

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

'Pombo' speaks on Che's leadership in Africa

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## U.S. troops to stay in Bosnia, while NATO moves east

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

The expansion of NATO into Eastern and Central Europe and the extension of the occupation of Bosnia by troops of the Atlantic imperialist alliance topped the agenda of the December 16 meeting of foreign ministers of NATO member states.

At the Brussels gathering, NATO officials signed agreements with the governments of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to bring them into membership of the reactionary military bloc by 1999, pending approval by the parliaments of NATO members.

The foreign ministers also approved plans for extending the mandate of the NATO forces in Bosnia, which currently number 34,000 troops led by 8,000 U.S. soldiers. The formal decision to prolong the occupation of the Yugoslav republic is still ahead, but all the groundwork is being carefully laid, above all by Washington.

"Over the coming months, President [William] Clinton will continue to make the case that our engagement in Bosnia serves U.S. interests," said U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright at the Brussels meeting.

At a press conference the same day in Washington, D.C., Clinton said he would make an announcement on the future of the deployment of U.S. forces in Bosnia before leaving for a visit to the republic on December 21. The White House has invited top congresspeople to accompany Clinton on the

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## Currency crisis deepens in southeast Asia

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

When capitalist politicians recently met in Malaysia to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean), they fretted about the onerous conditions demanded by the International Monetary Fund's "assistance programs." At the same time, rightist politicians in the United States have stepped up their nationalist demagoguery against "forcing the American taxpayers to bail out bad loans to and by foreigners."

In an effort to stem the financial turmoil triggered by a wave of currency devaluations in the region, Washington has engineered loans totaling more than \$100 billion as "rescue packages" for south Korea, Thailand, and Indonesia. The loan arrangements are aimed at maintaining the flow of blood money into the coffers of U.S. banks and other imperialist financial institutions. The IMF deals also call on the regimes to impose cuts in social programs and lay off millions of workers.

"Is the IMF very helpful or is the IMF causing more problems?" asked Malaysian foreign minister Abdullah Badawi, who attended the December 14-16 Asean meet-

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## Striking meatpackers say 'no' to Canada boss

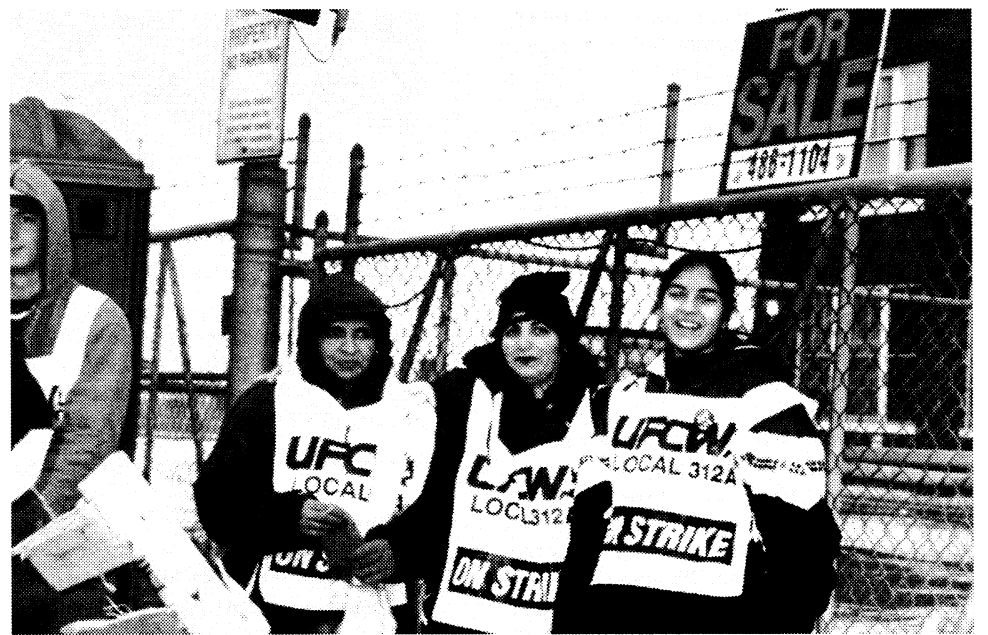
Maple Leaf demands givebacks to 'stay competitive'

BY JANET ANDERSON AND TED LENOIRE

EDMONTON, Alberta — "Maple Leaf treats us like garbage," said Jackie Kanla as she picketed the plant December 6. Kanla, a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) Local 312A, is on strike against Maple Leaf Foods.

Along with 900 other UFCW members at the Edmonton meatpacking plant, Kanla stood up to the company's threat to close the facility and went on strike November 17. She and her co-workers face one of the most serious assaults launched on a major industrial union in this country in many years. Two days before the Edmonton strike began, 900 workers at Maple Leaf's Burlington, Ontario, plant struck when the company proposed wage cuts of up to Can\$9 an hour (Can\$1=US\$0.70). Three months earlier Maple Leaf locked out the 200 UFCW members in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, and in October the company locked out another 300 in Hamilton, Ontario, in an attempt to intimidate workers taking strike votes on their contracts in Burlington and Edmonton.

Maple Leaf Foods is one of the largest food companies in Canada and the largest pork processor. Spokespeople for the company have justified their assault on the wages and working conditions of the more than 2,300 workers in these four plants with the explanation that they need to "trim the fat"



Militant/Janet Anderson

UFCW members on strike against Maple Leaf Foods, Edmonton, Alberta.

in the Canadian pork industry to make it more competitive, particularly in relationship to the U.S. meatpacking bosses. Business commentators clamor about lucrative opportunities for Canadian pork sales in Asia and South America, if only Maple Leaf and other companies can overcome one obstacle. Maple Leaf summed up the argument in a full page advertisement in the Novem-

ber 17 *Toronto Globe and Mail*: "Canadian labour costs in wages, benefits, and work rules are crippling high."

The stakes for the company in this strike are high. But they face a determined obstacle in the militancy of the UFCW members.

And the battle in meatpacking comes at a time when resistance to bosses' attacks is

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## Walkout by Machinists halts TWA flights in St. Louis for two hours

BY FRANK FORRESTAL AND NANCY ROSENSTOCK

ST. LOUIS — Hundreds of TWA baggage handlers and mechanics shut down the airline here December 9. The two-hour work stoppage by members of International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 949 caused 100 flight cancellations. At 9 p.m.,

two hours after the walkout ended, the majority of flights on TWA monitors at the airport still read "canceled."

Union members have been working under the old contract that expired last August. The company is demanding that more maintenance work be subcontracted out. TWA workers have given major concessions to the

company over the past decade totaling some \$4 billion. These include no pay raise in six years, a frozen pension, reduced vacation time, and cuts in crew sizes. This year alone TWA has eliminated 500 jobs. According to the IAM, TWA plans to slash the workforce by 3,000.

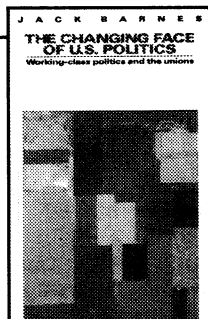
"It's about time we get what we deserve. We gave enough," said one IAM member who participated in the job action but did not want his name in print. "We don't have a decent standard of living and we need to stand up for our rights." In discussions with workers a few days after the stoppage, many were still high spirited from the walkout.

Lambert Airport is TWA's primary hub, with an estimated 75 percent of the airline's flights passing through St. Louis. The IAM represents 20,000 of TWA's 25,000-strong workforce, including 5,400 flight attendants who voted earlier this year to disaffiliate from the Independent Federation of Flight Attendants and join the Machinists. Some 2,300 members of IAM Local 949 work at the hub.

In response to the walkout, TWA spokesman Donn Walker declared, "We believe that this is nothing more than a posturing ploy on the union's part. We hope, and we believe, that this will be an isolated incident."

The walkout crippled TWA and to make matters worse for the airline, it came after a heap of cancellations due to bad weather. "Weather had already forced us to cancel 130 flights and then this happened," Walker moaned. "All our mechanics and baggage handlers just walked off the job, forcing us

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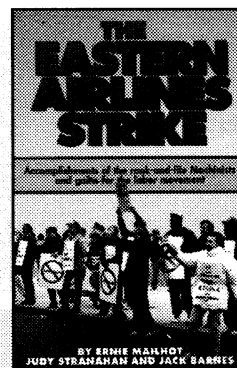
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Ask what to do for your class, not for 'your country' — page 14

## Okinawans protest U.S. military

Residents of Henoko, a small village on the Japanese island of Okinawa, say they will protest the U.S. military's plans to build a floating airfield in the East China Sea just off the coast of their village. Tokyo and Washington drew up the "heliport" plan — proposed to be 1,600 yards long and 550 yards wide — after the U.S. government was forced to give up Futenma Marine Corps Air Station in central Okinawa. The withdrawal came after thousands of Okinawans protested the presence of U.S. military bases last year.

Some 75 percent of the U.S. military forces in Japan are stationed in Okinawa. In a 1996 referendum, 90 percent of voters in Okinawa favored reducing the U.S. military presence, and in a September poll conducted by the *Okinawa Times*, about 60 percent of residents in the city of Nago, near Henoko, opposed the floating military site. About 21 percent were in favor.

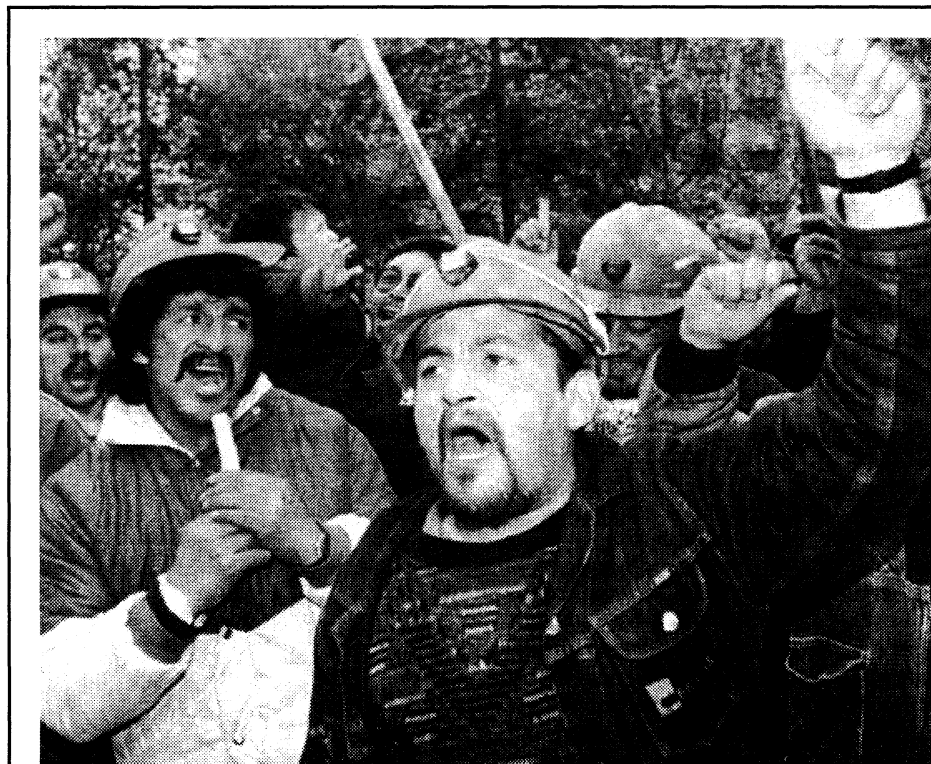
## Moscow seeks loans to pay wages

Moscow reached a deal December 12 with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to get \$1.7 billion worth of new loans in order to pay back wages. Thousands of workers who have not been paid for months have taken part in strikes and other protests. In return for the IMF deal, the Yeltsin administration promised to step up tax collections and cut government spending.

Moscow also promised to give its finance ministry authority over the ministry of the interior and the defense ministry. But the conditions for the loans will require approval from legislature, which is not a foregone conclusion. Meanwhile, the central bank in Russia spent most of November propping up the ruble, the country's monetary unit, spending over \$4 billion of its foreign currency reserves.

## German unemployment up again

Unemployment in Germany rose again to reach a new post-World War II high, climbing to 11.8 percent or 4.53 million people in November. According to the Federal Labor Office, the number of jobless in western Germany fell by 3,000, but in eastern Germany the figure swelled by 15,000 to nearly



Some 1,000 workers organized three demonstrations in Santiago, Chile, December 3. The protesters included 400 miners, laid off in 1992, who were demanding improvements in their severance package. One of the demonstrations was attacked by police armed with water cannons. The miners vowed to continue their protest until their demands are met.

1.5 million people.

## Tel Aviv outlaws census

On December 10 the Israeli government pushed through legislation that "widens the authority to prevent all activities of the PLO [Palestinian Liberation Organization] or of the Palestinian Authority inconsistent with the sovereignty of the state of Israel," said a Israeli Minister of Justice. The move was aimed at halting the Palestinian Authority from conducting a census in East Jerusalem, where some 180,000 Palestinians live, as well as in the West Bank and Gaza.

Israeli television reported that police arrested a Palestinian woman for conducting the census, which included dozens of questions on housing conditions, health, and eco-

nomie status of Palestinians — information that the Palestinian Authority wants to prepare the formation of a Palestinian state. Eastern Jerusalem was part of Jordan before it was seized by the Zionist regime along with the West Bank in 1967.

## Albright visits Congo

U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright visited Congo, formerly Zaire, December 12 touting the need for a "commitment to open markets, honest government, and the rule of law." Albright is the highest-ranking U.S. government official to visit the country since a rebellion ousted Washington's longtime lackey, corrupt dictator Mobutu Sese Seko, in May.

Albright suggested the White House might offer \$35 million in aid to the new regime, headed by Laurent Kabila, but declared that the Clinton administration would be on the lookout for "human rights" violations. The president of Congo responded that the \$10 million in U.S. aid this year was "insignificant, absolutely insignificant." Kabila added that whatever would be delivered by the U.S. government next year, he hoped would come "without conditions."

## Thousands strike in Bolivia

Workers in Bolivia began a 24-hour strike and street demonstrations December 10 protesting a government fuel price increase of 25 percent. The Bolivian Workers' Confederation (COB) called the labor action. Thousands of workers gathered in downtown La

Paz, the capital city, demanding the Hugo Banzer government cancel the price rise and provide economic and social compensation to confront the cost-of-living increase.

The government deployed 9,000 cops in the streets during the protest action. Following the gas price hike, businesses raised prices for public services, food, and other necessities — often by more than 25 percent. Charges for public transportation in the city and provinces went up more than 50 percent.

## Native land rights in Canada

The Canadian Supreme Court ruled December 11 that aboriginal oral history may serve as a valid record of long-standing land claims. The ruling came in a case by the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en tribes, who have been fighting since the 1970s for land rights over 22,400 square miles in northern British Columbia — a region rich in salmon, minerals, and lumber.

In 1991 a British Columbia court ruled that the tribes' right to the land was invalidated more than a century ago with the passage of colonial legislation. Most land in Canada was stolen from Native peoples who never signed treaties surrendering title to the colonizers. Dozens of aboriginal communities have been fighting for land-claim settlements.

## New Jersey gov't moves to implement 'sex offender alerts'

On December 9, U.S. Supreme Court judge David Souter refused to extend a ban on the implementation of "Megan's law," which includes notifying residents of paroled "sex offenders" in their area. Peter Verniero, the state's Attorney General, immediately set in motion "alerts" to schools, youth groups, women's organizations, and neighbors in areas where 635 so-called sex offenders live.

Meanwhile, the New Jersey Supreme Court approved rules that allow just 14 days for a person on parole to appeal the release of their name under the notification law. A judge then decides if a person merits this extra punishment. In these hearings the prosecution is supposed to prove that the alleged offender is a public safety risk. Under a previous set of rules that was rejected by a federal appeals court, the burden of proof would have been on the former prisoner to show they were not a threat.

— MEGAN ARNEY

# THE MILITANT

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# Paris aims slap at London over 'euro'

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — The European Union (EU) meeting in Luxembourg December 12-13 with heads of government from EU member states had been touted as a historic meeting that would issue formal invitations to several states in Eastern and Central Europe to join the EU in the coming years. Instead, the debate at the meeting centered largely on another question, the "euro club."

Paris, backed by Bonn, had proposed that the finance ministers of the 11 states that are expected to join the European Monetary Union (EMU) on Jan. 1, 1999, set up a separate forum within the EU to discuss questions concerning the euro, as the projected single currency is called. British prime minister Anthony Blair strongly opposed this scheme, as did the heads of the governments in Denmark, Sweden, and Greece, who demanded that their finance ministers should have the right to participate in these meetings as well.

A face-saving compromise for these governments — the four EU members who have stated that they will not participate in the single currency at the start — was negotiated during the meeting. The wording of the compromise says that the council of all the 15 EU finance ministers shall remain the sole body making economic policy decisions. But it made clear that EMU members will have the last word on the agenda of their forum and on which countries shall take part. All 15 member states are to be allowed to participate when there are matters of common interest on the agenda. The compromise was worked out under threats by the likely EMU members to meet informally

outside the EU treaty if the deal were blocked.

Which governments will be allowed to join the EU was also a point of dispute. With Washington's backing, the governments of Sweden and Denmark have been campaigning to start negotiations simultaneously with 11 of the 12 applicants for membership in the EU. The European Commission proposed that membership negotiations should start just with Cyprus, Estonia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia, with the others waiting for a later round. All of the current EU member states have shoved aside the Turkish government's application for membership in the trade block. But Stockholm and Copenhagen wanted to include the governments of Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, and Slovakia in the initial round of talks. Their campaign is especially focused on having all the Baltic states — Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania — enter the European Union as soon as possible.

This intersects with Washington's drive to expand NATO into these same states. The diverging imperialist interests in the region — economic, political, and military — are the key factors behind the EU conflicts over which countries should be taken into the Union. The EU summit reached a compromise over this question that leaves open practically all of the disputed questions. Membership talks will start with the six states proposed by the European Commission in March next year. At a meeting scheduled just before these talks, the governments of the other five applicants — Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Romania — will begin a negotiations process over the



**Construction workers in Berlin protest unemployment last March. While imperialist powers compete for dominance in the EU, they must also contend with toilers in their own respective countries, who resist austerity measures being placed upon them.**

standards they will have to reach to start membership negotiations, as well as how to attain them. In theory, if states in the second group reach these standards faster than states in the first, they could join the EU ahead of schedule.

The EU meeting reportedly just touched on the main underlying questions of the enlargement of the Union — the budget question — and especially the changes proposed by the European Commission on the system of agricultural and regional subsidies and how much each member should pay. "The meeting soon got stuck in Spanish-French-Portuguese worries over losing subsidies, and others fears over having to pay more," the Swedish daily *Svenska Dagbladet* wrote on December 14.

Another question that threatens to block enlargement is the Turkish government's objections to the decision by EU to start membership negotiations with Cyprus. Ankara says it is a more qualified applicant for membership in the European Union than the Eastern European and Central European states

the EU now is starting membership negotiations with. But its application is especially opposed by Bonn and Athens. It is a member of the western military alliance NATO and has had an association agreement with the European Union since 1963 and applied for membership in 1985. In 1995 the European Union promised the Greek government that membership negotiations should start with Cyprus if Athens accepted that EU formed a customs union with Turkey, and one was established the following year.

The southern portion of Cyprus is ruled by a Greek-backed regime, and thousands of Greek troops are stationed there. The northern portion of the island nation is occupied by Turkish forces. Participants in the EU summit agreed to start membership negotiations with a delegation led by the Greece-Cypriot government, but invite representatives of Turk-Cypriots to participate.

Instead of taking up Ankara's application for membership, the EU invited the Turkish government to participate in a European conference on narcotic-trafficking, refugees, and other issues. Ankara rejected this plan and demanded at least pre-negotiations on membership. Turkish prime minister Mesut Yilmaz refused to attend the dinner that ended the EU meeting December 13. The next day declared that his government would freeze its political contacts with the EU, including negotiations over Cyprus, and seek a "strategic partnership" with Washington.

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

## Anthrax vaccinations are propaganda ploy

BY MEGAN ARNEY

In a move aimed at bolstering Washington's efforts to justify its bellicose stance toward Iraq, the Pentagon announced December 15 that it would begin to vaccinate the entire military — 1.4 million troops on active duty and another 1 million reservists — against anthrax bacteria. The vaccination is set to begin in mid-1998 with the 100,000 U.S. troops who are in the Persian Gulf, on the Korean peninsula, or slated to be deployed in those regions.

Anthrax has never been used in warfare. Nevertheless, U.S. war officials assert that at least 10 governments may have biological weapons. "The current world threat environment and the unpredictable nature of terrorism make it prudent to include biological warfare defense as part of our force protection planning," declared the Pentagon's press release on the vaccinations. "Our goal is to vaccinate everybody in the force so they will be ready to deploy anywhere, anytime," said Deputy Secretary of Defense John Hamre, who is in charge of implementing the inoculation.

Washington has an armada of warships in the Persian Gulf, as well as 29,000 troops in the region. Since the end of the 1990-91 assault on Iraq, the U.S. rulers used a seven-year-long embargo to squeeze the government in Baghdad, in hopes of toppling it and installing a regime that better serves Washington's interests in the oil-rich region. The embargo, which is estimated to have killed over 1 million people, is supposedly to be kept in force until a U.S.-led United Nations inspection team deems Baghdad does not have weapons of "mass destruction."

### Imperialist provocations continue

Using the excuse of looking for anthrax and other so-called weapons of mass destruction, the UN inspection team is demanding that Baghdad open any and every building to them. So far, the Iraqi government has refused, saying it is a question of national sovereignty.

The chief UN inspector, Richard Butler, did report that the UN snoopers have gained access to a number of "sensitive sites," and added that they had not found any "genuine information on suspected germ warfare programs," according to the Associated Press.

Nevertheless, Secretary of Defense William Cohen asserted December 15 that Bagh-

dad could have produced enough anthrax to fill six missile warheads. An unidentified Iraqi government official replied that Baghdad "does not possess even one gram of that biological ... material," according to an information ministry spokesperson.

Washington stepped up the sensational

reports on anthrax and its effects during the Clinton administration's war preparations last month. On November 16 Defense Secretary Cohen went on TV holding up a five-pound bag of sugar and warned that an equivalent amount of anthrax could kill half

**Continued on Page 6**

## Currency turmoil rattles S. Africa economy

BY T.J. FIGUEROA

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Southern Africa is undergoing sharp economic blows spawned by world volatility. Stock markets and currencies in South Africa and neighboring Zimbabwe have been pounded since the late October plunge in world financial markets. At the opening of December, gold slumped to a 12-year low of \$288/oz. At the start of this year, it stood at \$369/oz, down from a high of \$416/oz. in January 1996. The 30 percent slide has sent South African mining companies into a frenzied round of further monopolization and retrenchments.

More than 60,000 jobs in the gold mines have been scrapped here in the last five years alone; economists employed by major banks and mining houses predict that up to 100,000 jobs could be eliminated in 1998 if the gold price continues to fall. Gold accounts for 20 percent of South Africa's exports and 5 percent of Gross Domestic Product.

The collapse of markets and currencies in southeast Asia is the immediate reason for the gold price slide. It is estimated that the Asian region accounts for 40 percent of world demand for base metals. The decline in demand is also hitting the price of other raw materials, including copper and aluminum. Taken together, Japan and south Korea account for 19 percent of world copper demand and 18 percent of aluminum consumption.

### Projected layoffs in the mines

National Union of Mineworkers spokesperson Ben Molapo said the declining price of bullion had sent "worrying signals to our members. We are worried about losing jobs. The new year looks very bleak for some of us." The effect of mass layoffs would extend far beyond miners alone: mineworkers are often the only employed family members. Unemployment here hovers around 30

percent.

The Johannesburg Stock Exchange is down 13 percent from its crash in late October. The exchange shed 11 percent of its paper values on October 28 alone, the largest single-day loss since 1987. Billions of rands in South African bonds were dumped, and the currency plunged to new lows against both the dollar and British pound. The Zimbabwe dollar, meanwhile, lost approximately 20 percent of its value on November 14, and in the subsequent week the Harare stock exchange tumbled 18 percent.

In hopes of maintaining their near-dominant position atop the world gold heap, the mining conglomerates here are consolidating. Two years ago, there were six major mining houses listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange; today there are two.

In October Gold Fields of South Africa and Gencor announced a merger to create Goldco, billed as the world's biggest mining house. Anglo American Corporation followed a month later with an announcement that it was grabbing up key mines from JCI, a recent "black empowerment" initiative, to create AngloGold. The company will be the world's largest in terms of production and reserves. The new ventures have said they will restructure to do away with unprofitable mines.

### Debate on jobs, economic future

These developments, together with the current economic course of the African National Congress-led government and the November passage of the Basic Conditions of Employment bill, have fueled debate over how to confront growing joblessness.

The Basic Conditions of Employment law was passed by the ANC majority in parliament over the objections of all other parties. It lowers the legal work week in South Africa to 45 hours, extends paid maternity leave to women workers, and raises the over-

time rate from time-and-a-third to time-and-a-half. The law provides a schedule for lowering the work week to 40 hours in time. The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) had demonstrated for key provisions of the legislation earlier this year, and while it failed to win certain amendments, the union federation termed the legislation a victory, clearing away much of apartheid labor law.

The government's Central Statistical Service released figures in early November showing that the number of jobs in the non-farm economy fell by 25,000 in the first half of the year, and that employment had shrunk 1.5 percent since June 1996. That brings the total number of people employed in the "formal" economy to fewer than 5.2 million, out of the population of nearly 44 million.

The figures were a blow to projections in the government's Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy, which projected the creation of 250,000 new jobs in 1997.

In November, the ANC's Jay Naidoo, minister of posts and telecommunications and former general secretary of COSATU, was met at a union conference in KwaZulu-Natal province by workers chanting and singing denunciations of GEAR. Naidoo was widely quoted in the press as chastising COSATU in his speech for being little better than disgruntled whites, and challenging the labor movement to make its own proposals on economic policy.

Responding to Naidoo later in November at a Bargaining Conference of the Chemical Workers Industrial Union, COSATU Deputy General Secretary Zwelinzima Vavi said the union federation had put forward proposals that differed from those of the ANC government.

These issues will be debated at the ANC's National Conference in Mafikeng, December 16-21.

# Cuban revolution is political feature of Mexico book fair

BY CATHLEEN GUTKANST  
AND TOBA SINGER

GUADALAJARA, Mexico — "It wasn't just the CIA that Che Guevara fought against in Bolivia," said Marco Antonio while visiting the Eleventh Guadalajara International Book Fair. "Che also had to fight the Bolivian Communist Party," added the high school student, as he and two of his friends browsed through the wide range of titles by revolutionary leaders displayed at the Pathfinder booth during the fair here the first week of December. Discussion and debate over the Cuban revolution was a political feature of the event, and nearly half of the Pathfinder titles sold were about Cuba.

Three hundred thousand people visited the fair, including youth, teachers, librarians, workers, and others. Nearly 900 book publishers and distributors — more than a third from Mexico and the rest from 28 other countries — exhibited this year. A team of eight Pathfinder Press supporters came from Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, New York, and San Francisco to help promote and distribute titles by the New York-based publisher. The team found a high level of interest in a wide range of titles, among them, *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* by Jack Barnes, *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism* by Carlos Tablada, and the interviews with Harry Villegas contained in the pamphlet *At the Side of Che Guevara*, all three available in Spanish and English. A number of people were particularly pleased to find titles on working-class struggles in the United States.

A total of 98 Pathfinder books and pamphlets were sold at the fair. All told, fair participants bought 15 copies of *Junto a Che Guevara*, making it the top-seller. Two copies of its English version, *At the Side of Che Guevara*, were also sold. The top-selling book—as in other book fairs in Mexico over the last three years—was *Habla Malcolm X* (Malcolm X Speaks) with nine copies sold. Pathfinder supporters also sold three copies of the Spanish edition of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*, and seven copies of *The Communist Manifesto* during the days the fair was open to the public.

Participants bought eight copies of the magazine of Marxist politics and theory, *Nueva Internacional* (New International); in addition to four subscriptions and 16 single copies of the socialist monthly in Spanish, *Perspectiva Mundial*; along with four single copies and one subscription to the *Militant*.

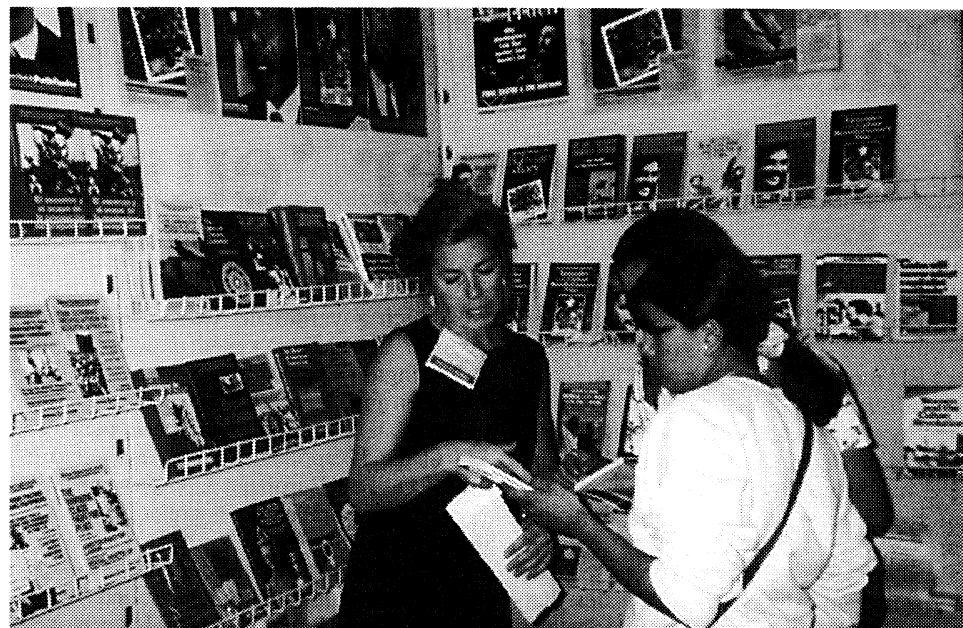
Considered the fourth largest in the world, the Guadalajara book fair focuses on Spanish-language books. Titles in many languages, however, from a variety of publishers from around the world could be seen on

display. This year Argentina became the fifth country designated as guest of honor by the organizers. The nine-day affair celebrated that Latin American nation's culture, featuring 80 Argentine publishers, panel discussions, book launchings, tango dance performances, and other cultural events.

The fair provided an important opportunity to meet librarians and distributors, book buyers and others. Pathfinder team members were able to fan out through the aisles of the fair, and had a couple dozen meetings with trade professionals from the United States; Argentina; Quebec, Canada; Chile; Dominican Republic; El Salvador. They also met library representatives from some of the main campuses in Mexico, such as the national university in Mexico City and Cuernavaca, as well as Guadalajara, Monterrey, and Puebla universities.

Some of those in the United States that Pathfinder representatives met included librarians from Albuquerque, New Mexico; Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona; Queens, New York; Oakland, Redwood City, San Francisco, San Jose, and San Mateo, California; and South Florida. A number of these representatives indicated they would welcome a sales visit by Pathfinder to their local libraries.

With the University of Guadalajara cohosting the book fair, team members decided to take books to that campus, where they set up a display. Students and professors there showed great interest in the books, and one professor commended Pathfinder



Militant/Luis Madrid

Young people at Guadalajara book fair look at *New International* magazine

for bringing such books to the campus. She invited several of her colleagues over to the display to have a look, take catalogs, and begin discussing how best to arrange for library orders and classroom adoptions of Pathfinder titles.

The team of Pathfinder volunteers distributed some 600 flyers advertising the booth and 200 Pathfinder catalogs during the fair. Most were handed out while engaging in discussions on a whole range of topics: from the Cuban revolution to the deepening crisis of capitalism worldwide to Washington's war threats against Iraq to the crisis of the "Asian tigers," and more. Many who stopped at the booth praised the fact that a publisher in the United States makes available in several languages the works of revolutionary leaders of the caliber of Ernesto Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, V.I. Lenin, Malcolm X, and others.

"It was a lot of fun, talking to so many

young people truly interested in revolutionary ideas," said Virginia Garza, who joined the team from Los Angeles. Pointing to the example of Marco Antonio and his friends, Garza added, "After talking with us for more than an hour, they ended up pooling their money and buying *El manifiesto comunista* (The communist manifesto), *La segunda declaración de La Habana* (The second declaration of Havana), *Mensaje a la Tricontinental* (Message to the Tricontinental), and *Habla Malcolm X*."

In addition, two students from the University of Guadalajara "were also excited when they learned that a group like the Young Socialists, an international revolutionary youth organization, exists," Garza continued. "They all wanted to make sure the YS contacted them so that they could begin figuring out ways to work together."

Luis Madrid contributed to this article.

## Guevara slandered at book fair event

BY TOBA SINGER

GUADALAJARA, Mexico—Ernesto Che Guevara is "to blame for the deaths" of thousands of fighters who took part in revolutionary struggles in Latin America over the past three decades, argued Jorge Castañeda at a meeting celebrating his book *La vida en rojo* (published in English as *Compañero: The Life and Death of Che Guevara*). More than 300 people packed the standing-room-only meeting sponsored by the Guadalajara Book Fair.

Guevara was part of the movement that led workers and peasants in Cuba to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictatorship in 1959. One of the revolution's central leaders, he left Cuba in 1965 to join and help lead other revolutionary struggles abroad.

Prefacing most of his comments with phrases such as "rather than simply believing the sources," or "while there are no sources," Castañeda freely speculated on why the examples of Che Guevara and the Cuban revolution are, in his opinion, to

blame for the defeats of working-class struggles throughout the Americas.

In a most vicious slander, Castañeda claimed that in 1967 Fidel Castro rejected a plan by Mario Monje, then general secretary of the Bolivian Communist Party, to save Guevara from the Bolivian counterinsurgency forces that murdered him in October of that year.

Castañeda's claims were parroted by Rafael Rojas, who was introduced as a Cuban historian. Rojas lives in Mexico and opposes the Cuban revolution. The claims also went unchallenged by Paco Ignacio Taibo II, the other panelist.

The forum opened with a broadside attack on the Cuban revolution by Rojas, who applauded *La vida en rojo* because it "challenges the myth of the supposed loyalty between Che and Fidel and between Che and the Cuban Revolution." Rojas also stated that "Che's violent messianism led him to carry out genocide and his own self-immolation." Further echoing Castañeda's views, he added, "I agree that Che is to blame for the failures across Latin America."

Taibo, the Mexican author of a biogra-

phy entitled *Guevara, also Known as Che*, opened his remarks by indicating he had not read *La vida en rojo*. But, he nonetheless claimed his intention was to "vindicate the myth of Che." By offering a saint-like image of the Cuban revolutionary, Taibo managed to portray Guevara as impossible for any ordinary human being to hope to emulate or identify with. Moreover, "Che belonged to his time, not ours," Taibo intoned.

"The great virtue of these four biographies," Taibo claimed about his and three other recently written books on Che, is that "they allow us to take sides." He passed off slanders and baseless "facts" as simply "differences of opinion."

As soon as the panelists concluded their remarks, members of the audience learned that the event was over and there would be no time for questions or discussion. As they filed out of the hall, several people pointed to what was obviously missing from the panel: the views of Cuban revolutionaries themselves. Prior to the forum, members of a team of Pathfinder supporters had distributed flyers highlighting books by Guevara, Castro, and other Cuban revolutionaries available at the Pathfinder booth in the fair.

## Thousands of Mexican youth seek truth about Cuban revolution

"A lot of hard political labor," is how Santiago Dórquez described the work by representatives of the Cuban Book Institute, the Cuban Book Chamber, and some 25 Cuban publishers and distributors at the Eleventh Guadalajara International Book Fair that ended December 7.

The event, however, had been an extremely rewarding experience, added the director of the Havana-based publisher Editora Política. "It allowed everyone of us to engage in constant political discussions with thousands, in their big majority youth, who were interested in learning the truth about the Cuban revolution." Students, academics, librarians and others uninterruptedly converged around the Cuban stand at the nine-day book fair.

"There is very little information on Washington's policy of aggression against the revolution," Dórquez stressed. "So the book fair allowed us to explain how we are not just confronting but overcoming the consequences" of the U.S. economic aggression against Cuba.

"Most wanted to hear what we, Cubans, had to say," he continued, "in order to have facts to challenge the distortions they are getting."

Dórquez said participants at the book fair bought several hundred copies of books, tapes, CDs, and other materials by and about Ernesto Che Guevara, Fidel Castro and other leaders of the revolution, including the Spanish-language editions of Che's *Bolivian Diary*, Castro's *History Will Absolve Me*, and *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'guerrilla'* by Harry Villegas. In addition, Dórquez explained, a number of book distributors from the United States expressed interest in materials from Cuba.

Emphasizing how culture is prioritized in the island, he added that despite the economic difficulties they face, publishers from Cuba brought some 200 new titles to the book fair. This was "another way of showing the Cuban revolution lives," Dórquez concluded.

— C.G. AND L.M.

## 1,000 protest rightist violence in Sweden

BY BIRGITTA ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM — About 1,000 demonstrators, most of them young, gathered here in the snow and sleet November 30 to protest police violence, racism, and police protection of ultrarightists. The rally also called for solidarity between Swedes and immigrants and for the right to asylum.

November 30 is the day when the Nazis, skinheads, and other ultrarightist forces celebrate King Karl XII, who ruled Sweden between 1697 and 1718 and died in battle in Norway. During his rule an estimated 200,000 Swedish soldiers were killed in wars that extended Swedish rule to all of Scandinavia, northern Germany, Poland, and the Baltic states. This time is known in Swedish history as the "great power period."

The demonstration was bigger than similar ones in recent years, and was an answer to the police violence shown November 8 when the cops protected racist demonstrators and assaulted counterprotesters.

Among the speakers was a young woman who urged demonstrators to protest the

skinheads' use of a hall that is financed by public means and run by the labor movement, with police protection. The night before, the network Nordland sponsored a rock concert at a restaurant in the center of Stockholm. The network publishes a "white power" newspaper titled *Nordland*, in addition to recording and organizing concerts for racist music groups. The privately-run restaurant, where the November 29 concert took place, is located in the ABF-house, a workers education house owned and run by the labor movement.

According to the janitor, workers at the restaurant did not know beforehand that it was skinheads who had rented it for the evening. He called the police when 200 racists turned up, but the police allowed the event to proceed.

The Gay-house, which had its windows smashed by skinheads at night on November 8, sits 200 yards from the ABF-house.

Birgitta Isacsson is a member of the Metalworkers union.



# SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

*Join the campaign to sell Pathfinder books and pamphlets*

## New Jersey stores: 'Glad Pathfinder is back in stock here'

BY JON ERWAY  
AND KATHIE FITZGERALD

NEWARK, New Jersey — "I'm so glad I'm going to have Pathfinder books back in my bookstore!" the owner of a small shop in Madison, New Jersey, told Lee Oleson and Sara Lobman after placing an order for 48 books. The buyer, whose store specializes in titles on women's studies and Black studies, ordered a wide range of titles, including *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* by Jack Barnes, *Speeches for Socialism* by James P. Cannon, *To Speak the Truth* by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, several titles by Malcolm X, *Sexism and Science* by Evelyn Reed, and several issues of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*.

Oleson, a Pathfinder supporter from New Jersey, and Lobman, Pathfinder's business manager, visited the store as part of a week-long special effort in mid-December to distribute more Pathfinder titles to bookstores and libraries in New Jersey. In addition to Oleson, six other New Jersey Pathfinder supporters participated in sales visits to 24 bookstores and libraries. As an immediate result of the visits, Pathfinder received seven new orders for 185 books.

The acquisitions director at one of the

state university libraries immediately placed an order for the *Collected Works of V.I. Lenin*. He said he and a professor had been trying to find one for the library there for three years.

The sales team arrived at a private university with time to do an initial check of the library's collection. When the representatives told the person in charge of collection development that they were missing a number of Pathfinder titles, including 9 issues of *New Internationalist*, she filled out the paperwork on the spot to send to the acquisitions department.

The bookstore for a community college in Cranford, New Jersey, only has one shelf set aside for books not assigned for course work. But the staff there has been discussing how to enlarge the section. They began by ordering 22 Pathfinder books, including *Che Guevara Speaks*; *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*; and *Art and Revolution*. They also ordered one each of the books by Malcolm X in preparation for Black History Month in February.

New Jersey Pathfinder supporters also used the tour to lay the basis for getting copies of the new 1998 Pathfinder catalog to professors at various state colleges and

### November Sales of Pathfinder Books to Non Pathfinder Outlets

#### NOVEMBER

CITY	GOALS	SOLD	%	OCT	SEP	JUL
<b>UNITED STATES</b>						
ATLANTA	32	239	747%	106%	29	137
DES MOINES	35	163	466%	0%	0	174
SAN FRANCISCO	74	256	346%	34%	25	22
CLEVELAND	40	134	335%	0%	146	141
WASHINGTON, D.C.	42	124	295%	88%	13	16
MIAMI	42	108	257%	7%	69	243
CHICAGO	60	76	127%	3%	129	15
PHILADELPHIA	49	39	80%	0%	0	364
LOS ANGELES	95	61	64%	200%	288	23
DETROIT	60	28	47%	0%	50	48
TWIN CITIES	67	16	24%	33%	121	83
BOSTON	50	9	18%	108%	414	22
BIRMINGHAM	50	5	10%	2%	0	60
SEATTLE	60	5	8%	60%	9	18
NEW YORK	190	7	4%	31%	160	73
HOUSTON	32	1	3%	28%	59	0
NEWARK	133	1	1%	0%	2	15
PITTSBURGH	49		0%	0%	16	0
<b>U.S. TOTAL</b>	<b>1160</b>	<b>1272</b>	<b>110%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>1530</b>	<b>1454</b>
<b>CANADA</b>						
VANCOUVER	35	16	46%	29%		
TORONTO	60	24	40%	0%		
MONTREAL	41	3	7%	29%		
<b>CANADA TOTAL</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>16%</b>		

universities so they can consider making the books part of the reading for their classes. They plan to follow up with phone calls and visits early next semester.

The importance of getting Pathfinder books out on the shelves of bookstores as widely as possible was underscored by the

comments of a student who was working as a cashier at a bookstore in New Brunswick when she caught a glimpse of the Pathfinder catalog while giving the sales team directions to their next stop. "Pathfinder! You guys are just great! Just last night my friends and I were discussing your books."

## Activists blast gov't frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal in Philadelphia, San Francisco

BY JASON COUGHLIN  
AND CONNIE ALLEN

PHILADELPHIA — More than 600 people took part in a December 6 "People's International Tribunal for Justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal." The event took place inside the Blue Horizon, located in downtown Philadelphia. Supporters of freedom for the journalist and political activist came from as far as Boston, Chicago, and Mississippi in the United States, along with more than 50 people from Canada, and several from France and Germany. Participants listened to dozens of presentations on the facts behind Abu-Jamal's frame-up, conviction, and the political events that led up to it.

Conducted in the form of a trial, the event put a spotlight on the unfair trial Abu-Jamal received while providing a platform for opponents of the death penalty and police brutality to speak out. Abu-Jamal is currently

sitting on Pennsylvania's death row. He and his supporters are fighting for a new trial that would include a jury of his peers, as well as evidence and testimony that was suppressed in the original trial that declared him guilty of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner in 1981.

Several witnesses for the prosecution in Abu-Jamal's 1982 trial have since indicated that they were pressured by Philadelphia police to give false testimony implicating Abu-Jamal in the 1981 shooting. Pamela Jenkins and Veronica Jones, both young prostitutes at the time, testified in recent hearings that they took the witness stand against Abu-Jamal in his original trial after being threatened with arrest by Philadelphia police. Jenkins reported that Cynthia White, a key witness for the prosecution, told her that she was also offered immunity from arrest for testifying against Abu-Jamal. William Singletary, who testified in 1995 that he had seen someone other than Abu-Jamal

shoot Faulkner, was pressured to sign a false statement at the time of the original trial.

At the end of the event, an international panel of observers endorsed a series of demands for an investigation into Mumia Abu-Jamal's trial and subsequent imprisonment. This panel included South African poet and professor Dennis Brutus; David DuBois, son of W.E.B. DuBois; Michael Meeropol, son of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, who were executed in 1953; and Gamal Nkrumah, son of Kwame Nkrumah.

The demands include Abu-Jamal's immediate release; an investigation of the Philadelphia Police Department; an investigation into the bombing of the headquarters of MOVE, Abu-Jamal's organization, in 1985; the removal of all public officials involved in Abu-Jamal's frame-up from office; and an investigation by the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights into his case.

Meanwhile, nearly 1,000 people marched to United Nations Plaza in San Francisco December 6 as part of the international day of solidarity with the framed-up activist. The demonstrators also demanded an end to the death penalty and police brutality. Speakers at the San Francisco action included Ramona Africa, a leader of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal; Ossie Davis, actor and civil rights activist who chairs the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal; and Robbie Meeropol, also the son of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. In the weeks preceding the demonstration, many Bay Area campuses hosted educational and building activities.

In a related development, Abu-Jamal's supporters packed the courtroom October 8 for a U.S. court of appeals hearing on whether the activists' rights are being violated by prison officials who open all his mail, including photocopying legal correspondence and forwarding it to the governor's office. Prison officials began this harassment after Abu-Jamal's writings were published as the book *Live from Death Row*, which they claimed violated prison rules prohibiting inmates from pursuing any business or profession.

Osborne Hart in San Francisco contributed to this article.

## New Jersey legislature bans abortion method

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

The New Jersey Senate voted 27-13 to enact a law banning the late-term abortion procedure called intact dilation and extraction December 15, overriding a veto by Gov. Christine Todd Whitman. The only exception to the ban is if the woman's life is at risk. It is the first such restriction in that state since abortion was legalized nearly a quarter century ago.

The American Civil Liberties Union and Planned Parenthood immediately petitioned a federal court to block the new law. Judge Anne Thompson rejected issuing a restraining order, but scheduled a hearing on the legislation for the next day. Some 16 state governments have voted to impose similar laws.

Whitman, who presents herself as a defender of abortion rights, vetoed the anti-choice legislation saying the ban was unconstitutional. She put forward an "alternate" bill, however, that would have banned all abortions in the state once the fetus was considered "viable," with exceptions for women whose life or long-term physical health was in jeopardy.

Anti-choice forces, who demagogically refer to the medical procedure as "partial birth" abortion, rejected Whitman's proposal, asserting that protecting "a woman's health" was too big a loophole.

The United States Court of Appeals ruled in November that an Ohio ban on specific abortion procedures was unconstitutional because it would outlaw "the vast majority" of abortions after the first trimester of pregnancy.

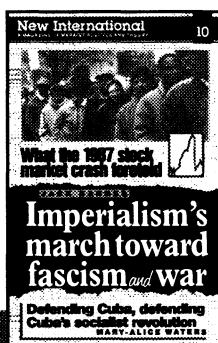
The Supreme Court has ruled that states can enact legislation restricting late-term abortion procedures, provided they include a clause for women whose health or life are threatened by giving birth. Forty-one states have done so.

available from Pathfinder

### In New International No. 10

#### Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War Jack Barnes

How the working class and its allies respond to the accelerated capitalist disorder will determine whether or not imperialism's march toward fascism and war can be stopped. Available in English, French, Spanish and Swedish. \$14.00



### Europe and America

#### Two speeches on Imperialism

Leon Trotsky

The United States, "the most highly concentrated capitalism in the world, is now entering the epoch of open struggle for its autocratic rule over the planet," Leon Trotsky explains in this pamphlet, written in the 1920's. Two speeches assess the roots of mounting conflict between Washington and its competitor/allies in Bonn, Paris, and London. \$6.00

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

# NATO pushes east, while extending Bosnia occupation

Continued from front page

trip to build support for his plan to keep U.S. forces in the Balkan country well beyond the June 30, 1998, deadline for withdrawal set last year.

"The real debate inside the Administration now is over what the mandate of a new international force should be — and its size," said an article in the December 16 *New York Times*. "The Pentagon ... wants to insure that the United States has enough troops in Bosnia to retain an overwhelming deterrent, as it does now with 8,000 troops."

It is also becoming clear that Washington will not set a new date for withdrawal, most likely, but will try to extend the occupation indefinitely until it deems its goals are met. These include reestablishing the domination of capitalist property relations throughout the formerly federated Yugoslav state and increasing, or at least maintaining, U.S. military and economic hegemony in Europe. "Rather than setting a new 'exit date,'" noted the December 16 *Times* article, "the Administration intends to develop a set of benchmarks, officials said. One official said: 'This time we want strict but doable sets of criteria that will let us draw down and exit. Exit strategies aren't just dates but must be tied to goals.'"

At his December 16 press conference at the State Department, Clinton stated that one of the goals of his government is implementation of the Dayton accords. Washington rammed these agreements down the throats of the rival regimes in Yugoslavia in late 1995. It did so as the culmination of a three-year-long plan that ensured the fueling of the Yugoslavia war, the failure of all the "peace" agreements its imperialist allies attempted to broker under the aegis of the United Nations, and the most sustained bombing raids in Europe by NATO forces since World War II. The Dayton accords laid the ground for the partition of Bosnia and the 1995 invasion by NATO troops. One of the main goals set in them is the reestablishment of the "free market" in Bosnia and elsewhere in Yugoslavia.

Dayton registered a new level of domi-

nation by the U.S. rulers in Europe and the humbling of many of their imperialist allies, who are also competitors. This was especially true of Paris, which has pushed a foreign policy in the Balkans, the Middle East, and elsewhere that contradicts Washington's interests. Albright referred explicitly to this conflict at the Brussels meeting of NATO foreign ministers.

## Washington-Paris conflict flares up

"I know there is a sense among some Europeans that the United States is too inclined to act unilaterally and too quick to pull the sanctions trigger," she declared. "There is likewise a sense among some Americans that too often the United States takes the heat for dealing with difficult issues while others take the contracts." She was referring to the recent conflicts between Washington and Paris over policy toward the Iraqi regime and the U.S. embargo on Iran, which French energy companies like Total have openly flaunted by signing business agreements with Tehran.

At the Brussels meeting Albright also called for Paris, Bonn, and other imperialist powers to pay for a bigger share of the costs of the U.S.-led occupation of Bosnia, but got no such commitments from either the French or the German rulers. The U.S. government provides 90 percent of the funds for training and equipping the Bosnian police currently. It got commitments only from the governments of Canada and Norway, for the paltry sums of \$100,000 and \$400,000 respectively, towards this fund.

This inter-imperialist conflict flared up most vividly during a December 15 visit to Paris by Louise Arbour, a Canadian who is the chief prosecutor of the so-called war crimes tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands. Washington and some of its allies — mostly London and Ottawa — have used the tribunal as a club in their drive to defeat those opposed to the Dayton accords in Yugoslavia. These governments have argued more forcefully for using NATO troops to pursue and arrest alleged "war criminals," which could provoke military confrontations with



U.S. soldier patrolling street near Kladan, Bosnia, during local elections in September carried out under the boot of the NATO occupation forces.

chauvinist Bosnian Serbs and other forces in Yugoslavia.

Arbour said that the largest number of "war crime" suspects in Bosnia reside in the section of the republic occupied by French troops where these individuals are "perfectly safe," as she put it, because French troops are unwilling to lift a finger. "There are opportunities for significant action in the French sector," Arbour said in an interview with the French daily *Le Monde*, "but we have had to face total inertia."

No power is better placed to arrest those accused by the tribunal, said an editorial in the December 16 *Financial Times* of London, "than France, which controls the Pale sector where Radovan Karadzic and other indicted Serb leaders notoriously reside."

The same editorial stated, "French officers have consistently failed to appear as witnesses at the trials in The Hague. They submit only written testimony, usually after long wrangles between Mrs. Arbour's office and the French defence ministry. Ten days ago, Alain Richard, the defence minister, confirmed that this was government policy. He also accused the tribunal of 'show justice.'"

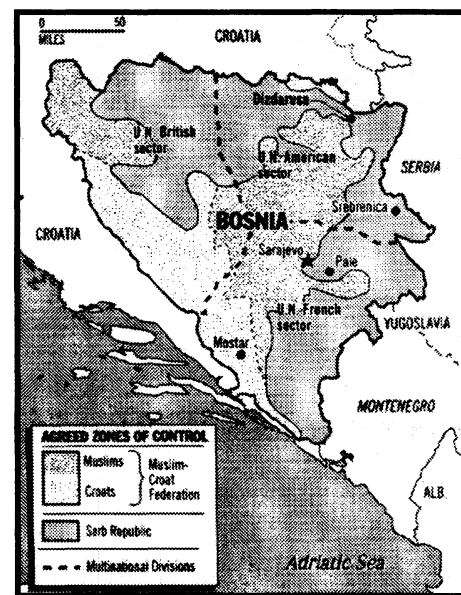
In her remarks, Arbour praised the actions by British commandos in Bosnia who last July hunted down and arrested one Serbian man and killed another in Prijedor, Bosnia. The two had been indicted by the imperialist tribunal in The Hague.

Arbour's remarks caused a furious reaction by government officials in Paris. French foreign minister Hubert Védrine called her statements "scandalous" and counterproductive.

French generals who have done time in

Bosnia have refused to testify as witnesses at The Hague tribunal, because their government says the distinction between witnesses and the accused is blurred under cross-examination by defense counsel — which Paris describes as an unfamiliar "Anglo-Saxon" custom.

"Apparently it fears that, if not excused from this ordeal, they might be obliged to talk too much about their role as commanders of the hapless UN 'protection force' during the Bosnia war," chimed the December 16 *Financial Times* editorial. "It is, you might say, a case of *qui s'excuse, s'accuse*."



Map from big-business press shows partition of Bosnia under Dayton accords.

## U.S. anthrax propaganda

Continued from Page 3

of the population of Washington, D.C.

Although Washington's most recent attempt to launch a military air strike against Iraq in mid-November failed, the Clinton administration has kept up the pressure to justify the continued embargo and possible future assaults on the Iraqi people. There have been a plethora of news articles and opinion pieces in the big-business media on the use of anthrax and other chemical weapons of "mass destruction," as well as a De-

fense Department report titled, "Proliferation: Threat and Response" in November.

Anthrax is a disease that normally afflicts animals, especially sheep and cattle. Anthrax spores can be produced in a dry form that, when inhaled by humans, cause severe pneumonia and death. Michigan State Department of Health has manufactured anthrax vaccine for the Pentagon since 1964, and some veterinarians and others who work with animals have used the vaccine since the early 1970s.

Although the germ has never been unleashed on a battlefield, during World War II London tested anthrax bombs on Gruinard Island, off the coast of Scotland. The bacteria killed sheep up to 250 yards downwind, and Gruinard's soil was rendered unusable. Access to the island was denied until 1990.

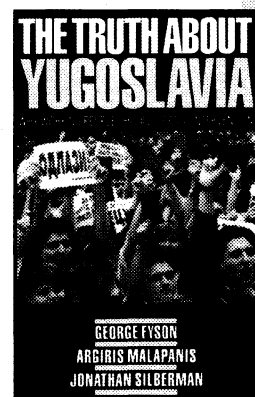
When the anthrax inoculation idea was first floated several years ago, reported the *Washington Post*, military tops raised hesitations given the increasing illnesses suffered by U.S. soldiers after the Gulf War, which may have been caused by one or a combination of several vaccines. The U.S. military also gave initial, but not complete, doses of the anthrax vaccine to about 150,000 U.S. soldiers stationed in the Persian Gulf during the 1990-91 assault, according to the *New York Times*.

Meanwhile, the *Washington Post* reported December 7 that in November the Clinton administration issued new guidelines for targeting Washington's nuclear arsenal. For the first time U.S. nuclear strikes can be called in response to the use of chemical or biological weapons.

### Young Socialist Fund Drive November 7– December 19

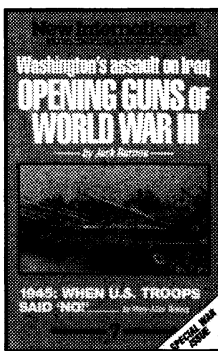
CITY	GOALS	PAID	%
Philadelphia*	250	223	89%
New York*	800	698	87%
Seattle	500	418	84%
Atlanta*	450	265	59%
Newark	650	332	51%
Chicago*	1,000	487	49%
Miami	200	70	35%
Twin Cities, MN	300	96	32%
Los Angeles	350	73	21%
Pittsburgh	450	50	11%
Des Moines	250	0	0%
Houston	300	0	0%
Washington, DC	150	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,650</b>	<b>2,712</b>	<b>62%</b>
<b>Should be</b>	<b>4,400</b>	<b>3,665</b>	<b>83%</b>
* raised goal			

### Books to understand conflicts in Balkans from Pathfinder



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# Meatpackers stay strong in Canada

Continued from front page

on the upswing across Canada. Days after the food workers went out on strike, they were joined by postal workers in a country-wide work stoppage. In British Columbia, 2,400 pulp and paper workers at three Fletcher Challenge mills are into the fifth month of their strike, making this the longest paper strike in the province's history. Fletcher Challenge, like Maple Leaf, is demanding "flexibility" from its workforce in its drive to become more competitive.

## Maple Leaf strike is solid

In spite of daily press reports to the contrary, the strike against Maple Leaf is solid. The press has ganged up to sow divisions among workers, trying to blame the plant shutdown on the union. The latest version of this attack centers on the news that the company is opening a new plant in Brandon, Manitoba, in 1999.

Kanla walked the picket line December 6 with her sister, daughter, and a couple dozen fellow workers. As they covered the main gate and walked the plant's fenced-in perimeter, they explained why they went on strike. Kanla described the speedup on the production line and how the number of injured workers has increased as a result. This makes the company's move to cut off health benefits such as drug subsidies especially hurtful, she said.

Baljit Minhs added his view on the media coverage of the strike. "They talk about a base wage of \$14 or more an hour," he said. "But they don't say you have to work for several years for that. Most of us here are making a lot less."

"They take money from your paycheck for going to the bathroom," said Kiet Ngugen. "You have to ask permission. Then they time you — five minutes, ten minutes. Sometimes the foreman is right there at the door."

Albert Kaplan was signing out pickets in the strike headquarters, a block from the plant. Strikers walk the line 24 hours a day in four-hour shifts. Every hour they take a break in the warmth of the strike headquarters. It is a very disciplined, organized operation. As a picket captain, Kaplan was very busy, but he paused to talk to *Militant* reporters. "I've worked here 25 years. I was here when the plant was Gainers," he said. "I was part of the strike of '86. I was here when the government sold it to Burns. I've been here working for Maple Leaf. They responded to our contract demands by shutting the plant down. They want us to give up. But we won't. We've been through this kind of thing before."

## History of struggle at Edmonton plant

In their strike against Gainers in 1986, the UFCW members at this same plant took on the company's attempt to break the union. The company brought in replacement work-

ers with the message to all: "If you strike, you are history."

The strike had many parallels with the meatpackers fight against Hormel in the United States. In that 1985-86 strike, UFCW Local P-9 took on the giant Hormel company in Austin, Minnesota. The Hormel workers faced the combined power of the company, the cops, the courts, the governor, the Minnesota National Guard, and the big-business owned media. Hormel was determined to drive forward the restructuring that the meatpacking bosses had launched industry-wide in the early 1980s.

The Hormel workers held firm and reached out for support across the country, and even increasingly, around the world. Hormel finally succeeded in getting a concession contract with the connivance and open treachery of the UFCW officialdom. The company refused to rehire 850 of the 1,500 who went on strike. But the example of the P-9 strikers opened the way for other packinghouse workers to fight the bosses' drive to slash wages and speedup production.

The Gainers workers were among those who saw the example of the fighting P-9ers. Workers fought an intense six-month battle against the company. They organized a campaign of solidarity — sending striking workers across the country to speak to union locals, supplemented by a nationwide boycott. Although they took some concessions, the meatpackers succeeded in beating back the attempt to break the union, forcing Gainers to sign a contract, bringing back all of the striking workers.

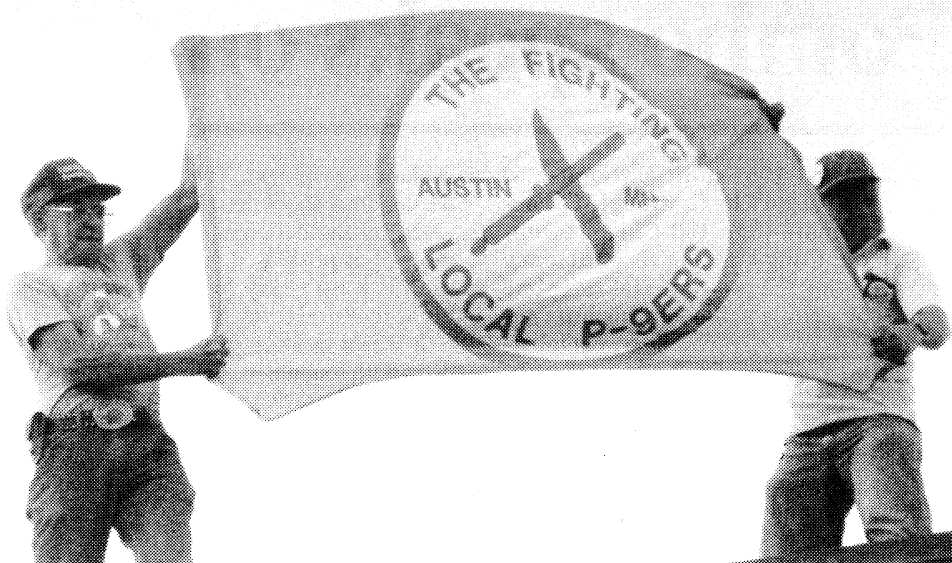
As Douglas Ford, spokesman for Gainers during the 1986 strike, lamented in a column attacking the present strike in the December 9 *Edmonton Journal*, it was Gainers, not the union that ended up in the dust bin of history. "The company suffered enormously from the strike of 1986 and, in particular, the lingering effects of the boycott. From my perspective, Gainers never was able to recover from 1986 and lost significant market share as a result of the strike."

Maple Leaf now needs to drive forward on raising productivity and attacking wages to get on par, and if possible below, those in the United States. The company needs to win this assault on the UFCW workers at its four hog-processing plants if it's to become competitive in its drive for new markets. Other meatpacking bosses are carefully watching this battle.

"It used to be that if you had a problem you stopped the line and worked it out together," Kaplan said. "When someone had to go to the bathroom or something, you worked that out. Not now. Now if the line stops for any reason the supervisors go wacky trying to get it going. Relief breaks are monitored by the supervisors."

"We were doing 4,000 hogs a day," he continued. "The line speeded up to almost twice that amount. But they want 9,000. And since 1984 we have only had two 3 percent wage increases. Your cost of living isn't going to go down because you make less money. We had no choice but to strike."

Kaplan added, "Ever since Burns the conditions have been bad and getting worse." Burns bought the plant after Gainers went out of business. The Alberta government leased the land and buildings to Burns and then Maple Leaf for pennies, Kaplan explained.



Militant/Margaret Jayko

The 1985-86 Local P-9 strike against Hormel was an example and opened the way for other UFCW workers like those at the Edmonton, Ontario, plant to fight the bosses' drive to slash wages and speed up production in the meatpacking industry.

The lease was up for renegotiation this December 31.

Kaplan appealed for solidarity. He offered flyers on the boycott called by the union and supported by the Canadian Labor Congress and several provincial labor federations.

Messages of support would be helpful, he said. Money would be even more useful. The Alberta Federation of Labor has launched a fund to aid the strikers and an "adopt a striker" campaign to help cover Christmas costs for the children of the workers. Contributions have already come from Manitoba and Ontario. Greg Zikos, president of the UFCW local on strike against Maple Leaf in Burlington, Ontario, said that United Steelworkers of America members at Stelco's steel mill in Hamilton, Ontario, are doing a plantgate collection December 16. According to Zikos, 50 auto workers from Ford's Oakville plant walked the picket line in Burlington December 12.

Mike Hoar, a computerized scale operator who has worked at the Burlington plant

for 19 years, reported on the success Ontario strikers had in convincing a number of grocery stores in Hamilton, Burlington, and Kitchener-Waterloo not to carry Maple Leaf products.

While the UFCW members in Edmonton picket, motorists driving by on the busy highway honk and wave. Conversations on the line are constantly interrupted by these expressions of support. Minhs commented, "We have a lot of support. The company is out to beat the unions. If they break us, then it will be harder on other workers."

He pointed to a sign in the window of the main plant building that says "Boycott Unions." Another worker stated, "I know the supervisor who put that there. It's his sign all right, but it's what the company wants."

Ted Lenoire is a member of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 424 in Edmonton, Alberta. Joanne Pritchard contributed to this article.

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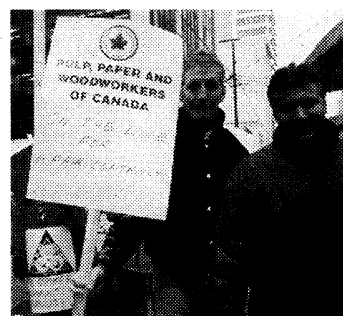
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#### The Siren Call of Economic Nationalism and Washington's March toward Fascism and War

Jack Barnes, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party

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

Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *New International* magazine



Fletcher Challenge paperworkers strike, Vancouver, October 28, 1997.

#### SCHEDULE

##### Thursday, January 1

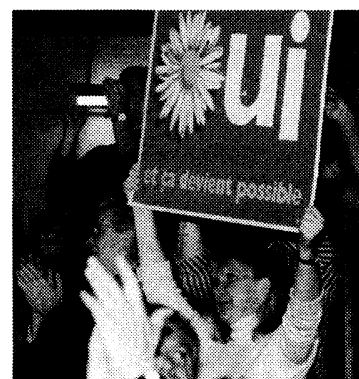
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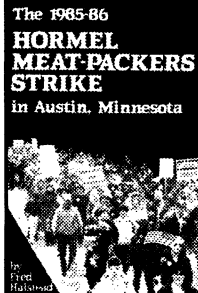
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# Pombo speaks on Che's leadership in Africa

From April 1965 until November of that year, Ernesto Che Guevara led a contingent of more than 100 Cuban volunteers in the Congo, aiding revolutionary forces fighting the pro-imperialist regime there. The article below on this internationalist effort appeared in a special issue of the magazine *Tricontinental*, published in Havana by the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The author, Harry Villegas, who fought alongside Guevara in the Congo and later Bolivia, is today a brigadier general in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces. Originally published under the title "With the Weapon of Moral Authority," the article is reprinted by permission. Translation, subheadings, and footnotes are by the *Militant*.

BY HARRY VILLEGAS (POMBO)

When I met him upon joining the Rebel Army in the Sierra Maestra mountains, Che was already an epic figure, the invincible commander, an example. Those were the qualities that help explain the great attraction he exercised on us, the young people there.

Those of us who fought and worked alongside him, first in Cuba, then in Africa and in Bolivia, always refer to a strict and demanding Che, for whom discipline was something fundamental, although it was a conscious discipline that the men internalized. This had great political significance for him, and he began by applying it to himself. It was to play an important role in the battles of the Congo.

In 1965, on returning from his tour of Africa, Che was already convinced that he had done his part in Cuba.<sup>1</sup> He wanted to continue his mission in "other lands of the world," and he had decided to move on. At that time, his objective was not Africa but rather Latin America. As a way of realizing his desire to help other peoples, he agreed to the proposal to temporarily join the struggle in the Congo (Leopoldville), to head up a group of Cuban military personnel who would be supporting the struggle there. Among them, major responsibilities would be held by Víctor Dreke (Moya) and José María Martínez Tamayo (Mbili).

Fidel stuck to the agreement he had made with Che in Mexico, that he would allow Che to leave Cuba whenever the latter desired, regardless of the economic, political, or revolutionary circumstances.<sup>2</sup> But Fidel was also profoundly human, and he tried to repay Che, to some extent, for everything Che had done for Cuba. Fidel proposed to fulfill that moral commitment by providing Che with security, making sure that wherever Che went he would not be alone, and that he would have the support of the Cubans. That is also why many of us found ourselves there, voluntarily. In one way or another we were repaying our debt to humanity.

What was Africa like when we arrived?

It was difficult, practically impossible, for the group to fully comprehend that stage of

social development. The customs were a tremendous shock to us. This was aggravated by the deficient cultural level that most of us possessed, although to tell the truth it wasn't easy for those who had a higher cultural level, either.

It was a mixture of primitive communism with feudalism, slavery, and patriarchy. Women provided for the sustenance of the family. They cultivated the land, carrying the children on their backs, while the men remained at home. We were very *machista* and weren't used to that; we didn't understand it and we resisted it.

There were also religious problems: the famous *dawa*, the fetish, with different forms and rituals in each zone, in each tribe. For example, when one said, "I am going to eat goat," they would warn us, "No, goats are sacred." We had to eat it and try to make them understand us, but it bothered them. They wound up concluding that we had a universal *dawa*, more powerful than theirs, which made us permanently immune. And therefore the one who had created that *dawa* for us, Fidel Castro, was the greatest *muganga* in the world.<sup>3</sup>

They could not go into combat without the protection of that fetish. They would form a long line to perform it on themselves, and during that time we would occupy defensive positions, turning ourselves into a shield to keep the enemy from arriving and to give them time to finish the ritual of the *dawa*.

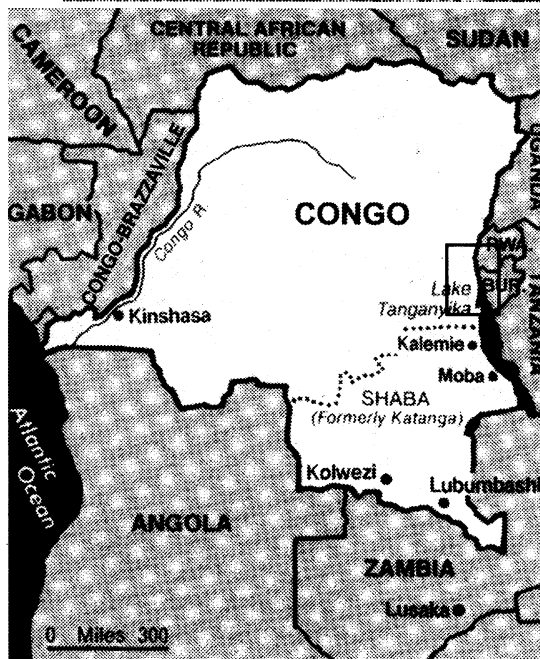
Everything turned out to be very complicated. I, as head of the rear guard, was responsible for organizing the food. There were nearly 3,000 men, and all of them demanded their food be cooked individually. That would have put us in danger of being discovered from thousands of miles away due to the tremendous smoke plume it would have formed. Nevertheless, the best that could be arranged was to have them cook by platoons, 25 men, more or less.

## Collaboration with Congolese fighters

So Che's first task, his permanent struggle, was to persuade us and make us understand this situation: that we were among an extremely backward people, who had been subjugated by the colonialists for more than four centuries.

When one saw the way he acted toward the Africans, one appreciated again Che's greatness, his extreme humility. He believed in the principle that collaboration involved a degree of subordination, although later on the experience in the Congo made him reconsider this tactic in the case of Bolivia, where he was more demanding with Mario Monje.<sup>4</sup>

His disposition to unconditional subordination explains why one could see him sitting in a hut waiting for months to be able to have a meeting with the main leaders of the National Liberation Army of the Congo



Above photo: *Tricontinental*; left photo: Granma Cuban fighters in the Congo, 1965. In the photo above, Harry Villegas (Pombo), stands at right, with Che Guevara seated to the left of him. Box on map indicates approximate location of Che's column.

even in regard to geography. According to initial reports, the mountains came up almost to the shore of Lake Tanganyika, but that wasn't the case. The person who compiled the information had observed the coast at a distance from the lake.

The time came when Che determined that he could no longer wait for the leadership of the movement, and he decided to go to the battle front. Then a different phase began, one of marches, ambushes, attacks. It was in the assault on Front de Force, the most intense battle, that we lost some comrades.

The Cubans thought it wasn't a good idea for us to attack. Che thought so too, but he was flexible, and he accepted the proposal by the head of the front to launch an assault on Front de Force. The coordination of our actions broke down, and they were not carried out as planned. Basically, combat was supposed to begin with the impact of rockets we fired at the retaining wall of the dam at a hydroelectric station. That rocket strike was not carried out, but all the other forces continued their advance, penetrating the sectors of enemy fire.

The enemy troops, dug in at the bridge, had all the access routes well covered with mortars which they had aimed precisely at the roads beforehand. When combat began, it was very easy for them to launch a pinpoint artillery barrage with the mortars, because they had already adjusted their aim, and had practiced several times. They had prepared a good defense. This, together with our lack of coordination and the fact that many [Congolese] combatants retreated spontaneously, forced us to withdraw without having attained our objectives. This resulted in a hard blow for the morale of our people.

In any of the written accounts of Che's presence in Africa — among them for example, the one by General William Gálvez, *El sueño africano del Che*, [Che's African

Continued on Page 9

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-

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."

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Guevara made a three-month visit to Africa December 1964 to March 1965, advancing Cuba's relations with African governments and liberation movements. Among the countries he visited were Algeria, Mali, Congo-Brazzaville, Guinea, Ghana, Dahomey [Benin], Tanzania, and Egypt.

<sup>2</sup> In 1987, Castro told an Italian journalist: "When [Che] joined us in Mexico ... he did ask one thing: 'The only thing I want after the victory of the revolution is to go fight in Argentina ... that no reasons of state will stand in the way.' And I promised him that."

<sup>3</sup> A *muganga* was one who administered the *dawa*, which was supposed to protect a combatant from any kind of danger.

<sup>4</sup> Mario Monje was the general secretary of the Communist Party of Bolivia. He sabotaged the revolutionary struggle led by Che in that country. Che rejected Monje's demand that Monje be the military commander of the guerrilla front.

## Tricontinental Special issue on Che Guevara



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# 'The task of the artist is to provoke new questions'

BY CATHARINA TIRSÉN

STOCKHOLM — "Welcome to the Writers' House here in Stockholm. We hope you will feel at home among all the books here," said Anna-Lena Löfberg, international secretary of the Swedish Writers' Union. She was welcoming Norberto Codina, poet and editor of *La Gaceta de Cuba*, the journal of the National Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC), during his tour in Sweden.

Codina's December 8 presentation to an audience of 25 people at the Writers' House here, as well as his talks at other meetings in Stockholm, included a background on culture in Cuba today. He discussed the cultural explosion of the first years after the 1959 revolution in Cuba, when culture was brought out to all workplaces and schools, including the campaign against illiteracy, to the gray period during the 1970s, influenced by ideas from Eastern Europe. At that time anticultural prejudices and dogmatism among a cultural bureaucracy had been dominant.

"In 1988," Codina said, "a man in his 30s was elected chairman of UNEAC, which we can characterize as symbolic for the 1980s. He did not have a great career behind him, either as an author or as a politician. He was a supporter of Bob Dylan and had long hair. From that moment authors began to take upon themselves their own role and responsibilities." The new chairman was Abel Prieto, recently appointed minister of culture in Cuba.

Then came the economic crises following the collapse of the bureaucratic regimes

in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. "The writers' union lost 90 percent of our agreements for cultural exchanges with other unions internationally. Most of them had been with unions in Eastern Europe. The number of new titles published each year went down from 2,000 to 200." At the same time, Codina explained, "the authors, like never before, themselves became the protagonists of their own affairs. Being used to the paternalism of the state, we now had to find our own ways to save and develop culture as part of the revolution."

Peter Curman, chairman of the Council of Professional Artists and Writers, and earlier chairman of the Swedish Writers Union for eight years, said that the union, formed in 1893, had a rule against poets reciting their own poems at their meetings. "There are literary societies and they play an important role," he explained. "But for the union it is important to see the role of the author in society and to protect freedom of expression, not only political but also cultural freedom." In Sweden today, he said, "We are experiencing what I call a moral panic around child pornography. Of course it is detestable — it has become obligatory to always say something so self-evident. But to limit freedom of speech with laws criminalizing artistic expression, even imaginary pictures, is a serious attack. Many of us would be arrested for our dreams."

Curman pointed to other factors influencing cultural life in a country, like the economic blockades aimed against Cuba and Iraq, and informed Codina about a meeting



Militant/Dag Tirsén

From left: Codina, Anna-Lena Löfberg, international secretary of Swedish Writers' Union, and Eva Björklund, president of Sweden Cuba Friendship Association.

being planned as a parallel conference to a UNESCO-sponsored meeting of cultural ministers in March and April 1998 in Stockholm.

Responding to a question on how *La Gaceta de Cuba* could survive despite the economic squeeze of the 1990s, Codina explained that *La Gaceta* is self-financing, with a budget in Cuban pesos for labor costs and one in dollars to buy paper, ink, and other supplies available only in hard currency. "And the magazine is a lot better now, not just because it is self-financing, but because of changes in the cultural life, changes which have made society and culture richer."

Codina came back to the same theme during a class at the University of Journalism in Stockholm. "In 1989," he said, "we had more than 100 cultural and scientific magazines. They all disappeared in 1990-91. *La Gaceta* resumed publication in 1992 through

the help of donations and self-financing. Now we have around 50 cultural and scientific magazines, half the number compared to 1989, but only one-fifth of the number of copies. But we have more of a debate, a richer exchange of ideas, including on more hot political subjects, and a higher quality." Codina also explained how this was a reflection of an even higher use of freedom of expression, including criticism, that took place in neighborhood meetings when elected delegates report back to their constituencies, or workers assemblies meeting to solve problems in their workplaces.

"The development of culture accelerated in the '90s," Codina told a final public meeting in Stockholm on December 9. "The task of the artist is not to give answers but more to provoke new questions and to be one step ahead of the rhythm of our society. The role of culture in Cuba," said Codina in reply to a question, "is a spiritual task to help us develop as human beings and help us exchange questions. It should reflect society, not be a copy of it."

Codina's six-day visit to Sweden also included poetry readings and public meetings in Malmö and Lund in southern Sweden.

Catharina Tirsén is a member of the Metalworkers Union.

## Internationalist mission in Congo

Continued from Page 8

dream] — one can appreciate Che's very strong convictions, among which was his concept of the role that we Cubans were called on to play: that of educator, of social reformer. That's why he demanded that we always be an example, and he called on us to show great humility, capacity for sacrifice, and understanding of the particular circumstance, of the fact that all problems of attitude had a basis in social psychology, given the cultural difference between the two groups.

Che sought to maintain unity, morale

In the midst of a conjuncture in which a group of comrades wanted to return to Cuba, where there was a lack of internal cohesion among the various groups of the Congolese movement, and where there was distrust within the movement toward the Rwandans,<sup>5</sup> Che sought constantly to bind the different groups together, to maintain discipline and fighting morale, which were indispensable for guaranteeing the unity in struggle necessary to lead the war. This required him to be

firm and demanding; he could not allow anything that might lead to chaos.

Faced with the obligation to solve these conflicts he was involved in, he appealed to persuasion, to convincing people, to his moral authority. He could do so because of the prestige he had gained in Cuba and because of that high degree of rigor, toward himself above all, which made him capable even of punishing himself if he committed an error.

One day we woke up to find a pile of rifles; the combatants had dropped them on the ground. Che called over a Congolese combatant and came to agreement with him on a reprimand, and that he should react by acknowledging that Che was right and picking up his weapon. Che began his talk in French, and the man forgot it all. Then Che told him, "Hey, my friend, hadn't we agreed that you'd pick up the rifle?" The Congolese picked up his weapon and all the others did the same. This gives you an idea of the psychological state that prevailed at that time.

We were already deep within Congolese territory when it was decided out of utter necessity that we should leave. Che analyzed all those internal conflicts. He wanted to go looking for Pierre Mulele, the head of one of the other three battle fronts, who was at the opposite end of the country. He would have had to travel almost to Brazzaville. Che's idea was to cross all the way through Zaire, in an invasion like the one the combatants of the Rebel Army had carried out from eastern Cuba to Las Villas<sup>6</sup> (in the central zone), only bigger — a huge march by nearly a thousand men, crossing a country of approximately three million square kilometers.

One must not forget that the presence of the Cuban column in the Congo (Leopoldville) depended to a certain extent on the policy laid out by the OAU [Organization of African Unity]<sup>7</sup> at its meeting in Addis Ababa, of providing support only to national liberation movements, and not to internal struggles. By November 1965 there was an internal change, in which the dictator Moïse Tshombe<sup>8</sup> (the one behind Patrice Lumumba's murder) was deposed. So the OAU reconsidered our presence there.

Che was authorized to decide whether we

would leave, and in compliance with the mandate of the OAU he prepared for us to withdraw in the most organized fashion possible. But at the same time he strove to find someone in charge of the movement who would sign a document requesting the withdrawal of our forces. He wanted to make it very clear that we Cubans were not leaving the Congo voluntarily, but rather that we were compelled to do so by the conjuncture in the country.

No one appeared who would sign the document. We began to retreat toward the lake, under great pressure, evading the pursuit of airlifted troops. I remember Che's words about psychologically avoiding the idea of defeat, about how the loss of combativity eroded morale and became our most dangerous enemy. He told us about a Russian novel, in which a guerrilla detachment suffered those effects when it came up against the reality of a setback.

Our departure was quite complicated. The plan was to cross the lake before dawn in two small boats that Captain Lawton (Changa) had obtained. But that was impossible, and we had to leave by day. Bright sunlight caught us in the middle of that freshwater sea, and the people were utterly exhausted.

We had installed a cannon on the boats, which we could not fire because the recoil itself would have destroyed the boat and wiped out all the men riding in it. Nevertheless, this stratagem served to convince the Congolese enemy, when they started to circle around us in two rapid Petit Vedette boats with Belgian crews, that we were capable of fighting. They avoided a confrontation, and let us pass. If they had decided to confront us, they could have cut us all to pieces with four shots. At the end of the day's journey, we got out.

Today I believe that the presence of Che in the Congo played a very important role from the psychological standpoint. It really contributed in a very positive way, and at the same time it had a powerful symbolism. The most important thing is the ideological message, the revolutionary message of fraternal cooperation, of sacrifice that he brought there, expressing the humanistic essence of the Cuban revolution and of Fidel.

**This week's article concludes the *Militant's* series "Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution." If you missed any of the articles, you can still order the issues of the *Militant* in which they appeared for \$1.50 each. Use the list below to order by issue number, and send your request together with payment to: The *Militant*, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.**

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No. 37 — Central goal of socialism is the creation of new man — interview with Orlando Borrego

No. 38 — Guevara: 'Human beings are no longer beasts of burden' — speech by Enrique Oltuski

No. 39 — 'I see Che and his men as reinforcements, as a detachment of invincible combatants' — speech by Fidel Castro

No. 40 — 'This was the work of a giant' — interview with Arturo Guzmán

No. 41 — 'Che Guevara was energetically devoted to anti-imperialist solidarity' — interview with Manuel Piñero (part I)

No. 42 — 'Aim was to spread anti-imperialist fight' — interview with Manuel Piñero (part II)

No. 43 — 'I am daughter of an internationalist' — interview with Aleida Guevara March

No. 44 — 'Urbano' speaks on experiences with Che in Bolivia — interview with Leonardo Tamayo

No. 45 — Che in the Congo: 'a return to our internationalist roots' — article from *Trabajadores*

No. 46 — Pombo speaks on Che's leadership in Africa — article by Harry Villegas

<sup>5</sup> A contingent of Rwandan volunteers was participating in the Congolese struggle.

<sup>6</sup> A reference to the Rebel Army's westward march from the Sierra Maestra in eastern Cuba to the central province of Las Villas. It was conducted between August and October of 1958 by the columns led by Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos. That effort helped seal the fate of the Batista dictatorship.

<sup>7</sup> The OAU, which had originally called for world support to the struggle against the Congo regime led by Moïse Tshombe and its Belgian and mercenary backers, changed its position when Tshombe was ousted October 13, 1965, and the new regime pledged to send the mercenaries home.

<sup>8</sup> Patrice Lumumba was the leader of the Congolese struggle for independence from Belgium and the country's first prime minister in 1960. With the backing of the U.S. and Belgian governments, Moïse Tshombe led a war against the Lumumba government that was aided by United Nations "peacekeeping" troops. Lumumba was murdered by Tshombe's forces in January 1961.

# Nationalism permeates opponents of Kyoto treaty

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

Nationalism has become the common banner of a wide array of social forces in the United States — from businessmen, to rightist politicians and pundits, to top officials of the AFL-CIO — in their campaign against the Kyoto treaty on “global warming.”

“The Kyoto treaty is manifestly unfair to the United States because Third World nations, including Mexico, China, Indonesia, India and Brazil, would not be subject to the emissions restrictions imposed on us,” said Phyllis Schlafly, a right-wing propagandist, in a column in the December 10 *Conservative Chronicle*. “That would accelerate the flight of U.S. industries and jobs to those countries.” The column was headlined “Clinton may get toasted by global warming.”

“One option being discussed is ‘emissions trading,’ i.e., to allow industries that find the emissions limits prohibitively expensive to buy emissions permits from the Third World,” Schlafly wrote. “That’s just a devious type of foreign giveaway and would redistribute U.S. wealth to other countries (which is probably the real purpose of the treaty anyway).”

Many trade union officials who campaigned for Washington not to sign such an agreement used similar arguments in recent articles, speeches, and advertisements.

The United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) ran an ad this fall along with other groups titled “Global Warming Treaty Leaves American Workers Out in the Cold.” Top union officials, including UMWA president Cecil Roberts, have been campaigning on this along with the coal bosses.

“President Roberts and Peabody Coal Co. President Pete Lilly were spokespersons in September at a joint labor/management

press conference to announce the release of two new studies highlighting the treaty’s adverse economic effect on industrialized workers in the U.S. and other developed nations,” said an article in the September/October issue of the *United Mine Workers Journal*. “The pair also denounced the treaty’s total exemption of developing nations like China, India and Mexico from the limit on ‘greenhouse gas’ emissions.”

“This treaty is all pain and no gain. It will have a devastating effect not only on the coal industry, but on every industrial sector,” Roberts said, according to the *UMW Journal*. “For the nation, it means lost jobs, lower wages, higher energy costs and a ballooning trade deficit.... We need to question why negotiators of this treaty aren’t looking out for the interests of American workers.”

Representatives of big business have also been campaigning along similar lines. “Many powerful industries have lobbied intensely against mandatory reductions in carbon dioxide, saying it will put the U.S. at a disadvantage and lead to thousands of layoffs of American workers,” said an article in the December 11 *Wall Street Journal*. If energy prices shoot up as a result of stricter limits on carbon dioxide emissions, it continued, “six big U.S. industries — aluminum, cement, chemicals, oil, paper and steel — could suffer big job cuts, concluded an analysis by the U.S. Energy Department.”

U.S. president William Clinton has defended Washington’s signature on the Kyoto accord. At the same time, vice-president Albert Gore said the White House will not present the treaty for ratification to the U.S. Senate until more “developing countries” sign on to it. He added that the agreement was a vindication for the administration’s “market based approach,” according to the December 12 *Financial Times* of London.

Gore was referring to Clinton’s plan for a system of tradable emissions permits, which would allow governments that voluntarily reduce emissions below a certain level to sell the difference as unused “right” to pollute. This is the scheme now being used between companies inside the United States under the Clean Air Act of 1990. Washington is obviously the top prospective buyer of such permits. This pollution exchange proposal was strongly opposed by Beijing. It was left open for further talks set for next November.

While the conference in Kyoto, Japan, was touted as having something to do with protecting the world environment, the proposals and debate at the meeting were about jockeying between the major capitalist powers to promote each of their national interests in competition with other regimes. Under the deal that was finally negotiated, the European Union would reduce its emissions by 8 percent from the 1990 level by the year 2010; Washington by 7 percent; Tokyo by 6 percent. Some smaller countries face lesser reductions and others none at all. The U.S. Senate voted unanimously in July not to ratify any agreement that doesn’t include emissions reductions by China and Third World countries. Representatives of many semicolonial countries in Kyoto argued that

## Don’t answer siren call of economic nationalism

Continued from Page 14

Young Socialist participation in the No! To APEC Coalition was discussed extensively at the YS convention in Montreal. In the December 1 issue favorable treatment is given to quotes from a Vancouver Young Socialist who participated in an APEC Youth Forum, organized as part of the APEC People’s Summit.

These anti-APEC activities were orchestrated by the trade union bureaucracy and marked by the nationalist campaign to “protect jobs” in their own countries. The anti-communist character to these actions was also evident. On television newscasts in Canada and the United States, among the most common slogans on placards was, “No Trade with Tyrants!” referring to China and Vietnam, two countries where workers’ revolutions expropriated the capitalist class, as well as “Free Tibet!” a demand that helps ready military aggression against China.

By promoting participation in these activities, the *Militant* appeared to be part of the anti-APEC campaign. Participating in these activities made it seem that socialists were part of the “communist wing” of the labor officialdom’s efforts, no matter how vocally they spoke against the chauvinist course of the campaign.

Moreover, these activities did not attract the kind of militant workers or revolutionary-minded youth that *Militant* supporters strive to reach with our opinions. Engaging in debates on issues like this with no regard for the class character of the forces involved has little point. Rather, the goal of class-conscious workers should be to find other fighters who can be attracted to the revolutionary road forward for the working class and with whom we can act together in struggle.

Nor can participating in these kinds of anti-NAFTA and anti-APEC activities — conferences, forums, rallies or petition campaigns — be justified on the grounds that they will help us find out what’s happening among the labor officials and their supporters. The central features of their chauvinist, protectionist campaign are already clear. The campaign is reactionary to the core — as reactionary as the course of those promoting NAFTA, APEC, etc. — and socialist workers don’t want to have anything to do with it. “Probes” to learn more can only

serve to legitimize it. Instead, we need to keep our eyes on the working-class ranks on the job, at the plant gates, at union meetings, and on picket lines.

### Get out of bourgeois framework

The Twin Cities Militant Labor Forum, which the *Militant* highlighted on the front page, had the same problem as the coverage of the anti-APEC protests. The meeting was presented as a panel of three opponents of “fast track” and NAFTA — a professor who is a leader of the Fair Trade Coalition; an executive board member of a local union; and myself, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of St. Paul, Minnesota, in the recent election. This lineup gave the appearance that the three speakers had something in common — participation in the anti-NAFTA campaign — and that we were debating our different opinions within that context, sort of like a family dispute.

The Twin Cities forum, like participation in the Vancouver protests, fed the notion that socialist workers somehow have more in common with the anti-NAFTA forces than we do with those beating the drums for NAFTA and APEC. But we are no more anti-APEC or anti-NAFTA than pro-APEC or pro-NAFTA.

The biggest problem with participating in these kinds of activities is that class-conscious workers get mired in the framework of a debate occurring within capitalist politics. There isn’t a single sentence or slogan that gets at what communists stand for on this. We don’t “campaign” for or against the ways the ruling families choose to organize their trade. Both positions are camps of the capitalist rulers that promote different ways to use Washington’s imperial power to extend domination over Latin America and Asia.

When workers try to engage the debate from the standpoint of for or against imperialist trade pacts, the capitalist rulers always win because they draw us into arguing for or against how the capitalists should better run and organize their system. If communists were in Congress, they would vote against U.S. participation in NAFTA, APEC, or any other military or economic pact — not because we “reject imperialist trade pacts,” but because we oppose the U.S.

government speaking in the name of the whole nation as it engineers moves to wield its mighty power. Similarly communists in the legislature would vote against the government’s budget as a whole, not just against its “war budget.”

One of the dangerous consequences of adaptation to the campaign of the trade union officialdom, including through the pages of the *Militant*, is that it contributes to disarming working-class militants and revolutionary-minded youth in the face of Washington’s war preparations. The chauvinist campaign by the mossbacks who sit astride the labor movement and the assorted petty-bourgeois radicals is part of the political preparations that the exploiting class uses to try to drag the working class into war. The capitalist rulers don’t just count on demonizing the adversaries against whom they are preparing an attack; they also bank on economic arguments transmitted by their lieutenants in the labor movement, the union bureaucracy. Their goal is to convince working people that they have common national interests with the employers that stand above class differences. So we’re fed demagoguery that to protect jobs in “our own country,” we need to support “our employers,” including in the arena of trade.

Most important, even in the absence of a war drive, when workers come to think of themselves as “Americans” first, last, and always we are hamstrung to fight the bosses and advance the struggle for a just society that puts human needs first, not profits. This means defending the interests of our class, the working class, that has no borders, not the interests of “our nation” or “our country.”

After the Clinton administration failed to get “fast track” authority through the latest session of Congress, union officials throughout the country hailed it as a victory and opportunity for working people. But a setback for Clinton isn’t automatically a gain for workers. To the contrary, working people are more disoriented as a result of the strengthening of the reactionary, protectionist campaign of the labor officials than they were before. Working people have been softened up a little more for Washington’s attempts to ready itself for war, whether against Iraq, Russia, north Korea, China,

Cuba, or some other country that it wants to bring to heel.

### ‘Sweat shop’ rallies promote ‘America First’

Some sections of the labor bureaucracy and their supporters attempt to put a social veneer on their arguments. They contend that protectionist measures are necessary to safeguard the environment and to promote better working conditions for workers in other countries. The conferences and other activities against sweatshops, for example, that are being organized throughout this country in recent months are part of this effort. The Nov./Dec. 1997 issue of the *NACLA Reporter* describes an October 4 action in New York against sweatshops. Protest organizers, the article states, hope that “once parents know that those 101 Dalmations pajamas are made by Third World sweatshop workers ... they will shop elsewhere, pressuring CEOs and investors to rethink their global practices.”

“Elsewhere” is transparently “America.” In the November 24 *Militant* article cited earlier on the Twin Cities forum, I’m quoted as saying that many union officials look at workers of Mexico and other countries “as victims and not as fellow combatants.” How the labor fakers see workers in other countries is not the central matter here (many actually view workers here and abroad as trash, pure and simple). The key problem is their nationalist campaign — they try to convince workers to think of themselves as “Americans” above all.

Underneath all the demagoguery of protesting pollution, child labor, and abysmal wages one theme emerges — protect jobs in the United States and buy “Made in America” products. The logic of the argument is: environmental protection is so inadequate in Mexico, or whatever country, that we should make sure U.S. companies don’t set up operations there and hire Mexican workers. Or working conditions are so bad there — no unions, long working days, unsanitary conditions — that it would be better to make sure those jobs stay in the United States. One way to do this, they contend, is fight against imports from other countries. This is arrogant chauvinism

Continued on Page 11

## GLOBAL WARMING TREATY LEAVES AMERICAN WORKERS OUT IN THE COLD



### New Studies Conclude Proposal Will Have High Cost for America

The upcoming Kyoto Treaty will have a high cost for America. It will require the U.S. to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 8 percent from 1990 levels by the year 2010. This is a significant reduction, but it is not enough to prevent global warming. The treaty also requires the U.S. to pay for the development of new technologies to reduce emissions. This is a huge cost for America. The treaty also requires the U.S. to pay for the development of new technologies to reduce emissions. This is a huge cost for America.

**The Facts Are Clear**

The Kyoto Treaty will have a high cost for America. It will require the U.S. to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 8 percent from 1990 levels by the year 2010. This is a significant reduction, but it is not enough to prevent global warming. The treaty also requires the U.S. to pay for the development of new technologies to reduce emissions. This is a huge cost for America. The treaty also requires the U.S. to pay for the development of new technologies to reduce emissions. This is a huge cost for America.

**Don't Sign a Treaty That Asks Too Much and Produces Too Little**

Ad against “global warming” pact by coalition including UMWA officialdom promotes American nationalism.



# TWA walkout

Continued from front page  
to cancel another 100 flights."

Throughout the year the union has been at odds with the company. IAM officials have encouraged union members to oppose the proposals contained in the contract offer. At one point earlier in the year the union called for the resignation of Gerald Gitner, TWA's chief executive officer, accusing him of dismantling the company.

Another job action, involving IAM mechanics, took place on December 6 and disrupted TWA operations for 45 minutes. This action was in response to a decision by TWA, according to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, "to stop paying workers overtime for staying on the job during their half-hour lunch period."

The December 9 walkout began hours after a meeting bogged down between TWA management and the IAM negotiating team. At the meeting, TWA outlined company plans to lay off more machinists from maintenance operations.

The following day, TWA, the IAM, and a federal mediator met to get contract talks going again. The airline's pilots are also negotiating a new contract.

The walkout had a major impact in the city, as TWA is one of the largest employers here. It was one of the main items on the TV networks and front page news. The lead story in the December 10 edition of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* ran a banner headline: "Walkout Cripples TWA Flights."

The stoppage sent the company reeling at one of its busiest times. Many flights, for example, were forced to make U-turns in the sky. "TWA is mending fences with customers" was the front-page headline the following day. "This company, this year, has made remarkable progress in its customer service, and its product. That's what makes this so disturbing," Walker added.

The company had put financial resources into a major ad campaign, in which TWA corporate customers touted the airline's on-time record and special incentives for corporate executives.

Word of the work stoppage spread rapidly. In New York area airports, including Kennedy's JFK, which is TWA's other major hub, the walkout was a big topic of discussion. Most workers were positive and supportive of the action taken in St. Louis.

The New York area airports have been hard hit by company layoffs. In fact, some of the workers who participated in the work stoppage were originally from New York. They took jobs in St. Louis after their positions were axed.

New York's JFK International Airport is a bone of contention between the union and company. TWA has stated that it wants to downsize the company to be a single-hub airline centered in St. Louis by closing the maintenance bases in New York and Los Angeles. If this were implemented, thousands of jobs would be eliminated.

*Frank Forrestal is a member of the United Transportation Union in Chicago. Nancy Rosenstock is a member of the IAM and works at TWA in New York. Jim Garrison, a member of the United Auto Workers in St. Louis, contributed to this article.*

## Haitian workers demand back pay



Public workers in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, protest outside mayor's office December 8, demanding two years of unpaid back wages. The city mayor claims the local government did not pay workers because they failed to receive federal funds.

## Indiana tire strikers hold the line

BY GARY BOYERS  
AND ALYSON KENNEDY

WOODBURN, Indiana — "If I have to lose my job for the cause of the future I'm willing to do it." That's how Cecil Sherrill, a member of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 715 with 18 years seniority at Uniroyal Goodrich's tire plant here, explained his outlook on the current strike in face of recent company threats to close the plant if a settlement is not reached.

Sherrill spoke to *Militant* reporters while doing picket duty at the plant's main entrance. He said he was fighting to preserve what the union had won for him, his co-workers, and his family over the years. Company officials sent a letter to striking workers dated December 6 threatening to close the plant if an agreement is not reached within a few weeks in the walkout that be-

gan October 24. "Whether or not this plant remains open is up to you and your bargaining committee," the letter says, according to the *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*.

Many workers expect a long fight. Although the first negotiations between the USWA and Michelin, the owner of Uniroyal Goodrich, in almost a month took place December 4, they went nowhere.

*Militant* reporters found strikers determined and in good morale. Many vehicles passing by picket lines honked their horns in solidarity. Terry Bourget and Dale Simmons were with a group of strikers next to the plant's rail line. Each had more than 20 years seniority, the bulk of it earned at Uniroyal's plant in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. That facility closed in 1992, and 140 workers there accepted job transfers to Woodburn.

"We gave up cost-of-living [raises], a week of vacation, some holidays, and had \$30 taken out of our weekly checks. They said they needed to make plant improvements. In 1992 they shut down the plant anyway," said Bourget, a module operator. Simmons, a tire builder, explained that the \$30 for "plant improvements to save jobs" continued to be deducted following the announcement of the plant shutdown, up until the final paychecks issued in Eau Claire.

While most of the Wisconsin workers transferred to Indiana moved to this area, a number of workers kept their homes in Wisconsin, rented apartments in the Woodburn area, and return home every two weeks or so. Bourget, Simmons, and two other strikers made the nine-hour trip to picket in northeast Indiana.

Local 715 president Ray Wiseman told the *Fort Wayne News Sentinel* that Uniroyal Goodrich wants to toss out written work rules and the discipline code. The bosses want the right to change rules as they please with no notice — even in the middle of a shift. Picket Dave Sorlie explained the discipline issue to the *Militant*. "The company's attitude on discipline is we are guilty until proven innocent. We believe we are innocent until proven guilty," he said. Wiseman said he suspects that management wants to weed out older workers, suspected "troublemakers," and union officers. The local president is currently contesting his own firing.

Pickets outlined some of the proposed new work rules to *Militant* reporters. One would prohibit workers occasionally trading shifts. Another would give supervisors control over workers' vacation scheduling, regardless of seniority. Last spring, workers were told they could no longer bring coffee or pop onto the job. The only liquid allowed would be water, and this would only be permitted from June through September, despite the extremely high temperatures on many jobs. Work rule changes around incentive rates and job classifications could cost workers as much as \$5 per hour.

Only two of the 1,200 strikers have crossed the picket line. A December 5 meeting called by one of them, an electrician, to encourage others to do likewise was a miserable failure. Woodburn's mayor, a state senator, what the *Journal Gazette* described as "community members," and some strikers showed up — about 50 people in all. Several strikers that went voiced support for the union and many of them left before the scab's wife passed out memos explaining how someone could resign from the union and thus avoid the fine assessed for crossing the picket line. No one volunteered to scab. Eleven northeast Indiana United Auto Workers locals and other AFL-CIO members donated \$9,642 to Local 715 during a support rally December 8.

*Gary Boyers is a member of USWA Local 1299 in River Rouge, Michigan. Lisa Potash and Jay Ressler contributed to this article.*

## Labor tops walk workers into trap

Continued from Page 10

through and through, and undercuts rather than welds international solidarity.

### Buchanan's fascist trap

Increasingly the labor bureaucracy and an entire spectrum of petty-bourgeois radicals are walking working people into the "America First" framework of right-wing politicians like Patrick Buchanan. "If I sound like [AFL-CIO President John] Sweeney on the issue of protecting the wages of our workers and keeping manufacturing at home, it is because on this issue, I agree with the AFL-CIO leader," Buchanan wrote in a September 24 column. To my knowledge no refutation of this by Sweeney or any other top AFL-CIO official has appeared.

Far from providing an effective political answer or fight against the fascist-type threat posed by Buchanan and his ilk, the labor bureaucrats and their boosters help grease the skids for the rightist "radicals" to get a broader hearing within the working class. Buchanan is a more consistent, more explicit, and more radical proponent of nationalism.

In a November 19 column Buchanan pronounced the defeat of "fast track" as the "first triumph of blazing new nationalism" and predicted that "when the coming tsunami of Asian exports hits America's shores, flooding our manufacturing base, and drowning industries and factories, the day of the economic nationalist will be at hand." Buchanan rejoices that "The New World Order evanesces as the old world of nation-states reappears. Multilateralism has been discredited; a new era of American unilateralism is upon us."

After the "craven" response of Washington's imperialist rivals and the UN Security Council to the Iraqi government last month, he writes, Washington now stands alone. Increasingly Buchanan and the ultrarightists he speaks for are assuming the

leadership of the capitalist war party in the United States. Buchanan has sometimes been referred to as "isolationist" or even "antiwar" for positions such as his opposition to the U.S. government's policy during Washington's assault on Iraq in 1991 or the deployment of U.S. troops in Bosnia under the aegis of the United Nations. But the opposite is the case. Buchanan will mobilize the rightist movement he is building to demand Washington use all its imperial might to support "our boys."

But he's determined to win the war at home first against the working class, as a precondition to do the job right. And then America must do it, unilaterally! "Indeed, if deterrence — the threat of massive retaliation — worked against Stalin and Mao, why would it not work against an Iraq with no navy and air force and a GDP that is but 1 percent of our own?" Buchanan wrote in a column in the December 3 *Conservative Chronicle*, a weekly compilation of articles by conservative and right-wing writers published Hampton, Iowa. Foreign policy, ultimately, is the fundamental question underlying the ultranationalism of the incipient fascist movement.

In a column in the December 17 *Conservative Chronicle*, titled "New nationalism overtakes both left and right," Samuel Francis spoke explicitly of the fledgling alliance between ultrarightists and labor tops in campaigning against fast track, indicating that the ultrarightists have emerged stronger as a result. Referring to a *New Republic* article by Peter Beinart on the "nationalist revolt," Francis said: "When Mr. Beinart speaks of nationalism, he mainly means economic nationalism, the belief promoted by Ross Perot and Pat Buchanan in recent years, that America as a nation possesses an economic interest that 'free trade,' favored by both the orthodox left and the orthodox right, doesn't reflect."

He continued, "But nationalism promises

to go a bit further than just trade issues.

"Nationalism also underlies the popular revolt against uncontrolled immigration, not only for economic reasons but also for what are basically cultural ones.... The cultural dimension of the revolt against immigration also happens to connect with the domestic culture war waged by the religious right and its allies."

On economic and trade issues, the right-wing columnist noted, "protectionists of the right can gain support from allies on the left like Ralph Nader, labor unions and environmentalists. But the protectionists of the left usually run for the hills when their allies on the right start invoking non-economic, cultural and political nationalist themes."

Concentrating his fire on his bourgeois opponents who pushed for fast track, the writer concluded, "They have a good reason to fear, because the nationalism that is beginning to unite Americans of both left and right is the most serious threat to their power yet to appear, and there is no sign that it is going to stop."

This underlines the stakes in doing everything possible to show fellow workers and revolutionary-minded youth a different course, an internationalist perspective, and to have nothing to do with the conferences, forums, and protests of the labor bureaucrats and other peddlers of American nationalism in the labor movement. Socialist workers need to discuss with fighters what capitalism and imperialism are and the need for working people to wage a fight for international solidarity that can lay the basis for the working class wresting power from the capitalist rulers.

Only then will capitalist governments in Washington, Ottawa, Tokyo, London, and other imperial centers be stopped from using their power through trade pacts, embargoes, bail-out schemes, and other such policies to deepen the exploitation and oppression of working people around the world.

# Currency crisis deepens in southeast Asia

Continued from front page

ing. "There is no improvement," he complained, adding that "the situation is becoming worse."

While the Asean conference was meeting, several currencies — including the Philippine peso, the Thai baht, the Malaysian ringgit, and the Indonesian rupiah — dropped to record lows against the U.S. dollar.

The value of the rupiah has plunged 52 percent since beginning of the year. Jakarta shut down 16 banks as part of the austerity measures demanded by the IMF in exchange for a \$40 billion loan agreement on October 8. The regime has imposed massive job cuts already — some 420,000 workers — and the number is expected to reach 1 million by next year. Nervousness over mounting "social unrest" is echoed in the big-business media each week.

If workers take to the streets, political stability in the region "could be shattered," the December 22 *Business Week* reported. "Already the numbers of unemployed are alarming."

Commenting on the 1995 "bailout" of the Mexico where the living standards of working people dropped 30 percent, David Roche, an economist at London Independent Strategy Ltd., told the financial weekly a similar decline in Asia would spark "nothing short of a revolution."

Mass protests have begun to unfold in Indonesia, the region's largest country with 200 million people. Workers have gone on strike to demand wage hikes at some of the country's largest companies, such as the Gudang Garam cigarette factory in east Java, where 40,000 people work.

"It's brewing in the region," said a union activist from Sumatra. "Prices are going up and wages are as miserable as ever."

Some job actions are expected in December and January as workers demand companies pay a special bonus during the celebration of Ramadan, the Muslim month of fasting. "Normally many companies do not want to pay the bonus and that is when workers strike. This year it will be much worse," explained Teten Masduki, an attorney who represents union activists in labor disputes.

Many unionists say strikes and protest actions are also likely to escalate on the eve of the presidential elections in March. In-

donesian president Suharto told the military during an October 5 parade to be prepared for any unrest. Gen. Faisal Tanjung, chief of the armed forces, pledged to crush any action that would disrupt the elections.

Suharto, who has ruled Indonesia for more than 30 years, came to power in a coup after more than half a million people were massacred by the military in 1965.

## Loan default still a threat in Seoul

Meanwhile, in south Korea, the possibility of a general default on foreign loans has not diminished. Government officials estimate some \$15 billion in short-term debt is due by the end of December. The country's useable foreign-exchange reserves have dwindled to a paltry \$10 billion, and possibly less. The \$57 billion imperialist-imposed "bailout" has not stanching the financial crisis there.

"Although Korean officials are hoping that some of the short-term debt will be rolled over, the likelihood of that is questionable because December is when annual accounts are settled as banks call in loans to balance their books," wrote John Burton in the December 15 *Financial Times*.

"If foreign lenders refuse to lend money to Korea, then we have no choice but to default," asserted Cho Soon, president of the governing party and head of the Central Bank. "How close is Korea to the possibility of a default?" he asked during a December 13 press conference. "I really do not know." Cho implied that the risk was 50-50, the December 14 *New York Times* reported.

With the specter of loan defaults to imperialist banks looming, President Kim Young Sam called the three leading presidential candidates to his mansion for meeting December 13, where he forced them to sign an agreement promising support for the IMF "bailout" program. "By observing the agreement with the IMF, we will enhance the nation's international credit standing," the statement said.

Two of the candidates had called for renegotiating the IMF deal. In posturing for the December 18 elections, they had hoped to tap nationalist sentiments and the wide-

spread resentment in south Korea against the IMF austerity demands. Kim Dae Jung, the front-runner in the race, has promised a six-month moratorium on layoffs if he is elected. But the IMF program calls for "labor market flexibility" that will force Seoul to impose more job cuts.

A layer of south Korea's capitalist class is promoting protectionist measures, including a "buy Korean" campaign and promoting token measures such as individuals selling gold jewelry to the government.

In spite of these moves, Washington and other imperialist powers succeeded in imposing further measures to pry open foreign markets in a deal struck December 13 under the auspices of the World Trade Organization. The agreement, signed by the governments of 100 countries, commits them to dismantle barriers to foreign ownership of banks and security firms. The pact includes a provision that permits the U.S. government to revoke "most-favored nation" trading rights — a promise of low tariffs in the United States — if regimes block foreign investments.

U.S. trade representative Charlene Barshefsky and U.S. treasury secretary Robert Rubin issued a joint statement declaring the trade accord would "open financial services markets to an unprecedented degree and provide lasting benefits to US industry,

the US economy and the global economy."

While the Clinton administration aims to use the trade deal and the Asia currency crisis to gain a competitive edge for the U.S. rulers against their imperialist rivals, U.S. rightist politicians have ratcheted up their nationalist clamor several notches.

"For America, Asia's devaluations are going to have a devastating impact," said ultrarightist politician Patrick Buchanan in an article published in the December 17 *Conservative Chronicle*. "Major targets of Korea and Japan will include the U.S. steel industry and that 60 percent of the U.S. auto industry still held by GM, Ford, and Chrysler. Both industries may soon appreciate how Japan, Inc., took down America's TV manufacturers."

Buchanan said Washington "could still protect U.S. manufacturers and workers from being swamped by Asian imports" by imposing "temporary tariffs to offset any sudden advantage Asian manufacturers have been given by their cheapened currencies." In the same issue of that weekly, right-wing columnist Phyllis Schlafly declared, "The questions for Americans is, are we going to sacrifice our right of self-government and let the big U.S. banks and multinationals decide that American taxpayers must cover the losses of foreigners' stupid loans and investments?"

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**Film Showing.** Documentary on the story of a hard-fought 1970 strike by Appalachian coal miners. Fri., Dec. 26. Light buffet, 7 p.m. Film (and popcorn) 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

### San Francisco

**Korea Bailout: How Washington Will Attempt to make Korean Workers Pay.** Speaker: Marklyn Wilson, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Transportation Union. Fri., Dec. 26, 7:30 p.m. 3284 23rd St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

### MASSACHUSETTS

#### Boston

**Celebrate 39 Years of the Cuban Revolution.** Speaker: Ted Leonard, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Dec. 27. 4 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

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**Touching** — Apparently assuming we were short on last-minute gift ideas, a reader sent a sheaf of ads for Princess Diana memorabilia, including porcelain dolls with “au-



Harry Ring

thentic” garment reproductions, a calendar, and a plate featuring an original painting and platinum border trim.

**A real holiday gift** — In En-

gland, the Karl Marx Memorial Library was granted £359,000 (nearly \$600,000) in national lottery profits. The library is housed in the London home where Marx, and later Lenin, worked. The library said it will use the grant to catalog its 150,000 books and pamphlets and put them on the Internet.

**Oh** — A study of the salaries of Senate staff members found that staffers who are Black get 76 cents for every dollar paid to whites. Latinos fared slightly better. A report said the study “attributed the disparity to a higher percentage of minorities in lower-paying jobs.”

**Blood-soaked Q&A** — Discussing why George Bush aborted the

invasion of Iraq, *USA Today* columnist Richard Benedetto said the ex-president “worried about media criticism that could have built as allied troops attacked retreating Iraqi soldiers along what became known as the ‘Highway of Death’ leading from Kuwait to Iraq.” He cites a question posed by Bush: “If we continued the fighting another day would we be accused of slaughter of Iraqis who were simply trying to escape?”

**Capitalism?** — According to one survey 52 percent of adults believe there is a hell.

**A slice** — Mikhail Gorbachev, who presided over the collapse of the Soviet regime, has made a Pizza

Hut commercial. He sits at a table with his granddaughter, while other patrons argue about him. Finally, to a standing ovation, one declares, “Because of him we have things like the Pizza Hut.” Reportedly, he’ll pocket nearly a million. The commercial won’t be shown in Russia, where his name is mud.

**2\$\$\$ A.D.** — Trademarks have been approved for 117 products that include “millennium” in the name, and 1,500 containing “2000.”

Thousands more are pending, including an offer by Miller beer to be the “Official Sponsor of the Millennium,” and *Playboy*, which wants to be “Official Magazine of

the Millennium.”

**Shopping tip** — Spend \$3,000 at Neiman-Marcus and you’re enrolled in the In Circle club. Spend \$300,000 and get a free flight to France. Rack up a million points and choose any global destination.

**Whatever turns you on** — “Her personal dream ... getaway is to check herself and her husband into the \$2,800-per-night Charles Pierre suite (her dogs like the terrace) at the Pierre, dine well ... and shop relentlessly.” — *USA Today* interview with Baroness Penelope von Kalinowski, operator of a Los Angeles celebrity-oriented travel agency.

## Socialists counter U.S. war drive in unions, 1937

The following excerpt is from *Teamster Bureaucracy*, the final book in a series by Farrell Dobbs, who was a leader of the Teamsters struggles in Minnesota in the 1930s and later national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. This selection is from the section of the book titled “Trade Union Campaign Against War.” The book is copyright © by Pathfinder Press, and reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY FARRELL DOBBS

Imperialist rivals were encroaching upon territories abroad which this country’s ruling class, with its global interests, had staked out for exploitation. Among those compet-

### BOOK OF THE WEEK

ing governmental gangs, two loomed as the most formidable opponents of their Wall Street counterparts. One operated from within Hitlerite Germany; the other had its base in Japan, where a militarist regime held power. Both had their eyes on the superprofits United States banking combines and monopoly corporations were raking in from foreign holdings; Germany and Japan were out to grab a larger piece of the action.

It was in this rivalry between imperialist cutthroats that Roosevelt was dedicating himself to the protection of “American interests.” But that wasn’t what he talked about during the 1936 elections.

Instead, he campaigned on the basis of his phony image, built up during his first term, as a champion of the exploited masses. Then, after being returned to office, he began to apply his real line in foreign policy. Budgetary provisions were made for increased military spending, using the argument that such action would expand industrial hiring and reduce the jobless rolls. At the same time Washington employed every available propaganda device in an effort to justify the handling of foreign affairs in a manner that led toward war.

At that point General Drivers Local 544, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, set out to organize trade union opposition to Roosevelt’s preparations for use of the workers as imperialist cannon fodder. Local 544, an affiliate of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, AFL, was led by Trotskyist militants. They were revolutionary socialists, whose training and experience enabled them to grasp the real meaning of the scheme being cooked up in Washington....

**Union paper speaks against war drive**

Fortunately, there was an excellent vehicle at hand to undertake that beginning. The Minneapolis Teamsters had a weekly paper, the *Northwest Organizer*, published initially by the General Drivers Union. In 1936 it had been made the official organ of the Teamsters Joint Council, a body composed of representatives from all IBT locals in the city. Its editor was Miles Dunne, one of Local 544’s central leaders....

The educational phase of the campaign was opened through an editorial in the April 22, 1937, issue of the paper. It was pegged to the upcoming celebration of May Day, the international working-class holiday which had come into being in direct relationship to class battles during the latter part of the nineteenth century....

“May Day will continue to express the interlocking nature of economics and politics,” the editorial said in part. “But although puny politicians may try to turn the occasion into a common election rally, the workers will be turning their attention to much broader and sounder implications, namely independent working-class action. Proper economic subjects such as hours, wages, jobs, relief and organization, will be amplified by consideration of political relations such as civil liberties, war and the other struggles ahead. . . .

“Wars and rumors of war are . . . necessary implements of great capitalist competitors. Not one of them can remain peaceable but each must strive until his power is broken, to gain world-wide supremacy by ruthless terror and destruction. Here, too, petty politics are of no avail. Why? Because government, ‘the executive committee of the ruling class,’ must not only conduct war for its master, but must prepare the way by subduing all opposition and assuring

‘unity at all costs’ at home. May Day therefore calls for renewed defense of workers’ rights.”

Some weeks later, in July 1937, the Japanese military invaded North China. Shortly thereafter two United States soldiers stationed in the war zone were wounded, and the capitalist propagandists seized upon the incident to build up anti-Japanese sentiment here in this country. At that point the Teamster paper set out to counter the jingoistic line, opening with an editorial which asserted:

“The reason the United States has its garrisons in China and its warships in the Far Pacific is to protect American capitalism in the

Orient. The American worker has nothing whatever at stake, the American bosses have millions of dollars of investments that must be protected. The American worker has nothing to gain and everything to lose by a war fought to protect American capitalism. . . . In the present crisis in the Far East, the interests of the American workers lie with the interests of the downtrodden people of China....”

**Imperialism and war**

Five articles written by Tex Norris, a revolutionary socialist educator, were then published. His main points, which were illustrated by historical examples, may be summarized as follows:

Imperialists are capitalists with investments in foreign countries. By 1937 United States business interests were making increasingly large investments in every possible quarter of the world. Those who benefited from this development were trying to keep the facts hidden from the workers, who always came out losers in such a situation, and it was the duty of the labor movement to explain what was happening.

Profits made by gouging U.S. labor, Norris continued, were being used in the form of capital to exploit foreign workers at starvation wages, even lower than those paid here. In order to maximize such exploitation, the imperialists, acting just as they did at home, sought to use the governments of the particular foreign countries to break strikes by native workers and, wher-

ever possible, to crush their trade unions. The accomplishment of those aims helped, moreover, to hold down wage rates in this country, thus enabling the imperialists to reap superprofits at the expense of both U.S. and foreign labor.

In an effort to cope with this problem, some within the trade unions were promoting “Buy American” campaigns, hoping thereby to protect jobs and wages in this country....

Imperialism, he added, was a natural development in any advanced capitalist nation. Just as U.S. business operated outside its home base, so did British, French, Italian, Japanese. The competition between those different imperialist interests within a contracted world market was growing keener daily, and that was leading to the most terrible of all the consequences of imperialism — war. Protection of U.S. business interests in that sharpening conflict, Norris emphasized, had become the main concern of the Roosevelt administration.... Acquisition of military bases was going on in regions where capitalist investments abroad were concentrated, and Washington was preparing to pull millions of workers into the armed forces for war against its rivals.

If workers in the U.S. were to resist this mad course, he concluded, they needed to fight against capitalism itself, of which imperialism was a deadly offspring. That, in turn, called for the claspings of workers’ hands in other countries in a grip of international labor solidarity.

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



December 29, 1972

DEC. 20 — The massive indiscriminate bombing of the Hanoi-Haiphong area of North Vietnam is entering its third day as we go to press.

Following almost two months of consistent lies about the negotiations, symbolized most clearly by Henry Kissinger’s Oct. 26 statement that “peace is at hand,” Washington’s ferocious escalation of the war is enraging the world.

Despite Kissinger’s claim that Hanoi is responsible for the collapse of the Paris secret negotiations, it is clear that the sole responsibility for continuing the war lies with the Nixon administration. The White House never abandoned its goal of securing the Saigon regime’s power over South Vietnam.

It was not over minor issues that the secret talks were deadlocked. At issue was Washington’s demand for guarantees that the proimperialist regime in Saigon would remain in command.

In this strategy Nixon is counting on Moscow and Peking to continue their treacherous pressure against Hanoi. Nixon hopes to demonstrate that no matter how heavy the bombing, Moscow and Peking will not provide an adequate defense to North Vietnam.

The Kremlin’s policies of doling out obsolete military equipment to Hanoi with an eyedropper have never been clearer than today, when the best North Vietnam can do against a storm of bombers and bombs is

fire antiquated missiles into the air on a hit-or-miss basis.



December 29, 1947

FLINT, Michigan, Dec. 21 — Five GM Local Union Presidents, representing over 50,000 workers in General Motors met today and released a highly important “Statement of Policy.”

Pointing out that “This conference unites the GM local presidents for the first time in the history of the Flint Auto Locals,” the five presidents issued a fighting 3-point program of action that called for:

- 1) 25-cent hourly wage increase and a sliding scale cost-of-living bonus clause.
- 2) revision of the GM contract.
- 3) a single termination date for all contracts in the auto industry.

The “Statement of Policy” announces that “We have united for all future struggles. General Motors understands only one language — power. In unity there is strength.”

This Statement of Policy, prominently quoted by both the Detroit and Flint daily papers, found immediate response from militants throughout the union. The actions of the Briggs and Budd Locals are reported elsewhere in this issue. And their actions had repercussions in the top leadership. Asher Lauren, labor writer of the Detroit News reported on Dec. 22 as follows: “As the wage clamor spread, Walter P. Reuther revealed that the 22-man executive board was being summoned here Jan. 15 to discuss the issue.”

### FROM PATHFINDER

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

# 100 years fighting imperialism

Next year marks the centennial of the anti-imperialist struggles in Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines. Working-class fighters and rebel-minded youth can celebrate this anniversary over the coming months by organizing meetings, conferences, media events, and other activities.

As Washington became an imperialist power at the turn of the century, it began to organize political and military intervention against the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean. It seized Cuba and Puerto Rico in 1898, as well as the Philippines and Guam, as the workers and peasants in these territories were winning independence from Spain.

Cuba was the last country to free itself from the Spanish colonial rule, after peasants and former slaves fought off 500,000 Spanish troops in two wars of liberation that spanned 30 years. José Martí, Cuba's national hero, who was killed in battle, founded the Cuban Revolutionary Party with the immediate purpose of fighting for the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico.

Activities can be organized to learn more about battles against Washington's rise as an imperialist power on the blood-soaked soil of other lands, such as the 1901 Balangiga Massacre in the Philippines, where U.S. troops wiped out thousands of civilians in a reprisal to their struggle against U.S. domination.

The Cuban revolution in 1959 established the first free territory in the Americas. The struggle to overthrow the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista tyranny was built on the shoulders of resistance by the Native Americans against their exterminators, the Africans against the slave owners, the workers and peasants against the colonizers, as well as against the local capitalists and landlords. As Washington turned its imperial wrath against the workers and farmers government that came to power, the leadership of the revolution mobilized the toilers to carry through

the expropriation of the Cuban and foreign bourgeoisies, establishing the first workers state in the hemisphere.

"Our struggle was the eternal struggle of all oppressed people; our enemies were and are the same enemies; our victories are the victories of all progressive humanity today and tomorrow," explained Cuban president Fidel Castro, speaking at a 1978 mass rally marking the continuity of Cuba's socialist revolution with the battle for independence.

Today, Cuba has turned a corner in conquering the "special period" of economic crisis precipitated by the collapse in trade with the Soviet Union and exacerbated by Washington's decades-long economic war. The revolutionary leadership there has launched an effort to win a new generation to communism, drawing on this revolutionary history. For Cuban communists and other revolutionaries around the world, 1997 was the "Year of the Heroic Guerrilla" — the year of the 30th anniversary of the combat in Bolivia by Che Guevara and his comrades. In the same way, 1998 is the "Year of the 100th anniversary of anti-imperialist struggle in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines."

The meetings celebrating Che's combat that were held in Cuba, the United States and elsewhere in recent months were not just an exercise to mark an historical event. They opened the door for young rebels to learn about the Cuban revolution, Che Guevara, and his fellow combatants, and seek to emulate their internationalist example today. Working-class fighters have ample political openings to work with these kind of fighters, supporters of Puerto Rican independence, and defenders of the Cuban revolution to build meetings on campuses, with workers, and organize events in cities around the world to continue the revolutionary struggle for full equality for all human beings and solidarity among all peoples of the world.

# Stop pollution? Via revolution

There is no question that capitalism has accelerated the destruction of the environment. Pollution proliferates from industries whose owners are unwilling to use existing technology to treat waste and minimize toxic emissions, because doing so would cut into their profits. The danger to health, safety, and life itself from radioactivity from nuclear power and weapons plants and their untreatable waste is not diminishing. The slash-and-burn policies imposed on farmers and carried out by big timber companies based in the imperialist countries were largely responsible for the vast fires in Indonesia this year and the ongoing burning of the Amazon forest. More of the world was on fire in 1997 than at any other time in history. These are only a few of the environmental ills that loom larger and will grow under capitalism.

Class-conscious workers, however, should refuse to join the petty bourgeois hysteria and panic by those who argue that destruction of the planet is imminent through pollution. There is no established scientific evidence, for example, that "global warming" is an unambiguous trend caused by emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases. It may be. But no one has been able to prove it so far. Records of annual average temperatures of the earth have only been kept since 1895, just over a century — a mere blip in human history, a minuscule slice of periods registering broad climatological changes.

Working people should also refuse to join the efforts of Greenpeace, other liberals, and many radical groups that call themselves socialist or prolabor that advocate reforming the fake environmental policies of the bourgeois rulers to improve "our country." That's what the campaigns

for so-called sustainable development by Global Exchange, a Bay Area-based liberal organization, and other groups are aimed at.

Class-conscious workers should also unequivocally reject the nationalist, America First campaign by the trade union officialdom to oppose the Kyoto treaty that is hanging workers' fortunes to those of their class enemy — the bosses — and walks them right into the fascist trap of ultrarightists.

The bourgeoisie really doesn't give a damn about global warming or most other alleged or substantiated long-term ecological disasters. As the debate around the Kyoto conference showed, big business is only concerned with maximizing their profits.

At the same time they should explain that Clinton, Gore and Co., who peddle Washington's fraudulent concern for the world environment, only use meetings and treaties like the one in Kyoto to advance the use of Washington's imperial power — both against weaker capitalist rivals and against the semicolonial world. The moneychangers mentality that permeated the Kyoto charade was captured by the Clinton-Gore proposal for tradable emissions permits, that is, buying the "right" to pollute.

The most important thing that any young person, any worker, or any human being genuinely concerned over the spreading environmental disasters can do is to organize and fight now to build revolutionary parties that can lead working people to take power out of the hands of the exploiting classes. Only then will humanity be able to confront capitalism's inevitable poisoning of human beings and degradation of nature.

# Defend abortion rights

Jan. 22, 1998, marks the 25th anniversary of the most important victory for women's rights in the United States in decades — the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court ruling legalizing the right to an abortion. The ruling, which codified gains won in struggle by the women's rights movement, struck down all prohibitions on women exercising their right to choose when and if to bear children.

The recent steps by the New Jersey legislature to ban a late-term abortion procedure in that state are just the latest in a series of moves by the government and right-wing forces aimed at rolling back a woman's fundamental right to control her own body. These efforts began just three years after the *Roe v. Wade* victory, when the U.S. Congress passed the Hyde Amendment in 1976, cutting off

Medicaid funding for abortion in virtually all cases. This legislation and steps since then to restrict access to abortion strike hardest at working-class women and especially those of oppressed nationalities. The labor movement should champion the fight for abortion rights, which are fundamental to women's equality.

The 25th anniversary of winning the right to abortion will be an important occasion for defenders of women's rights to organize pickets, rallies, forums, speakouts, and other actions. Mobilizations and public meetings serve to push back the right-wing forces that have blockaded clinics and tried to terrorize women and doctors at them, and build confidence among women's rights fighters and win solidarity from other struggles.

# Ask what you can do for your class, not for 'your country'

BY DOUG JENNESS

In his letter to the *Militant*, printed in the November 17 issue, reader Howard Brown contends that the paper appears to have recently changed its position from being neutral to opposing the North American Free Trade Agreement and other such trade deals. He refers to a previous letter by reader Roger Annis, who argued that the *Militant's* position was, until recently, "neutral." He then notes that in a response to Annis I argued that the communist movement has never been neutral on capitalist trade pacts. Brown suggests that my "memory is failing." He writes, "I know from my own experience, when I debated Jenness in your pages in 1993, that at that time he wouldn't have admitted opposition to NAFTA if he'd been beaten by a stick. I'm prepared to take Jenness's word that he was always opposed to NAFTA, but, for tactical reasons (until recently) he was also opposed to saying so explicitly."

## DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

Going through the *Militant* for the past four or five years, it's true that articles and headlines can be found that are ambiguous and may have given the impression of a neutral position. For example, in the November 1993 *International Socialist Review*, published as a supplement in the Nov. 29, 1993, issue of the *Militant*, one can find the following headline: "Do workers have a stake in bosses' trade conflicts?" This could be misread — especially if one were so inclined — to say that workers should abstain from taking a stance on the political questions involved in such conflicts.

Overall, however, the coverage was pretty clear, as was the paper's refusal to get caught in the framework of opposing or promoting either of the main capitalist camps in their attempt to use trade deals to deepen the exploitation of workers and domination of oppressed nations worldwide. Even in the 1993 debate with me that he refers to, Brown not only didn't raise the question of "neutrality" but referred explicitly to the opposition to such pacts expressed in the pamphlet *Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s*, which I wrote. In a review of that pamphlet in the November 1992 issue of the *Union Farmer*, published in Saskatchewan, which was reprinted in the April 5, 1993, *Militant*, Brown quoted as follows, "Neither capitalist protectionism nor free trade offers a solution to the price-cost squeeze facing the big majority of working farmers," Jenness says. "Moreover, both perspectives draw working people into tying their fate to either the 'free trade' capitalists or 'protectionist' capitalists — all in the name of defending 'American' interests." So neither a stick nor a lesser instrument was necessary to worm out of me opposition to capitalist trade policies. I said it freely and explicitly.

What was at issue in that discussion was whether or not class-conscious workers should campaign against NAFTA, which is what Brown argued. Not recognizing the political openings for doing this is the "mistaken tactical line" that he refers to in his November 17 letter. He's not explicit in that letter, but he suggests that the *Militant* appears to have corrected the tactical course that he believes it was erroneously on four years ago.

I would like to argue that that's absurd, but unfortunately in the past few months the *Militant* has run several articles that give the appearance that it's joined the campaign against NAFTA, the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, and other such deals. These articles reflect an adaptation to economic nationalism of the rulers in Canada or the United States through support to the anti-APEC or anti-NAFTA campaigns of the labor bureaucracy, which are supported by nearly every petty-bourgeois group claiming to be socialist.

### Examples of adaptation to nationalism

Two examples help illustrate the problem: the coverage on the anti-APEC protests in the November 17 and December 1 issues and the report on the Twin Cities Militant Labor Forum discussion around "fast track" that was featured on the front page of the November 24 issue.

The November 17 *Militant* reports favorably on the activities against the APEC trade conference in Vancouver, British Columbia — protests sponsored by the No! To APEC Coalition and the People's Summit on APEC. *Militant* readers are encouraged to participate, with telephone numbers and E-mail addresses provided to facilitate this.

The same issue also includes an article reporting that

Continued on Page 10



# Ontario unions discuss response to gov't austerity plan

BY JOHN STEELE

TORONTO — The more than 2,300 delegates attending the November 24 – 28 convention of the Ontario Federation of Labor (OFL) voted overwhelmingly to organize a one-day provincial walkout sometime next year to protest the austerity and anti-union drive of the Ontario government, headed by Conservative premier Michael Harris. The convention came two weeks after 126,000 teachers waged a 14-day, province-wide political strike against impending legislation, known as Bill 160, designed to cut hundreds of millions of dollars from public education in Ontario and lay off up to 10,000 teachers.

Some OFL delegates argued for an earlier action. "We can't squander an opportunity for decisive action," said a delegate from the Ontario Public Service Employees union.

"A one-year time line, I'm afraid, will be a recipe for inaction," stated John Cartwright of the Carpenters and Allied Workers.

The plan adopted by the delegates, representing OFL affiliates with 650,000 members, also included organizing more city-wide strikes and protests. There have been nine such actions across the province over the past two years. The convention also called for a renewed effort to build support for the union-based, social democratic New Democratic Party in preparation for provincial elections, expected in one to two years.

The delegates adopted an emergency resolution declaring support for the national strike of 45,000 members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, which was in its second week. During a lunch-hour break delegates joined about 2,000 postal workers from Toronto and surrounding areas in a downtown march to Canada Post offices. Signs carried by the strikers read: "Increased workload = Increased injuries"; "Keep Canada Post a public corporation — no privatization"; and "Full time — not part time jobs." The federal government was threatening to pass strike-breaking legislation, and did so December 2. The postal

workers returned to work a few days later.

About 200 meatpackers — members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1227 — on strike against Maple Leaf Foods, came to the convention from their picket lines in Burlington and Hamilton. They were given a standing ovation by the delegates, who voted to support a Canada-wide boycott against the company. Currently, about 2,300 Maple Leaf workers are locked out or on strike against the giant hog processor in four cities across the country. The strikers and convention delegates also marched through downtown Toronto.

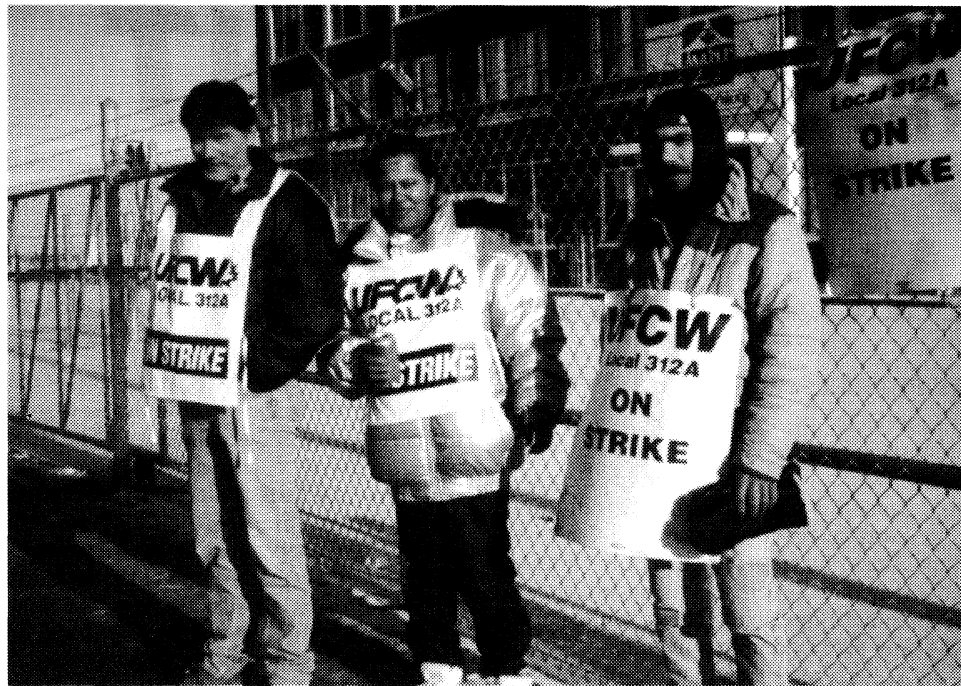
"We have no choice but to strike. What are you going to do when they try to cut your wages by \$9," said Leena, one of the strikers, who gave only her first name.

Maple Leaf "refuses to pay prices the farmers want," said striker Randy Morely, "But they have to make a living too."

Many delegates wore buttons inscribed with the name "Dudley" and the slogan "Support a public inquiry!" Three months after after the Harris government was elected in 1995, Ontario provincial cops shot and killed Native activist Dudley George during an armed raid against a peaceful land occupation by the Stoney Point people, who are fighting for government recognition of a Native burial ground near Sarnia, Ontario. The OFL delegates declared their support for the continuing struggle of the George family and Stoney Point band to win a public inquiry into Harris's role in the cops' decision to carry out the assault.

Towards the end of the convention delegates also marched to the Provincial legislature at Queen's Park, where the members of the legislature were debating Bill 160. Despite the continuing demonstrations and protests by the teachers' unions, parents, and student organizations, the misnamed Education Quality Improvement Act was passed into law December 1.

Most delegates viewed the fight of the teachers and the OFL as a fight against the "right-wing corporate agenda" of the Harris



Militant

Striking Maple Leaf meatpackers picket November 22 in front of Alberta plant

government. The Liberal government in Ottawa was also condemned in the same vein. A central theme promoted by the union officialdom and taken up by many of the delegates was the so-called "Americanization" of Canada. They defined this as the privatization of health care and education and government attacks on unions as a consequence of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

David Orchard, author of the chauvinist book *The Fight for Canada: Four Centuries Resistance to American Expansionism*, addressed the convention on the question of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment being promoted by Washington, Ottawa, and other imperialist powers. He claimed that trade deals like NAFTA and the MAI threaten "Canadian sovereignty," and pose the "dissolution" of the border between Canada and the United States, and the "Canadian way of life." The convention adopted a resolution demanding that Ottawa oppose the MAI.

A good deal of the convention agenda was taken up with campaigning for candidates for OFL president. The campaign reflected divisions in the union officialdom stemming from the "social contract" imposed on government workers in 1993 by the previous Ontario NDP government. The "social contract" tore up union contracts and imposed wage cuts and layoffs on govern-

ment workers in a deficit-cutting drive.

OFL staffer and United Steelworkers (USWA) member Wayne Samuelson, ran for the office with the backing of the International Association of Machinists, United Food and Commercial Workers, USWA, and Ontario Public Service Employees union officialdoms. Canadian Auto Workers member-staffer Paul Forder ran against Samuelson presenting himself as the main staffer in the Days of Action campaign, which brought thousands of unionists into the streets against Ottawa's austerity drive. Samuelson won the election by a little more than 200 votes.

John Steele is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 2113. Mick McDonald contributed to this article.

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## — LETTERS —

### More on environment

I would like to suggest that you broaden the spectrum of your material in the direction of environmental issues. Corporations still rape the homelands of cultures not heard of in the almighty United Nations. Missionaries still attempt to homogenize everything in their paths. Just because these people are not members of a labeled union, should they be ignored by a publication such as yours — one which has the power to bring the plights of the unheard to the international forum?

Millions of people's lives around the world are virtually destroyed at the hands of overzealous, ignorant capitalists every year. A vast amount of this destruction comes in the form of degraded or lost habitat. Why not expose your readers to the benefits of sustainable development projects that are currently being proposed or are already in existence. For instance, there is the "Shaman's apprentice" program, which focuses on establishing a market base for medicinal plants that are used in the Amazon region by tribal "medicine men." The ideal of the program is to involve the local inhabitants in a project which enables them to earn the money they have been forced to "need" by utilizing the resources of the forests in which they live without destroying them, an amazing feat in this day and age which could serve as a model for the future.

I am truly convinced such an expansion of your paper would be a benefit to all. Keep up the valuable work you do.

Ian Maxwell

Breckenridge, Colorado

### Hands off the Teamsters

Your articles pointing out the danger of government intervention into the Teamsters (or any union) are important to discuss on the job. What is at stake is the independent functioning of our unions, union democracy, and the future transformation of our unions through action and battle into fighting instruments to defend workers' rights and win social change.

During the labor struggles of the 1930s and the post World War II labor upsurge, many laws were passed and implemented that allowed the government, their agencies (FBI, police, courts, etc.) the secretary of labor, so-called mediators, and others to meddle into the affairs of unions. Interventions ranged from keeping tabs on union finances, pressuring union officials into loyalty oaths, overseeing union constitutions and by-laws, etc. Some of these laws like the Kennedy-Landrum-Griffin Law (1959) allowed the government to place police into the unions and urged dissident union members to sue the union in the capitalist courts. The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 allowed the government to invoke injunctions against a strike and even to "take possession" of a plant to prevent a strike.

One of the richest experiences is contained in the book *Teamster Bureaucracy* by Farrell Dobbs (Pathfinder Press). One chapter, "FBI Disruption", documents the origins of government intervention



into the Teamsters. Dobbs explains how FBI Director [J. Edgar] Hoover sent agents into the militant Teamsters Local 544 to act as agent-provocateurs and assist the government in carrying out frame-ups of militant workers, violating the Bill of Rights, and handing down secret indictments that were heard by rigged juries and resulted in workers doing jail time. The FBI had the assistance of Teamsters International president Tobin, who with Roosevelt, was trying to housebreak the union in preparation for U.S. entrance into World War II.

I encourage *Militant* readers to study this rich lesson and demand Hands off the Teamsters.

Mark Friedman  
Los Angeles, California

### 'Antiracist' protests?

The article in the December 15

*Militant* on the protests following the racist killing of Oumar Dia in Denver did not give an accurate picture of the rallies organized in the wake of this crime — to judge from the coverage I saw on CNN and articles appearing in the *Denver Post*.

The CNN coverage, for instance, featured a rally speaker calling on people to "stand up for our police," and focused not on the Dia killing but on the shooting death of a Denver cop, Bruce Vander Jagt, on November 12. This killing is also attributed to skinheads. After that shooting, a dead pig with Vander Jagt's name painted on it was left in front of his precinct house. The *Post's* and CNN's coverage strings together these killings in an attempt to channel people's outrage into an "anti-hate" — and pro-cop — campaign.

Was the rally a united "rally against racism" as reported in the

*Militant* article? It seems to me it was a bit more complicated than that. Who were the featured speakers at the rally? What views did they express? Weren't there different class responses that should have been reported?

Since when does Mayor Wellington Webb "organize rallies against racism?" Is he among the "activists who organized several other events," as reported in the *Militant* article? He's actually organizing to make it harder to unite people against police brutality and cop killings — of which there is a rich history in Denver.

The cops, no matter if Vander Jagt WAS killed by a skinhead, will never be the real targets of the rightists and fascists. Witness the revelation of cops "leaking" "confidential police information" to "skinheads."

Floyd Fowler  
Atlanta, Georgia

### Antidote to capitalist press

Thank you for providing an antidote to the bourgeois press. I love Harry Ring's "Great Society" column (Marxists really need doses of humor) and the "Book of the Week" excerpts.

M.S.  
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

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.

## Adams: 'Time London quit Ireland'

BY PETE CLIFFORD

LONDON — "A significant step — a moment in history" was how Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams described his December 11 meeting with Anthony Blair in London. It was the first time since 1921 that Irish Republicans had met a British prime minister at Downing Street. Adams, accompanied by six other Sinn Fein leaders, told Blair it was time for London to quit Ireland.

In a sharp reminder that the nationalist struggle remains unbroken, two days later thousands of residents of Derry, Northern Ireland, took to the streets to resist a pro-British march through the city center. Rioting in the face of police and British army assaults continued for 14 hours.

In an interview with the *Irish News*, Adams said the Republican delegation raised with Blair "our view that the two main things underpinning conflict in our country is the British policy and Unionist veto." London insists that any decisions on the future of Northern Ireland have the consent of those living in the six-county statelet alone, not Ireland as a whole. "Unionists" refers to those who support the continued "union" of Northern Ireland and Britain. Adams declared that there needs to be "a change in British policy away from maintaining the union to ending the union."

Adams reportedly said Sinn Fein was committed to conclude "unfinished business" from 1921. That year Prime Minister Lloyd George brokered a deal with Sinn Fein leader Michael Collins to partition the country. Six counties in the North continued to be ruled by London in collaboration with the Unionists, with independence to the other 26 counties of Ireland.

The Sinn Fein delegation's demands included demilitarization of Northern Ireland; the release of political prisoners; an independent public inquiry into the events of Bloody Sunday, when British soldiers shot 14 civil rights marchers dead in 1972; and the release of Róisín McAliskey, who has been detained by London and threatened with extradition to Germany to face frame-up charges. They also discussed the lack of progress at the all-party peace talks, including the refusal of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) to meet with Sinn Fein. Adams called on Blair to press UUP leader David Trimble to meet face to face.

Downing Street itself was full of journalists and photographers from throughout the world. Outside the prime minister's residence 80 supporters of the Irish Republicans enthusiastically sang the Irish national anthem as Adams and his delegation left. Further along the road six retired British Army paratroopers with their red berets and war medals joined 15 fascists from the British National Party to wave Union Jacks and jeer at the delegation.

Most of London's newspapers reacted uncomfortably to the meeting. The *Times* for example ran an editorial protesting that Adams spoke in Gaelic to a reporter. "The tongue which sounds so odd to British ears," it said, was "designed to suggest that Mr. Adams is the representative of a foreign people come to talk peace and negotiate colonial withdrawal." Adams, the editors protested, is no "Gaelic Mandela."

### 'Good luck' to escaped prisoner

On the day of the meeting most papers ran stories about an escape the previous day by Irish Republican Liam Averill from Long Kesh prison in Northern Ireland, and called on Adams to denounce this. A few hours before meeting Blair, the Sinn Fein leader responded in a radio interview about when he was interned without trial by the British. "While there are prisoners, there will be prisoners who try to escape. I tried it myself. Liam Averill succeeded where I did not," Adams declared. "Good luck to him."

While being forced to concede the Downing Street meeting, Britain's rulers remain unwilling to pull back from their military occupation of Northern Ireland. The Sinn Fein paper *An Phoblacht/Republican News* reported November 20, "It is clear that the

only cessation being observed by any of the armed groups in the six counties is that of the IRA [Irish Republican Army]. The British Army and RUC [Royal Ulster Constabulary] have intensified their activities in nationalist areas." Francie Molloy, a Sinn Fein delegate to the talks, explained in a November 29 interview that although London made a big deal of its withdrawal of a few hundred troops, "the level of security today is as bad as any time in the past 10 years." Molloy pointed to the strengthening of 19 army spy towers in South Armagh and accompanied stepped-up army patrols in the area. It is as though "they're preparing for trouble," he said.

### Clashes in Derry

The events in Derry December 13 began when police sealed off the city center to allow a rightist Apprentice Boys parade through. When several thousand nationalist protesters attempted to gain entry to the town center, the cops set dogs on them. Then, contrary to an agreement, a band on the Apprentice Boys parade began provocatively to play triumphalist songs. Running battles between nationalist youth and the police continued until 4 a.m. The British army moved into the streets for the first time since the IRA cease-fire, and 169 lethal plastic bullets were fired. Police claim 1,000 petrol bombs were thrown at them.

London has also announced its intention to transfer more Irish prisoners from England to Ireland, but insists that the Dublin government enact a new law ensuring that such prisoners serve the same terms in Irish jails. Speaking in London November 25, Gerry O'h'Eara, Northern Ireland chair of Sinn Fein, challenged London's claim this was a confidence-building measure. "Transfer of prisoners to serve their sentence near home is universally seen as a right," he said. "Confidence measures are when the doors of Long Kesh are opened." Reflecting a

widespread view, O'h'Eara declared, "There's no momentum to the talks."

A rally of more than 1,000 nationalists in the Europa Hotel in Belfast November 23 addressed this frustration. Sinn Fein president Adams appealed to the crowd, "Don't sit back and leave it to the negotiators." He argued that Republicans need to "keep focused on the prize. No one knows how its going to work out, but what we do know is the tide of history is going towards an Irish republic."

At the Europa rally plans were laid out for protest actions throughout December to highlight the case for freeing political prisoners. Almost weekly actions are now organized by Sinn Fein Youth, who held their first national conference on November 1. In South Armagh a Farmers and Residents Committee has been organizing public rallies and protests at the extension of the British Army activity. More than 2,000 people marched through the area December 6. The rally platform included Rory O'Hanlon, a representative of Fianna Fáil, the governing party in the Irish Republic; Séamus Mallon, a member of Parliament (MP) from the Social Democratic and Labour Party; Sinn Fein leader Martin McGuinness; and farmers leader Declan Feron.

Rather than report this, media attention has been focused on claims of a split in Sinn Fein in the South Armagh and Louth. Since then a December 8 meeting attended by 150 people in Dublin launched the 32-County Sovereignty Committee. Headed by Bernadette Sands-McKevitt, the new organization opposes Sinn Fein's participation in the current talks. At the Europa rally loud applause greeted Sinn Fein speakers from South Armagh, who refuted claims of any serious division.

The nationalist fight continues to impact on politics in the Irish Republic. The election of Mary McAleese to the Irish presidency is seen as a blow against opponents

of the nationalist fight. Coming from Belfast and therefore not a citizen of the 26-county Irish Republic, her election sets back moves to renounce claims for Irish unity. It also registers the shift in the Republic to increasingly discuss and respond to developments in Northern Ireland. One consequence is that Irish parliamentarians frequently travel to visit Irish prisoners in England, stand with nationalists facing Unionist parades, and issue protests about British repression such as the treatment of McAliskey.

The week before the Downing Street meeting, Sinn Fein MPs Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness held a meeting December 4 with the Speaker of the British Parliament to protest their exclusion from that body on grounds that they refuse to swear an oath of allegiance to the Queen of England. They have succeeded in shifting the debate from their refusal to take their seats because of this oath to the oath itself and how it is undemocratically used to exclude opponents of the British rulers. Several British MPs said they agreed with the Sinn Fein leaders' protest. The London daily *Independent* ran an editorial headed, "Not fit to sit in Parliament? It is the oath that is not fit."

Despite the refusal to date of Ulster Unionist leader Trimble to meet with Sinn Fein, he did participate in the first meeting for decades between Unionists and the Irish government on November 20. A few days later he denounced the Irish government's representative in the talks, David Andrews, for suggesting there could be a new all-Ireland body with executive powers. Rising tensions among Unionist forces were sharply exposed when the annual meeting of the Orange Order, which organizes supremacist marches in Northern Ireland, was occupied by about 400 ultrarightist opponents of the group's leadership. Three days after the Downing Street meeting Trimble announced "it is possible" that he'll meet Gerry Adams.

## Auto workers in Brazil protest bosses' demand for wage cuts to avoid layoffs

BY HILDA CUZCO

Thousands of auto workers demonstrated in São Paulo, Brazil, December 11, protesting threats of layoffs if they do not accept wage cuts and reduced working hours. When the effects of the currency turmoil in Asia shook the Brazilian economy in late October, the government of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso launched a massive austerity plan in hopes of avoiding a currency devaluation there.

One of the government's measures was to almost double interest rates, which led to a rapid drop in auto sales. Volkswagen AG, the largest automaker in Brazil, announced that in order to avoid layoffs of 10,000 workers, the trade unionists must accept a 20 percent cut in the workweek and their pay, as well as reductions in bonuses, profit sharing, and paid vacations.

Some 10,000 auto workers overwhelmingly rejected this concession scheme at a December 3 a meeting called by the metalworkers union ABC at the entrance of the Volkswagen plant in São Bernardo do Campo, a suburb of São Paulo. The company, which employs 31,000 workers, said its sales fell 42 percent in November alone. Ford Motor Co., Brazil's fourth-largest carmaker, has also announced that it will reduce production for the next year.

Meanwhile, the lower house of Congress approved the long-awaited Cardoso plan to "reform" the social security system, which has been the main target for cuts in public spending. This comes on top of the austerity package already in place, which includes \$18 billion in budget cuts and an accelerated sell-off of state enterprises. In his recent visit to London, Cardoso promised to the investors that his government will proceed and "accelerate" the economic reforms. "The cost and the pace and advance may be affected by external circumstances but you may be certain there will be no deviations and no U-turns," Cardoso told executives from the confederation of British Industry December 2.

While Cardoso was assuring investors of his commitment to austerity, hundreds of workers, among them activists in the Movement of the Landless Peasants, marched in São Paulo December 5 against the government's economic policy, in a demonstration called by the Central Confederation of Workers (CUT).



Around 10,000 Volkswagen workers near São Paulo, Brazil, at a meeting at entrance of the plant vote overwhelmingly against the company's proposal December 3.