degree murder charges by separate juries and sent to prison in October 1993.

The two cops were found guilty of using heavy flashlights to beat Green to death on Nov. 5, 1992. Green, an unemployed steelworker who was Black, was assaulted after he dropped an acquaintance off in front of what the police labeled a "drug house." The attack was witnessed by residents of the neighborhood, many of whom had experienced cop harassment. Coming not long after the acquittal of the Los Angeles police who beat Rodney King, the Green killing became a big issue in Detroit.

The court ruling let Nevers' conviction stand because there was overwhelming evidence. He will remain in federal prison serving a 12-25-year sentence, but Budzyn was released the very next day, after serving only four years of his 8-18-year sentence.

The court ordered a new trial for Budzyn claiming the jury was influenced by three factors outside the trial. First, they viewed the film *Malcolm X* during a break in the trial, which includes footage of cops beating Rodney King. Secondly, the jury reportedly discussed the special steps that the Detroit cops were taking in case the cops

were freed and there might be a riot. The third supposed error was that someone said that both cops had been members of "STRESS," an infamous police task force that targeted Blacks in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The STRESS unit killed 20 people, 17 of whom were Black. It was disbanded after massive public protest. But only Nevers had been a member.

After a two-week delay, with Budzyn walking the streets, and a widespread debate in plants, shopping centers, and in the press over the decision, the Wayne County prosecutor announced that he would seek a new trial, charging the ex-cop with second degree murder.

Meanwhile, Garmendia and Socialist Workers candidates for city council Willie Reid and John Sarge have won spots on the September 9 ballot.

Their supporters gathered more than 2,400 signatures at the candidates work sites, at factory gates, and in working-class neighborhoods to place them on the ballot. Among the signers were dozens of locked out Detroit newspaper workers. The candidates and their supporters have been active in backing the newspaper workers' fight to regain their jobs, as well as walking the picket lines with Teamsters at UPS.

Garmendia is a meatpacker at Thorn Apple Valley and a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Union. Reid, a machine operator at American Axle, and Sarge, an auto assembly worker at Ford, are both members of United Auto Workers.

Activists protest attack on Native rights

BY PAUL KOURI AND ROGER ANNIS

SURREY, BRITISH COLUMBIA — A trial of 15 Native Indian rights fighters in this Vancouver suburb ended with harsh sentences against them. Fourteen of the accused were sentenced to prison terms of six months to four years. Another, Jones William Ignace, received four and a half years in addition to the 22 months that he has already been held behind bars.

Dozens of the defendants' supporters were in the courtroom as the sentences were pronounced, and they shouted denunciations of the judge. They then filed outside and staged a rally in front of the courthouse. "This trial is an outrage, a mockery of justice," declared John "Splitting The Sky" Hill to the group and the many journalists covering the trial. He is a coordinator of the Gustafsen 18 Defense Committee.

The protesters then traveled to downtown Vancouver where the Assembly of First Nations was holding its national convention. Some 150 delegates agreed to sign a petition calling upon the British Columbia government to hold a public inquiry into the events that led to the arrest of the defendants in 1995. The outgoing president of the organization, Ovide Mercredi, however, dismissed the call. "If you use a gun," he said, "those are the consequences."

The Assembly of First Nations represents officials of local Indian governments who are elected under the terms of the Canada Indian Act. There are approximately one million Native Indian people in Canada.

The trial stemmed from a massive government and police assault against a spiritual encampment of Native and non-Native people on the shores of Gustafsen Lake in central British Columbia in the summer of

1995. The attack was ordered by the New Democratic Party government in British Columbia with the full backing of the federal Canadian government.

The government sided with a rancher who claimed title to the land and wanted the encampment closed down. Participants said the land was unceded Indian territory and refused to leave. The trial proved that the rancher possessed no legal title to the land. At the height of the assault, some 400 police were mobilized.

It was the biggest police operation in Canada since a similar one against the Mohawk Indians at Oka, Quebec, in 1990. Thousands of rounds of bullets were fired by police during several weeks of siege of the encampment in August and September. One of the soon-to-be accused was shot in the arm. Displays of weapons and warning shots by people in the encampment were presented to the trial by prosecutors as attempts to kill police.

There were 18 original defendants. Three were found not guilty when the trial jury delivered its verdict on May 20. The remaining 15 were acquitted of more serious charges, including two charges of attempting to murder police officers. William Ignace was one of those acquitted of a murder charge. He is 66 years old and is an outspoken opponent of the oppression of Native Indians in Canada.

The trial lasted 10 months, one of the longest criminal trials in Canadian history.

"Given the judge's instructions to the jury, we were not expecting acquittals on all charges," explained Bill Lightbown, a coordinator of the Gustafsen 18 Defense Committee. "He instructed them to ignore all three bases of our defense — that the land in question was unceded and should there-

fore be subject to a negotiated land claims process, that defendants acted in self-defense, and that they firmly believed their actions to be within the spirit if not the letter of the law."

The trial revealed details of the lies used by police and the government to justify an armed assault of the encampment. One internal police video made public during the trial portrays a sergeant of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Canada's federal police force, smiling as he tells his colleagues during a police planning meeting, "We're experts at smear campaigns."

In imposing the sentences, the judge fully supported the scope of the police operation.

The outcome of this trial is a sharp contrast to the trial stemming from a similar police assault the same summer against an occupation by Native protesters of Ipperwash Provincial Park in southwest Ontario. There, on September 6, Native Indian Dudley George was shot dead by the Ontario Provincial Police. One of the cops was found guilty of manslaughter this July 3 — but he will not spend a day in jail. He was sentenced to two years of "community service."

Internal notes of proceedings by the Ministry of the Solicitor-General in Ontario were recently obtained by the Canadian Press news agency and they confirm that the order for the assault came from the office of Ontario Premier Michael Harris. The premier wanted protesters "out of the park — nothing else," reported wrote one ministry official.

Paul Kouri is a member of the United Steelworkers of America in Vancouver. Roger Annis is a member of the International Association of Machinists, also in Vancouver.

UPS strike outcome haunts bourgeoisie

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

In the aftermath of the UPS strike, the big-business press around the world has been running a spate of articles and editorials on the outcome of the walkout. Most of them are expressing the deep concerns of the capitalist rulers that the Teamsters victory in the August 4-18 battle may mark a turning point in labor's resistance to the employers' demands for "sacrifice."

A number of these opinion columns also point to a growing nervousness among sections of the employing class about the stagnation of labor productivity in the United States and the volatility of the boom of paper values on the stock market.

"The just-resolved United Parcel Service strike was a shot across the bow of the inflationless 1990's," said Stephen Roach in an op-ed piece in the Sunday "This Week in Review" section of the August 24 *New York Times*. Roach, chief economist for the investment bank Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, had been a major proponent of "downsizing" and "reengineering."

About a year ago, Roach gave widely publicized interviews recanting from those views and saying downsizing "had gone too far." The layoffs, speedup, declining average real wages, and worsening working conditions that accompanied implementation of the concepts he had preached for years, Roach said in May 1996, were bound to lead to a "worker backlash" — the title of his recent column in the *Times*. Roach was relentlessly attacked for taking this position last year, especially in the capitalist media in Europe.

"American workers are now beginning to challenge the very forces that have led to a spectacular resurgence in corporate profitability in the United States," Roach said in his August 24 column. "They are, in effect, saying 'no' to years of corporate cost cutting that has been directed primarily at the nation's labor force."

Roach said the UPS-Teamsters settlement "was largely on the union's terms" — a fact commonly accepted among bourgeois economists and other such writers.

The August 23 *Economist* of London, for example, headlined its article assessing the outcome of the UPS strike "Labour's summer victory." And the September 1 *Business Week* featured the following headline that filled the entire front page of the magazine: "SHARING PROSPERITY: Wages are starting to move up — and the UPS settle-



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Teamsters picket UPS depot at 43rd St. in Manhattan, New York, August 6.

ment is a win for workers. But real wages for more than half of all Americans are actually lower than they were in 1989. What will it take for them to catch up?"

An endless boom or a depression?

Unlike Roach, the *Economist* tried to downplay the significance of the confrontation between the world's largest package delivery company and its 185,000 unionized employees for revitalizing the labor movement. The *Economist* article also argued that the result of the strike will have no detrimental impact on the current Wall Street "miracle."

The Morgan Stanley economist presented a different view. Roach said the wage settlement at UPS may reverse the trend of declining real wages workers have been forced to accept for the last quarter century and points to "the danger of renewed inflation." He also argued that the settlement "underscores the potential for a sharp decline in the ever frothy stock and bond markets."

The Dow Jones industrial average has indeed been wracked by what the August 26 *Wall Street Journal* described as "late-day stock tremors." Between August 6 — two days after the Teamsters walked out of their jobs at UPS — and August 26, the Dow Jones dropped from its record high of 8,529 to 7,782 points, nearly 6 percent. This included the plunge of 247 points on August

15, "its second-biggest one-day point loss ever," second to the 1987 stock market crash, as the *Journal* noted.

"These concerns are certainly at odds with today's conventional wisdom," Roach said. "Many believe that the United States economy has entered a new era. According to this tale, the post-cold-war forces of globalization, deregulation and a technology-led Information Age have combined to produce a rare and powerful recovery, led by increased worker productivity."

The case for 'worker backlash' view

Roach dubbed this view "the productivity-led recovery," counterposed to his "labor-crunch recovery" scenario.

"Unlike the productivity-led recovery, the labor-crunch recovery is not sustainable," Roach said. "It is a recipe for mounting tensions, in which a raw power struggle occurs between capital and labor. Investors are initially rewarded beyond their wildest dreams, but those rewards could eventually be wiped out by a worker backlash."

The Wall Street financier said the cornerstone of his opponents' arguments was that labor productivity has been rising due to computerization and other technological advances. Pointing to recently released figures by the Commerce Department that showed a further slowing in the rate of growth of labor productivity in the United

States, Roach stated, "There's not a shred of evidence that supports the notion of a meaningful improvement in America's productivity."

Mired in a steady decline of the average rate of industrial profits and intensifying competition for markets for more than two decades, big business has not been investing in new plants and equipment to expand productive capacity. The average rate of return in industrial investments is declining even as the average mass of profits grows. So landlords, industrialists, and other businessmen have been pouring money capital into the stock market, fueling the speculative bubble on Wall Street.

At the same time, the capitalist class has been trying to shore up its profit rates by intensifying the exploitation of labor. Without a growth of productive capacity, and without qualitative changes in technology, the only way to fatten profits is to force workers to produce more for less in the same amount of time. The "productivity-led recovery" school has been arguing that the bosses have been successful in accomplishing precisely this goal, which Roach tried to refute.

Specter that haunts the ruling class

It's not just the latest government statistics that support his view, Roach argued. "There has also been a dramatic realignment of the nation's economic pie, with a much smaller slice going to labor. Corporate profits surged to 9.6 percent of gross domestic product in 1996, the highest share in 28 years, and labor compensation stood at 58 percent of gross domestic product in 1996, well below the high of 59 percent hit in the late 1980's."

"Which takes us back to the recently settled U.P.S. strike. One strike hardly makes a trend. But there can be no mistaking the message from the nation's most significant work stoppage since 1983. Today, with the unemployment rate at a 24-year low, labor unions were emboldened to take action. And with corporate profitability at its highest in a generation, management has decided that it can afford to give workers a raise. For U.P.S., the cost of settlement is hardly trivial. By some estimates, it will eventually cost as much as \$1 billion a year, and that comes right out of the company's bottom line," Roach stated.

"In the end," he continued, "that's what worker backlash is all about. It speaks of cost cutting, which has been central to America's economic recovery in the 1990's." Whatever the major issues turn out to be in upcoming labor battles, Roach added, "gone are the days of a docile American labor force that once acquiesced to slash-and-burn corporate restructuring."

The former "guru of downsizing" did not offer any solution to the gloomy future for big business he predicted. He concluded with the following statement, "As the pendulum of economic power begins to swing from capital to labor, these are the very risks we must now begin to confront."

UPS workers defend rights on the job

Continued from front page

parcel delivery giant. As a result, the strike lasted two days longer in the Chicago area, until August 20.

Although Local 705 members have not seen the actual contract yet, several say the agreement contains many of the same elements in the national contract. In the local settlement, UPS agreed to create 600 new full-time jobs by combining existing part-time jobs. The company agreed to create 40 to 50 new full-time jobs at Willows Spring.

The union won gains in wages similar to those in the national accord. Hourly wages of full timers will increase \$3.10 over five years, and part timers got a \$4.10 hourly raise spread over the same period.

Teamsters Local 710, with 4,100 members in Illinois, is the other local with a separate contract with UPS. Unlike 705, the central Illinois local did not go on strike. At first, its members did not honor the picket lines set by the national Teamsters walkout. Once Local 705 organized its own pickets at 710-organized plants, UPS workers did not cross the line. Recently, Local 710 extended its expired agreement with UPS until September. The current contract contains a no-strike pledge.

"Among the Teamsters," said Campos, "it was smiles, hand shakes, and high fives" when word came down about the settlement around midnight on August 18. "It was like your favorite team had just won. We feel united, like we did something together. Now we realize we can do a lot of things."

"By striking we got a better offer," said Fiore Auriene. "The part-timers got what they wanted, which was more full-time jobs;

and the full timers got what they wanted, which was the union pension fund."

Auriene said he was glad he went through the strike experience. "Sometimes it takes courage to make a change," he stated. "When you stand up for what you believe in, it's better."

The union was stronger than the company had anticipated, Auriene said. "People think of UPS as the guys in the brown uniforms and the brown truck, but the majority at UPS are part timers, sweating away in these centers." Some 70 percent of UPS workers in the Chicago area work part time.

Fighting for better working conditions

Auriene said he hopes that with a strengthened union now the injury rate will go down. "There are more people injured at UPS than any other company in America," he said. "We average over 40 injuries a month on the day shift alone, one of four shifts."

Not everyone is back at work, Campos explained. "The company is trying to minimize staffing so they can justify the layoff of 15,000 they have been talking about."

UPS has taken out ads in the big-business dailies apologizing to its customers for inconveniences during the strike. One full-page ad says: "We're just as happy to have them back as you are," referring to UPS workers.

At the same time, UPS management says it does not know how many jobs it will cut "permanently." But this latest company stance is beginning to backfire. UPS hired 400 part-time workers at their Willows Spring hub "in what could be the first of

several waves of hiring," reported the August 27 *Chicago Tribune*.

"The first days back they picked on everything, your hair, your shirtsleeve, your mustache," said Campos. "They are bitter. They have an awful taste in their mouth."

"We finally did something," he continued. **Continued on Page 9**

Clinton blocks rail strike

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, DC — President William Clinton invoked the Railway Labor Act on August 21, blocking a walkout by 2,300 members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees (BMWE) against Amtrak. The union is prevented from striking for 60 days. A presidential panel has 30 days to make recommendations on settling the dispute. The union and Amtrak management will then have another month to try to reach an agreement. At that time Congress could also pass legislation imposing a settlement.

It is the 12th time Clinton has used the measure to intervene against workers' right to strike since he first took office in January 1993.

Clinton's action followed the BMWE's rejection of the National Mediation Board's binding arbitration. The union organizes workers who build, construct, and maintain Amtrak's railroad tracks, buildings, bridges, and electrical

power systems that powers trains. The principle issues in the dispute involve wages, benefits, and work rules. The union is demanding that wages for its members at Amtrak be the same as those employed by class-I freight railroads. BMWE members at Amtrak have worked without a general wage increase for more than two years.

Amtrak chairman Thomas Downs welcomed Clinton's action. In a statement released by the union, BMWE general chairman Jed Dodd said the action is "effectively coming to the aid of Amtrak management and putting our right to strike on hold. Whether we strike or not on October 21 will not depend upon the recommendations of this Emergency Board but will depend upon whether or not we are able to negotiate a just and equitable agreement."

Sam Manuel is a member of the United Transportation Union in Washington, D.C.

Union conference in Cuba discusses int'l labor resistance

BY GALE SHANGOLD
AND ERNIE MAILHOT

HAVANA, Cuba — More than 1,200 people representing 400 trade union organizations from 61 countries took part in an international gathering here August 6 – 8. Titled "International Meeting of Workers Against Neo-liberalism and Globalization," the gathering was initiated by the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC). It was cosponsored by trade union federations in a number of other countries.

Participants discussed the devastation the worldwide crisis of capitalism is inflicting on working people, especially in the colonial and semicolonial world, and adopted a resolution that includes demands aimed at uniting workers to confront this crisis. In fact, as the conference was preceding, unemployed workers in several cities in Argentina, were putting up roadblocks demanding that Buenos Aires provide relief from the depression conditions there.

The largest delegations outside Cuba came from Brazil and Argentina. Nearly 300 delegates came from Brazil, the majority from the United Federation of Workers (CUT), the largest trade union federation in that country. Many of the Argentine unionists were members of the Argentine Workers Federation (CTA), which organizes about a third of unionized workers there, mostly in the public sector.

Of the nearly 50 unionists attending the gathering from Canada, many were officials in some of the major unions in that country, including the Canadian Auto Workers and United Food and Commercial Workers.

Sizable delegations came from the General Labor Confederation (CGT) of France,

one of the three major union federations there, as well as other countries in Europe. While participation from Asia and Africa was smaller, a number of unionists participated from India and from the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).

More than 90 unionists and other activists attended from the United States, the majority of whom traveled with the Detroit-based U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange. The U.S. delegation included Rick Farquharson, a newspaper striker from Detroit. A smaller group traveled with the U.S. Health Care Trade Union Committee of Local 1199 of the hospital workers union in New York.

CTC secretary general Pedro Ross welcomed the delegates. Osvaldo Martínez, member of Cuba's National Assembly and Director of the Center for Research on the World Economy, gave the opening talk.

"Of the 5.6 billion people who inhabit the planet today," Martínez said, "some 2.8 billion make up the economically active population, that is, people of working age. Of them, 1.14 billion — 41 percent — are jobless or underemployed throughout the world."

These figures prove the inhuman character and the bankruptcy of a world system that promotes "neoliberalism and globalization," Martínez said. Neoliberalism is a term widely used in Latin America to describe policies of capitalist governments that promote privatization of state assets, layoffs of workers, worsening of working conditions, cutbacks of social services, and other austerity measures pushed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other imperialist financial institutions.

The resolution delegates adopted says



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Cuban union leader Pedro Ross speaking at August 6 – 8 conference in Havana

"that neoliberal globalization is a new moment in the development of capitalism characterized by economic concentration in the hands of transnational corporations, which, in their search to become competitive and cost effective, are trying to cut back, by all possible means, the cost of labor."

Many trade unionists at the meeting spoke about the crisis of unemployment in their countries and about labor protests demanding jobs. Roque Borons from Spain, for example, said in the plenary session that 3.5 million Spanish workers are jobless — 10 percent of the workforce. He also referred to a recent march of 50,000 there to protest layoffs and unemployment.

The final resolution calls for demanding "economic policies that foster more and better jobs," including through agrarian reform necessary in many underdeveloped countries; "higher wages and income for both permanent and temporary workers, sufficient to meet their basic needs;" "shortening the work shift without cutting wages;" and "substantial increases in health, education, social security, and housing appropriations."

A number of delegates pointed to examples of labor resistance and addressed the need for international solidarity. Rafael Cabarcas of the oil workers union in Colombia referred to a 40-day strike by oil workers in that country this year. Baron Hidrove of the Workers Federation of Ecuador described a labor uprising there that led to the resignation of president Abdalá Bucaram. David Sole, president of a United Auto Workers local in Detroit, got loud applause as he spoke about the newspaper workers battle against Detroit *News* and *Free Press*. And Betsy Stone, a member of the International Association of Machinists in Chicago, spoke about the UPS strike, which had begun just prior to the opening of the conference.

On August 4, the day the Teamsters struck UPS, Pedro Ross spoke at a workshop of young trade unionists at the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students, which preceded the trade union conference. "We have to show solidarity with these fighting men and women and others like them around the world," Ross said.

The ballooning foreign debt of third world countries was another topic of discussion and debate. Roberto Fornaris from the Argentinian CTA asked that the final resolution include a demand for "cancellation of the third world debt." Delegates from a number of countries, however, including those from India and other semicolonial countries who belong to political parties that are part of the ruling regimes opposed this proposal. The resolution adopted calls for "unmasking the unpayable and unfair external debt as a mechanism to rob the underdeveloped world of its wealth."

Another debate took over the question of the fight for national self-determination. A number of delegates from India raised that struggles for national independence cannot be supported in all cases. Their comments reflected their opposition to the struggle for Kashmir's independence from India. Nancy Exilas from the Confederation of Haitian Workers (KOTA) expressed a different view. "Support by trade unionists for national sovereignty can't be limited or cautious," she said. "We have to support unequivocally demands for national independence. The Cuban revolution, and our struggle in Haiti against domination by the United States, has shown this."

The resolution adopted calls for "defend-
Continued on Page 14

UPS workers defend rights on job

Continued from Page 8

ued. "These guys used to look down their noses at us and say you've got to work for a living while they sat on their fat as — s. They would have liked for us to have crawled back, but it didn't happen."

Auriene said the company failed to divide full-time and part-time workers. "They even installed separate bathrooms and cafeteria, but everyone ignored them."

After his first day back, Auriene said he ran into one guy who had crossed the picket line during the strike. He told me he had plans "to become a supervisor and thought striking would have reduced his chances."

Auriene's first day back was "normal except that I was asked to work a double shift and the company had workers walk through a metal detector on the way into work." Campos said his first day back was marked by tension. "We yelled at the scabs," he said. "Every time I see one of those guys I think of dinner being taken away from one of my kids. They are little mice. There is no excuse for their behavior." Only a few thousand workers among the 185,000 production employees crossed the Teamsters picket lines since the strike began August 4.

UPS has fired 45 – 50 Teamsters nationally for union activity during the walkout claiming these strikers "committed criminal acts of violence during the strike." Nine UPS workers were fired in Warwick, Rhode Island. They were targeted, according to an Associated Press report, because "they followed UPS trucks along delivery routes, then marched around the vehicles with strike signs — a strategy called 'ambulatory picketing'."

Coleman Shelley, a UPS shop steward at the company's Hialeah center in Miami, said that in south Florida "UPS has given out hundreds of warning letters for 'violent' activity on the picket line." Shelley, who is still working, said the notice he got accused him of "conducting terrorist threats." Shelley noted that the company letter was dated August 15, but one of the incidents cited is August 18. The union is fighting these victimizations, he said.

In response to the recent government ruling to void the reelection of Ron Carey to the Teamsters presidency last year, UPS worker Eugene Philips said union members "need to get the union back so it can do what it is supposed to do," he said.

Philips, however, rejected government intervention into the Teamsters' internal affairs. The government needs to "get out of the union's business," he stated. Phillips said the White House-engineered investigations become an obstacle to dealing with the next challenges facing union members.

Referring to Carey, Campos said, "Everyone I have talked to believes that this move [by the government] is aimed at downgrading the victory of the strike."

Recent press coverage underlined Campos's point of a government-led effort to knock the wind out of the strike. In an article titled "Win One, Lose One" in the September 1 issue of *Time* magazine, reporter Bruce Van Voorst wrote, "The ruling took some spring out of labor's step in making the UPS strike a springboard for orga-

nizing efforts, even as the Teamsters were staging Action Day for Good Jobs rallies across the nation."

In addition to the ruling, the federal board that oversees the Teamsters union, launched a major probe August 26 into the union's top leadership.

The three-member board was created allegedly to purge "corruption" out of the union as part of the settlement of a federal "antiracketeering" suit in 1989. One of the board members is William Webster, former FBI and CIA director.

James P. Hoffa, whom Carey narrowly defeated in last year's election, urged the board to recommend the removal of Carey from his union post.

On August 27 the National Mediation Board blocked the 2,000 UPS pilots from striking until 1998.

Cappy Kidd is a member of United Auto Workers Local 980 in Chicago. Rollande Girard and Janet Post from Miami also contributed to this article.

Unionists back from Cuba protest U.S. gov't harassment

BY JOHN SARGE

DETROIT — Three members of the U.S. delegation to an international trade union conference recently held in Havana were detained, questioned, and had materials seized by U.S. Customs agents on their return from Cuba August 9. Two people were stopped at the Detroit and one person at the Philadelphia airports. They were part of 92 trade unionists and other activists from the United States who attended the gathering, including nine from Detroit.

David Sole, president of United Auto Workers Local 2334 described the incidents at an August 15 press conference in the Detroit city council chambers. It was called by the U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange, one of the groups that organized travel to Cuba for the trade union gathering. Sole said two of the delegates were held "over three hours" in Detroit and the third nearly five hours in

Philadelphia.

Sole said the delegates were placed in separate rooms and denied legal representation when they requested to call a lawyer. "We were improperly questioned," he said. "They asked questions like who did we vote for in the last election. They asked us about our political beliefs." He said Customs agents made allegations that the second detainee in Detroit could be involved in industrial espionage because he is an engineer.

The agents had a prepared questionnaire they gave to each person to fill. The unionists refused to answer questions that demanded names of other participants or organizations. The agents seized literature and video tapes from Cuba, before allowing the delegates to leave. The unionists will file a legal complaint with U.S. Customs demanding the return of all seized articles.

Two members of the Detroit City Coun-

cil, Maryann Mahaffey and Clyde Cleveland, took part in the press conference along with Father John Nolan. City Council President Mahaffey told the press the actions Sole described "smacked of McCarthyism."

On August 23 the U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange hosted a report-back meeting, where several unionists who traveled to Cuba and a delegate to the world youth festival, which preceded the trade union conference in the Caribbean island, spoke to about 40 people. Rick Farquharson, a locked-out member of the Pressmen's union at the Detroit Newspaper Agency who attended the Havana gathering, said he "was surprised at the interest that the Cuban and other unionists had in the struggle by newspaper workers in the United States."

John Sarge is a member of the United Auto Workers in Detroit.

Steelworkers at Wheeling-Pitt hold off bosses' assault

BY TONY DUTROW

PITTSBURGH — "We proved that LaBow couldn't break us," said Ron Moran, a maintenance worker and member of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), in a phone interview from Mingo Junction, Ohio, where Wheeling Pittsburgh Steel Corp. has a mill. He was referring to the victory steelworkers there scored recently after a nearly eleven-month-long strike.

Ronald LaBow, chairman of WHX Corp., Wheeling-Pitt's parent company, has been the target of the anger of many of the 4,500 steelworkers who struck in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. The settlement, in what the August 4 *Wall Street Journal* described as "the longest strike against a major steel company this century," was announced as 185,000 Teamsters hit the picket lines against UPS.

Moran said he voted against the contract, which was approved overwhelmingly by the union membership in a secret ballot August 12. But he added that workers did win some of their key demands, particularly forcing WHX to back off from dismantling an industry-standard guaranteed pension, which LaBow had vowed he would never accept. Moran said the pact that ended the strike fell short of what the company could have been forced to agree to.

"The bosses are very bitter about the strike," Moran stated, referring to the situation inside the mill after the walkout. "We're still struggling with them, and we're going to be struggling to be treated justly and with equality on the job." He continued, "If nothing else, we stood together for 10 months and showed the company we've followed our union and will continue to do so."

Other workers made similar comments on the importance of coming out of the battle with their union intact and a bit stronger.

Jerry Adams, who worked for 31 years at Wheeling Pitt's Beech Bottom, West Virginia, corrugating mill, said the high point of the strike for him was the chance to reach out to other unionists for solidarity. He traveled to Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York spreading the message of the strike and seeking support. "I feel so fortunate to have been able to be part of this," he said in an interview. "I think this outreach helped break LaBow." In addition to speaking tours in states further away, unionists from the area joined Wheeling-Pitt workers in leafleting working-class neighborhoods in towns in the region to get the facts out about their strike and expose the role of WHX stockholders in the attempt to defeat the union.

Adams said the mill where he works was originally slated to be shut down, along with production lines at the Martins Ferry, Ohio, galvanizing mill. The settlement includes a

reversal of this decision and recall of nearly 200 workers.

The company gave in to the main union demand of a "defined-pension plan." This guarantees each retiree a monthly pension of at least \$1,200, or \$40 per year of service, for those at least 55 years of age who have worked for the company 30 years and more. This has been the standard for USWA members at other U.S. steelmakers.

Terms of settlement

The company had vowed to maintain a "defined-contribution" pension plan, which USWA members at Wheeling-Pittsburgh agreed to when the steelmaker argued it needed concessions to emerge from bankruptcy several years ago. The company plan placed a fixed amount of money into a retirement fund invested in the stock market, the value of which would rise and fall according to the gyrations of the market.

Company executives argued the union did not win much of a victory in the end. "We did some creative things to let them say they got a defined-benefit plan," Daniel Keaton, a Wheeling-Pitt vice president and member of the company negotiating team told the August 4 *Wall Street Journal*. "The union was intent on a defined benefit. We gave in to that, but the level of benefit is the same as if it were a defined contribution."

The contract is for five years on wage issues and eight years for the pension issues. It includes a wage increase of \$1.50 an hour — phased in over five years — on top of the average pay of \$14 an hour; a \$2,000 signing bonus, plus a \$200 weekly pay and full medical coverage for workers waiting to be recalled on the job; and \$2 million to reimburse workers for out-of-pocket medical expenses they incurred during the strike. The full-coverage medical plan in place before the walkout is included in the new contract.

The agreement extends the pension plan for three years beyond the life of the contract. Concessions include eliminating 850 jobs — nearly 19 percent of the workforce — through attrition and buyouts; and "workplace efficiencies," that is job combinations and other work rule changes that will toughen working conditions.

Reaction by big business

USWA president George Becker called the pact a "remarkable victory" for the union. But the company said it, too, was pleased. Keaton said Wheeling-Pitt will now be able to produce the same amount of steel with fewer workers. "At the end of the day we have lowered our costs measurably with this deal," Keaton stated.

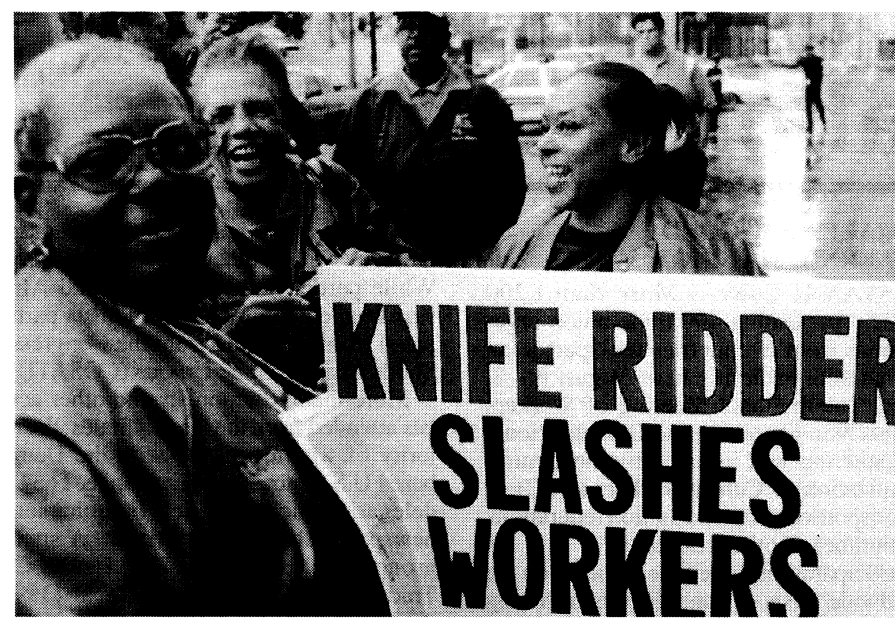
According to the August 18 *American Metals Market*, a steel industry daily, WHX posted an operating loss of \$101 million and a net loss of nearly \$72 million for the first half of 1997, on a 64 percent decline in sales compared to the previous year.

"The settlement, while welcome by both parties, renews worries that all steel producers could suffer from lower prices as Wheeling-Pittsburgh reenters the market," said an article in the August 4 *Wall Street Journal*.

The walkout and the new contract did have an impact throughout the steel industry. Supplies of flat-rolled products, particularly coated and cold-rolled sheet steel, used by the auto and other industries, were tight during the strike causing higher prices that are now expected to drop. Wheeling-Pitt is one of the few Basic Steel companies with blast furnaces that can produce such products. Over the last decade, the number of blast furnaces in the United States has dropped from 197 to 43.

Today, Wheeling Pitt has two such furnaces, while industry giant USX has 12. During the restructuring of the industry, many Basic Steel mills that use pig iron ore have shut down. "Minimills," largely non-union and running on recycled scrap metal, have proliferated. The minimills, however, are more and more dependent on Basic Steel for processed iron to mix with the increasingly scarce and impurity-tainted scrap, which is not suitable by itself for producing flat-rolled steel that meets the standards in

Detroit 'News' workers protest court ruling preventing rehiring of strikers



Militant/John Sarge

About 250 people, many former employees of Detroit *News* and *Free Press* who have been on strike since 1995, rallied in front of the company's headquarters in downtown Detroit, August 21. They were protesting an August 14 ruling by U.S. District judge John Corbett O'Meara, who refused to implement an order by the National Labor Relations Board that the companies reinstate the strikers. The demonstration was part of actions in 11 U.S. cities in solidarity with the Detroit *News* strikers. The rallies extended support to workers at the Monterey County *Herald*, which was recently acquired by Knight-Ridder, the parent company of the Detroit papers. Nearly 400 people rallied at Monterey Bay in California, August 21, in one of these actions. The Miami-based Knight-Ridder had announced it would fire all 190 workers at the *Herald* when it takes over operations September 4. The three newspaper unions in Monterey voted August 8 to authorize a strike. No strike date has been set yet. Since then, Knight-Ridder said it would rehire 109 of the *Herald's* 153 members of the Newspaper Guild.

auto and other basic manufacturing.

An editorial in the August 5 *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*, titled "Labor unrest; strikes may signal return of a more balanced playing field," expressed the uneasiness of many employers with the Wheeling-Pitt settlement. "The economy is booming, profits are sizzling and some workers have decided that they want to share in the good times," the editorial said. "Those at Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Corp. and at United Parcel Service are willing to strike for the privilege...."

"Ron LaBow... said he would never go back to that costlier (more secure) system. In the end, however, the defined-benefit plan was agreed to."

The *Wall Street Journal* said the settlement gave "Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Corp. workers a key pension related-victory, and the company desired job cuts."

Solidarity is key in union victory

Solidarity from other unionists contributed to the USWA's success in weathering some of the main company attacks. During the first months of the walkout, solidarity rallies of 2,000-4,000 workers were held in the region. Hundreds of steelworkers from all eight struck mills protested at the company's headquarters in Pittsburgh last November. They denounced Wheeling-Pitt's decision to cut off supplemental payments to widows of retirees. These payments were restored as part of the settlement.

Women's committees were set up by the Steubenville and Yorkville, Ohio, union locals, led by mill workers who are women.

These committees were instrumental in winning support for the strike among other workers and small businessmen in the area. Women strikers, for example, succeeded in getting hundreds of stores in the Ohio Valley to donate food to the embattled USWA members and display support for the walkout. The Yorkville women's committee organized regular collections at nearby factories. Steubenville streets were plastered with signs the women's committee there produced, urging motorists to honk in support and to wear blue ribbons in solidarity.

The AFL-CIO held a Wheeling-Pitt Solidarity Conference April 26 in downtown Pittsburgh. At that gathering, some 200 local union officials from the three-state region where the strike took place, pledged funds and organizing solidarity activities in their areas. AFL-CIO president John Sweeney chaired the conference and introduced a spirited delegation of Wheeling-Pitt strikers, who received a standing ovation.

Rank-and-file workers in the region and throughout the country took initiatives, sanctioned by their unions, to support the strike. Betsy Farley, a member of USWA Local 12014 in Birmingham, Alabama, works at the Sloss Industries Coke steel mill there. "At my last union meeting," Farley said in a recent interview, "the Wheeling-Pitt settlement was reported and discussed. Several of my coworkers told me they were proud to have helped the strikers win their demand for a defined pension plan. Workers at Sloss pitched in on a plant-gate collection for the strikers in March. This is our victory, too!"

Profit drive is behind Fine Air crash in Miami

BY RACHELE FRUIT AND SUZETTE JAMES

MIAMI, Florida — On August 7, Fine Air Flight 101 crashed on the perimeter of the Miami International Airport. The four people in the plane and one person on the ground were killed. Hundreds of others narrowly escaped death or injury as parts of the burning plane skidded across four lanes of a busy highway and a car-filled parking lot. The plane's nose eventually came to a rest inside a nearby store.

Following the crash, the investigation centered on Flight 101's cargo and the possibility that the plane was overloaded or that the load had been improperly secured in the cargo hold.

Several weeks earlier the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) had recommended suspensions of 29 of the company's

59 pilots for flying planes with dangerously heavy loads. But the FAA did not take any action against Fine Air.

One former Fine Air pilot showed up at the crash site to tell local media that the DC-8's crash wasn't a "fluke." He said two dozen other workers at Fine Air resigned about a year ago over safety concerns. Another former pilot, Richard Smith was quoted in the Miami *Herald* saying, "I looked it up and found out the door had a bad seal and that it had been reported to maintenance.... What they had done was shove two newspapers in the door to jam it shut."

Mary Schiavo, former inspector general of the Department of Transportation, suggested that Fine Air had "two strikes" against it — one, because it flew older planes and two because cargo airlines gen-

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Black farmers discuss stopping land loss

BY RICH STUART
AND KRISTIN MERIAM

EPES, Alabama — More than 200 people gathered here August 15-16 for the 30th Annual Meeting of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives (FSC). Participants included working farmers and their families, most of whom are Black, FSC staffers, and members of other farm-related organizations. A large contingent of government representatives from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) also took part.

The conference discussed the plight of Black farmers and how to stop the ongoing decline of their numbers, as racist discrimination and the workings of the capitalist system result in more and more of these exploited producers being driven off the land.

The number of Black farmers and land owners in the South of the United States has dropped from 100,000 owning 6 million acres in 1969 to less than 19,000 today owning less than 2.5 million acres of land.

Founded in 1967, the FSC has a history of fighting for the rights of working farmers who are Black. The Federation also provides aid to Black farmers — including debt restructuring, technical assistance, cooperative credit unions, and marketing programs. According to a brochure distributed at the conference, the aim of the FSC is to "save, protect, and expand the landholdings of Blacks in the South."

In his address to members and guests, FSC executive director Ralph Paige re-



Some 200 people attended the annual meeting of Federation of Southern Cooperatives

viewed the history of the federation and pointed to previous years when it organized caravans and other protests against government policies. "We couldn't even get in the door," Paige said, referring to those earlier battles. "Now we are in the door," he added, pointing to a tighter relationship between the Federation and government agencies. This includes funding by the USDA and state and local governments that amounted to 55 per-

cent of the Federation's budget last year.

One of the featured guests at the two-day meeting was Pearlie Reed, the government's assistant secretary of agriculture.

Testifying to the urgency of the rapid loss of land owned by Blacks, one farmer after another confronted Reed in the discussion. "Is there still a moratorium on farm foreclosures?" one farmer asked.

"Basically, there is a moratorium on fore-

closures and where there is a civil rights issue involved there will not be a foreclosure," Reed responded. "But I can't give you an absolute answer on that because there are about 15 definitions of foreclosure."

An angry peanut farmer from southwest Georgia told the meeting that a new quota system for peanut farmers threatened to drive him out of farming. "I'm farming land my ancestors had since 1887," he said. "My brothers and sisters all live out of state and buy quotas and give them to me, but the USDA makes me produce all kinds of deeds and plats to show I have enough land to grow the quota. I have debts from taxes and equipment. Not only minority farmers in general have a problem. The USDA shouldn't try to outmaneuver farmers — they have enough problems with weeds!"

Reed promised a private meeting with this farmer to address his concerns.

Another farmer, whose wife and children also attended the meeting, also confronted Reed. "I've been farming since we used mules," he said. "I farm my family land. I wanted to switch from cotton to sweet potatoes because I saw some money in sweet potatoes. I went to the USDA to get equipment for harvesting. The USDA said to borrow equipment when someone else was done. I lost my crop in the field while I was waiting to borrow the equipment." This farmer said that due to delays in getting loans earlier this year he may not be able to send his two children to college this fall.

Kenneth Thompson, a 37-year-old farmer from Lauderdale County, Alabama, told the meeting that as a younger farmer working inherited land he soon found himself deep in debt due to natural disasters and delays in getting loans. Getting no help from the government, he said, he had to borrow from a commercial bank at high interest rates. "I had to take a public job for the last seven years to make the payments to the bank."

Thompson told *Militant* reporters he strongly supported the Teamsters who struck UPS recently. He also took part in an unsuccessful union organizing drive last year at the poultry feed mill where he works.

Melbah Smith, a Black farmer from Brandon, Mississippi, challenged Reed saying, "Minority women are not being taken seriously." Smith said she had only gotten token "courtesy visits" but no serious attention when she asked for help to confront a bad soil erosion problem on her land.

A USDA representative told Smith he would see her "first thing Monday morning" after the conference. Smith demanded that he see the whole groups of minority women, saying she was not just speaking for herself. The USDA man told Smith he would start with her and then see the others.

"They blame the Lord for so much but the Lord doesn't have anything to do with these things," said Pearl Long, 76, another woman who runs a 300-acre cattle and peanut farm in Marianna, Florida. "We as farmers have got to start stirring up dust."

Profit drive caused Fine Air crash

Continued from Page 10

erally receive less scrutiny than passenger carriers. But Schiavo acknowledged, "In terms of cargo operations, they are fairly typical."

Prior to FAA officials returning to Washington they shifted their focus to whether or not the 49 aluminum latches found in the "open" position in the flight's wreckage

were ever locked. Workers who load Fine Air's planes are employed by Aeromar Airlines, a Dominican-based company that is prohibited from flying in the United States.

The August 14 *Herald* ran an article titled "Workers: Planes were overloaded. Aeromar accused of falsifying records on weights." The article details a systematic falsification of records by the company that loaded Fine Air's planes. Patrick Kennedy, a former Aeromar employee, stated, "Aeromar falsified weights. For instance, they would stick a load in the belly of the plane and say it weighed 25 pounds when it really weighed 250 pounds. This often happened."

A former Aeromar cargo traffic manager said she falsified cargo weights on documents filed with the FAA and U.S. Customs. "I filled out the paperwork, I was told to forge it, and I know it was terrible."

The bosses and the FAA have maintained that the final call on whether or not to fly a plane rests with the pilot. Former employees, however, explained that it was common for trucks to pull up at the last minute with thousands of pounds of cargo, which would then be tucked into unsecured compartments, without the pilot's knowledge.

Monica Seachrist, a former Fine Air cargo agent, told the *Herald*, "We kept separate books." A manifest with one weight went to authorities and another reflecting the true weight was kept for billing purposes. Seachrist stated that in her four years at Fine Air she "never saw anyone from the FAA inspecting anything."

Concern over cargo operations here dates back to the 1960s, when a string of crashes happened, involving small airlines under foreign registration. Referred to as "loop-hole" air charter firms, because their foreign registry exempts them from FAA standards and review, these firms flourished as U.S. capitalists expanded investments in Latin America and the Caribbean. Despite FAA claims that the agency is enforcing tighter scrutiny, air cargo planes are still free of many of the inspections passenger planes are subjected to. The crash of Flight 101, brought to 21 the number of cargo aircraft crashes this year resulting in 10 deaths.

Miami International Airport is the country's sixth largest airport, but handles more international cargo than any airport around the world — some \$17 billion annually.

More than 1,460 takeoffs and landings take place here each day. By 2010, the FAA projects that flights in and out of this airport — located in the center of Miami — will increase by 115 percent.

Janet Post, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Miami and a member of Inter-

national Association of Machinist Local 386 at United Airlines flight kitchen said, "From TWA Flight 800, to Korean Air Flight 801, ValuJet 592, and the Fine Air crash — none of these were caused by terrorism or workers' sabotage. They were all caused by the utter disregard for safety that the airline companies practice everyday. Executives of these companies should be indicted, prosecuted, and convicted for murder in every one of these crashes."

Despite the evidence that the company's drive for profits was at the heart of the crash's cause, Fine Air and the government continue to try to blame workers. The August 15 *Miami Herald* carried a "plea" by FAA for "workers in the aviation industry in South Florida... to come forward with their information" on the deliberate forging of loading documents for any cargo flights that operate out of the Miami airport.

The FAA said it knows of no plans to prosecute any worker who has reported safety violations they witnessed. The agency also indicated it can't guarantee immunity from prosecution.

Rachele Fruit is a member of the International Association of Machinists Local 1126 at Aero Thrust in Miami.

Women's rights activists protest Promise Keepers

BY DOUG JENNESS

MINNEAPOLIS, Minnesota — More than 75 supporters of women's rights held a rally here August 16 outside the Metrodome, where nearly 50,000 were participating in a two-day Promise Keepers conference.

Established in 1990, the Promise Keepers appeals to men to become "godly" by reasserting their traditional role as the dominant head of the family.

The group's gathering here, which drew men from throughout the Upper Midwest, was one of 22 such affairs organized in sports arenas across the country this summer. A national gathering is scheduled for Washington, D.C., on October 4.

"We won't go back!" the women's rights activists chanted. As one sign put it, "PK prayer: Women in the kitchen, Gays in the closet, Everyone else on their knees." Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Minneapolis Jennifer Benton was among the dozen speakers. She pointed to the tens of thousands of women among the UPS strikers, who are disproportionately represented among the lower-paid, part-time workers, as the example pointing the road forward for women's equality and for all working people.

The action was organized by a broad ad hoc committee, initiated by the Minnesota chapter of the National Organization for Women.

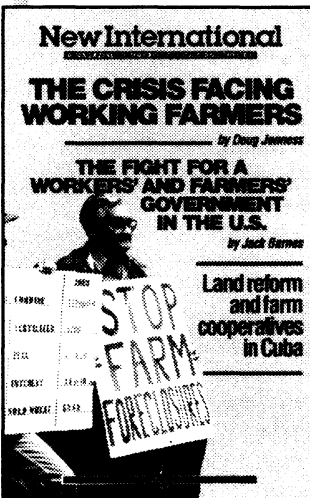
The coalition included women's rights, gay and lesbian rights groups, humanist and atheist organizations, Socialist Workers Party, Women Against Military Madness, and the Young Socialists.

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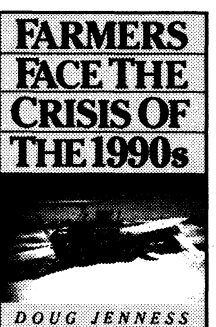
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Israeli bombings, sanctions fuel resistance

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

The Israeli government's bombing of Lebanese civilians and infrastructure, and Tel Aviv's continued acts of aggression against Palestinians, have fueled an uptick in resistance to Zionist rule in the region.

On August 18 pro-Israeli militiamen bombed Sidon, Lebanon's largest city, killing at least 10 civilians, including one infant. The next morning, Hezbollah rebels who are fighting to end the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon, together with outraged Lebanese soldiers who generally remain neutral, returned fire launching 80 Katyusha missiles at Israeli territory. Forty-five Katyushas actually landed in Israel causing minor scrapes to a few civilians, only one of whom, according to the August 20 *New York Times*, could be considered "slightly wounded." The rockets were fired in such a way, according to Timor Goksel, political advisor to the United Nations "peacekeeping mission" in the area, to minimize loss of life.

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, while attempting to distance himself from Tel Aviv's fatal bombing, warned Hezbollah that Tel Aviv would launch retaliatory strikes if any more shelling occurred. He claimed that his government was not responsible for the attack and that the South Lebanon Army, which occupies a nine-mile-deep piece of Lebanon along the Israeli border, is an independent unit. But the Israeli government pays, trains, arms, and directs the approximately 2,500-strong unit, created to supposedly thwart guerrilla infiltration into Israel.

On August 20 Israeli warplanes waged

an aerial assault on Sidon wounding at least four civilians and knocking out power lines that provide electricity to its 80,000 residents.

The latest bombings, initiated by the Israeli government, are a swift departure from April 1996 agreements to not attack civilians after Tel Aviv orchestrated a 17-day military offensive in southern Lebanon, killing 200 people, most of them civilians. Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri condemned the most recent assault saying, "The ongoing Israeli aggression against Lebanon shows that this state does not want peace."

Sanctions against Palestinians

Tel Aviv imposed sanctions on Palestinians shutting the borders of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and refused to pay \$40 million dollars in wages and taxes owed to Palestinian workers and the Palestinian Authority in the occupied territories. The sanctions against the Palestinian Authority were allegedly levied for lack of cooperation with the Israeli regime in cracking down on Palestinian liberation groups after the July 30 bombing of an Israeli produce market that killed 16 people, including the two Palestinians carrying the bombs. A CIA official has been called in to investigate the bombing with Palestinian Authority agreement.

The taxes and other funds are used by the Palestinian Authority to pay 78,000 government workers, many of whom have not been paid since the embargo went into effect. The border closing has blocked 100,000 Palestinian workers from their jobs, bringing unemployment in that region to 70 percent. Compounding the situation, per capita annual income among Palestinians in the occupied territories has dropped from \$1,700 to \$1,300 in the last three years, according to UN officials. The measures taken by the Netanyahu regime also included demolishing houses owned by Palestinians, charging



Palestinian runs through clouds of tear gas in Bethlehem as demonstrators clashed with Israeli forces there on August 26, protesting Tel Aviv's blockade of that city.

ing they were built without permits. Washington has backed the Israeli government stance, but has urged Tel Aviv to rescind economic sanctions, which immediately fueled angry protest actions by Palestinians.

The Palestinian Authority cabinet approved a boycott of Israeli products as a countermeasure to the sanctions. Some \$9 million worth of Israeli exports crosses into the West Bank and Gaza Strip every day.

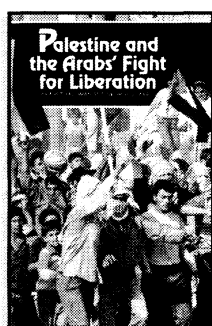
On August 18 Tel Aviv lifted some of the sanctions and paid \$12 million of the money it owes to the Palestinian Authority. Netanyahu said, however, that the blockade would not be lifted until Palestinian Authority president Yasir Arafat agreed to a widespread crackdown on Arab rebels.

In response, Arafat convened a meeting of Palestinian liberation organizations in Gaza on August 20. Most Palestinian groups took part, including Hamas and Islamic Holy War, two organizations that have rejected the peace accord Arafat signed with

Tel Aviv in Oslo and have organized attacks against Israeli government targets.

Participants at the National Unity Conference to Confront the Challenges condemned U.S.-Israeli government moves and vowed to step up resistance. "This is not a conference to support Oslo," said Hamas leader Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi, "but to support the stance of our people against the American and Israeli pressures on the Palestinian Authority to arrest and crack down on the Islamic movements."

On August 23 masked youth, some of them using slingshots to fling stones, charged in waves at the Israeli barricades that enclose the city of Bethlehem. Israeli troops responded with tear gas and rubber bullets, wounding four people. Palestinian police officers made little attempt to restrain the response to the blockade. "This is a popular response to the siege and starvation," said one officer. "When you blow too much air into a balloon, it pops."



Palestine and the Arabs' Fight for Liberation

by Fred Feldman and Georges Sayad

An overview of the Palestinian struggle from World War I to the beginning of the *intifada* in 1987. \$4.00

Available from Pathfinder bookstores, see addresses on this page.

New Zealand

Continued from Page 16

net currently provided by national superannuation will be progressively reduced."

A body that originally reported to the government in 1992 on different superannuation options, headed by Jeffrey Todd, also opposed the compulsory nature of Peters's proposal in a July 31 report. It advocated a mix of voluntary private savings and a government pension, and suggested increasing the retirement age or lowering the pension level.

Polls in July indicated strong opposition to Peters's scheme. Trade union leaders are also urging working people to vote against it.

Most of the different opponents and supporters of the Compulsory Retirement Savings scheme, however, share a common bourgeois framework.

They argue that with the proportion of the retirement-age population rising, the New Zealand economy is headed for a "great, gray blowout," as a recent *New Zealand Herald* headline put it. Their disagreements are not over whether to cut state pensions, but how deep and sudden the cuts should be.

In face of the growing opposition to the government proposal, one of its supporters, Prime Minister James Bolger of the National Party, said July 11 that "all the polls up to now have suggested it will be a 'no' vote."

"The real question," he continued, "is what do we do then? In my absolute, unqualified opinion it's not sustainable to go on as is with a universal scheme at the present rate into the future." Bolger suggested resurrecting the multiparty Superannuation Accord. The suggestion was reportedly greeted with cautious optimism by the opposition Labour Party and the Alliance.

James Robb is a member of the Meatworkers Union in Auckland, New Zealand.

CALENDAR

NEW JERSEY

Jersey City
Video Showing of 'Law and Orange Order.' Presented by Hudson County Irish Northern Aid. Speaker: Gerald Lally, member of the Brehon Law Society and eyewitness to the recent violence in Northern Ireland. Wed., Sept. 10, 7:30 p.m. Summit House, 510 Summit Avenue. Donation requested.

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Campaign Barbecue. Meet and support the Socialist Workers Party candidates. Sun., Aug. 31. For more information, call (201) 643-3341.

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CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

CUBA: The Recent International Trade Union Conference and the World Youth Festival. Political appraisals of both Havana events (plus impressions of Cuba today) by Los Angeles participants. Speakers: Heather Martin and Carlos Hernández, Young Socialists; Craig Honts, socialist Workers Party, member of United

Transportation Union. Fri., Sept. 5, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

FLORIDA

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Stop Police Brutality! Sat., Sept. 6, 7:30 p.m. 137 N.E. 54th St. Donation: \$4. Translation into Spanish and French. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

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Drive to work, or work to drive? — Last year, buyers plunked down an average of \$21,750 for a new car, 6.4 percent



Harry Ring

more than 1995. And in '96, used cars again outsold new ones and fetched a record average of \$11,600, a jump of nearly 5 percent over the previous year.

P.S. The above numbers bring to

mind Washington's assertions that the federal cost-of-living index *overstates* actual increases in living expenses.

Rude and unprofessional — That videotape of Texas prison guards using dogs, clubs, and stun guns to brutalize inmates drew some strong statements from officials. The chief deputy didn't see "any real brutality," but felt the video did show "unprofessional activity." The local police chief saw a need for "sensitivity training."

'Top Secret' — A recently declassified government document disclosed that at the time of the Kennedy assassination, Fidel Cas-

tro thought Washington might try to hang it on Cuba as the pretext for an invasion. He mobilized Cuba's armed forces and in a national telecast, reported the situation to the Cuban people.

Have an e-burger — With the August 21 recall of an added 25 million pounds of Hudson beef, questions were posed about federal inspection procedures. Many inspectors visit more than a dozen plants a day, in a 100-mile area. To detect microbes like E. coli, they still use the poke and sniff method.

Truly 'American' — In 1995, an American Airlines plane crashed in Colombia, killing all but four of

163 people aboard. In a pending suit, an AA pilots' manual has turned up. It warns that Latin Americans are often drunk and unruly, and if they're late getting to the airport, "it's rumored that they will phone in a false bomb threat to delay departure."

Oops, pardon us — AA says it's removing that manual and will investigate those responsible for it. It was written in 1989 and revised in 1995. No one noticed the offensive material until it became public.

Fringe benefits — The new budget's reduced capital gains tax will mean a mint for tax lawyers and accountants skilled in transforming

ordinary income into capital gains. Chortled one accountant: "This will get me into my retirement years. For a while... we were actually concerned they were going to simplify the tax code. You don't hear that talk any more."

How it's done — Occasionally a skeptic will ask, suspiciously, "Where do you get the stuff for that column?" Our reply: "This society provides such an abundance of material that there's no need to make things up." The column is based on items sent by readers. Joining the club is easy. Send clippings to Great Society, Pathfinder Bookstore, 2546 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA. 90006. Fax to 213-380-1268.

How are wages, profits, prices related under capitalism?

Below we reprint excerpts from the last chapter of *Value, Price, and Profit* by Karl Marx. The chapter is titled "The struggle between capital and labor and its results." This was first delivered by Marx at the meetings of the General Council of the First International, the first international organization of the working class, in June 1865. With this report, Marx answered James Weston, a member of the International, who argued that higher wages cannot improve the condition of the workers and that trade union activity must be considered detrimental to working peoples' interests. The report was later published as a pamphlet.

BOOK OF THE WEEK

The workers' struggle for higher wages and its relation to the employers' profits and prices of commodities became one of the main issues debated by all contending classes during the recent U.S. strike by the Teamsters against UPS. The excerpts below, and the entire report by Marx, shed light into these questions. The excerpts are taken from pages 144-149 of Vol. 20 of the *Collected Works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels* — two of the main founders of the modern workers' movement. The report by Marx can also be found in pp. 31-76 of Vol. 2 of the *Selected Works of Marx and Engels*.

BY KARL MARX

Having shown that the periodical resistance on the part of the working men against a reduction of wages, and their periodical attempts at getting a rise of wages, are inseparable from the wages system, and dictated by the very fact of labour being assimilated to commodities, and therefore subject to the laws regulating the general movement of prices; having, furthermore, shown that a general rise of wages would result in a fall in the general rate of profit, but not affect the average prices of commodities, or their values, the question now ultimately arises, how far, in this incessant struggle between capital and labour, the latter is likely to prove successful....

There are some peculiar features which

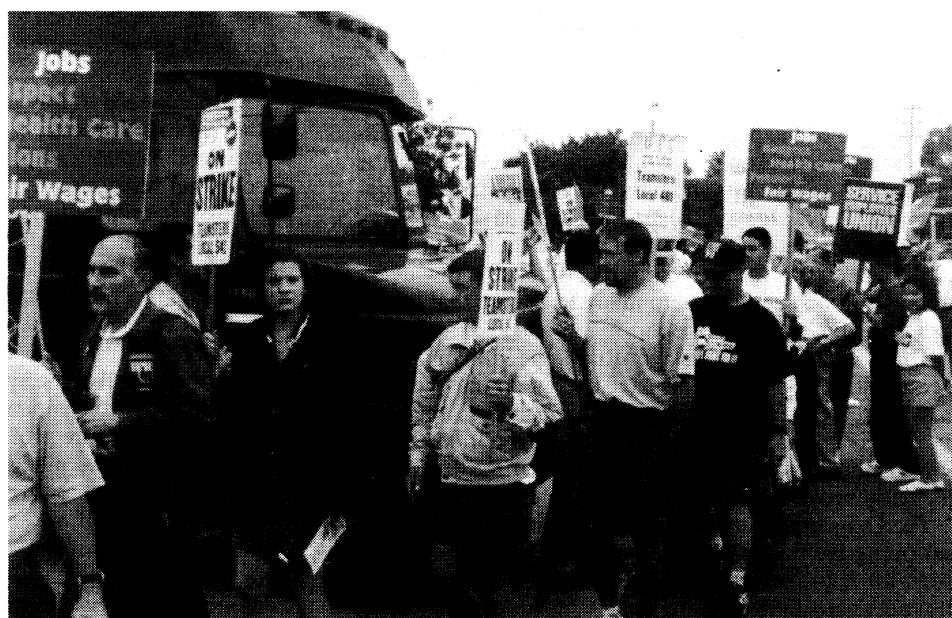
distinguish the *value of the labouring power*, or the *value of labour*, from the values of all other commodities. The value of the labouring power is formed by two elements—the one merely physical, the other historical or social. Its ultimate limit is determined by the *physical* element, that is to say, to maintain and reproduce itself, to perpetuate its physical existence, the working class must receive the necessities absolutely indispensable for living and multiplying. The *value* of those indispensable necessities forms, therefore, the ultimate limit of the *value of labour*. On the other hand, the length of the working day is also limited by ultimate, although very elastic boundaries. Its ultimate limit is given by the physical force of the labouring man. If the daily exhaustion of his vital forces exceeds a certain degree, it cannot be exerted anew, day by day....

Besides this mere physical element, the value of labour is in every country determined by a traditional standard of *life*. It is not mere physical life, but it is the satisfaction of certain wants springing from the social conditions in which people are placed and reared up. The English standard of life may be reduced to the Irish standard; the standard of life of a German peasant to that of a Livonian peasant....

But as to profits, there exists no law which determines their minimum. We cannot say what is the ultimate limit of their decrease. And why cannot we fix that limit? Because, although we can fix the minimum of wages, we cannot fix their maximum. We can only say that, the limits of the working day being given, the maximum of profit corresponds to the physical minimum of *wages*; and that wages being given, the maximum of profit corresponds to such a prolongation of the working day as is compatible with the physical forces of the labourer. The maximum of profit is, therefore, limited by the physical minimum of wages and the physical maximum of the working day. It is evident that between the two limits of this maximum *rate of profit* an immense scale of variations is possible. The fixation of its actual degree is only settled by the continuous struggle between capital and labour, the capitalist constantly tending to reduce wages to their physical minimum, and to extend the working day to its physical maximum, while the working man constantly presses in the opposite direction....

The very development of modern industry must progressively turn the scale in favour of the capitalist against the working man, and that consequently the general tendency of capitalistic production is not to raise, but to sink the average standard of wages, or to push the *value of labour* more or less to its *minimum limit*. Such being the tendency of *things* in this system, is this saying that the working class ought to renounce their resistance against the encroachments of capital, and abandon their attempts at making the best of the occasional chances for their temporary improvement? If they did, they would be degraded to one level mass of broken wretches past salvation.... By cowardly giving way in their everyday conflict with capital, they would certainly disqualify themselves for the initiating of any larger movement.

At the same time, and quite apart from the general servitude involved in the wages system, the working class ought not to exaggerate to themselves the ultimate working of these everyday struggles. They ought not to forget that they are fighting with effects, but not with the causes of those effects; that they



Militant/Gary Willhite

Teamsters picketing UPS depot in San Diego, California, August 14 demand "fair wages" among other things. There is no fairness in competition between labor and capital, Marx says. The capitalist has advantage until working people take possession of means of production—raw materials, factories, machinery—themselves.

are retarding the downward movement, but not changing its direction; that they are applying palliatives, not curing the malady. They ought, therefore, not to be exclusively absorbed in these unavoidable guerilla fights incessantly springing up from the never-ceasing encroachments of capital or changes of the market. They ought to understand that, with all the miseries it

imposes upon them, the present system simultaneously engenders the *material conditions* and the *social forms* necessary for an economical reconstruction of society. Instead of the *conservative* motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work!" they ought to inscribe on their banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wages system!"

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



September 8, 1972

AUG. 30 — Nineteen escaped political prisoners surrendered on Aug. 15 to troops of the Lanusse military dictatorship at the Trelew airport in Patagonia (southern Argentina).

On Aug. 22, a quick burst of gunfire in the Trelew naval-air base ended the lives of 16 of the young Argentine revolutionaries. Thirteen died immediately; the regime announced that three more died of wounds within two days. The three remaining prisoners still alive on Aug. 24 were reported in serious condition.

This cold-blooded mass execution has produced a wave of protest against the Lanusse regime throughout Argentina.

Universities across Argentina, the major labor federation — The General Confederation of Labor (CGT — Confederación General del Trabajo), and the country's massive Peronist movement (followers of exiled former president Juan Peron) have been involved in the protests.

"The Cordobazo, as the uprising became known, eventually brought down the military government of Lieut. Gen. Juan Carlos Onganía...."

On Aug. 23, a two-hour protest strike was carried out in Córdoba by the regional CGT. On Aug. 24, police raided the Córdoba CGT headquarters and closed the building. An army statement was issued containing orders for the arrest of all members of the district CGT governing board.

The Córdoba workers answered with a general strike. An Aug. 25 Associated Press dispatch from Córdoba reported, "This industrial city of nearly a million people was crippled today by a 14-hour general strike protesting the slaying of the 16 guerrillas and supporting a demand for higher wages."

"Banks, business, and schools were closed and public transportation halted. Union leaders who called the strike were in hiding and sought by the police."



September 6, 1947

Harold Russell, handless World War II veteran and star of the Academy Award motion picture, "The Best Years of Our Lives," has accepted the national chairmanship of the defense committee for James Kutcher, legless Newark veteran who faces dismissal from his \$40-a-week Veterans Administration job because of his membership in the Socialist Workers Party....

Kutcher, who lost both legs in combat in Italy and has taught himself to walk with artificial limbs and two canes, has challenged the 30-day dismissal notice sent him on Aug. 13.

He is fighting for his right to his government job despite his admitted affiliation with an organization on Truman's and Attorney General Clark's political blacklist.

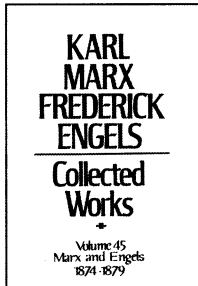
When informed of the "loyalty" purge action against his former hospital-mate, Mr. Russell immediately offered his services in Kutcher's defense.

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SWP: 'Jail all the guilty cops!'

Continued from front page

tians, Mexicans, and other workers, the rulers try to justify paying many of them less, forcing them to work in inhuman working conditions, and slashing their social benefits faster than other workers. In this way the bosses hurt the entire working class. Cop brutality and racism is an integral part of this picture. Every time cops lift a club against a worker, they deal a blow to all workers.

The recent victorious strike by the Teamsters against UPS showed the way forward in fighting divisions among working people. The strikers surprised the bosses by achieving unity between full-time and part-time workers, new hires and veterans, and UPS employees and other workers sharing the Teamsters pension plan. In that strike workers took the moral high ground and "we" prevailed over "me." This was the biggest gain for all working people.

During their walkout, many Teamsters members got a taste of police brutality themselves, some for the first time. Dozens were attacked by the cops and arrested as they tried to stop management from doing struck work by driving UPS trucks. As workers use the strike weapon more and wage increasingly effective actions to demand our rights, the police will be a major force for strikebreaking, as they have historically.

This role of the police becomes more apparent to millions in a period when social polarization sharpens, as the employers use the cops and hired thugs to run union organizers off the fields and plants and counterpunch every time working people stand up to defend their class interests. The heinous torture of Louima touched a raw nerve among millions and can help many to realize that in this society a cop, is a cop, is a cop.

That's why New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani and his Democratic Party opponents have been working overtime to perpetuate the myth that what happened in the 70th Precinct is once again an aberration, an exception. That's why Giuliani praised repeatedly some of the cops who allegedly broke the "blue wall of silence."

The Democratic and Republican politicians all talk of reforming the police. But the police cannot be reformed. Their job is to "serve and protect" the interests of the ruling rich against the working class. They are emboldened to carry out increasingly vicious acts of brutality by the relentless assault of the rulers against the living standards and rights of workers as their economic system slides

deeper into depression.

Regardless of their class origin before joining the police, cops have nothing to do with the working class. Their fraternal associations, often called "police unions," have nothing to do with the trade union movement either. These organizations are breeding grounds for fascist and vigilante elements. From the moment they wear the badge, cops are inculcated in the contempt the rulers reserve for workers, and their job is to terrorize and intimidate working people day-in and day-out. There are no "bad" or "good" apples among the police. Cop units are bodies of armed men, comprised in their entirety of rotten tools of repression against society's dispossessed and exploited — the vast majority.

Capitalist politicians call for new investigations of the police and better civilian review boards. There have been enough investigations — all showing a pattern of brutality and cops raking in money from payoffs, including from drug trafficking that is a lucrative part of big business in this country. Civilian review boards around the country are usually used as another institution to block justice for working people. Such schemes are designed to defuse demands for prosecuting cop brutality and minimize punishment for guilty cops.

Workers need to rely on our own power and ally with other exploited producers — not promises from the Democratic and Republican politicians. Mobilizations such as those that have already taken place are one way to be effective in confronting cop brutality. They are an opportunity for fighters on different fronts of the same war to join forces — from trade unionists on strike to those standing up against racist attacks and police brutality.

In this struggle, many workers and youth will become convinced that the only way to eventually stop cop brutality is to get rid of the system that perpetuates it and join the fight to replace capitalist rule with a society that puts human needs before profits — a socialist society.

As unionists, we pledge to fight for the trade unions to take on such questions as police brutality. It is by fighting for the needs of all workers and working farmers that the unions can be transformed into instruments of revolutionary struggle and lead a powerful movement that will make defending the most exploited and oppressed layers of the working class a top priority.

All workers have a stake in demanding "STOP POLICE BRUTALITY. JAIL THE GUILTY COPS NOW!"

N.Y.: thousands protest torture

Continued from front page

Haitian immigrant, was arrested outside a nightclub on August 9, driven to a nearby alley where he was beaten by several cops. After being taken to the 70th Precinct, two cops dragged him into the men's bathroom with his pants down, forced a toilet plunger into his rectum, and then into his mouth. Louima said the cops had shouted "stupid nigger" as they beat him.

"When you come here you have to endure humiliation and other indignities, like people calling you all kinds of racist names," Louima explained. He remains hospitalized with a pierced lower intestine, a torn bladder, and broken teeth. On August 18 Louima's family announced plans to file a \$55 million lawsuit charging that city negligence resulted in him sustaining extensive injuries.

A second Haitian man, Patrick Antoine was also beaten by the cops while walking down the street during the attack on Louima. He was charged with assaulting an officer among other violations, which were later dropped.

This case "is a wake up call for all our communities," Sabine Albert told nearly 200 people at a town meeting in Brooklyn. The August 24 meeting was held at a local church to protest the cop assault against Louima. Albert, a member of the National Coalition of Haitian Rights, urged the audience and organizations to combat police brutality. "We are not talking about bandage solutions," she added. The 11 Haitian organizations sponsoring the town meeting has called for the immediate dismissal of all police personnel present in the 70th Precinct police building the night of the incident.

Carl Thomas, Louima's attorney attending the town meeting, explained his demands that charges for attempted murder and conspiracy to commit murder be brought against the cops involved. "Which ones did the act and which ones saw and did nothing — those are issues," he said. Thomas also urged people to attend the October 29 demonstration.

A firestorm of outrage against the torture case has sent New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani and other city officials scrambling from the damage of the fallout. In the week following media reports of the beating, arrests in the 70th Precinct dropped almost 55 percent.

So far, two officers from the 70th Precinct, Justin Volpe and Charles Schwarz have been charged with brutalizing Louima. Two other officers, Thomas Wiese and Thomas Bruder are charged with beating Louima on the way to the police station. Investigators say that more arrests may follow.

Louima's attorneys' assert that the cops hid or destroyed evidence in their attempts to cover up the case. After the beating, Louima, wearing handcuffs, was put in a holding cell for 90 minutes. After about 40 minutes the police place a low priority call for medical treatment of "lacerations." The ambulance arrived at the precinct 25 minutes later. After waiting for an hour and a half for the police escort, the ambulance finally took Louima for treatment at the Coney Island Hospital.

There the police told doctors that Louima was injured as a result of homosexual activity. Magalie Laurent, a nurse at the hospital said some supervisors tried to keep the truth from getting out. But nurses treating Louima refused to be part of a cover-up and asked Laurent to call Louima's family, the police and the media. "I know that you are Haitian," Laurent recalled one nurse said to her. "You should know what happened. You mustn't keep it a secret. We must let everybody know." She described the reaction of the internal affairs officer who took the call. Laurent said, "it seemed like he didn't care. I knew that they hadn't taken my call seriously."

Trade union conference

continued from Page 9

ing the principle of the self-determination, independence and sovereignty of nations."

In their remarks, most delegates condemned Washington's economic war on Cuba and called for actions against the embargo-tightening U.S. Helms-Burton law. The final resolution calls on "all progressive forces in the world... to express, by all means possible, their solidarity with Cuba and to oppose imperialist designs to sweep away by force the example of independence and social justice that Cuba represents."

Delegates also designated October 8 as a day for actions by trade unionists to press such demands. The date marks the 30th anniversary of the death of Ernesto Che Guevara, one of the central leaders of the Cuban revolution.

In his closing remarks, Ross thanked the trade unionists for their work during conference. "This meeting was not about Cuba, or the Cuban revolution," he said, "but about building a united front for action."

Delegates decided that the next such labor conference will be held in Brazil in 1999.

NATO aggression

Continued from front page

paramilitary units would be treated as combat troops and placed under NATO control. U.S. Gen. Wesley Clark, NATO's supreme commander, bellowed, "I'm not setting a time limit, I'm saying turn yourself in."

The latest NATO assault was preceded by two coordinated attacks on July 10 when British troops backed by warplanes killed one Serb and seized another man in Prijedor. The operations were organized to arrest the two men who were named in secret indictments in March by the imperialist "war crimes tribunal" in The Hague, Netherlands.

Imperialists use Biljana Plavsic

NATO forces seized the cop stations in Banja Luka, two days after 300 British soldiers conducted a search of the facilities under the pretext of looking for evidence of electronic eavesdropping on Bosnia Serb president Biljana Plavsic by her political rivals. Washington has engineered a split between Plavsic and chauvinist leader Radovan Karadzic, who has been indicted as an alleged war criminal. Plavsic, described by the capitalist media as a "fervent Serb nationalist," was expelled from the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) on July 20. SDS is the ruling group in the part of Bosnia under control of pro-Belgrade Serbs.

Formerly Karadzic's vice president and one of his strongest supporters throughout the war in Bosnia, Plavsic called for new parliamentary elections, now scheduled for October 12.

Plavsic has recently rallied thousands of Bosnian Serbs and others in Banja Luka to support her side, exploiting widespread sentiments of mistrust toward Karadzic, whom many Bosnians consider one of the chief architects of 1992-95 war that claimed tens of thousands of lives. But her base among Bosnian Serbs is thin, since she is identified as a pawn of U.S. imperialism. The August 27 *New York Times* quoted an anonymous UN official describing Plavsic as "a creature of our creation."

Washington has thrown its weight behind Plavsic who recently met with Bosnian Serb commanding generals to win their support. Only a few hundred of the 40,000-strong Bosnian Serb police force are reportedly backing her. U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) officials said they are planning to deliver \$60 million in aid to Plavsic for private enterprises in the area around Banja Luka, the largest city in Bosnian Serb territory. Gen. Pero Colic, chief of staff of the Bosnian Serb armed forces loyal to Belgrade, ignored Plavsic's summons to meet with her August 25.

"Plavsic is in the right, is the right person who is trying to implement Dayton, and is the person who believes in democracy," said Robert Gelbard, chief U.S. diplomat for Bosnia. He was referring to the so-called peace accord Washington forced the warring factions in Yugoslavia to sign in October 1995 at a U.S. military base in Dayton, Ohio. The agreement set the stage for the current partition of Bosnia and for the invasion of the republic by tens of thousands of NATO troops. It also called explicitly for the reestablishment of a "free market," that is capitalist property relations, in Bosnia.

Gelbard authorized the attack on the police station after meeting with Plavsic and Shinseki.

'We have cut the enclave'

The NATO move is part of Washington's plan to slice the Bosnian territory held by pro-Belgrade forces into two parts run by parallel governments. This can make it easier for imperialist troops to extend their control over most of Bosnia. "It's a gamble, and a very risky one," said an unnamed United Nations official who was quoted in the August 21 *New York Times*. "We have cut the enclave into two factions and we don't yet know how all this will play out."

The war moves by Washington and its imperialist allies come as the capitalist rulers state that they have not made much headway toward their goal of overturning the workers state and reestablishing capitalist social relations in Bosnia or anywhere else in Yugoslavia, after 19 months of military occupation. "The circumstances that exist now amount to a failure of Dayton," said one Clinton administration official. "We're behind schedule."

Capitalist politicians and spokespeople for big business are openly debating the risks of moving to capture Karadzic, whom they describe as an obstacle to their aims. According to the August 27 *New York Times*, USAID officials "argue that wresting more power from Karadzic and his supporters, at this point, would be too difficult." Democratic Sen. Carl Levin called for the U.S. military to use the broadcasting equipment the Pentagon employed for propaganda purposes in preparation for past invasions — such as "Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada" in 1983, "Operation Desert Storm" against the people of Iraq in 1991, and the 1994 "Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti."

Meanwhile, many among the Bosnian Serbs are expressing opposition to the imperialist intervention force. "This is an occupation," remarked a passerby during a television interview with Serb Radio and Television (SRT). The station broadcasted a letter by Pero Colic, the Bosnian Serb army commander, who sent NATO officials a warning that his force would "not sit back with their hands folded" and watch them split Serb-controlled territory. SRT recently aired a show mixing images of NATO soldiers guarding the police stations in Banja Luka and Nazi troops in Croatia during World War II.

Gov't investigations aimed against labor

BY SCOTT BREEN

SEATTLE — As the Teamsters went into battle with UPS, their union officialdom was under government attack. The federal government was conducting an investigation into the financing of the campaign of Ronald Carey, who was reelected president of the Teamsters last year.

On August 22—barely three days after the Teamsters reached a tentative settlement with UPS that included many of the union's demands, ending a 15-day strike—a federal

UNION TALK

official overturned Carey's reelection and ordered a new vote.

Federal prosecutors and FBI agents filed court papers in June charging some of Carey's campaign supporters with illegally diverting union funds to his reelection fundraising efforts. Martin Davis, a longtime Carey supporter, whose November Fund consulting firm is employed by Teamsters International, has been charged with fraudulently laundering Teamsters union funds into Carey's reelection campaign. He has pled not guilty.

Barbara Quindel, the federally appointed official overseeing the December election, had refused to certify Carey's election because of the allegations, and ordered the new vote.

This government attack was prompted by allegations from James Hoffa, Jr., the lawyer who ran against Carey and narrowly lost.

Appeals to government intervention only serve to weaken the union. The government is not a friend of labor, nor of the truth. It is, however, looking out for the interests of big business.

To call on federal investigation of the unions is like asking the wolf to search the

chicken coop!

This is especially true in a battle like the one the Teamsters waged against UPS. As the stakes mounted, the big-business press gave even more play to the allegations of corruption and fraud among the union officials, including in relation to the pension funds that were under attack by UPS, in an attempt to sow divisions and demoralization in the union.

This can give a pretext for the government to weaken the unions — to mess around in our internal affairs. As a U.S. Chamber of Commerce spokesman said when the government indicted former Teamster president Jackie Presser in 1986 on charges of embezzlement and racketeering: "It gives employers one more weapon with which to fight Teamsters organizing drives."

In the end, government intervention in the internal affairs of the Teamsters can be used to try to discourage and demoralize the workers on the picket lines and in the union halls.

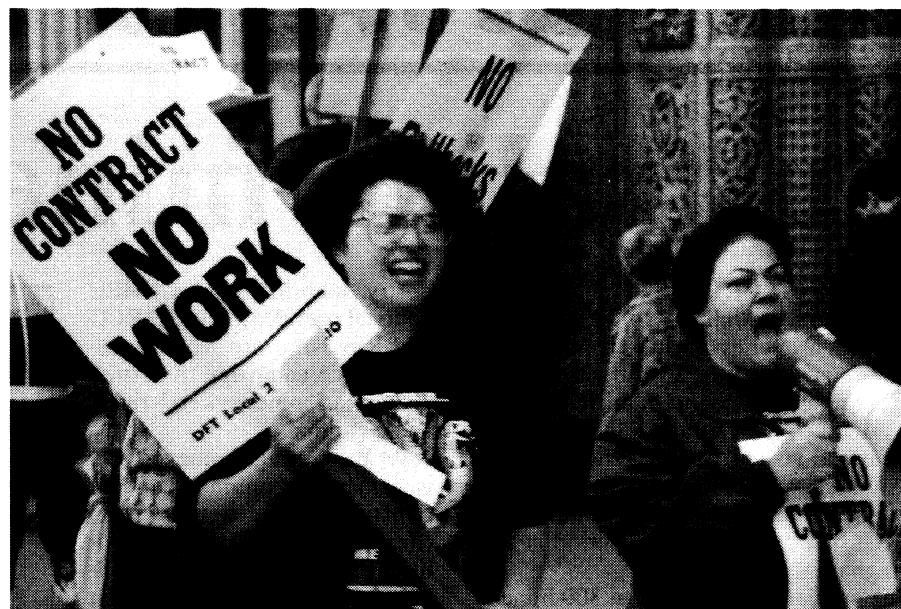
A similar development is occurring in my union, District 751 of the International Association of Machinists (IAM). This union organizes the aerospace workers at The Boeing Company.

A year and a half after a successful strike against Boeing, an election was held for various district offices. The incumbent, William Johnson, narrowly defeated David Clay, an official of the district Council and former Johnson supporter, in the Jan. 9, 1997, election.

Clay filed charges with the International Union accusing Johnson and his supporters of voting fraud. The union investigation has not been finished. Clay then filed charges with the U.S. Labor Department, seeking to hold a new election. He contends that Johnson used union resources to fund his reelection. The case is now pending.

Throughout this whole process, the ranks

Detroit teachers demand higher wages



Militant/John Sarge

About 150 teachers, members of the Detroit Federation of Teachers (DFT), protested in front of Detroit School Board building August 22, demanding a contract with higher wages. DFT members were scheduled to take strike vote August 25. The Michigan state government has new draconian law restricting such strikes, which was enacted after last Detroit teachers strike in 1992.

have been reduced to observers, non-participants. Meanwhile, the government of the capitalist rulers has another opening to meddle in the affairs of our organization. This is no way to build strong unions.

Instead, I would point to the example of the United Mine Workers of America, whose members mobilized and organized by the thousands during the 1970s to democratize their union in the course of fighting for health, safety, and better working conditions. They took back their union from the pro-company, corrupt officials around President Anthony Boyle.

Rank-and-file mine workers organized protest rallies, marches, and strikes against the bosses, and in defense of their union. Through their own efforts, they swept Boyle and his gang of pro-company bureaucrats

out of office in a virtual revolution in the union in 1972 that gave the membership more control. For example, rank-and-file ratification of contracts, and greater rights on the job were won.

During the recent strike against UPS, more workers began taking responsibility for their union. As striker Craig Nelson from Atlanta put it to *Militant* reporters, "UPS wants eight hours work done in four hours. I'm going to make it my business that everyone knows their rights."

This is the road to forming strong, class-struggle unions. We must reject all government intervention into our unions.

Scott Breen is a member of the IAM and the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Seattle.

LETTERS

Wages, prices, profits

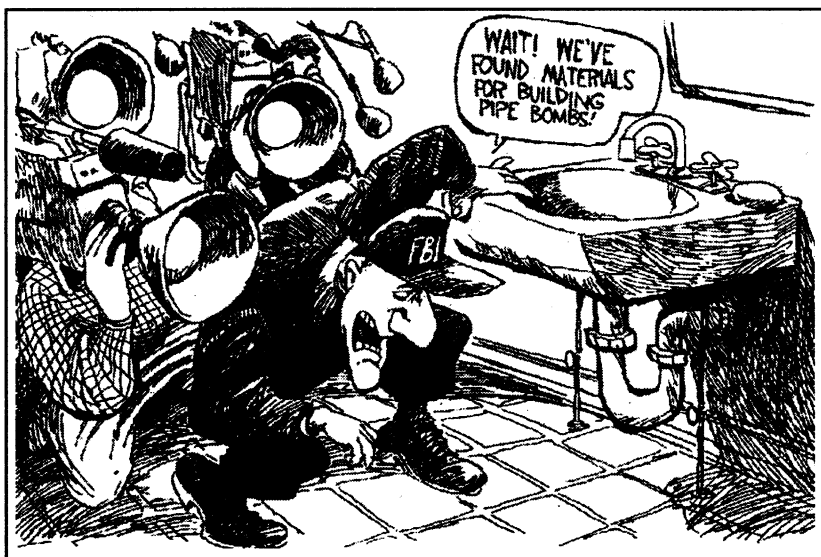
I found the *Militant* coverage on the UPS strike in last week's issue useful. Readers may want to check out "Wages, Price, and Profit" by Karl Marx where they will find some additional insight into the relationship between the part-time workers question and the wages question that came up during the Teamsters strike.

The following is from Vol. 2, page 69, of the *Selected Works of Marx and Engels*:

"Even with given limits of the working day, such as now exist in all branches of industry subjected to the factory laws, a rise of wages may become necessary, if only to keep up the old standard value of labour. By increasing the intensity of labour, a man may be made to expend as much vital force in one hour as he formerly did in two.

"This has, to a certain degree, been effected in the trades, placed under the Factory Acts, by the acceleration of machinery, and the greater number of working machines which a single individual has now to superintend. If the increase in the intensity of labour or the mass of labour spent in an hour keeps some fair proportion to the decrease in the extent of the working day, the working man will still be the winner. If this limit is overshot, he loses in one form what he has gained in another, and ten hours of labour may then become as ruinous as twelve hours were before. In checking this tendency of capital, by struggling for a rise of wages corresponding to the rising intensity of labour, the working man only resists the depreciation of his labour and the deterioration of his race."

Doesn't this describe how the UPS bosses have benefited by increasing the proportion of part-time workers who labor at such incredible rates of speed? Are they not able to subject these workers to an



intensity of labor that more than compensates for the shortened work day, and more than compensates for UPS's vaunted "high" part-time wages. As Marx argues against Citizen Weston, high relative to what? When you went to the picket lines and met the number of part-time workers with wrist braces, on crutches, etc., you could see before your own eyes how these workers' lives were being expended at an above normal pace.

UPS complains that the nature of its business would make it impossible to convert these part-time jobs to full-time, but that's just code language for saying they won't hire more workers at a lower rate of exploitation to produce the same output.

UPS says it may have to lay off part-timers as it creates more full-time positions to comply with the new contract, but even if this eliminates some jobs in the short run, aren't those "jobs" we — as a class resisting the depreciation of our labor and the deterioration of our species — can do without anyway?

Pete Seidman
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Gulf War Syndrome

Two recent articles in the national and local press have taken up the discussion of the cause of Gulf War Syndrome, and the associated cover-up by the Department of Defense. Of the 700,000 U.S. troops sent to the Persian Gulf, more than 110,000 vets have registered with federal agencies as suffering from Gulf War Syndrome.

Symptoms include fatigue, skin rashes, muscle and joint pains, headaches and memory loss, gastrointestinal and respiratory problems. In the August 2, 1997 *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* a top Pentagon official stated that the Pentagon is investigating exposure to depleted uranium as a cause of Gulf War Syndrome.

U.S. and British forces used about 1 million rounds of armor-piercing shells containing depleted uranium during Operation Desert Storm. This is the first time that this toxic heavy metal, 1.6 times denser than lead, has been used in warfare. Depleted uranium was also used to construct the M1A1 tanks used by U.S. troops. The article cites a 1990 study which found that "short-term

effects of high doses of depleted uranium can result in death, while long-term effects of low doses have been implicated in cancer."

When shells containing depleted uranium explode, some of the uranium aerosolizes, increasing the risk of exposure through inhalation. While the army was aware of the danger, officers failed to warn or train the exposed soldiers, or to take any precautions.

Readers of the *Militant* may also be interested to read an article entitled "The Gulf War Within," which appears in the August 1997 issue of *Discover* magazine. The article explores evidence for exposure to a mixture of toxic chemicals as the cause of Gulf War Syndrome.

Recently, after years of denial and covers, the Defense Department was forced to admit that at least 20,000 soldiers may have been exposed to nerve gas, including the deadly sarin, released into the air from bombings of Iraqi ammunition depots that contained chemical weapons. The CIA hinted in March 1997 that the real figure for those exposed may be closer to hundreds of thousands. Soldiers were exposed to at least four broad classes of chemicals: petroleum and petroleum products used for fuel and sprayed to dampen down sand and dust; pesticides and insect repellents, which were sprayed on uniforms, skin, and used to fumigate; drugs and vaccines, including pyridostigmine bromide, used to shield against nerve gas effects; and biological and chemical weapons.

The scientists theorized that pyridostigmine bromide, while shielding against effects of nerve gas, paradoxically prevents the body from detoxifying pesticides. Even evidence from Pentagon-sponsored studies conducted in the

1970s showed long-term effects in workers at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal near Denver who had been exposed to low doses of sarin. Low levels of exposure produced long-term changes in brain patterns, leading to fatigue, memory loss, sleep disturbances - all symptoms of Gulf War Syndrome.

Meanwhile, the Pentagon announced last February that 80 percent of its logs pertaining to exposure to chemical or biological weapons, including from the ammunition depot bombings, had mysteriously disappeared.

Marla Puziss
Atlanta, Georgia

Political opponents

The quote from Young Socialists National Executive Committee organizer and Socialist Workers Party leader Jack Willey, "Whenever we fall into the self-defeating notion that our political opponents prefer inactivity to activity, you can be sure these currents are influencing and recruiting young fighters who revolutionists could have won," ["SWP holds national convention" in July 14, 1997, *Militant*] rang true to me.

Militant readers will be interested to know that here, the Socialist Party of Australia, the traditional "pro-Moscow" Stalinist organization, renamed itself Communist Party of Australia in late 1996, in a move clearly designed to attract, influence, and recruit young fighters and others.

Doug Cooper
Sydney, Australia

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Australian miners fight for union

BY LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY, Australia — In the latest development in a series of battles between coal mining bosses and the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, (CFMEU), 160 miners at the Curragh mine in central Queensland voted to end a 15-week strike on August 22. This followed a ruling by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) that the legal strike period at the Curragh mine be terminated.

The previous day more than 300 miners from Curragh and other nearby mines joined the picket line across the rail tracks. About 30 police moved picketers off the tracks in front of the coal train.

As the train inched forward one striking worker ran in front of it. Cops dragged him from the rail line and he was arrested. The driver then decided to turn the empty train back.

This was the third attempt by the company in a week to break the strike by ordering a coal train to cross the picket line. Strikers had twice stopped trains, when drivers, members of the Australian Federated Union of Locomotive Enginemen, refused to cross the picket lines for safety reasons.

Government strikebreaking role

Queensland Rail, owned by the state government, had applied to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission for an order directing the train drivers to cross the picket line. On August 19 the commission ruled that drivers should cross the picket line if a supervisor on board the train deemed it safe.

The following day Queensland state Industrial Relations Minister Santo Santoro said he would intervene to end the dispute if a train was again stopped at the picket line. He told state Parliament that the government would not allow the dispute to continue dragging on, "recklessly damaging" the Queensland economy.

The Curragh mine is 60 percent owned by the U.S. mining giant ARCO and 30 percent owned by Coal & Allied, a subsidiary of Rio Tinto, the world's biggest mining company.

The AIRC return-to-work ruling followed a CFMEU proposal to extend action to mines operated by ARCO, MIM, Rio Tinto, and Shell shutting down much of the coal industry—Australia's biggest export in-

dustry. John Maitland, CFMEU national president, said, "ARCO and Rio Tinto are working together in a campaign to destroy Australian mineworkers' rights and conditions."

At the Curragh mine, ARCO is demanding unlimited use of contractors, no demarcation (flexible job classifications), abolition of seniority for determining retrenchments (permanent layoffs), and 12-hour shifts. In addition, individual contracts and voluntary redundancy packages have been announced.

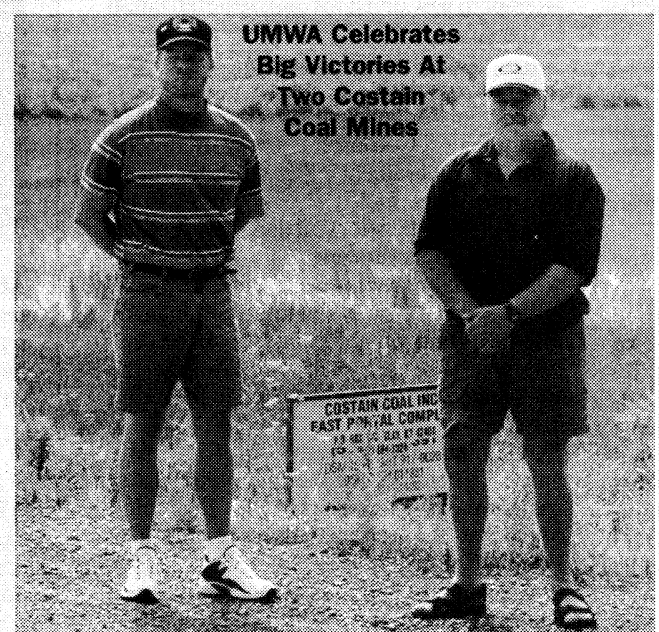
CFMEU state president Andrew Vickers said, "If Curragh can get away with putting on contractors for less wages and conditions than workers get here now, then the rest of the coal industry workers know they're next."

Two other coal mines—ARCO's Gordonstone mine in north Queensland and Rio Tinto's Mt. Thorley mine in New South Wales—are also in dispute with unions over plans to sack all workers and hire new workers on company terms. Management at ARCO's Gordonstone mine want to sack 360 miners and replace them with 160 on nonunion individual contracts.

Hunter Valley miners fight

The strike at Curragh was the second major showdown in the battle over union control in the coal industry, repeating tactics used by Rio Tinto at their Hunter Valley No. 1 mine in New South Wales. Towards the end of a six-week strike there, two unsuccessful attempts were made to have a train cross the picket line. A major national confrontation had loomed involving solidarity

UMWA wins at Kentucky mines



Front-page photo of July-August *Journal*, magazine of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). In May, miners at the Baker and Smith coal mines and the preparation plant that comprise the Costain complex in Kentucky voted 237-212 for union representation. "We believe that this can really blossom," said Tim Miller, a miner there. "We intend to reach out and organize those other mines in western Kentucky where miners are working under the same kind of miserable conditions that we put up with for so long." The union had made three previous organizing attempts there since the late 1970s. In July, miners at a Costain surface operation near Pax, southern West Virginia, employing 40 workers, voted 2-1 for the UMWA.

from rail and port workers.

In a July 22 split vote miners accepted a proposal by union officials to return to work and continue negotiations with the company.

Since then Rio Tinto has continued to aggressively push through changes to work-

place relations. On August 20, Rio Tinto announced that up to half the workforce of 200 are to be retrenched from the Hunter Valley No. 1 mine. The CFMEU immediately suspended negotiations, saying that Rio Tinto had breached the terms of the agreement reached with the AIRC, in which the company agreed not to take any provocative action while negotiations continued.

In another such a move, Rio Tinto decided to use management staff at the coal preparation plant at its Hunter Valley No. 1 mine to keep continuous production at the shift change-overs. Three workers were suspended for turning off machinery when they ended their shift. They were reinstated following an AIRC ruling.

None of these disputes have yet been resolved. At Curragh, the AIRC also ruled that pre-strike work practices should apply at the mine until September 6 so negotiations between the union and company could resume.

ARCO has protested this ruling saying that the AIRC must allow the introduction of changes which they insist are necessary to increase productivity at the mine.

ARCO and Rio Tinto are intent on driving back the hard-won conditions of mineworkers. They are prepared to take on the unions using new antiunion federal and state Workplace Relations Acts.

But as the strikes at Curragh and Hunter Valley show, mine workers are also determined to wage a fight to defend their jobs and their union.

Linda Harris is a member of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union in Sydney.

New Zealand rulers debate cuts in pensions

BY JAMES ROBB AND PATRICK BROWN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Sharp debates have broken out in governing circles here over how best to make new inroads against the state retirement pension plan. A proposal to replace universal government-funded pensions with compulsory individual savings goes to a referendum in September. The proposition has met widespread opposition among working people and appears to be headed for defeat. The ruling coalition of the conservative National Party and the rightist New Zealand First (NZF) is itself divided on the question.

Presently, all people over the age of 65 are entitled to a state pension known as New Zealand Superannuation, worth about a third of the average wage for a married person or 43 percent for a single person. This is the main source of retirement income for the majority of working people. Claiming that this scheme is "unsustainable," the rulers have made cutting pensions or dismantling the system altogether a priority in their ongoing campaign to cut the social wage. Superannuation accounts for 20 percent of the government's total expenditure.

Inroads against the scheme have already been made. In 1991 the level of payment was cut and the age of eligibility was raised from 60 to 65. Universal entitlement to the pension was also undermined by a "surcharge," a special tax levied only on retirees, which was introduced in 1984 by the Labour Party government. The surcharge effectively cuts the pension payment to those with other sources of retirement income.

In 1993, the capitalist parties then represented in parliament — National, Labour, and the Alliance — set up the "Superannuation Accord." The goal of this pact was to

find further ways of cutting pensions by consensus between these parties, thus keeping the issue out of election debates. But New Zealand First, which was formed that year, criticized the Accord and refused to sign it.

In the 1996 elections, New Zealand First campaigned against the widely-hated superannuation surcharge, promising to abolish it. NZF leaders also put forward a plan for compulsory retirement savings, to be implemented following a referendum. Both of these proposals became government policy when the National Party and NZF formed the current coalition government after the elections. The Superannuation Accord fell apart at that point.

NZF promoted its Retirement Savings Plan as a way to provide income additional to the state pension. But the Compulsory Retirement Savings scheme, as officially announced on July 7 by Deputy Prime Minister and NZF leader Winston Peters, proposes to replace, not supplement, the current state-funded pensions. The "savings" will come from new lifelong taxes on the income of working people and others.

If the scheme wins a majority in the referendum and is implemented, people would be compelled to pay 8 percent of their earnings to an investment fund of their choice run by private businesses. This expense would supposedly be offset partially by reductions on the income tax.

Contributions would continue until NZ \$120,000 (NZ\$1 = US\$0.64) in today's dollars was saved by each individual. Those who could not save that amount would be eligible for a government top-up (supplement) at age 65. The fund would be used to purchase an annuity on retirement. The annual sum would be set at 33 percent of the average ordinary time net wage.

Reporting that most working people are in effect likely to face tax increases under the scheme, the *New Zealand Herald* said that "about 90 percent of New Zealanders will be worse off."

Opposition to the scheme began building well before the final version was announced, as Peters floated different options. It mounted in the first place among Peters's National Party opponents and rivals within the cabinet. Only a minority of National Party Members of Parliament have declared support for the proposal.

Simon Upton, a senior National Party cabinet minister, said "to tell lower-income New Zealanders that they must pay for a none-too-flash retirement income of \$8,352 a year without a shred of assistance is a pretty tough message."

Jenney Shipley, another government minister, said the scheme would be disadvantageous to women and "increase the gap between rich and poor." Shipley's opposition to the scheme was widely reported in the press as an opening bid for leadership of the National Party.

Capitalist politicians and other spokespeople for the employing class opposed to Peters's plan have advocated alternatives centered on further reducing the level of current pension payments, raising the age of eligibility, and introducing means testing. Shipley, for example, proposed retirement age be raised to 67, and that a universal pension be introduced with "a tightly income tested top-up for those who have no other source of income."

"Better to give back taxpayers some of their own money through tax cuts," said an editorial in the July 11 *National Business Review*, "tell them to provide for their own retirement and explicitly warn that the safety

Continued on Page 12

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.
Call Sean Downes: (212) 587-3300

San Francisco

Martin McGuinness, MP
Saturday, Sept. 6, 8:00 p.m.
The Russian Centre 2460 Sutter St.
Donation: \$20.
Call Ciarán Scally: (415) 642-1170

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.
Call Dick Stanton: (312) 372-1646

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