

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

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— PAGE 5

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Currency crisis in Asia shakes Wall St.

Imperialists push for austerity; workers resist

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

When pension and mutual fund managers began selling off Hong Kong stocks, it triggered the largest one-day point lost in the history of the Dow Jones Industrial Average — 554.26 points on October 27. Triggered by the currency crisis sweeping many countries in Asia, the 7.18 percent plunge in stock prices was the 12th worst percentage drop in history and forced the New York Stock Exchange to shut down twice.

The next day Wall Street trading exploded with a one-day record 1.2 billion shares as the Dow Jones soared 4.7 percent or 337.17 points to 7498.32.

Southeast Asian markets, however, slid further, with the Hang Seng index in Hong Kong dropping almost 20 percent in two days. Stock prices in the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia all plummeted more than 6 percent, and Tokyo's exchange plunged 4.3 percent.

This followed a week of volatility on Wall Street, with the Dow Jones index swinging up and down by hundreds of points.

Meanwhile, working people in one country after another in Asia have begun to resist the effects of the economic crisis, dimming capitalists' hopes that they can easily impose austerity measures there.

"By now ... it should be clear that the U.S. economy will not escape the consequences of Asia's turmoil, even if the crisis could somehow be stopped in its tracks today," asserted John Lipsky, chief economist and director of research at the Chase Manhattan Bank, in an article published in the



Thousands of workers, farmers, and others rally outside parliament in Bangkok, Thailand, October 21 protesting economic crisis and demanding the prime minister resign.

October 28 *Wall Street Journal*.

Underlying the increasing volatility of the financial markets are fears among capitalists in the United States and other imperialist countries over the currency crisis in Southeast Asia. Like the 1994-95 collapse of the peso in Mexico, the recent devaluations threaten the stability of many of the largest imperialist banks, which count among their assets massive loans that they worry may now be difficult to collect. But the scale and scope of this crisis is many

times greater, and affects hundreds of millions of people.

Devaluations hit 'tiger economies'

Like in Mexico, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other imperialist financial institutions have forced massive, unsustainable loans on the capitalists in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the many of the other countries in Asia that have been dubbed "tiger economies" — hot spot for

Continued on Page 12

'Campaign disclosure law attacks rights,' says socialist

BY ESTELLE DEBATES

SEATTLE — Thirty-five people attended an October 25 meeting here to protest the City of Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission's (SEEC) attempt to impose a fine of \$6,040 on the Socialist Workers 1997 Campaign Committee and Jeff Powers, the campaign treasurer. The meeting was sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum. The SEEC is demanding that the Socialist Workers Campaign Committee turn over the names, addresses, and employers of its financial contributors, and the names and addresses of vendors who supplied goods and services to the Socialist Workers candidates' election campaign.

Powers chaired the protest meeting, and Scott Breen, the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Seattle this year, was the featured speaker. "The city government is acting on behalf of the wealthy who rule Seattle," said Breen, who is a member of the International Association of Machinists union and is employed by The Boeing Company. Breen called the fine that the SEEC seeks to impose "outrageous" and noted it is three times the total amount of money raised by the Socialist Workers 1997 Campaign.

In rulings made on September 10 and October 8 of this year, the SEEC denied the socialists the same right to a disclosure exemption that they have fought for and won in federal and Supreme Court decisions and

Continued on Page 10

Million Woman March shows desire to fight for rights of Blacks, women

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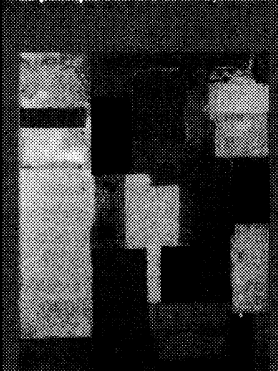
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BY HATTIE McCUTCHEON
AND BETSY FARLEY

PHILADELPHIA — As the first of hundreds of thousands of march participants reached Ben Franklin Parkway in the early morning rain of October 25, a group of young women broke into a chant that spread through the crowd, "Say it loud — I'm Black and I'm proud!" The Million Woman March was one of the largest gatherings in the history of the city. Most of the marchers were women, and the overwhelming majority were Black.

Although the march received scarce publicity in the major media until just before the date, over a million women filled the streets of Philadelphia. Buses were organized by community groups and students from hundreds of cities.

Many thousands of participants came on their own or with friends and family members. Participants came from as far away as California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Florida, and other countries including Canada, Britain, France, and Jamaica. March organizers estimated the crowd at 2.1 million, while police officials' estimates ranged from 300,000 to 1.5 million.

The massive turnout reflected the depth

Continued on Page 11

Cuban vote registers support for revolution

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

HAVANA — Some 7.7 million Cubans went to the polls in late October to elect delegates to the municipal assemblies of People's Power, the country's local government bodies. Many people here view the high turnout—up from the 1995 elections—as a registration of the deep popular support for the revolution and its leadership, even in face of Cuba's serious economic crisis.

Elections to the municipal assemblies are held every two and a half years. Voting for the provincial assemblies and the National Assembly—scheduled for January 11—is every five years.

Some 97.6 percent of eligible voters turned out October 19 to elect 13,435 delegates to the municipal assemblies throughout the island, choosing among 31,276 candidates. They replaced just over half of the incumbent delegates.

A second round of voting took place October 26 in the 1,098 local districts where none of the candidates had received more than 50 percent of the votes. This year, with

Continued on Page 7

Dominicans call general strike

The National Coordinating Committee of Unions, Peoples, and Drivers Organizations has called a general strike in the Dominican Republic for November 10-11. The action will protest 20-hour blackouts, potable water shortages, an increasingly high cost of living, and the steady dilapidation of the country's infrastructure.

Local protests are now generalized throughout the country, taking place almost every evening and into the night. Some 15 simultaneous street demonstrations broke out in the capital city of Santo Domingo alone October 21, with young activists burning tires on the road. High school students in Villa Juana, a neighborhood in northern Santo Domingo, walked out after a blackout hit their school and cops were called to stifle their action.

San Juan governor assails unions

Puerto Rican governor Pedro Rosselló recently submitted legislation that would deny public employees the right to strike. A similar bill was voted down four years ago. Protesters versus the antiunion move have linked up with some of the tens of thousands of trade unionists and others fighting the government sell-off of the Puerto Rico Telephone Co.

Mexico ruling party loses seats

The Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) of Mexico suffered a sizable defeat, losing more than half of its mayorships in the state of Veracruz. Ballot burnings and protests were part of the October 19 elections scene as the opposition Democratic Revolution party won 59 seats and the National Action party won 39 seats. Elections that took place last July cracked the PRI's decades-long stronghold on the government, registering losses that took away its congressional majority.

Unemployment up in São Paulo

September unemployment in São Paulo, Brazil, reached its highest level since such figures began to be compiled in 1985, according to Dieese, a labor research organization. Some 48,000 additional jobs evaporated last month, leaving 1.41 million people

jobless, or 16.3 percent of the workforce in the metropolitan area. This is the first time since 1987 that São Paulo saw joblessness go up in September, which is normally a busy month in the industrial sector. Dieese representative Marcelo Terrazas said the figures reflect a slowing down of the economy with big-business buyers canceling or suspending purchases. São Paulo officially posts unemployment at about 6 percent, using the narrow criteria of those who are unemployed and actively seeking work during the previous seven days.

National strike in Greece

Trade unionists in Greece paralyzed the country in a 24-hour general strike October 23 called by the Federation of Greek Workers demanding a 9 percent wage increase, a reduction in the workweek to 35 hours, and no cuts in social security benefits. Airline ground service workers and air traffic controllers held up several flights in solidarity. Power plant workers waged a 48-hour complimentary strike, which began October 22. Government workers and transport workers also joined the strike with several-hour work stoppages. The strike was provoked by Athens's probe to limit real wage increases for workers to 1.5 percent while inflation is projected to increase nearly 3 percent.

Israelis protest Netanyahu

Hundreds of Israelis who oppose Tel Aviv's aggressive stance towards settlements in the Palestinian territories demonstrated October 24 outside the home of Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu after he said that Israelis who support negotiations "have forgotten what it means to be Jewish." Those remarks were taped by an Israeli reporter and broadcast on the evening news. Among the protesters were two dozen army reservists wearing black bandannas with signs that read "Bibi [Netanyahu] incites." "No matter what Bibi does wrong, he never even thinks to apologize.



Chanting "Amnesty yes, deportation no" and "No discrimination against Haitians," in Creole, thousands of Haitian immigrants, unionists, and others demonstrated outside the INS building in Miami October 16. A recent measure amending last year's Immigration Reform Act would allow some 300,000 immigrants from Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala to avoid deportation, but does not include Haitian immigrants. Samedi Florvil, chair of Haitian rights organization Veye-Yo, said that the demonstration "is just the beginning. It's a fight ... against divisions that this [deal] creates among us, especially when we see that it is the dark-skinned that are left out."

He totally ignores the writing on the wall and we are all afraid of what will come next," said protester Ariel Doron.

Protests over Kashmir

In a demonstration backed by the Pakistani government, thousands of people formed a 360-mile human chain along the border with India October 24, protesting New Delhi's control of two-thirds of the state of Kashmir. Pakistani soldiers and paramilitary troops were deployed in riot gear to keep the protest on the Pakistani side of the border. The governments of India and Pakistan have fought two wars over the division of Kashmir, and border skirmishes continue to this day. The Pakistani government has called for a referendum in the Indian-held portion of Kashmir on making the entire state part of Pakistan. A smaller group of protesters specifically calling for Kashmir independence from both India and Pakistan marched through Mazaffarabad, some 48 miles east of the Pakistani capital Islamabad. In a re-

cent episode of the near-decade-long struggle for Kashmir independence, Indian police killed two guerrillas in the New Delhi-controlled portion of Kashmir.

Cop raids in Sri Lanka

The Sri Lankan government shut down the capital city Colombo and mobilized 8,000 cops and army and airforce troops to carry out massive security sweeps October 25, accusing Tamil rebels of bombing of the World Trade Center there 10 days earlier. During the raids, which began at 2:00 a.m. and lasted four hours, Colombo's 1 million residents were ordered to remain in their homes with identification ready for inspection. Hundreds of Tamil people were seized and held for questioning. The Defense Ministry claims that detainees lacked proper identification. That same day Tamil guerrillas, who have been fighting for self-determination for more than a decade, attacked a military post in Puvarasankulam, a town in northeastern Sri Lanka, killing six government soldiers and looting three of their own. Tamil people make up 18 percent of the population in Sri Lanka.

Antiabortion law fails

On October 20 the U.S. Supreme Court, in an 8-1 vote, refused to reinstate a Louisiana law demanding parental consent for young women under 18 years old to seek an abortion. The law was enacted in 1995 but never enforced, because lower courts ruled that it did not have sufficient provisions by which a court could waive the requirement in individual cases. The Supreme Court has upheld laws in most states requiring unmarried women under 18 to get parental consent before an abortion can be performed, but these laws include some form of judicial bypass procedure.

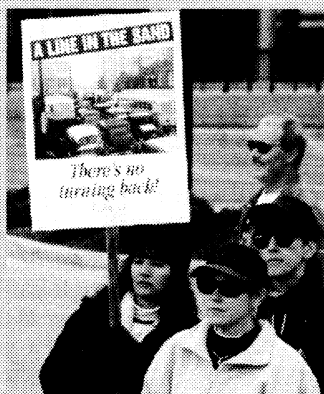
N.Y. students protest racist *Daily*

"Stop the insults against Hostos," read one of the many signs dozens of students carried October 21 as they protested in front of *The Daily News* offices in New York against racist editorials the newspaper has run. The editorials imply that Hostos students, the majority of whom speak Spanish as a first language, graduate with a less-than-minimal level of education. Student government secretary of culture Dagoberto López said that teaching methods are not adapted to fit the needs of bilingual students and this must be changed. "But the *Daily News* has said that we don't want to learn ... and that is a lie," he concluded. — BRIAN TAYLOR

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EU charter gives cops greater powers

BY DAG TIRSÉN

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — The revised European Union charter that was negotiated in Amsterdam last June incorporates a new section that gives police greater powers in the name of establishing a "freedom of movement" within the EU. The provisions include increasing border controls at the outer borders, a system of European-wide registrations of individuals, and more collaboration between cops in the EU-member states.

The provision began as an accord between five EU governments—Paris, Bonn, Brussels, Amsterdam, and Luxembourg—signed in Schengen, Luxembourg, in 1985 to eliminate border control between those countries, and establish a common visa policy. In 1990 an "Implementation Convention" was set up, centered around increased control over travelers.

The Schengen convention is said to be about the freedom of movement over the "internal borders" between the Schengen countries. But just four articles in the convention are about open borders and 138 are about increased control. Some of the members states, including the French government, make use of one article that says that control still *can* be kept at certain borders. In addition, Paris has 16,000 officers deployed in public institutions, including toll collections, border cops, and state cops, who are authorized to control people in a zone within 20 km (12.5 miles) from the borders. This is considered a "compensating action" for participation in the free-travel zone. The government of Holland, for its part, has established a mobile border control force with the task of stopping and controlling selected people.

Aim is to control movement

The biggest effect of the Schengen treaty will be at the external borders, which means more rigorous control for all travelers. Everybody crossing the border will be checked against the Schengen Information System (SIS) files. In 1995 this system consisted of 30,000 computer terminals and a central computer that at the beginning of this year had a capacity of 9 million records, with plans to expand.

Non-EU citizens are subject to "special control." They have to have one or more valid travel documents, approved by the Schengen Executive Committee, which in most cases includes a valid visa. In March 1995, citizens of 126 countries needed a visa under the Schengen rules, and those of just 20 did not. In addition, those entering the participating countries must present proof of the purpose and conditions of their stay, have cash to support themselves, not be on file in the SIS as "not wanted," nor be judged to endanger the public order of the country, its national security or its international relations. Anybody that does not fulfill all these conditions will be denied entrance to the whole Schengen territory.

One aim of the convention is a common asylum policy under which an asylum seeker who is unwanted in one country will be turned away in all the other Schengen countries. To implement that, all asylum seekers down to 11 years of age are today already recorded in the SIS system.

The people listed in the SIS files so far have mainly been asylum seekers. Of the 700,000 persons entered in the file by Bonn by late 1995, 86 percent were under the category of unwanted foreigners.

Connected to the SIS is a system called Supplementary Information at the National Entry (SIRENE), where the bulk of material of each person is stored. These files include photos, fingerprints, and other information. SIS is essentially an index for SIRENE. The guidelines for the data entries in SIRENE are confidential. SIRENE is not formally part of the Schengen convention, but was established by the Schengen Executive Committee. Unlike the Schengen convention itself, this system does not have to be ratified by any parliament.

Legitimizing police surveillance

Reports on persons may be stored in the SIS for the purpose of "discreet surveillance" or "specific checks" where "concrete evidence gives reason to suppose" that the information is "necessary for the prevention of a serious threat by the person concerned or other threats to internal or external State security." According to this, a person can be placed under surveillance not because of



Militant/Catharina Tirsén

Demonstration in Gothenburg, Sweden, last year against deportation of Kurdish people. Schengen treaty aims to give cops further powers against immigrants and others.

his or her own acts but because of "other threats" to the state security. In a recently published book on the Schengen convention, Thomas Mathiesen describes this formulation as "pointing in the direction of political surveillance."

The Schengen convention and its inclusion in the EU charter means legitimization for more surveillance by the cops and more restrictions on democratic rights. It goes hand in hand with other campaigns to legitimize the activities of the cops.

One example was the action by the Netherlands cops during the conference in Amsterdam in June where the recently adopted EU charter was prepared. Tens of thousands of workers and youth from across Europe came there to protest the meeting,

and held a peaceful demonstration. The next day the police arrested about 700 young people, in groups of up to 200. No charges were presented, and all were released in a few days. Most of the arrests were made under Article 140 in the criminal law of the Netherlands, which makes it illegal to belong to a "criminal organization." It was the first time that law was used this way. Cops from several European countries was present as observers, including from Sweden.

In March, a "joint action plan against organized crime" was approved by the Amsterdam European Council. One of its main components was that all member states makes it illegal to "participate in a criminal organization."

At the same time, the Swedish govern-

ment was working on proposals in the same direction: to make it punishable by law to be "an active participant" in an organization that commits crimes, to increase the powers of the cops to deal with gatherings declared to be "disturbing public order."

But the increasing tensions between the ruling classes of Europe make it difficult for them to make rapid progress in the cops' collaboration.

Also popular resistance is a problem for the rulers. After a plebiscite on the EU was defeated in Denmark, the government there demanded, and got, several exceptions from implementing the EU charters. At the Amsterdam meeting the governments of Denmark, the United Kingdom, and Ireland were exempted from the "Schengen" part in the new EU charter. Several other states have not ratified the convention yet, including Stockholm, which plans to do it at the end of the year.

The EU is pasted together with layers of different agreements. The Schengen convention was an attempt move things forward a little faster through having those governments that were willing to initiate collaboration before the others. Now this is incorporated in the Amsterdam charter as the principle of "flexible integration."

Earlier this year a coalition was formed to fight Sweden's ratification of the Schengen convention. It includes organizations and individuals, some of whom have been active in struggle against racist and fascist organizations, against Sweden's membership in the EU, and in the environmental movement. A series of informational meetings have been held. A march against the Schengen treaty is planned for November 9, the day of "Kristallnacht," which is the anniversary of a Nazi pogrom in 1938.

Dag Tirsén is a member of the Foodworkers Union in Stockholm, Sweden.

Maori activists fight frame-up charges

BY NATHAN SIMMS

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — Prominent Maori activist Tame Iti has been speaking out around the country against a police frame-up of himself and other Maori rights fighters in the Bay of Plenty. Iti and fellow activist Tekaha face kidnapping charges, and Tekaha and Laurie Davis have been charged with stealing a valuable painting.

Speaking to *Militant* reporters July 18 outside the District Court in the Bay of Plenty town of Whakatane, Tekaha said that "all this [pressure from the courts and police], and their lack of evidence, leads us to the absolute conviction that this is not a law and order case, but a political case."

Iti and Tekaha described the background to the frame-up. In early June, the *Urewera Mural*, a painting by the late artist Colin McCahon, with a reported value of \$NZ1.2 million (\$1NZ = US\$0.64), was stolen from a Conservation Department visitor center at Lake Waikaremoana.

As a part of what they call "Operation Art," police have raided a number of Maori homes in the Ruatoki area, openly stating that they would put pressure on the community to find the missing painting. Local resident Sandre Kruger told the *New Zealand Herald* that police seemed to be baiting and harassing activists in the area.

In one of these raids, Iti was woken in the early hours of the morning and charged with kidnapping two teenagers at gunpoint and beating them. Four days later, Tekaha and Laurie Davis were charged with the theft of the painting, which remains missing.

The activists said they had been hauled before other courts. In Rotorua July 4, Iti had to answer a charge of conspiring to defeat the course of justice by approaching a witness, and was held in custody for 10 days before being granted bail by the High Court in Auckland.

The defendants describe the charges as politically motivated. Iti, an artist and well-known political figure, has addressed several meetings, including a Militant Labour Forum of nearly 40 people in Auckland August 15 and a public meeting of 150 people in Christchurch on September 23, organized by Action for an Independent Aotearoa. In Christchurch he shared the platform with veteran Maori rights campaigner

Eva Rickard. The theme of the meeting was "The Struggle for Maori Self-Determination: Indigenous Rights in Aotearoa in the 1990s."

Iti said he and others have drawn the ire of the police and authorities for their active opposition to racist discrimination, past and present. "Basically, we're doing what we've been doing since 1866," he said.

In that year, he explained, the New Zealand colonial government confiscated nearly 400,000 acres of land from local tribes for their supposed involvement in the murder of a missionary, and for supporting neighboring Waikato tribes in their resistance to land-grabbing wars. His own tribe, Tuhoe, lost 56,000 acres. Since that time, Maori have resisted further encroachments, and fought for the return of confiscated lands.

Tuhoe activists have established an embassy in the town of Taneatua. Iti explained that during their raids the police invaded the embassy. "We see ourselves as guardians of the border," he said. "We don't recognize the authority of the crown."

This stance has particularly incensed the

police. In a television interview, the officer in charge of Operation Art, Detective Inspector Graham Bell, complained that "these people consider themselves outside of the laws of New Zealand." Iti stated Bell had boasted to him of his grandfather's leadership of a police operation in 1916 against the Maori settlement founded by Tuhoe leader Rua Kenana. Two Maori were killed as the police arrested Kenana on a charge of sedition, for calling on Maori not to enlist in the New Zealand army in World War I.

Iti assured those at the Christchurch meeting that Tuhoe activists and other fighters would not be cowed by recent attacks on democratic rights. "They're not going to stop us from talking. We're still going to speak out." He warned, "It could happen to any one of you."

During the meeting a collection was taken to contribute towards Iti's NZ\$20,000 court costs. Readers who want to contribute to the defense effort can send checks to: P.O. Box 12, Taneatua, New Zealand.

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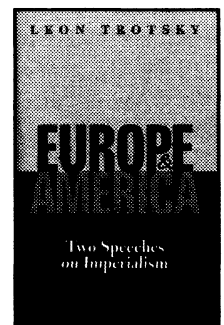
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Fund supporters near goals as Pathfinder releases 10th new title

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

NEW YORK — Hot off the presses, the first 50 copies of Pathfinder's 10th new title in 1997, *Le visage changeant de la politique aux États-Unis: la politique ouvrière et les syndicats*, were shipped to arrive by the opening of the Young Socialists convention in Canada. During the YS founding gathering, a meeting will be held to celebrate the release of this book, the French-language edition of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by Jack Barnes.

As the campaign enters its final week, contributions received put the Pathfinder fund drive just \$17,160 short of the \$125,000 international goal.

After securing pledges to cover their local goals, and gaining momentum in their

collection over the last few weeks, fund supporters in several areas are now organizing to surpass the goals they initially adopted.

"We have already collected more than our original goal of \$2,400," writes Ray Parson from Des Moines. In addition, he reports, they have about another \$250 worth in pledges to collect.

Ellen Berman reports from San Francisco, "As of Monday, October 27, we have collected and sent in to New York a total of \$11,850 toward our \$11,000 goal." San Francisco supporters "expect to go over \$12,000" by the November 1 deadline.

Other reports — including from Atlanta, Cleveland, Boston, and Pittsburgh — indicate each of these areas will organize the final days of the campaign to go over their goals.

Supporters in France continue to place efforts to get contributions from co-workers at the center of their campaign. "Our co-workers' contributions at Renault and GEC Alsthom are one of the reasons for our success," writes Nat London. "Our grand total collected toward the fund is now \$360. Not only are we now in sight of our goal, we hope to go over the top." One temporary worker at Renault has just contributed 200 francs (\$35) and another at GEC Alsthom has chipped in 100 francs. So far workers at Renault have contributed 308 francs, closing the gap toward the 500 francs goal from workers in this industry, London reported.

Contributions to help Pathfinder's publishing and reprints program can be sent to Pathfinder Fund, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.

'These books by Che will go fast,' say Pathfinder buyers at Frankfurt fair

BY TONY HUNT AND SARA LOBMAN

FRANKFURT, Germany — "The most important thing is to get books like these into people's hands," the buyer for a bookstore in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, said, looking over the Pathfinder stand at the Frankfurt Book Fair. She ordered some 200 books, including most of Pathfinder's titles in English, Spanish, and French. "These books by Che Guevara will sell fast," she noted.

Pathfinder's books on the history of the workers' movement and revolutionary and working-class politics in today's world got a good response from booksellers and youth at the October 15 – 20 event, as well as during a four-day sales trip in Germany following the fair. All told, 334 books were sold to 14 stores.

The Frankfurt Book Fair is among the largest in the world. Publishers and others in the book industry from 107 countries had booths at the fair, which filled 15 large halls spread out over 6 buildings. Some 287,000 people attended this year, mostly from the publishing trade, but also including significant numbers of young people from cities across Germany who took advantage of the two days the fair was open to the public. Tony Hunt from Pathfinder Distribution in London, Sara Lobman, the publisher's business manager from New York, and Pathfinder supporters from Sweden, France, and Belgium staffed the stand.

In addition to the order from The Netherlands, a bookstore in Copenhagen, Denmark, ordered 21 books, including 5 copies of *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s* by Frank Kofsky and three copies each of *White Business, Black Music*, also by Kofsky and *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'* by Harry Villegas. A bookstore in Delaware, in the United States, ordered 13 books, including several on the Cuban revolution, Leon Trotsky's *The History of the Russian Revolution*, *Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom*, and

a copy of the Marxist magazine *New International* no. 10, which includes the article "Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War."

The owner of two bookstores in South Africa, one in Johannesburg and one in Pretoria, stopped in front of the Pathfinder stand on the first day of the fair. "Struggle-related titles sell well in South Africa," he commented, and placed an order. His stores are close to two of the largest universities in South Africa.

Many people were drawn to the booth to look through titles on the Cuban revolution. The German editions of several new biographies of Guevara are in bookstores now and both individuals and book buyers were

interested in books by the revolutionary leader. Two young women from Erfurt, in eastern Germany, stopped by the stand to look through *Che Guevara Speaks: Selected Speeches and Writings* and several of the titles by Malcolm X. Another woman made arrangements to get a copy of *Malcolm X on Afro-American History* after the fair.

A woman from Turkey, currently living in Germany, offered a list of bookstores in Ankara and Istanbul that sell English-language books. A woman from Macedonia asked for a copy of *The Balkan Wars (1912-13)* by Leon Trotsky and a man from Iran for a copy of *Opening Guns of World War III* in Farsi. A young woman from Germany and her boyfriend, originally from Ireland,



Militant/Carole Lesnik

Pathfinder books got a great response as well from students in Los Angeles during October 22–25 tour of representatives from Cuban Interests Section.

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

CITY/COUNTRY	GOAL	PAID	%
Canada			
Toronto	2,500	2,500	100%
Vancouver	1,150	1,150	100%
Montreal	1,650	1,416	86%
Canada Total	5,300	5,066	96%
France	400	360	90%
United States			
Des Moines	2,400	2,511	105%
Boston	5,500	5,462	99%
San Francisco*	11,000	10,690	97%
Detroit	4,000	3,879	97%
Seattle*	9,000	8,575	95%
Chicago*	12,000	11,284	94%
Atlanta*	4,624	4,274	92%
Twin Cities*	7,750	6,930	89%
Philadelphia	4,000	3,551	89%
Washington, D.C.	3,000	2,558	85%
Birmingham	3,500	2,895	83%
Miami	3,000	2,442	81%
Cleveland	2,400	1,880	78%
New York*	13,500	10,334	77%
Pittsburgh	5,000	3,710	74%
Newark	8,500	5,994	71%
Los Angeles	10,000	6,350	64%
Houston	5,500	2,960	54%
Other	2,919	2,791	96%
U.S. Total	117,593	99,070	84%
Australia	750	582	78%
New Zealand			
Wellington	130	130	100%
Auckland	2,100	1,462	70%
Christchurch	640	315	49%
N. Z. Total*	2,870	1,907	66%
Sweden	700	450	64%
Iceland	150	60	40%
United Kingdom			
Manchester	600	310	52%
London	900	25	3%
U.K. Total*	1,500	335	22%
Other Int'l		10	
INT'L TOTAL:	129,263	107,840	86%
SHOULD BE:	125,000	111,250	89%
* Raised goal			

were interested in *Woman's Evolution: From Matriarchal Clan to Patriarchal Family* by Evelyn Reed, and purchased a copy of the book.

Following the book fair and several meetings with stores in Frankfurt, Hunt headed north to visit bookstores and libraries in Berlin, Göttingen, Hamburg, and Leipzig. Lobman visited the southern cities of Heidelberg, Freiburg, Tübingen, and Munich. A fair number of bookstores carry English-language titles.

Getting Pathfinder titles into these stores makes them accessible to workers and young people who would otherwise not be able to read them. For example, a high school teacher who stopped by the booth at the Frankfurt book fair had picked up a copy of *Malcolm X Talks to Young People* at a bookstore in Munich. She now uses the book for one of her classes.

The main public research library in Munich has many Pathfinder titles. Additionally, bookstore owners in Heidelberg and Munich, after placing orders, volunteered to send copies of the Pathfinder catalog to professors at the nearby universities who they thought would be especially interested.

During the sales trip, 11 bookstores in six cities placed orders for a total of 101 books. Several of these stores will be carrying Pathfinder books for the first time. The top sellers were *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'*, with 8 copies ordered; *Che Guevara Speaks*, with 7 copies; *White Business, Black Music*, with 6 copies; and *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s*, with 5 copies ordered.

Also among the wide range of titles stores ordered were 13 books by Malcolm X, 2 copies of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* by Jack Barnes (one in English and one in Spanish), 3 copies of the upcoming title *Capitalism's World Disorder*, also by Barnes, and 4 copies of *Democracy and Revolution* by George Novack.

Ohio unionists fight cuts in workers comp

BY TERRY PARKER

CLEVELAND — About 500 people filled the UAW Local 1250 hall here October 16 to rally against Ohio Senate Bill 45, a direct attack against workers compensation in the state.

The labor movement in Ohio has joined with other organizations to gather more than 400,000 signatures to put a referendum on S.B. 45 on the ballot for the November elections. If a majority of voters vote no on Issue 2 the bill, which was already signed by Gov. George Voinovich in April, will not go into effect. If a majority votes yes, the law goes into effect immediately.

Warren Davis, the director of UAW Region 2, told workers at the rally that the law was actually written by several corporate law firms. He said the only workers compensation benefit that is increased by the new law is death benefits, and this was only

included because the funeral industry complained that there was nothing in the law for them.

Some of the main provisions of the law are:

- Reduction of the length of time a person can receive compensation from 52 weeks to 26 weeks;
- Reduction of the life of a claim from 10 years to 5 years;
- Limiting public access to employer safety records including keeping secret from the public the results of safety inspections;
- Exempting agricultural production from safety rules that apply to industrial production; and
- Making it virtually impossible to get workers compensation for repetitive motion injuries like carpal tunnel syndrome.

William Burga, president of the Ohio AFL-CIO, also spoke at the rally. The larg-

est corporations in the state stand to save \$200 million a year on this law, he said, and they have already spent over \$2 million campaigning to get the law passed.

Steve Warshell, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Cleveland, is urging a No vote on Issue 2. "Senate Bill 45 is an effort of the employers and the Democratic and Republican parties to gut workers compensation in Ohio," he said. "Workers are taking the vote No campaign seriously. They view it in the context of the resistance to employer and government attacks, like the United Parcel Service strike and the Wheeling Pitt strike. A big No vote can deal another blow to this offensive."

Warshell is a member of the United Steelworkers union at USS/Kobe Steel in Lorain, Ohio. He said that at his mill, "There's no one who has been given a vote no sticker who doesn't have it on their hard-hat."

SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

Over 1,900 new readers won to the socialist press

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

"We welcome all of our 1,412 new readers," said *Militant* editor Naomi Craine at the conclusion of a successful eight-week subscription drive that surpassed all its international goals. "We would appreciate your comments and opinions of the paper over the coming weeks."

From London to New York and Los Angeles, sales soared during the last week of the drive. Young Socialists, socialist workers, and other readers sold 367 *Militant* and 181 *Perspectiva Mundial* (PM) subscriptions, as well as 138 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International* during the past seven days.

"In Los Angeles we used the subscription campaign to reach out to many students and

other young people with the truth about Cuba during a speaking tour by two representatives of the Cuban Interests Section [see article on page 7]," said Craig Honts, a member of the United Transportation Union in that city. "We sold 22 *Militant* subscriptions, 10 PM subs, 14 copies of the *New International* and nearly \$800 worth of Pathfinder books mostly on campuses during the four days of the tour."

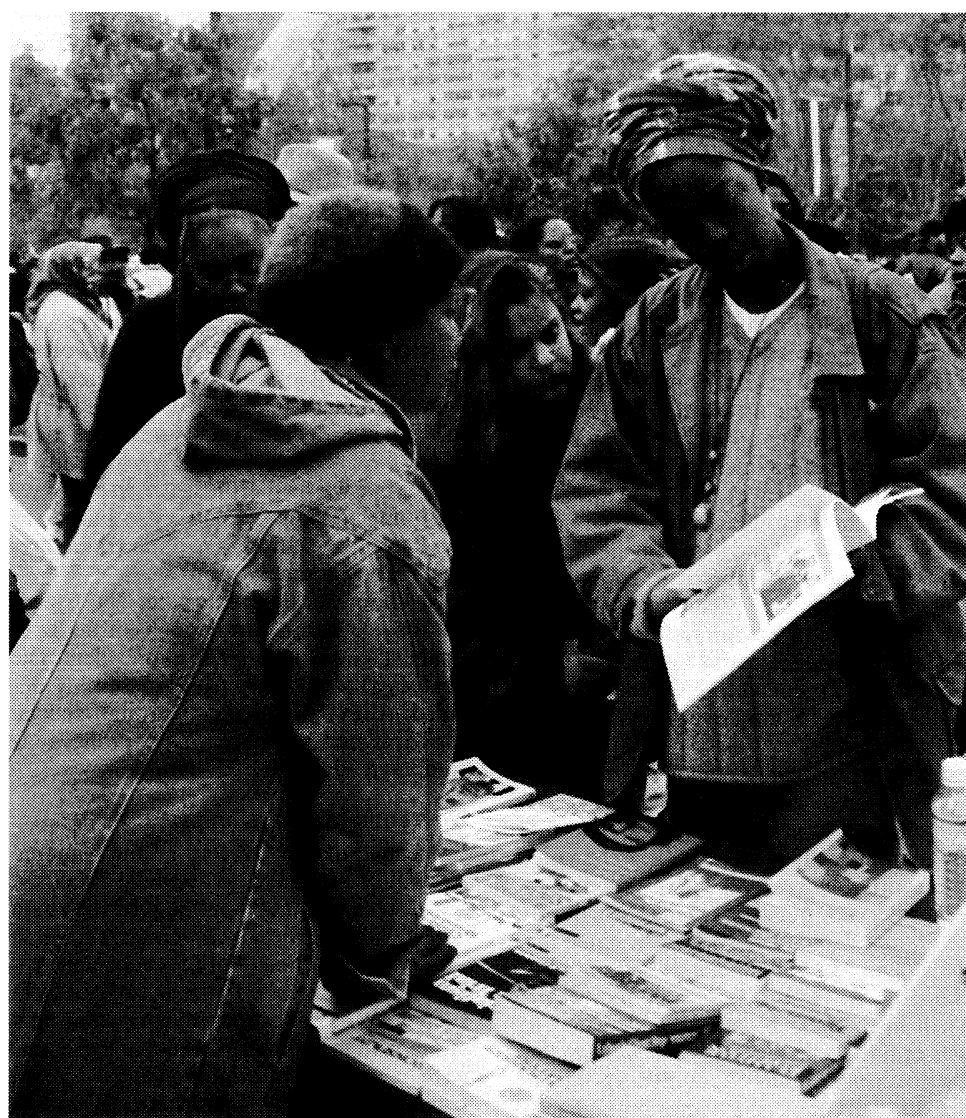
"One student at Cal State Northridge, Alex, came to the first meeting on October 22. He was drawn to Che Guevara and wanted to find out more about the Cuban revolution, so he had bought copies of books about Che by Jon Lee Anderson and Jorge Castañeda," both of which give a falsified account of the revolutionary's ideas and actions.

The student "was glad to see the socialists literature table outside the meeting hall. He ended up subscribing to the *Militant* and bought copies of Che's *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War*, *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution*, and *New International* no. 8," which features articles on "Che Guevara, Cuba, and the Road to Socialism." Two other students from UCLA that YS members met at that meeting and subsequent events subscribed to the *Militant* and then came to a discussion about the socialist movement Young Socialists held at a coffee shop on campus.

About 1,000 people turned out for a demonstration called by the Cuba Solidarity Campaign in London October 17, reported Pamela Holmes from the British capital. "They came to commemorate Ernesto Che Guevara's fall in combat in Bolivia 30 years ago, oppose Washington's economic war on Cuba, and defend Cuba's sovereignty," Holmes said in a note to the *Militant*.

Members of the Communist League and others sold eight *Militant* and two PM subscriptions during the march as well as five *New International*s and 27 Pathfinder books and pamphlets.

"The day-school Viva Che organized by the North East London Cuba Solidarity Campaign group to discuss the life and



Militant/Nancy Cole

The Pathfinder table at the Million Woman March on October 25 was a center for discussion and debate. Supporters of the socialist press sold 18 *Militant* subscriptions.

legacy of Che Guevara attracted more than 80 people on October 25," Holmes said. "Seven participants subscribed to the *Militant*, four others bought copies of the *New International*, and we sold 25 Pathfinder titles there."

Sales were also brisk at the Million Woman March in Philadelphia October 25. Socialists sold more than 125 Pathfinder books, along with 130 single copies and 18 subscriptions to the *Militant*, reported Betsy Farley.

"Books on Cuba, the fight for women's liberation, and the struggle for Black freedom were the best sellers. Marchers bought 35 copies of the pamphlet *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* by Thomas Sankara, the leader of the 1983-87 revolution in Burkina Faso, making the top-selling title of the day.

They also bought 10 copies of Guevara's *Socialism and Man in Cuba* and 16 books by Malcolm X," Farley said.

"Several demonstrators came to an open house for Socialist Workers candidates from the region after the march at the Philadelphia Pathfinder bookstore. The next day, five young people attended a class on women and the Cuban revolution sponsored by the Young Socialists."

The above stories are a small sample of the higher interest in the socialist press found in city after city around the world at the end of October.

In many cities the sheer number of subscriptions sold in one week — 47 in New York, for example — shows what is possible in raising the regular readership of the *Militant* over the long haul as an integral part of building the socialist movement.

While *Militant* supporters in most of the trade unions did not meet their goals, the increase in sales over the last week of the subscription campaign shows the potential to win more readers in this area as well. In the United States,

socialist workers sold 49 subscriptions to the *Militant* to their co-workers in industry in the last week.

By the end of the year, the *Militant* will announce its next campaigns to increase circulation — a subscription renewal campaign in early 1998 followed by another drive to win new readers. "We welcome suggestions from all readers on how to get the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* into the hands of a growing number of fighting workers and youth," Craine said.

From Pathfinder

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James P. Cannon

Socialism on Trial

James P. Cannon

The basic ideas of socialism, explained in testimony during the frame-up trial of 18 leaders of the Minneapolis Teamsters union and the Socialist Workers Party charged with sedition during World War II. **\$15.95**

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.

'MILITANT' SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE September 1 - October 26 FINAL TOTAL							
	Militant			PM		New Int'l	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
SWEDEN*	17	18	106%	9	8	10	12
AUSTRALIA*	16	16	100%	6	8	13	17
CANADA							
Vancouver	50	52	104%	5	8	20	10
Toronto	50	50	100%	10	10	20	22
Montreal	30	28	93%	10	7	30	30
Canada total	130	130	100%	25	25	70	62
UNITED KINGDOM							
London	50	53	106%	12	15	38	67
Manchester	25	26	104%	2	1	12	16
UK total	75	79	105%	14	16	50	80
UNITED STATES							
Philadelphia	25	31	124%	8	8	8	12
San Francisco	70	81	116%	30	29	35	35
Washington, DC*	45	51	113%	15	17	15	18
Des Moines	40	44	110%	20	27	20	20
Detroit*	40	44	110%	8	8	12	15
Atlanta*	33	35	106%	15	36	15	16
Boston	40	42	105%	15	15	35	35
Los Angeles	110	115	105%	55	55	55	67
Twin Cities, MN	70	73	104%	15	7	15	16
Birmingham, AL*	47	49	104%	5	7	15	17
Seattle	70	72	103%	20	12	20	23
Miami	40	41	103%	22	27	25	32
New York	140	140	100%	70	74	60	85
Cleveland	30	28	93%	6	4	10	10
Pittsburgh*	48	44	92%	3	1	15	7
Chicago*	95	80	84%	45	45	40	30
Newark, NJ	120	91	76%	40	58	60	69
Houston	40	30	75%	15	10	15	7
Other		14					
U.S. total	1103	1105	100%	407	440	470	514
NEW ZEALAND							
Auckland	30	31	103%	2	3	10	10
Wellington	3	3	100%	1	0	1	0
Christchurch	15	11	73%	1	1	5	6
NZ total	48	45	94%	4	4	16	16
ICELAND	10	9	90%	1	1	5	3
Other international		10			16		48
Int'l totals	1399	1412	109%	466	518	634	752
Should be	1300	1300	100%	400	400	600	600
* raised goal							

IN THE UNIONS

	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
AUSTRALIA							
AMWU	2	2	100%	0	0	1	1
CANADA							
IAM	10	10	100%	1	1	5	5
USWA	5	5	100%	1	0	5	3
Canada total	15	15	100%	2	1	10	8
NEW ZEALAND							
EU	7	5	71%	0	0	1	2
MWU	2	1	50%	0	0	1	0
UFBGWU	2	1	50%	0	0	1	0
NZ total	11	7	64%	0	0	3	2
UNITED STATES							
IAM	50	51	102%	15	9	22	7
UFCW	9	7	78%	13	15	9	9
UTU	50	27	54%	5	1	20	5
USWA	38	16	42%	4	3	22	12
UAW	50	19	38%	5	1	25	4
OCAW	30	8	27%	10	1	15	0
UNITE	8	1	13%	8	8	6	1
U.S. total	235	129	55%	60	38	119	38
UNITED KINGDOM							
RMT	3	2	67%	0	0	2	2
AEU	5	0	0%	0	0	5	2
TGWU	5	0	0%	0	0	4	0
UK total	13	2	15%	0	0	11	4

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

French gov't tries to appease workers with 35-hour pledge

BY FLORENCE DUVAL
AND DEREK JEFFERS

PARIS — At the conclusion of a day-long conference on employment between the government, unions, and bosses' organizations October 10, French Socialist Party (SP) prime minister Lionel Jospin announced a law to be introduced next year lowering the legal workweek from 39 to 35 hours on January 1, 2000, for all companies employing more than 10 workers. Unemployment in France is officially at 12.5 percent of the workforce.

A second law in late 1999 would define "the concrete measures which will accompany the law and its applications," particularly the rate of payment of hours worked beyond the new limit of 35. These measures will be "adapted to the economic situation of the companies," and based on the "health of the economy." Hours worked over the weekly legal limit of 39 are currently paid at 125 percent of the normal hourly wage, but this overtime rate may be lowered if the workweek is reduced to 35 hours, making it inexpensive for employers to circumvent the new limit.

The government has made contradictory noises about whether the shorter workweek will mean a lowering of wages. The first law on the 35-hour workweek, to be voted on in early 1998, leaves the question open. In an interview published in the French daily *Le Monde* September 16, Jospin stated that the slogan "35 hours paid 39" was not his, claiming it "would be antieconomical." Then in the next breath he added that he was against "a loss in pay." This implies that the government may encourage a policy of not officially lowering wages immediately upon a reduction of the workweek, but will suggest businesses "make up" for this initial concession by freezing salaries over several years while inflation rises, resulting in a de facto decline in wages.

In opening the October 10 conference, Jospin said, "Workers will have to compensate this act of social progress," the 35-hour workweek, "both in terms of the future evolution of wages and in terms of the way in which the workweek is organized." This is generally interpreted as accepting a varied length to the workweek according to the bosses' needs of the moment, without paying over-time, while merely respecting a 35-hour average on a yearly basis.

The government also promised substantial financial aid for business. Any firm that lowers the workweek by "at least 10 percent" and increases the workforce "by at least 6 percent" will receive 9,000 francs (US\$1,500) per employee the first year, and somewhat less in subsequent years.

Workers are skeptical

Many workers were skeptical that these laws would lead to new jobs. Gerard Wappler, an assembler at the GEC-Alsthom transformer factory in Saint Ouen, just outside Paris, predicted, "The 35-hour workweek won't be applied here. The Alsthom management's agenda is reducing the workforce, not the workweek." At the Renault auto parts plant in Choisy, also near Paris, Danny Hurgon, who has 30 years of seniority at Renault, said he thought the fight against unemployment should be a major priority. But he wasn't convinced the new government proposal would create jobs.

"It's to calm workers down," he said.

Many workers also worried that the new legislation would lead to a lowering of wages, despite Jospin's promises. "We must not give in on our buying power. We have to earn just as much as before," said 40-year-old GEC-Alsthom coil assembler Michel Cousin. "Now that depends on the unions — the unions and us," he added.

Despite the government's concessions to the bosses and the ambiguity of the proposed legislation, the bosses' representatives were furious with Jospin's concluding speech at the October 10 jobs conference. Three days later, National Council of French Business (CNPF) president Jean Gandois fumed to the press, "We were duped.... We have lost a battle, but we haven't lost the war and we are going to fight." CNPF, also known as the Patronat, is an organization of the biggest French companies.

Scathingly criticized by other CNPF leaders for not being hard enough on the government, Gandois resigned as president. The next day the monthly CNPF assembly decided to levy a war chest through special dues designed to finance a major propaganda campaign against the 35-hour workweek.

Government reneges on promises

Meanwhile, on October 13 the National Assembly adopted a government-proposed law to create 350,000 public jobs for youth under 30 during the next several years. These jobs, which will last only 5 years, are supposed to correspond to "new activities" in such areas as education, housing, transportation, and the police. Workers in these jobs will be paid at minimum wage — 39.80 francs (US\$6.72) — substantially below wages of other public workers. Eighty percent of the cost of these jobs will be covered by the national government, costing 35 billion francs (\$6 billion) over the next three years. The government began talks with the bosses October 10 to create 350,000 similar minimum-wage five-year jobs for youth in private companies.

While the Jospin government has been quick to claim it is fulfilling an electoral



Militant/Nat London

"All together for full employment; 32 or 35 hour week—reduce work time with no loss in wages," read a banner carried in demonstration in France last year.

promise by moving towards the creation of jobs for youth, it has reneged on other major vows. Less than three months after taking office, on August 21, the Council of Ministers announced that the repressive anti-immigrant Pasqua and Debré laws would not be repealed, but amended through new laws. The council is dominated by the Socialist Party, but also comprises four ministers from the French Communist Party and a leader of the Green Party. This was contrary to the commitments made by all these parties during the electoral campaign in May.

At the same time, according to the Interior Ministry, as of September 30, only 5,000 of the more than 120,000 immigrants without legal residence status, or *sans papiers*, who had applied for permits to live in France had received them. The others are still hoping for a favorable response. According to Jospin, those immigrants whose request is refused "will continue to be considered illegal, and will therefore have to leave the country."

On October 2 some 1,300 artists and intellectuals, many of whom had helped initiate massive demonstrations against the adoption of the Debré law in February, published a petition in *Le Monde* calling on the government "to give legal status to all the *sans-papiers* who have requested it."

On October 14 the day before the Council of Ministers was set to discuss the new immigration laws, unions and antiracist organizations held a demonstration of 1,500

people in Paris calling for the repeal of the Pasqua and Debré laws and legal status for the *sans papiers*. The General Confederation of Labor (CGT) and immigrant defense organizations are calling for a national demonstration in Paris November 22, just before the new laws are to be discussed in the National Assembly.

The government coalition has also backed off its promise to "stop the privatization process" at France Télécom, Air France, and Usinor SA — one of Europe's biggest steel producers. Jean-Claude Gayssot, a leader of the Communist Party and Minister of Transportation, announced September 10 that the capital of the fully state-owned airline Air France would be opened to private investment, although the extent of this opening has not yet been determined. At the same time the SP-led government made known that starting at the end of September, 38 percent of the state-owned telecommunications giant France Télécom would be sold. Three of the six unions, which organize workers there, held a one-day strike September 30 to protest the privatization. Some 26,400 workers out of the 165,000 participated, according to management.

Florence Duval is a member of the Young Socialists in Paris. Derek Jeffers is a member of the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) at GEC-Alsthom in Saint Ouen.

Houston conference celebrates Guevara

BY LEA SHERMAN

HOUSTON — Over 200 people gathered October 5 at the University of Houston for the main panel presentation of the Che Guevara Commemoration Conference. The event was initiated by the Irish Unity Committee, and co-sponsored by the African-American Studies Program, Alliance of Multicultural Progressive Students (AMPS), Cuba Friendship Committee, Latina Coalition, MEChA, NOW-UH, Pan-African People for Progressive Action (PAPPA), Women's Studies Program-UH, and the Young Socialists.

The keynote speaker on the panel was Angela Davis, currently a professor in feminist and African-American studies at the University of California. In 1970 Davis, a member of the Communist Party at the time, was framed up in connection with her activity in defense of several inmates in California's Soledad prison. She was imprisoned for 16 months and acquitted. Davis focused on what she called the "prison-industrial complex." She pointed to crimes that

go unpunished in the family, pollution of the environment, health and safety violations in the workplace, and government crimes of human rights violations. "How can anyone be reformed in this prison system?" she asked.

Davis ended her talk with a call to embrace Che Guevara by fighting for the freedom of political prisoners throughout the world, from Northern Ireland to the Basque Country in Spain, from Puerto Rico to U.S. prisoners.

Also on the panel was Blanka Kalzakorta, of the Basque political prisoner support group Senideak. She talked about Che's legacy for the Basque people, who are fighting for their sovereignty, self-determination, and independence from Spain. "We will maintain our struggle — that is our contribution to Che," Kalzakorta and Inigo Elkoro, who presented a workshop earlier in the conference, were beginning a U.S. speaking tour.

Steve Clark, managing editor of *New Internationalist*, emphasized the relevance of Che's ideas and example in his talk. To honor Che in the United States involves much more than solidarity, Clark said. "What Che, who is inseparable from the Cuban revolution and its leadership, teaches us is that revolution is possible," not only in the Third World but in the United States and other imperialist centers.

During the discussion, a young participant in the conference asked, "What would you expect and how would you define a modern day revolutionary in America?"

Davis responded that it was important for young people to seek to define being a revolutionary in a country like the United States, but said she couldn't answer that question today.

Clark responded that fighters in the United States, the most brutal empire in history of humanity, have a responsibility to

themselves and working people around the world to mobilize the working class as part of an international revolutionary movement to put an end to the capitalist system. "To be a revolutionary today is to be like Che — to be part of the great army of working people that represents the way forward for humanity," he said.

In addition to the main panel presentation, conference participants attended several workshops. The workshop topics included: Who Was Che Guevara?, Che: The Man and His Ideas, Solidarity with Cuba, The Irish Rebel Tradition, The Basque Struggle for Independence, and Chiapas and Mexico.

for further reading

The Wages System

by FREDERICK ENGELS

Is "a fair day's wages for a fair day's work" possible? Should workers build their own political party? Can trade unions play a revolutionary role? A series of articles written for the labor press in Britain. \$2.00

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

Ruling party set back in Argentine vote

BY NAOMI CRAINE

The ruling Peronist party of Argentine president Carlos Menem was dealt a setback in October 26 elections for half of the seats in the House of Deputies. The Peronists — who for decades had held the allegiance of the working class — lost their majority in the lower house of the legislature, with the Alliance electoral coalition winning more than 45 percent of the vote. The Alliance is a bloc between the Radical Party, which is the traditional liberal party, and the bour-

geois Frepaso party, which is supported by reformist left-wing forces.

The Alliance campaign attacked the government for corruption and the 16 percent joblessness that sparked widespread strikes and urban rebellions by unemployed workers earlier this year. But the opposition parties support Menem's austerity policies, including the sell-off of state-owned industries and continuing to peg the Argentine peso to the U.S. dollar, which has devastated workers' living standards.

Students, others hear Cubans in L.A.

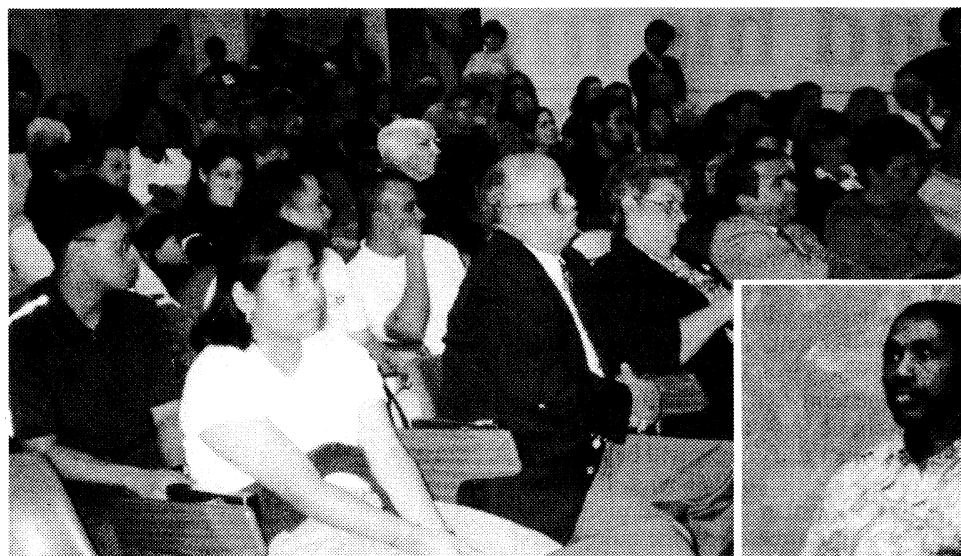
BY JACK WILLEY

LOS ANGELES — Félix Wilson, deputy chief of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., and Emilio Pérez, another officer of the Interests Section, ended a successful speaking tour here October 25. The Cuban diplomats spoke to more than 500 students and others at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) and elsewhere. The events marked the 30th anniversary of the combat in Bolivia by Ernesto Che Guevara and his comrades.

The tour was sponsored by a number of professors and an array of student groups based at UCLA, including the African Student Union, La Gente de Aztlán, Latin American Students Association, MEChA, the Cultural Affairs and Academic Affairs commissions of the Undergraduate Students Association, and the Young Socialists.

On October 22, more than 200 students and others filled UCLA's Haines Hall to hear Wilson and Pérez speak on "Ernesto Che Guevara and Cuba: Past, Present and Future." The next day, the Cuban officials spoke to two university classes. In the morning, they addressed 35 students in David Kunzle's class on "Revolutionary Art." Kunzle, an art history professor at UCLA, explained at the beginning of the session that Harry Villegas, the featured speaker, was denied a visa to come to the United States by the State Department.

Villegas, also known by his *nom-de-guerre* Pombo, fought in Che Guevara's column during Cuba's 1956-58 revolutionary war in the Sierra Maestra and as part of internationalist missions in the Congo in 1965 and later in Bolivia. In the 1970s and '80s, Pombo was one of the thousands of Cubans who fought in Angola against the South African apartheid troops who invaded the country. He is today a brigadier general of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba. Villegas was scheduled to address several university classes and a symposium at UCLA, titled "Thirty years later: A retrospective on Che Guevara, Twentieth-Cen-



200 students and others attended meeting at UCLA (above) where Harry Villegas was scheduled to talk. Félix Wilson (right) and Emilio Pérez of Cuban Interests Section spoke in Los Angeles after U.S. State Department denied his visa.

tury Utopias and Dystopias."

Kunzle read greetings sent by Villegas to the students and encouraged them to protest the denial of the visa for Pombo. "We will not take no for an answer from the State Department," Kunzle said. "We will continue the struggle to bring him into the United States."

Pérez, 33, spoke about Guevara's impact on Cuban youth. "I don't like to talk about Che Guevara as a symbol because he is very much alive today," he said. "Many young people in Cuba want to follow his example. Che's biggest contribution was his internationalism. I was one of the many youth who went to Angola. Two thousand Cubans died in Angola. We are willing to give our lives to fight for the independence of the people of the world. This is the legacy of Che."

"The same conditions of oppression and exploitation of man by man Che fought to change 30 years ago exist throughout the

world today," Wilson said.

Questions ranged from, "How is the U.S. embargo affecting the Cuban people?" to "During the 1960s and '70s, our government argued that Cuba was attempting to export revolution to justify the U.S. embargo. But why does the U.S. government remain so stubbornly against Cuba now?"

"The only reason for the U.S. government's aggression is the example Cuba offers to the people fighting oppression around the world," Wilson said. "We are not a military threat to the United States."

Many students stayed for about half an hour after the class to continue discussion with the Cuban officials.

That afternoon, Pérez and Wilson spoke to a class of Enrique Ochoa, professor of Latin American Studies at California State University Los Angeles. Ochoa teaches a course on "Revolutions in Latin America." The class was open to other students and a

standing room only crowd of 60 came. Leading up to the class, some student groups set up a 6-by-20-foot window display on campus announcing the event. The exhibit included poster-size pictures of Villegas and Che Guevara and several books by and about Guevara — including Guevara's *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War, 1956-58*, Pombo: *A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'* by Villegas, and John Lee Anderson's recently published biography on Guevara.

Ochoa opened the class, explaining the U.S. government denial of a visa for Villegas and introduced a 14-minute video interview with Villegas that aired on Cuban television last year. In the documentary, Villegas explained why he joined the Rebel Army in the Sierra Maestra and why he fought alongside Che in the Congo and Bolivia and later volunteered to go to Angola. "It's not possible to accept poverty, misery, destitution anywhere in the world,"

Villegas was heard saying in his concluding remarks. "There needs to be a response. And sooner or later the peoples of the world will look again to this kind of cooperation that is necessary among human beings. It's called internationalism."

One student said now that there are hard times, there may be unrest and people who want to overthrow the Cuban government in order to improve the quality of life.

"You have to compare the standard of living in Cuba with Mexico and other Latin American countries," Wilson responded. "Also compare it with the former Soviet Union or Bulgaria where the new regimes promised that the market will bring a better life, but instead people face lower life expectancy and misery. We are convinced that our system, socialism, is the road to follow."

Many students stayed for nearly an hour after the class for informal discussion.

The Cuban officials spoke to another 145 students at Eugene Ruehl's class on anthropology at California State University Long Beach October 24. The tour ended with a meeting of 50 at the hall of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, sponsored by the Los Angeles Coalition in Solidarity with Cuba on October 25. Wilson and Pérez were also interviewed by the *Daily Bruin*, UCLA's main student newspaper, and other student publications on that campus.

Messages demanding Washington grant Villegas a visa can be sent to James Theis, Cuba Desk, U.S. Department of State, 2201 C Street NW, Washington, D.C., 20250; Tel: (202) 647-9273; Fax: (202) 736-4475.

High turnout in Cuban elections

Continued from front page

a higher number of candidates, there were three times as many runoff elections as in the 1995 balloting. Of those elected, 17 percent are women and 12.5 percent are under the age of 30.

By law there must be a minimum of two and a maximum of eight candidates for every contested seat. In Cuba the Communist Party does not nominate or campaign for candidates, and not all candidates are CP members. Instead, citizens nominate candidates at neighborhood meetings, which this year took place in September, and their biographies are posted for the information of voters. The majority of municipal delegates continue working their regular jobs, and carry out their responsibilities as elected officials after work, receiving no pay other than the wages from their workplace.

One typical election took place in a community in the western Havana municipality of Playa, also known as Miramar. This municipality, with nearly 200,000 eligible voters, is divided into 103 *circunscripciones*, or neighborhood districts, each of which elected one delegate to the Playa municipal assembly. In one of these districts, residents had proposed two candidates at their local nomination meetings in September — Yuri Elio and Javier Duarte, the incumbent.

Brief biographies of each candidate were posted at the local polling station. Duarte, 29, is a technician at the electric company who currently serves as a vice president of the local People's Council, a governmental structure encompassing several *circunscripciones*. "I work full-time for the People's Council now, but I'm still an employee of the electrical company, which pays my salary," Duarte said in an interview on election day. "If I'm not reelected to the council, I'll go back to my regular job."

Duarte's biography reports that he has a high school diploma, is active in the Union of Young Communists (UJC), has served as captain of his local unit of the Territorial Troop Militias, and has participated in a voluntary minibrigade carrying out community services, among other things.

Yuri Elio, 28, was identified as an employee of the Industrial Military Enterprise who works full-time as first secretary of the

UJC in Playa. He is a university graduate, has studied in the Soviet Union, and, like Duarte, has taken part in many political mobilizations both locally and nationally.

'See how our democracy works'

The polls opened at 7:00 a.m. and closed at 6:00 p.m. In this district, as in many, the big majority of voters had cast their ballots within the first hour or two. The atmosphere at the polls, which were monitored by a pair of Pioneers, the children's organization, was professional but relaxed. At 6:00 p.m. the four volunteers staffing the polling station shut the doors and counted the ballots with several local residents acting as witnesses. They invited a *Militant* reporter to watch the process, "so you can see how our democracy works," as one of them put it.

The tellers did multiple rounds of meticulous counting and tallying ballots. "It's taken us three rounds because this is the first time any of us has done this, and we wanted to make sure we accounted for every ballot," one of the tellers explained.

After the witnesses certified that the correct procedures had been followed, the head teller announced the results: 199 votes for Duarte, 69 for Elio, 13 spoiled ballots, and 3 blank ballots. The spoiled ballots were either crossed out, had an "x" next to both names, or were otherwise not clearly marked. The next day, it was announced that Duarte had been reelected as delegate, winning a total of 1,064 votes to Elio's 310.

Nationally the number of spoiled or blank ballots was 7.2 percent, lower than the 11 percent registered in the 1995 municipal elections, when the worst of Cuba's economic crisis was only just beginning to ease. The figures for spoiled or blank ballots were highest in Havana province — 11 percent — compared to about 4 percent in several of the eastern provinces.

"Being a delegate is a challenging job," Duarte remarked. "When you report to the local meetings every six months, people are very demanding. They expect you to have carried out the decisions from the previous meetings. They can always exercise their right to recall delegates."

Duarte said that the People's Council here has three full-time officials drawn from the

area's 14 elected delegates — a president and two vice presidents. Playa's 103 neighborhood districts are grouped into eight People's Councils — bodies that were set up to deal with local issues more directly and rapidly than the larger municipal assemblies.

"The Special Period has created new social problems we have to grapple with," Duarte said of the work of the delegates, referring to the economic crisis precipitated in Cuba by the abrupt loss in 1990 of the bulk of its foreign trade with the disintegrating Soviet bloc regimes. "One problem is the material shortages. It used to be much easier to build and repair housing. Now a house must be in serious condition to get government aid. We try to distribute the aid equitably."

"We Cubans had been used to social equality. But now tourism, which we need to attract foreign currency, is one of the things that have created social differences. Some people, like hotel workers, have access to dollars; others don't. Some households are affected by the blackouts, while others always have electricity" because they are near a priority facility. One of the key facilities in the area is the modern Copacabana Hotel.

Duarte noted, "We had a lot of discussions about these problems in the community meetings. At first many people were opposed to the building of tourist hotels in their area. Eventually that changed. We even invited the hotel manager to the meetings to answer questions and to explain how the hotel's hard currency revenues help fund the country's health care, schools, and other necessities. Now people have a greater understanding of this question."

The delegate reported that the expanded tourist trade brought problems such as noise and prostitution to the area. "We worked with each of the four *jineteras* [the popular term for prostitutes] who lived in our neighborhood, one by one. Eventually, three of them got jobs and the fourth one left the country."

"Another complaint was the late-night noise from the hotel's disco, which bothered the neighbors. So we had some meetings and the hotel took steps to reduce the noise."

Houston meeting protests visa denial for Cuban general

BY LEA SHERMAN

HOUSTON — Nearly 70 students and others attended a meeting at the University of Houston October 28 titled "Why is Washington afraid to let Harry Villegas of Cuba come to the U.S.?" Villegas spent 10 years with revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara, working and fighting with him in Cuba, the Congo, and Bolivia. Because of this close relationship, the Department of History and the African American Studies Center invited Pombo to speak on a program about the legacy of Guevara on the 30th anniversary of his death in Bolivia.

The U.S. State Department denied his visa. Nevertheless, the meeting was held featuring a panel that included Dagoberto Rodríguez of the Cuban Interests Section and Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the English-language edition of *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'*.

The meeting sent greetings to Pombo. It also sent a letter to the State Department protesting the denial of his visa. A wide array of student and community groups sponsored the meeting to hear the ideas of Guevara, Villegas, and the Cuban revolution and protest the government's attack on free speech.

'I see Che and his men as reinforcements, as a detachment of invincible combatants'

The following speech was given by Cuban president Fidel Castro in the city of Santa Clara, Villa Clara province, October 17. Castro was addressing the main ceremony marking the 30th anniversary of the death in combat of Che Guevara, during which the remains of Guevara and six other combatants from Bolivia, Cuba, and Peru who were part of Che's *guerrilla* in Bolivia were interred. The speech was published in the October 18 issue of the Cuban daily *Granma*. Translation, subheadings, and footnotes are by the *Militant*.

BY FIDEL CASTRO

Relatives of the comrades who died in battle; invited guests; residents of Villa Clara; compatriots: [Applause]

With deep emotion, we are living through one of those moments that is not often repeated.

We did not come to bid farewell to Che and his heroic comrades. We came to greet them.

I view Che and his men as reinforcements, as a detachment of invincible combatants that this time includes not just Cubans. It also includes Latin Americans who have come to fight at our side and to write new pages of history and glory.

I view Che, furthermore, as a moral giant who grows day by day, whose image, whose strength, whose influence has multiplied throughout the world.

How could he fit below a tombstone?

How could he fit in this plaza?

How could he fit solely in our beloved but small island?

Only the world he dreamed of, which he lived and fought for, is big enough for him.

The more that injustice, exploitation, inequality, unemployment, poverty, hunger, and misery prevail in human society, the more Che's stature will grow.

The more that the power of imperialism, hegemonism, domination, and interventionism grow, to the detriment of the most sacred rights of the peoples — especially the weak, backward, and poor peoples who for centuries were colonies of the West and sources of slave labor — the more the values Che defended will be upheld.

The more that abuses, selfishness, and alienation exist; the more that Indians, ethnic minorities, women, and immigrants suffer discrimination; the more that children are objects of sexual trade or forced into the work force in their hundreds of millions; the more that ignorance, unsanitary conditions, insecurity, and homelessness prevail — the more Che's deeply humanistic message will stand out.

The more that corrupt, demagogic, and hypocritical politicians exist anywhere, the more Che's example of a pure, revolutionary, and consistent human being will come through.

The more cowards, opportunists, and traitors

there are on the face of the earth, the more Che's personal courage and revolutionary integrity will be admired. The more that others lack the ability to fulfill their duty, the more Che's iron willpower will be admired. The more that some individuals lack the most basic self-respect, the more Che's sense of honor and dignity will be admired. The more that skeptics abound, the more Che's faith in man will be admired. The more pessimists there are, the more Che's optimism will be admired. The more vacillators there are, the more Che's audacity will be admired. The more that loafers squander the product of the labor of others, the more Che's austerity, his spirit of study and work, will be admired.

Forger of others like himself

Che was a true communist and today he is an example and a model of what a revolutionary is and what a communist is.

Che was a teacher and forger of human beings like himself. Consistent in his actions, he always did what he preached, and he always demanded more of himself than of others.

Whenever a volunteer was needed for a difficult mission, he would be the first to step forward, both in wartime and in peacetime. He always subordinated his great dreams to his readiness to generously give his life. Nothing was impossible for him, and he was capable of making the impossible possible.

Among other actions, the invasion from the Sierra Maestra westward through immense and unprotected plains, and the capture of the city of Santa Clara with just a few men, testify to the feats he was capable of.¹

His ideas concerning revolution in his country of origin and the rest of South America, despite enormous difficulties, were possible. Had they been achieved, perhaps the world today would be different. Vietnam proved that it was possible to fight the interventionist forces of imperialism and defeat them. The Sandinistas [in Nicaragua] defeated one of the most powerful puppets of the United States. The Salvadoran revolutionaries were on the verge of attaining victory. In Africa, apartheid was defeated despite the nuclear weapons it possessed. China, thanks to the heroic struggle of its workers and peasants, is one of the countries with the greatest prospects in the world. Hong Kong had to be returned after 150 years of occupation, which was originally carried out to impose the drug trade on an immense country.

A combatant may die, but not his ideas

Every epoch and every circumstance do not require identical methods and identical tactics. But nothing can stop the course of history; its objective laws have enduring value. Che based himself on those laws and

ter consultation with Washington.

As part of the commemoration of this anniversary in Cuba, dozens of articles, speeches, and interviews by those who worked with Che are being published, dealing with the Cuban revolution, its impact in world politics, and the actions of its leadership.

Many of Guevara's collaborators and family members have spoken at conferences and other meetings, bringing Che to life for a new generation and explaining the importance of his rich political legacy today. These materials contain many valuable firsthand accounts and information, some of which are being written down and published for the first time. They are part of the broader discussion taking place in Cuba today on how to advance the revolution.

The *Militant* is reprinting a selection of these contributions as a weekly feature, under the banner "Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution."



Top: Militant/Martin Koppel
Left: Granma/Arnaldo Santos

"We did not come to bid farewell to Che and his heroic comrades," Castro told crowd in Santa Clara. "We came to greet them."

your life, and your example.

Thank you for coming to reinforce us in this difficult struggle we are waging today to save the ideas you fought so hard for, to save the revolution, the homeland, and the conquests of socialism, which is a realization of part of the great dreams you held so dear! [Applause] We are counting on you to help us carry out this enormous feat, to defeat the imperialist plans against Cuba, to resist the blockade, to achieve victory. [Applause]

As you can see, this land, which is your land; this people, which is your people; this revolution, which is your revolution, continues upholding with honor and pride the banners of socialism. [Applause]

Welcome, heroic comrades from the reinforcement detachment. The enemy will never be able to conquer the fortress of ideas and the fortress of justice that you will be defending alongside our people! And together we will continue fighting for a better world!

Hasta la victoria siempre! [Ever onward to victory]

[Ovation]

¹ Guevara commanded the forces that liberated Santa Clara on Jan. 1, 1959, in the last major battle of the revolutionary war that brought down the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship.

² La Higuera is the town where Guevara was executed by the Bolivian army.

This selection is part of a series marking the 30th anniversary of the death in combat of Ernesto Che Guevara. Argentine by birth, Guevara became one of the central leaders of the Cuban revolution that brought down the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959 and, in response to mounting pressure from Washington, opened the socialist revolution in the Americas. Che, as he is popularly known, was one of the outstanding Marxist leaders of the 20th century.

In 1966-67, he led a nucleus of revolutionaries from Bolivia, Cuba, and Peru who fought to overthrow the military dictatorship in Bolivia. In the process, they sought to forge a Latin America-wide movement of workers and peasants that could lead the battle for land reform and against U.S. imperialist domination of the continent and advance the struggle for socialism. Guevara was wounded and captured on Oct. 8, 1967. He was shot the next day by the Bolivian military, af-

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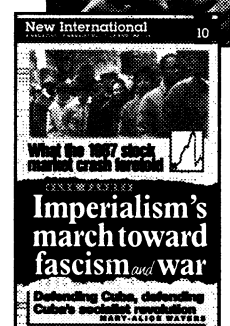
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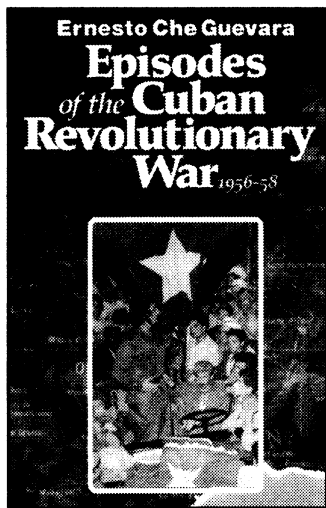
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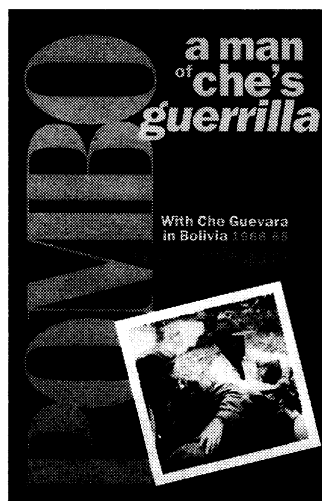
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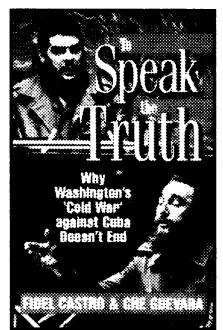
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Seattle disclosure

Continued from front page

from the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission. These exemptions were won on the basis of a proven record of harassment and intimidation of members and supporters of the Socialist Workers Party that would mean disclosure of contributors' names would have a chilling effect on those who may want to support the Socialist Workers campaigns.

In response to this latest attack on democratic rights by the City of Seattle, a new committee — the Seattle Committee to Defend Free Speech — was initiated at the protest meeting.

In an October 21 letter addressed to Powers and the campaign committee, SEEC executive director Carolyn M. Van Noy stated, "The campaign finance reports filed by Socialist Workers' 1997 Campaign are not in compliance with the law." The letter concluded, "Please amend each of the reports that has been filed, including the names and addresses of all contributors of more than \$25.00 and of all vendors to whom the committee has paid more than \$50.00 and file the amended reports with the City Clerk no later than November 4, 1997. In addition, submit to the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission office a check in the amount of \$6,040.00, payable to the City of Seattle, no later than November 4, 1997."

Meanwhile, on October 24, the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) issued written findings and conclusions based on its September 23 decision to approve the Socialist Workers 1997 Campaign Committee's request for an exemption from disclosing the names and addresses of its contributors and vendors. The PDC findings stated, "There is a long history of harassment, disruptive efforts by individuals and government agencies, government surveillance, and threats against individuals identified with the Socialist Workers Party nationwide."

In granting the exemption the PDC noted that disclosure of the names and addresses of campaign contributors "could have a chilling effect on the party's ability to solicit and collect campaign funds."

The PDC exemption is in effect through Dec. 31, 1997 and the Socialist Workers Campaign must reapply for a disclosure exemption for the 1998 statewide elections.

The Tacoma-based *News Tribune* became

the second major daily in this area to denounce the PDC decision, echoing the opinion of the *Seattle Times*. On October 6, under the title, "Poor PDC decision sets bad precedent," the *News Tribune* editorialized: "Washington's Public Disclosure Commission — charged with ensuring the ethical conduct of political campaigns and candidates in this state — took a wildly wrong turn recently by granting a disclosure exemption to the Socialist Workers Party."

"No one would argue that minority parties and their candidates are frequently discounted, ignored and even harassed by those who disagree with their politics," said the *News Tribune*. "And simply by virtue of what they stand for, it would not seem unreasonable to speculate that members of the Socialist Workers Party are probably more frequent targets for attack than perhaps Republicans or Democrats."

"Fundamentally, though, these are the same difficulties and challenges faced by many candidates for public office, regardless of their politics or affiliations. Openness and full disclosure are the antidotes for public distrust and disenchantment — not secrecy and exemptions."

These developments set the framework for the October 25 protest meeting. "The SEEC, the *Seattle Times* and the *Tacoma News Tribune* all complain that the law must be applied equally, that we are all equal. But this is false," said Breen.

"These disclosure laws were never aimed at curbing corruption or cleaning up the electoral process. After 25 years, can anyone say the elections are fairer, cheaper, or less subject to corruption? No, these laws only created a legal opening for the government to intrude into workers organizations — be they trade unions or political parties like the SWP. That's why fighting for this exemption is so important," he explained.

The SEEC ruling comes at a time when growing numbers of workers are resisting the decades-long employer offensive. The Socialist candidates in Seattle played an active part in supporting the Teamsters on strike against UPS and farm workers fighting for union representation.

"My employer, Boeing, is the largest manufacturer of commercial aircraft in the world, and now a gigantic producer of military weapons," said Breen. "And they are in trouble. Last week they admitted they will lose \$2.6 billion by not meeting their production schedule. Boeing stock has dived by 10 percent. Over a month ago Boeing attempted to intimidate me because I spoke

New Jersey socialist candidate in the news



"Platform stresses rights of workers" read the front page headline in *The Daily Targum* October 14, over an article about the Socialist Workers candidate for governor in New Jersey, Robert Miller. The coverage in the *Targum*, a paper at Rutgers University, included the photo above of Miller campaigning on campus.

out publicly about the effects on the workers of Boeing's profit-driven speedup — forced overtime, increased job injuries, and the possibilities for defective work in the rush. The company backed off due to support of my co-workers and the union.

"But in the past two weeks other Boeing workers have openly talked to the press about the conditions Boeing workers face," Breen said. "Management responded with an editorial in *Plane Facts* — a company magazine — as well as an article on the company's policy on speaking with the media. They are sending a clear warning to all of us — don't talk to the media at the risk of losing your job!" (See excerpts below.)

"The City of Seattle is sending a similar message to me, Boeing workers, and others who want to speak out and organize an independent working-class political course," continued Breen. "And this message is also a national one."

Breen announced the formation of the Seattle Committee to Defend Free Speech to be organized in "the tradition of the fighting labor movement." The purpose of this committee is to raise funds and reach out for support for the efforts of the Socialist Workers campaign to overturn the SEEC's decision, to restore the disclosure exemption, and to annul the fines, Breen said. The Washington State American Civil Liberties Union is supporting the fight and preparations are under way to appeal the decision in court. The Socialist Workers campaign

also plans to appeal the SEEC fines.

Autumn Knowlton spoke at the protest meeting representing the Seattle chapter of the Young Socialists. She said that her organization "will be active in this new committee and plans to bring this fight into all activities we are a part of."

Jason Welling, the coordinator of Students for Democracy at Shorecrest High School, also spoke. He related the attempts by his school administration to force students active in his organization to sign a "Student Code of Conduct" in order to have use of school facilities. "The code includes agreement that freedom of speech may not be used to interfere with the educational process and a pledge to inform on fellow students involved in illegal activity inside or outside the school," said Welling.

The Seattle Committee to Defend Free Speech will hold its first meeting November 1 at 4:30 p.m. at 1405 E. Madison.

Letters and statements protesting the SEEC's decision are urgently needed. They can be sent to: Seattle Ethics and Election Commission, 226 Municipal Building, 600 Fourth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104, or Fax no. (206) 684-8590. Copies should be sent to the office of the Mayor of Seattle, 600 Fourth Avenue, 12th Floor, Seattle, WA 98104 and to the Seattle Committee to Defend Free Speech. For more information on how you can help, contact the Seattle Committee to Defend Free Speech at 1122 E. Pike Street, Suite 727, Seattle, WA 98122.

Boeing to workers: 'don't talk to press'

The excerpts below are from the Fall 1997 issue of the Boeing magazine *Plane Facts*.

"Recently, our production challenges have been covered in the media. In some cases, the stories have been based on second-hand information taken out of context. I don't believe that any Boeing employee would intentionally provide information to the media that would be detrimental to our company or, in the long run, to his or her co-workers. Regardless, rumors about company business can result in irreparable damage to our reputation and relationship with customers, suppliers, shareholders and the general public. They could ultimately result in a serious competitive disadvantage and instability."

— Editorial by Ed Renouard, vice president and general manager, 747/767 Programs

"If you are contacted by the news media on a company-related matter, you must refer the reporter to the Public Relations/Communications office.... If there's a reason for you to be interviewed by the news media, then the interview must be arranged through PR/Communications. In a March 1996 letter to employees, Boeing Commercial Airplane Group President Ron Woodard stated that speaking with the media without having a PR communications representative present is a serious violation of company policy and would result in appropriate disciplinary action."

— Policy Reminder: Speaking With the Media

Minnesota socialists win first round fight for right to campaign on street

BY PATRICK CHRISTOPHER

MINNEAPOLIS — Supporters of the right to free speech won an important victory here October 28. Federal District Judge John Tunheim placed a temporary injunction on the enforcement of three ordinances that have been used by the city of Minneapolis to challenge the right of supporters of the Socialist Workers to set up street tables, sell the *Militant* newspaper, and post leaflets. The injunction means campaign supporters in Minneapolis can continue such activities while the constitutionality of these three anti-free speech ordinances are reviewed.

On August 31, Doug Jenness was given two citations while campaigning for Jennifer Benton, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Minneapolis. Jenness was cited for posting a leaflet on a lamppost and for selling the *Militant* newspaper without a permit from the city council. Each of the charges carries a maximum fine of \$700 and up to 90 days in jail. The citations were given by a Minneapolis cop working off-duty for the Uptown Association, a group of local business and property owners.

In response, Benton filed a complaint asking that the two ordinances used against her campaign be struck down as a violation of First Amendment rights. Supporters of this fight formed a Committee to Defend Free Speech, which has campaigned for letters of protest to be sent to Mayor Sharon Sayles-Belton calling on her to drop the charges. The committee is now signing up sponsors as well.

The committee organized an October 10 speak-out at the Pathfinder Bookstore in St. Paul. The panel included David Riehle, a member of United Transportation Workers Union Lodge 650, and SWP mayoral candidate Benton.

In a written response to Benton's complaint, city attorney Larry Cooperman conceded that the application of the ordinance "to the sale of newspapers may constitute a violation of First Amendment rights" and said that "the City will voluntarily agree not to charge the Plaintiff [Benton] with violations ... with respect to the sale of the newspaper."

Cooperman added, however, that "the reason the charge was brought was the placement of a table on the public sidewalk." The charge should have been under the ordinance covering sidewalk tables "because it is an obstruction and a nuisance."

At an October 27 hearing to present verbal arguments to Judge Tunheim, Cooperman described the stopping of the sale of newspapers on the street was an "over ambitious enforcement" of the city ordinance. Cooperman stood firm on the charge against sidewalk tables and posting leaflets.

In his response Benton's attorney, Randall Tighe, pointed out that the permit process for sidewalk tables was the same as for selling and for posting fliers and urged the judge to enjoin the city from enforcing all three ordinances. He argued that the ordinances are unconstitutional because they leave the power "to the unbridled discretion of government officials," which, Tighe noted,

"would permit the City Council to arbitrarily permit Mayor Sayles-Belton to post signs and deny such right to Jennifer Benton based solely upon the content of the respective speech of the candidates in question."

Tighe noted in the hearing that Benton doesn't have the financial backing of a Sharon Sayles-Belton or Barbara Carlson [the Democratic and Republican Party mayoral candidates]. Her campaign consists of setting up street tables, leafleting, and selling the *Militant* newspaper. "Take away the right to do these things and you effectively silence her campaign," he told the judge.

Cooperman replied that Benton was not directly affected by the citations because Jenness was the one being charged. The city's attorney also claimed that the permit process did not impinge on First Amendment rights because to his knowledge the city had never denied a permit, though he conceded that he could count on one hand the number of times someone had requested a permit from the city council to post flyers.

Tighe responded that in fact Benton was directly affected because the citation of one of her colleagues for campaigning intimidates her and others from engaging in the same activity.

The defense effort continues. Jenness has pleaded "not guilty" to the two citations and is scheduled to appear in Hennepin County court on November 7. Letters of support and contributions can be sent to: Committee to Defend Free Speech, P.O. Box 14302, St. Paul, MN 55114. Tel: (612) 644-6325. Fax: (612) 645-1674.

Million Woman March

Continued from front page

of the crisis facing Black workers and women in particular. March participants cited issues such as unemployment, resegregation, deterioration of education, the racist judicial system, the high rate of incarceration of Black youth, police brutality, the proliferation of drugs in the Black communities, and the need for respect for Black women as reasons for joining the action.

"I came with my daughter and her daughter," explained Audrey Wallace from East Orange, New Jersey, "for the most part to let people know that women are strong."

Janice and Gloria Williams came on buses filled with hospital workers organized by Service Employees International Union Local 200A in Syracuse, New York. "This march is long overdue," Janice Williams said. "The issues we need to deal with as women are jobs, health care, child care, education, and of course racism. Racism is issue number one."

Buses were also organized by the United Auto Workers in Edison, New Jersey, and Cleveland, Ohio. Some in the crowd were wearing union jackets or hats from the United Steelworkers of America; the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Workers; and other unions.

Cindy Thornton traveled 36 hours on a bus with 46 students from Langston University in Langston, Oklahoma. "Langston is the only Black college in Oklahoma," she said. "We came because we've got to learn to put aside our differences and work together as Black women."

Another student, Virengia Houston from the University of South Carolina at Columbia, said, "The main issues facing Black women are equal pay and job discrimination."

The action was initiated by Philadelphia activists Phile Chionesu and Asia Coney. Chionesu, who owns a store that sells books and African artifacts, has been involved in defending death row prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, and Coney is active in a tenant rights group. The 12 "platform issues" put forward by the organizers included questions of homelessness, prison reform, the creation of Black independent schools, drugs, and encouraging Black women to start their own businesses.

One of the keynote speakers at the rally was Rep. Maxine Waters, a Democratic Party congresswoman from California and president of the Congressional Black Caucus. Waters called for investigation into allegations of CIA responsibility for the crack cocaine trade in the Black communities, one of her main themes over the last year.

Winnie Madikizela-Mandela from South Africa also addressed the crowd. Other speakers included Rep. John Conyers, a Democrat from Michigan; Leona Smith, president of the National Union of Home-

less; Khadijah Farrakhan, wife of Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan; and rap artist Sista Souljah.

Ramona Africa and Pam Africa, leaders of the defense effort for Mumia Abu-Jamal, also addressed the gathering. Abu-Jamal is a Philadelphia Black rights activist who was framed up on murder charges and is currently on death row.

Karen Murphy-Smith from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, stood on a corner at the march collecting names of women who had traveled from different states to attend the march. "So far I have talked to women from every state except Mississippi," she said. "This is the first time in the history of America that women of African descent have put aside religious and political differences to join together as one." Murphy-Smith continued. "We fought the civil rights movement to get where we are today. Now we have to fight again, against a new form of enslavement they call welfare reform."

Hattie McCutcheon is a member of United Auto Workers Local 1069.



"Say it loud, I'm Black and I'm proud," chanted many of the hundreds of thousands of women and others who traveled to Philadelphia October 25.

California poultry workers settle contract

BY NORTON SANDLER

SAN FRANCISCO — Workers at the sprawling Foster Farms poultry plant in Livingston, 113 miles from San Francisco, returned to their jobs October 27. They had voted by a 3-to-1 margin four days earlier to approve a five-year contract, ending their 17-day strike.

The 2,200 members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1288 at the largest U.S. poultry slaughtering plant rejected the company's "best and final offer" October 6. They had also voted down the company's initial proposal on September 28. The company was demanding that the UFCW members accept a total of 65 cents an hour in pay raises over a five-year contract.

In addition, Foster Farms management was trying to force the workers to join the company's own Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) by increasing monthly family medical co-payments from \$20 to \$70 for workers who chose to stay with a plan that allowed them to select their own doctor (PPO). Foster Farms management also demanded to raise the deductible limit families who are part of PPO's have to pay before the company paid benefits go into effect to \$750 a year, a 43 percent increase. Many workers fought to maintain the right to go to a physician of their own choosing without the steep increase in what they have to pay out of their own pockets.

Some 90 percent of the union members immigrated to the United States from either

Latin America or from Punjab, India. A significant number are also from Southeast Asia.

Management tried to keep the plant running throughout the strike and threatened to bring in permanent replacements. On October 21, the company announced that they were presenting the union members with a retooled offer. "This is the company's one final effort to see if we can stop this from becoming very long, protracted, and painful for everybody," said Foster Farms spokesperson Jay Jory.

Jory said the company would hold off on "permanently replacing" the workers until October 27. The next day the union officials were presented with the redrafted offer.

Company officials campaigned to bludgeon the workers into accepting it by demanding that a vote take place without "intimidation." They claimed that angry, screaming workers outside the voting site had led to the previous contract being rejected.

Local 1288 president Don Hunsucker reiterated the company's assertions, telling the *Modesto Bee* that the union would not tolerate intimidation and would have the federal mediator who participated in negotiations supervise the election. "We were extremely shocked to see that kind of thing go on outside the hall," said Hunsucker, "and we're not going to have people standing around screaming and threatening people." UFCW Local 1288 has its offices in Fresno, some 60 miles from Livingston.

Unionists interviewed by the *Bee* adamantly denied that intimidation took place at the October 6 voting.

With the contract approved on October 23 union members received a \$1,000 bonus when they returned to work and 70 cents an hour in pay raises over the five years. This means that most workers will top out at \$8.72 an hour in the year 2002.

Union members have an option of receiving either a \$500 bonus or 10 cents an hour in raises in the third year of the contract.

Over the five years those in PPO's will have their monthly charge increased from \$10 to \$30 for an individual and from \$20

to \$40 for a family. The deductibles will rise to \$750 a year for families covered by PPO's.

As federal mediators were counting the votes on the contract, hundreds of workers lined barricades set up by the cops outside the hall where the balloting took place.

In a telephone interview with the *Militant*, union member Isabel Mendoza said she voted against the contract. "The company told so many lies. Like they were operating at 50 to 60 percent capacity. But," Mendoza said, "the first day back we threw out lots of spoiled meat. Ten thousand pounds of legs alone."

"We are proud that we fought, we showed that we can do it," she explained. "We stayed out there two weeks strong. The company says 200 crossed, but we doubt it."

"We didn't get the support we should have from the union. The union representative said, 'You will lose your jobs, the lawyer said we will be replaced.' Right before the vote they gave us the paperwork [contract summary]. And we didn't get a chance to discuss it," she added.

"I am frustrated that the laws work for the rich companies. What rights do we have? Just because we don't have money," Mendoza said, adding, "We'll be stronger next time, in five years we'll be better prepared."

"We won the strike," Ross Parcel told the *Militant*. Parcel said he voted for the contract because, "We got the company to come down on the medical benefits and that is what most of us were concerned with. I've worked here for 23 years and never thought I'd live to see the solidarity we had on that line." Parcel said the Livingston strike will have a big impact on the upcoming negotiations at the Foster Farms plant in Fresno. "If they are smart," Parcel stated, "they'll go out on strike too if the company tries to hand them this same stuff."

Norton Sandler is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1781. Barbara Bowman, a member of United Transportation Local 1732, contributed to this article.

Amtrak strike deadline is pushed back another week

BY RUTH ROBINETT

NEW YORK — The Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way (BMW) and the passenger railroad Amtrak agreed October 27 to extend a "cooling-off" period for another eight days, until November 6, thereby pushing back the deadline for a possible strike for the second time in two weeks. The request for the extension was made by Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater "in view of the significant progress made by the parties," said Transportation Dept. spokesman William Schultz. "There has been a lot of give and take.... This is the first time in this cycle of the negotiations that there has been significant engagement on all issues, including wages and productivity, against the backdrop of Amtrak's financial picture."

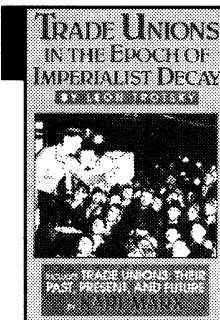
The latest development came as Congress was preparing to step in to stop a strike. Senator Trent Lott of Mississippi had said October 27 that the Senate might take up a bill the next day that would force the track workers back to work and eventually require binding arbitration if the union and company could not agree after 90 days. Lott also said he intended to attach a bill that would give the Amtrak board of directors greater freedom in determining routes based on profitability, authorize \$3.4 billion for operating expenses through 2000, and ease current labor protections on contracting out work and

layoffs. Sen. John McCain, chair of the Senate Commerce Committee, said, "At some point, unless there are labor reforms Amtrak will never be a profitable enterprise."

The House Transportation Committee was planning a hearing for October 28 on a companion measure.

At issue is wage parity for BMW members at Amtrak. The company recently rejected wage recommendations from a government-appointed board that are the same as those agreed to last year between the BMW and other class I railroads. The board did not recommend the same benefit, job security, or work rule improvements that are also part of the agreement, but instead proposed these and other local issues be placed into binding arbitration for final resolution. The BMW organizes 2,300 workers who construct and maintain Amtrak's railroad tracks, buildings, bridges, and electrical power systems that power trains.

In another development, the BMW, Amtrak, and representatives of other unions and railroad agencies reached an agreement that would allow the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) and New Jersey Transit (NJT), which bring commuters to New York City, to run in the event of a strike, along with Septa, which serves Philadelphia. Earlier agreements would have let Metra in Chicago keep operating.



Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay

Leon Trotsky

"Apart from their original purposes, the trade unions must now learn to act deliberately as organizing centers of the working class in the broad interest of its complete emancipation.... They must convince the world at large that their efforts, far from being narrow and selfish, aim at the emancipation of the downtrodden millions."

—Karl Marx, 1866

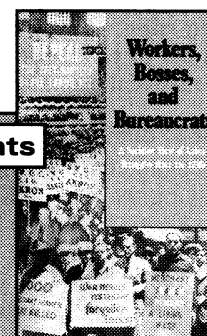
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The 1917 Russian Revolution: Why It Still Charts Road Forward for Humanity. Speaker: Harry Ring, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

GEORGIA

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The Stock Market Roller Coaster: Its Meaning for Working People. Fri., Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m. **The Promise Keepers and the Cultural War.** Fri., Nov. 14, 7:30 p.m.

Both events held at 803 Peachtree St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (404) 724-9759.

MASSACHUSETTS

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80 Years of World Revolution: The Living Reality of the Russian Revolution. Fri., Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

The Myth of Emerging Markets: What's Behind the Gyration on the Stock Market?

Speaker: Nell Wheeler, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m.

80 Years of the Bolshevik Revolution: The Impact of the Russian Revolution on World Politics. Speaker: Michael Baumann, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Nov. 14, 7:30 p.m.

Both events held at 87A Halsey St. (1 block west of Broad St., 2 blocks north of Raymond Blvd.) Donation: \$4. Tel: (973) 643-3341.

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St. Paul

What's Behind Debate on "Fast Track"? Panel discussion. Fri., Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m. 2490 University Ave. W. Donation: \$4. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

80th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution: How Workers and Farmers Took History Into Their hands. Fri., Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m. 1930 18th St. NW (at 18th & Florida, entrance on Florida). Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

Education is a Right! Speakers: Tiffany Page, president, Canterbury University Students Association; Nathan Simms, Young Socialists. Fri., Nov. 7, 7 p.m. 199 High St. (Corner High and Tuam). Donation: \$3. Tel: (03) 365-6055.

Currency crisis in Asia shakes Wall Street

Continued from front page

capitalist development. The currency devaluations mean it will be more expensive for these regimes to "service" — that is pay interest on — and repay the principle on these loans.

In several cases the IMF and various imperialist governments are trying to come up with "bailout" schemes such as the one Washington foisted on Mexico in 1995. That "rescue" left toilers in Mexico facing worse economic conditions, and accelerated the transfer of much of the country's national patrimony to U.S. capitalists.

To carry out a similar program in Asia, the regimes in the region must force workers and farmers to accept greater austerity. But that is easier said than done.

Ever since Thailand government officials released the Thai baht's peg with the U.S. dollar on July 2, one Asian currency after another has fallen against the dollar. The Thai currency has lost 38 percent of its value since then. Many companies in the region have been forced to repay loans with diminishing export earnings. According to figures from a 1997 report by the World Bank, Thailand's foreign debt climbed from \$8.2 billion in 1980 to more than 56 billion in 1995.

Indonesia's currency, the rupiah, has lost about 35 — 40 percent of its value against the dollar since August 14, when it was freed from any set relation with the U.S. currency. With a public debt estimated at more than \$50 billion and private debt at \$55 billion, the regime requested aid from the IMF and the World Bank on October 8. At least \$25 billion of the private debt is due to be paid by the summer of 1998.

Several companies in the Philippines announced problems with debt payments. "You're definitely going to see a surge in bad debt," declared Seema Desai, regional economist at Schroders Securities in Singapore.

Workers resist austerity drive

The regime in Thailand has so far been unable to impose austerity measures demanded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as a condition for delivering its \$17 billion "rescue package."

In early October protests by working people forced the government there to withdraw a new oil tax that had been imposed after the devaluation. And later that month thousands of workers, farmers, and others marched for four days in the streets from October 20 — 23 demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh. The protests has already forced all 48 cabinet members to resign from the Chavalit regime.

On October 13, some 16,000 aerospace workers in Bandung, Indonesia, went on strike and held mass rallies protesting threatened layoffs. IMF officials are pressing the Indonesian government to impose steeper budget cuts and a reduction in subsidies on imported diesel and kerosene. More than 60 percent of the people living in rural areas rely on kerosene for energy and lighting.

Anticipating social explosions in the country of more than 200 million people, Indonesian Gen. Feisal Tanjung threatened repression, vowing to crush any action he claims to be disruptive to the upcoming presidential elections.

Pile of debt in Hong Kong

Commenting on the political instability stalking the region, Kenneth Courtis, vice president of Deutsche Bank Asia, remarked, "It's quite clear there is going to be political spill from all this. Governments that are in power now are going to be severely tested."

Hong Kong's property industry has accumulated a pile of debt of roughly \$51 billion, with property values widely expected to fall sharply. Higher interest rates would cut corporate profits and lead to loan defaults for Hong Kong's banks. The banks have extended more than 40 percent of their loans to property companies there.

As the currency devaluations spread throughout Southeast Asia, the crisis in Hong Kong was fueled by speculators who also saw its real estate and currency as being overvalued and sought to drive the currency down, breaking its link with the U.S. dollar. Hong Kong banking officials raised interest rates 300 percent and the govern-

ment reportedly spent a total of \$8 billion October 22 and 24 buying Hong Kong dollars in order to maintain its fixed exchange rate of 7.75 to 1 with the U.S. currency.

"We will not change our system or our dollar link," declared Donald Tsang, Hong Kong's financial secretary. "The only people who will be burned by speculation against the Hong Kong dollar will be the speculators."

Meanwhile, Hong Kong stocks fell 10.4 percent October 23 and nearly 6 percent October 27. During the month of October, Hong Kong's stock market lost 30 percent of its value.

The economic turmoil in Asia is fueling

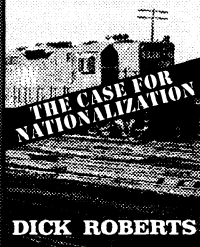
instability in other so-called emerging markets, particularly in Latin America. The Bovespa Index in Brazil plunged nearly 15 percent October 27, the fourth largest drop in the history of the São Paulo Stock Exchange. Capitalist investors fear that the debt crisis in Brazil could trigger a currency devaluation similar to that plaguing Southeast Asia.

Mexico's stock market, the Bolsa, dropped 13 percent October 27 before bouncing back nearly 12 percent the next day. The Mexican peso had fallen to a record low of 8.5 to the dollar, sliding below its previous low point reached during

Continued on Page 14

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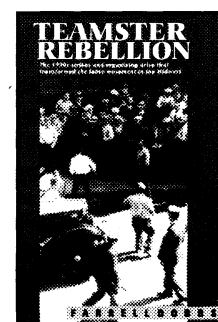
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Stockholm: Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Postal code: S-113 42. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. Compuserve: 100416,2362

The can-do system — Since the Union Pacific Railroad took over the Southern Pacific hundreds of freight trains have been idled for lack of locomotives, hundreds more



Harry Ring

for lack of crews. Thousands of cars sit in sidings blocked by stalled trains. There's been a series of deadly accidents. The feds are investigating.

Sure, not to worry — "U.S.

May Be Shielded from Asia's Woes" — Headline on *Los Angeles Times* story on Hong Kong stock plunge.

The caring society — Of 10,000 nursing homes with federal violations, only 2 percent were fined or otherwise penalized. The feds say that this shows the other 98 percent fix things when it's called to their attention.

Meanwhile in California, a review of 300,000 nursing home death certificates showed that in seven years nearly 22,000 patients died of such preventable ailments as malnutrition and dehydration.

Exceptions, except... — Miami's Catholic archdiocese

hopes to fill a cruise ship to Cuba during the pope's visit. What about the travel ban? No problem. The Treasury Dept. said visits are OK for "clearly defined educational or religious purpose."

Last summer it denied authorization to the young people who went to Cuba for a world youth festival, and to see the revolution first hand. Obviously not "educational."

Dang, must be here somewhere — Responding to a Freedom of Information request, the Energy Dept. said it can't find records which assertedly prove that between 1945 and 1975 it dismantled some 30,000 nuclear weapons.

That does figure — Britain's

Royal Navy admitted that it's missing thousands of spare parts for the Trident intercontinental nuclear missile. It's speculated that the U.S. manufacturer never delivered them, but no one really knows.

Writes opinions? — The feds spent \$4 million renovating the courthouse in Greenville, South Carolina. That included \$200,000 for mahogany paneling in judge's chambers and \$494 brass shower heads. But records are missing, so we'll never know the details on the two \$250 toilet paper holders installed in one judge's lavatory.

Prince Mickey — "Despite the savings that would come from depositing the queen, British officials

argue that such a move would be penny wise and pound foolish. Without a living monarchy, tourism would suffer.... So think of the living costs for Elizabeth and her princelings ... as the salary and maintenance costs for a British Disneyland and you get the right picture." — *Los Angeles Times*.

Thought for the week — "We're starting to see a backlash to some of these branding efforts. When the profit motive of a firm becomes so apparent, and the consumer infers that all the firm wants to do is make money, the consumer starts resisting." — Marketing prof. Margaret Campbell on current brand-name megahype.

What the 1987 stock market crash foretold

October 19 marked the 10-year anniversary of the 1987 stock market crash. Below, we reprint excerpts from "What the 1987 stock market crash foretold," a resolution adopted by the 1988 convention of the Socialist Workers Party. The entire resolution appears in issue no. 10 of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory. It is Copyright © 1994 by 408 Printing and Publishing, reprinted by permission.

The October 19, 1987, crash on the New York Stock Exchange was the steepest plunge in stock prices in this century, a larger

BOOK OF THE WEEK

and faster drop than the 1929 crash that signaled the coming Great Depression. Between Wall Street's opening and closing bells October 19 there was a 23 percent plummet in average stock prices, resulting in roughly \$500 billion in losses. The Chicago futures market fell even more sharply, diving 36 percent in 10 hours over two days. The crash culminated a stock market slide that had begun in late August; overall, share prices fell by more than one-third over that period. This came on top of a collapse in the bond market, with prices of U.S. government securities falling 26 percent between late March and October 19.

Unlike the 1929 crash, the dive on Wall Street did not pause at the U.S. borders. With explosive computerized rapidity, over the next twenty-four hours it spread to every other stock market around the world. Hundreds of billions more dollars in paper values were destroyed. This reflected the tightening interlinkages, especially since World War II, of the U.S.-dominated imperialist world system of capitalist monetary relations, credit, production, and trade. Rather than buffering the shocks from the crash in New York, stock markets from London to Hong Kong, from Tokyo to Toronto, from Sydney to Mexico City helped drag each

other down.

The most devastating decline hit the exchanges in semicolonial countries. The Hong Kong stock market ended trading altogether for a week. Shares on the Mexico City exchange dropped 75 percent in October, setting off a loss of nearly one-third of the peso's value and a capital flight of more than \$2 billion from Mexico over the next two months....

Repeated and unpredictable sharp one-day declines over the months since October keep reminding the masters of finance capital that it is not within their powers to prevent a sudden recurrence of an even more devastating crash.

At the same time, however, the exploiters' ceaseless quest for the highest returns will eventually force them to pour money capital back into stocks, sending volumes and prices soaring once again. Under capitalism, the blind laws of the market are ultimately more powerful than the mightiest state in matters of values and prices. And in a world where almost everything is a commodity, that is powerful indeed.

The near meltdown on October 19 also further exposed the vulnerability of the capitalist world to the towering pile of government and private debt whose buildup worldwide has accelerated since the early 1970s. The indebtedness of the oppressed countries of Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific increased at a dizzying pace in the 1980s as these nations suffered the combined blows of exploding interest rates at the opening of the decade; the deep 1981-82 recessions that rolled through the United States and several other capitalist countries; and the sharp drop in the prices of most raw materials and other commodities sold by Third World countries on the world market.

The total debt owed by the capitalists and governments of these countries to the wealthy families that own the major imperialist banks reached the almost unimaginable figure of \$1.2 trillion by the end of 1987, more than twelve times its level in 1973. Much as bankers in the United States goaded farmers into bigger and bigger debt loads throughout the 1970s, the massive borrowing that resulted in today's Third World debt was initiated, pushed, and sustained by finance capital,

which stood to profit mightily off the interest payments.

Mounting international debt slavery has not only meant economic and social devastation for hundreds of millions of peasants and workers; it has also increased the instability of the entire imperialist banking system. The so-called Third World debt crisis is in fact a dance of death between the capitalists in the imperialist countries and those in the semicolonial world, in which the primary victims of an international monetary calamity will be the working people of both the oppressed and oppressor countries.

Over the past century trade in stocks, bonds, and other commercial paper—the devices that Karl Marx called "fictitious capital"¹—have become integral to the very functioning of the world capitalist system: its interrelated banking and monetary operations, government finance, domestic and foreign trade, industrial production, mining, and agriculture. Capitalism does not operate on the basis of a "real economy" in which the ups and downs of production determine the conditions of both capitalists and working people, and a "paper economy" whose price gyrations affect only speculators and middle-class professionals who play the markets. The trading in stocks and bonds, together with intertwined credit and monetary flows, are part and parcel of the capitalist mode of production....

The explosive expansion, internationalization, and accelerating transaction speed in the securities markets have become necessary to the circulation of money capital and its interpenetration with industrial, min-

ing, and agricultural production and trade. In order for the surplus value created by the labor of working people to be transformed into profits, the capitalists must compete among themselves to sell the commodities produced in the fields, mines, mills, and factories. They must compete to maximize further gains from their accumulated profits, whether by plowing this money capital back into production or finding other sources of investment or speculation that they believe will yield a larger return.

The circulation of money capital, Marx observed, is the "most striking and characteristic form of appearance of the circuit of industrial capital, in which its aim and driving motive.... money-making and accumulation—appears in a form that leaps to the eye (buying in order to sell dearer)." Under capitalism, he pointed out, "The production process appears simply as an unavoidable middle term, a necessary evil for the purpose of money-making." Frederick Engels, in preparing a second edition of volume two of *Capital* a decade after Marx's death in 1883, added in light of further experience: "This explains why all nations characterized by the capitalist mode of production are periodically seized by fits of giddiness in which they try to accomplish the money-making without the mediation of the production process." Today the world capitalist system has evolved to the point that just such a fit of giddiness has become unavoidable. Its duration and volatility remain to be seen.

¹ Fictitious capital—in the form of stocks, bonds, and other securities issued by businesses or the government—is a paper title to claims on money capital.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



November 10, 1972

Public schools were officially opened up for the new school year on Sept. 11 — seven weeks ago. But for 32 Black and Puerto Rican students from the Tilden Houses, a public housing project in Brooklyn's Brownsville ghetto, the first day of school came on Oct. 23, when they were escorted into John Wilson Junior High School (JHS 211) by some 150 policemen. More than 1,000 demonstrators screamed racial epithets at the Brownsville students from behind police barricades.

When schools opened on Sept. 11, local schools officials barred 90 Black students from the Tilden Houses from registering at Meyer Levin Junior High School (JHS 285), which is situated on the border between Canarsie and Flatbush.

The officials of District 18 claimed that the admission of these 90 students would cause overcrowding in the school and would "tip its racial balance," which is now 50 percent Black.

The Tilden parents, however, refused to accept this proposal on the grounds that Somers JHS is a segregated school with inferior conditions. "We're dealing with a racist board," said Joan Boatright, one of the Black parents. The Tilden parents rented a bus, and showed up at JHS 285

every morning, demanding that their children be admitted to the school.



November 10, 1947

NEW YORK, Nov. 5 — The powerful AFL Building Trades Council of Greater New York, representing several hundred thousand workers in 38 crafts, has unanimously restated its demand for a cost-of-living escalator wage clause in contracts now under negotiations with the Building Trades Employers Association.

At their last meeting, it was disclosed yesterday, the Council delegates also unanimously rejected the employers' counter-proposals for a 2 1/2-year wage freeze and imposition of a drastic speed-up.

The employers' demand for a wage freeze from Jan. 1948 to June 30, 1950, while prices are soaring and profits have hit a scandalous peak, has been backed by Democrat Mayor O'Dwyer.

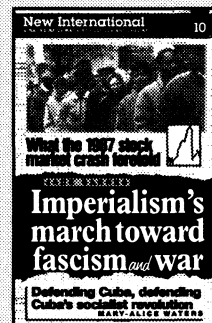
Union negotiators stated that they had been discussing a wage stabilization agreement with the employers and not a wage freeze or a supplementary contract on working conditions.

They had proposed the cost-of-living escalator clause to stabilize real wages by providing automatic wage increases when living costs rise.

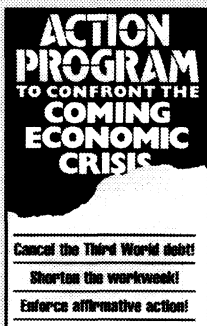
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In New International no. 10

What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold



- ◆ Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War by Jack Barnes also:
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An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis

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Socialism or barbarism

The currency crisis in Asia and growing volatility of stock markets from New York to Tokyo highlight the fact that the choice facing humanity is socialism or barbarism.

The recent economic turmoil is not the product of some rogue speculators run amok. It is the result of the normal workings of world capitalism in the epoch of imperialist decay.

As profit rates in industry have declined, the ruling families of the imperialist countries, through their banks and other financial institutions, have put more and more of their capital into an international loan-sharking operation preying on workers and peasants in the underdeveloped world. The currency devaluations, financial bailouts, and subsequent austerity measures are simply the imperialists' attempts to impose burden of their crisis-ridden system on the backs of working people. This is how capitalism works.

The faltering of the so-called Asian miracle is now making big-business investors nervous. But for hundreds of millions of workers and peasants, the miracle is already a nightmare. Toilers throughout the world are experiencing ever increasing joblessness, homelessness, preventable diseases, and starvation. The smog catastrophe lingering across much of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand is just one example of the effects of the rulers' profit drive. It was sparked by wealthy plantation owners setting fires to clear land to produce lucrative palm oil.

One of the mechanisms used to transfer the wealth produced by the toilers in much of Asia, Africa, and Latin America into the coffers of the biggest capitalist powers is the massive loans and mounting interest payments im-

posed on regimes in the semicolonial world. And behind every demand for austerity measures, for a greater squeeze in order to pay the debt, stands the imperialist collection agency — the war machine dominated by U.S. fire power.

This reality for working people around the world underscores the statement in *The Communist Manifesto*, written 150 years ago, that "pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. And here it becomes evident that the bourgeoisie is no longer fit to be the ruling class in society and to impose its conditions of existence upon society."

An international campaign is needed to press demands and organize a fight to cancel the debt imposed on undeveloped countries. Working people in the United States and other imperialist centers have a particular obligation to champion this demand, as part of the fight to forge international working-class solidarity. The battle to abolish the debt is intertwined with the fight by workers and farmers to take power out of the hands of the capitalist class.

The examples of the 1917 Bolshevik revolution and the Cuban revolution over the last four decades demonstrate that it is possible — and necessary — to resist imperialist dictates and the disastrous effects of living under bourgeois society. Only by overturning capitalist rule and establishing a workers and farmers government can working people ultimately end these unjust debt payments and other horrors of the market system, and begin to construct a new society. The bourgeois class has itself incapable of leading humanity out of their economic and social crises. The only alternative to imperialism's barbarous march toward fascism and war is the fight for socialism.

Support the Ontario teachers!

Working people around the world should support the 126,000 striking teachers in Ontario, including opposing government attempts to declare their fight "illegal." The strikers are in the forefront of the battles against the attempts to impose austerity measures by the federal and provincial governments in Canada.

There is nothing special about the administration of Ontario premier Michael Harris, except for its bluntness in pressing the cutbacks. Since the beginning of the 1990s, the federal government has cut billions of dollars in what they call "transfer payments" to the provinces in education, health care, welfare, and other vital services. Every single provincial government — Liberal, Conservative, New Democratic Party (NDP), or Parti Quebequois — has since implemented cuts with different forms and tempos. This is a conscious attempt by Canada's rulers to prevent the development of a national protest movement by making this a province-by-province issue.

The Ontario teachers strike is the biggest labor battle in North America today. It is a new confirmation that more and more working people refuse to continue making "sacrifices" for a system they understand is not working in their interests.

The teachers' strike comes on top of nine union-organized Days of Action across Ontario since 1995 protest-

ing the massive cuts by the Harris government. These have involved hundreds of thousands of workers, unionized and nonunionized, youth and others.

This growing labor resistance in Canada is becoming a political factor. The Harris administration was forced to retreat somewhat on its antiunion Bill 130 a few weeks ago, for example. This shows that workers' struggles and mobilizations can make a difference. It also shows the stake for all working people in the current teachers' strike. A victory by the teachers' would put our side in a better position to resist the much broader attacks against our living and working conditions. A defeat will embolden all capitalist rulers to initiate further cuts and attacks.

Solidarity with the teacher's strike is posed across Ontario, Canada, North America, and the rest of the world. Working-class solidarity will help make concrete the need for the union movement as a whole to launch a common fight against all cuts in social services, for free, high quality education and health services for all, for full union rights for all workers, including the right to unionize and the right to strike. The union movement needs to fight for demands like a shorter workweek with no reduction in pay as a way to create thousands of jobs that we need against unemployment, and for a massive program of public works.

Getting the facts right

As an aid to our worker-correspondents, the *Militant* is reprinting the following editorial that first appeared in the Nov. 4, 1996 issue.

The masthead of the *Militant* reads, "A socialist newsweekly published in the interests of working people." The *Militant* makes a promise to working people — we tell the truth. We stand behind what we write and have the facts to prove it. This is the paper's political responsibility. We encourage readers to send the *Militant* articles about political developments and struggles by working people and the oppressed all over the world. The *Militant* couldn't exist without its worker-correspondents. To help make sure these articles meet our high standards of accuracy, we are taking this opportunity to reaffirm and publish our sourcing policy.

The *Militant* editorial staff needs to verify the facts in every article that appears in the paper. Sourcing starts with interviews, as well as facts from other newspapers, television, and radio. No article will be considered for publication without source materials.

It's important to get the names of those quoted in the *Militant*. This paper's policy is not to use anonymous quotes, or just individuals' first names. When a correspondent asks, "May I quote you for an article in the *Militant*?" they should ask for the full name. It's often useful to find out the person's union affiliation and age as well. Verify that you've written down the correct spelling of the person's name while you're at it. Many people like to see their name in the paper, but only if it's accurately spelled and identified.

When the source is an interview it should be noted in the article submitted. Be prepared to fax your notes to the

Militant if there's any question that needs to be verified. Leaflets for the spelling of names and clippings from newspapers for quotations are other examples of source materials. If you use portions of an article previously published in the *Militant*, be sure to cite that as a source, and when possible include the clipping.

One common mistake is the misspelling of names and places. Be sure to double-check with the person or check a map or dictionary. Other common mistakes are numbers, dates, accents on names, and the exact names of political parties and unions. A source is needed for all of the above mentioned; it's easy to misremember such details.

Judge the sources you are using from a political standpoint. Not every "fact" that appears in a bourgeois newspaper is true. Working-class correspondents need to judge: Who is saying this, why do they say it, and is this accurate? Supposedly neutral descriptions, terms, or wording used by the capitalist press often slip in their own class bias. It's better to report it in your own words.

Each source submitted with an article to the *Militant* should be labeled with letters, from A to Z. Use numbers to indicate the source in each particular lettered source. For example, take a fact (1) from an article in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (letter A). The source for that fact would be A1 — and so on. Marking these source references for each paragraph of your article will make it possible for the *Militant* editors and copy editors to do an accurate job.

Working people want to be armed with the facts. By sticking to these guidelines, all *Militant* correspondents can help make their paper an effective, powerful weapon in discussing and acting in the political struggles of the international working class.

Asia currency crisis stings Wall Street

Continued from Page 12

that country's financial crisis in 1994.

In Argentina, the Merval index in Buenos Aires plummeted a record one-day loss of 13.7 percent. The regime of President of Carlos Menem is trying to impose an austerity package on working people that includes wage cuts, higher taxes, and a longer work day at a time when some 16 percent of the workforce remains on the streets. The government's economic policies sparked a wave of social explosions in major cities throughout the country last April and May.

'Japan is an economy in deep trouble'

"Japan is an economy in deep trouble right now," said Robert Hormats, vice chairman of the investment firm Goldman Sachs International. U.S. capitalists are fearful that Japanese banks would sell billions of dollars of U.S. Treasury bonds to generate cash if one or more of Japan's giant banks faced bankruptcy. More than 20 percent of Tokyo's trade is with Hong Kong and 40 percent of the country's exports go to Southeast Asia. Many of Japan's banks have lent heavily in the region.

Hormats expressed concern that a sell off of U.S. Treasury bonds by Japanese banks could trigger a recession in the United States. The currency devaluations could also set off a regional slowdown or recession that would increase "excess capacity" — the capitalists' ability to produce more than they can sell for a profit — while intensifying competitive and deflationary pressures.

Meanwhile, for some 30 million working people in the United States, the stock plunge put some \$1 trillion invested in 401k retirement accounts at risk.

As Wall Street investors bit their nails during the wild swings in market trading, White House spokesman Michael McCurry urged them not to panic. "We want everyone to take a deep breath and think about where we are. The market has taken breathtaking drops in the past — so let's just be calm and reasonable."

Just as the stock prices were plummeting, U.S. president William Clinton bragged to the Democratic Leadership Council that his 1993 budget deficit reduction plan was the key to the "strong performance" in the U.S. economy. He announced that in five years the federal deficit had dropped from \$290 billion or almost 5 percent of the gross domestic product to \$22.6 billion or 0.3 percent of the GDP.

Big-business commentators repeated assurances that the October 27 stock market dive not similar to 1987 crash, but only a "correction."

"There is no sense of urgency today like in 1987," asserted William Johnston, president of the New York Stock Exchange.

In 1987, major banks, suddenly finding themselves with mounting bad debts, began turning down credit requests from brokerage firms attempting to pay for stocks their clients were anxiously trying to sell. The Federal Reserve stepped in an ordered the banks to continue lending, narrowly averting a complete collapse.

So-called circuit breakers that were installed after the 1987 meltdown to stem market volatility and "promote investor confidence" were used for the first time on October 27. Under these rules a decline of 350 points in the Dow Jones Industrial Average triggers a market halt for 30 minutes. A second trading halt of 60 minutes is tripped by a fall of 550 points. Johnston boasted that the circuit breakers worked "absolutely beautifully" in their trial run.

The October 30 editorial of the London daily *Financial Times*, however, asserted the mechanism would "actually increase the general level of alarm." The editors cautioned, "When the cinema is on fire, it does not usually make sense to lock the doors."

Alabama coal miners strike for dignity on job

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

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

work on Sundays." The company did not explain how the union local is supposed to assure that enough miners sign up for Sunday work.

UK Ford workers walk out demanding a raise

LONDON — Unionists at Ford's Dagenham plant brought produc-

trains and signaling. Its proposed sale, which will be decided by November 6, is part of the process of privatization of London Underground. The 250 workers are members of the National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Union (RMT), the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU), and the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union (AEEU).

Although Acton Works has 5 years of orders for rolling stock, ADTRANZ will only guarantee workers jobs for 6 months. The leaflet produced by the Acton Works Committee said that this was in order to cut pay and conditions. Workers currently work a 35-hour week.

Placards at the picket were made by the section that makes the train seats. They said, "Great Train Robbery" and "Profits for safety, not for shareholders."

It was announced during the picket that Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott had agreed to see Jimmy Knapp, General Secretary of the RMT and a union delegation on Thursday 16 October.

Workers at the picket were uneasy about the stance of the Labour Party. At the recent national party conference, John Prescott persuaded the rails unions to withdraw their motion for the re-nationalization of the railways. London Underground is the only part of the rail system that has not been privatized.

New Zealand bosses stage protectionist rally

THAMES, New Zealand — The Businessmen's Association in this small rural town, two hours drive from Auckland, organized a rally here September 26 to demand retention of protective tariffs on imported cars. They are concerned at the impact on business of the possible closure of the local Toyota car assembly plant, which employs 330 people.

Toyota management claims that government plans, agreed to in conjunction with members of the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), to cut tariffs to nil by 2010 will make vehicle assembly in New Zealand unviable, and that the plant will likely close. The Thames plant

'Stop cutting our jobs, pay'



Columbia University clerical workers, organized by the United Auto Workers union, above, went on strike in mid-October demanding a contract that would include a pay raise higher than the 3 percent company offer and more hiring. "The issue is restoration of jobs," said 25-year Columbia employee Booker Washington. Some 300 workers have been laid off there.

ON THE PICKET LINE

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

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — Coal miners at Drummond Coal Company's Shoal Creek mine near here struck for two days October 7-8. Some 700 miners, members of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 1948, shut down the mine in protest when the company posted a new absentee policy and a "Code of Personal Conduct" for the mine that included a provision for the search of miners' personal property on mine premises.

U.S. District Judge Sharon Lovelace Blackburn quickly granted the company's request for a restraining order against the strike. On October 15 the federal judge extended her October 8 ruling ordering the miners back to work until November 7. According to the *Birmingham News*, the judge wanted "to allow the parties an additional opportunity to resolve their disputes." The miners are prohibited by the restraining order from striking or "refusing to perform their work in a regular and normal manner, or failing or refusing to sign up for Sunday work, or failing or refusing to work on Sunday."

According to Drummond's complaint to the judge, the miners responded to the first back-to-work order by refusing to sign up for Sunday work. The company claims that the UMWA local is bound by the 1993 contract to "assure that an adequate number of personnel make themselves available for necessary

tion to a halt when an estimated 10-15 percent of the workers in the Paint, Trim and Assembly plant walked off the line on the night shift on October 3 and the day shift on October 6. They were protesting the company's proposed two-year deal for an annual pay raise of 2.75 percent, a small increase in pension benefits, and the introduction of what Ford termed a "flexible time corridor." Inflation in the United Kingdom is currently 3.6 percent.

The "flexible time corridor" refers to an extra 100 hours each year that employees would be contracted to work if required, "in order to respond more efficiently to market-driven peaks and troughs," according to the company. These hours would be without payment. Instead, an equivalent amount of time off would be allowed, paid at standard rate. The next meeting between the company and the unions is scheduled for mid-November.

Workers protest rail privatization in London

LONDON — Over a 100 workers from Acton Works in West London, United Kingdom, picketed the headquarters of the Department of Transport and Environment on Friday 10 October to protest the selling off of the Works to the German company, ADTRANZ. This was the third picket held. During the first one, workers blocked the main road and stopped traffic to draw attention to their demands.

Acton Works is the only engineering workshop left on the London Underground system. It specializes in the maintenance of safety equipment on the underground

LETTERS

No death penalty

Over 250 mostly young people chanted, "Death Row ... Hell No!" and joined in a rap song "Fight for Life" with fists in the air as they gathered at Philadelphia's City Hall October 18. Over 100 participants at a five-state regional Amnesty International conference boarded three buses and joined the demonstration. The rally, called by the Pennsylvania Abolitionists United Against the Death Penalty included brief talks by a long list of participants. Speakers included murder victim family members and religious persons who spoke of the immorality of the death penalty, Dennis Brutus (a South African poet) spoke of the advance of the South African revolution in abolishing the death penalty, and Pam Africa spoke on the fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal and the plans for the December 6th international tribunal in his behalf in Philadelphia.

Participants said that the demonstration was a good first step in a long fight to end capital punishment.

Bob Stanton
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Capitalist T.V., radio

I've been reading and learning from you now for about 15 years. I have become so politically conscious from you, that I cannot stand the sight of Dan Rather, Ted

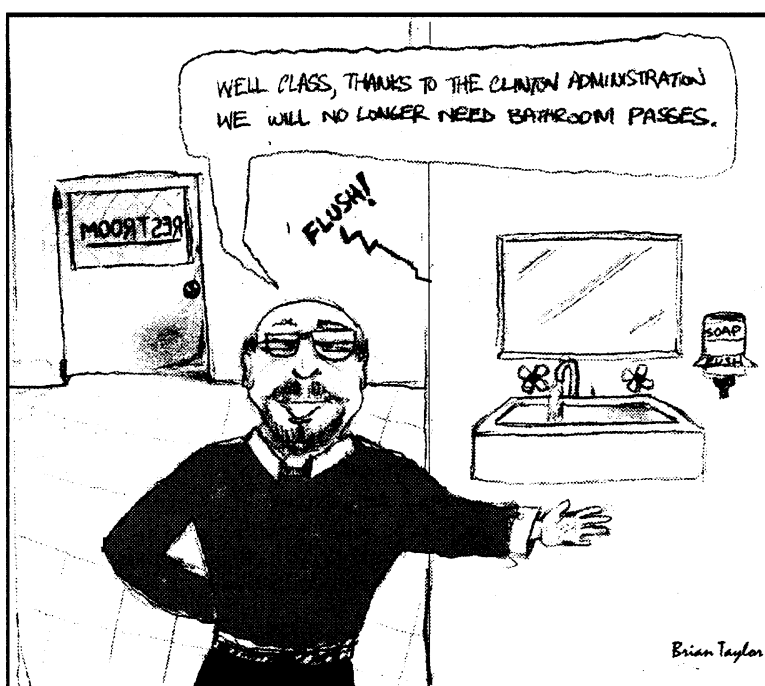
Koppel, Evans and Novak, and the many other pundits on the capitalists' T.V. and radio shows. I've come to realize that CNN is the most deceiving of them ALL. I have an interest in the truth, and I just wasn't getting it from NBC, ABC, CBS, CNN, 60 Minutes, etc. They are not news casters... they are "Actor News Casters." Their job is to make the public believe what the oligarchy wants the public to think is the truth. I've canceled my cable and threw out my T.V. in the trash can about two weeks ago. T.V. is the tool they use to keep Americans (and the world) in the dark.

Enclosed is my check for the continuation of my *Militant*. Thank you! For saving my mind.

B.A.Q.
Collegeville, Pennsylvania

Art and revolution

The exhibition entitled "Exiles and Emigrés: The Flight of European Artists from Hitler," recently held in Montreal showed the work of visual artists influenced by the Surrealist Movement. Surrealism is the most politically committed of the modern art movements and at its height exerted a major influence on abstract expressionism. It continues to do so to a lesser degree, particularly on the arts in Quebec. In *What is Surrealism?* (Pathfinder Press) we find the following, "...surrealism is not a mere literary or



artistic school. It is an unrelenting revolt against a civilization that reduces all human aspirations to market values, religious impostures, universal boredom and misery."

Surrealism seeks to free the imagination from constraint of social repression so that creativity will be the property of all. The Surrealist Manifesto "Towards a Free Revolutionary Art," written by André Breton in collaboration with Leon Trotsky deals with the necessity of complete freedom for art. In

their words, "The independence of art — for the revolution. The revolution — for the complete liberation of art."

In *Art and Revolution*, Trotsky explains that the economic foundations of a given society is organically interrelated and continuously reacts with its cultural superstructure, but that in the long run, the material base — in our era, the capitalist mode of production — exerts the defining influence. He emphasizes that this has nothing to do with

the crude determinism of the servile Stalinist cult of "Socialist Realism." It is heartening to see that the arts in Cuba are free from censorship and conformity which is a continuing sign of a healthy revolution.

Unfortunately both in Cuba and in the rest of world, the popular T-shirt image of Che Guevara has reinforced the iconization of Che, although the true Che as one of the giants of Marxist theory and practice is beginning to be restored. Pathfinder books on Che's ideas have had an important influence on this process. Pathfinder has also added to the consciousness of the relation between culture and the struggle for socialism with its reproduction of serious art on its bookcovers.

An interesting note on the Montreal exhibition is that the organizers were unable to find corporate support for a venue in the United States, possibly because the photographs and documentaries in the show deal with the rejection of Jewish immigrants seeking refuge in America from Nazi persecution.

Bea Bryant
Blenheim, Ontario

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.

126,000 teachers strike in Ontario

BY JOHN STEELE

TORONTO, Ontario — Picket lines went up at thousands of primary and secondary schools across Ontario October 27, as 126,000 members of the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) went on strike in a "political protest" against Bill 160 — the Ontario Conservative government's impending education "reform" legislation. The strike, which the government and media have branded "illegal," affects 2.1 million students. The OTF is the umbrella organization for five teachers' unions.

The teachers' confrontation with the government has become the front line in the resistance of working people in Ontario to the antiunion austerity drive of the provincial government of Premier Michael Harris, who was elected in 1995 on a tax-cutting platform called the Common Sense Revolution. Despite the pervasive government and media campaign depicting teachers as a privileged "special interest group" standing in the way of change, widespread support for the teachers on the picket lines was evident the first day of the strike.

Before dawn, 20 members of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation marched at Oakwood collegiate in pouring rain mixed with snow. Their picket signs read, "Underfunding education is child neglect"; "Cuts hurt students"; "Teachers working conditions are students learning conditions"; and "Another billion in cuts will cripple education."

As the teachers were describing their walkout as an act of "mass civil disobedience" like the civil rights struggle against racist segregation in the United States in the 1960s, one motorist drove by with his fist in the air and yelled, "I support you, I like the power."

Hundreds of others honked their horns in support.

"Seeing you here this morning brought tears to my eyes. I'm with you all the way," said passerby Cheryl Taylor, herself a teacher at a community college, not involved in the strike.

Eight Oakwood students walked the line with their teachers. All of them helped organize a walkout of Oakwood students the previous week against Bill 160. "We are doing this because the cuts affect us and we support the teachers," said grade 13 student Jessica Phillips.

Don Lee, the owner of the Biblio cafe across the street, provided the pickets with a thermos of steaming coffee. "I'm going to keep doing this every day till they win," he said.

At Central Tech, where 2,600 students go to school, about 50 pickets sang "Hit the road Mike. Don't cutback no more, no more."

Attempt to brand strike as 'illegal'

In the week before the strike the media campaign against the teachers was vicious. The day after the OTF announced its October 27 strike deadline, the *Toronto Sun*, a mass-circulation tabloid ready by many workers had a huge headline pasted over a picture of the teachers' union leaders which read "Who the hell do you think you are?" The editorial painted the union leaders as criminals out to make children suffer. The *Toronto Star* and the nationally-circulated English language *Globe and Mail* also published editorials urging the teachers not to strike. On the first day of the strike, some motorists were reported to have given pickets the finger, although horn-honking in solidarity was much more prevalent.

An angry mother in Kleinburg who wouldn't give her name confronted them on the picket line at Woodbridge public school. "As role models, [teachers] are telling my child that when you disagree with something it's all right to take illegal action," she said.

The government has now launched a \$1 million advertising campaign with a TV ad featuring Harris, who states, "We live in a law-abiding society; breaking the law is not the right example. Let's put our children first."

"They say this is illegal," said Keith Far-



Striking teachers picket George Harvey Collegiate Institute in Toronto October 27

row, Central Tech athletic director. "But when the premier goes on TV and lies to the population I say that's morally criminal. I am amazed at the support out here on the street. We have steelworkers with us. We will stay out as long as it takes to get rid of Bill 160."

During the previous week Harris was forced to admit that contrary to previous promises, he intended to cut up to another \$667 million after previously chopping half a billion from the \$14 billion education budget.

Wearing an orange picket captain's cap, Spanish language and ESL teacher Barb Landrey reported that the coffee shop around the corner had phoned the union offering to open its doors to the teachers at 4:30 a.m. "The public supports us because Harris wants to crush the teachers' unions so he can destroy public education and set up charter private schools," said Landrey.

"This is the first time I have ever been on a picket line. I used to be against unions. But we have to do it," said tech teacher Brian Hepburn, outside the George Harvey Collegiate Institute. "I'm proud of the union."

Pickets at the C.E. Webster Junior Public School included members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), which organizes 40,000 school support staff — the janitors, secretaries, and teachers' assistants. They have refused to cross the picket lines, forcing many of the local school boards to close the facilities. Pointing to a major hospital down the street that is scheduled to be

shut down, one of the CUPE pickets compared the attacks on education to the government's cutbacks in health care.

At Bloor Collegiate, a tractor trailer driver blasted his air horn in support of the pickets. Three members of the student council brought donuts to their teachers. "We organized a student assembly to present the pros and cons of Bill 160," said grade 10 student Saba Quadri. "The majority were against it. We don't want bigger class room sizes."

Thousands rally against Bill 160

In the early afternoon more than 10,000 teachers, students, members of other unions, and parent organizations converged on the provincial government legislature chanting "we won't back down." Similar rallies demanding the withdrawal of Bill 160 were held in cities across the province.

Under Bill 160, which the government wants adopted and in place by January 1, the provincial cabinet would have the power to decide minimum and maximum limits for class size and a new funding formula that opens the door to more cuts in funding. The bill would also permit the government to reduce the class preparation time of teachers as well as the use of non-certified, non-unionized staff in the class room. These measures could cut up to 10,000 teachers from the school system, and would strip teachers of their current right to bargain with school boards over both the learning conditions of students and working conditions of teachers.

"We will not back down. We will stay in the streets until the government meets our demands, which are the demands of the majority in this province," Eileen Lennon, president of the OTF, told the rally.

"The labor movement will not be separated from the teachers in their struggle. We are shoulder to shoulder and we won't back down," Linda Torney, president of the Labor Council of Metropolitan Toronto, said in her speech. Torney reviewed the recent victory by the Ontario Federation of Labor in forcing the Harris government through a series of city-wide strikes and demonstrations to drop anti-strike provisions aimed at government workers from Bill 136, another piece of legislation that is part of its austerity drive.

Support for the teachers was also expressed by the leaders of both the Liberal and union-based, social democratic New Democratic Party.

Canadian Autoworkers president Basil Hargrove pledged action by that union's membership if the government "tries to impose fines on you or jail your leaders."

The walkout began following the collapse of talks between the government and the teachers' unions just hours before the strike deadline set by the OTF. Over the heads of their unions, education Minister David Johnson then appealed directly to teachers to reject the "illegal strike." He said the schools would be open and he intended to take his daughter to school.

At the same time he complained: "The government has not ruled out any option. If there is an illegal strike, the law has already been broken. If someone is prepared to break the law, will they be prepared to obey a second law?"

Newspaper columnists have begun to talk about the possibility of other unions taking job action in support of teachers if the government tries to force them back to work with some form of back to work legislation or court order.

Following the rally at the legislature, Premier Harris told the media that the government was preparing the ground for a court injunction against the teachers. Strike leaders could be found in contempt of court and jailed if they disobeyed such a court order.

"This will take a few days to prepare," said Harris. "But, if we go this route it is not clear that the schools will be reopened."

In response to this move, OTF president Lennon stated that she would be "hard-pressed to encourage my members to respect an injunction."

John Steele is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 2113. Guy Tremblay, a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 5338, contributed to this article.

Communist League candidate backs striking teachers

TORONTO, Ontario — Auto assembly worker Joanne Pritchard, who is the Communist League candidate for mayor of Toronto in the upcoming November 10 municipal election, is actively building support for the teachers' strike in defense of public education and collective bargaining rights.

Pritchard, who is a member of Canadian Autoworkers Local 1285 at the Chrysler Bramalea assembly plant near Toronto, released a statement the first day of the strike, which was distributed to the media and striking teachers and supporters at the October 27 mass rally at the provincial legislature.

"Every worker and every student in Ontario has a stake in the outcome of the teachers' struggle against Bill 160," said the statement. "This bill is about further cutbacks to education, and it is an attack on collective-bargaining rights."

"The Tories in Queen's Park, and the Liberals in Ottawa have been attacking

the social wage — health care, education and other programs — that working people won through years of struggle. They are trying to boost the profit rates of the ruling rich who face a worsening worldwide economic crisis of the capitalism system.

"If the Harris government defeats the teachers, it will be a serious setback for every union member.... We can fight this if unionists from industry, and the public sector walk the picket lines with the teachers."

In a mayoral candidates debate sponsored by the *Toronto Star* newspaper, Pritchard challenged the front running candidates, North York mayor Mel Lastman, and Toronto mayor Barbara Hall, to support the teachers by getting out on their picket lines.

However, both candidates since then have stated that they would cross picket lines to attend election debates held on school premises.

Pritchard's challenge to the candidates was reported in the *Star's* coverage of the election debate.

— J.S.



Joanne Pritchard joins striking teachers at October 27 rally in Toronto.