

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Che in the Congo: 'return to our internationalist roots'

— PAGE 8

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NATO troops get out of Yugoslavia now!

Washington's aim is restoring capitalist domination

The working class and its allies — working farmers and other exploited producers — and their conquests in overturning capitalist rule in Yugoslavia in the 1940s are the target of the occupation of Bosnia. NATO's expansion into

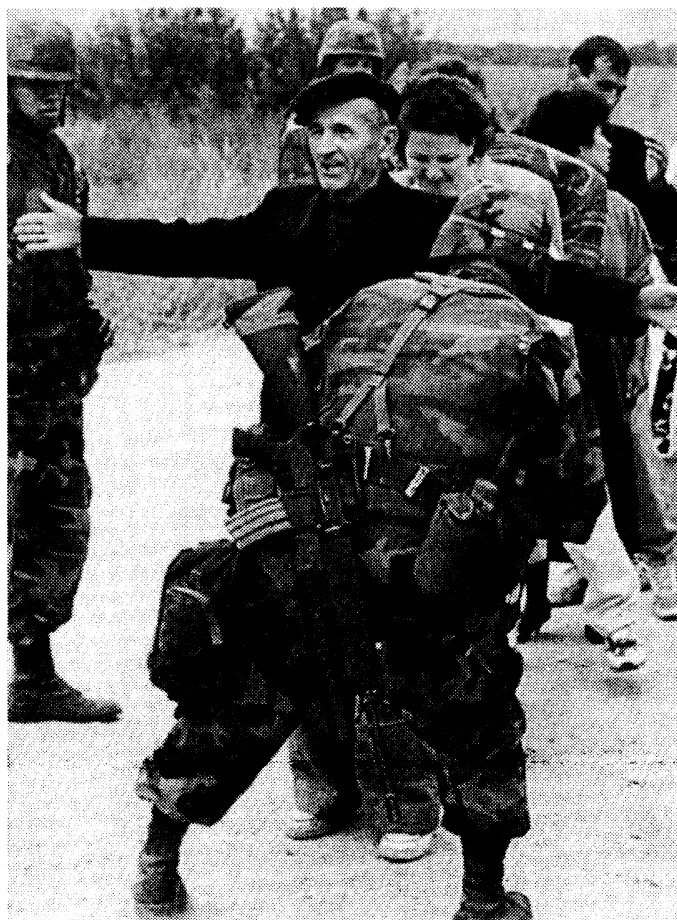
EDITORIAL

Eastern and Central Europe has a similar and interrelated goal: sweeping away once and for all the remaining gains of the October 1917 Russian revolution and reestablishing class exploitation and the complete domination of the profit system from the Balkans to the Caucasus and beyond.

NATO's course, which is Washington's course, means nothing but economic ruination, moral degradation, and subjugation to the imperialist boot for working people in Yugoslavia and elsewhere in the region.

Inside the United States and other capitalist powers occupying Yugoslavia, class-conscious workers have an obligation to campaign among fellow unionists and others to explain this imperialist war drive and why working people should oppose it.

As capitalist politicians and pundits have pointed out, the U.S.-engineered expansion of NATO into Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic is linked to the invasion



A Bosnian refugee returning to his hometown to vote September 13-14 is searched by a U.S. soldier in Brcko.

of Bosnia. In fact, Washington's projected enlargement of NATO was prepared on the blood and bones of the toilers of Yugoslavia.

In the early 1990s, as rival European governments

Continued on Page 14

U.S. gov't to extend Bosnia occupation

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

An international conference in Königswinter, near Bonn, Germany, approved extending the mandate of NATO forces in Bosnia — currently occupied by 34,000 foreign troops — beyond June 30, 1998, the deadline for withdrawal set last year. The move, spearheaded by the U.S. government, is another step in the five-year-long drive to reestablish the domination of capitalist social relations in all the republics of the former Yugoslav federation and expand Washington's hegemony as the number one military and economic power in Europe.

The December 9-10 meeting was sponsored by the governments of the United States, Britain, Germany, France, and other capitalist states with forces in Yugoslavia, as well as Moscow. Officials from 51 countries took part in the so-called Peace Implementation Conference, which meets annually to discuss enforcement of the Dayton "peace" accord that paved the way for the partition of Bosnia and the NATO invasion. The U.S. government forced the warring parties in Yugoslavia to sign the agreement at the Patterson Air Force base in Dayton,

Continued on Page 7

Sanctions against Iraq have deadly impact

BY MEGAN ARNEY

The United Nations Security Council voted December 4 to continue to allow the Iraqi government to sell \$2 billion worth of oil every six months to pay "war reparations" and purchase a limited amount of food and medicine. This arrangement was established last year, within the framework of sanctions that were first imposed on Baghdad by the UN Security Council in 1990 at Washington's insistence.

Baghdad immediately responded to the UN Security Council's decision by announcing that it would neither pump nor sell any more oil until there is agreement on a new distribution plan for food and medicine. The Iraqi government also closed its oil pipeline to Turkey December 5, saying it would not be reopened until the United Nations approved a plan to increase the amount of oil Baghdad could sell. "Iraq does not accept the continuation of this situation, which is unbalanced and forced by the United States on the Security Council by pressure, blackmail, and lies," an Iraqi government spokesman told the Associated Press December 5. Both Paris and Moscow

Continued on Page 10

IMF deals in Asia don't stop currency crisis

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

A \$57 billion imperialist-imposed "bail-out" hasn't halted the financial nightmare facing south Korea's capitalist rulers. The country's currency lost 20 percent of its value in two days, with the won falling to a record low of 1,460 to the U.S. dollar on December 9. "Everybody's panicking," remarked one executive at a foreign brokerage firm in Seoul. "The won is going further down." Meanwhile the first large-scale layoffs under the austerity terms of the "bail-out" are looming.

On December 8 the government in Seoul acknowledged that its short-term debt totaled more than \$100 billion, not the \$66 billion figure announced when negotiations began for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) financial arrangement. The *Chosun Ilbo*, a major newspaper in south Korea, reported the same day that the country's foreign currency reserves had fallen to only \$5 billion during the first week of December, from about \$30 billion in late October.

One finance ministry official said the Bank of Korea was slashing through its reserves by as much as \$2 billion a day to aid south Korean banks struggling to pay off

Continued on Page 12

'Global warming' conference was about imperialist rivalries, not environment

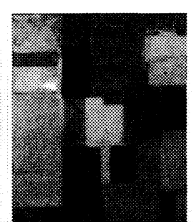
BY DOUG JENNESS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — For 11 days some 1,500 delegates from more than 150 countries met in Kyoto, Japan, to discuss adopting a protocol on limiting emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases that may cause global warming. The stated aim was to strengthen the 1992 Climate Change Treaty, which set voluntary emission goals for 34 countries by the year 2000. The agreement reached on December 11 would in theory require 38 industrialized countries to reduce carbon dioxide and other gases that can cause a greenhouse effect that might lead to climatic warming to below 1990 levels between 2008 and 2012.

Although the Kyoto conference was supposedly about protecting the world environment, the proposals and discussion there in fact centered on the economic rivalry and promotion of national interests of various capitalist regimes that increasingly dominate international trade discussions. The U.S. government, for example, pressed by auto and oil corporations and owners of electrical utilities, argued that it couldn't agree to reductions if semicolonial countries didn't

Continued on Page 11

JACK BARNES
THE CHANGING FACE
OF U.S. POLITICS
Working-class politics and the unions



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For more reading from Pathfinder

Why workers should oppose 'Free Tibet' campaign — page 14

Basque fighters call for protests

The Basque pro-independence political party Herri Batasuna (Popular Unity) has called a demonstration for December 13 and a two-hour strike December 15 to protest the Spanish government's jailing of the party's entire executive body. Between December 5 - 6, Madrid arrested all 23 of the party's leaders, who refused to turn themselves in following the December 1 Spanish Supreme Court decision to sentence them to seven years in prison. They also refused to pay \$3,300 court-imposed fines.

The Herri Batasuna leaders were charged with "collaborating" with the ETA — an armed group fighting for Basque independence from Spain. The act of "collaboration" was the attempt to air a video on television, which among other things included the ETA's peace initiative. The oppressed nation of Basque people numbers 3 million in northern Spain and southern France. Herri Batasuna is a legal political party with representatives in the regional and national parliaments.

EU bans milk from Poland

The European Union (EU) imposed a ban on all imports of Polish milk and other dairy products December 1. The European Commission, the EU's executive body, claimed its inspectors found "significant hygiene and operational failure" in two of four Polish facilities they visited in November. Warsaw officials say the accusations are false.

A \$43 million EU contract with Poland to sell milk and dairy products to 40 enterprises in EU-member countries lapsed at midnight November 30. EU officials are also pressing the Polish government to lower tariffs on EU steel imports from 9 percent to 3 percent. Warsaw is one of the governments that has campaigned for admittance into the European Union.

Danish gov't curbs immigration

Denmark's social democratic government announced measures tightening its immigration policy December 4. They include ending the right of immigrants to have their parents and other family members gain permanent residence and deporting those con-



Hundreds of women marched through La Paz, Bolivia, in mid-November to protest violence against women in the country. Participants in the "Women in Black" march were demanding legislation against sexual harassment.

victed of "serious crimes." Many refugees and other immigrants will also be forced to attend classes in Danish and on Danish social conditions. General elections will be held in Denmark sometime between now and next September. The ultrarightist Danish People's Party, headed by Pia Kjaersgaard, has made scapegoating of immigrants for supposedly living on social security benefits one of its main themes. Its ratings have risen to as high as 15 percent in some opinion polls.

Turkmenistan plans gas pipeline

Turkmenistan president Saparmurat Niyazov has reached an initial agreement with Royal/Dutch Shell to build a pipeline to transport gas from that country to Turkey. Moscow has placed heavy restrictions on Turkmenistan's access to current gas lines servicing western Europe, where Russian gas giant Gazprom holds a monopoly.

The new pipeline, projected to be built as early as 2000, will access Turkey through Iran, based on preliminary agreements signed between the three governments in May. One problem with the plan is U.S. sanctions on Iran, which will make it difficult to fund that leg of the pipeline. Shell also faces a potential conflict over a deal it signed in mid-November with Gazprom to transport Russian gas to Turkey via the Black Sea.

Talks on Korea are scheduled

Pyongyang, Seoul, Washington, and Beijing are scheduled to begin talks in Geneva, Switzerland, December 9 on a treaty to formally end the 1950 - 53 Korean War. While the negotiations agenda does not explicitly include the call for the 37,000 U.S. troops to leave south Korea, U.S. officials are clear that this will be raised by Pyongyang's representatives as part of the talks.

Leading up to the talks, the Clinton administration said it would increase its modest food aid to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea next year — a measure Washington had previously refused to agree to. The U.S. government, in collaboration with Seoul, have used north Korea's near-famine conditions — resulting from two years of failed crops due to massive flooding and then a drought — as a cudgel to demand that Pyongyang carry out "market reforms" and renounce the near half-century fight to reunify Korea.

Land reform in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe president Robert Mugabe has announced that government will confiscate and redistribute more than 1,500 farms, most of them white-owned, to landless peasants.

Mugabe said the government would not pay for the land, which totals about 10 million acres, but would reimburse farmers for any buildings, or infrastructural improvements made on the land.

Nearly two decades after Zimbabwe won independence from Britain in 1980, one-third of the land is still owned by a small minority of white farmers. Some 8 million peasants are cramped into another third, while the rest of the country is composed of mountains and nature reserves. Substantial areas belonging to foreign-owned companies are also slated for redistribution.

'Mothers' protest Menem gov't

Argentine president Carlos Menem "is killing the people with hunger and unemployment," declared Hebe de Bonafini, leader of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, at a December 4 demonstration in Buenos Aires. The action was the annual "resistance march" of the Mothers, a group formed to demand justice for the "disappearings" of youth under the 1976 - 83 military dictatorship in that country. Circling the Plaza de Mayo, opposite the presidential palace in the capital, the protesters also denounced the government's austerity drive. Unemployment there stands at 16 percent.

Brazil gov't deepens austerity

Brazilian president Fernando Henrique Cardoso on December 2 assured executives of the Confederation of British Industry in London that they "may be certain that there will be no deviations and no U-turns" from the \$18 billion austerity package. Brasília has set out to impose the measures in the wake of the currency crises that continue to rock southeast Asian countries and reverberate around the world.

Meanwhile, the Brazilian division of Volkswagen AG is threatening its 31,000 workers with massive layoffs if they do not accept a 20 percent cut in hours — and pay — along with reductions in annual pay bonuses and paid vacation time. There is resistance by working people there. Dock workers in São Paulo struck for jobs at the end of November, paralyzing that state, and earlier that month crane operators held work stoppages at the same port, which the state recently sold to capitalist investors.

S. Carolina case sets precedent for prosecuting 'fetus abuse'

A 27-year-old woman in South Carolina pled guilty December 2 to involuntary manslaughter for the miscarriage of her fetus, allegedly as a result of smoking crack cocaine. She was sentenced to three years' probation.

Talitha Renee Garick had faced charges of "murder by child abuse" in the case. Some 30 states since 1990 have combined drug abuse laws and so-called child-endangerment laws to try to bring such charges, but South Carolina's Supreme Court is the only one to uphold them so far.

— BRIAN TAYLOR

THE MILITANT

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France: fascist mayor strengthens own cops

BY NAT LONDON
AND RAFIK BENALI

PARIS — As municipal police and the first assistant mayor of Vitrolles, Hubert Fayard, looked on, the windows and doors of Le Sous-Marin café and concert hall were bricked shut. The building was seized October 6 by order of Catherine Mégret, the new mayor of Vitrolles and a member of the fascist National Front party.

Vitrolles is one of four municipalities with National Front mayors. Like the others, it is in southern France near Marseille.

The Le Sous-Marin association had organized concerts of rock, reggae, rap, and rai, a popular form of music from North Africa. Mégret first canceled the city's annual aid of 200,000 francs (US\$33,400) to Le Sous-Marin. The grant had been awarded by the previous Socialist Party-led town administration.

On October 4, only two days before the municipality shut down the center, 4,000 people had attended a concert in support of the embattled association.

The mayor's office issued a communiqué stating that Le Sous-Marin was a source "of great annoyance to the residents, a pernicious environment would prevail for youth, since drugs would circulate under the table and groups would appear that appealed to uncivilized behavior, violence, and indeed crime."

Before bricking up Le Sous-Marin, city officials seized computer files listing the names and addresses of the group's 1,000 members and 10,000 financial contributors.

Four days later the center won a temporary reprieve, as a court ordered its reopening. According to the court ruling, city hall had not followed appropriate legal procedure in ordering the closure. The next day, October 11, some 2,000 people marched in Vitrolles to defend Le Sous-Marin, as the mayor's office prepared a new municipal procedure to close down the center.

Expansion of municipal cop force

Said Belhout, a social worker in Vitrolles, is particularly worried by the efforts of the new city administration to reinforce the municipal police. "Their objective is to have a municipal police force of 80 policemen by early 1998. They are dressed in black uniforms and are there to provoke fights," he told the *Militant*. "They use these fights against us to say that foreigners are all savages."

The only legally recognized police in France are those directed by the French state. In recent years, however, some municipalities have taken to organizing their own police forces. There are now 12,000 municipal cops throughout the country. Although the "municipal police" have no legally defined powers other than giving out parking tickets and guarding street crossings in front of schools, they dress in uniforms, are armed, and often act as if they were part of the National Police force.

The previous Socialist Party mayor established the municipal police force in Vitrolles, which the National Front administration rapidly expanded from 34 members to 50. They plan to increase the force to 80 by early 1998, and have already set up a special militarized "rapid intervention brigade" within the municipal police. By comparison, the National Police Commissariat in Vitrolles has 79 cops.

The expansion of the municipal police in Vitrolles was accompanied by a political campaign by the National Front against "police slackness." The mayor's office sponsored a petition criticizing the police, which pointed to several incidents of unsolved minor crimes and a number of physical attacks on elected city council members who were members of the National Front. The local Commissioner of the National Police, Jacques Rabiller, was criticized as being hostile to the new city administration. However, the mayor's office added, "The policemen are our friends."

The National Front has been trying to build a base within the National Police. In 1994 they founded a "union" called National Front-Police. The next year the FN-Police received 7.5 percent of the total vote in nationwide "union" elections among the National Police. Following protests by other police associations, the FN-Police was ordered dissolved last March by a court judgment which found that "the FN-Police aims to disseminate the ideology of a political party."

Leaders of the FN-Police then joined another small police "union" that is part of the Catholic trade union confederation, CFTC. The national CFTC ordered the CFTC-Police to take 11 former FN-Police leaders off of its list of candidates for the next elections.

The Vitrolles municipal police is being led by M. Brunel, a leader of the National Front's marshal squad, the DPS (Department of Protection-Security). DPS members are being moved into Vitrolles from all over France to take part in the municipal police force. Belhout said, "The Vitrolles municipal police is really the National Front marshaling squad in disguise."

The national press has speculated on "growing tensions" between Vitrolles city administration and the National Police. However, the two sides organized a "peace agreement." The local head of the National Police will meet once a month with a representative of the mayor's office to work out any differences between the cop forces.

A former member of the DPS has given a long interview to a major daily newspaper, *Libération*. Using the pseudonym "Dominique," he explained that the DPS has special "unofficial" intervention squads made up of former paratroopers and Foreign Legionnaires, veterans of French imperialist interventions in Chad, Lebanon, and the Central African Republic. They are armed with helmets and shields, gas masks, tear gas launchers, guns that fire rubber bullets, bullet proof vests, clubs, and gloves with lead weights. They have compiled computerized lists of journalists and antifascist activists with their names, addresses, and photos.

They engage in punitive actions against their opponents but have, Dominique said, excellent relations with the police, including the police commissioners. They are organized with military grades such as colonel and captain. According to *Libération*, the DPS now has 3,000 members.

The group's commander, Bernard Courcelle, claimed, "We only defend ourselves. We never attack the meetings of other groups." Courcelle is the former security director of the French armaments manufacturer, Luchaire.

While the National Front has been work-

ing to expand its tightly controlled police force in Vitrolles, it has been trying to root out any opposition among municipal employees. In July two young women working in a municipal vacation center were fired for refusing to serve meals to elected officials of the National Front.

The Municipal Council boasted in July that they had already fired 80 municipal employees. A local association claims the figure is 130. After numerous protests, a representative of the prefecture, which represents the national government, sent the mayor a letter asking that 31 of the firings be "postponed."

Among those fired was Regina Juin, director of the movie theater Arts et Essais. She was fired for refusing to cancel a series of short films on homosexuality and AIDS.

The municipal council has also voted to change the names of city streets, including

Nelson Mandela Place and François Mitterand Avenue. Jean-Marie Tjibaou Avenue, named after the assassinated leader of the independence movement in the French colony of New Caledonia, will become Jean-Pierre Stirbois Avenue. Stirbois, a leader of the National Front, was killed in a car accident in 1988.

Other cities with National Front mayors have not been far behind their counterparts in Vitrolles. In Toulon, Gérard Paquet, a well-known director of the Châteaullon Theater, was fired in spite of a national movement of intellectuals in his defense. In Orange the municipal council cut off the budget to the Centre culturel Mosaïque. The Chorégies Art Festival also had its funds cut off.

Rafik Benali is a member of the Young Socialists in Paris.

More student protests in Germany



More than 500,000 students from across Germany joined a new wave of protests December 5 against education cuts, according to organizers. Some 120,000 people rallied the day before. The protests followed a march of 40,000 students November 27 against the implementation of fees, overcrowding, and cuts (above).

Yeltsin visits Sweden hoping to push back expansion of NATO military alliance

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM — Russian president Boris Yeltsin made a two-day trip here December 2-3. He was accompanied by a staff of 200 people, including Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov, First Vice Prime Minister Boris Nemtsov, Minister of Justice Sergei Stepashin, and central bank chief Sergei Dubinin. High on the agenda was relations between Stockholm, Moscow, and the states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, which border the Baltic Sea. According to the Swedish conservative daily *Svenska Dagbladet*, the visit's main aim was to hold back the expansion of the U.S.-led NATO military alliance to the Baltic states and perhaps even Sweden and Finland.

On October 24 Yeltsin proposed a security pact with the Baltic states. In the weeks leading up to his visit here, Swedish prime minister Göran Persson rejected this plan in interviews with the Russian press. The governments of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania also responded negatively to Yeltsin's proposal.

On the first day of his visit Yeltsin surprised his hosts by pledging that Moscow would reduce its nuclear forces by a third. The statement was immediately modified by aides, who said Yeltsin was "tired" and that the offer might be part of future arms control negotiations. The Russian legislature has not yet ratified the proposed "Start 2" nuclear arms reduction pact, and especially postponed doing so after Washington embarked on the course for expansion of NATO into Eastern Europe.

On the second day of his visit Yeltsin spoke in the Swedish parliament and stated that "from Jan. 1, 1999, Russia will unilaterally reduce — and I am saying this for the first time — by more than 40 percent its land and naval units, especially in northwest Russia." This time Yeltsin spoke from a text,

and at NATO headquarters in Brussels, Russian defense minister Igor Sergeyev confirmed Yeltsin's plans for cuts in both land and naval forces. Troops would be reduced in Kaliningrad, the Russian enclave sandwiched between Lithuania and Poland, and from the St. Petersburg area. The Russian Baltic and Northern fleets would also be reduced.

The proposal is aimed at assuring the Baltic states, Stockholm, and Helsinki that they don't need to join NATO, as well as putting political pressure on the negotiations now under way to bring the governments of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into the military alliance.

Yeltsin's proposal had repercussions in Russia. Alexander Lebed, a former secretary in the Russian security council and presidential hopeful, called it "a clumsy attempt to try to completely dismantle Russia's armed forces and the whole country with it." He declared, "How long do we need such a man sending us toward our doom before he finally resigns?"

The Swedish hosts didn't respond to Yeltsin's proposal. Stockholm has not only supported NATO's expansion into the Baltic states, but is the government in Europe that has done the most to get them into the military bloc and the European Union (EU). Swedish foreign minister Lena Hjelm-Wallén's comments demanding that the Russian government sign border treaties that had been negotiated with the regimes in Estonia and Latvia further confirmed that course.

Moscow refused to sign the border treaties after the Clinton administration launched its drive to expand NATO eastward last year, arguing that the Russian population in those states faces discrimination.

Similar questions will be posed in the upcoming negotiations over these states'

membership in the European Union. After the European Commission announced its proposal for EU enlargement earlier this year, the governments of Sweden, Finland, and Denmark made a joint proposal that membership negotiations should jointly start with all 11 applicants. The European Commission had proposed opening talks just with Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia. The governments of Latvia and Lithuania are among those that have also applied for EU membership. Washington has expressed its support for including all the Baltic states in the European Union.

Helsinki has since backed off from this position, but Stockholm and Copenhagen continue to push it. At a meeting of the foreign ministers of the European Union late in November, it was apparent that Bonn and London oppose starting the membership negotiations jointly, while other governments are positive. These include those around the Mediterranean Sea, who see this as a way to stall the enlargement of the EU into eastern Europe to safeguard their agricultural and regional subsidies. A compromise is expected to be worked out in time for the European Union meeting in Luxembourg December 12-13.

During Yeltsin's stay in Stockholm his delegation also met Swedish big-business representatives, who worked out some deals like with the telephone company Ericsson and on trucks and busses from Volvo. Yeltsin floated a proposal to build a pipeline for natural gas from Russia through Sweden and to the European continent, but it got a cold reception from Swedish authorities who see Norway, a NATO member, as a better deliverer of natural gas.

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

'Fight is for rights of the Irish people'

Interview with 'H-Block 4' defendant

Thirty-eight Irish Republican prisoners broke out of the H-Block wing of the infamous Long Kesh prison in Northern Ireland, on Sept. 25, 1983. It was the biggest jail-break in British history. Four of these men — Jimmy Smyth, Pol Brennan, Kevin Barry Artt, and Terry Kirby — were arrested by the FBI in California between 1992 and '94. Ever since, the U.S. government has fought to have them extradited to Northern Ireland. Numerous groups that support the Irish freedom struggle along with defenders of democratic rights have rallied to back these fighters, known as the "H-Block Four."

Smyth's case was heard first. After a long fight, he was extradited to Northern Ireland in 1996. He and other prisoners were beaten by their Long Kesh jailers earlier this year.

The other three H-Block defendants had their cases heard in late 1996 and early '97 before Federal Judge Charles Legge in San Francisco. On Aug. 11, 1997 Legge ordered their extradition, and denied them bail while his ruling is appealed. In November, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld their bail denial.

After being held together in the federal prison in Pleasanton, California, for some weeks, Artt was abruptly moved to a jail in Oakland. Brennan and Kirby remain in Pleasanton.

This interview with Terry Kirby was conducted at his home in Concord, California, on June 29 before his most recent arrest and again by telephone from prison on November 11.

BY CATHLEEN GUTEKANST AND NORTON SANDLER

SAN FRANCISCO — "The prison guards, you can hear their voices through the door, you can't tell who it is. They call us terrorists, Irish scum. My mail has been opened. When I do get it, it's all ripped in half, especially the mail from Colleen and Keely [Kirby's wife and daughter]. People tell me they have sent me mail and money orders, but I've never received it. When I do get the newspapers, I am weeks behind."

That's how Terry Kirby summarized the conditions that he and Irish republican prisoners Pol Brennan and Kevin Barry Artt are facing in U.S. jails as they wait for their appeal to be heard of a federal judge's order extraditing them to Northern Ireland.

Terry Kirby, now 41, grew up in a Republican household in the Andersonstown section of Belfast. His father, Joe, a steelworker, was interned (held in jail by the British authorities without being brought to trial) in the 1940s. "My father was outspoken, he would always come to the aid of anybody being victimized," Kirby explained. His mother, Bridie, a nurse, was a close friend and political associate of Maire Drumm, a vice president of Sinn Fein, the leading party in the fight to end British rule in Northern Ireland. Drumm was assassinated by a Loyalist (pro-British) death squad in 1976 while lying in a hospital bed. "I remember Maire being on TV and I remember my mother being on TV. I remember my mother helping Maire with her speeches," Kirby said.

As a youth Kirby "joined a youth group associated with Sinn Fein. I would basically sell the newspaper, the *Republican News*," he said. This was just after the Irish civil rights movement began in 1968. When the Republican movement split in 1970, Kirby joined the fight, "I don't regret one day of it," he explained, "because they were only ones who took up the defense of the Irish people."

Harassment of Republican youth

As a teenager Kirby began to experience the wrath of the British government. His sister Clare testified at his extradition trial last year that from ages 13 to 16, Terry was beaten regularly by the British soldiers. He'd come back covered with bruises, welts, and cigarette burns, she told the court.

"At school they started trying to make us stand for 'God Save the Queen,' and I refused to do so. I was suspended from school, I was constantly harassed," Kirby explained. "They said, 'we can't get your Dad, but

we're going to get you.' They told my sister they were going to kill me.

"I was interned on my 17th birthday, from July 4, 1973, to March 20, 1975. No charges were ever filed."

Kirby was arrested again along with four other men in August 1976, just after his 20th birthday, following a shoot-out with the police. "It was mainly the cops that did all the firing," Kirby said. He was charged with the murder of a gas station owner.

Over the next three days Kirby was questioned 12 times for a total of more than 26 hours, according to his U.S. attorney Gilbert Eisenberg. Kirby explains that he was beaten and deprived of sleep. During the torture sessions, Kirby "confessed" to the murder of the gas station owner, as well as two hotel bombings, a furniture store bombing, and an attack on a restaurant. Though Kirby retracted these statements, he was charged with the murder of the gas station owner and separately with possession of weapons and explosives. The other charges were dropped.

Kirby went to trial in 1978 and was convicted and sentenced to life in prison in a nonjury Diplock Court.

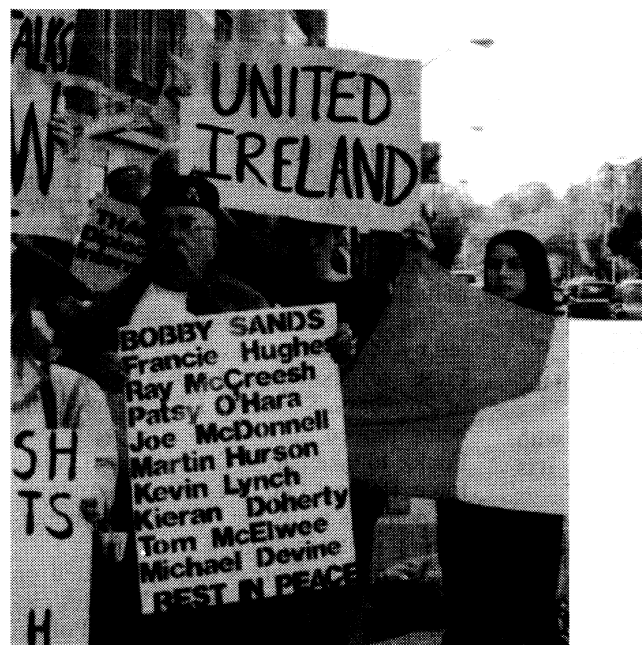
Hunger strikes and escape from Maze

Two years earlier the British authorities had instituted a policy of classifying the Republican prisoners as "common criminals." The Republican fighters refused to wear prison garb and demanded to wear their own clothes. When the authorities denied them this right, the prisoners wore only towels in their cells. By 1980, Kirby was one of 400 men and women "on the blanket" in the H-Block at Long Kesh (also known as Maze) and the Armagh women's prison.

On March 1, 1981, Republican prisoner Bobby Sands went on a hunger strike. He was soon joined by others. The British government refused to act on the prisoners' demands. Sands died on May 5. Nine more prisoners died before the hunger strike ended in August 1981.

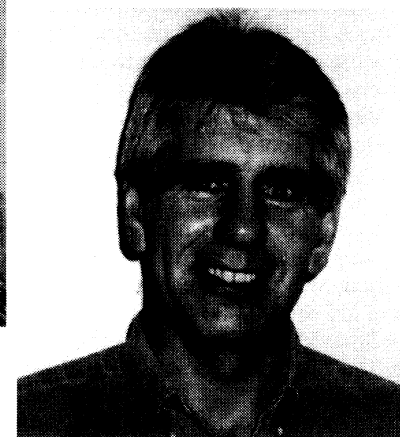
"Kevin Lynch was one of my cell mates, Joe McDonnell was a good friend of mine," Kirby stated, referring to some of the young fighters who died on hunger strike. "Kieran Doherty was one of my best friends. And Bobby Sands I knew very well. I knew all the hunger strikers except Francis Hughes, who I only knew to say hello."

Two years later 38 prisoners escaped from the Maze. Kirby arrived in San Francisco a



left photo: Militant/Nancy Cole;
bottom photo: Irish American
Unity Conference

Left, opponents of British occupation of Ireland with list of those who died in 1981 hunger strike. Below, H-Block Four defendant Terry Kirby.



year later. He married Colleen Dolan and they have a three-year old daughter, Keely.

In 1992, H-block escapee Jimmy Smyth was arrested by the FBI. Kirby was arrested in 1994. Pol Brennan and Kevin Barry Artt were also arrested around the same time.

Kirby was released on bail in 1996 after being housed in six different prisons. A condition of his bail was that he wear an ankle bracelet so that the authorities could monitor his whereabouts. He could not leave his house without permission. Kirby was also forced to pay for the rental of the electronic ankle bracelet — \$200 a month.

U.S. extradition trials

At the extradition trials of Artt and Kirby, U.S. attorney Mark Zanides, acting for the British government, argued that the two were "terrorists" and criminals, not political fighters victimized because of their opposition to British rule. Zanides stated that because Kirby had signed a "confession," this proved his guilt.

Defenders of Kirby and Artt pointed out that documents the U.S. attorney produced at the trial supplied by British authorities and alleged to have been written in 1978 were actually written some time after 1981.

Judge Legge allowed Kirby to finally remove the ankle monitor about a month before he issued the extradition ruling and had the Irish activist rearrested. In this ruling Legge claimed that Kirby, Artt, and Brennan, "were convicted because they committed serious crimes, not because they are Catholics or nationalists or republicans."

The three refused to accept prison work assignments and told their jailers here that they were not convicted of anything in the United States and are political prisoners. Prison authorities responded by separating the three.

Artt has been moved to a different prison and denied badly needed dental care. Brennan has been placed in solidarity con-

finement on two occasions. "It's very frustrating when you hear what has happened to Kevin," Kirby stated. "They are still trying to use that old tactic of divide and conquer."

Kirby emphasized that the fight of the H-Block defendants "is not about Terry Kirby or Pol Brennan or Jimmy Smyth or Kevin Artt or Joe Doherty or about any of the prisoners. This is about the Irish people having a right to govern themselves."

Commenting on Sinn Fein's participation in the peace talks under way in Ireland, Kirby said, "I scan the papers, I try to read between the lines. It's a sad state of affairs when you have Ian Paisley trying to disrupt the talks. I think the Loyalist paramilitaries will rejoin the talks, they are more honest than David Trimble and his like." Paisley and Trimble are leaders of the Loyalist parties that oppose a united Ireland. During a recent White House visit, Trimble urged the Clinton administration to proceed immediately with the extradition of the H-block prisoners.

"The British are trying to say that the Irish people are not entitled to anything at all, as if they are entitled to speak for me. I am not a British citizen, I am an Irish citizen," Kirby continued.

"Sinn Fein is trying to put forward the situation that we face in the neighborhoods, where you're constantly harassed, interfered with, there's no jobs, and no opportunities," he emphasized. "For the first time, we see a chance for peace. Everyone in the nationalist community is behind them. Sinn Fein is fighting for equality at the peace talks."

Norton Sandler is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1781.

Philadelphia bar association calls for moratorium on death penalty

BY PETE SEIDMAN

PHILADELPHIA — Following a standing-room only debate, the Board of Governors of the Philadelphia Bar Association here voted November 25 to call for "a moratorium on capital punishment in Pennsylvania until such time that fairness in its administration can be ensured." The Association followed in the footsteps of the American Bar Association, which called for a moratorium on the death penalty at its semi-annual meeting last February.

The ABA's call followed an analysis of death penalty cases during the last decade that determined most had been tried unfairly. According to a report in the November 5 *Philadelphia Weekly*, "The ABA drafted the resolution based on its observation that quite often the public defenders assigned to poor, frequently minority defendants are inexperienced, underpaid, overworked, largely indifferent to their client's plight and rushed into the courtroom with inadequate preparation and a limited understanding of the rights of the defendant in a capital case."

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections of the 210 people on death row in this state, 131 — or 62 percent — are Black. Of the state's death row inmates, 115 are from Philadelphia — more people on death row than from any other

U.S. county except Harris (Houston) and Los Angeles. Philadelphia has sent 14 times as many prisoners to death row — 84 percent are Black — as from Allegheny County, the state's second-most populous and where Pittsburgh is located.

Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham's office has sought the death penalty in 85 percent of all eligible cases, putting it at three-and-a-half times the national average. The *Philadelphia Weekly* noted, "The DA's Office employs its best and brightest to prosecute cases, while the public defenders often assigned to capital cases are among the least able and most poorly paid. The well-heeled prosecution can afford to hire experts to perform medical and psychological evaluations, while the defense is lucky if it can afford a decent suit."

Pierre Sane, the London-based secretary general of Amnesty International, spoke briefly at the Bar Association debate. He came to Philadelphia following meetings the day before with Mumia Abu-Jamal and another death row inmate. Abu-Jamal was framed for the 1981 killing of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner.

At a news conference, Sane blasted the Pennsylvania death penalty as "one of the most racist and unfair" in the United States.

The same day as the Bar Association de-

bate the State Supreme Court chose to remove Judge Albert Sabo and two other senior court judges beginning this January.

Sabo, who presided over both the original trial and the post conviction appeal of Mumia Abu-Jamal has, according to the November 26 *Philadelphia Inquirer*, "acquired the reputation of being the king of death row. For 14 years, he presided over nothing but homicide cases, and 31 defendants left his court with death sentences. An *Inquirer* survey several years ago found no other judge in the country with as many defendants on death row." Sabo told reporters he was "angry about the procedure" and asked that the court reconsider.

The *Inquirer* said the Mumia case "captured the attention of celebrities and death-penalty opponents from around the world. There were rallies in a dozen cities and countries. More than 500 people marched at City Hall for a new trial — and a new judge."

Pam Africa, a leader of the Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal hailed the ouster of Sabo as "a minor victory from our pressure." Busloads of activists are expected here for the December 6 International Tribunal for Justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal, including individuals such as the mayor of Palermo, Italy, and representatives of Amnesty International.

SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets

Sales at plant gates, campuses build socialist conference

Below are notes from supporters of the *Militant* and Pathfinder Press around the world about sales of socialist literature in recent weeks.

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — Socialist workers and young socialists in the southeast region have stepped up sales of the *Militant* at factory plant gates and campuses in response to the recent threats of war against Iraq and in preparation for the upcoming southeast regional educational conference in Birmingham (see ad on page 6).

Militant supporters from Pittsburgh travelled to southern West Virginia, where they sold the newspaper to members of the United Mine Workers of America. Edwin Fruit reports that the team carried a sign that said "U.S. Hands off Iraq! Stop the government assault on the Teamsters!" and sold 9 issues of the *Militant* at two mine portals.

Lea Sherman, a member of the machinists union in Houston, reports that communists in that city have relaunched regular factory plant gate sales. In one week they sold 10 copies of the *Militant* to members of the International Association of Machinists at Wyman Gordon, 3 copies to railroad workers and 2 to oil workers.

Twenty-five people attended a forum at the University of North Carolina in Greensboro entitled "Why the U.S. War Against Iraq Doesn't End." The speakers were Raina Masri of the Iraq Action Coalition in Raleigh and John Armstrong of the Young Socialists. M.J. Rahn, a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, reports that so far, seven people from Greensboro and Raleigh are planning to attend the Birmingham conference.

PARIS — "We sold 107 Pathfinder titles at an antifascist book fair November 19-23 in Gardanne, which is in the southern part of the country near Marseille," reports Derek Jeffers. "An international team of six activists from France, Canada, and the United Kingdom sold six copies of the new French-language edition of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*; a dozen copies of *Nouvelle Internationale* no. 5, which features the article "Imperialism's March Toward Fascism and War," and five copies of *Nouvelle Internationale* no. 4, that has the article 'The Opening Guns of World War III.'" Jeffers said the team also sold 30 copies of *Socialism and Man in Cuba* by Cuban revolutionary leaders Ernesto Che Guevara and Fidel Castro; as well as 33 copies of a translated version of *Counter-Mobilization: A Strategy to Fight Racist and Fascist Attacks* that was produced by Young Socialist members in France.

DES MOINES, Iowa — "For the month of November, supporters in Des Moines sold 92 Pathfinder titles said Dick Geyer. "The highlight of the



Selling the *Militant* with headline: "Protest U.S. war threats against Iraq!" to workers going into Boeing plant in Seattle, Washington.

month was our trip to Denver where we participated in an anti-racist rally and extended solidarity to more than 1,000 steelworkers on strike at CF&I in Pueblo, Colorado. During the trip we sold 57 Pathfinder titles and 26 single issues of the *Militant*."

Among the books and pamphlets unionists and other activists bought were *Two Speeches by Malcolm X; In Defense of Socialism* by Cuban president Fidel Castro; *Europe and America: Two Speeches on Imperialism* by Russian revolution leader Leon Trotsky; and *At the Side of Che Guevara: Interviews with Harry Villegas (Pombo)*. Supporters of the socialist press also sold three single issues of the *Militant* at the steelworkers picket line.

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — In the month of November, socialist workers in the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) sold 32 books to co-workers, reports Meg Novak from Birmingham. More than a dozen copies of the Marxist magazine *New International* were sold; 13 titles on Malcolm X and the Black struggle; five on Cuba; and four of *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*.

Activists in Des Moines sold 10 copies of the *Militant* with the headline "U.S. Hands off Iraq!" to workers at the plantgate of a USWA-organized factory. In Houston a USWA member purchased a *Militant* subscription and in Newark, a steelworker bought a subscription to *Perspectiva Mundial*.

ATHENS, Greece — "Our sales at the Pathfinder bookstore here totaled 28 titles," writes Georges Sayad. "By far our best seller was *The Second Declaration of Havana*, of which we sold 15." The pamphlet is available in English, French, Greek, and Spanish.

Support YS Fund Drive!

BY VERÓNICA POSES

CHICAGO — After successful fund-raising events, chapters of the Young Socialists are raising their targets and fighting to go over the national goal of \$4,400 by December 19. So far chapter pledges total \$5,400.

The New York chapter surpassed its goal of \$500 at a December 5 forum and fund-raising event. Ryan Lewis, chairperson of the New York Young Socialists, gave a presentation entitled, "The Weakening of Imperialism and the Prospects for American Revolution." In his talk, Lewis outlined Washington's drive toward war, the austerity measures being carried out by imperialist powers around the world, and the resistance put up by the working class against these moves. The event was also a send-off for YS member Shoghi Fret, who has moved to Chicago to help build the Young Socialists in that city.

Questions at the event included, "What is the importance of U.S. imperialism to have stability in the Middle East?" and "What is the character of U.S. war moves this time compared to the 1990 assault in Iraq?" In response to an appeal for funds, the approximately 30 participants contributed \$283, a combination of pledges, payments towards pledges already made, and contributions. The chapter has decided to raise its local goal to \$700.

The Chicago Young Socialists raised its goal from \$700 to \$1,000 after a forum and fund-raiser featuring Mick McDonald, member of the YS in Canada. "The chapter will be holding a fund-raising party December 12 that will help reach the new goal, as well as raise money for the monthly contribution that the chapter makes to the YS National Office," said Sarah Katz, a member of the chapter executive committee. The Chicago chapter is planning to hold a raffle at the

Book Sales from Pathfinder Bookstores

Countries/Cities	November			Previous months		
	Goal	Sold	%	Oct.	Sept.	August
FRANCE	30	126	420%	397	533%	280%
SWEDEN	55	119	216%	131	89%	224%
GREECE	13	28	215%	208	223%	77%
AUSTRALIA	36	75	208%	311	108%	178%
CANADA						
Vancouver	41	70	171%	63%	88%	100%
Montreal	68	92	135%	121%	64%	83%
Toronto	80	47	59%	103%	78%	88%
Canada Total	189	209	111%	101%	75%	111%
ICELAND	5	5	100%	480	100%	520%
NEW ZEALAND						
Auckland	49	46	94%	57%	73%	129%
Christchurch	28	16	57%	36%	54%	100%
N.Z. Total	77	62	81%	49%	66%	214%
UNITED STATES						
Miami	65	204	314%	128%	120%	172%
Des Moines	50	92	184%	132%	64%	144%
Washington, D.C.	70	84	120%	186%	223%	205%
Philadelphia	41	39	95%	253%	105%	149%
San Francisco	200	185	93%	141%	89%	94%
Los Angeles	120	106	88%	211%	128%	160%
Atlanta	48	39	81%	117%	88%	123%
Boston	65	46	71%	140%	166%	192%
Houston	65	46	71%	175%	49%	60%
Pittsburgh	63	41	65%	90%	100%	73%
Twin Cities	104	61	59%	108%	60%	83%
Chicago	77	40	52%	152%	121%	178%
Birmingham	45	23	51%	109%	103%	170%
Detroit	54	24	44%	129%	142%	106%
New York	245	96	39%	99%	115%	183%
Seattle	80	31	39%	85%	60%	80%
Newark	171	61	36%	101%	129%	184%
Cleveland	50	17	34%	80%	32%	56%
U.S. Total	1613	1235	77%	132%	96%	123%
Goal/Should be	1800	1800	100%			
UNITED KINGDOM						
London	150	116	77%	147%	153%	185%
Manchester	56	33	59%	77%	71%	113%
U.K. Total	206	149	72%	92%	87%	166%

PATHFINDER BOOKS SOLD IN THE UNIONS

Unions	November			Oct. Sept. Aug.		
	Goal	Sales	Total			
CANADA						
IAM	8	4	50%	88%	75%	100%
USWA	18	8	44%	28%	0%	33%
Canada Total	26	12	46%	46%	23%	54%
BRITAIN						
RMT	6	6	100%	0%	83%	67%
AEEU	5	2	40%	100%	40%	20%
TGWU*	7	0	0%	0%	0%	114%
U.K. Total	18	8	44%	28%	39%	50%
UNITED STATES						
USWA	40	32	80%	75%	17%	25%
UNITE	14	6	43%	40%	21%	21%
UFCW	16	6	38%	94%	233%	267%
IAM	60	12	20%	55%	20%	100%
UTU	94	16	17%	14%	15%	35%
UAW	50	7	14%	22%	24%	84%
OCAW	44	3	7%	7%	14%	18%
U.S. Total	318	82	26%	37%	21%	30%
AUSTRALIA						
AMWU	4	0	0%	75%	25%	200%

* No report received

AEEU — 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; UFCW — United Food, Beverage, and General Workers Union; UFBGWU — United Food, Beverage, and General Workers Union; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; UMW — United Mine Workers of America; UNITE — Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU — United Transportation Union.

event and collect payments for pledges already made by YS members and supporters.

With a week left in the drive, YS members will have to intensify their efforts to reach the local and national goals. Contributions toward the fund drive can be sent to the Young Socialists at 1573 N. Milwaukee, P.O. Box #478, Chicago, IL 60622.

Young Socialist Fund Drive November 7– December 19

CITY	GOALS	PAID	%
Philadelphia*	250	223	89%
New York*	700	557	80%
Atlanta*	450	200	44%
Newark	500	202	40%
Miami	200	70	35%
Twin Cities, MN	300	96	32%
Chicago*	1,000	250	25%
Los Angeles	350	73	21%
Pittsburgh	450	50	11%
Seattle	500	18	4%
Des Moines	250	0	0%
Houston	300	0	0%
Washington, DC	150	0	0%
TOTAL	5,400	1,739	40%
Should be	4,400	2,948	67%
* raised goal			

Birmingham civil rights museum tells story of historic working-class struggle

BY DEREK BRACEY

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — Part of the schedule of the regional socialist educational conference taking place here December 20–21 is a visit to the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (BCRI). It's a part of the weekend that no one should miss.

The BCRI is one of a few museums built to honor a major historic battle for human rights. The things that separate it from other museums devoted to the fight for Black rights in the United States, most notably the King Center for Nonviolent Social Change in Atlanta, are a result of what occurred in this city.

The Battle of Birmingham in the spring of 1963 ushered in a new stage in the civil rights movement. Tens of thousands of industrial workers entered the fray with mass actions, direct confrontations, and — under intense assault by racists who were supported by city and state governments — armed self defense.

Birmingham was different than most other cities and towns where civil rights fights had taken place. A large center of heavy industry in the mostly rural southern United States, the city in the 1960s had the highest ratio of factory workers in the nation, with strong unions.

There are many images at the Civil Rights Institute of coal and iron ore mines that existed within the current city limits and the huge plants throughout the area. Most of the workers in these industries were Black, including more than 60 percent of the workforce in the coal mines and steel mills.

The museum opens with vivid photos and displays portraying life under Jim Crow — the system of legal segregation and racial discrimination that was buried by the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s.

In the mid-1950s and early 1960s, civil rights fighters led by Rev. Fred L. Shuttlesworth confronted a brutal, fierce racist defense of Jim Crow. The racists bombed so many of the homes and churches where civil rights leaders organized that the city gained the nickname "Bombingham." Leading civil rights organizations were banned in Alabama. In Birmingham, all demonstrations were illegal. Among the displays is a fire-bombed burned-out bus that was used in the Freedom Rides.

In early April 1963, Martin Luther King Jr. and other national civil rights leaders agreed to support a stepped-up campaign in the city. What followed was a massive response by the Black working class.

In May thousands of young people, many under 10 years old, confronted the racists. When the police tried to arrest all the protesters, the young fighters decided to over-

whelm them. After jailing 2,400 people, the city government was met with a march of 3,000 youth. Unable to arrest more, the racists unleashed police dogs and high-pressure water hoses. Mass actions continued throughout the summer.

The events in Birmingham were followed by millions throughout the world. The BCRI has clippings from the international press coverage. It also features timelines for every year from 1954 to 1965 that make the connection between world events and the battle unfolding here. Above the line are major world political and social events, below are events in Alabama, especially Birmingham, so they can be compared.

The Battle of Birmingham inspired mass actions in numerous other cities in all parts of the country. These struggles shattered the racists' defense of Jim Crow and forced the federal government to pass civil rights laws.

A class at the conference will discuss the Battle of Birmingham and its political significance for revolutionaries today.



Demonstrators outside the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, which was headquarters for the civil rights fight there. The Civil Rights Institute is located across the street from the church, which was firebombed by racists in 1963.

Regional Socialist Conference Birmingham, AL • Sat.-Sun., Dec. 20-21

Main presentations

The Siren Call of Economic Nationalism and Washington's Drive Toward War

JACK BARNES

National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party

The Seduction of the Entire North American Left by the 'New Leadership' of the AFL-CIO ■ Liberal Reformers and Petty Bourgeois Radicals Walk Workers and Youth toward Patrick Buchanan's Fascist Trap ■ Poor Little Tibet: Today's Poor Little Finland ■ The Weakening of the Clinton Administration and Its Dangerous Lurches toward War ■ Seattle, Boeing: The Central Political Test of Workers' Space in the War Industries

Che Guevara, Socialism, and the Weight of Cuba in a World of Growing Capitalist Disorder

MARY-ALICE WATERS

Editor of 'New International' magazine

The Special Period, Rectification, and the Homecoming of Che's Reinforcement Brigade ■ The Scope of the Spreading Economic Crisis in Latin America and Asia ■ From Brazil to Japan: Washington's Drive to Buy Up the World ■ The October 1962 'Missile Crisis' and the Example Set by the Cuban People ■ An Action Program to Confront the Capitalist Crisis and the Offensive of the Exploiting Classes



Selling the *Militant* at mine portal near Morgantown, West Virginia, May 1997.



Unity march and rally to end the embargo against Cuba October 8 in Chicago.

Saturday, December 20

Registration	8:30 a.m.
Meeting of socialist workers in Machinists union (IAM)	8:30 a.m.
Visit Civil Rights Institute	10:00 a.m.
Reception	12 noon
Main presentations and discussion	1:00 p.m.
Dinner	7:00 p.m.
Meeting of Young Socialists	
Dance & social	8:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 21

Meeting of socialist workers in Machinists union	7 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Classes	9:30 a.m.
Summary of conference	2:30 p.m.

Ramada Inn Hotel & Suites
420 20th St. South, Birmingham
(20th S. between 4th and 5th Avenue)

For transportation and further information

Young Socialists: (773) 772-0551
Atlanta: (404) 724-9759
Birmingham: (205) 323-3079
Greensboro: (910) 854-6073
Houston: (713) 847-0704
Miami: (305) 756-1020
Philadelphia: (215) 546-8218
Pittsburgh: (412) 381-9785
Washington, D.C.: (202) 387-2185

Hosts: Young Socialists National Committee and the Atlanta, Birmingham, Houston, Miami, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Washington, D.C., branches of the Socialist Workers Party

Classes

Who will change the world? The Battle of Birmingham and the fight to end racist segregation

Stephen Bloodworth and Derek Bracey

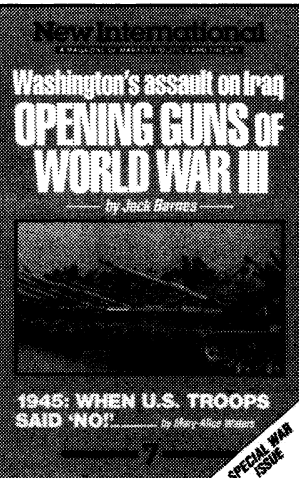
Cuba, Iraq, and the working-class campaign against imperialist war

Diana Newberry and Chris Remple

War, immigrant workers, and the transform- ation of the working class in the U.S.

Lessons from World War II, Korea, and the Maritime unions

Tom Leonard



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Samad Sharif

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NATO to extend Bosnia intervention

Continued from front page
Ohio, in the fall of 1995.

The conference took place a week after the meeting of the defense ministers of NATO's member states in Brussels, where the occupation of Bosnia by the Atlantic military alliance topped the agenda. Gen. Wesley Clark, the U.S. commander of NATO's forces in Europe and an architect of Dayton, pushed for maintaining substantial military forces in Bosnia beyond next summer to implement the accords and break what he called "the wall of Serb resistance." If NATO troops pull out, Clark argued, war would resume in the Balkan country.

"Clark is not afraid of using the necessary firepower to keep the agreements on track," said an unnamed diplomat from Europe, according to the December 3 *Washington Post*. "Unlike other American generals we have seen over here, he is not afraid of mission creep."

The defense ministers at the Brussels meeting asked NATO's military commanders to prepare a plan for renewing their forces in Bosnia by March 1.

The Clinton administration has maintained troops in Bosnia for nearly two years, now numbering 8,000, that are leading the NATO occupation. The White House has not announced yet the exact U.S. military commitment it will project. But the course laid out at the Brussels and Königswinter meetings had already been announced earlier by U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright and other government officials.

A month earlier, Albright said that "a consensus was emerging" in Washington to keep U.S. troops in Bosnia past the previously announced deadline.

During the recent U.S. military provocations against Iraq, the British government was Washington's main ally among the major imperialist powers, in contrast to Paris, whose opposition dealt a setback to the U.S. government's plan for military strikes. In a similar way, London, which has already announced its troops will stay in Bosnia beyond next June, has been the main advocate for maintaining a large U.S. military contingent in Yugoslavia. "We have used both private and public exhortations to make sure there is an American presence," said British defense minister George Robertson in a joint press conference with his U.S. counterpart William Cohen in London, December 4.

New powers for Westendorp

The conference in Germany gave new powers to Carlos Westendorp, the international commissioner in Bosnia appointed by the powers backing the Dayton accord. The High Representative in Bosnia, as the former Spanish diplomat is referred to in the big-business press, was granted the authority to make binding decisions on the timing, lo-

cation, and chairmanship of governing institutions in Bosnia; impose interim solutions in cases of dispute; and even dismiss Bosnian officials whom he deems are blocking the Dayton accord.

Since 1995, Bosnia has been divided between a precarious "Muslim-Croat federation" and a "Serb republic," with supposedly federal institutions where both entities are represented. Westendorp complained, among other things, that authorities in Bosnia are not moving fast toward establishing a common currency, laws on foreign investment, or private corporations. He and other capitalist politicians wrapped these worries in a pious concern for the plight of 1.5 million refugees, many of whom are prevented from returning to their homes by competing chauvinist politicians in Bosnia.

Referring to Bosnian government officials, Westendorp said, "If they do not do their job, we have to do it in their place."

U.S. deputy secretary of state Strobe Talbott was among the strongest proponents of this decision. "We agree with the wisdom of giving [Westendorp] the authority to override the obstructionism of those who want to block the full implementation of Dayton," he said.

At the end of the Königswinter meeting, the delegations from the Bosnian Serb republic and Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia (comprised of Serbia and Montenegro) stormed out of the conference. They did so to protest a statement in the conference's final declaration about "escalating ethnic tensions" in Kosovo, a region in southern Serbia where 90 percent of the population is of Albanian origin.

The Stalinist regime of Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade, supported by its backers in Bosnia, revoked the status of Kosovo as an autonomous region in 1989 after strikes by miners and other workers against austerity and massive protests against national oppression of the Albanian population. Since then, Kosovo has been under a state of emergency and Belgrade has used repression against rebellious Albanians demanding the return of their right

to use their language and culture in schools and elsewhere and run the local government. Thousands of Albanians demonstrated in Kosovo's capital, Pristina, in October to press such demands.

In late October, 17 men went on trial in Kosovo accused by Belgrade authorities of terrorism and of belonging to the Kosovo

maniacs just waiting to crawl out of their respective holes and the war just waiting to resume, then how can NATO be taken seriously?"

Intervention in Yugoslavia and NATO's enlargement are also at the heart of expanding Washington's hegemony in Europe. This point was made bluntly by Zbigniew Brzezinski, former national security adviser during the U.S. administration of James Carter. Speaking at a conference on German-Polish relations and NATO on December 6, Brzezinski said NATO's expansion into Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland solves a problem that had been considered "impolite" to mention until recently: the "disproportionate power" of Bonn. "Involving Germany in a wider framework," he said, "allows us to cope with Europe's central security problem of the 20th century: how to cope with the reality of Germany's power."

NATO has difficulty in reaching goals

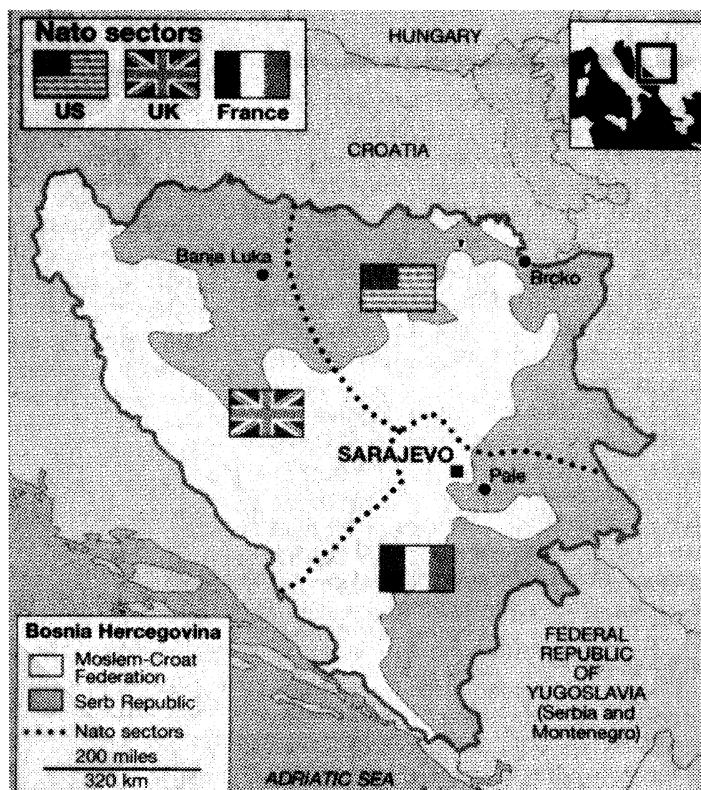
Over the last few months, Washington has fostered divisions between the leadership of the chauvinist Bosnian Serbs to advance its goals. NATO troops have taken over police stations and television transmitters from Karadzic loyalists and turned them over to supporters of Bosnian Serb president Biljana Plavsic, who broke with Karadzic earlier this year.

In a November 22-23 ballot in the part of Bosnia controlled by nationalist Serb forces, carried out under the control of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Karadzic's Serbian Democratic Party lost control of its majority in the 83-seat regional assembly but remained the biggest political force with 24 seats. With massive financial and military backing from NATO forces, Plavsic's electoral formation got 15 seats. The Serbian Radical Party of rightist Vojislav Seselj, which has made electoral gains in Serbia recently and has usually allied with Karadzic in his quest for a "greater Serbia," doubled its seats to 15. Supporters of Milosevic's Socialist Party also won 9 deputies.

Since then, Karadzic's party has claimed fraud in the elections and vowed not to accept the results. And Plavsic has turned down U.S. demands to arrest Karadzic and hand him over to NATO troops, saying she does not recognize the authority of the tribunal in The Hague. "The move to use the assembly to get rid of Karadzic has failed," said an unnamed diplomat in Europe quoted in the December 8 *New York Times*. "Plavsic has much less support than even we imagined."

Over the last year, Washington's relations with the regime of Croatia president Franjo Tudjman have also been strained. Tudjman's government has slapped criminal convictions on officers of the Open Society Institute, a foundation underwritten by U.S. financier George Soros, that promotes the rapid establishment of a "free market" economy and capitalist "democracy." Tudjman has accused Soros of promoting a "dangerous alien ideology." Washington in turn has accused the government in Zagreb of "human rights violations" and non-compliance with Dayton.

Washington's inability to accomplish its goals through the means it has used thus far is behind the decision to extend the occupation of Bosnia.



NATO troops deployment in Bosnia, now at 34,000, including 8,000 U.S. soldiers, is to be extended beyond June 1998.

Liberation Army (KLA), which Serbian officials allege has carried out violent attacks over the last year.

Washington and other imperialist powers are using what they refer to as "human rights violations" by Belgrade to maintain sanctions on Serbia and Montenegro and justify their drive to extend the occupation of Bosnia.

The U.S. government is also using the imperialist tribunal in The Hague to pursue those it accuses of "war crimes." Those opposed to the Dayton accord, like chauvinist Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, are special targets.

NATO expansion tied to Bosnia

The big-business press has continued to push this campaign. One such article appeared in the September 12 *International Herald Tribune* under the headline "The U.S. can't demand a bigger NATO while it's turning tail in Bosnia." The column, by Richard Cohen, was published earlier in the *Washington Post*. Cohen advocated a more aggressive drive by NATO troops to arrest Karadzic and other "war criminals." He also said that the projected expansion of NATO into Eastern and Central Europe will rise or fall on its success in Bosnia.

"What is NATO if it cannot bring one man to justice and end a war in a small country?" Cohen wrote. "In fact, the failure of NATO — whether expanded or static — is inextricably linked to what happens in Bosnia. And that, in turn, is linked to what the United States does. If it leaves Bosnia without finishing the job, with homicidal

Communist League in Canada calls January 1-4 convention, conference

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE

MONTREAL — The Communist League announced here that its fifth constitutional convention will be held in Toronto in conjunction with a socialist educational conference, January 1-4. The conference will be co-sponsored by the League and the Young Socialists in Canada. Communist workers and Young Socialists members in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver are building the event among fellow workers, young people, and supporters of the communist movement in Canada.

Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States, and Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*, will present the opening conference talks on New Year's day. They will speak on "The Siren Call of Economic Nationalism and Washington's Drive Toward War" and "Che Guevara, Socialism, and the Weight of Cuba in a World of Growing Capitalist Disorder" respectively, the themes they will address in the Decem-

ber 20-21 regional socialist conference in Birmingham, Alabama (see ad on facing page). The questions addressed in their talks will be at the center of the Toronto convention, whose sessions will begin the next morning. Registration will start at 11 a.m. on January 1 and the opening talks by Barnes and Waters will begin at 1 p.m.

In addition to the opening presentations, conference participants will be able to attend the sessions of the convention that the delegates will open to invited observers, as well as classes. There will be special book sales and time for informal discussion and relaxation as well.

Participants are planning to come from across North America, socialist workers and youth in Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Newark, and New York in particular are building the combined conference and convention. Those who want more information can call the Communist League or Young Socialists in Toronto at (416) 588-8591. More information will appear in next week's *Militant*.

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Che in the Congo: 'a return to our internationalist roots'

The article below appeared in the Nov. 20, 1995, issue of *Trabajadores*, the weekly publication of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers, reporting on a conference that had just concluded. Translation and footnotes are by the *Militant*.

Fifty of the 370 Cuban internationalists who were part of the two columns headed by Che toward the end of 1965 in what are today the African republics of Zaire¹ and the Congo participated in an extensive and reflective look back at those events, held this past Saturday at the Central House of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces [FAR]. At its conclusion, Division General Néstor López Cuba discussed the role of the FAR at present and said, "The mission today is the special period,² but without weakening defense." There were many key moments during this return to our internationalist roots.

BY ERNESTO MONTERO ACUÑA

A Latin-African people is how Fidel labeled us at the conclusion of the First Congress of the [Communist] Party at the Plaza of the Revolution in 1975. He was explaining the reasons for the Cuban internationalist mission in the People's Republic of Angola, which had just been proclaimed.³

Twenty years later one can better appreciate the relationship of that event to our heritage and also to the presence of Che's guerrilla unit in the Congo. Two columns of experienced Cuban combatants planted the seeds that later bore fruit on African soil.

Today we commemorate the 30th anniversary of that mission of solidarity, begun by the Heroic Guerrilla on April 24, 1965, in what was then Congo-Leopoldville, today the Republic of Zaire. On August 21 of that year, this mission was complemented by another column that aided the government of Congo-Brazzaville, today the Republic of the Congo. At the time, however, they were ready to reinforce Che's group.

Jorge Risquet Valdés, head of the political high command of that mission, recalled various circumstances of those events, together with some of the 50 participants in the seminar held last Saturday at the Central House of the FAR. The meeting commemorated the 30th anniversary of that act of solidarity with the struggle of Black Africa against colonial and neocolonial oppression, conceived by Che and the Cuban revolutionary leadership.

Brig. Gen. Harry Villegas, Hero of the Republic of Cuba and internationalist combatant in Column no. 1 in the Congo and in the Bolivian guerrilla movement, explained the adverse conditions they had to confront in an unfamiliar environment, with ethnic

and cultural differences, a low level of development, and profound backwardness.

For Villegas, currently a member of the leadership of the Western Army, the mission that concluded Nov. 21, 1965, had proven to be effective in a brief period of time. It contributed to improving the medical care provided by the Cubans to the adult population and children, and was an important contribution to getting acquainted with one another.

In line with the seminar's reflective character, Jorge Risquet recalled that in Brazzaville, in early 1965, Che held "a meeting with the leadership of the MPLA, headed by Agostinho Neto," at which a commitment was made "at the request of the Angolan patriots" to aid their guerrilla movement in the fight against Portuguese colonialism, which led to deep and lasting internationalist cooperation.

Risquet, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, cited passages from the speech by General of the Army Raúl Castro, minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, at the event marking the 20th anniversary of both columns—the second of which concluded its mission in December 1966. In that speech Raúl highlighted the consequences of colonialism in Africa and America.

"Long before the aboriginal inhabitants in the Antilles were exterminated by the fire and lash of the conquistadores," Raúl said, "the Portuguese and Spaniards had already begun the shameful business of slave-trafficking, seizing ivory and rubber and especially the greatest wealth of all: African human beings."

He also pointed out how Che envisioned that in a "context of political ferment and increasing prominence by the African peoples . . . there was a need to offer solidarity to prevent the recolonization of Zaire and contribute to the armed struggle of the peoples of the Portuguese colonies. This was to be a starting point for the great and definitive battle: the liberation of the South African people from the abject yoke of apartheid and the independence of Namibia, also occupied by the white racists of Pretoria."

In his evaluation of that historic mission, the minister of the FAR hailed the intense combat activity of both columns, characterized by their member's daring and discipline. He also reviewed the numerous missions of Column no. 2, headed by Jorge Risquet and Brigadier General Rolando Kinkelán Blez.

This column, in addition to constituting Che's reserve force to be incorporated when necessary and aiding the progressive government of the Congo, then threatened with aggression by the Kinshasa regime,⁴ was

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, along with related material such as the article above, as a weekly feature, under the banner "Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution."



Tricontinental

Che Guevara (right) with other Cuban fighters in the Congo, 1965.

also assigned to assist the Second Front of the MPLA in Cabinda, among other activities. The Cuban-Congolese-Angolan collaboration helped create the conditions for the struggle in Angola, in conquering and preserving that country's independence.

"In the difficult initial moments of Angola's second war of liberation," explained the second secretary of the party on the 20th anniversary of these columns, "Brazzaville served as a secure rear guard for one part of our troops. Its comradeship in arms with the MPLA—dating back to 1965—has become a factor of considerable importance in preserving the sovereignty and integrity of the People's Republic of Angola."

He then stated the following: "To spell things out, the course of history has confirmed . . . the validity of that mission, which already figures among the outstanding precedents of our internationalist course of action, which we will never renounce. It also helped clear open a path for the struggles of the peoples of Africa, to which the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba has offered its determined support."

In his historical evaluation, Raúl stressed how those approximately 370 men have been "multiplied a thousand-fold in the noble endeavor of paying our debt of gratitude to humanity at the price of one's own life if necessary."⁵ He stated that more than 120 carried out other internationalist missions, and several dozen of them participated in three, four, and even five missions. Of these combatants, more than 90 percent are members of the [Cuban Communist] party.

During the seminar, chaired by Division General Ulises Rosales del Toro, first deputy to the minister of the FAR and head of the general staff, and Néstor López Cuba, head of the Political Directorate of the FAR, a number of speakers made remarks reflecting the central importance of Cuba's collaboration in Africa.

In one very illustrative set of remarks, pediatrician Rodolfo Puentes Ferro explained the role of our doctors in Brazzaville, where infant mortality was very high. An incipient effort against poliomyelitis was begun; a hundred young people were selected to be trained in Cuba. In 1977, during his trip to the Congo, he was able to corroborate that 70 of them were doctors.

At the time of the 1960s mission, there was only one native-born doctor of medicine. Now there exists one for every 8,000 inhabitants, according to World Health

Organization figures. In concluding his remarks, in which he referred to Doctors Rodrigo Alvarez Cambras, Luis Delgado, Manuel Jaca, and other doctors participating in the mission, he said that "the most important thing was the mark of our presence we left behind."

In contrast, the United States first ordered the assassination of Patrice Lumumba,⁶ and later spent \$45 million financing the white mercenaries in the Congo—located in the heart of Africa and possessing enormous mineral wealth. It equipped the repressive forces with arms and planes, and promoted massive crimes.

U.S. imperialism came to replace its Belgian and Portuguese peers. But it was unable to prevent the liberation of Angola, Namibia, Guinea-Bissau, or the defeat of apartheid in South Africa. All this was a result of those historic missions by the Cuban combatants in the Congo, headed by the Heroic Guerrilla.

It was a return to our Latin-African revolutionary roots.

1. Zaire was renamed Democratic Republic of the Congo following the overthrow of the regime of dictator Mobutu Sese Seko in May 1997.

2. "Special Period" is the term Cubans use to describe the economic crisis precipitated by the collapse in aid and trade from the Soviet Union at the opening of the 1990s.

3. Shortly before the Angolan government was to celebrate its formal independence from Portuguese colonial rule in November 1975, the country was invaded by troops from South Africa and Zaire. When the new regime led by the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) called for internationalist assistance, Cuban troops volunteered and turned back the invasion. Over the next 13 years, Cuban forces remained in Angola, helping defend the country's sovereignty against repeated attacks by the apartheid regime. A historic turning point in Africa came when Cuban volunteer troops, together with the Angolan army, defeated the South African forces at the battle of Cuito Cuanavale in 1988. This victory spurred an upsurge in South Africa that finally toppled the apartheid regime there. The last Cuban troops left Angola in 1991.

4. The dictatorship in Congo-Leopoldville.

5. More than 300,000 Cubans took part in the internationalist mission in Angola alone.

6. In January 1961 Patrice Lumumba, central leader of the Congo's independence movement, was murdered by imperialist-backed forces loyal to rightist figure Moïse Tshombe.

Cuban general's book is 'fascinating reading'

The following review of *Pombo: A Man of Che's guerrilla* appeared in the December issue of *Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*. The book is also available in cloth for \$60.

Villegas, Harry. *Pombo: A man of Che's guerrilla: with Che Guevara in Bolivia, 1966-68*, [ed. By Mary-Alice Waters]. Pathfinder, NY, 1997. 365p index ISBN 0-87348-833-4 pbk, \$21.95.

This is an unabashedly enthusiastic diary account of Che Guevara's ill-fated Bolivian revolutionary campaign (1966-68) written by Harry Villegas (Pombo), who as a young Cuban in his 20s was a member of Guevara's general staff. Villegas, now a

brigadier general in the Cuban Army, dedicates his book to Guevara "and to the comrades in the struggle." The book is well produced, with excellent maps and photographs, and makes for fascinating reading. It is the best record now available of Guevara's attempt to bring the Cuban Revolution to the Latin American masses. It tells the story from the inside, in great detail, and, as such, is a model presentation of the official Cuban point of view as seen through the eyes of one of its idealistic apostles. The diary spans the period from July 1966 to the end of May 1967. It should be required reading for all those interested in hemispheric affairs. All levels.

— R.M. Levine, University of Miami

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-

U.S. rightists funded terror bombings in Cuba

BY SHIRLEY PEÑA

MIAMI — The November 16 *Miami Herald* featured a front-page story documenting a two month investigation into the 11 terrorist bombing attacks directed against Cuba this past summer. The bombings, aimed at hotels and other tourist spots, began in April and ended in September with the arrest of Salvadoran citizen Raúl Ernesto Cruz León. The *Herald* report by Juan Tamayo concluded that financing for the five-month bombing campaign, which caused property damage, several injuries, and the death of an Italian tourist, came from Cuban-American right-wingers in Miami.

The article states that while "many Cuban exiles in Miami ... doubt Cuba's allegations against Cruz León," the findings of the *Herald* "largely supported the Cuban police version that the bombs were the work of Salvadorans and Cubans abroad and not, as rumored in Havana, the work of opponents inside the island." It further describes the terrorist attacks as carried out by a "gang of four criminals" from El Salvador with "extremely close" connections to Salvadoran "army officers who were highly influential."

The political initiative for the attacks reportedly came from right-wing Cuban terrorist Luis Posada Carriles, a longtime supporter of Washington's war against the Cuban revolution. According to the *Herald*, Posada sent appeals to the Miami "exile" community, where he collected \$15,000. Posada, who was charged in the 1976 bombing of a Cuban airliner in which 73 people died, is known to have taken up residence in El Salvador following his escape from a Venezuelan prison. He also played a role in the secret *contra* supply line organized by former U.S. Army Col. Oliver North during the CIA-organized war against the Nicaraguan revolution.

The involvement of this well-known counterrevolutionary was confirmed in conversations the *Herald* had with a number of "wealthy Cuban-American businessmen" who admitted providing financial backing for this terrorist campaign against Cuba. The *Herald* reported, "The exile sources declined to identify the donors, saying that the cash probably violated U.S. neutrality laws that prohibit plotting armed operations against another nation."

Cruz León, the Salvadoran mercenary who confessed and was charged with six of

the bombing attacks, said that he was offered \$4,500 for each blast he set. He told Cuban authorities that his pay came from the Cuban-American National Foundation (CANF) based in Miami, Florida.

Recently the ties of another Florida "businessman," Jose Antonio Llama, to Cuban right-wing terror has been revealed. Llama, who sits on the executive board of the CANF, was recently implicated in a plot to assassinate Cuban President Fidel Castro. He owns the 46-foot yacht that was used to transport four Cuban-American rightists whose stated aim was the assassination of Castro. The *Herald* reported that Llama's lawyer said he would advise his client to take advantage of his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination.

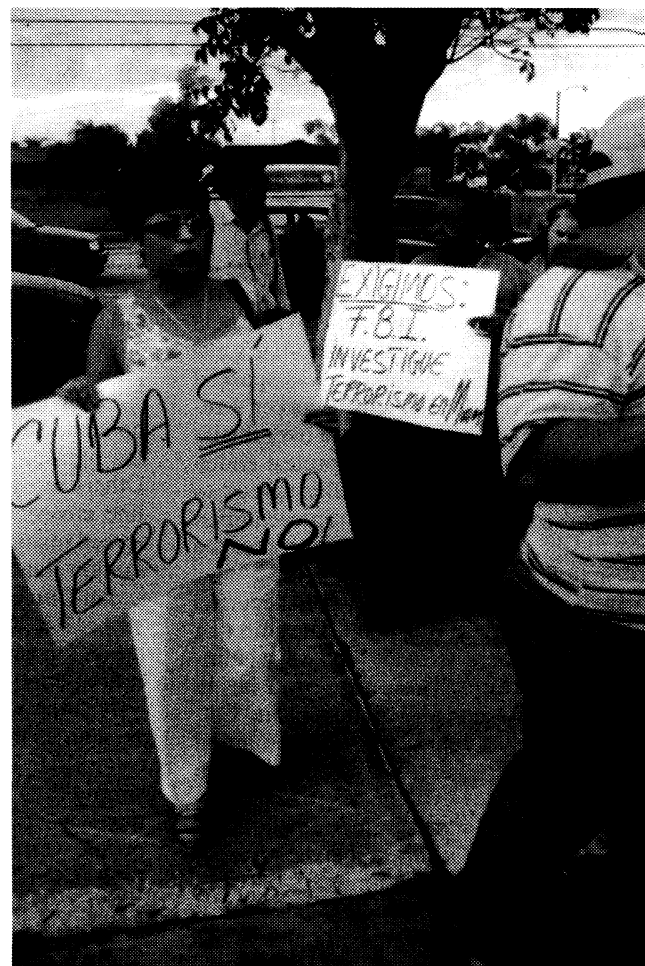
Meanwhile, a federal court here recently heard arguments supporting a lawsuit by the families of three of the four members of the rightist group Brothers to the Rescue, who were shot down following their February 1996 violation of Cuban airspace. The families are attempting to collect \$79.9 million in damages from the Republic of Cuba.

In an attempt to prove that the Brothers to the Rescue aircraft never entered Cuban airspace, the attorneys for the rightists used a former National Transportation Safety Board investigator and Air Force fighter pilot as their expert witness. The November 14 *Herald* described this witness, Charles Leonard, "holding a model of a MiG jet in

one hand and a Cessna model that it dwarfed in another" as he declared, "At no time were these aircraft in Cuban territorial airspace." Leonard also claimed the downing of the two Brothers to the Rescue planes was "premeditated."

James Lawrence, the judge in the case, ruled that the Cuban government was in "default" for not being present at the trial. The December 1 *Herald* reported that the most likely source for the funds, if the court rules for the families, will be the \$148 million in Cuban assets, frozen by the U.S. government following Cuba's nationalization of former U.S. holdings.

The funds are only available if there is administrative approval from the U.S. president. Last year President William Clinton did just that — dipping into the illegally held Cuban funds and distributing \$1.2 million to the four families of the downed Brothers to the Rescue pilots. The lawsuit falls under the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1996, which permits court actions against



Militant/Eric Simpson
Miami picket in front of Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen's office September 16 to protest terrorist bombings in Cuba.

governments found to have sponsored "extrajudicial killings" of U.S. citizens.

Shirley Peña is a member of the International Association of Machinists Local 368.

Cuban poet, editor completes UK tour

BY CLIFF WILLIAMS

MANCHESTER, England — "This journey has had various points of interest to me, not only as a poet participating in an important literary event, but also getting to know England, getting to know excellent people, and getting to know their cultural interests," said Roberto Codina, in his opening address to a fund-raising dinner for the Cuba Solidarity Campaign in Preston.

Codina, poet and editor of *La Gaceta de Cuba*, the magazine of the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba, was referring to his participation in the Ibero-American poetry festival and a speaking tour of England which had already taken him to London, Oxford, and Bristol. The dinner was the first engagement on the northern leg of

the tour. Codina also spoke to 50 students at the University of Manchester and in the same city 80 people heard him speak at the Copacabana Latino Bar. In addition he addressed a mass meeting of the locked-out Liverpool dockers, was the main speaker at a dayschool in Sheffield entitled "Inside Cuba Today," and spoke to an open Spanish class at the University of Sheffield.

Codina also took time to visit places of cultural interest, including the Beatles museum and Cavern club, where they performed. The Beatles, popular in Cuba, were often referred to in Codina's talks.

The cultural advance of the revolution was not a linear process, he explained. "There was a first period in the sixties when Cuban culture was expanded. After this there was a time, called the gray period or 'black decade,' where dogmatism and bureaucracy were conspiring against the cultural gains the revolution had made." He gave the example of having to "hear the Beatles sung by Spanish groups, which had nothing to do with the original version. As is normal, young people objected to this, and whoever had a Beatles record was invited to every party."

The poet explained that things began to change in the mid-1970s, and this process

developed through the '80s, confronting conservatism and prejudice. Despite the economic crisis triggered by the collapse in trade with the Soviet Union at the start of the 1990s, the recent years have seen some of the greatest advances in cultural freedom, Codina said. He pointed to the Second International Conference on the Beatles, currently taking place in Cuba, as one example of this change. Another is the broader readership of *La Gaceta de Cuba*, despite its smaller print run and much greater price. "One should understand that our fight for the culture was our fight for the country and the gains of the revolution," he stated.

Codina was able to meet with the strike committee of the Liverpool dockers, before addressing their mass meeting of hundreds of workers. The dockers were locked out by their employers for refusing to cross a picket line over two years ago. Since then they have waged a fight for full reinstatement and trade union conditions for all those wishing to return to work. This struggle has received widespread international solidarity, particularly from other dock workers.

"The chance to speak to a group of workers who are in industrial struggle to claim their rights is very important for me. I was

Continued on Page 10

'Granma International' offers the voice of Cuban revolution

BY MIKE TABER

Since February 1966 *Granma International* has been the weekly voice of the Cuban revolution in English, French, and Spanish. For almost 32 years it has published speeches by Fidel Castro and other Cuban leaders, documents by the Cuban government, and news articles on Cuba. Among recent articles are:

- An interview with Cuban Brig. Gen. Luis Pérez Róspide, head of the Union of Military Industries. These are enterprises run by the Revolutionary Armed Forces to spur production and promote economic efficiency. In these enterprises 97.6 percent of the work force, and 70 percent of administrators and specialists, are civilians. Key to their success, Pérez states, is workers' participation in decision making.

- At the heart of this program is the nature of the Cuban army itself. "The Rebel Army is the people in uniform," Pérez says. "And with that concept of Fidel's we arrived at the strategy of the War of All the People." This strategy consists of "guaranteeing each Cuban a rifle, a land mine, and a grenade to defend the country," the article points out.

- An article on the Fourth National Meeting of Nonsugarcane UBPCs. UBPC stands for Basic Units of Cooperative Production, which were set up in 1993 in face of the sharp drop in production on state farms. Among their tasks was to involve working people more in decision making and eliminate some of the bureaucratic features of the

old state farm setup.

Some 1,600 UBPCs are currently functioning, on 37 percent of the country's arable land that is not utilized for sugarcane production, the article in *Granma* points out. But the creation of the UBPCs by itself has not solved the difficulties. Only 25 percent of them are self-sufficient in food.

Nevertheless, the UBPCs "are credited with having made a contribution to reducing the overall losses in the agricultural sector, inherited from other less fortunate stages: from approximately 1.8 billion pesos in 1993 to close to 400 million pesos anticipated at the end of the year."


The article concludes by citing remarks to the meeting by Cuban vice president Carlos Lage, "Even though 71 percent of those entities are showing losses, the constant reduction of those losses and improved results in production are favorable aspects in the course of Cuban agriculture."

- A report on the recent wave of terrorist bombings in Havana, given by Col. Adalberto Rabeiro of the counterintelligence division of the Ministry of the Interior.

- Articles on the Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, and of the events surrounding the 30th anniversary of the death of Ernesto Che Guevara, whose remains were recently found, returned to Cuba, and interred in the city of Santa Clara amidst a massive popular outpouring.

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Skirmishes continue over conditions at Caterpillar

BY CAPPY KIDD

MOSSVILLE, Illinois — On Nov. 8, 1997, dozens of members of UAW Local 974 walked off the job at Caterpillar's engine plant here. The walkout was sparked when management denied a worker's request to talk to a union steward over the issue of forced overtime. The protest ended 20 hours later when Caterpillar agreed to the workers' right to union representation and to take no disciplinary measures for the job action.

In September a similar walkout occurred at Caterpillar's seal ring plant. The shift that walked out there is made up overwhelmingly of new hires. These are skirmishes in the battle between UAW members and Caterpillar that has continued since the union suspended a 17-and-a-half-month strike in December 1995. UAW members have been without a signed contract since 1991 at Caterpillar, the world's largest manufacturer of heavy earth-moving equipment.

Since the strike, the company has continued its efforts to housebreak the union and drive down the wages and working conditions. Caterpillar has announced plans to close its unionized plant at York, Pennsylvania, and is in the process of opening five smaller nonunion plants.

Several unionized plants in Peoria, Decatur, Aurora, and Pontiac, Illinois, remain central to Caterpillar's production. Workers resistance to the company's attacks in these plants remains unbroken. For example, Caterpillar management tries to prohibit workers from wearing T-shirts with pro-union slogans. However, union members have found a way to express solidarity by designating Black Mondays for those injured on the job and Green Fridays for union solidarity. On these days the workplaces are a sea of black or green.

Former line crossers join the union

A significant number of the former line crossers have begun to join the union. Tom Smith, age 43, who worked most of his 25 years at Caterpillar at the Mossville engine plant, told the *Militant* that 350 former line

crossers have now joined the union. "Cat thought they had these people in their hand, but then they started treating them the same way they had been treating us," he explained.

UAW members are debating this development. Several Local 974 members used the phrase, "Once a scab always a scab." Others recognize that the treatment former line crossers receive from Caterpillar has forced many of them to reconsider their anti-union stance.

Jan Chance, the wife of illegally fired Cat striker J.R. Chance, told the *Militant*, "The union's position is that eventually [due to retirements] the line-crossers will be the only force in there; therefore they have to be won to the union. I do agree with that. Caterpillar is the enemy. The scabs were simply their tools. However, I make a distinction between the new hires and our own people who crossed, because if they crawled back in there once, they will do it again."

When asked if he thought the former line crossers could become good unionists, Smith responded, "Some of them will someday make some fine union people. It's too bad that they had to make such a huge mistake to learn these lessons."

Since the strike ended in 1995, Caterpillar has continued its war against the union through outsourcing and through hiring outside contractors to come into the Caterpillar plants and perform production work ordinarily done by union members. Working under the same roof on the same production line you have members of UAW Local 974, those hired by Caterpillar in its attempt to break the strike, and employees of several different subcontractors. The rates of pay, benefits, and work rules vary widely.

Fight of the 'illegally terminated'

Over the course of the strike, Caterpillar utilized scabs, threats of closing the plants, thugs organized by the Vance Security Agency, and threats to permanently replace all strikers. They also carried out arbitrary dismissals in their attempt to intimidate the unionists and break the strike. Without any

due process, review, or appeal, company officials would inform workers by letter that their employment (or if retired, their medical insurance and pension benefits) had been terminated because of their activities in support of the strike. In the Peoria area alone, 67 members of the UAW were terminated during the strike.

"I'm really proud of the stance my union has taken on this issue," said illegally terminated worker John Schmidt. "The union has made the full resolution of all the cases a precondition for any contract settlement." Schmidt, now 53, had worked for Caterpillar for 31 years and was four days away from retirement when he received his letter of termination from Caterpillar.

He and a co-worker had been arrested for allegedly "keying" (scratching) a Peoria county sheriff's vehicle at a UAW rally at Cat's Mapleton facility on Oct. 24, 1994. In addition to the termination, Cat officials stripped him of two-thirds of his pension. The pension benefits have not been reinstated even though Schmidt and his co-worker were cleared of all charges by a Peoria County court.

J.R. Chance, a 44-year-old welder with 27 years' seniority, was fired on Feb. 8, 1995 by Caterpillar for hand-billing during the strike. Chance told the *Militant* that on Aug. 27, 1997, he received a call from Caterpillar telling him his case had been settled and instructing him to return to work. Nine minutes after his return, he was shown to the door once more because he refused to sign a statement declaring that all the time he had been suspended was to be considered disciplinary time.

The union organizes weekly informa-



Militant/Angel Lariscy
Peoria, Illinois, rally in support of UAW workers May 7, 1994, when Caterpillar locked them out.

tional meetings to keep everyone up to date on union affairs, including the terminated and their families, and to plan benefits and other fund raising activities.

One of the most successful of these events took place November 22, when more than 350 UAW members and their families raised over \$5,000 for the continuing legal expenses for Ozzie Cranford, a terminated UAW member. The announcement of the partial victory that Cat had been forced to restore medical benefits for Cranford and his wife drew loud and sustained cheers.

The cases of the illegally terminated are among hundreds of grievances and unfair labor practice complaints filed with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) against Caterpillar by the UAW. A sign outside the headquarters of Local 974 tallies the current number of unresolved cases at 352.

In the midst of their own struggle, the union members at Caterpillar have extended solidarity to 76 members of UAW Local 844, forced on strike at the Mahoney Brass Foundry in Vermont, Illinois. According to Jim Fisher, fellow members of Local 974 collected more than \$2,000 cash along with food for Thanksgiving dinners and toys for Christmas.

Cappy Kidd is a member of UAW Local 890. Danny Booher, a member of the United Transportation Union, contributed to this article.

Sanctions have deadly impact on Iraq

Continued from front page

favor easing the sanctions in order to expand their business in Iraq, while Washington has insisted on keeping them as tight as possible.

The Iraqi government on December 5 also reiterated its refusal to allow the UN "weapons inspectors" into dozens of government buildings, presidential compounds, and military sites, and again demanded a timetable on ending the inspections and replacing U.S.-piloted U2 spy planes that fly over Iraqi airspace with planes from another country.

Secretary of Defense William Cohen and British defense secretary George Robertson immediately called a press conference to respond to Baghdad. Cohen said, "We would not rule out any military action," while Robertson added that the British aircraft carrier the *Invincible* would join the U.S. naval and air armada in the Persian Gulf. Washington has some 20,000 troops are stationed in the region, two aircraft carriers with more than 50 warplanes each, and a dozen warships that are capable of firing Tomahawk missiles deep into Iraq.

A few days later, Cohen postponed a trip to the Mideast December 9, claiming that worries over tensions with Baghdad and in Bosnia kept him from leaving the U.S. capital. Noting the massive buildup of U.S. air and naval forces in the Gulf, Cohen declared that the situation "can't go on indefinitely without being resolved," and warned that any U.S. military assault on Iraq would not be "pinpricks."

Deadly impact of U.S.-led sanctions

After failing in its most recent attempt to launch a war against Iraq, Washington is now using the sanctions, UN weapons "inspectors," and the oil deal to keep pressure on Baghdad in its goal to overturn the regime there and establish a government more subservient to imperialist interests.

The Clinton administration and other bourgeois spokespeople have attempted to shift the blame for more than a million deaths caused by the UN sanctions onto the Iraqi regime. In his December 9 *New York Times* column, A.M. Rosenthal piped, "For seven years Saddam Hussein has murdered Iraqi children, thousands. He refuses to provide the foreign food and medicine they must have.... The talk at the UN became not how to punish him for that crime but how to ease the sanctions that so far have prevented him from regaining full military power."

But a United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) report issued in late November gave a glimpse of the impact that the U.S.-led sanctions have had on the Iraqi people. The report stated that 32 percent of children under five, some 960,000, are chronically malnourished — a rise of 72 percent since 1991. Around 23 percent are underweight — twice as many as in neighboring Jordan or Turkey. UNICEF surveys also found that in rural areas only 50 percent of people have access to water, and only 34 percent have sanitation. Since the sanctions were imposed on Iraq there has been a six-fold increase in infant mortality, according to the World Health Organization.

On top of these figures, scientific studies by international researchers have found that Washington used banned weapons and ammunition with uranium against Iraq in 1990-91, exposing Iraqi land to contamination by toxic chemicals making it impossible to cultivate.

The recent UNICEF report concluded "that there has been no consistent evidence for improvement in nutritional status" in children under five "since the start of SCR986/1111 implementation," that is, the UN Security Council agreement a year ago to allow the sale of small amounts of Iraqi oil.

And despite this arrangement, which

came after more than six years of a total ban on oil sales, Iraq receives only 25 percent of the medicine it needs and none of the materials needed for agriculture, water, spare parts of electrical power stations, and education.

Tour of Cuban poet in U.K.

Continued from Page 9

very happy to see that there have been such things as comedy shows to raise funds and promote the struggle," Codina said. "There has been a traditional effort to separate workers from artists but we can see that cultural workers and artists can come together, in solidarity with the struggle of workers."

"More than 20 years ago, I wrote a poem that said that strikes have no limits but I never thought that I would come to experience the kind of struggle of workers in Liverpool. I owe a great deal to the people of this port, for my generation the Beatles were very important and they had a very popular origin. When I return to Cuba I will be taking with me the experience of meeting with yourselves," he told the mass meeting. "Your struggle is not sufficiently well known in Latin America and Cuba and similarly the struggles of Latin America and Cuba are not known here ... we need to remember that solidarity doesn't only relate to Cuba, but, as José Martí said, every true man must feel on his own cheek every blow dealt against the cheek of another." Martí was a leader of the Cuban fight for independence from Spain in the late 1800s.

Noberto Codina and participants from the World Festival of Youth and Students held in Cuba last summer in Havana were the inspirations of the dayschool in Sheffield, explained Jenny Fortune of Sheffield Cuba Solidarity Campaign.

The discussion there took up a wide range

of issues. One person asked if the circulation of the dollar, legal now for three years, was leading to culture taking on commodity forms and becoming commercialized. In reply Codina said, "The problem created with the legalization of the dollar has contaminated some sectors of culture, but this is something that writers and artists are very clear about and we are fighting against the dollarization of culture. For example, although my own journal needs dollars to buy the raw materials, the journal is being sold in Cuban pesos for Cuban people. The Cuban reader pays only 10 percent of the price people outside the country have to pay, and we have made clear that the journal is mainly for the Cuban reader."

One question that came up in many forms was about how relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe had effected Cuban culture. Codina explained that these relations helped make possible the publishing projects of institutions like Casa de las Américas.

This made some of the best literature of the world and especially the Third World, available, at cheap prices, to Cubans and Latin Americans. "As happens with any exchange we had good things and bad things. The cinema of Eisenstein could be seen in Cuba and we saw also these Soviet films where couples couldn't kiss on the lips. Nonetheless, this exchange made it possible for Cubans and Latin America to discover a very rich culture," Codina explained.

Colorado strikers strong after 10 weeks

BY ARDY BLANDFORD

PUEBLO, Colorado — Some 1,100 members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) have been on strike against CF&I/Oregon Steel here since October 3. The strikers' main demands are an end to forced overtime; the right to have a say in work assignments; increased wages, health care, and benefits for retirees; job security; and improvements in the pension plan. During contract negotiations that led up to the strike, the company harassed workers for wearing union stickers, said it would close the plant for good if the union went out, and threatened to fire strikers. Two months into the walkout, workers on the picket line say morale is high, and the union hall is bustling with activity.

For many workers, members of USWA locals 2102 and 3267, this strike is about being treated with dignity. At a November 25 meeting at the Pueblo County Courthouse, workers described about the conditions at CF&I. The forum was called by state Sen. William Thiebaut. Dozens of strikers turned out to explain how they have been forced to work for weeks on end without a day off, including for up to 16 hours a day in 140-degree heat with just one meal break.

Ernie Madrid told of when he had a heart attack at work. "I crawled through the door of my supervisor's office and told him I was having a heart attack. He wouldn't call an

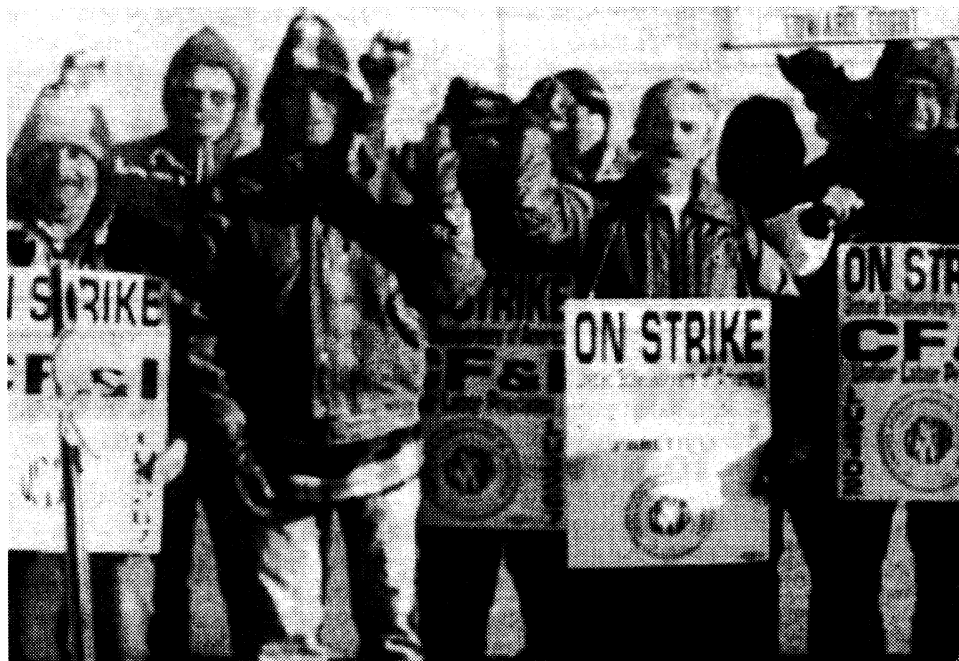
ambulance until he got some one else to say it was OK." After returning to work following bypass surgery, he was forced to work double shifts for the first two days back, despite being on medical restrictions. "This is blood money," Madrid said, referring to overtime pay.

Ralph Edmond said he was forced to work 42 days straight, many of those 12-hour days. Many said they had been forced to work overtime on little or no notice. "A foreman followed one man home and told him he had to come back to work," said one.

Company spokeswoman Vicki Tagliafico asserted that not many workers put in overtime. Some 82 percent of the employees worked fewer than 55 hours a week, she said, and only 5 percent worked 65 hours or more. The legal workweek is 40 hours.

Since the strike began the company has hired 500 permanent replacement workers. Another 250 managers and some 100 workers who crossed the picket lines also are working. In 1983 Oregon Steel was able to break the union at its Portland mill. Ten years later, the company bought CF&I Steel and wrested \$35 million in concessions from the workforce there.

Support for the strike is building. Around 800 people rallied in support of the strikers November 16. AFL-CIO president John Sweeney and USWA secretary-treasurer Leo Gerard addressed that rally. Among



Strikers rally outside CF&I plant in Pueblo, Colorado.

those who turned out were members of the plumbers, Teamsters, electricians, firefighters, communications workers, and other unions.

After the rally people marched to the CF&I headquarters chanting they would hold out "one more day" than the steel bosses. The USWA has also organized demonstrations in San Francisco and Portland at the offices of Wells Fargo Bank, which is the lead partner in a consortium of banks extending credit to Oregon Steel.

Other Steelworker unions, including members of a local from Rocky Flats, have shown solidarity by sending members to the picket lines. Other unions have been host-

ing solidarity dinners for the strikers, and members of the Teamsters, AFSCME, Electrical Workers, Postal Workers, Carpenters, Food and Commercial Workers, Communication Workers and Teachers have joined the picket lines.

The union is asking that contributions for the strike fund be sent to the USWA/CF&I Emergency Fund, USWA, 1414 Evans Avenue, Pueblo, CO 81005. For further information call USWA locals 2102 and 3267 at (719) 564-8600.

Ardy Blandford is a member of United Auto Workers Local 270 in Des Moines, Iowa. Dick Geyer contributed to this article.

Ottawa uses anti-mine conference to boost position

BY KATY LEROUGETEL

MONTREAL — Amidst great media fanfare on December 4, representatives of 121 countries signed a treaty in Ottawa banning the use, production, export and transfer of land mines. Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy used his government's position as host of the event to strengthen Canadian imperialism's leverage in world politics against its rivals.

At the same time, a campaign by the trade union officialdom and social democratic politicians in support of the treaty drew many working people toward Canadian nationalism and support for the use of Ottawa's imperial power abroad.

About 550 delegates representing governments and nongovernmental organizations attended the three-day conference and so-called Action Forum against Land Mines. Land mines are cheap defensive weapons costing between \$3 and \$30 each.

United Nations (UN) secretary-general Kofi Annan lavished praise on Ottawa's role in initiating the ban saying, "There are countries whose leadership can make a difference ... and these countries do not have to be superpowers."

The December 6 *La Presse*, a Montreal daily, editorialized glowingly, "The great Liberal tradition had a precise vision of what Canada was, a small country with a vocation of peacekeeping and goodwill ambassador. The [Liberal party] Chrétien government has unequivocally reestablished this image, among other things with its intervention in Haiti, the land mines dossier and thanks to its role in favor of human rights within the Commonwealth." Some 650 Canadian troops began a withdrawal from Haiti this month, after a three-year stint as part of an imperialist occupation force initiated by Washington under the UN flag. About 30 Canadian cops remain charged with training the National Haitian Police force.

Among those refusing to sign the treaty were the governments of the United States, Russia, China, Israel, India and Pakistan. Washington refused to sign because the treaty did not include a clause allowing its 1 million mines in south Korea. Washington has 37,000 troops stationed in south Korea four decades after its military invasion divided the Korean peninsula.

The Cuban government did not sign the treaty either for different reasons. Cuban Brig. Gen. Luis Pérez Róspide, director of the Union of Military Industries (UIM) in Cuba, spoke about this earlier this year. "Asked about the manufacture and utilization of land mines, which are opposed by some rich countries led by the United States, the UIM director gave his opinion that no

one discussed this issue with the poor or those who are threatened by nuclear weapons and have none of their own," said an article in the September 28 *Granma International*, a Cuban weekly. "Land mines are a weapon of the poor," Róspide declared.

Part of the UIM's basic mission is to guarantee each Cuban a rifle, a land mine and a grenade to defend the country.

The signatories of the treaty in Ottawa announced \$500 million-worth of pledges to de-mining and victim-rehabilitation activities.

The Canadian Autoworkers union has pledged CAN \$1.25 million over the next three years to de-mine Mozambique. The union aims to finance labor-intensive de-

mining programs employing Mozambicans and is seeking technology from companies without links to the armaments industry.

"People's treaties" signaling support for the official agreement were signed in 40 countries, including Canada, by union officials and various petty bourgeois radicals attending ceremonies coinciding with the official Ottawa event. On December 9, the Montreal Metro Labor Council of the Quebec Federation of Labor added its name to the "people's treaty." Prominent figures such as Canadian singer Bruce Cockburn have publicly supported Ottawa's campaign.

Remarks by Federal Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion at the biennial meeting of the Quebec wing of the fed-

eral Liberal Party reflect ruling-class satisfaction at its success in using the land mines campaign to draw labor officials, and broader social democratic and liberal forces into support for Canadian imperialism. Taking aim at the strong pro-sovereignty sentiment in Quebec, he enthused, "The minister of national unity last week was Lloyd Axworthy. I am proud to share this country with this great Manitoban."

Concurrent with the conference, Canada's Ministry of Industry organized a "Salon of Canadian de-mining technology" in which roughly 20 companies participated. "De-mining activities promise a good future given the number of countries signing the treaty," said a Ministry official.

'Global warming' conference in Kyoto

Continued from front page

also make cuts in the use of fossil fuels. The added costs to accommodate these changes by U.S. companies, they argued, would make Third World countries more competitive in the world market. Moreover, it initially pressed for reducing emissions to 1990 levels, not below them.

U.S. vice president Albert Gore, who has cultivated an image of concern over the environment, made a 16-hour stopover at the gathering. He walked a tightrope between U.S. industry lobbyists and environmentalists in separate meetings with them. Clearly, the main warming he was attentive to is the heating up of the 2000 presidential elections.

The dominant governments in the European Union pressed for a faster pace to emission reductions than the Clinton administration in the United States. Per capita emissions in Europe are less than in the United States, and if U.S. companies could be forced to adopt bigger cuts it might reduce the relative cost of some European products.

Government officials in some European countries boast that they have been able to keep emissions relatively lower because they rely much more on nuclear power than on coal-fired plants to generate electricity. Nuclear power supplies 75 percent of electricity in France, 50 percent in Sweden, and 30 percent in Germany compared to 20 percent in the United States. There is no proven way that nuclear power can be made safe, however, and serious accidents such as the one at Chernobyl plant in the Ukraine and the one at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania point to the deadly danger that this source of power represents.

The Japanese government's initial stand was between that of the EU and Washing-

ton, while the Australian government said it favored no reductions because it is a coal-exporting nation.

Under the deal that was finally negotiated, the European Union would reduce its emissions by 8 percent; the United States by 7 percent; and Japan by 6 percent. Some smaller countries would face smaller reductions; others none at all. The agreement reached in Kyoto will go into effect if it is ratified by countries representing 55 percent of the 1990 level of carbon dioxide by a deadline of March 1999. It remains to be seen whether or not the U.S. Senate, which voted unanimously July 25 not to approve any agreement that doesn't include emission reductions by China and Third World countries, will ratify it.

One of the propositions most steeped in the moneychangers mentality of the meeting was President Clinton's plan for a system of tradable emissions permits. This would allow governments that voluntarily reduce emissions below a certain level to sell the difference to others as unused "right" to pollute. This is the scheme now being used between companies in the United States under the Clean Air Act of 1990. Washington is a perspective buyer of such permits.

Bonn has agreed to assume a larger share of the total emissions slated to be cut in Europe. The bargain would allow poorer countries like Portugal and Ireland to increase emissions as much as 30 percent.

This pollution exchange proposal was strongly opposed by the Chinese government and was left open for further discussion scheduled to begin next November.

Representatives of many semicolonial countries argued that the burden for reducing greenhouse emissions should be on the

industrially developed imperialist countries, where the greatest portion of carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere originates. The additional cost of reducing emissions would force them, they argue, to slow down economic development. Monopoly-rigged pricing and domination of world markets have led to the institutionalization of unequal trade relations between a handful of industrialized imperialist countries and the large number of oppressed countries.

Part of the warped development of these countries as a result their unequal relations and the conditions imposed by imperialist banks has led to disastrous air pollution that is today harming the health of millions. But the conference didn't address the problem.

There was scant attention to the massive destruction of the tropical rain forests in Asia and Latin America. In the past few months the amount of carbon dioxide spewed into the atmosphere as the result of the burning of forests in Indonesia is larger than all the emissions from Europe in one year. There has also been widespread burning in the Amazon, partly due to government pressure in Brazil on small farmers to burn or forfeit credit. The vast fires in Indonesia and the Amazon make more of the world on fire in 1997 than at any other time in history.

In both South America and Indonesia conditions resulting from the El Niño weather pattern are often blamed for the fires. But the slash and burn policies imposed on farmers and carried out by big timber companies based in the imperialist world are much more responsible. And not only does the burning of these forests release large amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, but it also eliminates one of the main absorbers of carbon dioxide.

IMF deal doesn't stop Asia currency crisis

Continued from front page

loans as foreign creditors demanded payment. Most of the regime's short-term debt is dominated in U.S. dollars, which means that with a devalued currency, loans become more expensive to repay. Foreign banks had previously shut off credit lines to south Korea, fearing defaults.

South Korea's economy, like those of other countries in the region, has been battered by currency devaluations that have precipitated a flurry of defaults on loan payments to imperialist banks. Searching for financial stability, Seoul reached an agreement with the IMF December 3 that includes an austerity program with demands for deep cuts in social programs and massive layoffs. The deal also allows the maximum foreign ownership of south Korean companies to be raised from 26 percent to 50 percent.

Tensions between the south Korean government and the Clinton administration have grown. Washington is pressing the regime to impose the IMF austerity package, while south Korean officials are seeking more financial commitments from their imperial masters. Tokyo had agreed to contribute \$10 billion and Washington \$5 billion to the IMF deal as a "backup source" of funds, available only if \$35 billion from IMF, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Fund prove insufficient.

"If the U.S. and Japan are committed to supporting the Korean economy, they should support the economy at the early stage, rather than waiting," declared Lim Chang Yuel, the minister of finance. "If not, they are just servicing by words. They are advising on policies and not really putting their money in at all."

In response, U.S. treasury secretary Robert Rubin snapped, "They should implement the reforms that are needed to get Korea back on the right track."

Adding to Seoul's jitters, "already unions have threatened strikes if the Government complies with the I.M.F.'s conditions — which many in South Korea view, accurately, as American conditions," the December 10 *New York Times* reported.

As fears of new bankruptcies escalate, the Halla shipbuilding group collapsed December 6 after failing to repay \$200 million in debt. It was the sixth of south Korea's 30 largest conglomerates to fail this year. The company had announced November 26 it was firing 3,000 workers in December, anticipating IMF "restructuring" conditions. Workers at Halla said they would resist the measures.

"Job losses may generate social tensions," declared the headline on a December 10 article in London's *Financial Times*. It reported that the labor ministry in south Korea estimated more than 900,000 people will lose their jobs in south Korea in 1998. Government officials in Thailand say some 1.5 million workers will be fired by the end of next year, and another 1 million people will be jobless in Indonesia as a result of the current economic crisis.

Tokyo ponders \$77 billion 'bailout'

On December 10 Japanese prime minister Ryutaro Hashimoto was scheduled to present an economic package that must "revive Japan's comatose economy that fell into recession in six months through Sept. 30," the December 15 *Business Week* reported. The plan involves using \$77 billion of the country's public funds to shore up weak banks and other financial institutions.

According to *Business Week*, "Hashimoto's fate hangs on" the proposals. "It's a political minefield that could cost taxpayers \$80 billion — and Hashimoto his job." The last time government officials attempted to use public funds to salvage failing financial institutions was 1996, in a scheme involving \$6 billion to housing lenders that sparked demonstrations across the country.

Regulators in Japan have begun to assert that the amount of problem loans on banks books could be nearly \$600 billion — three times the government's official figure and 14 percent of all outstanding loans. South Korea's financial woes have had the greatest impact on capitalist investors in Japan, who owned \$24.3 billion of Korean bank debt last year.

Tokyo has hinted at selling some of the country's \$391 billion worth of U.S. Treasury Bonds to "rescue" the weaker banks. Such a move was "one of the biggest potential threats to the U.S. financial system posed by Japan's financial problems," the *Wall*

Street Journal remarked.

Meanwhile, government officials in Thailand announced December 8 that 56 out of 58 financial institutions that had been suspended in June and August will be shut down, with 5,000 — 10,000 jobs being cut. This action was one of the conditions demanded by the IMF's \$17 billion "bailout" deal after the Thai regime devalued the baht on July 2. That currency's value has plummeted by more than 40 percent since then.

Another IMF demand included opening up the country to foreign investors. Bangkok

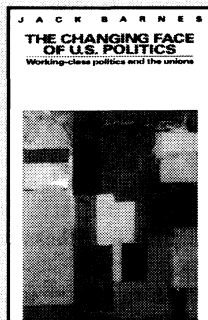
Investment, one of the two remaining finance companies that were suspended, will sell an 80 percent stake to AIG Consumer Finance, an American International Assurance subsidiary Group.

With the IMF paving the way, foreign investors stepped up the pace to gobble up property in southeast Asia. Citicorp signed a bid to acquire control of First Bangkok City Bank in Thailand, while the Germany-based Westdeutsche Landesbank is bidding to purchase Finance One of Thailand.

Procter & Gamble recently acquired a

controlling share of Ssangyong Paper Co., in what is considered to be the first large takeover of a south Korean firm by a foreign company.

Saying it will not succumb to IMF dictates like other regimes in the region, the government of Malaysia is projecting an IMF-style austerity program without the "bailout" package to halt the deterioration of its economy. Finance Minister Anwar Ibrahim announced December 5 that the regime would slash spending for social programs in 1998 by 18 percent.



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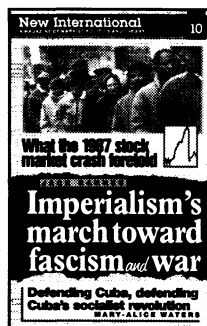
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Clear? — At the international parley on global warming, chief U.S. negotiator Stuart Eizenstat warned that Washington would walk away if there wasn't an eco-



Harry Ring

nomically "sound" agreement. "The bottom line," he declared, is that "we don't simply want to have an agreement at any cost."

Definitely a Leninist — Checking early records, a Swiss bank found a savings account belonging to V.I. Lenin who was in exile there until the first months of the 1917 Russian revolution. Reportedly, he had 12 Swiss francs (nearly US\$9 at 1997 exchange rates) in the account and withdrew all but \$3.60. According to his niece, the balance was intended to pay his Bolshevik Party dues.

Art for art's sake — In the United Kingdom's Palace of Westminster, the official residence of the Lord Chancellor of House of Lords is being redone. The wallpa-

per alone will cost £59,211 (about US\$98,290). Officials explain it's a landmark site and wallpaper is being custom made according to original Victorian design.

Just be patient — Hospital waiting lists in England are now growing by more than 1,000 patients a week. The new Labour government is suggesting that its preelection promise to quickly cut the waiting list by 100,000 may have been financially unrealistic.

...meanwhile — To accommodate another 20,000 inmates, 30 new jails are slated for England and Wales.

Speck of justice — A San Francisco cop got six years for sexually assaulting his ex-wife. (Maximum term: 11 years, 8 months.) He was also convicted on two other charges of false imprisonment and got two years on each — to be served concurrently with the six.

Cop almost tells truth — In a legal brief, Northern California officials defended the cops who swabbed pepper spray into the eyes of anti-logging protesters and filmed the action for training. A police training expert declared the video illustrates "modern police practices delivered in a calm, cal-

culated manner."

Some things they can count — To let you know that in 2000 the census takers will be coming, the feds signed a contract with Young & Rubicam, the Madison Avenue biggie, to do a radio/TV blitz. The tab? \$100 million.

A bit like capitalist democracy — For prisons with chain-gang labor American Handcuff Company offers steel ankle cuffs attached to a 44-inch chain. Why 44 inches? The company prez explains: "You want to give 'em some freedom, but not enough to have 'em run away on you."

In defense of USSR over 'poor little Finland'

A few weeks after the outbreak of World War II, Soviet troops invaded Poland on Sept. 17, 1939, and occupied the eastern part of the country. Over the following weeks, Soviet forces invaded Finland, as well as the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, which were forced to accept the presence of Soviet bases, leading to their total occupation in mid-1940.

BOOK OF THE WEEK

These actions became part of a political struggle unfolding within the Socialist Workers Party in the United States. A petty-bourgeois layer within the party, adapting to the rulers' war drive, argued that the communist movement should abandon its stance of unconditional defense of the workers state in the Soviet Union. These forces split from the SWP in 1940.

Below we reprint an excerpt from "Speech on the Russian Question," given by Socialist Workers Party leader James P. Cannon at an October 1939 party membership meeting in New York. The excerpt is taken from the book *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party*, copyright © 1972 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted with permission. Footnotes and subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY JAMES P. CANNON

Those who take the Polish invasion — an incident in a great chain of events — as the basis for a fundamental change in our program show a lack of proportion. That is the kindest thing that can be said for them. They are destined to remain in a permanent lather throughout the war. They are already four laps behind schedule: There is also Latvia, and Estonia, and Lithuania, and now Finland.

We can expect another clamor of demands that we say, pointblank, and in one word, whether we are "for" or "against" the pressure on poor little bourgeois-democratic Finland. Our answer — wait a minute. Keep your shirt on. There is no lack of protests in behalf of the bourgeois swine who rule Finland. The *New Leader* has protested. Charles Yale Harrison has written a tearful column about it. The renegade Lore has wept about it in the *New York Post*. The President of the United States has protested. Finland is pretty well covered with moral support. So bourgeois Finland can wait a minute till we explain our attitude without bothering about the "for" or "against" ultimatum.

I personally feel very deeply about Finland, and this is by no means confined to

the present dispute between Stalin and the Finnish Prime Minister. When I think of Finland, I think of the thousands of martyred dead, the proletarian heroes who perished under the white terror of Mannerheim.¹ I would, if I could, call them back from their graves. Failing that, I would organize a proletarian army of Finnish workers to avenge them, and drive their murderers into the Baltic Sea. I would send the Red Army of the regenerated Soviet Union to help them at the decisive moment.

We don't support Stalin's invasion only because he doesn't come for revolutionary purposes. He doesn't come at the call of Finnish workers whose confidence he has forfeited. That is the only reason we are against it. The "borders" have nothing to do with it. "Defense" in war also means attack. Do you think we will respect frontiers when we make our revolution? If an enemy army lands troops at Quebec, for example, do you think we will wait placidly at the Canadian border for their attack? No, if we are genuine revolutionists and not pacifist muddleheads we will cross the border and meet them at the point of landing. And if our defense requires the seizure of Quebec, we will seize it as the Red Army of Lenin seized Georgia and tried to take Warsaw.

Defense of the Soviet Union

Some may think the war and the alliance with Hitler change everything we have previously considered; that it, at least, requires a reconsideration of the whole question of the Soviet Union, if not a complete change in our program. To this we can answer:

War was contemplated by our program. The fundamental theses on "War and the Fourth International,"² adopted in 1934, say:

"Every big war, irrespective of its initial moves, must pose squarely the question of military intervention against the U.S.S.R. in order to transfuse fresh blood into the sclerotic veins of capitalism....

"*Defense of the Soviet Union* from the blows of the capitalist enemies, irrespective of the circumstances and immediate causes of the conflict, is the elementary and imperative duty of every honest labor organization."

Alliances were contemplated. The theses say:

"In the existing situation an alliance of the U.S.S.R. with an imperialist state or with one

¹ K.G. Mannerheim led counterrevolutionary forces in the 1918 Finnish civil war and subsequent White terror. He commanded the Finnish army against Soviet forces in 1939, and was president of Finland in 1944-46.

² The Fourth International was the name of the world communist movement at that time. The Third International, formed under the impact of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, had become a counterrevolutionary instrument of the foreign policy of the Soviet bureaucracy.

imperialist combination against another, in case of war, cannot at all be considered as excluded. Under the pressure of circumstances a temporary alliance of this kind may become an iron necessity, without ceasing, however, because of it, to be of the greatest danger both to the U.S.S.R. and to the world revolution.

"The international proletariat will not decline to defend the U.S.S.R. even if the latter should find itself forced into a military alliance with some imperialists against others. But in this case, even more than in any other, the international proletariat must safeguard its complete political independence from Soviet diplomacy and thereby also from the bureaucracy of the Third International."

A stand on defense was taken in the light of this perspective.

A slogan of defense acquires a concrete meaning precisely in the event of war. A strange time to drop it! That would mean a rejection of all our theoretical preparation for the war. That would mean starting all over again. From what fundamental basis?



Demonstration in winter of 1938-39 protesting Washington's war preparation. Under the pressure of the war drive, a layer in the SWP adapted to the U.S. bourgeoisie.

Nobody knows.

There has been much talk of "independence" on the Russian question. That is good! A revolutionist who is not independent is not worth his salt. But it is necessary to specify: Independent of whom? What is needed by our party at every turn is class independence, independence of the Stalinists, and, above all, independence of the bourgeoisie. Our program assures such independence under all circumstances. It shall not be changed!

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

25 CENTS THE MILITANT

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

December 22, 1972

LOS ANGELES—A victory was won here Dec. 5 in the fight of women to control their own bodies when a jury of four women and eight men returned a "not guilty" verdict in the case of Carol Downer.

Downer is the codirector of the Feminist Women's Health Center in Los Angeles. Using the testimony of undercover agents sent into the center, city authorities charged Downer with practicing medicine without a license. The charge was based on Downer's use of yogurt as a home remedy for a friend's vaginal yeast infection.

For more than a year, the Feminist Women's Health Center has conducted classes aimed at increasing women's knowledge of their anatomy, reducing their self-consciousness about their bodies, and teaching them basic gynecological care. The center also has an abortion referral service.

The indictment of Downer received a nationwide media coverage, and as a result her defense efforts won significant national support. Downer's supporters attended the five days of trial proceedings. One teacher brought her high school class, mostly Black women, to a session of the trial.

The prosecution's case against Downer began to fall apart when Adah Maurer, a Berkeley child psychologist, testified that Downer was participating in a Western Psychological Association symposium the day that undercover agent Sharyn Dalton claimed Downer had offered her illegal medical aid.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

December 22, 1947

CHICAGO, Dec. 16—The campaign to win freedom for James Hickman ended in victory today, when he walked out of Cook County Jail, free to return to his family and his job.

The State had attempted to convict him of murder in the first trial, which ended Nov. 15 with a "hung jury."

Faced with mounting protests from all parts of the country, the State dropped the murder charge this week, and recommended a two years' probationary sentence based on a manslaughter conviction. Under these terms Hickman agreed to plead guilty to the charge of manslaughter.

In his speech recommending probation for Hickman, Assistant State's Attorney Samuel Friedman testified to the powerful public sentiment that had been aroused in the case when he held up a sheaf of letters, resolutions and telegram urging freedom for Hickman that had been received from all parts of the U.S.

Hickman had spent five months in the country jail, without bail on the charge of murdering his landlord, David Coleman, whom he held responsible for the death of his four youngest children in a disastrous attic fire last January.

Hickman had never denied killing Coleman, but the defense movement came to his aid because the real cause of the killing was the intolerable housing conditions under which he had suffered and the criminal actions of the landlord.

For further reading from Pathfinder

The Struggle for a Proletarian Party
James P. Cannon
\$19.95

In Defense of Marxism: The Social and Political Contradictions of the Soviet Union
Leon Trotsky

Writing in 1939-40, Leon Trotsky replies to those in the revolutionary workers movement who were retreating from defense of the degenerated Soviet workers state in face of looming imperialist assault. Includes sections on the Soviet invasion of Finland. \$24.95

Available from
bookstores listed
on page 12.

The
Struggle
for a
Proletarian
Party
by James P. Cannon.

NATO troops out of Yugoslavia!

Continued from front page

fanned the flames of war between competing layers of the Stalinist bureaucracy in Yugoslavia, the U.S. rulers put on a show of a pious concern for the Bosnian Muslims — much like their posturing today as opponents of the oppression of Albanians in Kosovo. All the while, however, Washington worked behind the scenes to make sure enough weapons got in to keep the slaughter going, without resolution. The U.S. rulers urged their French and British counterparts to intervene under the United Nations flag, while sabotaging every accord proposed by powers in the European Union between 1992 and 1995.

Meanwhile, Washington built a military ring in and around Yugoslavia — with hundreds of soldiers on the ground in Macedonia, agreements to deploy U.S. forces from Albania and Hungary, covert links with the regime in Croatia, and the U.S. Sixth Fleet off the Yugoslav coast in the Adriatic. Finally, after letting the Yugoslav people bleed for three years, organizing the first sustained bombing raids over Europe since World War II, and repeatedly humbling its imperialist rivals, the White House dictated a set of accords at an air force base in Dayton, Ohio. These accords spelled out the partition of Bosnia and its occu-

pation by NATO troops.

The Dayton accord was a symbol of the new level of U.S. hegemony in Europe. It coincided with the Clinton administration's announcement of the plan to expand NATO, bringing imperialist forces closer to the border of Russia. Since NATO's founding in 1949, its goal was to defeat the Soviet Union and other workers states. That is still its purpose today.

But NATO has been weakened by the deepening conflicts among its members and between them and Moscow. That's why Washington is repositioning its military forces vis-à-vis Russia and strengthening its place as the dominant "European power."

The main problem for Washington is that with thousands of troops on the ground it has been unable to overturn noncapitalist property relations in Yugoslavia. It has also been unable to erase the desire among many Yugoslav working people and youth of various nationalities to restore the Yugoslav federation. That's why NATO's forces plan on staying in Yugoslavia well beyond June 1998. And that's why working people and youth in the United States and around the world should organize forums and protests demanding: NATO troops out of Yugoslavia now!

For land mines, against Ottawa

The following statement was released Dec. 10, 1997, by the Political Committee of the Communist League in Canada.

Workers, small farmers, youth, and other fighters for social justice in Canada and elsewhere have to unambiguously reject and oppose Ottawa's march toward war under the guise of the recent land mine treaty it initiated and hosted December 2 – 4. This treaty has nothing to do with stopping military slaughter or the maiming of children. It will be used instead as a club against those in the world who resist or are not compliant enough with imperialist dictates. Ottawa uses its campaign around land mines to advance the interests of Canadian imperialism in the world — against its rivals and against oppressed nations and peoples — and to suck working people in Canada into supporting its foreign policy and the use of Canadian troops abroad and at home.

The Canadian government's so-called "pacifism" is that of a smaller imperialist country with limited military weight compared to its bigger imperialist competitors — above all its neighbor to the south, the United States.

But in fact Ottawa has been a participant in most of the imperialist wars in this century, from WWI to the slaughter of 150,000 Iraqi working people in 1990 – 91. It took part in imperialist interventions in the Congo in the early 1960s and in Somalia in the 1990s. It supported the invasions of the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and Panama or has been complicit, as in the Algerian and Vietnam wars of national liberation against Paris and Washington. Its forces are still part of the occupation of Haiti.

The Canadian rulers' crusade is aimed at banning "small" arms, the only ones that oppressed people can get in most cases, not the massive machines of death and destruction used by Washington, Paris, London, and Ottawa to terrorize workers and farmers around the world. Work-

ing people should defend unconditionally the right of the oppressed and exploited to use whatever weapons they can get to fight for their freedom.

The Communist League supports the Cuban government's refusal to sign the mine treaty. "Land mines are a weapon of the poor," a Cuban general said recently, explaining the commitment by the Cuban government to provide a rifle, a land mine, and a grenade to each Cuban citizen so they can defend their country and their socialist revolution against Washington's decades-long aggression.

The very same day the conference on land mines opened, Ottawa suspended the right to strike of 45,000 postal workers. Over the last half-decade it has forced through draconian cuts to vital social services. Inside its own borders it denies the right to self-determination of nationally oppressed Quebecois and Natives people, and has used its army against the Quebecois in 1970 and against the Mohawks in 1990.

Working people in Canada can strengthen their fighting capacity by opposing the support given to Ottawa's imperialist initiatives by the entire labor bureaucracy and by its political arm outside Quebec, the social-democratic New Democratic Party. The pledge of CAN \$1.25 million to a de-mining project by the Canadian Auto Workers officialdom only draws working people to support Ottawa's capitalist government — their biggest enemy — and its imperialist war aims.

The main thing that workers, farmers, and youth in Canada can do to make the world safer from land mines or weapons of mass destruction is to organize to take political power out the hands of Canada's imperialist exploiters, establish a workers and farmers government, and use this revolutionary weapon to help working people in the rest of the world to do the same — as their brothers and sisters in Cuba have done uncompromisingly since the victory of their revolution in 1959.

Hands off Bougainville

Below we reprint major excerpts from a joint statement issued Nov. 29, 1997 by the Communist Leagues in Australia and New Zealand.

All working people should oppose the military intervention by New Zealand and Australian forces on Bougainville, which began in mid-November.

Initially, under the guise of peace-keeping, 136 unarmed military personnel from New Zealand and 92 from Australia will be on the ground. These unarmed troops have plenty of firepower at their fingertips. Just offshore, New Zealand's forces will include the frigate *Canterbury*, two other naval vessels, Hercules aircraft, and three Iroquois helicopters....

These imperialist forces are intervening — as they did unsuccessfully in October 1990 and October 1994 — to try to quell the struggle being waged by the people of Bougainville for self-determination. They also stand as a deadly threat to working people in Papua New Guinea.

The people of Bougainville, led by the Bougainville Revolutionary Army, have fought a nine-year war for independence. They have defeated the Papua New Guinea (PNG) Defence Force, which are backed by Canberra and Wellington, including with equipment and personnel....

Until independence in 1975 Canberra ruled Papua New Guinea as a colony. Since then Australian corporations — particularly mining companies — have continued to profit from PNG's rich natural resources. The country is a neo-colony of Australian imperialism, and a key form this takes is the massive and unpayable debt owed to Australian and other imperialist banks.

In March 1997 the PNG government of then Prime

Minister Julius Chan was deeply shaken by a rebellion in its armed forces and mass mobilizations, which forced him to step aside. This upsurge was sparked by Chan's decision to employ foreign mercenaries in a new offensive on Bougainville. The conditions of austerity, social crisis, unemployment, and poverty that fueled the March rebellion remain today — in fact they have been accentuated by the deep famine that is driving many Papua New Guineans to the point of starvation.

At the same time as Wellington and Canberra join forces to oppose these freedom fights, they clash with each other as competitors in the race for markets, raw materials, and sources of cheap labor in the region....

The toilers of Bougainville and Papua New Guinea have shaken the basis of imperialist domination with their rebellions. Working people, especially in New Zealand and Australia, have a real stake in their struggles, which further weaken our common enemy — the warmakers and exploiters in Canberra and Wellington. Miners in Australia, confronting a union-busting drive by Rio Tinto, the owner of the Panguna mine, can more easily identify with the aspirations of the people of Bougainville....

The rulers will use their interference on Bougainville to soften us up, to get us used to the idea that workers, farmers, and youth should be sent to intervene militarily in the affairs of other peoples on behalf of Australian and New Zealand big business. But our interests don't lie with "our" governments or rulers....

New Zealand and Australian forces out of Bougainville and Papua New Guinea! PNG forces off Bougainville! Cancel PNG's foreign debt! No intervention! Independence for Bougainville!

'Free Tibet' is campaign against Chinese revolution

We agree entirely with reader Nick Brisini, who raised in a letter published two weeks ago that the *Militant* should have explicitly spoken out against the attack on the Chinese workers state represented by the October 29 anti-

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

China rally held in Washington, D.C. A brief news article on this action appeared in the November 17 issue of the *Militant*. The rally included rightists such as Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council, which campaigns against abortion rights and gay rights; prominent liberals like Sen. Paul Wellstone and actor Richard Gere; and top labor officials who call for protectionist measures against Beijing, all protesting supposed "human rights abuses" in China. The call to "save Tibet" was prominent at the event.

The *Militant* is completely opposed to this campaign. It is aimed directly against the Chinese revolution, in which workers and peasants took power in 1949 achieving a landmark victory for all workers around the world. The Chinese revolution destroyed landlordism, forged a national unified state, and overturned capitalist relations freeing about one-quarter of the world's population from imperialist domination and the market system. Communists have given unconditional support to the workers state in China against any imperialist attack ever since.

The pro-capitalist propaganda around Tibet is not a new story. Throughout the 1950s, Washington made use of counterrevolutionary rebellions by the former feudal rulers of Tibet to try to gain a foothold to roll back the Chinese revolution, particularly after the Korean and Chinese toilers handed Washington's imperialist army its first defeat in the 1950 – 53 Korean War.

Tibet, historically a separate country, had been controlled by China for several centuries. The Tibetan system had a religious aristocracy with the Dalai Lama, the "godking" of the sect as the head, presiding over the government. Next in line was the Panchen Lama. The clergy were among the biggest landlords; one monastery near Lhasa owned estates with some 25,000 serfs. At the triumph of the Chinese revolution in 1949, the Communist Party-led troops occupied Tibet. While the Mao regime initially promised not to touch the oppressive property relations there, over the next several years the feudal relations in Tibet came into increasing conflict with the Chinese workers state. As Chinese forces moved to put down revolts by the Tibetan ruling class, the capitalist press worldwide screamed about the alleged genocide against a supposedly peaceful society. The *Militant* at the time described this "dreamlike system."

The "monasteries are supported by contributions from the nobility — which means, ultimately, by the labor of the peasants. In addition to monks and nobles, the warrior-tribes function as the military arm of the state," explained Daniel Roberts in an April 13, 1959, article. In fact, conflicts between the rulers were solved with harsh punishments, and as Roberts put it, "one wonders how they treat the peasants?... In Tibet, the landlords and monks lead the revolt in order to preserve a social order that most of mankind has left far behind. Although the Mao regime is bureaucratic (and although this undoubtedly affected Chinese dealings with Tibet adversely), the Chinese Communist Party defends social relations that are progressive not only in comparison with feudalism but with capitalism as well. Unquestionably, in the present conflict, the Chinese government fights on the side of social progress."

A recent report published in the December 1997 issue of the right-wing magazine *The American Spectator*, confirms the depth of Washington's involvement in the anti-communist revolts in Tibet. The article, titled "The Secret War Over Tibet" by John B. Roberts II, describes the Tibetan counterrevolutionaries as "heroic" and blasts the Kennedy administration for supposedly not doing enough to help them. He gives high praises to Allen Dulles, who became director of the CIA in 1953 and "oversaw the creation of an audacious covert program involving tens of thousands of Tibetan freedom fighters who fought courageously against China's People's Liberation Army in a decade-long struggle for independence. The scale of Dulles's covert war dwarfed William Casey and President Reagan's aid to Nicaragua's contras...."

Tibetan rebels received special training at Camp Hale in Colorado. At the end of the program the CIA-backed forces were sent to camps in Nepal and then infiltrated back into Tibet. Roberts adds, "By the late 1950s the CIA had plenty of assets inside Tibet. These included agents, paramilitary troops, and commanders. The number of Tibetan freedom fighters had risen to the tens of thousands." After these forces were defeated by the Chinese army in 1959, Washington backed remnant guerrilla forces in Tibet until at least 1968, according to Roberts.

Today's hue and cry over "poor little Tibet" and "human rights in China" has the same class content as in the 1950s — it's a call the freedom to restore capitalist rule as a beachhead against noncapitalist China. Class-conscious workers should oppose it in every way.

— HILDA CUZCO AND NAOMI CRAINE

'Crown pollutes,' locked-out refinery workers say

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

porate greed."

The Crown Central refinery, founded 80 years ago, is one of the oldest in the region and has a long record of polluting. Even before the lockout, it was one of the few refineries along the Houston Ship Channel that received a "grandfathered" variance from the TNRCC, allow-

300 supporters of workers on strike at Magnetic Specialty, Inc. (MSI) in Marietta, Ohio, rallied and marched through town to the plant November 22. The gathering ended with a meal of beans, cornbread, and venison at the strike headquarters in a field across from the plant.

MSI makes magnetic strips used in refrigerators and in the automotive industry. In August 1995, MSI workers voted 65 to 33 to join the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). After MSI manager Gary Murphy refused to recognize the union, the workers struck MSI in March 1997. When the U.S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals in October ordered MSI to bargain with the union, Murphy agreed to talk and then fired 16 of the strikers.

Strikers speaking at the rally cautioned that in spite of Murphy's willingness to negotiate they must continue to fight to win broader support in the face of Murphy's ongoing attacks and to show other employers that solidarity works.

Picket duty is organized in rotating shifts at the six plant gates, three to a gate. Pickets have been harassed by local police. Two strikers were recently acquitted in jury trials on charges of menacing.

The union is distributing buttons supporting the 16 workers fired "for standing up to Gary Murphy." Rick Farley is one of the 16 and a 40-year-old maintenance mechanic with eight years at MSI. He said, "MSI is trying to weaken the union. But we all walked out together and we'll all walk back in together."

A support group of spouses of the strikers has organized meals and parties to aid and boost the morale of the strikers and their families. It also organized floats and distribution of literature at regional fairs in September and October.

Ola Acoff was one of about 20 workers from LTV Steel representing several locals at the Cleveland Works who came by bus to the solidarity action. "Everybody was encouraged by the turnout of USWA

ing higher levels of emissions than is normal.

During a 40-month period — 20 months before the lockout and 20 months after — Crown released 1,649 tons of sulfur dioxide into the atmosphere. Some 1,208 tons, or 73.3 percent of this total was released in the second 20 months.

Crown Central Petroleum officials locked out 252 members of OCAW Local 4-227 during a contract fight on Feb. 5, 1996. Although the locked-out unionists have maintained a 24-hour presence in a parking lot across the street from the refinery, production has continued uninterrupted by managers and scab contract workers.

On July 21, 1997, a coalition of environmental groups and families living in Pasadena, Texas, where the plant is located, filed a lawsuit against Crown for more than 10,000 violations of the Clean Air Act.

Another lawsuit has been filed by 77 residents and property owners of Pasadena who live near the refinery asking for \$50 million in punitive damages and unspecified compensatory damages for numerous releases of toxic chemicals.

Residents around the refinery suffer from skin rashes, breathing problems, severe headaches and dizziness, eyesight problems, digestive ailments and other physical and mental conditions.

MSI workers win support in strike for union rights

MARIETTA, Ohio — About

ON THE PICKET LINE

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

PASADENA, Texas — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) Local 4-227 and the Texans United Education Fund, an environmental group, have accused Crown Central Petroleum Refinery of violating the Clean Air Act since the company locked out OCAW members 22 months ago. Crown has emitted almost three times as much sulfur dioxide, a major component of smog, since the lockout began compared with before.

At a November 21 press conference in front of Crown Central Petroleum Refinery, officials of the OCAW and Texans United attacked the company's claim that its pollution releases have actually decreased. The two organizations pointed to data based on Crown's own reports to the Harris County Pollution Control Department and the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC).

"Crown has tried to pit the workers against the community, but what we're finding is that we have a lot in common," stated Dean Cook, a leading activist among the locked-out Crown workers. "Environmentalists don't threaten our jobs; they just want the company to operate safely, like we do. We both want to protect people against Crown's cor-



Militant/Patti Iiyama

Billboard erected by union during lockout in 1996

support for the strike," she said. Donations totaling more than \$21,000 were presented to the strikers by unions and other participants in the rally from throughout the region of Ohio, northern West Virginia and western Pennsylvania.

Sacked Liverpool dockers reject settlement offer

MANCHESTER, England — Liverpool dockers voted 213 to 97 to reject a £28,000 (\$47,000) per person settlement proposed by the Liverpool port authority Mersey Docks and Harbour Company (MD&HC) October 23.

The vote, taken by mail-in ballot at the insistence of the national leadership of the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU), was the second majority vote rejection of such a settlement. The dockers have always maintained the dispute will not end until all are back at work. A vote is taken at weekly union meetings to verify that the majority wish to continue the struggle.

The dispute began in 1995 when Torside, an independent stevedoring company, sacked 80 workers when it decided to close. The company had run into resistance from workers following an overtime pay dispute. Leaders of the local TGWU branch demanded the 80 workers sacked by Torside be taken on by

MD&HC, the port authority and owner of the docks. MD&HC workers were sacked when they refused to cross the Torside picket lines.

For 18 months before the sackings, dockers had been fighting MD&HC over irregular working hours. Work is now done by the tide rather than the clock to turn ships around faster. The 329 MD&HC workers were replaced by 150 workers employed by Drake Port Management Services. The replacement workers do not receive bonuses, as MD&HC employees do. MD&HC claims record profits and doubled productivity.

The price of such productivity for the replacement workers is clear in THE DART, a Drake employees newsletter: "Here we are, nearly two years after the old workforce walked out of the gate, and still we are having to put up with practices such as sixteen hour shifts, odd shifts, i.e. 0300 until 0700 [3:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.] with the threat of the sack if workers do not comply."

Patti Iiyama, member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 4-227 in Houston; Mike Fitzsimmons, member of USWA Local 188, and Janice Ortega, member of USWA Local 2265, in Cleveland; and Liz Keighley in Manchester, England, contributed to this column.

LETTERS

Teach-in on Iraq

A teach-in on Iraq was held at George Washington University here November 20. Sponsored by the D.C. chapter of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, some 50 students and others heard about the devastating impact of the seven years of sanctions on Iraq.

"The sanctions are the real weapons of mass destruction," declared Rania Masri of the Iraqi Action Coalition. Masri narrated a slide presentation with documentation from various United Nations agencies on the effects of the economic sanctions against Iraq. More than 1 million Iraqis have died — 567,000 of them children — as a direct consequence of economic sanctions. Iraq's health care system is being deprived of medicine, and other basic supplies such as anesthesia and painkillers. Sanctions are inhibiting the importation of spare parts, chemical reagents, and the means of transportation required to provide water and sanitation services to the civilian population of Iraq.

Masri explained this is why the Iraqi people are angry with the U.S. government. The lifting of the sanctions is conditional on certification that Iraq does not possess weapons of "mass destruction."

"But the American inspectors have dominated the UN inspections teams in Iraq," Masri said, "and they are the ones providing the reasons to prolong the blockade. The U-2 flights," she added, "provide the Pentagon information for future

bombing missions."

Masri and other Arab-Americans present also denounced the U.S. mainstream media for fueling anti-Arab racism. The meeting ended with a call for an end to the war on Iraq; for a lifting of the blockade on the Iraqi people; and for continuing the campaign to get out the truth about the U.S. aggression against the Iraqi people.

Janice Lynn
Washington, D.C.

Debating Iraq on the job

On November 19 supporters of the *Militant* talked to members of the United Auto Workers at the shift change at Lear Seating Corp. in Atlanta where I work. No one bought a copy of the paper, but many took notice of the *Militant* distributors' sign reading, "U.S. Hands off Iraq." The next day some of my co-workers were mimicking the signs, which led some people to ask me what I thought about Saddam Hussein. I said that Saddam was just as bad as any other capitalist and the Iraqi people over there needed to make a revolution to overthrow him and the Iraqi government. But that's not the issue. The real issue is the U.S. wants control of Iraqi oil and they will go to any lengths to get it.

Some other people said that he was stockpiling chemical weapons and that he bombed his own people. They said that if he bombed his own people that he would try to bomb the United States. I pointed out that



during the civil rights movement the U.S. government turned on its "own people."

Then a co-worker named Tim, who was a chemical weapons specialist in the army, said the United States needs to get their hands off Iraq and that it was none of the U.S.'s business what Iraq is doing. He said "the U.S. is starving innocent people with the sanctions and that the real criminal Saddam is sitting pretty because he is rich and doesn't have to worry about food."

Then another worker yelled out "I think we should just smart bomb them all!" Tim replied very sharply, "Smart bomb! Smart bomb! There is no such thing as smart bombs!" The other worker said, "Yes there is." Tim answered, "You call killing innocent people smart? I don't

think so."
Clint Ivie
Atlanta, Georgia

More on Promise Keepers

The Oct. 20 *Militant* used out of context something I wrote on the Promise Keepers, missing the point that NOW leader [Patricia] Ireland and I were both attacking the rightwing base of the PK movement from different angles. This led a reader to label me a "formerly profeminist" writer who believes women must submit to subordination as an alternative to rape. Oh, puh-leeze! Contrary to the charge that I have "either forgotten or never contemplated the possibility... of women fighting for equality and social justice," that's exactly what I

advocate in my new book, *The Way We Really Are: Coming to Terms with America's Changing Families*.

My op-ed piece tried to explain, however, in contrast to feminist accounts that lack a class or historical perspective, why some disempowered women, lacking the leverage of economic independence or the support of political allies, often claim that the Promise Keepers have made their lives better. PK rallies reflect the pressures of the women's movement even on conservative Christians. These men are playing catch-up with the 1990s, offering women benevolent paternalism as a step up from autocracy but also as a substitute for equality.

Though some wives may see paternalism as an improvement over their husbands' former neglectful self-centeredness, I argued, it is not a solid basis for reorganizing male-female relations. Such relations must be built on equality and justice, not paternalism.

Don't those of us who struggle for justice and equality have enough real opponents without misrepresenting our allies?

Stephanie Coontz
Olympia, Washington

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.

Israel: strikers protest pension cuts

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

Hundreds of thousands of public sector workers began a five-day national strike December 3 against Israeli government attacks on pensions and moves to sell off state-owned industries. By the time a settlement was reached between Tel Aviv and union officials, some 700,000 people were on strike, ranging from teachers to dock workers.

The work stoppage began after Israeli finance minister Yaakov Neeman stated that Tel Aviv would not honor labor agreements made with the former Labor government in the months prior to the 1996 elections. With pension plans and other entitlements thrown into question, hundreds of thousands of public sector workers joined a walkout called by Histadrut.

The Israeli labor court ordered strikers back to work, but they refused. The international airport, railroads, sea ports, government offices, banks, state-owned telephone and power companies, hospitals, and military industries were either shut or severely affected by the strike. Workers with and without pensions joined the strike actions. Neeman asserted that the affects of the strike — losses of \$32 million a day — were “irreversible.”

Unemployment in Israel hit a three-year high of 8.1 percent, or 179,000 people, in the third quarter of 1997. The reneging on pensions rights was part of Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's \$650 million austerity package, which also includes the selling off of up to 13 percent of state-owned industries.

The *New York Times*, Associated Press, and other big-business media focused their coverage on the disruption caused by the strike, with pictures and quotes from disgruntled passengers at the struck airport. The *Jerusalem Post* described Histadrut as a “hated” institution, and declared, “The public has little understanding and no patience for strikes.”

Attorney General Eliakim Rubinstein began preparing indictments against Histadrut officials and steep fines for strikers for disobeying the government order, but nothing ever came of it. Some workers blocked highway intersections in places around the country. On the morning of December 7 workers rallied in front of the National Labor Court building, chanting “Neeman go home!” after talks broke down the night before. Hours later, Amir Peretz, the social democratic chairman of Histadrut, reached a compromise with the National Labor Court and called strikers back to work. The exact terms of the agreement were not available.

Histadrut: an arm of the Zionist state

Unlike most trade unions, Histadrut, which is often described as a trade union

federation, did not originate out of working-class struggle. Founded in December 1920, the organization was an economic anchor for Zionist settlers, providing jobs and services for occupational forces. It also assumed major responsibility for guarding the land-grabbing settler-state in formation against the “threat of Arab revolution.”

Histadrut represents employers as well as workers. By the late 1960s Histadrut-owned companies employed 25 percent of Israeli toilers, and until recently, all health insurance. Two Histadrut companies — the American Israel Corp., responsible for directing U.S. capital investment in Israel; and Koor, a major construction and manufacturing company, are run by private owners. The umbrella organization runs all kinds of social welfare and charity operations under the banner Israel Histadrut Foundation, Inc. Histadrut is one of Israel's largest employers. Arabs were barred from participating in the unions until 1960, and to this day Palestinians from the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip cannot join Histadrut.

In other developments, the unbroken fight by Lebanese people against the Israeli occupation of the southern portion of their country is heightening rifts within the Israeli ruling class. A total of 217 Israeli troops have died in combat with Lebanese guerrillas since 1985, according to Associated Press, including 39 this year. Another 73 soldiers died last February in a plane crash while en route to Lebanon.

Tel Aviv debates Lebanon withdrawal

In face of this death toll coupled with the failure to crush anti-Zionist rebels, Labor party leader Yossi Beilin, Gen. Amiram Levine, and others within the Israeli state have begun calling for a unilateral pullout. Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak gave full support to Levine's withdrawal proposal, asserting that Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu inhibits the army by not letting them go for an all out-attack on Lebanon.

About 10 Israelis rallied at the border November 26 calling for Tel Aviv to get out of Lebanon. The Israeli government's term

“security zone” is losing its luster in Israel, and is more frequently described internationally as an occupational zone.

Associated Press reporter Nicholas Tatro, writing from an Israeli Army base in southern Lebanon November 26, noted “army jitters” there. Military officials abruptly ended an interview with Israeli soldiers, Tatro said, after reporters asked them about army morale.

In late November Maj. Gen. Moshe Ayalon, the Israeli army intelligence chief, complained that the debate over Lebanon was causing irreversible damage, showing the weakness and division of the regime that could encourage Arab resistance.

Meanwhile, in a move to try to hold together the fracturing Likud party and appease rightist forces, Netanyahu placed Ariel Sharon, currently the National Infrastructure Minister, on the committee of the projected redeployment of Israeli troops in the West Bank, which is supposed to be negotiated with the Palestinian Authority. Sharon immediately proposed creating two new “security zones” to protect Zionist settlements there.

Puerto Rico sugar workers face layoffs

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — On Thanksgiving morning the front page of the Spanish language daily *El Nuevo Día* quoted the governor of Puerto Rico, Pedro Rosselló, explaining what he had to give thanks for. In the inside of the paper there was an article about the 500 sugar industry workers who had received their layoff notices the day before. The layoffs are a result of the Rosselló administration's campaign to sell off government-owned assets.

For 30 years the sugar mills of Puerto Rico have been owned by the government, while the land that the cane was grown on was held by private individuals. On December 31, the last two sugar mills in Puerto Rico — Coloso in Aguada and Roig in Yabucoa — will be sold to an association of capitalist growers set up by the government. For now, the government will continue to run Mercedita in Ponce — the only plant where raw sugar is refined into white sugar. Eventually it too will be sold to the growers. The sugar industry in Puerto Rico produces 28,000 tons per year, 50 percent of the consumption in this colony.

Jobs in the Puerto Rican sugar industry typically pay \$5–6 per hour, and many last only for the harvest. Most but not all of the workers are expected to be rehired by the new owners of the mills, but the bosses plan to push for lower wages and worse working conditions.

“Most of the workers will be back after January 1 to keep working for us,” but not



More than 100,000 people protested the sell-off of Telefónica phone company in October. Now the Puerto Rican government is moving to privatize sugar mills.

all, said Carlos Bouet, chairman of the board of the Corporación Central Roig and a sugar plantation owner. “The government might have had use for some workers they thought were needed under their operations, but we can't keep them under our plans.”

“I understand that the relations between the unions and the growers can be difficult,” said Sugar Corporation advisor Duhamel Zayas. “Because the Sugar Corporation never made money and the growers have to negotiate and convince the unions that they cannot maintain the same benefits that the government had.... The unions won very favorable contracts,” Zayas continued. “But these were very costly to the government. There are costs of fringe benefits and vacations that the growers cannot sustain. The unions need to be realistic.”

“The benefits such as vacations and paid holidays for workers like tractor drivers who work only 80 days in the harvest, we cannot honor that,” said Yabucoa grower José Ortiz.

“Many of my co-workers did not expect a blow like this,” said Osvaldo Cruz, a worker with 22 years in the Coloso mill. “They told us that during the privatization we would continue working and that nobody would be let go.”

“It is bad faith on the part of the government to deliver documents like this on the day before Thanksgiving,” said Román Vélez Mangual, president of the Labor Confederation of Puerto Rico, which organizes the workers at the Coloso mill. “Under the contract, this is a forced closure and we will put up a fight.”

The layoffs in the sugar industry are only

another round in the ongoing fight in Puerto Rico around privatization of government-owned corporations such as telephone, water, electricity, agro-industry and hotels. The Puerto Rican and municipal governments are also privatizing services such as garbage collection and health care. In the last year there have been hundreds of pickets and protests involving many diverse organizations. The largest activity was the October 1 national strike that drew 100,000 people.

New Zealand workers protest proposal to limit labor rights

BY STUART NEEDHAM

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — Trade unionists throughout New Zealand have launched a public protest campaign against proposals being considered by the National Party-New Zealand First coalition government to amend the Holidays Act and Employment Contracts Act.

The Holidays Act guarantees workers 11 paid public holidays a year and three weeks' annual leave. Changes being considered by the government would allow employers to replace some or all of these holidays with cash payments. Part-time workers would be classified as casual employees with no holiday entitlements.

Other changes being considered include abolishing or reducing the powers of the Employment Court, which currently hears about 4,000 personal grievance cases brought by workers against employers each year, and a review of minimum wage provi-

sions.

Unionists also fear that the Employment Contracts Act will be amended to weaken personal grievance rights, particularly the right to claim “unjustified dismissal.” Such changes would make it easier for employers to fire workers at will.

Some 3,000 workers rallied at Parliament in Wellington, the capital, December 10 to protest the measure. Demonstrations are also being organized in most major towns and cities throughout the South Island, beginning December 13 in Nelson and ending in Dunedin five days later.

A march and rally in Christchurch's city center is being held at midday, December 17. A number of unions, including members of the Meat Workers and Related Trades Union, are stopping work to attend the protests.

Stuart Needham is a member of the Meat Workers Union.

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