

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Socialist gets on ballot  
for mayor of Los Angeles

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Workers strike GM, Johnson Controls

BY VAL LIBBY

MORaine, Ohio — The 4,300 members of International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE) Local 801 reached a tentative agreement January 28, ending a three-day walkout at a General Motors truck assembly plant here. Meanwhile, 500 United Auto Workers (UAW) members went on strike at Johnson Controls auto parts plants in Michigan and Ohio.

The Moraine strike was the fourth work stoppage against the world's largest car maker in the past year. The GM plant was shut down tight by the Saturday night walkout, after the IUE workers rejected the local three-year contract by a vote of 1,990 to 1,534. The union was prepared for the strike. Several weeks ago some 3,800 IUE members had signed up for strike duty and gate captains had been assigned.

The Moraine plant is a final assembly plant for GM's popular Chevrolet Blazer, Oldsmobile, Bravada, and GMC Jimmy.

Although Local 801 members ratified the national GM contract in December, the local contract had been extended several times since it expired in September. System-wide, there are dozens of plants without local contracts.

John, a worker with 28 years' seniority, said the major issue of the strike was GM's "no fault" absentee policy. (John asked that his last name not be used out of fear of company retaliation.)

"Even if you have a doctor's excuse, the

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## Labor battle shows failure of 'S. Korean miracle'

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

Officials of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) on January 28 announced an end to the weekly one-day strikes that had been planned to demand the government repeal antiunion legislation passed last December. The union maintains that if the laws, scheduled to go into effect March 1, are not rescinded, however, another general strike will be called.

Some 100,000 workers and youth rallied in Seoul, the south Korean capital, January 26 to show their determination to push back the laws, which grant employers more rights to lay off workers, maintain a ban on the KCTU, and expand the powers of the regime's secret police. The protesters wore headbands reading "collective struggle."

The outpouring by workers in response to the antilabor laws adopted December 26 — including a three-week strike that halted many industries — highlights the failure of the much-touted Korean "economic miracle." It brings home the fact that it is too late in history to transform a semicolonial country into a capitalist world power.

Conflicts between the Seoul regime and the working class in south Korea have exploded almost annually over the last decade.

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## Albanian workers rebel over financial fraud

Capitalist 'market reforms' ruin living standards

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

In the biggest challenge yet to the pro-capitalist regime of President Sali Berisha, tens of thousands of workers and others have been protesting, setting roadblocks, and clashing with the police in Albania since January 15. The demonstrations spread nationwide, swelled, and became more explosive the last weekend of January, as working people took control of some cities out of the hands of the authorities.

Protesters are demanding their money back from failed "pyramid schemes." Managers of these fraudulent investment funds lured hundreds of thousands to deposit their savings by promising to double people's money in two to three months. Operators of some of these schemes, which were promoted on state television, began declaring bankruptcy in early January, igniting the social explosion. Workers who have taken to the streets are demanding the government cover their losses.

"I invested \$30,000 I saved working in Germany and I have lost it all," said Agem Mucaj, an unemployed construction worker, standing at a barricade in the town of Rrogozhine. "Why did the government allow these schemes to go on collecting money?"

About 500,000 Albanians out of a population of 3.2 million have put money in these

funds. In addition to immigrant workers depositing their savings, others sold land, homes, or livestock to invest in the so-called pyramids, which offered interest rates of 50 to 300 percent.

In a way, these get-rich-quick scams are a rather crude reminder of the current financial bubble building up in the stock markets

on Wall Street; they are based on the illusion that new investments will keep pouring in endlessly, that money will generate more money without the medium of production. While the financing of the funds is secretive, the basic premise is that contributors are paid handsomely from the deposits

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Albanian police cower in Tirana January 26 as protesters throw stones demanding the government cover their losses from "pyramid schemes," officially promoted in this workers state.

## Clinton: open to means testing Medicare

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

At a White House press conference January 28, President William Clinton said he does not rule out raising monthly premiums for Medicare recipients with income above a certain level — in other words instituting a form of means testing for the federal program that provides health coverage for the elderly and disabled.

A week earlier the Democratic president had announced he will seek \$138 billion in cuts in Medicare when he presents his federal budget proposal to Congress, \$22 billion more than what he offered to chop during his re-election campaign.

An article in the January 29 *Wall Street Journal* stated, "Republicans are hopeful that budget talks can produce an agreement with President Clinton to increase Medicare premiums, at least for upper-income beneficiaries."

In the absence of any protests from the organized labor movement, there is growing bipartisan convergence on how far to go in slashing Medicare, and now apparently in ending it as a social entitlement available to all without means testing.

"We keep talking about holding hands and jumping off together, but we're still saying, 'You first,'" stated Senate majority leader Trent Lott, referring

to Clinton on the issue of pegging Medicare payments to one's income. "I'm prepared to meet with Senator Lott and discuss that and other issues," Clinton said at his White House news conference.

Working people won Medicare along with Medicaid, which provides medical coverage for low income families, in the

1960s, as a by-product of the civil rights movement and an extension of the Social Security Act of 1935.

The bipartisan propaganda campaign aimed at numbing labor opposition to slashing these social programs has been unfolding methodically ever since the November

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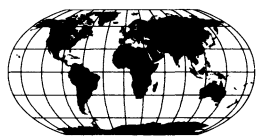
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How Social Security was won through class struggle — page 8



## French workers seize bank

On January 17, more than 1,000 bank workers seized Crédit Foncier de France bank, and took bank president Jerome Meyssonier and seven others from his executive committee hostage. They were protesting government plans to lay off 1,800 of the state-owned bank's 3,300 workers. Last year, Paris bought all the outstanding stock of the failing bank, giving it enough control to start downsizing the operation.

On the sixth day of the takeover, workers released the bank president but continued to occupy the facility, vowing to stay there until the government renounced its job cut plans. Other workers in France have carried out similar plant takeovers in the face of French prime minister Alan Juppé's austerity drive. Unemployment in France is 12.7 percent and expected to rise. The *New York Times*, in an article on the seizure wrote that "worker protests are becoming almost weekly events in some European countries."



Bank workers occupy Paris headquarters of Crédit Foncier de France to protest layoffs

## Italy farmers refuse to be milked

Dairy farmers in northern Italy have been refusing to pay \$240 million in European Union (EU) fines for breaching EU milk quotas during 1995-96. During four days of protests in Milan in mid-January, farmers blocked access to Linate airport, among other actions. EU rules, introduced in 1984, allow Italy to produce only 9.9 million tons of milk a year, a limit farmers insist is too low. Italian President Romano Prodi, while promising some aid, still maintains that the farmers must pay the fine.

## Turkey, Greece tensions mount

Turkish president Suleyman Demirel issued a warning January 20 that if the Greek government were to set up air and naval bases in southern Cyprus, it would do the same in the north. Demirel made this statement as he signed a declaration of military cooperation with Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash. "Any attack against the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus will

be considered as an attack against Turkey," Demirel declared. Tensions in that region escalated following the recent purchase of surface-to-air missiles in southern Cyprus.

Cyprus, a Mediterranean island, is a former British colony that has been divided since 1974, with the north controlled by Turkish forces and the south dominated by the Greek government. In response to the rising conflict, German foreign minister Klaus Kinkel said this could jeopardize Turkey's entry into the European Union.

## U.S. renews Lebanon travel ban

Warren Christopher, the outgoing U.S. secretary of state, renewed a 10-year ban on U.S. citizens traveling to Lebanon. State Department spokeswoman Nancy Beck claims the ban is based on "concerns" about "the safety of Americans" in that region following a series of military actions, including bombings, carried out by various groups in Lebanon. The ban originated in 1987. At the time Palestinian refugees, peasants, and Hezbollah, a guerrilla group that supported

the Iranian government, were in battle against Amal, a Syrian-backed militia group that began taking over Lebanon.

In the name of ending "factional strife," the Syrian government waged war on Lebanese toilers, invading the country and murdering members of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The assault was also aimed at other resistance fronts, in a crackdown effort to aid Amal's forces. The Israeli government, also trying to crush resistance, launched a Sept. 5, 1987, missile strike — one of many — that killed 41 people. Tel Aviv claimed they were attacking "terrorist" bases; Lebanese police confirmed that civilian homes were also bombed. In addition to protesting, resistance fighters retaliated with any means available including bombings and kidnapping, among other methods.

## U.S.-Japan shipping conflict

The United States government is at the brink of imposing economic sanctions on several Japanese shipping companies. The move is promoted as retaliation against requirements at Japanese ports that U.S. shipping bosses say restricts competition among those providing harbor service. After Washington and the European Union warned Tokyo about its "discriminatory" treatment of foreign companies and got no reply, the U.S. Federal Maritime Commission proposed a \$100,000 fee per trip to any U.S. port. This fee would be imposed on three Japanese shipping operators: Mitsui OSK Lines, Kawasaki Kisen, and Nippon Yusen.

## Cambodia textile workers strike

Thousands of textile workers from five textile companies in Cambodia have gone on strike or protested since late December. At one factory in Phnom Penh, hundreds of

women walked off their jobs demanding wages increase to \$40 a month, a 48-hour work week, sick leave, and a right to elect representation. Currently these workers put in seven days a week, for a dollar a day with forced, unpaid overtime. "We will not go back until our demands are met," said Lao Bonna, one of the workers in the plant. Cops were sent in and strikers were beaten and sprayed with water canons. The Associated Press reported that the more than 18,000 people in Cambodia's textile mills produced \$70 million in exports in 1996 — almost triple the 1995 figure — comprising 30 percent of the nation's total exports.

## U.S. pharmaceutical bosses push tariff on Argentina

The U.S. government issued a January 15 tariff threat against Argentina, to go into effect on March 1. The Argentinian government allows domestic pharmaceutical companies to copy medications without paying patent fees. Charlene Barshefsky, acting U.S. trade representative, said unless Buenos Aires enforces copyright laws Washington will withdraw 50 percent of the South American country's duty-free trade privileges, affecting \$260 million in products shipped to the United States.

## Port workers strike in Colombia

Colombian port workers began a strike of 2,500 the second week of January in Buenaventura. Strikers have prevented any shipments from going out. The Buenaventura port ships out 60 percent of the coffee in Colombia, the world's second largest coffee producer.

## Plant fined over injuries

Landis, a nonunion plastics factory, was found guilty of failure to report and record workers' injuries, and fined \$720,700 January 14 in New York State. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) held a six-month investigation on the plant after workers came forward to tell about the conditions. They found that four workers had fingers cut off in the last 18 months. Broken pelvises, amputated extremities, and mangled digits are among the gruesome unreported findings uncovered. The company was also cited for having inadequate safety mechanisms on machines and a poor safety training. The amputation rate at Landis is 100 times higher than the average New York factory, according to state safety statistics.

Landis spokeswoman Linda Russell said the company would "vigorously contest" the fines laid down on them. Russell said of the penalties placed on the company for maiming dozens of workers, "We believe that these violations are the work place equivalent of old parking tickets."

— BRIAN TAYLOR

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# Mexico 'bailout' fosters economic crisis

BY HILDA CUZCO

On January 15, U.S. president William Clinton announced that the government of Mexico paid the entire \$12.5 billion it borrowed from Washington, plus interest, three years ahead of schedule. Government officials are also bragging that the U.S. Treasury pocketed a larger-than-normal profit from the loan, which the White House cobbled together after the collapse of the Mexican peso in 1994.

Nearly a week later, a hunger strike by street sweepers in Mexico City was attacked by the police January 20. The incident received nationwide media attention in Mexico and highlighted the devastating toll Clinton's "bailout" brought on the country's workers and peasants.

After two years of protests and a 97-day hunger strike, the street sweepers reached a settlement with the government on January 22. The administration of Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo agreed to rehire 190 of the dismissed workers and compensate another 110. The hunger strikers were fighting to win back the jobs of 366 street sweepers from Tabasco state, in the southeast, who were fired in 1995. Their dismissals were part of the austerity measures the Zedillo regime implemented in the last three years to repay the U.S. loans and continue making payments on the country's foreign debt.

Orlando Benito Martínez, one of hunger strikers, told the *New York Times* that the Tabasco workers were fired after they demanded back pay they were owed from extra services they were required to perform for local politicians, like cleaning their private homes and building swimming pools.

In the early hours of January 20, prior to reaching an accord with the government, 200 policemen carrying shields and truncheons stormed the strikers' campsite on a highway median across from the National Human Rights commission office in Mexico City. The police officers beat up the workers who pelted them back with stones. One worker was hospitalized. Two hunger strikers, Venancio Jiménez, 22, and Jorge Luis Magaña Alamilla, 35, were forcibly taken to a city hospital. The workers called this action a kidnapping, as did a major newspaper columnist, while the city authorities dubbed it a "humanitarian" intervention. Zedillo complimented the officers, saying they "acted well" to end the fast.

The Tabasco workers had occupied the town hall in Villahermosa, the state capital, last year forcing the authorities to reach a settlement. Later in October, they decided to march to Mexico City accusing the governor of Tabasco, Roberto Madrazo, of not complying with the agreement. Madrazo has been the target of opposition parties on charges of illegally spending \$39 million on his 1994 gubernatorial campaign. The federal authorities declined to prosecute him, and the state officials dismissed the case.

## Fall and bailout of the Mexican peso

The current crisis in Mexico dates back to Dec. 20, 1994, when Zedillo announced a devaluation of the peso. In response, international money traders unloaded the currency hand over fist, driving it down 40

percent against the U.S. dollar in one week. The collapse of the peso raised fears among bankers and financiers in the United States and other imperialist countries that Mexico could default in interest payments on its loans. The country's foreign debt stood at \$98 billion last year, or 38 percent of Mexico's gross domestic product.

In February 1995, Clinton authorized "loan guarantees" to Mexico of \$20 billion from the U.S. Treasury, while the International Monetary Fund and other lenders offered an additional \$30 billion. In exchange, the Zedillo regime agreed to carry out a harsh austerity plan to guarantee payments on the debt. This included imposing a cap on wages well below the rate of inflation, layoffs, increasing the sale tax from 10 to 15 percent, and raising fees for public services.

At the time the White House faced opposition from many politicians in both the Republican and Democratic parties and decided not to ask approval from Congress. Among the most outspoken critics were Senator Alfonse D'Amato, a Republican from New York, and rightist politicians Ross Perot and Patrick Buchanan. "They were wrong," Clinton said on January 15, without referring to specific names. "Today the American people can be proud that we did the right thing."

Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin said Washington made an extra \$580 million profit on the loan. This is because the White House charged a "premium" on interest to Mexico, 4 percent higher than normal U.S. interest rates, supposedly to make up for the risk involved.

Today the peso stands below the rate of 8 to the dollar. Inflation was 29 percent at the end of 1996.

The Mexican government is paying back 1.5 billion borrowed from the IMF as well. Mexico's Finance Minister Guillermo Ortiz said in an interview that the Zedillo administrations financed these loan repayments by selling bonds denominated mostly in foreign currencies in European, Asian, and U.S. markets in five to 10-year term.

The austerity measures imposed as conditions for these loans led to plunging living standards for Mexico's workers and peasants and many in the middle classes. "Obviously the crisis took a toll in terms of economic welfare, and incomes are still down from their 1994 level," said Ortiz.

Since 1994, many people have lost their jobs or are underemployed, scores of small businesses have gone bankrupt, many homeowners cannot pay their mortgages, and real wages have fallen sharply. A study published in 1996 by Mexico's National Autonomous University (UNAM) reported that 50 percent of the Mexican population of 92 million live in extreme poverty, up from 31 percent in 1993.

In 1996, the country's gross domestic product grew 4.5 percent and Mercedes Benz sales in Mexico jumped 50 percent over 1995. But inflation, cuts in social services, and other austerity measures meant a rapid deterioration in living and working conditions for workers.

A recent report by UNAM said that while



March in Mexico City to demand access to unused land for new housing construction

the cost of living rose by 913 percent between 1987 and 1996, the minimum wage grew only by 249 percent in the same period. In December, the Zedillo administration raised the minimum wage to 23-26 pesos (\$2.90-\$3.30) per day. According to the UNAM report, a basket of basic food staples — tortillas, beans, eggs, rice and cooking oil — costs today an average 64.50 pesos (\$8.16) per person daily.

Many workers who have lost their jobs have resorted to marginal employment for an income. Thousands from the countryside continue to flock to the capital city.

Juan Calderón, a young man who used to work in a government job and now sells knockoff perfumes out of a car trunk, told the *Christian Science Monitor*, "My other job was better, but this puts food on the table." Calderón is one of the tens of thousands of street vendors, *ambulantes*, that take over the sidewalks in front of the store shops in Mexico City's historic center. Their growing numbers have been noticeable since the 1994 currency crisis, and have survived conflicts with both the shop owners and the police who conduct raids and confiscate their merchandises alleging they have not paid permit fees. "I already pay every day to keep this spot, but I couldn't tell you where the money goes," said Rosa Angua, who sells nylons. "It's all corruption."

## Resistance by workers and peasants

The strike of the street sweepers in Mexico, adds to the thousands of protests taken place last year against austerity measures. "We are dying of hunger in Tabasco," Benito Martínez, one of the hunger strikers, told the *New York Times*. The workers there said that they have no land to farm and fishing is out of the question since the waters are polluted by Pemex — the state-run oil enterprise. Some 3,000 protest marches took place in 1996 in Mexico City alone, including nurses who squirted blood drawn from their arms with syringes, demanding medicines for the social security hospitals.

Skirmishes in the countryside have also included demonstrations by peasants against political repression and economic conditions. Guerrilla groups have also begun functioning more widely in rural areas like Guerrero and Chiapas, winning sympathy among peasants. Last year, when a train loaded with corn passed through a shantytown in the northern city of Monterrey, residents halted it while families rushed to fill sacks of grain.

An official census in Mexico of 1995 released last December described the states of Guerrero, Oaxaca and Chiapas as falling behind the national average by almost every measure. The southern states mostly populated by indigenous people have unpaved roads, schools are in poor conditions with irregularities in the attendance from both teachers and students, and illiteracy runs rampant, while one out of three homes lacks running water. These are also areas where guerrilla groups carry out armed assaults on government installations.

Last November, a group of peasants blocked the highways in Chiapas restricting access to four municipalities. They were demanding a price increase for their corn from \$162.8 per ton to \$320.5. The authorities gave them the run around while arguing that "other groups" have been forcing people to join their protests. In the municipality of Laja Tendida, near the border with Guatemala, a group of peasants holding a protest were attacked by the police leaving three dead and several injured. Seven police officers were eventually jailed for the killings.

## Stopping flow of immigrants to U.S.?

An editorial in the January 16 *New York Times* stated that Washington "bailed out" Mexico, "because Mexico's economic collapse would have slashed demand for American exports and driven illegal workers across the border."

A study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said that economic conditions in the country since 1994 have fostered immigration. The OECD predicts that more than 6 million peasants will be moving to either Mexico City or will cross the Mexico-U.S. border in the next decade.

Meanwhile the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service announced a plan to spend \$400 million in addition to their allotted budget, "to secure the border," according to INS Commissioner Doris Meissner. The agency will hire 1,000 additional border cops and 350 new border inspectors.

# Bonn continues attacks on immigrants

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

The Christian Social Union (CSU), the sister party and coalition partner of German chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democratic Union (CDU), are waging a campaign to blame immigrants for the high unemployment in Germany. At the party's traditional New Years' meeting in Bad Kreuth, a campaign was launched demanding that foreigners from non-European Union countries not be granted work permits the first five years they live in Germany.

On January 7, CSU chairman Theo Waigel who is also minister of finance in the coalition government stated, "We have to keep the steady jobs for Germans." He asserted that so many foreigners are needed on the labor market in Germany just because many Germans do not want to do the heavy, dirty and low paid jobs. His statement coincided with the publication of the unemployment figures for December 1996, listed at 4.2 million workers. The jobless rate is up from 10.2 percent of the workforce to 10.8 percent and is even expected to reach 4.5 million this winter, according to Bernard

Jagoda, the head of Germany's labor department. Criticized by liberals and social democrats in parliament for playing on prejudices, Waigel countered that "in times like these immigration has to be checked. Germany is still too attractive. Otherwise not so many foreigners would come here," he said. In 1991-1993, when refugee camps were set on fire in Heuerswerda and Rostock, prominent government politicians also had openly blamed the immigrants for the high unemployment and social crises that followed the reunification of Germany. Several immigrants of Turkish origin were killed in arson attacks in Mölln and Solingen during that period. At the time, then-Minister of Interior Wolfgang Schäuble had stated, "Large parts of the population are concerned about the influx of asylum seekers. We have to check the uncontrollable influx of foreigners."

Stricter asylum laws were proposed and enacted to solve the problem. Tens of thousands took part in demonstrations at that time in Germany against the attacks on the immigrants. Another part of the anti-immi-

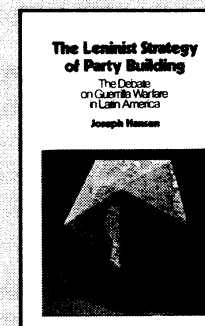
grant campaign is to deport 320,000 refugees back to Bosnia.

As of January 15, children from Morocco, Turkey, Tunisia, and Yugoslavia are required to have visas if they are to visit Germany. Minister of Interior Manfred Kanther motivated the decision by the government declaring, "There has been an abuse of the present rules leading to an increased influx of youth from these states." The present rules allowed children from these countries, below 16 years, to visit Germany without visas if they stay for less than three months.

Kanther accused the parents of children from these countries to arrange for their children to go to Germany, apply for asylum and live on welfare and in the end the parents and their relatives end up as asylum seekers in Germany too. The new rules could even require that the 600,000 children of immigrant workers who were born and grew up in Germany, have to apply for their own permit to stay in Germany.

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

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# Revolt in Albania

Continued from front page

of later investors. When new deposits slow down, they quickly become insolvent.

Albanians put their money in these schemes en masse, searching for income higher than the average wages of \$60-80 per month, in a largely agricultural and underdeveloped country — the poorest in Europe. Tens of thousands are now incensed that the government, which urged them to invest, appears to be shielding some of these would-be capitalists.

"Albania entered the market economy no more than four years ago, coming from a strong centralized economy," declared Tritan Shehu, foreign minister and chairman of the ruling Democratic Party. "I guess it is normal for Albania to have problems that are normal for Western economies. The government has never undertaken to manage its citizens' portfolios."

## Anti-government revolt spreads

About 35,000 people gathered in Skanderberg Square at the center of Tirana, the country's capital January 26, in the largest protest to date. "The government are thieves, we want our money back," many shouted. Riot police attacked the rally but had to retreat initially, after being pelted with rocks. The cops later returned in force with water cannons and assault dogs, dispersing the crowd. Witnesses said the police badly beat protesters who attempted to reach parliament to present their demands, including a call for Berisha's resignation.

The revolt spread throughout this workers state the same day. In some cities police stood aside as protesters blocked roads, severing transport links between the north and the south and with neighboring Greece and Yugoslavia. In Rrogozhine, which was paralyzed by a mile of makeshift blockades, one police officer said orders had been received from the interior ministry not to break up demonstrations by force.

The government lost control of some large cities, like Lushnje in central Albania, home of the founders of two failed pyramid schemes. The courthouse and the offices of the Bureau of Investigation were reportedly burned there January 24. The headquarters of the Democratic Party were also ransacked.

On January 25, Tritan Shehu, who is also deputy prime minister, was chased by angry demonstrators in Lushnje. Shehu had to lock himself in the changing rooms of the town soccer stadium with his bodyguards and 10 riot policemen. A government helicopter sent to rescue him was left hovering over the soccer field as protesters prevented it from landing.

In Patos, demonstrators attacked the headquarters of Albpetrol, the state-owned oil company. In the southern port of Vlora, base of the failed Gjalica scheme, the municipal building and police station was set ablaze, while four policemen were hurt in clashes January 26. In Korca, near the border with Greece, the headquarters of the governing party was also torched.

As protests raged, the Albanian parliament gave the president special powers on January 26 to deploy the army to guard roads and government buildings.

## Regime has trouble defusing protests

The protests spread rapidly despite hasty actions by the regime to defuse them. On January 23, the Albanian parliament passed a law banning "pyramid schemes." The legislation includes minimum sentences of 20 years for starting up such enterprises and confiscation of assets. The government also froze 25.5 billion leks (\$232 million) deposited by owners of the Xhaferrie and Populli funds in state-owned banks and arrested 60 of their officials, including top managers. But many protesters are demanding these swindlers be released so they can pay out at least some of the debts.

On January 28 Prime Minister Aleksander Meksi reiterated earlier official pledges that the government would begin paying back investors on February 5. Meksi stated, however, that authorities can only guarantee up to 70 percent of the principal. And he indicated it may take months before the money is returned, heightening fears that deposits will be quickly eaten up by inflation, which jumped to 18 percent in December, up from 6 percent a year earlier.



Even to meet these promises, the government will probably have to print more money, accelerating inflationary trends. State-owned banks are already burdened by many bad debts. Nine leading companies and foundations taking deposits at exorbitant interest rates have their funds in state banks. And some of the few privately owned companies with productive investments in agriculture and industry, such as VEFA Holdings and the Kamberi group, have been financing their activities through pyramid schemes.



Thousands of workers have left Albania to find jobs, like these refugees in Italy, 1991.

Officials of some of these companies were prominent supporters and financial contributors to the Democratic Party in last year's controversial elections. While some of these foundations have now collapsed, the government has declared continued backing for companies like VEFA, which has re-applied for a banking license that was denied earlier by the central bank.

To avert financial collapse and weather the storm, the Berisha administration, which has strong backing from Washington, has requested new loans from the International Monetary Fund. An IMF delegation is expected in Tirana soon. An article in the January 29 *Financial Times* of London quoted an anonymous official of an imperialist financial institution saying, "It is important to ... find ways of minimizing the economic and political costs."

The government also launched a propaganda offensive. After threatening a counter-demonstration in front of the opposition Socialist Party (SP) headquarters, Berisha's Democratic Party held a pro-government rally in central Tirana on January 28. Only 3,000 people showed up, a much smaller crowd than previous pro-Berisha mobilizations.

"The future of Albania is not based on pyramid schemes, which will not exist anymore," Berisha told the rally in his first public appearance since the crisis began. "But there will be in Albania a great freedom of initiative."

The president and his entourage accused SP leaders of fomenting the unrest. "Stop the red terror!" their supporters shouted.

"These were terrorist acts that tried to distort the image of Albania, and to block support from Europe and the world," stated foreign minister Shehu. "But those who try to set fires in Albania will themselves be consumed by fire."

The night before the pro-government rally, SP leader Ndrek Legisi was badly beaten in the head. Prime Minister Meksi told reporters he did not know who carried out the attack, but added that Legisi has been among the most active anti-Democratic Party politicians. The Socialist Party, which has backed the protests, is calling on Berisha to resign.

## Roots of economic crisis

The SP is the former Communist Party, or Albanian Workers Party, which ruled the country until the opening of the 1990s. The former Stalinist regime, headed by Enver Hoxha until his death in 1985, shattered under pressure of mass mobilizations for democratic rights and better economic and social conditions. These included large student protests and strikes by half of the country's 700,000 wage workers. The change in the ruling guard was part of similar developments in other workers states in the region.

Between 1989 and 1991, Stalinist regimes and governing parties crumbled across Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, often in the face of popular protests. These regimes had been weakened by years of economic and political crisis. The Stalinist bureaucratic and anti-working-class methods of planning and management had proved incapable of raising labor productivity. The resulting crisis was worsened by the accelerating economic stagnation of capitalism

since the mid-1970s.

The Democratic Party was formed and recognized as a legal opposition group in December 1990, and held its first rally at the University of Tirana. It was founded by pro-capitalist professors, intellectuals, disgruntled government officials, students, and others.

The SP and Democratic Party represent competing interests among the petty-bourgeois ruling caste and aspiring bourgeois layers in Albania. Both parties joined in a brief coalition cabinet in 1991. This bureaucratic caste, in power since the degeneration of the Albanian revolution in the late 1940s, is interested only in safeguarding its own privileges, diverting workers from acting in their own class interests, and continuing the fruitless attempt — at different tempos — to be welcomed as equal partners in the world capitalist system.

After Hoxha's death his successor, Ramiz Alia, began opening Albania's economy to capitalist investment. Alia's regime won the first bourgeois-type parliamentary ballot in March 1991. The Albanian Workers Party was subsequently renamed the Socialist Party, as hundreds of thousands of workers struck demanding wage raises and improved working conditions. But after dozens were killed in anti-government food riots in December 1991, the Stalinist regime was forced to call new elections, which swept the Democratic Party to power in March 1992.

While the SP adopted a social democratic posture, the Democratic Party favored a more rapid integration into the world capitalist market and espoused right-wing views. Ever since it came to power, Berisha's group has been trying to purge its Socialist Party rivals from the state bureaucracy. SP leader Fatos Nano, who was Albania's premier in 1991, is serving a 12-year sentence on charges of embezzling Italian aid funds.

## Washington backs Berisha regime

Washington has backed the Berisha administration with economic and military aid since 1992. In exchange, the Albanian government has provided a military base for U.S. reconnaissance activities over neighboring Yugoslavia. It has also discouraged Albanians in the Kosovo region of Serbia from pressing demands for autonomy.

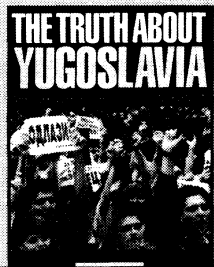
All opposition groups, including the SP and the Human Rights Union, which is backed mainly by the ethnic Greek minority in southern Albania, alleged widespread fraud and organized protests demanding new elections after the last parliamentary ballot in May 1996. Berisha responded with a brutal police crackdown, beating and jailing many opposition leaders. Washington and other imperialist powers refrained from raising even mild criticism. The Berisha administration managed to hold onto power, claiming a landslide victory.

During its five years in office, the Berisha regime has implemented austerity measures such as cutting social services, sold off some state-owned companies to foreign investors, and has relied on loans from the IMF to finance imports. Albania has been touted by the big-business media as one of the success stories of "market reform" in Eastern Europe. But Berisha's pro-capitalist policies have plunged the Albanian workers state, already backward economically, into a deeper social crisis by making it more vulnerable to the ups and downs of the business cycle in a period of world depression.

Today, some 300,000 people are unem-

Continued on Page 5

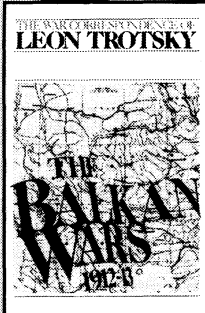
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# SELL THE BOOKS WORKERS OF THE WORLD NEED

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## Pathfinder announces new titles in Spanish

BY GREG McCARTAN

NEW YORK — Pathfinder Press announced this week that two new titles in Spanish will be released at the end of February: a pamphlet, *La segunda declaración de La Habana* (The Second Declaration of Havana), and a book, *La última lucha de Lenin* (Lenin's Final Fight).

"The new titles, drawing on the lessons of the Russian and Cuban revolutions, will be an important addition to the Spanish-language books and pamphlets published and distributed by Pathfinder," said Luis Madrid, who edited both. "They make available writings and speeches that are central to the living continuity of the communist workers movement." Both titles are also available from Pathfinder in English. The pamphlet can also be obtained in French.

*La segunda declaración de La Habana* is available for \$4.50 and *La última lucha de Lenin* is priced at \$21.95. Pathfinder Readers Club members, however, can take advantage of a special pre-publication offer through the end of March: a 30 percent discount on *La última lucha de Lenin*, for \$14.95. During the same period, the same special \$14.95 price will apply to *Lenin's Final Fight*.

*La última lucha de Lenin* is the record of Lenin's last political struggle. Through it the communist leader fought to win the leadership of the Bolshevik Party to maintain the political course that had enabled the workers and peasants in Russia to overthrow the old tsarist empire, carry out the first successful socialist revolution, and begin building a world communist movement. The issues posed in that political battle remain at the heart of world politics today.

*La segunda declaración de La Habana* was read and ratified at a mass rally of a million people in Havana's Plaza of the Revolution in Cuba on Feb. 4, 1962. Three years earlier, workers and farmers had carried out a revolution in that country and refused to back down in the face of military, economic, and political aggression by Washington. Instead, they pointed to the powerful example of their revolution as the way forward for the oppressed and exploited throughout Latin America.

"Three and half decades later, this historic document's unwavering dissection and condemnation of imperialism remains as sound as ever," Madrid stressed. Previously unavailable in pamphlet form, it also includes the First Declaration of Havana, issued in September 1960 in response to the U.S. government-engineered censure of the Cuba government for refusing to reject aid from the Soviet Union and China. "It helps explain not only the character and power of

the revolution made by workers and peasants Cuba," Madrid said. "It also explains the class character of society, the revolutionary potential of the working class, and why working people will wage massive anti-imperialist and anticapitalist battles as they fight for political power in country after country around the world."

In the preface to *La última lucha de Lenin* Madrid writes, "The growth of a receptive audience in the United States for revolutionary literature in Spanish has been demonstrated in recent years by the tens of thousands of Mexicans, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and other Latinos who mobilized in street

protests against the anti-immigrant Proposition 187 in California in 1994 and who marched on Washington in October 1996 to tell the U.S. ruling families that 'No human being is illegal!' The increasing numbers of accelerating social and political weight in the United States of immigrants from Mexico and elsewhere throughout the Americas guarantees they will be heavily represented in the leading battalions of U.S. labor as the class struggle unfolds in the years to come."

Until Pathfinder prepared and published this collection in English in 1995, Madrid noted, the articles, letters, speeches, resolutions, and memos by Lenin that were at the

heart of his final fight had never before been presented in any language in full, or in chronological order as the battle actually unfolded.

Madrid says *La última lucha de Lenin* and other books published by Pathfinder in Spanish "are the product of the enthusiasm, attention to detail, and hard work of many translators and volunteers across the United States, throughout the Americas, and around the world."

In June, Pathfinder will publish for the first time in Spanish, *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*, by Jack Barnes.

## Albanian workers rebel over fraud

Continued from Page 4

ployed. The official jobless rate is 10 percent. Despite an initial upswing in the rate of growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) in the mid-1990s, and the curbing of inflation from 237 percent in 1992 to 6 percent in 1995, working people face economic ruin. Ninety percent of industry has been shut down and most in the country's majority rural population live barely above the level of poverty. About 500,000 retirees struggle with average pensions of \$30 per month. Hundreds of thousands of workers and peasants have immigrated to Greece, Italy, and Germany in search of better jobs. Their remittances to relatives back home account for nearly half the country's GDP.

The recent collapse of the pyramid schemes — which was preceded by similar phenomena throughout Eastern Europe and the former USSR, such as the failure of the \$1 billion MMM investment fund in Russia in 1994 — may unleash new waves of immigration.

Farm worker Xhyser Lamani is one such example. He worked for six years as an undocumented immigrant on farms in the Greek island of Crete. During that time he saved \$24,000, which he invested in three of the failed schemes. "I wanted to build a house in Tirana and make a proper life for my family, but now there's nothing else to do but go back to Greece," he told the *Financial Times*. "This is worse than a disaster."

The challenges facing working people in Albania today can best be appreciated, however, by taking a look at the road workers and peasants have traveled in the last half century — primarily at the revolution that abolished capitalist social relations in this Balkan country in the mid-1940s and its subsequent degeneration.

### Revolution by workers and peasants

Albania won formal independence in 1912, after 450 years of feudal rule under the Ottoman empire. It became a monarchy in 1928 under King Ahmed Zogu. Prior to World War II, the country was essentially a semicolony of Italy.

The vast majority of the population were peasants. Illiteracy was rampant. Apart from some handicraft in the towns, the industrial work force was tiny. In 1938, only 300 light industrial plants existed in the entire country, and wage workers numbered 15,000. Many of these workers were employed mining bitumen, chrome, and copper, as well as in oil extraction, owned primarily by Italian capitalists. Rome was the dominant capitalist power, absorbing two-thirds of Albania's exports and providing half of its imports. Italian imperialist domination began in 1925, with the signing of an agreement for the exploitation of Albania's natural resources. Rome relegated backward Albania to a mere exporter of raw materials, assuring its underdevelopment. In addition, the Italian government and Italian firms provided loans for imports and capital investments, perpetuating the country's debt slavery.

In April 1939, at the outbreak of World War II, the fascist government of Benito Mussolini, sent 100,000 troops and 400 aircraft to occupy Albania. King Zogu fled to neighboring Greece, and Mussolini offered the Albanian crown to the Italian monarch,

Victor Emanuel III. The German army under Adolph Hitler took over from the Italian forces in 1941, after the Italian army suffered humiliating defeats by troops of the capitalist regime in Greece.

Resistance to the occupation developed among workers and peasants in a similar fashion as in Yugoslavia. A guerrilla movement flourished, which was heavily influenced by the Yugoslav partisans. The armed struggle against the German occupation led to the victory of the popular forces in 1944, when Albanian partisan brigades defeated 20,000 German troops after a 19-day battle and liberated the capital.

The revolutionary resistance movement was led by the Albanian Communist Party, formed in 1941 out of three groups — the Seutari, Koritza, and the Youth group — which claimed adherence to communism but were in constant conflict with one another. Many of its leaders had been trained in Moscow's school of Stalinism already, and its Central Committee was riven by factionalism through the 1940s. Delegates from the Yugoslav Communist Party played an active role in the fusion.

Following the defeat of the occupying forces, the new government nationalized the vast bulk of productive property. All the German- and Italian-owned enterprises were confiscated, along with those belonging to local capitalists that collaborated with the Nazis. A radical land reform in 1945-46 redistributed nearly half the arable land to landless peasants. Rationing provided a more equitable distribution of initially scarce food resources. Foreign trade came under state hands and planning was instituted.

The resulting workers state began developing close links with its Yugoslav neighbor, including common price and currency systems and joint economic planning. Joint Yugoslav-Albanian corporations were organized in transportation, mining, foreign trade and banking. Albania was one of the strongest candidates for the Balkan federation, proposed by the Yugoslav CP as an alternative to the Warsaw Pact at the time.

### Rapid degeneration of workers state

In 1948, a fierce struggle that had been developing between Moscow and Belgrade broke out into the open. Moscow criticized policies of the Yugoslav government of Josip Broz Tito and dredged up conflicts from the Yugoslav civil war and before. The Yugoslav leadership condemned Moscow's plunder of the so-called buffer zone of Eastern Europe. That year, the regime of Joseph Stalin in the USSR imposed an economic blockade on Yugoslavia, leading to the formal break of the Yugoslav CP from Moscow.

Stalin worked to foment divisions within the Albanian CP. During the Soviet break with Belgrade, the faction headed by one of the Albanian CP's central leaders, Enver Hoxha, promoted by Moscow, gained control through bloody purges. The fight centered on matters related to the national question: whether Kosovo would be returned to Albania as had been the formal position of the Yugoslav CP, and Albania's status in the proposed Balkan federation. The party's organizational secretary, Koci Xoxe, who was supported by the Yugoslav CP, was executed by Hoxha's group in 1949 at the urg-

ing of Moscow. Many others followed. By 1953 only three members of the original Albanian CP Central Committee were still members. Hoxha's regime cut off ties with Yugoslavia and allied itself totally with Moscow.

During this period, a bureaucratic caste headed by Enver Hoxha crystallized, leading to the rapid degeneration of the initial gains of the revolution and closing of any democratic space for the working class. Hoxha maintained the alliance with Moscow until Stalin's death in 1955. Fearing a working-class uprising like the one that developed in the Hungarian workers state in 1956 — after new Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev acknowledged some of Stalin's crimes while crushing the Hungarian rebellion with Soviet troops — Hoxha broke away from Moscow and realigned his government with the Stalinist regime of Mao Zedong in China. In the subsequent decades, Hoxha ruled with an iron grip, keeping Albanian workers and peasants isolated from the rest of the working class in the region and from world politics.

### Isolation of working class is broken

This isolation was broken at the dawn of the 1990s, as popular protests led to the shattering of the Stalinist murder machine that Hoxha meticulously put together. Any political continuity with the revolutionary traditions of the workers and peasants in the 1940s had been decisively broken, which explains why a pro-capitalist opposition initially gained such a wide hearing.

At the same time, Albanian workers and peasants became part of the class struggle in the region, through the massive immigration and travel back and forth that was now permitted. The current mobilizations against the would-be capitalists of the Democratic Party, as well as the uprising against the Stalinist regime of Alia in 1991, show that workers and peasants in Albania can eventually find their way back to building a leadership worthy of their accomplishments in the 1940s.

That's what worries capitalist investors today, as the Berisha regime is shaken by protests. As an article in the January 29 *Financial Times* put it, "There is no easy solution to this. There is going to be a lot of disruption in Albania, however the problem is approached."



In related developments in the neighboring workers states, the Stalinist regime of Slobodan Milosevic has refused to make any more concessions to 10 weeks of daily protests by tens of thousands, demanding reinstatement of municipal election results Belgrade annulled earlier. At the end of January, a Yugoslav court overturned a ruling by the state electoral commission conceding victory to the Zajedno opposition coalition in Belgrade. Other courts have also ruled that the governing Socialist Party won in eight of the 14 cities where Zajedno claims it won majorities in the November 17 ballot.

In Bulgaria, the ruling Socialist Party is pressing ahead to form a new government. The SP parliamentary majority is not heeding calls by the opposition Union of Democratic Forces for new elections, despite weeks of strikes and demonstrations fueled by runaway inflation and declining wages.

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# Sweden YS helps sell and print socialist books

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists (YS), an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS write to: Young Socialists, P.O. Box 14392, St. Paul, MN 55114. Tel: (612) 644-0051. Compuserve: 105162,605

BY JOHAN NILSSON  
AND ERNEST OLEINIK

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Members of the Young Socialists in Sweden are now participating in the international effort to sell Pathfinder books by selling to students in different Stockholm schools.

This is the latest move by the YS chapter to bring socialism to a potential new generation of fighters, who will, in the coming struggles, unite together with workers and

begin to chart a way forward from capitalist depression and war. Youth have especially suffered in Sweden from the economic crisis that hit the country in the beginning of the 1990s.

The YS, together with the Communist League, have been involved in the last three months in organizing several activities, such as selling Pathfinder books at the 12 annual Gothenburg book fair at the end of October. Also at the end of October and on November 26 we participated in demonstrations against rising unemployment in Sweden — now 8.7 percent. Altogether, about 9,000 came people to the two demonstrations.

On November 9, the YS chapter participated in a rally of about 200 people honoring the 58th anniversary of the night when the Nazi regime in Germany instigated the killing of several Jews in Berlin. The event

has become known as "The Crystal Night."

Three weeks later, the YS together with the Communist League sent five of its members to an annual demonstration against racism and fascism in central Stockholm. This year the police restricted the demonstrators from marching because, as they put it, "they would be disturbing the Christmas shopping."

One of the most important steps for the YS chapter in Sweden has been the discussion on the functioning of a proletarian youth organization. This discussion began after two of the YS members came back from the Washington D.C. regional socialist educational conference. After the discussion at the December 13 YS meeting, we took a vote in which the YS chapter decided with overwhelming majority to have an executive committee, with organizers that have the responsibility of implementing the decisions that the weekly YS chapter meeting makes.

Since we made the decision on our organizational form, we decided on having regular study classes on Marxist books like the *Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Socialism on Trial* by James P. Cannon and *Socialism and Man in Cuba* by Ernesto Che Guevara.

The Young Social-

ists have participated with the Communist League in organizing classes on *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* by Jack Barnes. We also had a member speak at a Militant Labor Forum on "Malcolm X and the Civil Rights Movement."

And on January 15 a YS member helped to print the new Swedish edition of the *Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*.



Militant/Birgitta Issacson

Young Socialists members in Sweden have put selling Pathfinder books at the center of their work. Above, YS members help staff literature table at unemployment protest.

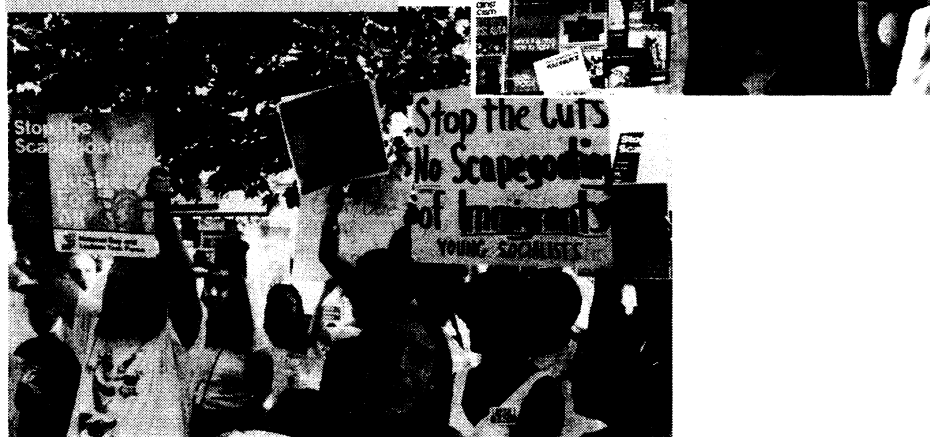
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## Sinn Fein youth tour Canada

BY PATTIE KELLY  
AND AHMAD HAGHIGHAT

TORONTO — "The British Government has failed miserably to break the nationalist movement," stated Sinn Fein youth leader Maeve McLaughlin at a public meeting here January 17. "[British prime minister] John Major, in desperation, has tried to sabotage peace. But one thing Major overlooks is that, after he is gone, the republican movement will continue."

McLaughlin, 27, and Marion Donaghy, 19, are currently on a tour of Canadian universities and high schools. The tour of the two youth from Northern Ireland is sponsored by various Irish activist groups in Toronto and Montreal, as well as the Ontario Public Interest Research Group. It is aimed at broadening solidarity with the Irish struggle and explaining the reality in Ireland today.

"The tour is a learning experience for ourselves," explained McLaughlin. "In terms of making links, we will work with anyone who is willing to work with us. Connections are vital to defeat our oppressors."

Being involved in the national struggle "is not a choice. Politics is your life, a reality," said McLaughlin.

Donaghy, whose father was arrested and imprisoned when she was four years old, described the years of harassment and intimidation she endured, as well as interrogation at the age of five. At a meeting at the University of Toronto she told an audience of more than 150, "I joined Sinn Fein so that I could have a voice."

The meeting at the University of Toronto, held January 15, was chaired by Faisal Moola, a young South African. He spoke enthusiastically about the connection between the struggle of the South African people and that of the Irish people. He described how he and his family had sought refuge in Ireland during apartheid because of their association with the African National Congress, and hailed the solidarity of the Irish people.

McLaughlin agreed, saying that "the links between Belfast and South Africa have existed a long time; they existed before I was born."

During the discussion, the two Irish youth said they were inspired by their meeting with Native activists earlier that day. One participant in the audience also pointed out that similar links exist between the oppression of the Irish and the oppression of the Quebecois, who were marching through the streets in Quebec last October chanting, "We want a country!" The meeting was recorded for Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) Radio and broadcast twice the next day. Clips of the meeting were shown on CBC Television.

In addition to visiting seven universities in the Toronto and the surrounding area, the Irish activists also spoke at six high schools. They said the reception they received was extremely positive and encouraging, with 400 students attending at one high school meeting. Other activities in Toronto included a public screening of the video *The Law And The Order*, a documentary exposing the violent nature of the Orange marches — parades organized by Protestant Loyalists through predominantly Catholic areas aimed at intimidating and terrorizing the neighborhood. About 70 people attended.

Upcoming solidarity events in Toronto include a commemoration of the 25th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, to be held at the Ontario Federation of Labor Hall February 1. Bloody Sunday occurred on Jan. 30, 1972, when 13 civil rights protesters were killed by the British Army in Derry, Northern Ireland.

The two Sinn Fein youth leaders will then head on to Ottawa, where they will speak at Ottawa University and Carlton University and will conduct a television interview. They will conclude their tour in Montreal, where they will speak at Concordia University and at a premier of the film *Some Mother's Son*, a film about the hunger strikes by Irish political prisoners.



# UK rulers debate legalizing cop spying

BY CHRIS MORRIS

MANCHESTER, England — The House of Lords approved legislation January 21 that would expand the spying power of the cops. Two amendments to the "Police Bill" adopted by the upper house of Parliament, however, reflect some hesitations among Britain's rulers over how fast to move in attacking democratic rights.

The Police Bill aims to make legal the use of bugging equipment and hidden cameras by the police. The cops have entered premises secretly for decades, without any legal basis, to plant surveillance devices or copy material. According to the *Daily Telegraph*, authorizations for this activity currently run at more than 1,200 a year, and are given by chief constables or their deputies. "As there was no statute, police were, in theory, always liable to civil suits for trespass or causing damage," the *Telegraph* reported.

The government's draft bill sought to create a "commissioner" to oversee the use of bugs by the police. The Lords passed an amendment proposed by Labour Party legislators saying that the police would need this commissioner's permission in advance, except in "emergencies." Jack Straw, Labour's shadow home secretary, had originally supported the bill. A second amend-



Militant/Marcella Fitzgerald

**Demonstration in London in 1994 against another crime bill that also attacked democratic rights. New 'Police Bill' aims to legalize use of government spying devices.**

ment, put forward by the Liberal Democrats, stipulated the police would need the approval of a judge before entering private premises to place surveillance equipment. It too was adopted.

The House of Lords, the upper house of the United Kingdom's parliament, includes the hereditary aristocracy, the bishops of the Church of England, and also "life peers," usually retired capitalists or politicians. In

the Lords debate, James Callaghan, who was home secretary in a Labour government 30 years ago, said he had no recollection of warrants to mount bugging operations ever being approved by him. He propounded to be "flabbergasted" at the number of surreptitious spy operations carried out by the cops.

Robert Carr, home secretary in a Conservative government in the early 1970s, said, "I am not happy with the way the government is doing this. I must vote against the police being given authority to do these awful deeds by any other than the judiciary."

The amended bill adopted by the Lords now goes back to the House of Commons, where a new version will be negotiated.

Jack Straw assured that "cross-party understanding will be possible" if the government accepts the "spirit of the amendment ... that the principle of prior consent by a commissioner is accepted in respect of intrusive surveillance on premises, and in respect of doctors, lawyers, and journalists, save in urgent cases."

London police commissioner William Taylor joined the debate, speaking for the Association of Chief Police Officers. He said judges were neither "trained nor equipped and don't have the availability" to make operational decisions. Cops should have maximum authority, he claimed, in order to have speed and flexibility to combat crimes such as terrorism, kidnapping, and armed robbery.

The *Telegraph* said that according to Taylor, "the use of covert technology was likely to grow. Police use a variety of devices, including close-quarter audio bugs, long-distance directional microphones and miniature cameras. They bore holes in corners of rooms or remove panels to hide cameras or recording equipment. They regularly place tracking devices on cars and lorries.... The next largest category is 'public or quasi-public places' such as hotel foyers or rooms, where criminals often meet.... But intrusion into homes is very rare, said Mr. Taylor."

The Police Bill will also establish a national crime squad for England and Wales. The bill creates a legal basis for the "National Criminal Intelligence Service," which collects "criminal intelligence for use by police forces and other law enforcement agencies."

The law would set up a Criminal Records Agency to provide individuals with information about their criminal records in the form of a Criminal Conviction Certificate, which employers could ask to see. These aspects of the bill were approved by the Lords.

*Chris Morris is a member of the Amalgamated Electrical and Engineering Union.*

## Clinton probes means testing Medicare

Continued from front page

elections, with new twists and turns every week. Unlike the 1994-95 "Republican revolution," it is led by the Clinton administration and other prominent Democrats.

The latest trick is convincing working people that "upper-income" families should pay more toward the Medicare federal fund to save it from imminent bankruptcy and balance the federal budget. "Something has got to happen in the area of more affluent citizens in terms of the percentage that they pay," said Sen. Peter Domenici, a Republican from New Mexico and Budget Committee chairman.

But all the funds for Medicare, as well as Social Security and other entitlements, come out of the value workers produce that is appropriated by the bosses in the form of profit. The rulers' drive to slash the social wage has nothing to do with "responsibilities" of the wealthy. It has everything to do with reversing the decline in the profit rates of the capitalist class.

Most of the cuts Clinton announced he will propose when he unveils his federal budget on February 6, \$91 billion, are to come from reducing federal payments to hospitals, health maintenance organizations (HMOs), and doctors. This will affect working people, because HMOs and hospitals will become less likely to serve Medicare patients and will offer lower quality care. The "affluent" can easily afford private, and better, health care programs.

Clinton's proposals also include raising the monthly premium Medicare recipients pay from an average \$44 today to nearly \$62 in five years.

Republicans, seeing the writing on the wall, are cautiously pushing for more, particularly establishing the principle that the amount of care anyone gets should be pegged to his or her income. "I don't think you can solve the problem legitimately just on the provider side," said Lott. "And I think he [Clinton] knows that."

Means testing has been widely used in the existing welfare programs as part of humiliating and demoralizing low-paid or jobless workers who depend on relief. These programs are staffed by bureaucrats and snoops who pry into every aspect of a person's life — how you spend your money, who you live with, whether or not you decide to bear a child.

Last year, Clinton signed the Welfare Reform Act, eliminating Aid to the Families with Dependent Children and other parts of the federal relief program — the first gutting of the Social Security Act in 60 years. Responsibility for disbursing the reduced welfare funds was placed on the states, some of which are now reapplying the more degrading aspects of means testing.

In Maine, for example, the state is reinstituting an old practice: when a family comes in to apply for welfare, a social worker assigned to the case will visit them at home. Home visits were abandoned in the 1970s when they became widely viewed as an invasion of privacy in the aftermath of the movements for Black freedom, women's equality, and against the Vietnam war.

Instituting a differential, pegged to personal income, on the premium recipients pay for Medicare coverage guts the character of the program as an entitlement. Winning federally funded health care programs available to all elderly and disabled people, regardless of income, was an essential part of the victories labor scored in its battle to expand working-class solidarity and undercut competition imposed by the wages system.

Some of the proposals floated now would require individuals whose income exceeds \$60,000, or \$80,000 for couples, to pay double the current premium. Once that principle is established, however, the cutoff point can be changed easily.

The leadership of the Republican Party in Congress has also announced it will push as a priority a bill that would do away with mandatory overtime pay. The "comp-time"

bill would give employers the option of not paying workers time and a half for overtime. The bosses would instead give workers points for overtime that would be accumulated and workers would cash them in by getting time off after notifying the employer 30 days in advance.

The bill is being pushed under the pretext of helping working families have more flexible hours. "We have an opportunity to give families the time off they need to care for their children's school activities and in many cases, care for their elderly parents," said Rep. Susan Molinari, a Republican from New York. Clinton supported a slightly different version of such a bill during his election campaign last year, using arguments like Molinari's. Now he is warming up to signing such a measure.

"Though he opposed the GOP's effort last year," said an article in the January 28 *Wall Street Journal*, "President Clinton now says he might sign some form of comp-time legislation, provided it has safeguards sufficient to ward off potential employer abuses. Even some moderate Democrats are giving tacit approval."

## U.S. committee is formed to build world youth festival

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Nearly 20 representatives of youth and other organizations attended a meeting here at the end of January to organize a delegation from the United States to the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students.

The international youth conference is scheduled to take place in Cuba July 28-August 5 of this year. It is sponsored by the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the Asian Students Association, and a number of other international, national, and local youth organizations. It will be hosted in Cuba by the Federation of University Students, Union of Young Communists, and other student and youth groups.

A brochure produced by the international preparatory committee for the event says the festival "will be the continuation of the best traditions of the previous festivals for Anti-Imperialist Solidarity, Peace and Friendship." The last festival of this kind took place in Pyongyang, Korea, in 1989.

Participants at the January 25 meeting decided to form the "U.S. Organizing Committee for the World Youth Festival," which will be responsible for building and making logistical arrangements for the U.S. delegation.

In addition, a couple of other organizations are planning trips to Cuba in July and August and will encourage those who join them to attend the youth gathering. The

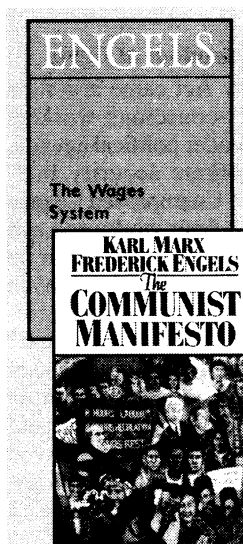
Venceremos Brigade is planning its annual two-week trip to the Caribbean island at the end of July. And the Detroit-based U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange is organizing a delegation to Cuba around the same time, which will attend an international conference of trade unionists scheduled immediately after the youth festival.

Participants at the Washington, D.C., meeting included activists in the National Network on Cuba (NNOC), a nationwide coalition of groups organizing activities to oppose U.S. policy toward Cuba. They also included representatives of the All African Peoples' Revolutionary Party, Committees of Correspondence, D.C. Hands Off Cuba Coalition, Socialist Workers Party, Venceremos Brigade, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Workers World party, and Young Socialists.

In a number of cities, local Cuba coalitions and student groups have taken advantage of visits by Cuban youth leaders and other speakers from Cuba to get the word out about the festival.

Leslie Cagan, a longtime activist in the NNOC who attended the meeting, said a number of other groups have expressed interest in endorsing the effort and taking part in building activities.

Those interested can contact the "U.S. Organizing Committee" at 2565 Broadway #236, New York, NY 10025; Tel: (212) 866-7270.



*From Pathfinder*

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# Social Security: a product of labor battles

(First in a series)

BY MEGAN ARNEY

In his second term, U.S. president William Jefferson Clinton has made clear he intends to lead the bipartisan effort to dismantle Social Security. In fighting to defend the gains that are codified in the Social Security Act, it's useful to look at how working people won these measures, which offer some minimal protection from the ravages of the capitalist system.

The Social Security Act — first adopted in 1935 — encompasses several different programs. The most well known program is social insurance for the elderly. This program is funded by both payroll taxes and taxes on employers. It provides benefits to workers after they reach the age of 65, as well as federal grants for the disabled. Unemployment insurance was initiated under the Social Security Act, but is currently administered separately by state governments. Aid for Families with Dependent Children had been part of the 1935 Social Security Act, but was eliminated last year as part of the "welfare reform" signed by Clinton. Other federal social programs also run by the Social Security Administration include supplemental security income, which augments Social Security payments, and the Medicare and Medicaid programs, which provide health coverage to the elderly and poor, respectively. The medical portions were added to the original act in the 1960s.

## Depression leaves millions unemployed

The October 1929 stock market crash signaled the opening of an economic depression. Between 1929 and 1933, industrial production in the United States dropped nearly 50 percent. The national income spiraled downward by one-half, and unemployment soared.

By December 1930 there were between 4.5 and 5 million unemployed, though President Herbert Hoover claimed there were only 2.5 million. At its peak in 1933, unemployment ranged between 13.3 and nearly 18 million workers, according to government agencies. The symbol of the depression became the "Hoovervilles" — the tarpaper-and-tin shack communities that grew up in the dumps of the cities and towns where families who were evicted were forced to live. An estimated 1.5 million homeless people wandered the roads in search of work. Between 1920 and 1933, one farm in every four was sold for debt or taxes, while tenancy increased from 25 percent of all farmers in 1880 to 42 percent in 1935.

Many of those who did have jobs worked for starvation wages. The Feb. 15, 1929, *Militant* reported that already there was "a standing army of unemployed workers numbering several millions" and a "growing series of wage cuts." Between March 1930 and March 1931, nearly 3 million workers in manufacturing industries suffered average wage cuts of 9.4 percent.

After the initial shock of the economic catastrophe, working people began to respond. From Albany, New York, across the Midwest to the West Coast, local organizations popped up and there were many demonstrations demanding work and relief. National hunger marches took place in 1931 and 1932, demanding unemployment pay-

ments, a shorter workweek, social insurance for illness, accident, old age, and maternity, and other measures. Many working people began to organize to combat the depression conditions, both in trade unions and in unemployed organizations. These groups fought for unemployment compensation and other social security measures to protect those most affected by the capitalist depression.

An Associated Press dispatch dated Dec. 7, 1931, reported: "Fifteen hundred demonstrators marched back and forth on Pennsylvania avenue today [in Washington, D.C.] and found both the White House and Capitol doors barred against them. Singing the 'Internationale' and chanting slogans calling for unemployed insurance they paraded under a police escort."

Workers' protests were often met by resistance from the employers and the police. In Detroit, 3,000 laid-off Ford auto workers rallied in March 1932 to demand jobs. Four demonstrators were killed by police and Ford security guards.

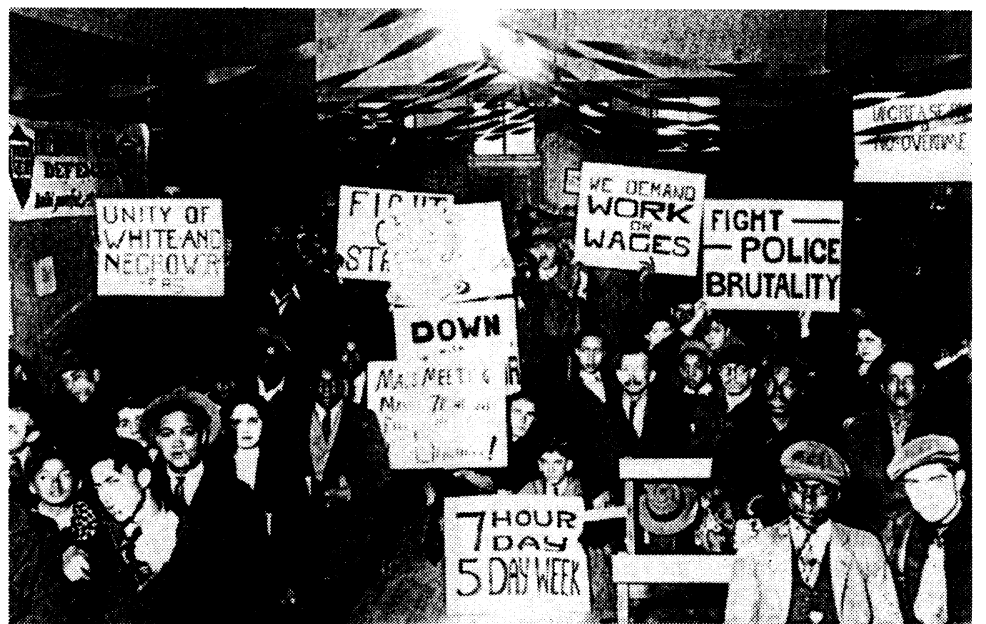
The government was forced to concede crumb-like relief, but the federal funds and private relief were inadequate and humiliating for those who were forced to rely on them. President Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal" of 1933, with its "made work" relief programs, known as the WPA, was in fact more like a "raw deal" for workers. Workers were paid barely livable wages of as low as \$40 a month in the North and as low as \$19 a month in the South.

In his book, *Teamster Politics*, Farrell Dobbs, a leader of the Teamsters union in the 1930s and longtime leader of the Socialist Workers Party, interviewed Max Goldman, a leader of the Federal Workers Section of Minneapolis Teamsters Local 574. This union auxiliary organized unemployed workers, including those in the WPA programs. Goldman recalled, "Considering the billions spent that could have been used to creative ends, it was like dumping products to maintain high prices and fat profits. The labor power of millions was wasted, so as not to upset the balance of the capitalist system. No wonder the symbol of the WPA was a worker leaning on a shovel." Roosevelt's works program never provided jobs for more than 25 percent of the jobless. His historically touted WPA project would lay off workers just after presidential elections. In 1936, for example, 400,000 WPA workers were fired en masse.

## Labor battles explode

Labor resistance to the depression conditions exploded in a strike wave in 1934. In 1929, there had been 921 strikes, involving 289,000 workers for a loss of over 5.3 million workdays. In 1933, an average of 603,000 workdays per month were lost to strikes in the first half of the year. The number reached nearly 1.4 million in July 1933, and in August it was over 2.3 million. Overall, 1933 saw the largest number of work stoppages since 1921.

In 1934, three major strikes and numerous smaller ones set the stage for workers to force concessions from the bosses and their lackeys in Washington. These working-class struggles transformed the labor movement, opening the process that forged the industrial unions of the CIO. The June



Unemployed organizations in 1930s (above) put forward broad demands affecting the working class. Women took part in the picket lines during strike wave of mid-30s in trucking, steel, auto, and other industries.

2, 1934, front page headline of the *Militant* read: "Strike Wave Sweeps Country," with subheadings on the two main strikes at that time.

One headline read, "General Strike Looms in Toledo." The fight there started with the Electric Auto-Lite strike. In his book, *Labor's Giant Step: The First Twenty Years of the CIO: 1936-55*, Art Preis explains that this strike by auto parts workers "blazed forth to illuminate the whole horizon of the American class struggle. The American workers were to be given an unforgettable lesson in how to confront all the agencies of the capitalist government — courts, labor boards and armed troops — and win."

One out of three people living in Toledo were on relief. In 1933, the Unemployed League, led by followers of A.J. Muste, head of the American Workers Party, had organized militant mass actions of the unemployed and won cash relief. When the company hired 1,800 strikebreakers, the union had reached out to the Unemployed League. In a letter to Louis Howe in the White House, newspaper reporter Roy Howard wrote, "The point about Toledo was this: that it is nothing new to see organized unemployed appear on the streets, fight police, and raise hell in general. But usually they do this for their own ends, to protest against unemployment or relief conditions. At Toledo they appeared on the picket lines to help striking employees win a strike, though you would expect their interest would lie the other way — that is, in going in and getting the jobs the other men had laid down."

On June 1, 1934, some 40,000 workers turned out for a solidarity rally in Toledo. By then, 98 of the 99 AFL union locals in the city had voted for a general strike. On June 4, the company capitulated and signed a six-month contract, including a wage raise and union recognition.

Another *Militant* headline in 1934 read: "Union Recognition Gained By Militant Minneapolis Battles, Victory is an Inspiration to Workers Everywhere." As the Auto-Lite strike was reaching its height, truckers in Minneapolis were waging the second of a series of strikes that year. Over 30 percent of the population of Hennepin County, Minnesota, consisted of unemployed workers and their families at the time. From the very beginning the most militant of the unemployed organizations were involved in the strike.

On August 22, after a third strike and several rounds of street battles against the forces of the employers and the government, the strikers won. The bosses capitulated and gave the Teamsters their main demands, including union representation for all workers employed by the trucking bosses. The successful battles in Minneapolis laid the ground for efforts to organize the trucking industry throughout the Midwest.

The third major industrial struggle in 1934 started on May 9, 1934. Between 10,000 and 15,000 West Coast members of the AFL International Longshoremen's Association went on an "unauthorized" strike.



Soon it included 25,000 workers. After battles with police in which over 100 were wounded, San Francisco labor answered with a two-day general strike. On July 31, the strike ended with an agreement to arbitrate. It took repeated job actions before the union won its main demand: a union hiring hall. The strike gave impetus to the maritime organizations on the East Coast and the 1937 establishment of the CIO National Maritime Union, as well as opening the way for organization of West Coast industrial labor.

Before the year was out, more than 1.4 million workers had struck across the United States. The labor battles did not stop once the Social Security Act was passed, but actually increased in the following years. More than 1,000 sit-down strikes were reported in the press in 1936 and 1937.

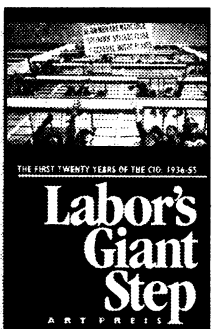
By 1938 Roosevelt had fired 1.5 unemployed from the WPA work-relief programs — he would cut 2 million by 1940. At the same time, Washington spent over \$6.3 billion in war preparations. According to the June 20, 1939, *Socialist Appeal* (the name under which the *Militant* was published at that time), the total number of persons dependent on one or another form of public relief was 23 million. Aid they received was about 22 cents a day.

Workers on the WPA struck that year for less hours worked, higher pay, back pay, and more jobs — and many were won. In 1939 the July 13 *Northwest Organizer*, the Midwest Teamster newspaper, reported, "The strike of WPA workers continued to mount and roll across the country like a tidal wave this week, as fresh thousands of desperate and disgusted workers downed tools and brought the number of men and women on strike close to 500,000 with still more to come out."

## Social Security a byproduct of fights

The Social Security Act came at a time when the most class-conscious workers were pushing for a broader political agenda. For example, a "workers security bill" drafted by the National Unemployed League in 1934 called for a 30-hour workweek and a public works program to provide "an up to date, fully equipped county hospital in every county; modern libraries and recreational centers in every city and country." The document also called for other social needs, including "rural electrification" those employed by the "relief" program be paid the standing union wage. The Unemployed League demanded unemployment and so-

Continued on Page 11



## Labor's Giant Step

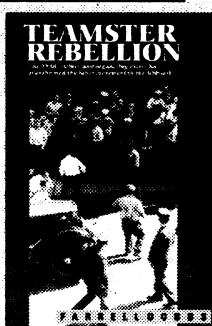
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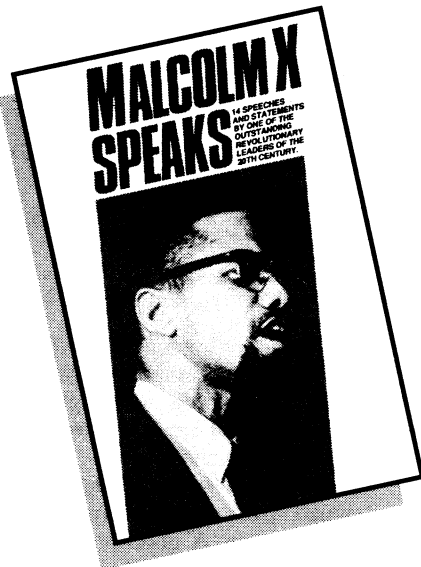


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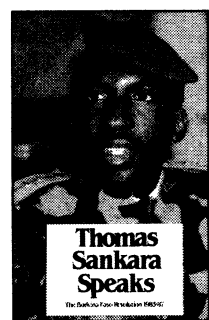
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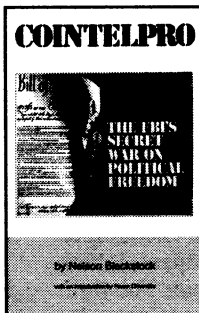
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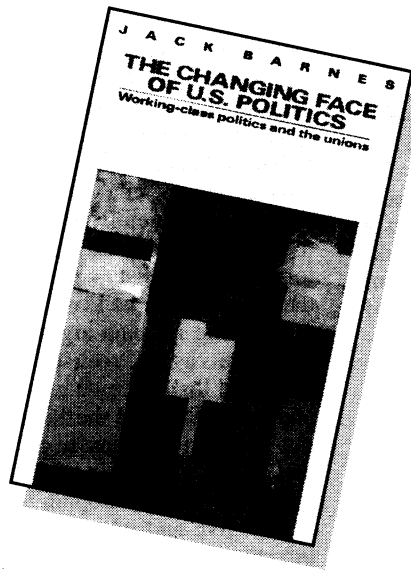
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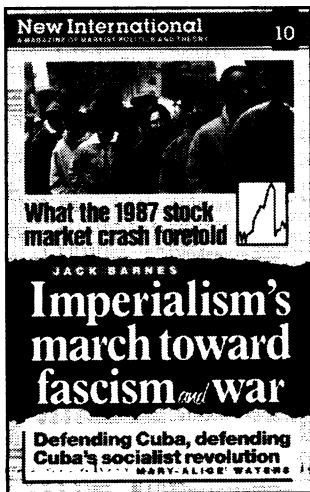
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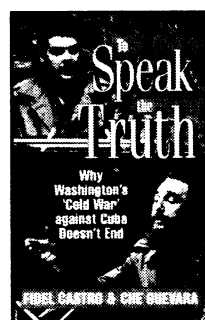
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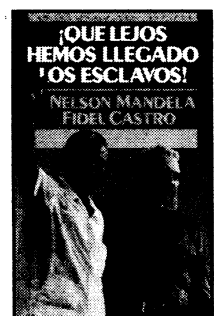
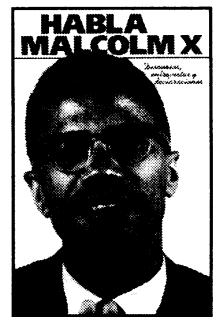
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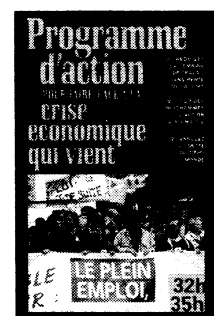
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# Socialists launch campaign in Los Angeles

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — Craig Honts, the Socialist Workers Party nominee for mayor of Los Angeles, has been certified for the ballot. In less than two weeks, he and his supporters collected 1,000 signatures on nominating petitions, double the legal requirement. Similar numbers of petitions are being filed for his running mates, Virginia Garza and Eli Green. Gale Shangold is also running as a write-in candidate.

Honts is an engineer on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad and a member of the United Transportation Union, Local 1-674. Garza, running for comptroller, is a health care worker. Green, candidate for community colleges board of trustees, works at the Chevron oil refinery and is a member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 1-675. Shangold, a garment worker and member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees Local 482, is a candidate for city council in the 13th District.

The April election will be "nonpartisan" and party affiliation of the candidates will not be on the ballot. Among others, Honts will be running against Republican incumbent Richard Riordan and the liberal Democrat and 1960s activist, Thomas Hayden.

The opportunities offered by the cam-

paigned to build the socialist movement have been readily apparent. At the Militant Labor Forum, January 25, Honts spoke on the deepening world crisis of capitalism internationally. The key issues confronting Los Angeles voters, he explained — the antilabor drive, immigrant-bashing, homelessness, pollution, and more — cannot be effectively acted on except from the starting premise that they are rooted in the crisis that grips the country and the world.

Among those listening most intently was a half dozen people, four of them youth, who were attending the forum for the first time. Several joined readily in the discussion that followed his talk. Their essential concerns: Do socialists offer a viable alternative in the election? Concretely, what would Honts do, if elected, to deal with the social issues? The long-term socialist goals seems fine, but are they relevant to the Los Angeles elections?

A young Filipina argued for supporting Democrats as the "realistic" course, but also indicated that her own growing skepticism about this. She said she had considered Thomas Hayden "as a last hope." Honts argued that trying to reform a bankrupt capitalist system is "totally utopian" and dead-end.

The give-and-take discussion continued informally when the meeting ended. The upshot, Honts said later, was that the young



Militant/Carole Lesnick

Socialist mayoral candidate Craig Honts (right) petitioning to get on the ballot in L.A.

woman plans to continue the political discussion with campaign supporters over dinner and attend the next forum.

Campaign activity has also been reflected in increased sales at the Pathfinder bookstore. One fellow who came to forum after

signing a petition earlier in the day said he had read some socialist literature at college. After the meeting, he bought three books, by Frederick Engels, George Novack, and Georges Plekanov.

As of last count, some 40 people had signed up to receive information about campaign events. A good number indicated a specific interest in learning more about the Young Socialists organization.

Elizabeth Lariscy, a pace setter in the petition drive, told of a University of California-Los Angeles campus meeting marking the twenty-fourth anniversary of the legalization of abortion which she, Virginia Garza, and other petitioners attended.

During discussion at the meeting Garza vigorously assailed the Clinton administration for not taking meaningful action against the new outbreak of abortion clinic bombings. The socialist candidate urged the audience to join in demanding that federal troops be dispatched to defend abortion clinics. Her remarks were greeted with substantial applause.

Afterwards the campaigners talked with several people, including a student from Sri Lanka who was enthusiastic about meeting socialists in the United States. She and a friend have been leading dormitory discussions on political events and she was particularly interested in learning more about the Young Socialists.

## 200 protest 'factory farms' in Iowa

BY SIMONE BERG  
AND MARGE TOWER

DES MOINES — Holding signs saying "Family Farms, Not Factory Farms" and "Greed and Hog Factories Stink," some 200 farmers, their families, and supporters demonstrated in the Iowa state capitol after Governor Terry Branstad gave his annual address on January 14 to open the 1997 state legis-

lative session. The focus of this rally, sponsored by the Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement (ICCI), was to protest state government policies that promote the hog containment facilities.

Larry Ginter, who raises hogs near Marshalltown, Iowa, chaired the rally. Ginter won an important victory this summer against state government attempts to

make him remove a sign, posted on his property, condemning big-business hog farms and Branstad's support for them.

Large-scale hog factories, run by capitalist farmers and corporations, raise thousands of hogs at a time and produce so much manure that the waste products threaten to contaminate the water table. Many people get their drinking water from wells on farms near the hog factories. The manure lagoons, often near houses, farms, and roads, emit powerful fumes of ammonia and sulfur compounds that are a health hazard, in addition to being extremely noxious.

The size of these facilities makes it difficult for small producers to compete. Two speakers at the rally said that in 1996, some 4,000 small hog producers went out of business. This affects all of the other small businesses that sell to small family farms, like feed sellers and veterinarians.

Larry Lewis, who raises 600 hogs near Creston, Iowa, said he had never been at a protest of any sort before. "Maybe I can be one more person protesting what these politicians are doing," he told the *Militant*. Lewis said he is concerned about encroachment on surrounding family hog farms by Farmland Industries in southwestern Iowa.

The big hog producers have received a helping hand from the Iowa Legislature with House File 519, a law passed in 1995. While this law did increase constraints on capitalist hog farmers — modestly increasing the distance required between manure lagoons and nearby houses and farms, for example — H.F. 519 contains a nuisance clause which makes it very difficult for an individual to sue a factory farm to force them to comply with protective legislation, including on pollution. The law also explicitly asserts that local jurisdictions have no zoning power pertaining to the hog factories, and that the pro-agribusiness Iowa Department of Natural Resources controls such matters. A containment facility with less than 5,000 hogs does not need to meet any special zoning requirements.

Harold Weidner, who farms in Glidden, Iowa, said he was at the rally "to save the family farms and the environment." A new large hog factory has been set up close to the airport in his area.

After the rally, participants jammed into a conference room to confront state legislative leaders members belonging to the Senate Agriculture Committee, most of whom are Democrats. The exchange was often sharp, with farmers taking issue with legislators who sided with the large-scale hog producers. The weekend after the rally, a *Des Moines Register* editorial called for stricter environmental constraints on pollution of the water supply in central and northern Iowa by the hog factory operators. Ginter told the *Militant*, "I was encouraged by the turnout. As this crisis deepens, I think we'll see more people come out. The fight is here, and we're not going to go away."

## Undemocratic 'Megan's law' is implemented in New York

BY ROSE ANA BERBEO

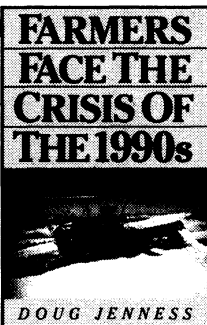
NEW YORK — Striking a blow to the democratic rights of working people, New York state officials have released a list of 17 names, addresses, photos, and descriptions of people in the state who were convicted of sex crimes and have completed their jail sentences or are on probation. Some of these names were immediately published in the *New York Daily News*, along with an editorial claiming that "Among convicts, they are the most likely to commit more sex crimes."

The list was released January 3 under the so-called "Megan's Law," which calls for people who have been convicted of sex crimes to register with the state within 10 days of release from prison or probation. The state then decides who is included on a list of names released to police departments and available to anyone. A federal law was passed—New York, New Jersey and other states passed similar laws—after 7-year-old Megan Kanka was raped and killed in 1994. A neighbor, convicted of prior sex offenses, was charged with her murder.

Governor George Pataki hailed the list of 17 names, known as the "Subdirectory of Sexually Violent Predators," as a victory for

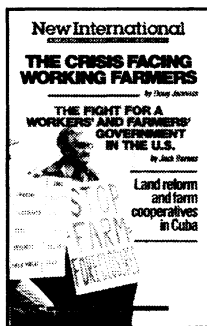
parents. "Now families will begin to be informed, and be able to take steps to keep their children safe," he said. The Attorney General, Dennis Vacco, is appealing a federal ruling that prohibits publishing an additional 5,000 names of people convicted of sex crimes before Jan. 21, 1996, when the law went into effect. Manhattan Federal Judge Denny Chin ruled that applying the law retroactively constituted "extra punishment" and that "constitutional protections for individuals, even unsympathetic ones, cannot be set aside in the name of the greater good."

Jury selection in the trial of Jesse K. Timmendequas, who is charged with Megan Kanka's murder, began January 13. His lawyers say people with knowledge of "Megan's Law" should be barred from the jury, because if they knew why the law was passed, they would also know that Timmendequas had been convicted of similar crimes before. Potential jurors are filling out 36-page questionnaires about their knowledge of "Megan's Law," and are being individually interviewed, but Mercer County Superior Court Judge Andrew Smithson said that he would not bar jurors who knew about the law.



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## L.A. 8 win round against gov't

BY HARRY RING

LOS ANGELES — The Justice Department was defeated in a first attempt to use the reactionary 1996 anti-immigrant law to grease the skids for deportation of political dissidents.

In a January 13 ruling, Federal Judge Stephen Wilson rejected a government motion based on the new law that he dismiss a suit against the government by the Los Angeles Eight. The L.A. 8 — seven Palestinians and a Kenyan — have charged the government with unlawful, selective prosecution. For 10 years, the government has been trying to deport them for their political support for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Previously, Judge Wilson had issued an order blocking deportation of the eight while they were conducting their suit against the government.

The Justice Department filed a brief arguing that judges were barred from taking such actions under the new "Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act."

A government lawyer argued that in passing the law, Congress clearly intended to curb the right of federal courts to intervene in deportation proceeding. After a deportation order is issued, he advised, it could be considered by an appeals court. Judge Wilson flatly rejected this, endorsing the argument by L.A. 8 attorney David Cole that it would "close the door" to any meaningful appeals. He also agreed with Cole that the selective prosecution suit has a higher priority than other kinds of claims because the case is based on First Amendment rights.

Earlier, Wilson had been upheld in his landmark ruling that legal residents have the same free-speech rights as citizens.



# Steel strikers face growing pressure

BY DAVID SANDOR

MORGANTOWN, West Virginia — In the aftermath of failed negotiations between Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Co. and the United Steel Workers of America (USWA), the company has launched a propaganda campaign against the union, attempting to intensify pressure on the strikers and break the unity of their walkout.

Negotiations broke down January 17 after several days of bargaining, with no future talks scheduled. That was the 109th day of the strike by 4,500 steelworkers at eight Wheeling-Pittsburgh plants in Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. The talks were overseen by John Pinto, a Pittsburgh-based federal mediator. The workers struck over the company's refusal to discuss restoration of the pension plan that was taken away after Wheeling-Pitt's bankruptcy and a subsequent 89-day strike in 1985.

That pension, called a defined benefit pension, requires the employer to guarantee a monthly benefit amount for retirees according to years of service and the right to retire after 30 years of employment. This is the type of pension now in effect at all other unionized integrated steel companies in the United States.

The company wants a pension system where the amount of the monthly benefit would be based on the level of returns from the stock market and other investments. In addition, company officials say that their cost of funding the pension should be renegotiated each time a contract expires.

## Company escalates threats

Commenting on the failure of negotiations, WHX chairman Ron LaBow stated, "We can sit indefinitely, a year or two years. There is no time limit. They have the right to strike and we have the right not to give in to their demands."

Wheeling-Pitt bought a two-page advertisement in the *Wheeling-Register* and other newspapers throughout the strike region, attempting to sell their pension offer and calling on rank-and-file steelworkers to accept the company proposal. The ad demands that the union organize a vote on the company's latest offer and says, "Let's settle this strike the American way. Free men and women voting their consciences in a supervised, secret ballot election." The ad also touted the company's "improved" pension offer: retirement at age 60 with 42 years of service, instead of age 62 with 44 years, as in their previous offer.

James Wareham, chief executive of Wheeling-Pittsburgh, made a veiled threat against the strikers. "We're at a point, now, where we have to begin considering more drastic steps to gird ourselves against the negative impact of what, at this point, appears will be an extraordinarily prolonged strike."

These statements are consistent with the pattern of threats, intimidation, and pressure that the company has used during the strike. In November, the company canceled pay-

ment of an annual bonus for widows who receive less than the minimum pension, which was provided for in the previous contract. The company has obtained injunctions to limit picketing at the plant gates and argued against the strikers' claim for unemployment benefits, which have been denied in all three states where the strikers live and work.

## 'We have to get a better offer'

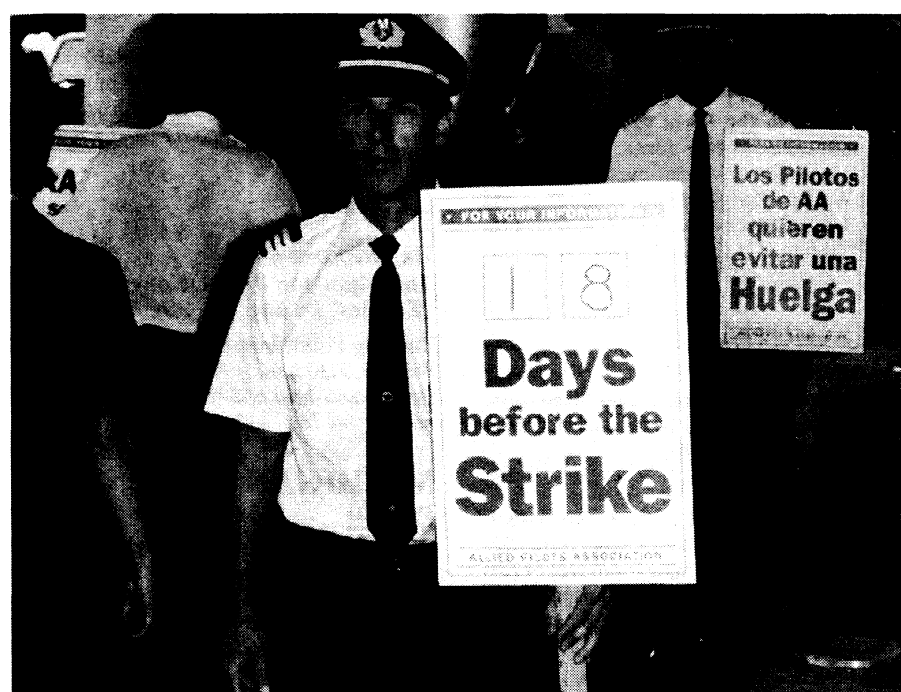
Strikers emphasize that Wheeling-Pitt, the ninth largest integrated steel producer in the U.S., is profitable and has a significant cost advantage over its competitors. The company has a lower cost of producing steel because it doesn't have to pay into a guaranteed pension plan with retirement after 30 years, unlike other producers.

Ed Babel, who works in the Steubenville, Ohio, mill and has 24 years at Wheeling-Pitt, explained, "Truthfully, this guy [LaBow] is trying to do what all the others [integrated steel producers] want to do. The flatrolled steel we make here gets \$16 per ton; all the rest get \$8 per ton."

Speaking of LaBow, striker Ron Moran pointed out, "Everybody thought he was a great guy. We saw him as the savior of the company." Babel said LaBow, who took over the company in 1991, "promised us then that we would get it [the guaranteed pension plan] back in the reorganization plan."

Ed Jones, who has worked 25 years at Wheeling-Pitt, stopped for lunch at the union hall in Steubenville on his way to do picket duty at the Mingo Junction gate. He summed up the resolve that is driving the strikers to fight for the pension. "I'm looking for a secure retirement. I don't want my family in hock. We have a right to a happy retirement without fear. We have to get a better offer from the company before returning to work."

*David Sandor is a member of United Steelworkers of America, Local 3403 in Morgantown, West Virginia. Tony Dutrow, a member of USWA Local 1557 in Pittsburgh, and Dan Fein, a member of USWA Local 4347 in Salt Lake City, contributed to this article.*



Militant/Janet Post

Pilots protest in Miami January 28, the first day of informational picketing.

## Pilots picket American Airlines

BY JANET POST

MIAMI — Pilots at American Airlines who are members of the Allied Pilots Association (APA) began informational picketing at several airports throughout the United States January 28. The pilots are garnering support for their contract demands and are in a 30-day "cooling off" period after the APA rejected binding arbitration January 15. At 12:01 a.m. February 15, the pilots could decide to strike. The company and the 9,300 pilots represented by the APA have been in negotiations since 1994.

At the Miami International Airport, one of American's largest hubs, pilots and airline workers walked the picket line for three hours on the first day of picketing and will continue for several days. "One of the biggest issues is the outsourcing of jobs," Bob Ward, a pilot with 20 years' seniority and a local association spokesperson, told the *Militant*.

"American wants to have non-APA pilots fly American Eagle jets. Right now they say 62 jets, but that's just the tip of the iceberg — someday it could be thousands of planes," he said. "This is an issue for the flight attendants and ramp workers as well. It's not just a question

of money, but having all of the pilots in the same union."

American Eagle is American's commuter affiliate. It currently uses pilots from four different companies with four different pilots' associations, according to Ward.

Jody Hill, a Miami pilot and local association representative, said the pilots were also fighting against their two-tiered pay structure. "We've been fighting this for a decade," he said. Ward added, "The company doesn't want to pay reasonable wages for newer pilots."

Ward asserted that the Merrill Lynch financial consultant firm has estimated that American will lose "\$35 to \$65 million a day if the pilots strike." The last strike at American was in November 1993 when the flight attendants successfully struck during the Thanksgiving holidays. Pickets carried signs reading "18 Days Before Strike," "This Employee Supports American Airline Pilots," and "American Airlines Passengers Need to Rebook Future Flights."

*Janet Post works at United Airlines in Miami and is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 368.*

# Auto workers strike in Ohio, Michigan

Continued from front page

supervisor can still mark you with absenteeism," said the IUE worker. "That isn't right — anyone can get sick. If you get up in the morning and your child is sick and you come into work late, they will try to fire you. A lot of the women in the plant are worried about that," he said. In the past few years GM has hired more than 1,000 workers, many of them female, said the striker.

Random drug testing and alcohol screening was another issue that workers were concerned about. Some 800 grievances have been filed with the company, including 50 discharges, according to the union.

In reaching a tentative agreement GM "agreed to settle all grievances and to scrap a more restrictive absentee policy it had proposed," according to a AP news report.

The walkout caught the GM bosses off guard. This was captured by the *Dayton Daily News* headline, "IUE walkout puzzles GM."

In recent days, GM has trumpeted its plans to boost dividends to its shareholders and launch a big stock buyback. According to the January 24 *Wall Street Journal*, "Having largely resolved major items of business such as reaching new labor contracts and, more recently, agreeing to sell its Hughes defense unit, GM's top officials have made enhancing the value of the company's still-stagnant stock one of their top priorities."

But much remains unresolved. GM's "labor problems" are not behind them but ahead of them. After a 18-day strike last year at two GM brake plants in Dayton, Ohio, which shut down the company's car assembly production in North America, GM is again on the prod against UAW parts workers in Dayton. According to a January 16 *USA Today* report, "GM told

6,500 employees at two brake and two suspension plants that their futures are uncertain unless their factories can become more profitable."

"These plants are not earning the return that they need to," said a GM spokesman.

In a related development, some 500 UAW members at two Johnson Controls plants in Plymouth, Michigan, and Oberlin, Ohio, walked off the job January 28, as part of a fight for their first union contract. Johnson Controls is a major supplier of car seats in the auto industry. The company is asking for much lower wages than the \$12 to \$15 demanded by the union.

Close to 1,000 workers hit the picket lines in front of the Plymouth plant in solidarity with the strike. Many were UAW workers from Ford assembly plants in UAW Region 1A. There were also GM and Chrysler workers, as well as Detroit News strikers.

Johnson Controls organized scabs to replace the striking workers. But by noon, union officials reported to pickets, Ford had informed Johnson Controls that it would not accept seats from the struck plant. In an about face, four busloads of scabs were driven out of the plant by mid-afternoon.

Johnson Controls has been on a "union free" campaign for several years. Out of 30 of its auto parts plants, 24 are non-union. Both the Plymouth and Oberlin plants were unionized through a deal between Ford and UAW officials.

Reports in the big-business press have suggested that both the Plymouth and Oberlin plants were unionized as part of a deal between Ford and the UAW officials. "Johnson Controls recognized UAW representation for 300 workers in Plymouth and 200 workers in Oberlin last summer. That let Ford conclude national UAW talks and launch the Expedition without union com-

plaints about work going to a nonunion shop," explained a January 28 AP news report.

*John Sarge, member of UAW Local 900 in the Detroit area, and Frank Forrestal, member of UAW Local 551 in Chicago, contributed to the article.*

## Social Security

Continued from Page 8

cial insurance to be "extended to workers and farmers without discrimination because of age, sex, race, or color, religious or political opinion or affiliations ... for all time lost."

Under the pressure of the strikes and unemployed mobilizations, Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act in August 1935. Far from being a gift, the Social Security Act was an attempt to placate the every-increasing mobilization of a radicalizing, working-class and unemployment movement.

In subsequent years, workers fought to extend unemployment compensation and other provisions of the Social Security Act to more layers of the working class. As the CIO grew in the 1930s and 40s, unionists continued to fight for social programs for all workers. What ended the working-class upsurge was World War II, and the capitulation of the labor bureaucracy to Washington with a "no-strike" pledge and persecution against those who spoke out against the impending imperialist slaughter.

These social gains expanded in the 1960s, including with Medicare and Medicaid, also as a product of working-class struggle, this time in the form of the advancing civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s.

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## ALABAMA

### Birmingham

**Labor's Stake in the Fight to Defend Social Security.** Speakers: Mary Jones, consultant at Greater Birmingham Ministries; Betsy Farley, Socialist Workers Party National Committee and member, United Steelworkers of America. Fri., Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m. *111 21st St. South. Donation: \$4. Tel: (205) 323-3079.*

## CALIFORNIA

### Los Angeles

**Korean Labor Fights Back. Panel discussion.** Fri., Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m. *2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.*

### San Francisco

**Governor Wilson's 1997 Budget: An Attack on Working People.** Speaker: Craig Honts, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Los Angeles and member, United Transportation Union. Fri., Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m. Dinner, 6 p.m. *3284 23rd St. at Mission St. Donation: \$5. Tel: (415) 285-5323.*

## FLORIDA

### Miami

**Labor and the Fight for Affirmative Action.** Speaker: Rollande Girard, Socialist Workers Party and member, United Steelworkers of America. Fri., Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m.

**The Crisis in Public Education and the "Ebonics" Debate.** Speakers: Eugene Fisher, teacher in the Dade County public schools; Ernie Mailhot, Socialist Workers Party, member of

Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. Fri., Feb. 14, 7:30 p.m. *Both events held at 137 N.E. 54th St. Donation: \$4. Translation into Spanish and English. Tel: (305) 756-1020.*

## IOWA

### Des Moines

**The Fight for Public Education and the "Ebonics" Debate.** Fri., Feb., 7th, 7:30 p.m.

**Turning Points in the Cuban Revolution.** Sat., Feb. 15, 7:30 p.m.

*Both events held at 2724 Douglas Avenue. Donation: \$4. Tel: (515) 277-4600.*

## MICHIGAN

### Detroit

**South Korean Workers Fight Anti-Labor Laws.** Speaker: Gary Boyers, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Steelworkers of America. Fri., Feb. 7, 7 p.m. *7414 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (313) 875-0100.*

## MINNESOTA

### St. Paul

**INS Raids in the Meatpacking Industry.** Speaker: Dick McBride, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Food and Commercial Workers. Sat., Feb. 8, 7:30 p.m. *2490 University Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (612) 644-6325.*

## NEW JERSEY

### Newark

**Defend a Woman's Right to Choose: Protest**

**Abortion Clinic Bombings in Atlanta and Tulsa!** Speakers: Arlynda Lee Boyer, Young Feminists, National Organization for Women; Dave Berg, Young Socialists. Fri., Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m.

**Black Liberation and Socialism: Prospects for Freedom in the 21st Century.** Speaker: Brock Satter, Young Socialists. Fri., Feb. 14, 7:30 p.m. *Both events held at 87A Halsey St. (1 block west of Broad, 2 blocks north of Raymond). Donation: \$4. Tel: (201) 643-3341.*

## NEW YORK

### Brooklyn

**Abortion is a Woman's Right: Keep the Clinics Open!** Panel discussion. Fri., Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m. *59 Fourth Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (718) 399-7257.*

## PENNSYLVANIA

### Philadelphia

**Zaire: The Struggle for Freedom.** Fri., Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m. Panel discussion.

**Racism, Revolution, and Reaction.** Fri., Feb. 14, 7:30 p.m. *Both events held at 1906 South St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (215) 546-8218.*

## UTAH

### Salt Lake City

**Support the Wheeling-Pitt Strike: A First-hand Report from the Picket Lines.** Speaker: Dan Fein, Socialist Workers Party, member,

United Steelworkers of America Local 4347. Fri., Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m. *209 E. 300 S. Donation: \$4. Tel: (801) 355-1124.*

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

**Black Farmers Fight Government Discrimination.** Speaker: John Boyd, President, National Black Farmers Association. Fri., Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m. *1930 18th St. NW (at 18th and Florida, entrance on Florida). Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.*

## CANADA

### Vancouver

**Sovereignty and Justice for Native Peoples.** Panel discussion with Bill Lightbown, Kootenai elder, supporter of the Gustafsen Lake 18 defendants; Paul Keller, Communist League. Fri., Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m. *3967 Main St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (604) 872-8343.*

## NEW ZEALAND

### Auckland

**Farmers Face the Crisis of the Nineties.** Speaker: Colin Parker, Communist League. Fri., Feb. 7, 7 p.m. *La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.*

### Christchurch

**The New Coalition Government: Shift to the Right.** Speaker: Ruth Gray, Communist League. Fri., Feb. 14, 7 p.m. *199 High St. (Corner High St. and Tuam). Donation: \$3. Tel: (3) 365-6055.*

# Labor battle shows failure of Korean 'miracle'

## Continued from front page

Workers have won substantial economic and political gains, which the Korean rulers now must try to roll back in order to compete with their international rivals.

The history of the Korean peninsula in the second half of this century has been shaped by the U.S.-led imperialist war carried out against the Korean people from 1950-53. U.S. forces leveled much of the country through massive bombings and napalming, especially in the north. They destroying whole neighborhoods deemed "enemy" outposts, obliterated most of Korea's industrial infrastructure, and systematically bombed dikes to destroy crops and cause flooding. At the same time, they suppressed popular uprisings in the southern region that took the shape of general strikes and mass demonstrations. Nearly four years of slaughter left 2 million Koreans dead and 3 million wounded.

U.S. president Harry Truman, together with Washington's puppet, south Korean president Syngman Rhee, set up the 38th parallel as the heavily fortified dividing line across the peninsula after failing in their aim to conquer the entire country. Tens of thousands of U.S. troops remain in south Korea today, with gunships off the coast, their weapons aimed at Pyongyang. This forced division of Korea remains a burning issue for many workers and youth, who want their country reunified.

The rapid industrialization of south Korea began in the 1960s as part of an entire period of post-World War II capitalist expansion in Asia. The 1960 *World Almanac* described south Korea as a "chiefly agricultural area." U.S. military, financial, and technological aid that year stood at \$1.3 billion. A five-year economic plan was launched in 1962 to accelerate the industrialization of the country. By 1966, U.S. funding had reached \$2.2 billion. Mining and production of tungsten, coal, iron ore, bismuth, fluor-spar, graphite, and cement was picking up, and the timber, rubber, glass, shipbuilding, steel, electronic, and automotive equipment industries were also rapidly expanding. Industrial growth set records year after year over the next decade.

In the 1977 *World Almanac*, south Korea

was described as a "once" chiefly agricultural country. It has been touted as a major success among the so-called developing markets, and is sometimes referred to as one of the "four tigers" of Asia, along with Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan. Just last year, Seoul was admitted to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Washington backed a series of repressive regimes in Seoul throughout this period. In 1980, for example, hundreds of student demonstrators protesting a military coup the previous year were massacred at Kwangju.

## Labor upsurge wins some gains

A massive strike wave broke out across south Korea in 1988, after decades during which company unions were the only legally recognized labor organizations. Workers demanded higher wages and a shorter workweek. The previous year at least 1,500 new

unions were organized, and the number of workers in unions grew to 1.3 million or 22 percent of the workforce. Average pay was \$2.30 an hour, which covered only 60 percent of a worker's living expenses. The average workweek was 54 hours — among the longest in the world. Workers also fought for bonus payments, paid vacations, holidays off, and better cafeteria food, among other things.

In response to this wave of protests, the Seoul government placed 71 companies on its "important defense industries" list. By mandate of a law enacted in 1987, workers in such industries were not permitted to strike or even organize unions.

Bosses brought in Kusadae, or Save the Company Corps. These were antiunion hooligans hired by employers to attack and harass workers trying to organize. Workers would be kidnapped by the Kusadae, beaten,

and tortured by management to the point of hospitalization. The cops referred to it as an "internal company matter." Police were also sent out to suppress the street actions.

A recurring component of the these confrontations was the fight for reunification of Korea. On July 21, 1990, hundreds of thousands blanketed the streets of Seoul, outraged by a National Assembly meeting held earlier that month that passed 26 bills into law in 30 seconds, with no debate allowed. Included in those bills was legislation that criminalized any nongovernmental relations to individuals or organizations in north Korea. Roh Tae Woo, the president at that time, was later ousted by massive demonstrations and is now in prison, convicted for corruption and his role in the Kwangju massacre.

Out of these fights and many others in

**Continued on Page 14**

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## SWEDEN

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

# CALENDAR

## BRITAIN

### London

**Protest the Attack on the Pathfinder Bookshop!** Defend the Right to read and sell socialist literature! Defend the right to organize politically. Speakers invited from Irish organizations, MPs, civil liberties groups, the Communist League, the National Abortion Campaign. Fri., Feb. 7, 7 p.m. *The Pathfinder Bookshop, 47 The Cut. Donation: £2. For more information: 0171-401-2409.*



**Guilty, innocent, whatever** — According to the Supreme Court, a person convicted on one charge and acquitted on another can be sentenced for as long a term as if convicted on both charges. Opined the top court: "It's impossible to know why a jury found a defendant not guilty on a certain charge."



Harry Ring

**How tolerant can you get?** — In the *Iowa Farmer Today*, psychologist Val Farmer chides folks for anti-immigrant prejudices, explaining: "To survive in America, immigrants need time to learn to be individualistic, goal oriented...to adopt conventional family relationships. They don't have to get rid of that which is valuable from their own culture."

**They're icing the current staff?** — A CIA help-wanted ad says the spook agency is looking for candidates "with spirit, personality, intelligence, and integrity."

**History note** — Newly released documents confirm that Winston Churchill, British prime minister during World War II and secretary of war in WWI, was a great poison

gas fan. In 1919, he declared, "I am strongly in favor of using poisonous gas against uncivilized tribes." A year later, Kurdish freedom fighters were subjected to British gas bombings.

**Frequent flyer points to Pearly Gate** — A church in northern Spain discarded the traditional collection plate in favor of an after-mass credit-card machine.

**The antigun war** — Jeffrey Parks, 10, was expelled from a Seattle school after being caught packing a toy pistol about an inch long. (It came out of his pocket while fishing for his lunch money.) After his parents appealed the decision, school officials revoked the expulsion, reducing the weapons violation charge — a criminal offense — to a rules infraction.

**The civilizers** — In England, Geoffrey Thomas, 25, a prison inmate with terminal cancer, was chained to a hospice bed for three days. A court order got him unchained three hours before he died. There was no problem of escape, the hospice director declared. Thomas "needed help to sit up in bed."

The prison service's top dog said the incident would be probed and if anything was done wrong, the family would get an apology.

**Neither is capitalism** — "Germany isn't working," declared a London *Daily Telegraph* headline.

The paper cited a German government report that a 10.8 percent jobless rate is likely to worsen in coming months. It said German economists warn that 1997 "will be the worst year for jobs since the Great Depression."

**We keep chuckling** — Miami cops, whose brutality has touched off several rebellions in the impoverished, Black Overtown area, were petulant about going door-to-door asking folks to return any money they may have scooped up during a cash spill from an overturned Brink's Security truck. Nobody forked over any, and some laughed heartily. Declared one resident, "This couldn't happen to a more deserving neighborhood."

## Why abortion is a woman's right

**Abortion Is a Woman's Right!** is a brief pamphlet that explains how abortion rights were won in the United States, why they are under attack, and why working people should fight to defend them. It includes articles by Pat Grogan, José G. Pérez, and Evelyn Reed that originally appeared in the *Militant* between 1973 and 1984, as well as an interview with Dr. Henry Morgentaler on the fight for abortion rights in Canada. Below, we reprint an excerpt from the opening article, "The Issue Is Women's Rights." The pamphlet, which is available in English and Spanish, is copyright © 1985 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted with permission.

BY PAT GROGAN

On January 22, 1973, women won their most important victory in decades.

The U.S. Supreme Court, in *Roe vs. Wade*,

### BOOK OF THE WEEK

ruled that women had the constitutional right to have abortions. The ruling legalized abortion through the first twenty-four weeks of pregnancy and struck down all laws that restricted that right.

For the first time the right of *women* to decide whether or not to bear children — not the state, church, husband, father, or priest — was recognized.

The women's liberation movement saw reproductive freedom as the most fundamental right of women, a precondition for full equality and liberation. Without the right to control her own body, a woman could not exercise effective control over her life.

Beginning in the 1960s, contraception was becoming more available and accepted, but it was not foolproof — and still isn't. Advances in medical science had made abortion a safe, simple, medical procedure. But in most states, abortion was against the law. Women were forced to bear children against their will, or risk dangerous — and often deadly — illegal or self-induced abortions.

In 1969, the year before New York State adopted liberalized abortion laws — a step that laid the basis for the later Supreme Court victory — approximately 210,000 women entered city hospitals due to abortion complications.

The restrictions on abortion were power-

ful and barbaric chains on women. Black women and Latinas suffered the most from the illegal status of abortion. *Eighty percent* of the hundreds of women who died each year were Black and Spanish-speaking women.

And many Black women and Latinas were forced to submit to sterilization in order to obtain an abortion.

Prior to the emergence of the feminist movement in the late 1960s, many supporters of legal abortion presented their arguments in terms of population control — arguments that are used to bolster the racist practice of forced sterilization.

The feminist movement put the axis for the fight to legalize abortion where it belonged — on the right of women to control their own bodies. It was on this basis that majority support for legal abortion was won.

Because of the stakes involved in the fight for abortion rights, this right was never secure. Several years ago, Democrats and Republicans alike began to step up their attacks on the right to abortion.

The Hyde Amendment, passed by Congress in 1976, was the most serious blow. It cut off Medicaid funding for abortions, except in cases of rape, incest, or when a woman's life is in danger. In May 1981, Congress cut off funds even in cases of rape and incest.

In October 1984, Congress once again denied abortion funding for victims of rape and incest. Since the Hyde Amendment was passed, thirty-six states have cut off state funding for abortions.

This strikes hardest at Black women, Latinas, and the poorest women. It is part of the attack against the right of all women to abortion and lays the basis for further attempts to restrict abortion rights.

In the years 1978 and 1979 alone, almost 1.5 million women were unable to obtain abortions, either because of lack of facilities or inability to pay.

These attacks against women's rights have sharply escalated in the last few years. There were 180 incidents of violent attacks by right-wing foes of abortion rights on abortion clinics as of November 1984. This includes 20 arsons and firebombings.

Women seeking abortions are harassed, threatened, and called "murderers" by "right-to-lifers" who try to create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation at abortion clinics. They are the shock troops of a broader assault on abortion rights.

The 1984 presidential elections were used as a staging ground for a major escalation in

the ideological offensive against women's rights. The main theme sounded was, "Abortion is murder!"...

Week after week, abortion is discussed in the big-business media as a moral, religious, ethical, and scientific question; a private, public, personal, and medical question. But the real issue is the right of women to decide if and when to have children.

The torrent of antiabortion propaganda does not come out of a big victory by the capitalist rulers against women's rights. Rather it is aimed at launching a fight to reverse the gains women have won in the last 15 years.

The steps taken toward equality by both the women's rights movement and the civil rights movement have strengthened the entire working class in its ability to struggle against the employers.

In order to lay the basis for ever deeper attacks against the rights and living standards of the working class — and as part of the preparation for full-scale imperialist war in Central America — the ruling class must pit worker against worker, using racist and sexist prejudices to undermine the unity and strength of the working class.

The ruling class ideological offensive is aimed at undermining the powerful idea that *women should have equal rights*. It is



Militant/Ellen Lemisch

Washington, D.C. woman's liberation march, 1971.

aimed at convincing both men and women that a woman's place is in the home, and that the family, not the government, should bear the cost of caring for children, the sick, and the elderly.

It is aimed at justifying lower pay for women who work and making unemployment of women more acceptable.

The fire is aimed particularly at abortion rights because the right of women to choose whether or not to bear children is an elementary precondition for women's liberation.

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

**THE MILITANT**

Published in the Interest of the Working People

Price 10¢

February 11, 1972

FEB. 2 — A general strike of Catholic workers has spread throughout Northern Ireland in the wake of the British army's murderous attack on a peaceful mass demonstration in Derry three days ago. A wave of anti-British protests is also occurring in the Republic of Ireland to the south.

Thirteen civilians were left dead and at least 16 wounded when British paratroopers opened fire with automatic weapons on a demonstration of between 15,000 and 20,000 called by the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA).

Defying a government ban on all demonstrations, the protesters were demanding an end to the government's policy of internment under which some 755 Catholics have been imprisoned without charge or trial.

The attack in Derry, now referred to as "Bloody Sunday," has been compared to the 1960 Sharpeville massacre in which 72 Blacks were shot dead by South African police and soldiers during an unarmed and peaceful demonstration against that country's pass laws.

A general strike, called by the outlawed Irish Republican Army, has already halted the commercial life of Derry, according to the Feb. 1 *Washington Post*.

Meanwhile during an emergency debate in the House of Commons in London, the Labor Party, rather than calling for the immediate withdrawal of British troops, demanded that British imperialism take over all responsibility for maintaining "law and order" from Northern Ireland's Protestant government.

**THE MILITANT**

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

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

February 8, 1947

LONDON — The magnificent demonstration of solidarity and militancy of the transport workers has compelled the government and the employers to grant a 44 hour week and a regulated day without any reduction in pay. The capitalist press itself recognizes this as a "complete victory" for the transport workers.

The direct action of the transport workers produced the quickest negotiations in union history. The solidarity of the organized workers has taught the Labor Government that the working class will not lightly tolerate the use of troops as strikebreakers.

For the first time since the General Strike of 1926, the struggles of one section of the workers won the sympathy and solidarity of wide sections of the masses. Dockers, porters, and all engaged in the transport industry stopped work as soon as the troops marched in. Other sections, railway workers, passenger transport workers, gas workers, petroleum workers, shop assistants and caterers, were ready for strike action if the use of troops was extended.

**ABORTION IS A WOMAN'S RIGHT!**

KEEP YOUR LAWS OFF MY BODY

Edited by Pat Grogan, José G. Pérez, Evelyn Reed

Interview with Dr. Henry Morgentaler

**From Pathfinder**

Pat Grogan and others

Why abortion rights are central to the fight for the full emancipation of women. In English, and Spanish. \$3.00

also:

**Communist Continuity and the Fight for Women's Liberation**

**Women's Liberation and the Line of March of the Working Class** Part 1 \$10.00

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**Abortion Rights, the ERA, and the Rebirth of a Feminist Movement** Part 3 \$11.00

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

# Cancel Mexico's foreign debt!

Cancel the foreign debt of Mexico and of the entire Third World! That should be the demand of workers in the United States and internationally in face of the systematic pillage of Mexico and other semicolonial countries by the sharks on Wall Street and Washington.

The Clinton administration has been bragging about the extra \$580 million in premium profits that the U.S. rulers extracted through the recent "bailout" of the Mexican peso. Meanwhile Mexico's foreign debt stood at \$98 billion last year — 38 percent of the country's gross domestic product — and working people faced growing unemployment, a cap on wage increases well below the inflation rate, and skyrocketing sales taxes and other fees that hit the toilers hardest.

The situation in Mexico is by no means unique. The conditions there are part of the long-term debt slavery imposed on peoples throughout Latin America, Asia, and Africa as a mechanism to transfer massive wealth from the labor of workers and peasants in the region to the coffers of the capitalists in New York, London, Paris, Tokyo, and other imperialist centers. The debt crisis exploded in the 1980s. Lacking sufficiently profitable ways to invest money capital in the expansion of industrial capacity, the imperialist rulers foisted gigantic loans onto governments and groups of capitalists in the semicolonial countries at exorbitant rates.

For bankers and other financiers, debts are assets, not problems as they are for most workers. They take the form of paper used as contracts for superexploitation. They

register the social relationship between the exploiting families of finance capital and their states on one side, backed by the imperialist armed forces, and the capitalists and governments of the oppressed countries on the other.

As the interest due mounts — quickly outstripping the principal — the imperialists bring their enormous economic and military power to bear on governments in the semicolonial countries, pressing them to squeeze out funds for payments by imposing ever harsher austerity measures on the workers and peasants. These include currency devaluations, abolition of price subsidies on food and other necessities, wage cuts, longer hours, speedup, and sharp cutbacks in spending for health, education, and housing. In exchange for "rescheduling" portions of the debt, governments throughout the Third World have been forced to hand over entire factories, mines, and tracts of land to imperialist interests.

This debt is immoral and unpayable. The revolutionary government in Cuba took the lead in the mid-1980s in calling for its cancellation as a necessary component of the fight to improve the conditions of the toilers in the Third World.

Working people in imperialist countries must champion this demand today as part of combating the national divisions the rulers try to foist upon us. The call to cancel the debt goes hand in hand with demanding equal rights for immigrants and for a world without borders — for international working-class solidarity.

# Oppose 'Megan's Law'

The recent decision by New York state officials to release a list of 17 names, addresses, photos, and descriptions of people in the state who were convicted of sex crimes marks an attack on the democratic rights of working people. It goes hand-in-hand with the reinstitution of chain gangs, and other types of punishment designed to degrade working people and portray them as non-human and without rights.

These moves are part of the offensive by the employing class and its government against the working class. As they push to lower wages, lengthen the work day, and gut entitlements such as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, the capitalist rulers must find ways to divide and weaken the working class as a whole. They seek to drive a wedge between the unemployed and employed, and foster other divisions based on race, gender, and immigrant status. The rulers must force working people to

accept the notion that there are certain people who are less than fully human, who don't deserve the same rights as others.

One prong of this offensive is the attempt, through measures such as the so-called "Megan's law" in New York, to gain acceptance for the idea that those who have been convicted of crimes should be denied democratic rights. The New York law and similar measures across the country strike directly at the right to presumption of innocence, an important conquest working people have won. It allows the state to arbitrarily impose punishment after a person has served out their usual sentence. These are democratic safeguards that the working class needs to defend as it comes up against the employers in battle.

Class-conscious workers and all supporters of democratic rights should oppose these "sexual offenders" laws and explain why they are a blow to civil liberties.

# Myth of the Korean 'miracle'

Continued from Page 12

the following years, workers wrested a number of concessions from the bosses. Hyundai workers, for example, get a 50 percent discount at the hospital, apartment subsidies, and free schooling for children. Wages have risen 15 percent a year over the past ten years as well. And workers' expectations have also risen. During the recent strikes Chung Jong Soo, an assembly worker at Hyundai Motor, told reporters, "It's true that life is better.... But I don't think we are well off."

## Economic stagnation

In today's conditions of world depression and intensified competition, Korea's capitalists must face the limits of the rapid industrialization that took place in a period of world capitalist expansion. Prices for computer memory chips, one of south Korea's best exports, plunged by as much as 70 percent last year. Seoul faces a gap in the overall scope of what it buys and sells. In April 1996, for instance, merchandise exports grew 6.5 percent, while imports rose 14.8 percent. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* summarized comments of Lee Chan Hong, a

spokesman for south Korea-based LG Electronics as, "The Korean home market just isn't big enough for future growth, and has become too expensive for export production." Some Korean companies have begun setting up factories abroad, from Vietnam to Mexico, in search of lower labor costs.

Even though Korean companies fill a third of the world's new ship orders, in the first quarter of 1996 orders decreased by 47 percent in comparison to the previous year. Tokyo's ship-building operations saw a slight gain in the same period. Ships produced in south Korea had been 10-15 percent cheaper than those built in Japan. This price gap has now closed to only 5 percent. Internationally, the industry is facing a crisis of overproduction, with more capacity than can be put to use for an acceptable profit margin.

Banking and other financial institutions are facing hard times as well. "Banks are saddled with a heavy burden of bad debts" and "loans to heavy industrial projects that went sour in the 1970s and 1980s," noted an article in the January 24 *Financial Times*.

The most recent example of this is the January collapse of the Hanbo Steel Corp., Korea's second largest steel producer. The company defaulted on payment of a \$5.8 billion dollar debt borrowed from national banks. Now the banks are scrambling to try to put together a loan package that will prevent bankruptcy. Two other subsidiaries of the Hanbo Group — Hanbo Energy Co. and Sang-A-Pharmaceutical Co. — have also declared bankruptcy.

As the recent strikes showed, the employers and their government in Seoul face sharp resistance to their attempts to push back workers' gains. In this test of strength, trade unionists in south Korea broadened their fight beyond a labor dispute between individual workers and bosses. The strikers won support from workers in industries not on strike, students, and others. And all the questions in dispute remain to be resolved in the battles ahead.

# Take more, and better, pictures for the 'Militant'

We have received several inquiries recently on how to send in pictures to the *Militant*. Today, it's easier than ever to send in pictures — of workers on the picket lines, Young Socialists and other youth in political action, job conditions, sales of the socialist press, and much more.

There are several ways in which the *Militant* can accept photos for press. You can send unprocessed film or negatives, although you should be aware that our standard policy is not to return the negatives or photographs. Prints are fine, either in black-and-white or color. We scan photos for publication from either prints or negatives.

What an increasing number of contributors are doing is sending their pictures via e-mail, as scanned images in either TIFF or JPEG format. Now that scanners are relatively inexpensive, and there are facilities that will scan and e-mail pictures (for a small fee), photos can reach the *Militant* in a matter of minutes. The picture in this week's *Militant* of Young Socialists in Sweden selling Pathfinder books at an unemployment demonstration was sent in this way, and we placed it directly on the page. The electronic photo files should be a grayscale scan with a final size between 1 and 1.5 megabytes. The scanned images must be sent for IBM compatible computers (not MAC).

As an aid to our readers taking and sending in more photos for the *Militant*, we are reprinting below portions of a 1995 article by Eric Simpson, who often takes pictures for the *Militant*, on how to take good photos.

BY ERIC SIMPSON

Imagine the *Militant* without pictures. Thanks to our many worker correspondents we don't have to. But the *Militant* needs more and better photos, on a wider array of topics, and from more countries.

Photographs are a big component of the *Militant's* journalistic style. We need photos to bring life and action into our pages. Photographs quickly and directly set the scene for a story — give a sense of place — and show the main characters. Photographs communicate the scale of an event: whether it involves hundreds of people, or hundreds of thousands.

And photographs can substantiate the facts in a story, driving home the point that the *Militant* tells the truth. Helping to get the facts out to our readers — to tell the truth directly and without embellishment — is the number one goal of *Militant* photography. The facts are in the details. We have to reflect the immediacy of the specific situation we are reporting on as journalists and participants.

A photograph should never show a "picket line" in general, for example, but should show *certain* workers, with first and last names, standing in a unique place for a very specific and important reason. A *good* photograph would put you on the line, and introduce you to fellow fighters. A *great* photograph would give voice to those fighters, speaking to the reader with their expressions.

## Get up close

Only through clear detail can a photo communicate the facts. To capture the detail, you must put yourself at the center of the action. *You have to get close.*

*Militant* photographers must always photograph what they see, never what they know. From 100 yards in the driving rain, I know the five gray shapes are a picket line because I am looking for a strike at that mine. But what do I really see? Some shapes and a lot of rain. What is in my mind will not show on film. But if I stop and participate in the picket line for a while, talk with the strikers and learn about their struggle, and introduce myself and my newspaper, I'll be part of their fight and they'll appreciate an up-close shot to support their strike. The photographs I take of fighters on the line in the driving rain, drenched, with dripping union caps and soggy placards, will show real people and their determination.

Always shoot a number of pictures. Not only will it be more likely that one of them will turn out to be usable, but it also will help to put people at ease.

Even without an article, a photo and a short caption can communicate a wealth of information. It can show how the picket line works. It can show the attitude of the workers as they explain their fight to new people....

The subject of every *Militant* photo should be people moving into political action. One way or another, these two words — people and action — cover the entire range of *Militant* photography. This is the reality of our class, the working class, which is reflected in the pages of the *Militant*. We need *Militant* readers to send photographs of the struggles you are involved in. Of fights against cop brutality. Of your factory and the conditions of work you are organizing to improve. Of people getting together to study politics or to organize against tuition increases. We need photos of the rotten conditions in your high school or neighborhood. Of struggles you aren't a part of but want to let the world know about.

We need photographs of people selling the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and Pathfinder books. If you hear that something is going on, go to the action. Take copies of the *Militant*, take a pen and paper, and take your camera. Shoot a whole roll of film and send it in immediately.... And every photograph or roll of film should be accompanied by as much back-up information as you can put together, including your name and phone number.

## 1995 'Militant' index now available

The 1995 index to the *Militant* is now available. It includes lists of the articles published in the *Militant* that year, organized by subject and by author. Subscribers will receive a copy of the index with this issue. Individual copies can be ordered for \$1.50 each from the *Militant*, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. The 1996 index and bound volumes of the *Militant* from 1995 and 1996 will be available soon.



# Workers protest job cuts at Ford in Britain

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

## ON THE PICKET LINE

short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

LONDON — Workers at Ford Motor Co., including some of the 1,300 threatened with layoffs at the Halewood factory near Liverpool, rallied outside the company offices in London January 23. The company was meeting with union officials to discuss the future of the plant. More than 400 took to the streets, the majority from Halewood, where production was halted. Workers from the Dagenham, Bridgend (Wales), Southampton, and Coventry facilities also took part. The unions held mass meetings company-wide to endorse calls for a national strike ballot.

The company has announced plans to scale back the Halewood facility, and produce the model that will replace the Liverpool-built Escort in 1998 at its factories in Germany and Spain. The future of production at Halewood, according to the company, rests on a new multi-purpose vehicle coming on-line in 2000. Until then, the remaining Halewood workers will continue limited production of the "old" Escort.

Steve Riley, the union conveyor at the company's largest UK factory in Dagenham, London, rejected this assertion. Speaking to night shift workers at a mass meeting at the plant's Paint Trim and Assembly facility January 21, Riley claimed that until a month ago, plans for a new multi-activity vehicle were non-existent. Production of the "old" Fiesta model in Spain lasted just six months after the introduction of the new version in 1995, he said.

According to the *Financial*

*Times*, production of the multi-purpose vehicle at Halewood remains contingent on the "productivity gap" being closed, and possible government financial aid.

"We've done more than they

asked for," said Steve Farrer, a Halewood worker picketing the talks January 23. "They said if you do this you'll get the new car. Now we've not got it. If they can do it to us, they'll do it to you too."

Tim Bennett, another Halewood worker who travelled on the union buses from Liverpool to picket the talks, explained, "We've got to fight to get everyone out. They'll lay us off and get the British public to pay our dole: it stinks! If there is overcapacity as they say we should get a shorter working week."

Anthony Woodley, Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) national secretary for the motor industry, remarked with a nationalist tone, "This is a fight for Britain, Ford workers in Britain, and Halewood's future."

### Flight attendants at Air Ontario walk out

TORONTO — On January 5, 146 Air Ontario flight attendants, members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), set up picket lines after the company began to remove them from their flights and replaced them with scabs six hours prior to the strike deadline. The flight attendants have been working without a contract since Aug. 31, 1996. Air Ontario is one of several components of Air Canada.

The flight attendants are demanding the reduction of the 15-hour duty day, in which they work up to nine landings in a day, often alone. They are also responsible for cleaning the aircraft. There is no running water aboard the planes to wash their hands. One of the demands is wage parity with other regional carriers who operate the same aircraft, such as Air B.C., another regional carrier owned by Air Canada. The top pay there will be CAN\$37,000 (US\$27,750) by 1999, compared with CAN\$29,000 today at Air Ontario.

Steve Smith, the president of Air

Ontario, has rejected the request for parity. The airline's current offer is 3 percent a year increase over three years. "We can show them a whole bunch of airlines that pay less than us," Smith told the *Toronto Star*.

A number of flights were delayed or canceled on the evening of January 5, since the pilots refused to fly with replacement flight attendants. Some passengers were bussed to their destinations. Air Ontario began interviewing replacement workers in November in anticipation of a walkout.

The pilots at Air Ontario along with their counterparts at Air Canada's other regional airlines — Air Nova, Air B.C. and Air Alliance — went on strike on January 10. The striking pilots, members of Canadian Air Line Pilots Association (CALPA), are demanding that the seniority list of regional pilots be merged with that of pilots at Air Canada. This would allow the pilots to transfer without financial penalty to the parent company. The day after the pilots went on strike, Air Canada chartered a large number of independent carriers in hopes of providing about 70 percent of their normal services during the strike.

Donette Carty, who has worked for seven years as a flight attendant, said, "We have received solidarity from Canadian Auto Workers, the International Association of Machinists, and CALPA. According to what I was told by the baggage handlers, 70 percent of the flights have been canceled."

### Montreal printing workers fight for contract

MONTREAL — Workers have been on strike against Sérigraphie Richford in Point-Claire, Quebec, since Dec. 4, 1996. The 103 workers, who won union certification in November 1995 for Local 145 of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada, are still fighting for their first union contract. On January 15, they rejected the company's latest offer,

which included a pay hike of 1.5 percent over three years, and no guarantees to eliminate the 12-hour shift.

Strikers explained that the company had tried to divide workers with more seniority from new hires by offering a wage increase to the latter. But Stéphane Brunet said, "I've worked here for three months. After the first month and a half, the union came to talk to the new people. After I saw what the company was pulling, I signed my union card. I had better benefits when I worked at Kentucky Fried Chicken."

Sérigraphie Richford is the only company in the province that specializes in printing bottles for wine, cosmetics, and other products. The average wage is only CAN\$7.49 (US\$5.61) an hour with 60 percent of the employees receiving an even lower minimum wage. According to striker Peter Brown, there has been no wage increase for the past two and a half years.

Workers put in 12-hour shifts, clocking 80.5 hours over a two week period: one week they work 23.5 hours, the next 57 hours without overtime pay.

Close to 90 percent of the work-

ers are immigrants and 60 percent are women. Striker Hilarion Akoly explained that many women have had back problems because of the heavy work but have not qualified for work-related injury benefits. Health and safety are considered important contract issues.

The company also hires undocumented immigrants through a sub-contractor. Now the sub-contractor is supplying replacement workers. Gaetane Bolduc, the chief shop steward, told the *Militant* that a representative of Quebec's Ministry of Labor visited the plant before Christmas and saw the scabs operating machines. This is illegal under provincial anti-scam legislation. However, the government official has not yet submitted his report.

The union has also filed a complaint with the immigration department against the use of undocumented immigrants as replacement workers during the strike.

Ian Grant, member of the TGWU at Ford's Dagenham plant in London; Ahmad Haghighat in Toronto; and Patricia O'Beirne, member of United Steelworkers of America Local 9284 in Montreal, contributed to this column.



Some 400 Ford workers demonstrated outside company headquarters in London during talks with union officials January 23.

## LETTERS

### Ebonics and education

I would like to commend you for printing Nick Sands's article "Ebonics and the fight for education." This article made two important points that I rarely see in the *Militant*. One issue was that the story showed the deplorable conditions young working-class students face in the so-called educational system of this country. I believe it is important to document some of the horrendous conditions workers face, not only in school, but in housing, at health care centers, and on the job.

Revolutionaries have always seen the importance of uncovering these conditions. Some of those who wrote about the conditions of the working class were: Frederick Engels, Vladimir Illyich Lenin, Mother Jones, and W.E.B. DuBois. In Lenin's book *What Is to Be Done?*, he argued that exposing abuses to workers "serves as a starting point for the awakening of class-consciousness, for the beginning of a trade union struggle, and for the spread of socialism." Most writers for the *Militant* have an advantage that the previous revolutionaries didn't have. These writers work in industry and can report about the conditions on the job from first hand

experience.

The article argued that working people need to support the demand of self-determination for African Americans in the United States. It is in this context that we can talk about the issue of Ebonics. Instead of supporting one of the strategies offered by the government, why not talk about how we as workers would begin to solve the problems we face? Steve Halpern Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

### Racial justice conference

On January 18 nearly 100 people attended the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Conference for Racial Justice in Pittsburgh.

Activists from the region attended plenaries and workshops which focused on the issues of po-

lice repression, affirmative action, and school desegregation.

At an opening rally several speakers talked about the case of Jonny Gammage, whose murder by cops in October 1995 brought forth a movement to demand that the cops

responsible be sent to jail.

Jamila Levi, coordinator of the Western Pa. Committee to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, said that Mumia's appeal is now before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. A decision is expected soon and it is



possible that a new death warrant may be signed by Governor Ridge if the appeal is turned down.

John White, a member of Local 1223 of the United Steelworkers of America, on strike against Wheeling-Pitt, gave greetings and urged participants to support the steelworkers in their fight.

Mauri Saalakhian of the Peace and Justice Foundation in Washington, D.C., urged people to celebrate the legacy of Dr. King by coming to the nation's capital on February 21. On that date there will be a news conference and a march to the Justice Department demanding that the federal government prosecute the five cops who were involved in the death of Jonny Gammage.

Edwin Fruit Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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.

## London protest calls for justice on 25th anniversary of Bloody Sunday

BY ALAN HARRIS

LONDON — Two thousand people turned out for a march and rally January 25 here to commemorate the 25th anniversary of Bloody Sunday. Another, much larger event, will be held in Derry, Northern Ireland, over the weekend of February 1-2.

Demonstrations are held annually to honor the 13 unarmed Irish civil rights fighters shot dead in Derry by British paratroopers on Jan. 30, 1972. One activist died of a brain tumor not long after Bloody Sunday, but his family is convinced that the trauma from the attack contributed to his untimely death. This is the reason why conflicting figures — 13 or 14 deaths — are cited when speakers at various events refer to the number of people killed by British soldiers that day.

The commemoration is an act of solidarity with those continuing the struggle for the self-determination of Ireland. Many at the London event commented that this year's march was bigger, more spirited, and more united than in previous years.

A variety of placards and banners demanded that the British government end its aggression against the Irish people, and concede democratic rights to the nationalist population in the six counties of northern Ireland. "Troops out of Ireland — Prisoners out of jail" and "British justice — No justice," were popular chants. Placards called for the London government to hold "A Public Enquiry Now — End the Shoot to Kill Policy." This slogan referred to the many killings of unarmed, Irish activists over the past years, the most recent being the cold-blooded execution of Diarmuid O'Neill by police in London last September 23. Hundreds of participants carried signs calling for "All Party Peace Talks Now."

The overwhelming majority of the marchers were working-class people from the London area. Others came from Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester, and other cities in England, as well as Wales. Many were of Irish descent, including long-time activists from the republican and civil rights movements. Three flute and drum bands from Glasgow, Scotland, got a warm welcome.

Members of groups such as the Irish Political Prisoners Campaign in London (FUASCAILT), the Troops Out Movement, and the Wolfe Tone Society were out in force.

Speakers at the rallies before and after the march included Jeremy Corbyn, Labour Party Member of Parliament; Shelagh O'Connor of FUASCAILT; Declan Bree, Irish Labour T.D. (Member of Parliament); Gerry Duddy of the Bloody Sunday Relatives Campaign; and a representative of the Kurdish Community Centre in London. Solidarity messages were read from Tony Benn M.P. and Mark Durkan, a representa-



Militant/Bob Buchan

2,000 people demonstrated in London January 25 commemorating "Bloody Sunday"

tive of the Social Democratic and Labour Party from Derry.

Sinn Fein leader Martin McGuinness was the main speaker. He explained that the British government killed the 14 Derry civil rights marchers in 1972 as an act of revenge, in response to the nationalist community getting off its knees and starting to fight back. "We never expected the troops to open fire," McGuinness continued, "although we understood there was always this possibility due to the previous murders committed in Derry by the British forces. The troops therefore declared war against the Derry citizens." McGuinness stated that the British government cannot ignore forever the fact that 43 percent of the nationalist community in Northern Ireland vote for Sinn Fein, the leading party opposing British rule in the north. "Therefore the day will come when people like British prime minister John Major will sit down and negotiate with us, just as they were forced, eventually, to negotiate with Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress."

McGuinness got loud applause and laughter when he pointed out that Major should not be organizing by-elections, but "bye-bye" elections, referring to the time the British troops will leave Ireland once and for all. McGuinness objected to the exclusion of Sinn Fein from the talks taking place in Belfast hosted by the London and Dublin governments. "I do not want the loyalists out of the talks," he said. "All parties should be included — without preconditions."

**'We demand peace now'**

Gerry Duddy received a warm response when he described exactly what happened on Jan. 30, 1972. He concluded his remarks by stating that "We demand peace now. We demand justice for the 14 murdered victims of Bloody Sunday. It is said that the Irish remember too much, while the English forget and expect others to forget too much. Maybe that is so, but certainly as long as justice has not been secured, I make no apology for remembering, and I can assure John Major and Patrick Mayhew [Secretary of State for Northern Ireland] that I will not let them forget British murder on Derry's streets. The British must understand that for us to forget, is to deny our humanity."

The presence of Bree, a Labour party member of the Irish parliament, on the platform was significant. It is the first time in several decades that someone in his position has spoken in the United Kingdom at a demonstration sympathetic to the republican movement. Bree supports the demands for justice put forward by the Bloody Sunday Relatives Campaign. He started his contribution by explaining there have been many Bloody Sundays in Irish history, and that the British government has always used

force and violence to maintain its rule. He pointed out that this "is a well established pattern of our history."

Bree continued by criticizing the Irish Republican Army (IRA). He claimed that "there was no justification for the ending of the IRA cease-fire. By ending the cease-fire and bombing civilians in London, the militarists in the IRA in effect greatly undermined the nationalist consensus, and in fact strengthened the position of John Major and vindicated the intransigence of both the Tories and unionists." When he said that "those who pursue the tactics of the bomb and the bullet... should be pursued with the full vigor of the law," the heckling and disruption was so bad he could hardly continue.

McGuinness intervened to explain that everyone should respect and listen to Bree's point of view, regardless of whether they agreed with it. The Irish politician did manage to finish his contribution, which is what the majority of those in the auditorium wished.

In the course of his speech Martin McGuinness referred to a new book, *Eye-*

*witness, Bloody Sunday*, by Don Mullan. It reports many of the facts ignored by the tribunal set up by the British government in the aftermath of the Bloody Sunday killings. Mullan presents evidence that it was not only paratroopers who opened fire on the demonstrators, but that British army snipers hidden on the Derry city walls, shot and killed three of the 13 civil rights fighters.

**Facts come out about massacre**

The book shows how Lord Widgery, who headed up the tribunal for the British government, ignored vital evidence. The Widgery tribunal examined only 15 of the 700 statements submitted by witnesses to the massacre. It accepted the army officers version of events — that the troops were fired on first and only acted in self-defense.

As new information continues to be made public, exposing the British government's brutal and inhuman policy towards the Irish freedom fighters, it becomes more and more difficult for the government to suppress it.

A second trial being conducted against five men convicted of terrorist activity and who attempted to escape from a maximum security jail in 1994 has now collapsed. This is because the London *Evening Standard* printed an article describing three of the five accused as "terrorists" thereby denying them a fair trial. In addition, the judge called a halt to the trial and declined to order a new one because of the deteriorating mental health of the accused. Three leading psychiatrists found the men had developed severe mental illness, including depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder caused by their isolation in prison. Doctors found the prisoners gaunt and thin, suffering muscle wastage from lack of exercise, sleep deprivation, vitamin deficiency from lack of sunlight and poor nutrition, and impaired eyesight.

Meanwhile, Lee Clegg, a British paratrooper convicted for shooting dead 18-year-old joy rider Karen Reilly in northern Ireland, was released from prison last year after serving a total of 4 years including the time spent on remand. He has since been promoted to lance-corporal, and works as a physical training instructor at an army base.

## Activists condemn rightist attack on London bookshop

BY MARTIN HILL

LONDON — The Pathfinder bookshop here was the object of an attack by rightist thugs on January 25. A plate glass window, valued at around £1,000 (\$1,600), was damaged. The attack took place about 5 p.m., immediately following a march to commemorate the 25th anniversary of Bloody Sunday.

"I heard three voices outside," said Darryl Hillgrove, who was staffing the shop at the time. "One of them said 'There's Gerry Adams,'" referring to the Sinn Fein leader, whose recently published autobiography, *Before the Dawn*, was one of the books displayed in the window. "Immediately after," said Hillgrove, "there was a bang on the window, which shattered." A large, empty paint can had been hurled at the window. The thugs ran off immediately.

The Pathfinder bookshop carries a range of books about the struggle for Irish freedom, including several by Gerry Adams, as well as other books by working-class and revolutionary leaders from around the world.

The bookshop makes its building available for meetings of the Militant Labor Forum. The building also houses the offices of Pathfinder Distribution and the Communist League. The Communist League was one of the groups that organized the London Bloody Sunday demonstration.

"This was an assault on the right of all working people to read what they want," said Celia Pugh, an engineering worker who is manager of the bookshop. "If these thugs think they will stop us selling books that tell the truth about Ireland, they are mistaken."

The same evening Paul Davies, a leader of the Communist League, was invited to explain the attack to several hundred people at a social held following the Bloody Sunday demonstration. He was applauded when he promised "This attack won't stop us selling Gerry Adams's book."

Following the attack, volunteers who staff the shop decided to organize to keep it open extra hours over the next two weeks, as well as stepping up campaigning in the area around the bookshop. The Pathfinder bookshop now plans to host a public meeting in defense of freedom of speech on February 7. Volunteers who kept the shop open the following Monday reported a good response from those they told about the rightist attack. A man who stopped by to buy a copy of *Blacks in America's Wars* promised to watch the shop whenever he drives past. "If me and my friends spot anyone causing damage, we'll be out of the car in seconds," he promised.

Donations to help replace the window can be sent to Pathfinder Bookshop, 47 The Cut, London SE1 8LL.

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