

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Cuban editor gets visa, will speak at U.S. campuses

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 62/NO. 35 OCTOBER 5, 1998

Washington prepares assault on Yugoslavia

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

Washington has taken new steps toward launching military strikes against Yugoslavia, using the pretext of alleged concern for Albanians in Kosovo who are under fire by Belgrade's army and police forces.

At a meeting of defense ministers of NATO member countries in Vilamoura, Portugal, September 24, the U.S.-run Atlantic imperialist alliance issued an "activation warning" for air strikes and cruise missile attacks on Yugoslavia. This means military chiefs have drawn up their plans and are

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Socialists fight new attack on election rights

BY DENNIS RICHTER

SEATTLE — The Socialist Workers 1998 State Campaign is calling on all defenders of democratic rights to join in an effort to challenge the recent ruling of the Washington state Public Disclosure Commission (PDC). While formally granting the Socialist Workers campaign an exemption from state laws requiring campaign committees to disclose the names of their contributors and vendors, the ruling establishes the right of the PDC to review the "books of account" of the campaign.

A section of the ruling reads, "The applicant shall make available its public disclosure reports for public inspection during the

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Steelworkers strike at second Titan Tire plant

BY JEANNE FITZMAURICE

NATCHEZ, Mississippi — Early on the morning of September 15, members of the United Steelworkers of America Local 303L began picketing Titan Tire International here. Workers at Titan's Des Moines, Iowa, factory have been on strike since May 1.

The Natchez plant had been Fidelity Tire Manufacturing Co., owned by Condere Corp. That company filed for bankruptcy in 1997, and in late August of this year Titan Tire owner Maurice Taylor bought Condere's assets.

One of the striking Steelworkers, Mitchell Rushing, described some of what workers had gone through since Fidelity Tire had filed for bankruptcy. There were 500 workers but Rushing and hundreds of others were laid off in April 1997. Only 200 were working as of September 4, the last day of work under Fidelity.

Rushing added that the Fidelity bosses had taken payroll deductions in the last months before April 1997 but that the workers' money had not been sent to pay health insurance premiums or to pay child support payments.



Members of USWA Local 303L struck Titan Tire in Natchez, Mississippi, September 15, adding new reinforcements to four-month-long strike at Titan plant in Des Moines, Iowa.

Militant/Ved Dookhun

Because of this some workers had debts for medical expenses, and some were even arrested for nonpayment of child support.

"If you look in the dictionary under 'thievery,' it says when someone takes

Continued on Page 10

Black Lung Association marks 30 years of miners fighting coal bosses' greed

BY FRANK FORRESTAL AND DOROTHY KOLIS

BEAVER, West Virginia — About 85 people attended a one-day meeting here September 12 commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Black Lung Association (BLA). Participants at the event included

BLA members, United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) miners and retirees, U.S. Department of Labor officials, and some doctors and attorneys. The BLA represents about 10,000 miners nationwide.

Mike South, president of the National Black Lung Association, opened the gathering by noting that while the meeting commemorated the organization's 30th anniversary, it was not a time to "celebrate." South, a disabled miner who breathes with the aid of an oxygen tank, worked in West Virginia mines for more than 11 years, before being disabled at age 35. He said thousands of miners are still dying from the disease.

Black lung, also known as miners' pneumoconiosis, is a disabling occupational lung disease caused by breathing coal dust. It is a progressive disease that causes shortness of breath and eventually suffocation. There is no cure for black lung but with proper ventilation in the mines, the disease can be prevented. Almost 30 years after federal legislation was enacted to combat black lung, the disease is still the main killer of miners. Nearly every family in central Appalachia has had a family member die of black lung.

Most miners' claims are denied

In recent years, miners throughout the coal fields have expressed growing concern at the deteriorating conditions in the mines and at coal bosses' efforts to eliminate any form of miners' compensation. Getting black lung benefits and holding onto them has become a nightmare for most workers who need them. According to UMWA figures, only about 7 percent of miners who applied for black lung benefits have received them since 1981, compared with 70 percent in the early 1970s. More than 6,000 new black lung claims are filed each year.

Last year almost no coal miners qualified

for black lung benefits under Kentucky's new workers compensation law. In Pennsylvania, the Insurance Commissioner ap-

Continued on Page 11

Young Socialists set convention dates

BY VERÓNICA POSES

LOS ANGELES — Young Socialists leaders from 13 cities met here September 19-20 and decided to hold the Young Socialists convention December 4-6 in Los Angeles. Participants at the meeting also elected a new National Executive Committee to lead the work of the YS through the convention. They decided to make the building of the convention the focal point of the work of the organization over the next two months. Chapters and members will join the campaign to sell subscriptions to the *Militant* newspaper and *Perspectiva Mundial*, as well as the new issue no. 11 of the Marxist magazine *New International*.

Members of the organization will soon start a period of pre-convention discussion that will be opened up with the "Young Socialists Manifesto," drafted by the Los Angeles chapter of the YS, and the "YS Organizer," a document adopted at the organization's second national convention. The Manifesto and the first section of the Organizer are published in the new issue of *New International*.

More information on this meeting and the YS convention, will appear in an upcoming issue of the *Militant*.

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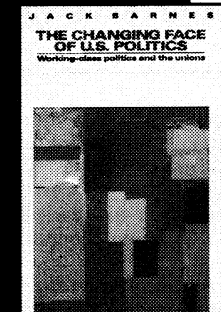
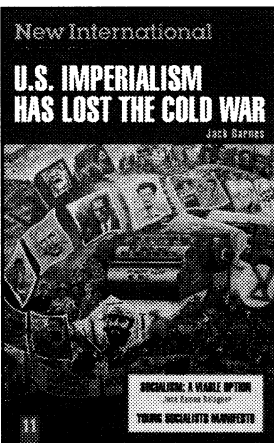
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Striking miners reach out for support in Illinois — page 11

Washington levels further accusations of 'terrorism'

The U.S. government has conjured up more "suspects" supposedly linked to the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Comoros Islands citizen Haroun Fazil has been accused *in absentia* of 12 counts of murder, conspiracy to murder, and use of weapons of mass destruction. U.S. officials presented no hard evidence against him, only accusations of being a "very active member" or a "major player" in al Qaeda, an organization that Saudi businessman Osama bin Laden — who Washington claims was responsible for the bombings — reportedly leads. FBI agents and local cops in Comoros Islands raided two houses and questioned his wife.

Police arrested Texas resident Wadih el Hage, who they claim served as bin Laden's secretary, and are holding him without bond. In addition, German cops detained Mahmud Mahmud Salim in Bavaria September 16. Salim faces probable extradition to the United States. Dubbed a "top lieutenant" of bin Laden by the big-business press, Salim was seized by "special antiterrorist police" with no evidence of criminal intent, admitted Bavarian state interior minister Guenter Beckstein. The only basis for the arrest was a demand by Washington to arrest him. Salim says that he is innocent.

Israeli settler kills Palestinian

An Israeli settler in West Bank opened fire with M-16 rifles on a group of Palestinian teenagers returning home from school September 17, killing one youth and injuring another. The settler surrendered to the cops, claiming he was retaliating for stones thrown at his car. But witnesses insisted that the shooting was unprovoked. "There was no stone throwing and no need for shooting," said high school student Hassan al-Qadi. "They were shooting randomly." The gunman, Avshalom Ladani, is being allowed to stay in a Jerusalem hostel with his family while Israeli authorities decide whether to pursue formal charges against him.

More layoffs in Indonesia

Rini Soewandi, president-director at PT Astra International — Indonesia's largest



Palestinian youth throw rocks at Israeli soldiers after they sealed off West Bank and killed a leader of Hamas and his brother in mid-September. A few days later, a Zionist settler shot a Palestinian student dead September 17.

automobile producer — said she would lay off nearly a fourth of the company's 100,000-plus employees in "restructuring moves." Anticipating workers' reaction, Soewandi called for "law and order." Protests and food riots spread across the island nation in the first two weeks of September. The price for basic foods like rice has more than doubled since July, as the government pushes through more austerity measures, including cutting price subsidies. According to the government's food minister, at least 17 million Indonesians suffer from food shortages. In the large industrial city of Medan, 6,000 cab drivers are on strike.

Ecuador's currency is devalued

The central bank of Ecuador was forced to devalue the national currency, the sucre, nearly 11 percent September 14. Export prices of oil, bananas, and shrimp — primarily to Asian buyers — have fizzled. Oil sales generated 30 percent of Ecuador's export profits in 1997.

Claiming the government needs to re-

spond to the currency meltdown, newly elected president Jamil Mahuad plans to cut government subsidies on electricity, natural gas, and oil — a \$500 million annual expense. Mahuad will also cut funds to public services. At the same time, he promised a public-relief package averaging \$16.40 a month to "shelter" poor families.

Senate fails to override veto of ban on abortion procedure

Opponents of a woman's right to choose narrowly failed to muster enough votes in the U.S. Senate to overturn President William Clinton's veto of a proposed ban on a type of late-term abortion procedure. The 64-to-36 vote taken was three shy of the two-thirds majority necessary to override a presidential veto.

Black women face much higher maternal death rate than whites

According to a study announced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention September 3, between 18 and 22 Black women died from complications with pregnancy or childbirth for each 100,000 live births — almost four times the rate for women who are white. The rates remained essentially the same over the course of the study, conducted from 1982 to 1996. More than half of these deaths were caused by excess bleeding, infection, pregnancy-induced high blood pressure, or irregular pregnancies — problems that can usually be prevented or treated with early diagnosis.

Basque fighters call cease-fire

The organization Basque Homeland and Freedom (ETA), which is fighting for independence of the Basque Country from Spain and France, announced an open-ended

cease-fire September 16. A four-page statement issued by the ETA reads, "Taking into account the situation of the Basque Country, as well as present opportunity and longing for freedom, Euskadi Ta Askatasuna [ETA] announces an indefinite, complete cessation of military operations." ETA reserved the right to retaliate against aggression and did not disarm. "We would not be entering into this new situation" without the continued fight from Basque people, the statement said. Spanish authorities, who have framed-up, jailed, and murdered supporters of Basque independence for decades, reacted coolly to the nationalist initiative. Prime Minister José María Aznar said, "After 39 years of terrorist activity, we cannot give ETA the benefit of the doubt." Meanwhile, on September 19, 23 political parties, labor unions, and others called for unconditional multilateral talks with the ETA.

UN backs Algerian dictatorship

A United Nations "fact-finding team" visited Algeria last summer and issued a report September 16 blaming "Islamic radicals" for most of the killing taking place in that country and calling for the "world's sympathy" for the government there. The report spoke in general terms about "excesses" against civilians that the government has carried out. Amnesty International called the report a "whitewash" of that government's abuses, pointing out that the so-called fact finders made no effort to meet with the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) or anyone else Algerian rulers consider "security risks."

In 1992 the FIS was poised to win elections by a landslide. The vote was canceled after a military coup. The FIS was then officially dissolved and many of its leaders were jailed or killed. As the Algerian people began protesting the coup, the army turned on them setting off a civil war that resulted in the deaths of more than 75,000 people. While the Algerian government blames a splinter group of the FIS for most of the killings, mounting evidence points to the ruling class there as the creators of death squads.

Moscow issues rubles to pay debt

The Russian government began issuing billions of rubles in loans to its all banks September 18 in an effort to pay debts, setting aside dire warnings of hyperinflation by U.S. and other officials. New Russian prime minister Yevgeny Primakov's regime will allow Russian banks to repay the loans with bonds that were frozen when that country devalued its currency August 17. But foreign investors' bonds remain frozen and can't be used to repay loans. Some of these bankers sent Primakov a letter protesting unequal treatment. According to the plan, after all the loans have been distributed, those banks that cannot repay them, go under. Meanwhile, as the ruble continues to fall, the value of foreign-owned treasury bonds in Russia has plummeted from \$11 billion in mid-August to \$5 billion.

—BRIAN TAYLOR

THE MILITANT

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Native American whaling rights come under attack

BY ESTELLE DEBATES

SEATTLE — For the first time in seven decades, the Makah Indian tribe of Washington State will conduct a whale hunt. The tribe voluntarily discontinued hunting in the 1920s because of the wholesale decimation of the gray whales by commercial whalers. The Makah decision to reinstate the whale hunt is aimed at fighting to restore a part of their culture that was taken from them and restore pride among their youth.

Their plans have sparked controversy. Articles and letters appear almost daily in Seattle papers. Moreover, the Makah are facing an international array of opposition. Two radical animal rights groups and rightist bourgeois politicians — in particular, Washington Congressman Jack Metcalf — have joined forces to try to stop the Makah's whaling expedition set for October or November, including through physical intimidation.

The Makah, who once occupied 700,000 acres of what is now known as the Olympic Peninsula, whaled for nearly 2,000 years off the coast of Washington state. In 1855, following a smallpox epidemic that killed nearly two-thirds of their population and facing the growing settler encroachment backed by U.S. military power, they accepted a treaty with the United States government. The treaty left the tribe with only 28,000 acres in a reservation at Neah Bay, in exchange for a specific guarantee of the right to continue whaling.

The gray whale was removed from the endangered species list in 1994. Today's population is estimated at 22,000 and growing. After four years of legal proceedings, the International Whaling Commission (IWC) ruled last year that the Makah can kill four gray whales a year. The Makah plan to hunt the whales in an ocean-going traditional dugout canoe, throwing a harpoon into the whale and then shooting it with a high-powered rifle to kill it quickly. They will tow it to shore to use for food and oil.

Campaign against treaty rights

Both Republican and Democratic politicians have opposed the Makah's right to whaling. Congressman Metcalf, a Republican, is promoting a lawsuit against several government agencies seeking to block the whale hunt on supposedly environmental grounds. Metcalf claims that treaty rights are

"special privileges denied to all other citizens" and should be eliminated. On September 21 a federal judge ruled in favor of the Makah's right to whale.

In 1984 Metcalf attacked Indian fishing rights in Washington State. In 1996 he introduced a bill to make it more difficult for Indian nations to petition for federal recognition. Last year, he personally delivered a bipartisan letter signed by himself and 43 other congressmen to the IWC meeting in Monaco opposing the Makah request to hunt gray whales.

In league with Metcalf's rightist crusade are the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society and Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS). Sea Shepherd has vowed it will prevent the Makah from hunting the whales. They back up their threats with a 172-foot, steel-clad ocean-going ship and a 27-foot submarine. Earlier this summer, they provocatively sailed these ships into Neah Bay onto the Makah reservation. The group says it opposes the hunt because "aboriginal whaling are being used as a tool for commercial interests to reopen commercial whaling."

PAWS is widely disseminating a brochure that claims the Makah culture "has survived and revived without whaling.... Well-connected to the City of Port Angeles and boasting a new 7.8 million dollar marina, a world-class tribal museum, lighted tennis courts, schools, Federal Express and other amenities, the Makah of Neah Bay have ample access to the modern conveniences of life."

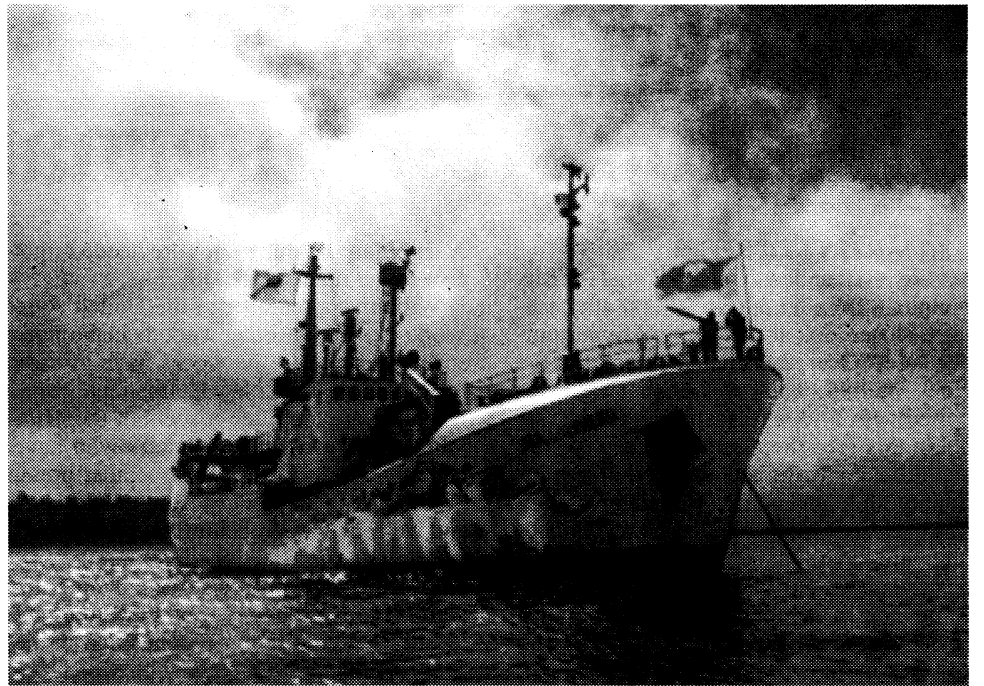
Unemployment is as high as 75 percent much of the year on the Makah reservation. The major industry, fishing, has disappeared and the only cannery in town has shut down. And most of the housing for the 2,000 residents consists of trailers and small houses.

PAWS echoes the lie that Japanese and Norwegian whaling businesses are behind the Makah's decision to hunt. The Makah have declared that they will not sell whale meat, although that, too, would be protected by the 1855 treaty. PAWS plans to organize people to "witness" the whale hunt.

Another group, "In the Path of Giants," has declared that they will "impede the whalers from leaving the harbor."

'This is connection to our tribal culture'

In response to this opposition, the Makah have continued to make their preparations



The group Sea Shepherd has announced it will use 127-foot ocean-going ship (above) and submarine to stop Makah tribe from exercising its right to hunt four gray whales.

for the hunt and to publicly explain their position.

In a special article in the *Seattle Times* entitled "The Makah Manifesto," Keith Johnson, the president of the Makah Whaling Commission, publicly responded to these attacks, calling them "distortions, exaggerations and outright falsehoods." He explained that 85 percent of the tribe voting in an opinion poll favored whaling and answered forthrightly many of the issues raised by the animal rights groups. "We are committed to this because it is our connection to our tribal culture and because it is a treaty right — not because we see the prospect of money," he said.

Responding to those who believe it could open up the door to renewed commercial whaling, Johnson replied, "This is nonsense. If there are other indigenous people who have a legitimate whaling culture and whaling tradition, then they should be allowed to whale just as we do. The rest is all hype."

"To us the implication that our culture is inferior if we believe in whaling is demeaning and racist," he told the *Militant*.

This stance was echoed by many Indians attending the Makah Days Festival the last weekend in August. Many attending wore "I support Makah whaling" stickers. The theme was "Back to Tradition," a slogan not lost on anybody, including Sid Smith, a Makah and Alaska Airline mechanic. "I want to continue the tradition before we die out," he explained. "Whaling is a right we should exercise, otherwise we will lose it."

Prior to the festival, several Makah received death threats, including Ben Johnson, chairman of the Makah Tribal Council. One caller threatened, "For every whale that dies, a Makah will die." In response to a request

from the County Sheriff's office, which feared anti-whaling protests at the Festival, Governor Gary Locke mobilized hundreds of National Guardsmen during the event. The Festival successfully proceeded without any protests materializing.

The Coast Guard, which has a base at Neah Bay, has also proposed establishing a 500-yard "exclusion zone" around the Makah whale hunters. This is supported by the Makah in order to prevent anyone from interfering with the hunt or being put into danger by it. Metcalf and the animal rights groups oppose the exclusion zone.

In Seattle, animal rights groups are organizing opposition to the hunt. They are planning a "Seattle Rally for the Gray Whales" on September 26, which includes a march through downtown Seattle. They have also been conducting public meetings to get out their position and gather more supporters.

At one such meeting hosted by *Common Ground*, a "New Age" publication, leaders of Sea Shepherd and PAWS expressed paternalistic contempt for the Makah. Several times, they said that they "support the Makah's treaty rights — but not their exercise of those rights." They also considered the Makah "pawns" who are like "children." They even accused the Makah of "not knowing their real culture."

Scott Breen, Socialist Workers candidate for state senate in the 37th District, spoke from the floor, saying, "I unreservedly support the right of the Makah, guaranteed by treaty to hunt gray whales. This right needs to be respected, supported, and defended."

He said that attacks on Native rights "are occurring across the capitalist world. They are racist campaigns accusing indigenous people of having 'special rights.'"

"These right-wing attacks are aimed at reversing gains that indigenous people have won through decades of struggle and dividing and weakening the working class as a whole. They seek to foster resentment, portraying them as a threat to the jobs and rights of other workers — or as a threat to nature and the environment. They are being made scapegoats for the economic and social crisis created by capitalism."

The arguments of Breen and his supporters had an impact on several of the 15 people who attended the meeting. Some thanked the socialists for expressing these views; one person, an immigrant from Greece, said he agreed with the socialist position.

Washington and UN Security Council refuse to even review Iraq embargo

BY MEGAN ARNEY

At Washington's behest, the United Nations Security Council voted unanimously September 9 to end even a pretense of regularly reviewing strangling sanctions against Iraq. As a pretext, the council pointed to the Iraqi government's decision earlier that month to halt further on-site inspections of its facilities by the U.S.-led UN "weapons inspectors." Iraqi officials said that move was taken because of the Security Council's failure to follow through on a February agreement to begin discussions on lifting the eight-year embargo.

Since August Washington has stepped up its threats against Baghdad. The Iraqi National Assembly and Revolutionary Command Council voted September 14 and 16 respectively to stop all cooperation with the UN snoop team. Washington immediately called for the UN Security Council to take further action. State Department spokesman James Rubin said Iraq's decision "would constitute yet another flagrant violation of UN Security Council resolutions and a direct challenge to the authority of the Council." Adding insult to injury, Washington will now begin broadcasting Radio Free Iraq into the country in Arabic from Europe.

U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright is set to meet with UN officials in late September to garner support for Washington's next round of aggression against Baghdad.

"Should it become clear that the Security Council is not prepared to live up to its obligations in this regard, then... we will have a free hand to act," said Martin Indyk, assistant secretary of state for the Mideast.

Since the 1990-91 Gulf War, the UN Security Council has maintained an embargo against Iraq that has resulted in more than half a million deaths. The supposed search for alleged "weapons of mass destruction" is one of the main pretexts used to justify this continued economic warfare, and is a provocation that Washington has used to justify plans for possible U.S. military intervention. The U.S. rulers would still like to do what they failed to achieve in the Gulf War: replace the government of Iraqi president Saddam Hussein with a protectorate subservient to Washington, which would not only provide control over Iraqi oil but also strengthen U.S. domination in the region and tighten the imperialist encirclement of the workers state in Russia.

On August 26 Scott Ritter resigned as the chief inspector of the UN Special Commission in Iraq. The onetime Marine major, who served on the U.S. Central Command's intelligence staff during the Gulf War and is accused by Baghdad of being a CIA agent, had been part of the snoop operation for seven years.

In congressional hearings, Ritter accused high-level officials within the Clinton ad-

ministration, including Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, of being soft on Baghdad. "This means I was wasting my time," Ritter said. "It means we lost the Gulf war."

House Speaker Newton Gingrich asked whether Albright and the Clinton administration had "misled Congress and the American people on our actual policy toward Iraq." He added that if the allegations by Ritter are true, the White House's "tough rhetoric on Iraq has been a deception masking a real policy of weakness and concession."

Albright responded that Ritter did not "have a clue" about Washington's overall policy toward Iraq and she was backed up by several members of Congress. In a speech September 9 Albright again stated that Washington has "not taken any option off the table, including military force" against Iraq. White House officials have pointed to the fact that U.S. warships moved into waters near Iraq in mid-August.

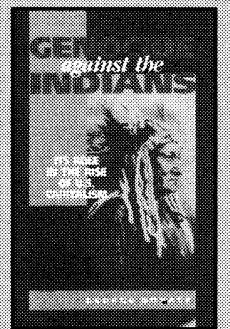
The State Department announced August 27 that Washington has more military force in the Gulf now than it had in February, when the Clinton administration was preparing to launch a military assault on Iraq. Those plans were shelved after the deal brokered by UN secretary general Kofi Annan. Far from ushering in peace and stability, that agreement set the stage for the further provocations over inspections that are unfolding today.

Pathfinder

Genocide against the Indians

GEORGE NOVACK

Why did the leaders of the Europeans who settled in North America try to exterminate the peoples already living there? How was the campaign of genocide against the Indians linked to the expansion of capitalism in the United States? Noted Marxist George Novack answers these questions. \$4.00



Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder.

'We decided to raise our goal' for \$115,000 New International Fund

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

"We just decided to raise the goal for Birmingham from \$2,500 to \$3,000 after taking a closer look at our political opportunities here," George Williams, director of the New International Fund in that area, reported with evident pleasure.

"In this area there are some new young people around who are attracted to revolutionary ideas and who will be interested in *New International*," Williams explained, referring to the Marxist magazine of politics and theory, the latest issue of which will be out before October 1. "There are a number of workers who read the *Militant* and who we know will contribute to the fund. And several longtime contributors are in better job situations right now. After looking at all that, we decided we should raise the goal right away."

With that increase, the cumulative goals for the fund are just over \$113,000, as you can see on the chart — still a couple thousand dollars short of the international goal.

A few more Birminghams are needed right now to get up to \$115,000.

Williams, a member of the United Auto Workers, said five other workers in the aerospace plant where he works have already made pledges to the New International Fund. A couple are longtime readers of the *Militant*, others are young workers who have recently begun to read the socialist press. "We have \$75 in pledges from co-workers, and we're still approaching several more."

Another fund-raising ingredient, Williams said, is a public political meeting planned for October 16. Such meetings are most effective if they are scheduled in the first half of the fund campaign, which began September 19 and ends November 15. That way, they can help give early momentum to the fund drive rather than serve as a catch-up tool.

There is a real political premium on raising as much of the money as early as possible in order to allow for fund-raising in late October and early November for the

Young Socialists national convention, scheduled for December 4-6 in Los Angeles.

Maggie Trowe, a packinghouse worker who is the fund director in Des Moines, Iowa, says supporters of the New International Fund there are planning some teams to the outlying region to sell subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* and to raise funds. Several potential contributors live in Kansas City, Missouri; Omaha, Nebraska; and other surrounding cities.

"We're going to use issue no. 11 of *New International* to expand our sales, discuss the big political questions facing working people, and raise money for the New International Fund," Trowe added.

Supporters in Des Moines are preparing to mail a letter to interested workers and youth soliciting contributions.

Next week we will start reporting results on the fund. Checks must be received by Wednesday to be counted in the chart printed in the *Militant* that Thursday.

\$115,000 New International Fund Drive

SEPTEMBER 19 - NOVEMBER 15

Country/City	Goal
CANADA	
Montreal	665
Toronto	1,670
Vancouver	665
Total Canada	3000
ICELAND	1,400
NEW ZEALAND	
Auckland	1,000
Christchurch	550
Total NZ	1,550
UNITED KINGDOM	
London	1,500
Manchester	620
Total UK	2,120
UNITED STATES	
Atlanta	2,800
Birmingham	3,000
Boston	4,700
Chicago	7,500
Cleveland	2,200
Des Moines	2,500
Detroit	4,500
Houston	6,000
Los Angeles	9,000
Miami	2,500
Newark	8,500
New York	12,000
Philadelphia	4,000
Pittsburgh	4,000
San Francisco	11,000
Seattle	8,500
Twin Cities	7,000
Wash., D.C.	4,000
Total US	103,700
SWEDEN	1,250
Int'l Totals	113,020

Pathfinder's 'Cuba for Beginners' now digital

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

Cuba for Beginners, the fifth book to be electronically formatted by volunteers this year, was being prepared to go on press in Pathfinder's print shop September 23. A week earlier, Bobbi and Greg Sack had sent the book to Pathfinder on CD-ROM.

The Sacks, who are supporters of the communist movement in Cincinnati, scanned and adjusted the 153 pages of cartoons at their home computer to make up this title. "The digitized pages of illustrations were error free," said Mike Baumann, a Pathfinder editor. The Sacks also assembled the electronic files of the book's cover — which was digitized by two other supporters of the Socialist Workers Party, Robbie Scherr and Sybil Perkins, in Seattle — along with the body of the book on CD, and checked the quality before sending the final product to Pathfinder.

Bobbi Sack and Mike Shur in New York organize a team of 15 volunteers who are putting into electronic format the covers and internal graphics of 350 titles in Pathfinder's arsenal. Their work is supervised by the Pathfinder Volunteer Steering Committee based in the San Francisco Bay Area, which is organizing nearly 150 supporters of the communist movement around the world digitizing Pathfinder books. Their work is making it possible for Pathfinder to keep its back list in print — books necessary in building a communist movement in the United States and internationally — with a substantially smaller print shop and at a

lower cost for short runs.

Most of the volunteers organized by the Bay Area-steering committee are working on scanning, proofreading, and formatting the text of the books in final electronic page layouts. Getting the graphics team going is the latest accomplishment, and challenge, of the volunteer organizers.

"It took me and Greg nearly a month, working several hours per day, sometimes up to ten hours between the two of us, to digitize the internal illustrations of the book," said Bobbi Sack in a telephone interview from her home in Cincinnati September 23. This is the first book that each page had to be scanned as a graphic, since it consists of hand-drawn sketches by Mexican cartoonist Rius [Eduardo del Rio]. "One of our major accomplishments as a result of this labor-intensive process was compiling an information sheet of procedures on how to do this work, so we can train other volunteers."

Work to digitize the cover and internal photos of the team's first project, *Malcolm X on Afro-American History*, was completed in about a week. The graphics for the other three titles put into electronic format by volunteers — *The Revolution Betrayed* by Leon Trotsky, *Sexism and Science* by Evelyn Reed, and *Rosa Luxembourg Speaks* — were digitized by workers in Pathfinder's print shop. In July, the Bay Area-steering committee decided to take on this task as well.

One of the bottlenecks in organizing this

work — preparing film and other materials to be sent from the print shop to those digitizing graphics — was solved through a volunteer mobilization over a "Red Weekend" September 6-7 at the building in New York that houses Pathfinder's editorial facilities and printing factory. Over 120 members and supporters of the communist movement from a dozen U.S. cities, Canada, and New Zealand disassembled film containing graphics from flats and cleaned it, carefully packaged it, and catalogued it.

Materials needed for most of the book covers were also prepared. A smaller crew finished off this task September 13. During the Red Weekend, all film flats that contained text were discarded. (Film flats are used to burn printing plates for the presses; they had been assembled in the past in Pathfinder's print shop through manual stripping, a labor intensive and highly skilled process that is bypassed with the use of modern computer technology.) With this step, Pathfinder can only keep its back list in print using the electronic files sent by volunteers.

"One of our main challenges now is training and involving everyone in the work," Sack said. Only half of the 15 volunteers on the graphics team have assignments thus far. They are working on the illustrations of five books. "Our goal is to increase that number from seven to nine in the next two weeks and get everyone working simultaneously over the next month."

The next two titles the Bay Area-steer-

ing committee has set a deadline for delivery to Pathfinder — October 7 — are *Women and the Cuban Revolution*, edited by Elizabeth Stone, and the pamphlet *Leon Trotsky on the Jewish Question*.

Production of digitized reprints increased from one book per month during the June-August period to two in September — still far from the 10 titles per month needed to keep Pathfinder's back list in print at the current level of sales. To face the challenge and decide on the next steps in taking a qualitative leap in production, an expanded meeting of the Pathfinder digitization steering committee will take place in Detroit September 26-27.

Washington state attacks Socialist Workers campaign rights

Continued from front page

eight days before the election, but not its books of account; except that, *if the PDC determines a review of the applicant's books of account is necessary, the records shall be made available to an independent third party mutually agreed to be the applicant and the PDC.*" (Italics added.)

Past rulings have included language clearly granting the Socialist Workers campaign committees an exemption from making books of account available for public inspection prior to the elections.

The Socialist Workers 1998 State Campaign, the campaign committee for Scott Breen, a member of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) who is running for State Senate in the 37th District, has decided to appeal the decision by requesting a formal reconsideration of the PDC ruling.

The other Socialist Workers candidates in Washington state — Nan Bailey for U.S. Senate and Jeff Powers for U.S. Congress in the 7th District — come under federal election guidelines and are not affected by the PDC ruling.

Socialist Workers campaign committees have fought for and won exemptions from turning over the names of contributors and vendors since disclosure legislation was enacted, both at the state and federal level.

Making such information public would provide employers, police agencies, and right-wing forces with a ready-made list of those associated with the socialist election campaign, opening campaign supporters to possible harassment and victimization. The campaign committees have been forced to submit financial reports, but with the agreement that codes be used as a substitute for contributors names.

The latest ruling leaves open the option for the PDC to grant a third party the right to review the campaign's original books, which are required by law to contain the names of those individuals contributing to the campaign.

"Turning over the names to anyone outside the campaign committee constitutes an act of disclosure, thus opening the door to undoing the entire exemption," said Senate candidate Nan Bailey, who is also a member of the IAM.

The PDC's decision was issued August 27 following a public hearing two days earlier on the Socialist Workers 1998 State Campaign exemption request held in Olympia, the state capital. Prior to the hearing, the Socialist Workers campaign committee submitted material supporting its right to exemption to the commission members. This material included legal precedents, the constitutional right to privacy and freedom of

speech, the history of government and private harassment directed against the Socialist Workers Party and its election campaigns, and documentation of seven of the most recent incidents of harassment directed against Socialist Workers campaign supporters.

"This is yet another attempt by the rulers and their governing bodies in the state of Washington to chip away at our right to not disclose the names of our financial supporters and vendors," said State Senate candidate Breen.

"To allow them to enforce this ruling in Washington state would set a precedent that could be used by election commissions around the country. Ultimately it is a threat to the exemption we have been granted on a national level by the Federal Elections Commission."

The PDC ruling follows the Socialist Workers 1997 Campaign's battle against a similar probe by the Seattle Ethics and Election Commission (SEEC). That body asserted that the Socialist Workers had not proven extensive enough harassment to warrant a disclosure exemption in the city elections. The SEEC set a deadline for the campaign committee to submit for public record the names and addresses of its contributors and vendors. In addition, fines totaling \$6,040 were to be levied against the campaign.

Supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign formed the Seattle Free Speech Committee, which built support and raised funds for the socialists' fight against the city. In July 1998, the Socialist Workers 1997 Campaign came to an agreement with the city. In the settlement, the city upheld its ruling of no exemption, but agreed to take no further action against the campaign committee, with the understanding that the Socialist Workers had no intention of turning over names. In addition, the fines were lowered to \$330.

"We were able to push back the SEEC's demand for a list of names only through the support of dozens of unionists, democratic rights supporters, and organizations. They wrote protest letters to the SEEC, attended hearings, and spread the word about this attack," said Breen, who was the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Seattle in 1997. "We will fight this ruling in the same way. Today we are pulling together not only those who fought against the SEEC ruling, but new supporters we have met through our 1998 campaign."

A public forum on the PDC's attack on democratic rights and to help organize a response will take place at the Seattle Pathfinder bookstore, where the Socialist Workers campaign offices are located, at 7:30 p.m. October 2 (see page 12 for details).

Arizona miners are glad to see the 'Militant' again

BY MANUEL GONZÁLEZ
AND SAMUEL FARLEY

KAYENTA, Arizona — On September 16 we left Los Angeles and headed out to the Black Mesa coal complex in Kayenta, Arizona. Our team also included Estelle DeBates from Seattle. The complex consists of two large mines, Black Mesa and Kayenta, which are located in the heart of the Navajo Nation, making them very unique coal mines. Most of the workers are Navajo and the mines function under the jurisdiction of the tribal government. Affirmative action in the hiring process and reclamation of the land are two conditions to which the private companies running the mines agree in order to mine in the area.

There have been many important and pivotal developments in the mines and in the area in the past three years. According to a miner we spoke to, the complex has been sold four times since the last contract, and the current owner, Texas Energy, has just put the facility up for sale again. Two miners spoke in favor of a strike in the year 2000 when their contract expires. Cut backs, layoffs, a four-day workweek, and no new hiring, were some of the reasons why miners told us they favor a strike.

Uranium mining has also become a highly debated issue in the area. Hydro Resources Inc. has just been granted a license from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to begin mining. Many Kayenta residents who we spoke to are against the plans for uranium mining in the area. They expressed concern for the health of the workers and the possible pollution and contamination of the water and environment. Since the potential sites for the mining are on Navajo land, Hydro Resources will have to negotiate with the Navajo Nation before anything is finalized.

We sold the *Militant* at a public road, which is the only way into the entrances of both mines in the complex. We also made a big sign that said, "Read the *Militant*." Many miners who were already familiar with the *Militant* asked us where we had been for the past few years. They were glad to see us out there once again.

We sold 18 issues of the *Militant* and two supplements on the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan and Sudan at the road entrance to the two mines, Black Mesa and Kayenta, during a late afternoon shift change. At a shopping center in

Kayenta, we sold 20 copies and a sub to the *Militant*.

The timing of these teams to the western coal mines is important, since the struggles that lie ahead are just developing. A second team left Los Angeles for Window Rock, Arizona, September 22 and will focus on the Pittsburgh & Midway mines there and the surrounding area. There will also be more teams going out to the western coal mines. If anyone is interested in being part of these teams, contact *Militant* supporters in Los Angeles for more information.



BY ELLIE GARCÍA

NEWARK, New Jersey — During the first week of the campaign to win new readers, I sold a subscription to one of my Black co-workers at Amtrak who was a youth organizer during the civil rights movement. He is interested in inviting a Black farmer to speak at a meeting of his union about recent protests against racist discrimination and the fight to defend their land. After I showed him a recent article in the *Militant* on struggles of Black farmers, he explained that he used to read the newspaper but hadn't in a long time because the person he used to buy it from, Tom Headley, had been fired by Amtrak bosses. He said that he "loved the *Militant*" and missed reading it.

After I told him that Tom had won his job back, I asked him to subscribe and he signed up. He thanked me for showing him the *Militant*. He and Tom will be working together on the speaking engagement.

I sold a copy of *Nueva Internacional* to a co-worker from Mexico who is a member of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees. He rode the passenger train I worked. We had discussed the drop in the stock market and what the effect would be on workers in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Right after that I was bumped from the job. After seeking him out, I showed him *Perspectiva Mundial* and the four issues of *Nueva Internacional*. He grabbed issue no. 2, which includes an article by Che Guevara, and said, "I want this one!"

He said that he wants to buy a subscription to *Perspectiva Mundial* next week.



BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Supporters of the *Militant* in a number of areas are organizing regional sales teams, including to North Carolina to meet workers at several textile mills and at a huge meatpacking plant where there's an ongoing fight to organize a union. In Des Moines, socialist workers are preparing to travel to regions in Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska to reach packinghouse workers.

"One place we want to visit is Garden City, Kansas, the site of one of the largest beef plants in the country," said Dick McBride, a meatpacker and member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union. The team will be on the road October 17-24. Other teams will be organized for one or two days to travel to packinghouses in Iowa, eastern Nebraska, and South Dakota. Anyone interested in participating in the Midwest regional teams can call Iowa supporters of the *Militant* at (515) 277-4600.

Brian Williams and other *Militant* supporters in Washington, D.C., are organizing a regional team to North Carolina for roughly October 7-12, and would welcome others joining in. "We plan to visit the area around Tillery, North Carolina, where leaders of one the Black farmers organizations are based," Williams said, and also plan to get in touch with a farm workers organizing effort.

Williams, a steelworker at the Bethlehem Steel's Sparrow Point plant, added, "Selling *Militant* subscriptions to my co-workers at the plant got off to a good start. I sold two subscriptions to co-workers — one introductory 12-week sub and one for a year. Both of the new subscribers first learned about the paper through discussions and buying copies of the paper from *Militant* supporters who sell the paper every week at the plant gate entrance to the mill."



"The 'On the picket line' column generated interest among the strikers at the W. Ralston plastics factory in Bramalea," wrote John Steele from Toronto. The 70 workers, who are members of the Communication Energy and Paperworkers union, just returned to work after a four-week walkout. A report on their strike appeared in issue last week's *Militant*. A number of strikers had reviewed the article before it was sent to the *Militant*. "One of the strikers ordered and paid for 10 copies, which she intends to sell to her co-workers," said Steele. "She also took subscription blanks and will see if some of the workers are interested in buying introductory subscriptions."



New International no. 11 will be shipped to Pathfinder bookstores on September 26. Supporters of the campaign will reevaluate their goals to include selling copies of this latest issue of the Marxist magazine. New goals will be printed in the chart next week.

SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE September 12 – November 8 MILITANT/PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL/NEW INT'L

	Militant Goal	Sold	%	PM Goal	Sold	NI Goal	Sold
Sweden	16	2	13%	8	0	18	2
United States							
Philadelphia	35	7	20%	8	1	30	
Atlanta	28	5	18%	8	2	40	
Cleveland	35	6	17%	10	2	10	1
Newark, NJ	120	20	17%	40	8	50	14
Pittsburgh	40	6	15%	5	3	45	
New York	140	20	14%	60	7	120	11
Seattle	70	10	14%	20	1	70	16
Miami	40	5	13%	20		20	4
Washington, D.C.	45	6	13%	15	2	25	3
Twin Cities, MN	65	8	12%	10	1	15	
Los Angeles	90	10	11%	45	6	70	2
Birmingham, AL	50	5	10%	6		12	2
Des Moines	45	4	9%	25	2	35	4
Detroit	45	4	9%	5	3	40	
Houston	35	3	9%	10	0	8	1
Boston	35	2	6%	20	2	20	1
Chicago	65	4	6%	25	5	20	8
San Francisco	95	6	6%	38	4	45	4
U.S. Total	1078	131	12%	370	49	675	71
United Kingdom							
Manchester	24	3	13%	2		15	
London	40	2	5%	10		60	1
UK Total	64	5	8%	12		75	1
Canada							
Toronto	40	5	13%	5		50	3
Montreal	25	1	4%	10		40	
Vancouver	40	1	3%	5		40	5
Canada Total	105	7	7%	20		130	8
New Zealand							
Auckland	28	2	7%	1	1	25	
Christchurch	18	1	6%	1		15	
N.Z. Total	46	3	7%	2	1	40	
Australia							
	16		0%	3		18	
France							
	5	0	0%	3		25	8
Iceland							
	8	0	0%	1		4	
Int'l totals	1333	148	11%	419	50	985	90
Goal/Should be	1300	163	13%	400	50		138

IN THE UNIONS

Country/Union	Militant Goal	PM Sold	%	PM Goal	Sold	NI Goal	Sold
Canada							
CAW	4					3	
USWA	4					4	
IAM	8			1		5	
Canada total	16			1		12	
United States							
IAM	50	7	14%	10		25	1
UFCW	10	1	10%	13	1	9	2
OCAW	24	2	8%	4		12	
UNITE	4			5		4	
UTU	45	5		3		25	1
UAW	40			5		20	
USWA	31					13	
U.S. total	204	15	7%	40		108	4
New Zealand							
MWU	1					1	
EU	4					2	
EFWU	2						
N.Z. total	7					3	
Australia							
AMWU	3					4	
TCFU							
Australia total	3					4	
United Kingdom							
AEEU							
RMT	5					5	1
TGWU	5					3	
UK Total	10					5	1

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

Socialist Workers candidates join fights against cop brutality



Militant/Rich Stuart

George Williams, Socialist Workers candidate for Lt. Governor of Alabama, speaks at a rally in Talladega, Alabama, August 15 demanding justice for Donald "Bruno" Nabors, gunned down by police July 31.



Militant/Barbara Graham

Lea Sherman, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress, 29th C.D. (left), joins in September 20 protest against cop killing of Pedro Oregon in Houston, Texas.

Capitalism's currency crises and fetishes

From Asia to United States, bosses can't control results of their competition

The following excerpt is from "The vote for Ross Perot and Patrick Buchanan's 'Culture War': What the 1992 Elections Revealed," a talk by Jack Barnes, the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. It was presented on November 7, 1992, four days after the presidential elections. The entire talk will be published in *Capitalism's World Disorder*, coming in December from Pathfinder. This excerpt is copyright © by Pathfinder Press, and reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY JACK BARNES

International capitalism's stock, bond, and currency markets today are indeed, as widely proclaimed, becoming more and more interconnected and, partly as a result, they are also becoming more unstable. Just a little over five years ago, the world's stock markets crashed. In just two days in October 1987, the stock market in the United States plunged nearly 25 percent. The crash sent shock waves through the international bourgeoisie, and working people sensed it was the harbinger of a deepening social crisis worldwide. It was the first sharp public signal of an accelerated decline in the post-World War II curve of capitalist development — the first signal that a worldwide depression had become inevitable.

Now we have seen the Japanese stock market decline by more than half since the beginning of 1990. There is a chronic credit and banking crisis facing finance capital in Japan — a deep deflationary crisis. You may have read in the late 1980s that the value in dollar terms of a relatively small portion of real estate in Tokyo had shot up to more than that of all the real estate in the state of California. What did you think when you read that? Even a person who is the most bedazzled by the fetishism of capitalism, even the most zealous worshipper at the altar of the commodity, knew that was a little much; it boded trouble.

It is important to remember that private banks, not the government, create almost all the money that circulates. They do it by granting loans. And in case problems develop, banks are supposed to have assets with real value to stand behind all those checking balances they crank out. In Japan, the estimated market value of real estate makes up a big portion of those bank reserves, and the shifting ticker prices of stocks — yes, common stocks! — make up another big hunk. Land and stock prices puffed up like a giant balloon throughout the 1980s in Japan and have been plummeting just as sharply ever since, creating big problems for Japanese banks.¹

The post-World War II capitalist land reform in Japan — imposed by U.S. occupation authorities under Gen. Douglas MacArthur — was designed from the outset to serve the interests not of working farmers, but the restoration of a stable bourgeois state. It was nothing like the Homestead Acts coming out of the Civil War in the United States, or the land reforms in much of Europe following the French Revolution and revolutions of 1848 — even with all their bourgeois limitations. Japan also never went through a bourgeois banking reform like that carried out in the United States in the wake of bank failures at the opening of the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Washington and its rivals

Today U.S. capitalism accounts for a little over a quarter of manufactured goods worldwide, and more than 15 percent of world exports. This represents a *relative* decline from what Wall Street and Washington had established in the decade or so after the close of World War II. But the enormous *absolute* size of U.S. imperialism's wealth and productive capacity, however, has meant that the effects of the deepening world capitalist crisis are hitting its German and Japanese rivals substantially harder. For

some time now, the relative position of German and Japanese capital has been slipping in the world imperialist system. Since the mid-1980s, U.S. capital's share of the world export market has been rising a bit once again, while Tokyo's and especially Bonn's shares have been falling. U.S. businesses have taken back markets in computer chips and hardware, machine tools, automobiles, and other industrial goods. And this trend will likely continue until the world bourgeoisie faces some cataclysmic crisis.

The U.S. rulers continue to suck in capital from all over the world, even though German long-term interest rates are several points higher than comparable U.S. rates. We should ask ourselves: Why do the biggest banks in Japan, Germany, and elsewhere transfer capital to North America to buy up pieces of paper — Treasury bonds — from the U.S. government? Why do they buy up these pieces of paper that promise to give you dollars thirty years from now, no matter what they are worth by then? It is certainly not that the U.S. capitalist economy is so rosy. Bankers around the world know what happened on Wall Street in October 1987, and they know the shape of the U.S. banking system. But they also know the much shakier condition of the banks in Japan, and what has been happening in Germany since "reunification." Bankers put their money where they anticipate it will be safer. But these enormous currency transfers increasingly turn the day-to-day business of banking into speculation, further destabilizing the world capitalist system.

Unimaginable sums of money are traded back and forth every day. With the development of computers and telecommunications, the speed and quantity of international transactions in a single twenty-four hours is mind-boggling. It is like keeping all the slots in Vegas working by long-distance touch-tone, multiplied by an order of god knows what!

In fact, the total dollar value of all the transactions on all the foreign currency markets for just seven business days equals the dollar value of world capitalist trade *for a full year*. The main function of world currency trading throughout most of the history of capitalism has been to balance out import and export deficits and surpluses between countries and repatriate the profits of superexploitation. As recently as the early 1970s, annual currency trading across borders was still only a fraction of world trade. Today, however, no government or big business statistical agency really knows the exact scope and size of this currency trading, although most public estimates put it at more than \$1 trillion each day.

Crisis as profit rates decline

As profit rates decline, capitalists look for more and more ways of using money to make money. Investing in plants and equipment does not bring them sufficiently competitive returns, so they keep inventing new kinds of paper instruments to trade and speculate with, including accelerated currency speculation.

Capitalists have faced a long-run decline in profit rates at least three times before in the history of world capitalism, and each time it has led to a deep crisis before it could be turned around. But the speed of international communication today, the enormity of the monetary amounts involved, and the percentage of the world's working people brought under capitalist exploitation since the post-World War II decolonization make



Top: Militant/Naomi Craine

"The enormity of the monetary amounts involved, and the percentage of the world's working people brought under capitalist exploitation since the post-World War II decolonization, make the potential scope and explosiveness of the coming crisis truly staggering." Above, market vendors in Bandung, Indonesia, protest deteriorating living and working conditions in June 1998. At left, prices drop on New York Stock Exchange August 31.



the potential scope and explosiveness of the coming crisis truly staggering.

Earlier I mentioned the recent run on the pound by international finance, which forced a substantial de facto devaluation in Britain. It is not that the Bank of England did too little in attempting to stop the fall; it laid out \$27 billion in the effort. But the quantitative scope of the assault on the pound was beyond the bank's capacity to reverse, possibly, even if it exhausted *all* its reserves.

Governments and national banks no longer have much control over their currencies. And it is not just London — Washington, too, exercises very little control over the dollar. World currency markets are awash with dollars. Dollars are held in massive quantities by corporations all over the globe, including by many owned in full or in part by U.S. capital. In fact, some 50 percent of all private financial wealth in the world is held in dollars, as well as more than half of all exchange reserves in the vaults of foreign central banks.² In Russia, and even Eastern Europe to some degree, the dollar is the only real store of value today.

The conflicting national capitalist classes ultimately cannot control the results of their intensifying competition — and not because their actions are "irrational." Deep social crises result from acts that are completely rational for the profit maximization of *particular* capitalists competing with other capitalists and with other particular *national* capitals. The consequences of all these separate rational, short-term, and pragmatic decisions, however, further destabilize the world imperialist system.

Capitalist governments try to buffer some of these unanticipated consequences. In a manner of speaking, they resort to a kind of socialism — the socialism of the bourgeoisie, the socialization of their losses. Clinton says he will introduce a national health plan, for example. But it is really a plan to "socialize" a corporate expense item through increased taxes on workers' wages and boost the profits of the biggest insurance

companies.³

The financial press wags its finger at General Motors management today, saying it would be filing for bankruptcy protection if it were a small business and that it got that way by making short-run, revenue-maximizing decisions instead of long-run investment decisions. But that is what all owners of capital do, all the more so when their profit rate is declining and their mass of profits is stagnating. When profit rates get low enough, the owners of capital consider it better to cut costs — to "downsize" — than to invest in the expansion of capacity with no foreseeable competitive returns. And it is not enough for capitalist governments to try to keep interest rates low either. Capitalists are not going to borrow to invest unless anticipated profits make that a more lucrative use of their money than some alternative — like currency speculation, for example. So the decisions by GM management in recent years are neither a plot nor a mistake — they are simply profit maximization.

Confidence in bourgeois officials falls

Instability and sharpening conflicts will continue to mark the imperialist world. There will be more banking and credit crises in the years ahead. And along with them, confidence in the bourgeois leaderships of the imperialist countries will continue declining, too. We should note the tendency today for prime ministers, presidents, and other bourgeois officeholders to be elected with a steadily decreasing percentage of the populace having any confidence that these political figures will be able to turn things around.

This is an important economic fact, not just a political fact. Because workers should not ever fall for the ultimate fetish of money — the notion that there is something objective that determines the worth of a currency. There is nothing objective about it. The paper currency of a nation-state under capitalism is only as strong as the confidence of the population, of the rulers themselves, and of international bankers in the stability and future of that ruling class and the competence of its leading figures.

¹ Some four years after this talk was given, in mid-1997, land prices in Tokyo were still more than 50 percent below their level at the opening of the decade. By the Japanese government's own estimates, banks held \$250 billion in bad loans in the first half of 1997, and private estimates range up to \$1 trillion. And the Japanese stock market in July 1997 was still some 47 percent off its 1989 peak.

² Pointing to a time as recently as the mid-1970s when 80 percent of world foreign exchange reserves were held in U.S. currency, financial writer James Grant observed in May 1995 that, "In some important sense, the dollar has lost caste as an international store of value." Grant quickly added, however: "Checking the field, there is no obvious successor to the dollar as a reserve currency. There are too few francs and marks, and the Japanese have no naval power. At the moment, the Japanese have no banking power either."

³ Clinton dropped his plan in early 1994 in face of opposition within both the Democratic and Republican parties and among sections of U.S. capital—including those with big stakes in pharmaceuticals and hospital management—who believed they would lose out to the big insurance interests and so-called Health Maintenance Organizations in the competition for profits from health care.

IAM restructuring divides, weakens union at Northwest

BY MARK FRIEDMAN

LOS ANGELES — In an August 31 open letter to all members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) at Northwest Airlines, International President Thomas Buffenbarger announced the formation of a "new airline district within the ranks of our Northwest members. The new district will service our mechanics and related members [i.e. cleaners] while the existing District 143 will continue to represent equipment service [ramp], passenger, reservation, office and clerical, flight kitchen, and guard members."

This comes at a time when the 27,000 members of the IAM and nearly 11,000 Teamster-organized flight attendants are in contract battles with the bosses. The Northwest pilots just concluded a victorious strike against the company, having won broad support from the Machinists, Teamsters, and workers in many other industries. The pilots won significant wage and benefit increases, as well as a phased end to the two-tier wage system — a key issue in the IAM and Teamster contracts.

Over the past few months, informational picket lines organized by the IAM and Teamsters in more than a dozen cities began to unite the workforce in opposition to the bosses' demands for concessions despite record profits.

Northwest workers in all classifications are discussing and debating the separate district proposal in light of attempts by the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) to separate the mechanics and cleaners from the greater body of 27,000 IAM members at Northwest. The National Labor Relations Board scheduled a union representation election for the mechanics and cleaners beginning October 16, with mail-in ballots scheduled to be counted on November 20. The NLRB has consistently linked these groups together, although AMFA has legally challenged this and tried to jettison the cleaners. Meanwhile, Northwest's owners have taken this opening to break off all contract talks.

More IAM members are recognizing that AMFA is not a craft union that happens to be carrying out a raid to divide the workforce, but rather a pro-company organization whose logic is to weaken and ultimately bust the Machinists union.

Los Angeles Northwest ramp worker Herb Bradley pointed out, "AMFA is not a real union and I'm opposed to the separation proposal by the IAM leadership because it divides us among ourselves and caters to one group." He added that others will make the same threat to get a district solely for themselves. "The IAM officials don't understand the frustration of the members, and a separate district sends a bad message that makes AMFA look right. It destroys the basic principals of unionism." Bradley said

the IAM's actions can only send a message that splitting the union is good and thus backs AMFA's contention that the mechanics would do better if they negotiated alone.

Ramp worker Armando Soto commented, "When you separate people it weakens you. AMFA leaders don't care about the people. They never supported the IAM strikers in their fight against Frank Lorenzo at Eastern Airlines. AMFA's not supporting other unions and they won't support the mechanics in the long run."

Soto said he was referring to AMFA members' refusal to back and participate in the recent IAM informational picket lines in Los Angeles to fight for a decent contract. Other Northwest workers here point out AMFA leaders' opposition at local union meetings to supporting the United Farm Workers financially and their support to government attacks on immigrant workers and affirmative action. Others challenge AMFA's arguments that mechanics should receive more in wages and benefits by taking the money from ramp workers' wages.

An example of AMFA's antiunion stance was the statement by one of its Los Angeles leaders, Joe Klemowitz. During a discussion with half a dozen mechanics about the separate district and labor solidarity, Klemowitz said he did not support the recent pilots strike because "they are just overpaid bus drivers." There are many other mechanics who agree with AMFA and plan on voting for them.

Marilyn Brown, a cleaner at Northwest here, said, "I don't think we should be separated. We should all stand together. I will stay with the IAM. AMFA is making false promises they can't keep."

Ground equipment mechanic Jim Milan said that he wouldn't vote for AMFA. "I believe we should stick together as a group and everybody should be respected in their classification." The majority of mechanics and cleaners in Los Angeles voted for the last contract offer, but it was soundly defeated nationwide. Milan's response was different. "The company is making a lot of money," he noted. "We shouldn't settle for the crumbs management threw at us. Corporate management shows no respect to the blue-collar worker. It was a slap in the face when they lined their pockets and we took concessions."

James Hicks, an aircraft mechanic at Northwest in Duluth, Minnesota, said he believes "the proposed separation of the mechanics seems to say that AMFA's ideas on representing only mechanics is a successful plan. In reality, the track record is dismal, which is what the bosses like. The division returns the union to the old system of dividing the workers by trade. This was overcome by the massive union organizing victories in the 1930s led by industrial workers and later the merger of the AFL-CIO."

The logic of the IAM officialdom's move

'Justice for Pedro Oregón!'



Militant/Barbara Graham

BY LEA SHERMAN

HOUSTON—Some 150 protesters against police brutality marched through the streets of southwest Houston September 20. Chanting "Justice for Pedro Oregón now," in English and Spanish, they proceeded to the Mark Five Apartments where Pedro Oregón Navarro was killed by the cops. There they held a moment of silence in memory of the 22-year-old Mexican immigrant worker.

On the night of July 12, six police stormed into Oregón's apartment without a warrant and fired 30 rounds of bullets. Nine of the 12 shots that hit Oregón were fired from behind. The six cops involved

are suspended with pay, while a grand jury hears testimony on the case.

Led by Oregón's family, the marchers drew interest in the largely working-class, immigrant community. Many came out on the balconies of their apartments to watch; some marched a few blocks talking and agreeing with the demonstrators' demand to jail the cops who killed their neighbor.

The march ended with a rally at Burnett Bayland Park, where speakers from the Coalition for Justice for Pedro Oregón, the sponsors of the march, and others vowed to continue protests until the cops were charged with murder.

was not lost on the AMFA leadership, which has now tasted blood. In a September 1 newsletter entitled "Fool me once, Shame on you," the pro-company outfit says, "First the IAM has accused us of being elitists and now they create a district just for a select few."

"A separate union is the only sensible and

viable solution," read a statement issued on their website. "We will not be subject to the demands of ticket agents and baggage handlers...[or] distracted by baggage handlers and agents."

Mark Friedman is a ramp worker at Northwest and a member of IAM Local 2785.

TV networks broadcast grand jury testimony on sex scandal

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

After a some debate, the U.S. Congress decided to make public four hours of videotaped grand jury testimony by U.S. president William Clinton. On September 21, the three major broadcast networks and four cable networks aired the entire testimony, which had been given a month earlier. Some 3,100 pages of other "evidence" in the Clinton sex scandal were released the next day.

The Whitewater independent counsel

Kenneth Starr had previously delivered his 445-page report to Congress September 10, accusing the president of perjury and obstruction of justice and urging that impeachment proceedings begin against him. This report, like the video testimony, consisted mostly of salacious details of Clinton's sexual activities with White House intern Monica Lewinsky.

The Starr report was immediately posted in full on the Internet and is being sold in paperback form. The Government Printing Office bookstore also released transcripts of the grand jury testimony of Clinton, Lewinsky, and other related documents for sale September 21. Daily papers across the country ran special supplements featuring excerpts of this testimony the next day.

Ultrarightist politician Patrick Buchanan seized on the latest stage in the scandal to press his "cultural war" against the "elite," in a September 23 syndicated column. "Monicagate is a battlefield in the war for the soul of America, a war that is religious and cultural in character, as well as political," he declared. "Traditional America means to purge him [Clinton] from office for living by Woodstock values that most of America's social and media elite also embrace."

from Pathfinder



The Eastern Airlines Strike

Accomplishments of the Rank-and-File Machinists and Gains for the Labor Movement

Ernie Mailhot, Judy Stranahan, and Jack Barnes

The story of the 686-day strike in which a rank-and-file resistance by Machinists prevented Eastern's union-busting onslaught from becoming the road to a profitable nonunion airline. \$9.95

Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay

Leon Trotsky

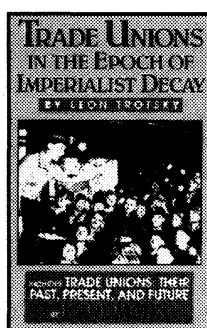
Featuring "Trade Unions: Their Past, Present, and Future"

by Karl Marx

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

—Karl Marx, 1866.

In this book, two central leaders of the modern communist workers movement outline the fight for this revolutionary perspective. \$14.95



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

Pathfinder Mural: a celebration of revolutionary workers' struggles

The cover of issue no. 11 of the Marxist magazine *New International* features a reproduction of the Pathfinder Mural, which for seven years covered the six-story wall of the building where Pathfinder books, *New International*, and the *Militant* are edited and printed. The following article by *New International* managing editor Steve Clark appears at the beginning of issue no. 11, under the heading, "About the cover." It is copyright © 1998 by 408 Printing and Publishing Corp., and reprinted by permission.

BY STEVE CLARK

"Irony, is it not? In East Europe, the victims of communism tear down images of Marx and Engels; in the arts capital of America, their portraits go up [and] Fidel Castro rises over the Westside Highway," wrote right-wing demagogue Patrick Buchanan in his nationally syndicated column in late November 1989. Buchanan's vitriolic comment was in reference to the Pathfinder Mural, pictured on the front and back cover, which had been unveiled in New York City several days earlier, on November 19, 1989.

In fact, there is nothing "ironic" about it, as readers of "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War," the 1990 Socialist Workers Party resolution featured in this issue of *New International*, will be well equipped to understand.

Buchanan was seconding a provocative call to assault the mural, launched the very day of the dedication itself. The November 19 issue of the *New York Post* had carried an editorial headlined, "Off the wall — that's where it belongs." Tarring the mural as a "bizarre celebration of totalitarianism," the editorial concluded with the real point, an incitement to act: "The mural should be removed."

An ultrarightist squad responded to these calls a few weeks later, defacing the mural with five paint bombs during the night of December 20. Artists rallied to repair the damage. And from that day forward, the mural, and the Pathfinder Building whose wall it covered, was defended — successfully — around the clock by a roster of volunteers who gave up a night's sleep once every few weeks to be part of teams doing

guard duty.

The fact of the completed mural, and its impact, caught the right wing by surprise, and they were never able to effectively respond.

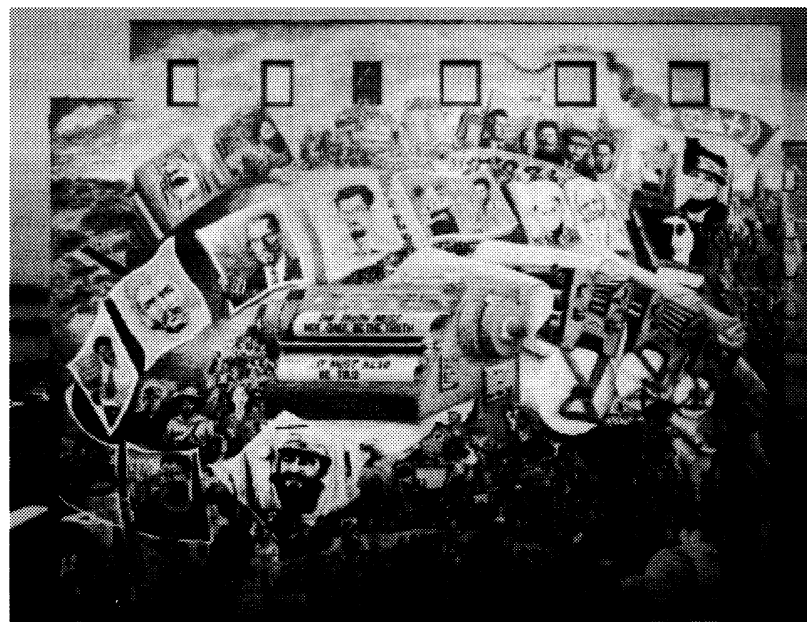
Many revolutionary and communist leaders discussed in this issue, whose writings and speeches are published and distributed by Pathfinder, are portrayed on the mural, which was painted on the six-story south wall of the Pathfinder Building in lower Manhattan. The mural was a joint endeavor of communist workers and youth and of artists from around the world who volunteered their talent and their time, and who in addi-



tion helped raise the funds to purchase paint, erect scaffolding, and cover other costs. The November 19 dedication drew some four hundred participants: artists, supporters of the Cuban revolution and of the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa, students, and workers — including unionists on strike against Eastern Airlines and United Mine Workers members supporting the hard-fought strike against Pittston coal company. Two and half years in the making, this work of art was truly an expression, to paraphrase the Communist Manifesto, of "an existing class struggle, of a historical movement going on under our very eyes."

Order a Full-Color Poster of the Mural (21.5" x 30") for only \$20. Also available: a color poster of the Malcolm X portrait by artist Carole Byard (18" x 24" — \$8.00) and postcards (4" x 6" — \$1). Available at your local Pathfinder bookstore (see list on page 12), or order from Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014

Visit the Pathfinder Mural Bookstore, located next to the Pathfinder Building, 167 Charles St., New York
Tel: (212) 366-1973



THE PATHFINDER MURAL AND BOOKSTORE



Top: Pathfinder/Andrea Brizzi; Left: Militant/Selva Nebbia
Eighty artists from 20 countries helped paint the Pathfinder Mural. At left, Carole Byard works on portrait of Malcolm X. Above, detail from Pathfinder Mural featured in *New International* no. 11. Depicted are scenes from the Chinese revolution and India's independence struggle; South African anti-apartheid protesters; U.S. abortion rights activists; several of the Haymarket martyrs; Mexican revolutionary leaders Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa; Paris communist Louise Michel; American Indian leader Leonard Peltier; U.S. antislavery fighters John Brown, Sojourner Truth, and Harriet Tubman; Puerto Rican independence fighter Lolita Lebrón; Irish Republican martyr Bobby Sands; 19th century revolutionist August Blanqui and Marx collaborator Joseph Weydemeyer; Socialist Workers Party leaders Joseph Hansen and Evelyn Reed; Congolese liberation leader Patrice Lumumba; gay rights activist Leonard Matlovich; Industrial Workers of the World leaders "Big Bill" Haywood and Frank Little; and numerous others.

The centerpiece of the mural is a large printing press, with the words of Cuban president Fidel Castro — "The truth must not only be the truth, it must also be told" — imprinted on a paper roll. The press is churning out books on which the featured portraits appear. Starting at the top left of the mural, and tracing an inverted "S" across and down the mural (see below), readers will find the following portraits:

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the founding leaders of the modern communist workers movement (artists: Aldo Soler — Cuba; Marjan Hormozi — Iran);

Five central leaders of the Communist International (from left to right), **Gregory Zinoviev, Nikolai Bukharin, Leon Trotsky, V.I. Lenin, and Karl Radek** (artist: Malcolm McAllister — New Zealand);

U.S. socialist and labor leader **Eugene V. Debs** (artist: David Fichter);

United Mine Workers union organizer **Mother Jones** (artist: Eva Cockcroft);

Rosa Luxemburg, internationalist leader of the workers movement in Germany and Poland (sketch by May Stevens, painted by Mike Alewitz);

Black rights leader and author **W.E.B. Du Bois** (artist: Seitu Ken Jones);

Nicaraguan revolutionary leader **Augusto Sandino** (artist: Arnolando Guillén — Nicaragua);

U.S. working-class and communist leaders **Farrell Dobbs** and **James P. Cannon** (artist: Bob Allen);

Carlos Fonseca, founding leader of Nicaragua's Sandinista National Liberation Front (artist: Arnolando Guillén — Nicaragua);

Black rights fighter and revolutionary leader **Malcolm X** (artist: Carole Byard);

Ernesto Che Guevara, the Argentine-born communist and leader of the Cuban revolution (artist: Ricardo Carpani — Argentina);

Maurice Bishop, the central leader of the Grenada revolution (Maxine Townsend-Broderick);

Thomas Sankara, leader of the revolutionary government in the West African country Burkina Faso (Lynne Pelletier —

Quebec; Luis Perero);

African National Congress leader and later president of South Africa **Nelson Mandela** (artist: Dumile Feni — South Africa); and

Fidel Castro, the central leader of Cuba's socialist revolution (artist: Aldo Soler — Cuba).

From the "Breaker Boys" gathered around a mine portal at the foot of the mural (child laborers exploited by Pennsylvania mining bosses in the early twentieth century, some of whom later joined in the bloody struggles to unionize coal); to the battle flag carried into combat against the British colonizers of New Zealand by Maori warrior Te Kooti, flying across the mural's peak; to the fighting workers and peasants scaling the classics of Marxism — the mural depicts the struggles of working people over the past 150 years. Among the multitudes are portraits of other working-class leaders and fighters for national liberation and social justice the world over. Some can be seen more clearly in the detail from the mural on the facing page.

Eighty artists — volunteers all — from twenty countries participated in creating the mural. Many painted scenes of working-class and national liberation struggles from their countries, or portraits of leaders of those struggles.

The mural's first project director was Mike Alewitz, and the work was carried through to completion by Sam Manuel, who cut the ribbons to unveil the mural at its 1989 dedication. Manuel continued as director following that ceremony, overseeing work to restore sections of the mural damaged by right-wingers, fighting a disciplined if inevitably losing battle against the effects of weather, and keeping in contact with the artists and others whose collective efforts brought the mural into being.

The mural remained on the wall of the Pathfinder Building for seven years, attracting visitors, tour groups, and press coverage from across North America and around the world. From the start it won a supportive reception, and often the admiration, of workers and residents in the Manhattan neighbor-

Continued on Page 9

'A book about the Cuban revolution today'

Miami meeting celebrates 'Secrets of generals,' interviews with Cuban fighters

BY ERIC SIMPSON

MIAMI — "*Secretos de generales* [Secrets of generals] is a book about the Cuban socialist revolution today. It tells us how millions of working people, in making a revolution, have transformed society and themselves. It's about the proletarian character of the leadership of Cuba's revolution.

"*Secretos* is about what it means to be a revolutionary, about why socialism is a necessity today. It is not a theoretical explanation, but a practical one. And for those of you who hate capitalism and want to change the world, it is important reading," Martín Koppel explained to a meeting of 50 people hosted by the Militant Labor Forum here September 12. Koppel, a staff writer for the *Militant* and editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*, was in Miami to introduce *Secretos de generales*, which for the first time is available in this area through the Pathfinder Bookstore. The book, published last year in Cuba, includes interviews with 41 top officers of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces.

Several people came to the event for *Secretos de generales* after reading a prominent announcement for it in the calendar column of the popular Miami weekly *New Times*. One woman was especially interested in the link between Cuba and Puerto Rico, responding to the announced participation in the meeting of the Committee to Free the Puerto Rican Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War of Orlando, Florida. At the last minute, the committee was unable to send a representative and sent greetings to the meeting instead.

Leading up to the program, Koppel conducted a wide-ranging interview in Spanish with Alvaro Sánchez-Cifuentes, on his program "En alta voz", aired on *Radio Progreso*, announcing the book's availability. Cifuentes probed Koppel's views for an hour on the Cuban revolution, the world capitalist economic crisis, and what socialists do in the United States, in a live broadcast that has an estimated 14,000 listeners daily.

Several listeners called the Pathfinder bookstore to thank Koppel for telling the truth about the Cuban revolution on the air. Several more stopped by to buy the book, while others attended the book celebration Saturday night. Only two people called to complain about the sale of *Secretos de generales*.

The book itself is known to many in Miami, but has never been available here. Last year, a column on the editorial page of *El Nuevo Herald* was devoted to an attack on the book. This followed an exchange of letters to the editor praising and condemning it. And a front-page article in the *Miami Herald* on Cuban president Fidel Castro's



The 41 interviews in *Secretos de generales* give a living picture of Cuba's support for revolutionary and anti-imperialist struggles worldwide. Above, Cuban construction brigade in Bluefields, Nicaragua, 1989.

Militant/Seth Galinsky

recent trip to the Dominican Republic cited the publication of *Secretos de generales* as proof that Cuba has not abandoned its support for revolutions internationally.

Koppel pointed to Cuba's role in world politics today. He said that when Fidel Castro speaks out in world forums, denouncing capitalism, as he did recently in South Africa, he is talking to fighters looking for an alternative to the capitalist system. Cuba is that living class alternative, Koppel said, one that follows the political continuity of the 1917 Bolshevik-led Russian revolution.

Koppel highlighted some of the accounts

by the revolutionary leaders in *Secretos de generales*, who explain how U.S. imperialism suffered its first defeat in the Americas at the hands of Cuban working people at the Bay of Pigs in 1961. They describe how when the Kennedy administration brought the world to the brink of nuclear war during the 1962 missile crisis, it was the mobilization of millions of Cubans that stopped Washington's murderous hand.

Virtually every general in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces has taken part in voluntary internationalist missions around the world, joining with others in national

liberation struggles and fights against imperialist-sponsored attacks, from Angola to Argentina to Syria.

In *Secretos de generales*, Koppel noted, these proletarian leaders, who are today the leadership of Cuba's armed forces, speak to the new generation of Cubans, seeking to win them to their communist perspective.

At the Saturday event, Koppel was joined by Andrés Gómez of the Antonio Maceo Brigade and Walfrido Moreno of the Association of Workers of the Cuban Community (ATC).

One forum participant drove several hours from Tampa on a motorcycle to be at the forum. He arrived too late to hear the program, but was able to be part of a breakfast discussion with Koppel the next morning.

Koppel also discussed the Cuban revolution with Claude Aubry on his show "Voix du peuple" on Haitian radio Plus-Pép AM 1320. Aubry invited Koppel back to tape two further interviews on world politics.

And on September 11, Koppel spoke for about 15 minutes and answered questions at the regular meeting of the Haitian rights organization Veye-Yo.

Koppel also addressed 40 people at the regular meeting of the ATC, a Cuban-American group that opposes the U.S. economic blockade of Cuba. Two copies of the book were bought by ATC members, and several people spoke to Koppel after the meeting.

According to representatives of the Miami Pathfinder bookstore, the initial shipment of 18 copies of *Secretos de generales* has sold out, and orders are being taken for the next consignment of books.

Cuban editor receives visa, will visit U.S.

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

CHICAGO — Norberto Codina, editor of the Cuban cultural magazine *La Gaceta de Cuba*, begins a month-long lecture series at university campuses in several U.S. cities this week.

Codina will begin his visit as part of a delegation of Cuban scholars who will be attending the conference of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) in Chicago September 24-26.

A delegation of several dozen Cuban academics was invited by LASA to attend the conference. They will participate in workshops on topics ranging from U.S.-Cuba relations, to women in Cuba, to the political role of Argentine-Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara.

U.S. officials were late in granting entry visas to many of the Cuban participants. This, along with a cancellation of flights due

to hurricane Georges, will cause many to miss the beginning of the conference.

La Gaceta de Cuba, published by the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC), is a lively and wide-ranging forum for discussion on the arts, literature, and commentary on many aspects of Cuban culture and politics. It regularly includes selections of essays, poetry, short stories, and drawings. Recent issues have featured literature by Cuban-American writers and essays presenting different views on topics such as the challenges facing Cuban television today. The issue just off the presses includes an interview with Cuban singer Silvio Rodríguez.

After the LASA event, Codina will travel to New York, where he has been invited to speak at meetings at Hostos College on Sep-

tember 30 and Casa de las Américas on October 2.

He then goes to Boston for a public meeting at Emerson College, a poetry reading at Tufts University, a reception at the University of Massachusetts, and a meeting of garment workers hosted by Local 1 of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

The Cuban writer will then travel to the San Francisco Bay Area and Minneapolis, where meetings are being sponsored at the University of California and the University of Minnesota. Codina's speaking engagements are being coordinated by Prof. Félix Masud-Piloto at DePaul University in Chicago.

For further information, call (773) 325-7316.

Mural celebrates workers' fights

Continued from Page 8

hood it overlooked. It was viewed by literally millions driving north on the heavily traveled Westside Highway, or enjoying riverboat cruises along the New York City shoreline. A number of figures portrayed in the mural who could not visit it had this work of art described to them in detail by others who had been able to view it directly.

A full-color poster of the Pathfinder Mural can be ordered by consulting the ad printed on page 8.

By 1996 the mural had faded and the underlying surface had crumbled beyond repair from the effects of sun and weathering. The wall it covered had suffered similarly and was badly in need of structural repair.

Following a June 1996 celebration outside the Pathfinder Building — participated in by artists and others involved in its creation, as well as workers, young people, and neighbors — the mural, in the process of structural restoration of the south wall, was covered over with a light yellow protective paneling. That surface stands invitingly for a new generation of socialist workers, at a

future junction in the class struggle, to organize the next artistic representation of Pathfinder, the publishing house that was born with the October revolution.



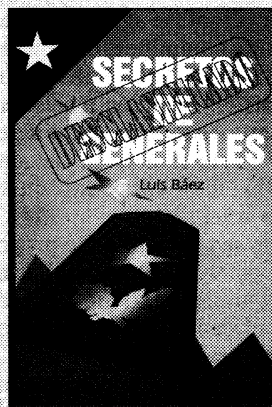
The rendering of the mural wrapped around this issue of *New Internationalist* was made possible by the collective work of Eva Braiman, the cover designer, and Toni Gorton, who provided invaluable consultation. They collaborated with the editors while working opposite shifts in factories in different cities. The workers in Pathfinder's printshop took the design and, with painstaking care for quality, transformed it into the magazine you now hold in your hands.

The editors express appreciation for all these efforts, which will help get this issue of *New Internationalist* into the hands of workers, farmers, and youth around the world. We hope it is a fitting tribute to those who created and defended the mural, and to those who today continue to guard the space that will serve as the site of the next one.

Now available from Pathfinder!

Secretos de generales (SECRETS OF GENERALS)

Luis Báez



In this collection of 41 interviews, top officers of Cuba's armed forces tell how they joined the revolutionary movement to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in the 1950s. They discuss their experiences around the world spanning several decades as they fought alongside national liberation movements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. This "is not a textbook on the past but living history," explains Revolutionary Armed Forces Minister Raúl Castro in the preface, a "treasure of moral values and accumulated combat experience."

IN SPANISH. \$24.95

Available from bookstores listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150.

Locked-out Crown workers get out their story in fight against company frame-up

BY TOM LEONARD

HOUSTON — The president of Norway's Oil and Petrochemical Workers Union (NOPEF), Lars Myhre, visited locked out workers in front of the Crown Central refinery in Pasadena, Texas, September 15. Members of Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) Local 4-227 have been picketing the refinery since 252 members of the amalgamated local were locked out two and a half years ago.

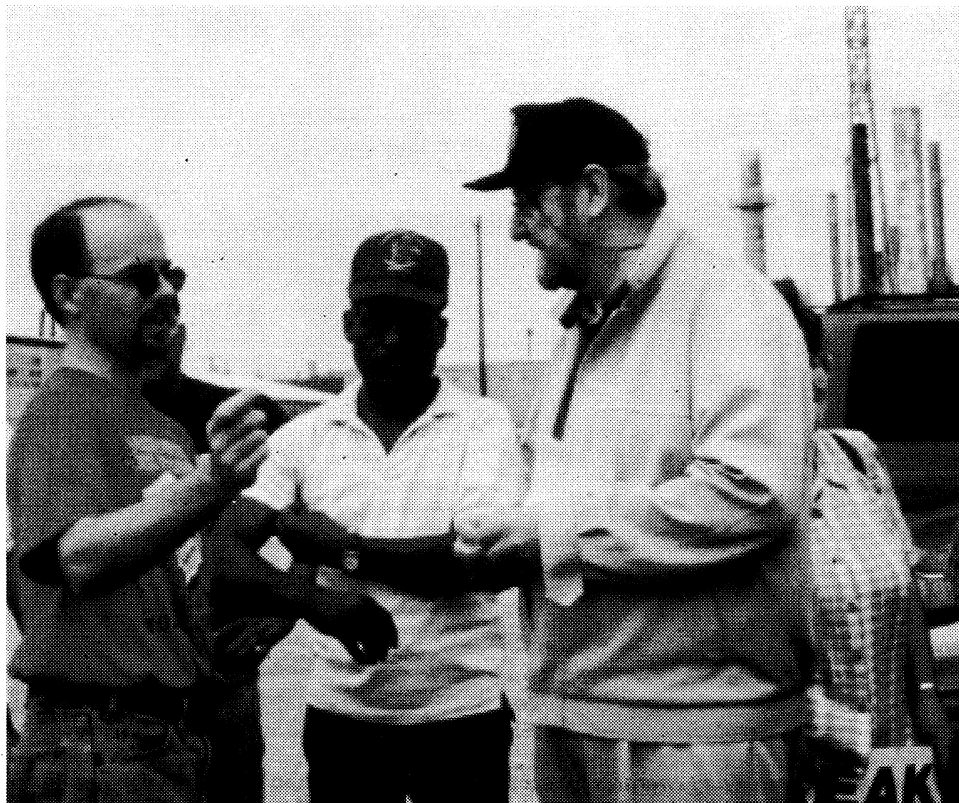
Myhre was in Houston attending the Congress of the World Energy Council, an energy industry conference that includes various heads of state, energy ministers from oil producing countries, and executives from energy corporations around the globe.

"Crown is having trouble with its employees, the environment, and safety. I am here to see what kind of relationship Crown has with labor," Myhre told the *Pasadena Citizen*, which covered the picket line event and interviewed the Norwegian unionist.

The bosses at Crown Central boasted in the *Citizen* last August 23 that they'd snagged a lucrative deal with Statoil of Norway, which is government owned. Statoil is also the leading producer in the North Sea. Driven by the fierce competition for markets, Statoil hopes this deal will help it break further into the U.S. market. NOPEF in Norway organizes 2,500 oil workers at Statoil.

Many of the Crown workers attending the picket line event explained their story to the NOPEF official and urged him to join their fight. At a later press conference, Myhre said that because of the lockout, he plans to put pressure on Statoil to stop selling 35,000 barrels of crude oil each day to Crown Central Petroleum's refinery in Pasadena.

Bruce Hicks, a Crown company official,



Norwegian union official Lars Myhre, at right, discusses lockout with civil suit defendant Dean Cook, at left, in front of Crown refinery in Pasadena, Texas.

contemptuously told the *Chronicle* that Statoil is completely satisfied with Crown's twisted version of the "facts," and that he hoped Myhre examined these "and not the fantasy that he has learned so far."

As part of its story on Lars Myhre and his visit to the picket line, the *Citizen* interviewed Hicks, who elaborated, "The lockout is solely an issue of sabotage. That was the issue that created the lockout. It will have

an impact on reaching an agreement."

Dean Alexander, executive assistant to the president of the OCAW international union, who also accompanied the Norwegian union leader, reiterated that the company's false accusations against the workers at Crown are constantly dangled in front of the union. "Sabotage is a big issue with Crown. It's a sticking point in the negotiations," Alexander pointed out Crown

is not seriously negotiating.

In fact, to back up the false charges of sabotage, last January the company filed a civil suit against Local 4-227 and 15 of its members charging them with conspiracy to commit sabotage. Fourteen of those charged are refinery workers: Brian Ambrose, David Arnold, Kenneth Bell, Michael Bonnin, Thomas Clark, Dean Cook, Douglas Cowart, Thaddeus Cruz, J.D. Denson, Richard Furlow, Dennis Gotcher, Richard Kimes, Jesse Ramirez Jr., and Hector Salenz. Also named in the suit was Joe Campbell, secretary-treasurer of the union local. Several of the defendants have taken new jobs and resigned from Crown since the suit was filed.

Two procedural hearings in the suit have been held so far before Federal Judge Lee Rosenthal of the 8th District Federal Court. Formal hearings and motions will take place through the fall of 1999 before the case is heard.

"Defending Workers Rights," a newsletter published by locked-out Crown workers, reported the following update of the court hearings in its September 14 issue. "On September 4 we went to Judge Rosenthal's courtroom at the Federal Courthouse for our second hearing in this suit. Our attorney told us that hearings like this are very unusual and the judge was holding them because she expects much animosity between the two sides."

The newsletter noted that Crown had demanded union attorney Patrick Flynn sign a confidentiality agreement before providing union lawyers with company records necessary to the defense such as time card records, videos, and photos. The company wanted to withhold such documents altogether, claiming they were "confidential and proprietary."

In a blow against Crown at the September 4 hearing, Rosenthal denied Crown's requests regarding these materials. This ruling "was a very small victory in a big war," the Crown workers newsletter stated.

During the lockout the union has been pursuing a corporate campaign at Crown's main office in Baltimore, Maryland, and protested at stockholder meetings held there. Locked-out workers have also traveled wherever Crown's products and service stations are located in other southern states, such as Virginia and North Carolina. With the help of other unions and civil rights organizations they recently took this campaign to Birmingham, Alabama.

The union's corporate campaign is also supporting an affirmative action suit against Crown's racist and sexist abuse of both union and nonunion employees prior to the lockout.

The suit was filed soon after the lockout in the Federal Court's Eastern District in Tyler, Texas, near Crown's other Texas facility.

Lea Sherman and Tony Dutrow contributed to this article.

Steelworkers strike second Titan plant

Continued from front page

something from you against your will, that's thievery," Rushing said. "The way I look at it, one thief sold this plant to another thief."

Fidelity closed on September 4, and it has not resumed production since.

Workers on the picket line say that all they are asking is that Titan agree to the same contract that they had with Fidelity.

A federal district judge has ruled that Titan should accept the previous contract. Taylor claims to have accepted the Fidelity collective bargaining agreement, but Steelworkers say the Titan boss is demanding substantial changes.

Titan wants to rehire only 70 percent of those working as of September 1, and 70 percent of the workers who were laid off in April 1997. The company wants to recall workers by job classification rather than plant seniority. The union is fighting to limit the workweek to no more than six days and no more than 56 hours. Some workers on the picket line say that they would rather work 40 hours a week and that overtime should be voluntary rather than forced. Titan wants to take certain jobs in the plant that were union, including final quality technicians, trash truck drivers, and inspector-classifiers, and classify them as nonunion, as well as shorten the length of time a worker has to train and qualify on a new job.

There are no negotiations at this time, Titan has placed full page ads in the *Natchez Democrat* that ask for job applicants and claim that "the plant is operating under the Local 303L contract." As of September 19 only three workers had crossed the picket line.

At this writing there is no production at the plant. Picketers say there is support for their picket line by the truck drivers and postal workers.

Jeanne FitzMaurice is a member of USWA Local 1013 in Fairfield, Alabama.



BY RAY PARSONS

DES MOINES, Iowa — Members of USWA Local 164 on strike at the Titan Tire plant here have been following the developments in Natchez closely since they walked out May 1. The news of Local 303L's

September 15 strike has strengthened the Des Moines unionists' already high confidence and determination.

Following a September 16 informational meeting called to discuss the Natchez strike, Larry Lingner, who has worked at Titan Tire since 1988, said, "Another 500 steelworkers have joined us in fighting Taylor. What makes us a lot stronger is that both locals have agreed that we will stay out together until we both get a fair contract from Titan."

A few days later Local 164 member Dino Masolini said, "Titan is trying to do to them what they did to our local three years ago. I'm glad the union there is nipping it in the bud."

Another striker added, "I'm very upbeat with Natchez going out. This strike has boosted my morale more than any other we've had, seeing all the support we're getting."

A regional office of the National Labor

Relations Board issued an unfair-labor practices complaint against Titan on September 16. The complaint says Titan "interfered with, restrained, and coerced employees" with threats to permanently replace Local 164 members and in moving production equipment out of the plant June 11. An October 13 hearing has been scheduled.

Strikers see this action, along with granting strikers state unemployment benefits at the beginning of September, as making the strike more solid.

Local 164 has continued to reach out to win support for the strike, including hand-billing at farm equipment trade shows and speaking before other unions about their fight.

Ray Parsons is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 310 and the Socialist Workers candidate for Iowa Secretary of Agriculture. Joe Swanson contributed to this article.

US West phone workers debate contract

BY BECKY ELLIS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — The 34,000 members of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) at US West are just now learning more details of the agreement made by their bargaining committee, three weeks after ending a 15-day strike against the regional phone carrier. As union locals have meetings to discuss a summary of the agreement, many workers remain in the dark about exactly what they will be expected to vote on in a few weeks.

Some workers say they like the proposals in the new contract. Others think the strike won a few things from the company. Many are not confident about winning more by turning the contract down.

"The whole process seems out of our control," commented Rhonda Listen, who works in the business office. Most workers didn't like being told to come back to work without seeing and voting on the proposed contract.

Many workers are opposed to a pay-for-performance plan for workers in the repair network. Even some workers in other de-

partments say they will vote against the contract because of this proposal, even though the company says it will be voluntary.

Sales and service consultant Kathy Romeiser said, "I think it went down the tubes three years ago. The company got its foot in the door with the pay-for-performance plan, and it's likely they will be able to make it mandatory for all departments."

"I feel bad about the way the company pushes us to give bad service to the customers," said credit consultant Kellie Jones. "The company is always pushing the numbers. The pay-for-performance plan is just another way to advance the numbers."

Health care is another big issue in the discussions. The bargaining committee says there will be no change. But the tentative agreement calls for a committee of six people — three representing the company and three from the union — who will look at a plan where each city will go with the most cost-effective plan available.

"I am opposed to the contract offer. The benefits are bad. I just had a baby a few weeks ago. With the new medical plan I

would have to pay a lot more," said Jones, adding that medical care is already very expensive.

The proposed contract would reduce the amount of mandatory overtime, which is currently unlimited, to eight hours per week for only two weeks of the month. Many union members think this is too little too late.

This is a particularly volatile issue in the Repair Call Handling Center (RCHC). Before the strike, workers in that department worked mandatory 8-10 hours of overtime per week. Since the strike they have been forced to work 6 days a week, many days at 10 hours. Workers there find it amazing that US West President and CEO said that the company didn't fall behind on repair orders during the strike.

Workers in the St. Paul RCHC decided to get T-shirts that could be worn on a specific day each week. They came up with a design — "I'm Workin' on the Chain Gang" — and sold 50 in two days.

Becky Ellis is a member of the CWA at US West.

Black Lung Assn. marks 30 years of fighting bosses' greed

Continued from front page

proved a 21 percent decrease in workers compensation rates for coal companies. According to *Coal Age*, a big-business magazine serving the coal industry, mining companies are expected to "realize \$11 million in workers' compensation savings" as a result. Responding to the new law, Pennsylvania governor Thomas Ridge bragged, "This unprecedented rate reduction is a milestone that helps Pennsylvania coal mine companies become more competitive in the global market."

Many of the largest coal bosses in West Virginia — USX Corp., Island Creek Co., A.T. Massey, Peabody Coal Co., Eastern Associated Coal Corp. — have refused to pay premiums totaling \$100 million into the Workers Compensation Fund. Some 30 lawsuits have been filed against these delinquent companies.

These conditions were exposed in a five-part series published in the Louisville *Courier-Journal* earlier this year. "Every year, black lung disease kills almost 1,500 people who have worked in the nation's coal mines," reported the paper. The articles detailed widespread cheating by coal companies of government-mandated tests intended to keep coal dust levels in check. The series reported that the government ignored this cheating and fraud "for decades."

"Coal is the closest thing to brute, unrepentant...capitalism that we have left in American life," editorialized the *Courier-Journal*. "If you don't believe that, just consider the fact that ranks of miners choke to death every year, because coal operators routinely cheat."

The paper reported that conditions in non-union mines are qualitatively worse than union mines. According to the *Courier-Journal*, 96 percent of underground mines in Kentucky are nonunion. "Operators of union mines who scrimp on safety must deal with determined union stewards, who often call government inspectors if a problem isn't corrected," reported the *Journal*. "Nonunion miners who complain are often fired and blackballed, which make it almost impossible to get another job in a nearby mine, miners said."

The *Journal* reported that miners "described dust so thick they couldn't see their feet or the head lamps of other miners. Those who are still working spit up coal dust every morning."

Black lung strike of 1969

The meeting began with a video showing national news footage of developments in the coal fields that led to the black lung strike of 1969. In hearings on the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act in 1969, one witness said at least 365,000 miners in the United States had died of black lung. At that time there were only four known cases in West Virginia's history where a miner had been compensated for black lung.

Viewing the video one could see the militant mood that led to mass mobilizations of rank-and-file miners. No sanitary facilities in the mines, few bathhouses, no pay for sick or injured miners, growing mine fatalities, plus the wide prevalence of miners' lung diseases — all these conditions brought miners' discontent to the boiling point in the late 1960s.

The 1968 explosion of Consol's Farmington mine, which killed 78 miners, propelled the struggle against black lung and for mine safety into national prominence. Following the explosion, then-UMWA president Anthony Boyle, rationalized, "As long as we mine coal, there is always this inherent danger." Boyle also said Consol was "one of the best companies to work with as far as cooperation and safety are concerned." These statements rankled miners and served to strengthen their determination to fight for better conditions in the coal fields and oust Boyle from power.

At this time, the UMWA was led by a corrupt bureaucracy that under Boyle's leadership resorted to hooliganism and cold-blooded murder to subdue the ranks. The union tops supported a weaker black lung bill and accused the BLA of "dual union-

ism." Despite these obstacles, the rank-and-file-led Black Lung Association fought for stronger legislation.

At the height of the struggle, more than 40,000 miners from West Virginia were out on strike. Their fighting motto was: "No Law, No Coal." In the aftermath of the three-week strike, miners in West Virginia won black lung benefits for the first time. The successful black lung strike was also instrumental in the passing of the federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969. For the first time black lung was recognized as an occupational disease. The government was forced to mandate allowable dust concentration levels in the mines and provided for compensation of miners disabled by black lung.

The 1969 strike gave rank-and-file miners the confidence to confront the Boyle gang and take back their union. This growth in confidence was reinforced in the late 1960s and early 1970s by the hiring of young miners. Eventually the Boyle machine was ousted from the leadership by the rank-and-file Miners for Democracy movement, which grew out of the 1969 black lung strike.

Black lung is a disease

In their efforts to win better health and safety in the mines, miners were aided by coal-field doctors who worked side by side with the miners. Ostracized by their profession, these doctors formed the Physicians for Miners' Health and Safety. They took on the coal bosses and in the process won the confidence of thousands of miners.

Two of these doctors, Hawey Wells and Donald Rasmussen, who played prominent roles in the black lung movement in the late 1960s, spoke on the panel, "Black Lung Movement: Then and Now." The panel was chaired by Craig Robinson, who became active in the black lung movement in the 1960s. In tribute to the 30th anniversary of the BLA, Robinson has been traveling around the coal fields showing a slide show documenting the mining areas he saw in the late 1960s.

Wells explained how medical authorities slighted the efforts of the doctors and their findings on the causes of black lung. At that time, cigarette smoking was said to be one of the main causes of black lung — an assertion once again in vogue 30 years later. Facing this roadblock, Wells said he realized that the way to change conditions was to go directly to the miners and their families.

In the late 1960s, Rasmussen had examined more than 3,000 miners suffering from black lung. He was regarded as the nation's leading expert on coal miners pneumoconiosis. At the meeting, Rasmussen's main point was to salute the miners that formed the "nucleus" of the black lung movement.

"I want to give credit to the original group of coal miners that formed the association,"

Striking miners reach out for solidarity

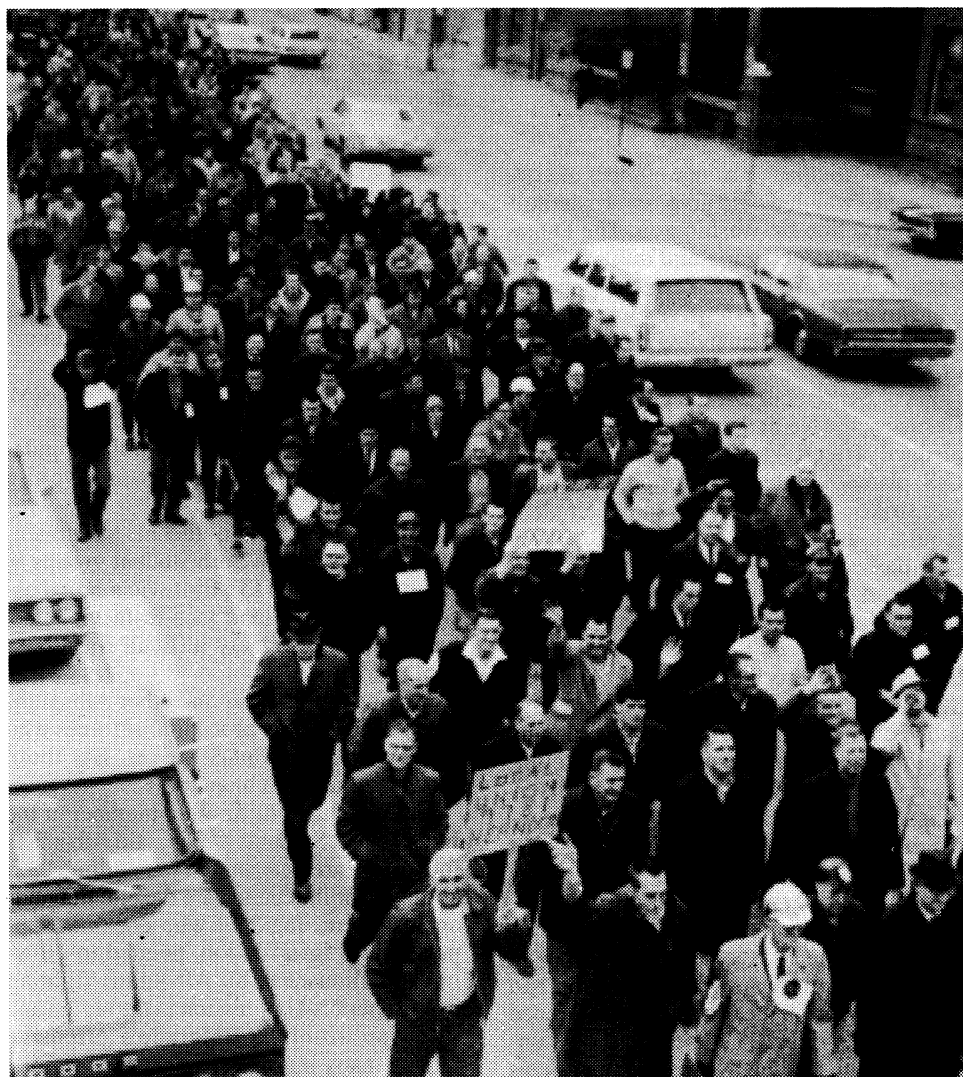
BY ALYSON KENNEDY

CHICAGO — Members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) on strike at three coal mines run by Freeman United Coal Mines continue a determined fight against company demands to gut medical benefits for retired miners. And they have begun reaching out to other workers in the region and winning support.

Goons hired by Freeman have begun provocations and harassment against the pickets at the Crown No. 2 and No. 3 mines, where most of the 350 strikers are employed. One of the tactics they are using is to shine a floodlight at the legal pickets from sundown until sunup.

These guards are from ATR, a subsidiary of Vance Security, and began appearing on Crown mine property September 15. They are guarding all gates and the mine sub power stations, and are moved around frequently.

The bosses at Crown No. 3, located near Farmersville, Illinois, are mining coal. The nonunion trucking outfit Curry Trucking



Feb. 26, 1969, black lung march by miners in West Virginia. Three-week strike that year was key in winning government legislation forcing mine bosses to limit the coal dust that causes the fatal disease and provide compensation to miners who suffer from it. Since 1981, only 7 percent of miners applying for black lung benefits received them.

said Rasmussen. He then read off several workers' names, including Woodrow Mullins, Lyman Calhoun, Ernest Riddle, Charles Brooks, and Arnold Miller.

Brooks, a Black miner who began working in the mines in 1941, was the first president of the Black Lung Association. In an unpublished history entitled *Miners for Democracy* by Paul Nyden, Brooks recounted the story of how the Black Lung Association was formed. Both Brooks and Mullins were elected delegates to the UMWA convention in 1968 held in Denver.

"The last thing Boyle told us before we left the convention was to go back and organize the nonunion mines and fight for a Black Lung law. So that's what we tried to do. The first thing we did was to send a delegate to see the President of District 17 in Charleston. Our delegate was thrown out of the office. So we decided to set up our own organization and called it the Black Lung Association."

In his presentation to the meeting, Davitt McAteer, the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Labor for the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), said the current system is flawed since it relies on coal companies regulating themselves. McAteer compared it to an individual motorist being responsible for reporting their speeding violations to the police.

The Louisville *Courier-Journal* articles described how MSHA didn't lift a finger for two decades against the coal bosses, despite "overwhelming evidence that many coal-mine operators were exposing their work-

ers to dangerous amounts of coal dust and covering it up."

Prior to his position at the Labor Department, McAteer was the executive director of the Occupational Safety and Health Law Center, and was widely quoted criticizing MSHA for doing too little to enforce limits on coal dust. Since moving on to his new position, however, McAteer has called off several investigations into coal-dust fraud, as well as prosecutions against coal bosses.

Jerry Jones, UMWA international vice president, spoke at the gathering for the UMWA. He blamed the recent attacks on miners benefits on "Republicans taking over Congress in 1994."

Kentucky has gone the furthest in attacking black lung benefits. Under the previous workers compensation law between 1994 and 1996, 79.6 percent received or qualified for benefits. However, in 1997 only .9 percent received benefits. Not surprisingly, there have been visible protests organized by the BLA in Kentucky, which has resulted in four public hearings.

The BLA is determined to continue to fight for black lung benefits for miners. Said Susie Davis, president of the Kentucky BLA, "We know these young miners aren't thinking about black lung. But they are going to get it, and we will be here when they need us."

Dorothy Kolis is a member of the United Steelworkers of America Local 1211 and is the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress.

hauls about 45 trucks a day out of the mine.

The company won a court injunction against the UMWA barring "secondary boycotting." The injunction ordered Local 1969 to remove all pickets from the access road to Crown no. 2 mine in Virden, Illinois. Following the injunction, UMWA members who work for the Freesen mining construction company then began entering mine property to do work at the struck mine.

The UMWA locals on strike against Freeman have established an outreach committee to organize speaking engagements. They are also asking UMWA members and others to attend a rally on October 11 in Virden.

Members of UMWA Local 1969 and Local 2488, representing the Crown No. 2 and No. 3 strikers, will speak at the next local meeting of United Auto Workers Local 751, whose members work at Caterpillar in Decatur, Illinois. A collection is also being organized by the Caterpillar local. Strikers have also been invited to speak at the Madison County Federation of Labor in Granite City, Illinois, at the United Steelworkers of

America Local 67 headquarters.

On October 11 the Virden Historical Society is sponsoring a commemoration of the 100th year anniversary of the Virden Massacre. In 1898 the Chicago-Virden Coal Company attempted to break the UMWA at Virden Coal Co. They locked out union miners for six months and attempted to bring in Black strikebreakers from Alabama. An armed battle between the company and the strikers took place.

UMWA Local 1969 has gotten involved in helping to publicize the October 11 rally. Miners from central Illinois plan to attend. The UMWA has been invited to speak. Participants will gather at 1:00 p.m. at City Square in downtown Virden and then march.

For more information about the strike or to send donations or arrange for speakers contact: UMWA Strike Headquarters, P.O. Box 107, Farmersville, Illinois 62533. Phone: 217-227-3233.

Alyson Kennedy is a member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 7-507.

U.S. gov't plans air strikes on Yugoslavia

Continued from front page

seeking participation from a number of governments, which would give "international" cover to action by Washington. The Pentagon has threatened unilateral military intervention unless Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic halts the offensive by his regime against Albanians demanding independence of Kosova.

As of September 24, the governments of Germany, the Netherlands, and Portugal had pledged 30 jet fighters to be used along with U.S. planes and the navy for possible military strikes. NATO officials said their plans require hundreds of warplanes.

A day earlier, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution calling for a cease-fire and negotiations on the status of Kosova between Belgrade and representatives of the pro-independence Albanian majority in Kosova. The document also called on the Milosevic regime "to order the withdrawal of security units used for civilian repression." And it condemned "all terrorist actions," referring to the guerrilla campaign by the Kosova Liberation Army that is fighting for independence.

The government of China did not support the resolution, but did not veto it either. To secure Moscow's acquiescence at the UN Security Council, Washington had to withdraw from the text explicit reference to military strikes. The document falls under a section of the UN's charter that gives it military enforcement powers, which is what the U.S. government argues it has a right to do. Moscow, which has often sided with Belgrade in the conflict, disagrees. "No measures of force and no sanctions at this stage are being introduced by the Security Council," said Sergei Lavrov, the Russian government's representative, who voted for the resolution.

Washington and Moscow have been on a collision course over NATO's expansion into Eastern and Central Europe and the repositioning of U.S. forces closer to Russia's border, as well as over U.S. imperialism's overt attempts to dominate petroleum production and distribution in the oil-rich former Soviet republics of the Caucasus region.

NATO expansion, and a new degree of domination by Washington as the number one military and economic power among its imperialist allies in Europe, were built on the U.S. government's earlier success in bleeding Yugoslavia and in deploying tens of thousands of NATO troops in Bosnia that have been occupying that republic since 1995. The U.S. rulers' ultimate goal is to use their military might to maintain an edge over their capitalist competitors in Europe and to reestablish the domination of capitalist property relations throughout the formerly federated Yugoslav workers state.

Fighting spreads in Kosova

In Kosova, a region of Yugoslavia whose population of about 2 million is 90 percent Albanian, fighting has recently intensified in the central region of Drenica and in areas east of the capital Pristina. The fighting has developed progressively into open warfare since the end of February, when Belgrade's forces launched the first assaults with heavy artillery and tanks on civilians, killing dozens. The attacks came after a series of mass mobilizations led largely by students demanding an end to the state of siege Belgrade has imposed since 1989, when it revoked Kosova's autonomous status, and reopening of Albanian-language universities and schools.

Since that time, support for independence among the majority Albanian population, which faces widespread discrimination by chauvinist Serbs, has spread. The ranks of the Kosova Liberation Army (UCK) also swelled over the spring and summer, and UCK units took control of large parts of Kosova. In an offensive that began in mid-July, Belgrade's army and special police units have retaken many areas, setting many villages on fire and forcing hundreds of thousands of Albanians to flee.

"As of now, Albanian refugees are nearly 400,000," said Adani, a member of the Independent Students Union in Pristina who asked that his real name not be used, in a telephone interview from Kosova's capital September 24. "Tens of thousands have fled across the borders to Albania, Macedonia, and Montenegro," he said, "but 70 percent are displaced inside Kosova, the overwhelming majority living out in the open."

Over the last few days, "the war has spread for the first time to the areas east of Kosova," Adani added. "Another 20,000 Albanians were forced to flee from the municipality of Podujeva, not far from Pristina. Fighting between UCK soldiers and the Serbian regime is intense there. Smoke and fire from Belgrade's artillery bombardment can be seen from afar."

Many Serbs who were brought to Kosova over the last decade as part of a "colonization" effort by Belgrade to tip the population balance against the Albanians have also left for Serbia.

Adani said Albanian students have maintained contact with Serb student groups in Belgrade opposed to Milosevic's brutal assault. "But travel and face-to-face contact has become extremely difficult for all except journalists."

Among the students and other Albanians many echo calls by procapitalist forces who support NATO military strikes. But those views are far from unanimous.

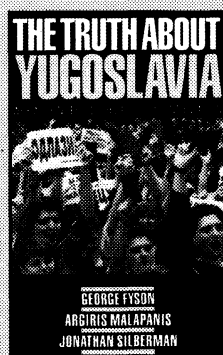
Lulëzon Jagxhiu, another member of the Independent Students Union, said Albanians in Kosova are determined to continue their struggle for independence despite the odds against them. Jagxhiu, who does not support NATO intervention, pointed to growing rebelliousness by Albanians fighting against national oppression in the region and said opposition to Belgrade's offensive among many inside Serbia remains significant even though not visible in the streets at the moment.

In neighboring Macedonia, police of the proimperialist regime of Kiro Gligorov

clashed with thousands of Albanians in Gostivar and Tetovo, after cops removed Albanian flags from city halls in those two cities. Albanians are nearly a third of the

population of Macedonia and are concentrated in the areas near Kosova. Spray-painted "UCK" signs have recently appeared on many walls in border villages.

from Pathfinder



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George Fyson, Argiris Malapanis, and Jonathan Silberman

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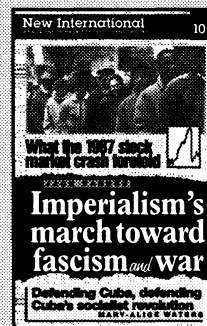
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The sane society — "Nabisco Holding Corp., maker of cookies and crackers, said it will close a processing plant in Ohio, firing about 140 workers, as it continues to cut



Harry Ring

costs to pay for more advertising." — News item.

Besides, they're only numbers — The U.S. conducted above-

ground nuke tests in Nevada from 1951 to 1962. A 14-year study of the aftermath was finished last year, but kept under wraps until last month. A researcher said that "nobody was really terribly interested." The study found that fallout from the tests spread further than initially contended. The report guesses the tests caused between 11,000 to 212,000 cancer cases.

Conned again — We took it seriously when the media tagged Bill Gates as the richest man in the world. (One awe-struck financial writer declared him the wealthiest person in the universe). Now we learn he's merely the richest hustler

in the computer software racket. According to *Forbes*, he's "worth" \$58 billion.

Temp gremlin? — A reader advises: In the Microsoft Word program, type: "I'd like to see Bill Gates dead." Highlight the sentence, click on the tools menu and chose thesaurus. It comes up with "I'll drink to that."

A bit of history — Check out the lifestyle of a Soviet-bloc despot with a visit to Romania. Ride in one of the luxury cars of ex-dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, stay at one of his numerous villas. Visit the wine

cellars and hunt boar. The Patrimony Department is hustling to raise hard currency. Ceausescu was shot eight years ago on Xmas day.

Treading water — In 1996 working couples put in 247 hours more a year than in 1989.

The good ol' boy system — The feds have expressed concern that for the fourth year in a row, banks have eased standards on commercial loans, inviting a wave of defaults. One news report recalled that in the early '90s Donald Trump and other real estate sharks forced the banks to renegotiate billions in loans or face default.

....meanwhile — Trump Hotels & Casino Resorts said its chief financial officer has resigned, but they declined to say why. In the past two years the company's stock has dived 67 percent.

Coffin-nail update — The record of the tobacco companies is impressive: Concealing evidence that their product is an addictive carcinogen, adding nicotine to make it more addictive; targeting children, etc. Now documents confirm that Philip Morris and British American Tobacco (BAT) have been fixing prices and dividing markets in Argentina, Venezuela, and other Latin American countries.

Assault on Iraq increased capitalist instability

Seven years after their 1990-91 assault on Iraq that has led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of its people, the U.S. rulers still have not accomplished their goal of ousting Saddam Hussein and imposing a regime more to their liking. The excerpt below tells the truth about how that war exacerbated the economic and political contradictions in the United States and worldwide that drove Washington to use its military might in the first place. The excerpt is taken from the article, "The Opening Guns of World War III" by Jack Barnes in *New International* no. 7. It is copyright © 1991 by 408 Printing and Publishing Corp. and reprinted by permission.

BOOK OF THE WEEK

BY JACK BARNES

The assault against Iraq was the first of Washington's wars since World War II in which it sought to use its military might to deal blows, indirect but palpable, to U.S. imperialism's rivals, especially in Bonn, Tokyo, and Paris. The Gulf war exacerbated the conflicts and divisions between Washington and its imperialist competitors, as well as between these rival powers themselves. While we know these sharpening conflicts already existed (every working person has been deluged by protectionist propaganda from the U.S. government, bourgeois politicians, trade union bureaucrats, and their radical hangers-on), the war brought them to the surface with greater force and accelerated them to a degree not seen in world politics for some time.

Coming out of World War II, U.S. imperialism emerged the dominant power in the world imperialist system, both economically and militarily. For a substantial period following that war the rate of profit, and for even longer the tempo of growth of the mass of profits, was rising in all the imperialist countries. As a result, competition between the imperialist powers over markets for commodities and capital and over sources of raw materials was buffered.

Since the mid-1970s, however, the combination of the declining rate of profit, halt-

ing growth in the mass of profits, and relative slowdown in economic expansion has precipitated growing, sometimes sharp rivalry among the imperialist ruling classes. The years 1974-75 saw the first worldwide recession since 1937, as economic interdependence among the major capitalist powers grew alongside their competition and conflict. Although the sheer size and output of the U.S. capitalist economy remains enormous, and while it remains the largest market in the world, its position as an industrial and trading power has slipped substantially in recent decades in the face of growing challenges from German, Japanese, and other rivals. U.S. strategic military power remains unchallenged, however, and is the main lever the U.S. rulers have to compensate for their relative decline....

The U.S. war against Iraq once again emphasized the fact that for any ruling class aspiring to world power, a chasm cannot be allowed to persist between its economic power and its ability to use strategic military might abroad. A time comes when a ruling class recognizes that it has to put the checkbook away, put the gold away, and reach for the troops — or else it cannot maintain itself as a world power capable of defending its own class interests, either against workers in rebellion or competitors on the prod.

One certain result of the Gulf war will be efforts by the German and Japanese rulers to strengthen their armed forces and to push back political constraints — both at home and abroad — on the use of military power beyond their own borders. The German and Japanese rulers are determined they will never again be in a position of forking over billions of dollars to their chief rival to help it strengthen its strategic and competitive power. Their resolve is all the stronger after having paid for a war that strengthens Washington's domination over a vital commodity, especially one that both Germany and Japan must import. Bonn and Tokyo have just been compelled to pay through the teeth to make the cost of their access to that oil more vulnerable to manipulation by Washington and Wall Street.

Germany and Japan already have large and modern standing armies — much more so in reality than their image in the United States would lead us to believe. Germany has the largest army in Western Europe, with 480,000 soldiers in uniform; it spends some \$30 billion on its military annually. Japan has 247,000 soldiers in uniform and an annual military budget roughly the same as Bonn's. Tokyo and Bonn will now seek to transform these armies into forces capable of taking decisive action in the world.

The bourgeois press has played up the fact that the German and Japanese constitutions have provisions restricting the use of military forces abroad. But the history of the modern capitalist world proves that constitutions don't prevent ruling classes from doing what they need to do to advance their state interests: substantial agreement in the ruling class, well-prepared public opinion, a shift in the class relationship of forces, and — voilà! — a new "interpretation" of the constitution, or an amendment to it.

The German and Japanese rulers will start acting as military powers in their regions and in the semicolonial world. This fact alone means that the world has become more volatile and unstable. Political conflicts will sharpen between these two mighty



Since Washington's assault on Iraq in 1990-91, the U.S. rulers have been unable oust Saddam Hussein and install a more pliant regime. Instead, all tensions within the Mideast region and between the rival powers that formed Gulf War "coalition" have intensified. Above, protesters in Jordan rally in 1990 against U.S. war preparations.

imperialist powers and Washington, Paris, and other rivals — and between each other. Conflicts will be exacerbated between Japan, Korea, and the United States, as well as between North and South Korea. These conflicts can spark real political battles at home that the vanguard of the working-class movement can involve itself in by advancing a political course that defends working people independent of any wing of the capitalist rulers....

Ultimately, this is not simply a political or a military question; it's an economic

question. The rulers in Tokyo remember how the Roosevelt administration put an embargo on oil sales to Japan in 1940. (And the U.S. Navy remembers Tokyo's rejoinder: the December 7, 1941, bombing of Pearl Harbor.) There is a good reason why the Gulf region was one of the most contested prizes in both the first and second world wars. Oil is vital in the modern world, and the Gulf today supplies more than 20 percent of the world oil market. No capitalist ruling class can with impunity allow itself to become vulnerable to oil blackmail by its rivals.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

25 CENTS THE MILITANT

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

October 5, 1973

NEW YORK — As Secretary of State Henry Kissinger made his first speech to the United Nations, nearly 1,000 demonstrators marched to the UN to denounce the role of U.S. imperialism in Puerto Rico.

The demonstration was called by the United Committee for a Discussion of the Colonial Case of Puerto Rico in the UN which is spearheaded by the Puerto Rican Socialist Party. Among the events celebrated were the anniversary of the birth of Pedro Albizu Campos, the central leader of the Puerto Rican independence movement in the 1930s and 1940s, and El Grito de Lares, the 1868 rebellion for independence from Spain. Thousands rallied in Puerto Rico Sept. 23 to mark the anniversary of the uprising. One theme of the United Committee's campaign was opposition to the plan to build a superport in Puerto Rico.

Since the early 1950s, when Albizu Campos tried to get a hearing before the UN, that body had refused to hear the case. Only in the last year, due to the efforts of Cuban delegate Ricardo Alarcón and protests by Puerto Ricans, has the UN Decolonization Committee taken up Puerto Rico.

The cause of Puerto Rican independence also won endorsement at the recent Conference of Non-aligned Nations in Algeria.

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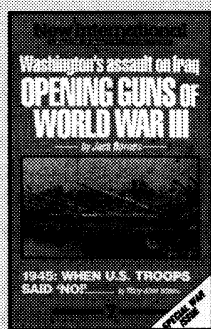
SAN FRANCISCO — The Pacific coast maritime strike, which began Sept. 2 remains solid at the end of the fourth week.

The Waterfront Employees and Pacific American Steamship Association are still adamantly refusing to negotiate with the elected representatives of the CIO Int'l Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union. These operators are standing by their original declaration that they will not meet with union officials who have refused to sign the Taft-Hartley affidavits. However, the union has been able to negotiate separate contracts with independent operators in the ports of Seattle and San Francisco which allows for the loading of Army cargoes at the pre-strike wages and conditions and grants the union demand of 15 cents per hour increase for working commercial cargoes. The strike is now nearly one month old and the men on the picket lines are in no mood to return to work after this loss in wages until they are guaranteed the 15 cents per hour raise they walked off the job to win.

Opening Guns of World War III Washington's Assault on Iraq

Jack Barnes

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



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Black lung caused by boss greed

There is no better example of the bosses' cold-blooded disregard for workers lives than what is taking place in the coal fields today. Two facts stand out. First, the coal bosses are working overtime to eliminate black lung benefits for miners, and they are doing this through one of their favorite methods: cheating. As recent articles in the Louisville *Courier-Journal* reported, for decades mine owners have falsified tests mandated by the government — tests that were only established because miners fought for them.

The second fact is that the U.S. government, through its so-called oversight agency — the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) — has sat back and watched this criminal activity happen. One MSHA bureaucrat described the agency's complicity in ignoring evidence of rampant dust-test fraud as "a blind spot." In reality, government officials were doing their job: looking out for the financial interests of the coal bosses.

Meanwhile, miners are dying from black lung, a disease that can be prevented by a combination of water sprays and proper air circulation. The simple fact — plain for all to see — is that the mine bosses put their profit ledgers above the health and safety of coal miners. For them it means nothing for a miner in his or her 30s or 40s to be disabled and unable to work again.

The cause of this preventable disease has been known for more than 150 years. One of the founders of the modern revolutionary working-class movement, Frederick Engels, described black lung — then referred to by miners as "black spittle" — in 1845. "In all the coal-mines which are properly ventilated this disease is unknown, while it frequently happens that miners who go from well to ill-ventilated mines are seized by it."

Engels made another important point worth quoting: "The profit-greed of mine owners which prevents the use of ventilators is therefore responsible for the fact that this working-men's disease exists at all."

Profit-greed. That's what this is all about. The assault by the mine owners is part of a broader offensive by the capitalist employers and their government against the health and safety, the unionization, and the very humanity of the working class. The basic workings of the production-for-profit system drive them to try to squeeze ever more out of the hides of the working class.

The assaults on miners — from mine layoffs to attacks on health, safety, and black lung benefits — are not going unnoticed in central Appalachia and Southern Illinois. At a recent Black lung hearing in Kentucky, UMW miners from Pittston came to show their solidarity with miners who testified, many of whom were from nonunion mines where conditions are far worse than union mines. Almost a decade ago, more than 1,900 Pittston miners waged an 11-month strike and held off their employers' union-busting drive.

In eastern Pennsylvania, 59 UMW miners have been on strike against Jeddo Coal Co. since March 26. This fight was reinforced September 11 when 350 UMW miners struck three Freeman United Coal mines in southern Illinois. Gutting medical benefits for retirees is the main issue in the strike. In taking on the miners, Freeman has resorted to rough methods, including bringing in goons to harass and intimidate strikers.

The Freeman miners are beginning to reach out to other fighters for support. On October 11 they will be holding a solidarity rally. The labor movement should go all out in getting the word out about this fight.

Yes to Native American whaling

The following statement was issued by the Socialist Workers candidates in Washington state: Nan Bailey for U.S. Senate; Jeff Powers for U.S. Congress, 7th C.D.; and Scott Breen for State Senate, 37th District.

The Socialist Workers Party candidates for public office in Washington unreservedly support the right of the Makah, guaranteed by treaty, to hunt gray whales. Those rights must be respected, protected, and defended. We support the vigorous reassertion of their will to preserve their tribal heritage and resist the pressures exerted by capitalist "civilization" to consummate the physical genocide of the past with cultural genocide in the present.

From Australia to Washington state, from British Columbia to South America, indigenous peoples and their rights are under attack. These racist campaigns accuse Native peoples of having "special rights," which they claim should be ended. Like Senator Slade Gorton's bill to destroy all Native American treaty rights in the United States, they are part of the "cultural war" led by rightist forces against the oppressed.

These right-wing attacks are aimed at reversing gains that indigenous people have won through decades of struggle and dividing and weakening the working class as a whole. They seek to foster resentment of the gains won by the oppressed, portraying them as a threat to the jobs and rights of other workers — or as a threat to nature and the environment.

Those, like the Sea Shepherd Society, who oppose this hunt in the name of defending whales, aid and abet this international right-wing attack on native rights and end

up making the Makah a scapegoat for the decimation of whale populations. Native peoples have always been a voice for, and a steward of, the land, forests, water, and those animals and plants that populate it.

The fact is the destruction of species and the environment are the result of the workings of capitalism in the world today, not the Native peoples. Many a species has been sacrificed upon the altar of profit and greed spawned by capitalism. The capitalist class, with its military forces, carried out the genocide, oppression, and exploitation of the Native peoples at the same time it raped the environment, decimated the animals and forests, and polluted the air and water.

The entire labor movement needs to join in support for the fight for the rights of Native American peoples, explaining that their demands for land, fishing and hunting rights, and self-government are just and should be supported.

At the same time, unions must champion the need for affirmative action for Native Americans and other oppressed nationalities, including the use of preferential treatment and quotas, to fight against the systematic racist employment practices of the bosses. This could be combined with campaigning for jobs for all through the fight for 30 hours work for 40 hours pay and a massive public works program. This could provide decent housing, schools, and health facilities that are needed, not only by the Makah and other native peoples, but all working people. Most importantly, such a campaign would greatly strengthen the unity and fighting capacity of the entire working class.

Defend the right to privacy

The public broadcast of Clinton's grand jury testimony, filled with lewd details of his sexual exploits in the Oval Office, should be condemned by all defenders of democratic rights. The release of thousands of reams of "evidence" has nothing to do with obtaining justice. The grand jury proceedings and the disclosure of each piece of lurid material tramples on privacy rights. It is detestable and can justifiably send a chill down the spine of all working people.

While grand jury investigations are supposedly secret and informal, the bourgeoisie has no qualms about abandoning this procedure "in the interests of justice." In fact, a grand jury's primary function is inquisitorial and accusatorial, serving as a fishing expedition or political witch-hunt by the wealthy rulers of working-class fighters or others challenging bourgeois prerogatives. In recent months, for example, supporters of Puerto Rican independence in Chicago have been called before a grand jury to testify about alleged terrorist activities — a move aimed at intimidating them and possibly framing them on trumped up charges.

Clinton's lechery and offensive behavior notwithstanding, working people have no interest in the massive release of pornographic material heaped upon them by Kenneth Starr and his men. The howls for Clinton's impeach-

ment, built around another instance of the pornographication of bourgeois politics, mainly benefit rightist figures like Patrick Buchanan who seek a broader hearing by denouncing the "immoral and squalid conduct" of the "social and media elite."

Working people need to remember that decrying the smut and degeneracy of the ruling elite became the stock-in-trade of Hitler's Nazis in the 1920s on their road to power.

The demagoguery by Buchanan and Co. is aimed at drawing working people into the pit of the politics of resentment and salacious envy. It serves to cover up the system of class rule that can survive only through obfuscating reality and denying democratic rights to the toilers.

What the working class needs is not exposés of bourgeois politicians and their personal weaknesses. Class-conscious workers need to be able to explain why the working class has no common interests with the class these bourgeois politicians speak for — from Buchanan to Gingrich to Clinton to Maxine Waters. We need to spotlight every abuse of power by them, to advance a class understanding of politics, and to help our class forge an independent political organization that can lead the fight for a social and political program to advance the interests of the oppressed and exploited.

U.S. bombing of Sudan, Afghanistan: 'abject act of gangsterism'

The following editorial appeared in the September issue of *Asé Pléré An Nou Lité* (Stop Crying, It's Time to Fight), a monthly newspaper published in Fort de France, Martinique, that advocates independence for the French colonies of Martinique, Guadeloupe, and Guyane in the Caribbean.

The bombings that killed and wounded hundreds of civilians near the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam sparked unanimous condemnation. Yes, the networks of fanatics who perpetrate such blind attacks that massacre innocent people can be called barbaric and criminal. Nothing, truly nothing can justify these horrors, which leave intact the imperialist powers they are supposedly targeting. Those powers seek to use such actions to reinforce their own propaganda and to justify brutal interventions under the cover of "fighting terrorism."

Precisely in this regard, the bombings carried out by the U.S. military against camps in Afghanistan and a pharmaceutical factory in Sudan must summon a response by all people. The United States continues to claim the unilateral right to trample on the sovereignty of nations. What other government in the world assumes the privilege of declaring single-handedly who is guilty, and then meting "punishment" against them in any country it chooses, without respecting borders and existing laws?

Those who are swayed by the notion that the United States acted within the framework of reasonable, legitimate defense should be reminded that the United States gave military and political support to the Taliban and fundamentalists who today turn against it. This, by the way, is a result of its indecent policy of backing Israeli aggression against the Arab peoples and U.S. anti-Muslim propaganda, which borders on racism.

We must remember that U.S. academies trained most dictators and fascist military cadres throughout the Americas, and that the CIA, linked to drug traffickers, armed and financed all kinds of "contras."

While one might argue over the strikes against training camps in the country of the Taliban, hitting a medicine factory in Sudan in reprisal against an attack on an embassy in Kenya constitutes an abject act of gangsterism.

The pretext? "Precursors for chemical weapons that could be produced there." Coming from a country with stocks of chemical and biological weapons and thousands of nuclear warheads on its territory, such a pretext would be cause for laughter if it were not such a serious matter.

The same week, an accident left 4 people dead and about 20 wounded, and endangered the security of 25,000 people at a factory that manufactures chemical and biological weapons in Tel Aviv, Israel. This terrorist state does not respect UN resolutions, occupying Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese territory in defiance of international law. But far from bombing that factory, the United States gives military and political support to Israel.

The Sudanese government has asked for the immediate sending of a UN investigative commission, which the United States opposes.

The bombing of a pharmaceutical plant in Sudan constitutes an act of piracy. The United States practices international terrorism. That country views itself as above all international laws, as shown by:

- its attempts to impose supranational laws (Helms-Burton, D'Amato);
- its repeated military interventions in violation of UN authority;
- its practice of starving populations and killing children by refusing access to medicine, through embargoes that aim to destroy countries opposing its imperial strategy.

The United States

- encourages anti-Castro training camps (Alpha 66) on its territory that are responsible for terrorist actions against Cuba;
- protects the terrorists responsible for sabotaging a commercial airplane, killing young Cuban and Barbadian athletes;
- massacred 4,000 civilians in Panama under the pretext of kidnapping President Noriega, who, incidentally, was formerly a CIA collaborator.

Would the United States allow a third country to bomb its national territory?

In any case, the wave of popular protests against the U.S. bombing of the pharmaceutical plant announces that sooner or later the people will put an end to the arrogant hegemonism of the Yankee imperialists.

Workers at US Airways reject contract, vote to strike

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

ON THE PICKET LINE

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

PITTSBURGH — Fleet service workers at US Airways have rejected a contract proposal by the company and voted to authorize a strike. The International Association of Machinists (IAM) is negotiating the first contract for more than 6,100 baggage handlers and caterers in 78 cities since they voted to join the union in 1994. More than 80 percent of the workers voted against the proposal, and three-quarters voted for the strike authorization.

The proposed five-year contract included a 4 percent signing bonus and a 9 percent pay increase for most members within six months. After that, pay raises would be based one percent higher than the average pay at the airline's biggest competitors — Delta, United, American, and Northwest.

Outsourcing, part-time work, and lack of a guaranteed pension headed the list of criticisms for most workers. "I'm happy with the money," one ramp worker said. "But what good is the money when you don't have a job?" He was referring to the lack of protection from outsourcing for catering workers and part-time workers in the smaller stations. Lou Knoll, a baggage handler for more than 10 years at US Airways, said, "When negotiations began, we said that the top two issues to be resolved were to put a cap on part-time work and to provide medical benefits to families of part-timers. This agreement allows for the company to have 35 percent of its workforce be part time system-wide, with no medical benefits for family members of part-timers."

John Matascik, who has 12 years with the company, explained his situation. "I'm still classified as a part timer with a 27.5-hour work week. In the spring and summer I

usually work 40-50 hours a week just to pay for the medical benefits for my family. This amounts to over \$3,000 a year, which the company makes no contribution toward."

Workers also criticized the lack of a guaranteed pension like the IAM-organized maintenance workers at US Airways have in their contract. "They're offering us a 401K [savings plan], but nothing else," said baggage handler George Muhrunich. "With the way the stock market is performing, we can't depend on that alone for retirement," he said.

The union has announced that new negotiations will begin with a mediator from the National Mediation Board during the week of October 5. Airline negotiations are regulated under the Railway Labor Act, which prohibits strikes by airline workers without the okay of a federal mediator, and then only after a 30-day "cooling off" period.

The contract's rejection comes as the IAM is beginning contract negotiations for 7,500 mechanics, cleaners, and stores workers. The Association of Flight Attendants is also negotiating a new contract for 8,000 members and the Communication Workers of America, which won a union representation election earlier this year, is seeking a contract for customer service and reservation agents.

Alabama mine boss forces contract reopener

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — Jim Walter Resources, a large coal operator in Alabama, idled its No. 3 mine on June 8. The mine in Adger, Alabama, was kept closed until July 19. Jim Walter operates three other mines in Alabama.

Around 400 miners, who are members of UMWA Local 1928 were out of work for 41 days. They were told by the bosses that the mine would be permanently closed, due to economic considerations and mine conditions. The seam of coal that was being mined was coming to a fault, a rock wall, which would have to be mined through to reach the rest of the seam on the other side.

The company then said to reopen the mine there would have to be "modifications" to the wage agreement between Local 1928 and the company. In December 1997, UMWA members at Jim Walter's

signed a contract with the Independent Bituminous Coal Operators alliance. This contract is nearly identical to the national Bituminous Coal agreement, the agreement between most of the major coal companies and the UMWA in the eastern United States.

This July, members of the local voted 235 to 155 to accept the new agreement, which effects only issues covered under the local contract. This includes changes in the safety committee in the mine, overtime pay, job classifications, "attendance control," and the use of memorial days. The new agreement sets a "target absentee rate" of 4 percent. The bosses will no longer accept a doctor's note as an excused absence. The new agreement states this will help reduce medical costs.

The agreement also establishes an "accident review committee," which will have both union and company representatives. This committee will make "recommendations" to any worker who has two accidents within a 12-month period. The worker "will be advised as to the consequences of future accidents," that is, disciplinary actions.

Under the old agreement, miners at Jim Walter No. 3 were guaranteed overtime pay for working more than eight hours a day and for work on Saturdays. The new agreement stipulates wages of time and a half only after a miner has worked 40 hours in the week.

The mine closing has been a topic of discussion among miners in the area. One miner at No. 3, who voted against the contract and asked not to be identified, said that workers felt their jobs were threatened if they didn't agree to the changes in the contract. He also pointed out that the fault has been there since the mine opened, and they have mined through faults before.

Two different miners who work at Jim Walter mines told *Militant* reporters that they think the company is doing this to make it easier to go after wages and working conditions at the other mines that Jim Walter Resources owns.

A.R. Cooke, who works in Jim Walter's No. 4 mine, commented, "When the company idled No. 3, we should have told them, if you want to shut down No. 3, we can shut down all the mines."

Puerto Rico phone strike leaders speak in U.S.

HARTFORD, Connecticut — "The greatest gain was getting the unions together," stated José Acosta, general secretary of the Independent



Militant/Nancy Cole

Telephone workers and supporters protest sell-off of state-owned phone company in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in July. Puerto Rican union leaders recently spoke to striking phone workers in Connecticut.

Union of Telephone Workers (UIET) of Puerto Rico to a meeting of 20 held at the Connecticut State Employees Association union hall on September 3. He was referring to the 41-day strike by members of UIET and the Independent Brotherhood of Telephone Workers (HIETEL) against the Puerto Rican Telephone Company.

The two unions struck earlier this year to oppose plans to sell the state-owned enterprise to a private consortium led by the U.S. company GTE. For two days during that strike, 500,000 workers from more than 50 unions in Puerto Rico struck in solidarity with the telephone workers.

Prior to Acosta's presentation, portions of a video of the telephone workers strike were shown that documented the police beating peaceful picketers.

Earlier that day Annie Cruz, president of HIETEL, who was on tour with Acosta, addressed a rally of more than 1,500 Communication Workers of America (CWA) members and their supporters in Milford, Connecticut.

The CWA is on strike against Southern New England Telecommunications Company (SNET). Cruz told the meeting at the union hall that HIETEL "was recognized in 1996 and since then we have gone on strike three times and have had two work stoppages."

Acosta noted that, "while we are here we want to talk about the strike at SNET."

In the discussion period after Acosta spoke, a member of the CWA on strike against SNET took the floor and explained they were "out because of the two-tier" wages.

Cruz and Acosta were accompanied in Connecticut by two CWA members from New York who recently had been on strike against

Bell Atlantic.

N.J. teachers more united after strike

MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP, New Jersey — Eight hundred teachers returned to work here September 11 after a week-long strike. Teachers had been working without a contract for two and a half years.

In July of this year, the local school board imposed a contract, which the settlement replaced with a negotiated agreement. The new contract includes some concessions by the teachers but far less than the board had been demanding. For example, teachers earning more than \$30,000 will pay up to \$250 a year for dental and health insurance annually, compared to the \$600 to \$1,900 demanded by the board.

To win their contract, strikers stood up to the school board's threats that they would be jailed or fired for violating a court order by walking out. Kathleen Brazas, a Middletown South High School English teacher, said one important gain from the fight was beating back a contract provision requiring teachers to work six classes without a break. "A teacher's job does not allow them to use the bathroom, get a cup of coffee, or access a phone when they need to," she said.

Kris Kurzynowski expressed the common sentiment of the dozen teachers *Militant* correspondents interviewed September 11 when she said, "Everyone came together to fight. It was a unifying experience."

Dave Welters, a member of the IAM, and Ed Fruit in Pittsburgh; Jeanne FitzMaurice and Marilyn Nolin in Birmingham, Alabama; Ted Leonard in Boston; and Jane Harris, a member of the United Transportation Union in Newark, New Jersey, contributed to this column.

LETTERS

Disagree on Cold War

Walt Snyder in the letters page of last week's *Militant*, states that a decade ago: "*Militant* stood alone in correctly saying that this collapse was a historic gain not for the imperialists but rather for the workers and farmers around the world. The recent events in Russia, the core of the old Soviet Union, show beyond a doubt that it is the capitalists who suffered the great defeat."

It is one thing to say that the U.S. and its allies failed to win a decisive victory in the cold war, it is another to say that they lost it.

The logic of his position (and that of the *Militant*) is that imperialism has already "lost the war." This is far from being the case. Militarily NATO is building alliances with Eastern European states, which were formerly part of the Soviet Alliance, the former liberation movements have accepted a capitalist path of development, and there

has been a huge regression in the productive forces of Russia.

To ignore these facts is to present a false and misleading picture to the working class. It also leads to ultra-leftist politics and a failure to analyze the most elementary political issues.

The Communist Party's loss of power in 1991 was not accompanied by a leftward movement within the working class and thus, the layers within the bureaucracy which supported free-market capitalism were emboldened. The resulting destruction of the Russian economy was certainly no victory for the working class. Those workers who mistakenly supported Yeltsin because he opposed a Stalinist coup, are now paying the price for his capture of Presidential power.

The collapse of stock market values worldwide places question of socialism on the agenda once more. But achieving this goal will require

a contemporary transitional political programme and a clear orientation towards winning those workers still dominated by reformist leaders and ideas.

John Laurence
by email

'Antiterrorist' hysteria

I thought readers of the *Militant* might be interested in a column that Gus Hall, National Chair of the Communist Party USA, recently wrote for that party's newspaper, *The People's Weekly World*, in its September 12 issue. The full-page opinion piece was headlined "World terrorism — new threat to humanity." Calling terrorism "a new evil in the world," Hall abstracts the question of individual terror from the world we live in today and from the class struggle, where clearly Washington is the number one terrorist government on the planet.

And he caves in totally to the big-business hysteria around terrorism that is used to justify U.S. war moves abroad and attacks on democratic rights in this country.

The two photographs that accompany the article speak volumes. One is of a two-year-old girl who was hurt from the April bombing of the Federal Building in Oklahoma City, and the other the damaged U.S. embassy in Kenya that was recently bombed. No photos of the pharmaceutical plant in the Sudan destroyed by U.S. missiles, or of Iraqi victims of deadly U.S. aggression.

He does come out against U.S. government terrorism, though in twelve paragraphs on the subject the only mention of the U.S. war against the Cuban revolution is to denounce "the 10-year [?] effort to assassinate Fidel Castro." Nowhere is the U.S. aggression against Iraq stated, but Hall talks about the "spraying of the deadly Agent Orange on our own

soldiers in the Persian Gulf War."

The Communist Party's support for the U.S. warmakers now goes under the rubric of fighting against terrorism, as their support for the U.S. imperialists during World War II was declared to be fighting fascism. "Too many in our movement are knee-jerk anti-Americans," Hall complains. "Everything American, everything the United States government does, is automatically wrong or suspect.... Of course, there are things our government does that are right, that we support."

Bill Kalman,
Miami, Florida

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.

Australia: Aborigines win land back

BY DOUG COOPER

MUTAWINTJI, Australia — In the culmination of a 15-year fight, more than 500 Aborigines and their supporters from around eastern Australia gathered at newly renamed Mutawintji National Park September 5 for a day of celebration to mark the return of its 76,000 hectares (188,000 acres) to the traditional owners.

"This is my mother's mother's people's land. Us Wiimpatja [Aboriginal people] don't exploit our land. You stole our land," said Walpra Thompson, as he welcomed the crowd in the Paakantji language. "This place is just part of what we have. Getting Mutawintji back is a start. It's good that we are moving towards reconciliation. You invaded, now you recognize us.... Soon we will have our sovereignty." Thompson is a young man from Wilcannia, one of the key places from which the fight was organized, two hours' drive to the east.

The park is situated northeast of Broken Hill in outback New South Wales, a 14 hours' drive from Sydney. It is the first of five parks in the state to be returned to Aboriginal people by the state government. There is no time frame for the return of the other four.

Communal title recognized

Recognition of communal "inalienable freehold" title to the land was conditional on the park being leased to the government for a minimum of 30 years. Access will remain open to all. Similar arrangements have been won elsewhere in Australia in the last decade or so.

A majority of the new Board of Management of the park will be Aboriginal owners. The board will also include a representative of the National Parks and Wildlife Service as well as a nearby station owner, or grazier, and others. An affirmative action training and hiring program will ensure that the majority of jobs now go to Aboriginal people, who have also won hunting, fishing, and food-gathering rights on this land.

Participants came from as far away as Arnhem Land and Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park in the Northern Territory, Tasmania, Cape York in far north Queensland, Victoria, and Sydney, as well as outback towns in a few hundred kilometer radius. State Labor Premier Robert Carr, Deputy Premier and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Andrew Refshauge, and others spoke.

Mark Sutton, of the Mutawintji Local Aboriginal Land Council and the chair of the event, explained, "In [September] 1983 Paakantji community members from Broken Hill, Wilcannia, and Menindee came out

and blockaded the main entrance to the park" to protest the lack of involvement of Aboriginal people in how it was run.

The park is famous for its rock art, especially hand stencils, engravings, and other examples of Aboriginal culture dating back thousands of years. The area was a meeting place for different tribes from the far broader region for generations. Sutton noted that the fight for the return of Mutawintji "has allowed us to rekindle our culture."

Maureen O'Donnell, one of the traditional owners, told the crowd, "We put our point of views across. They weren't outrageous, they were simply the truth for Aboriginal people fighting for their land. We have to walk together. We have to have a say in our land." Pointing to children playing in the red soil in front of the stage, she said, "I think we can be all proud today, as I am, that my grandchildren are playing in their own sand—which was always theirs, but we just had to make the white fella see it."

O'Donnell, who was born in Wilcannia and now lives in Broken Hill, told the *Militant*, "It's a milestone. We finally got government people to listen to us and understand where we're coming from about our ties with the land and the spiritual meaning of Mutawintji to us.... Although we had to lease it back, still, we'll have a majority say at meetings."

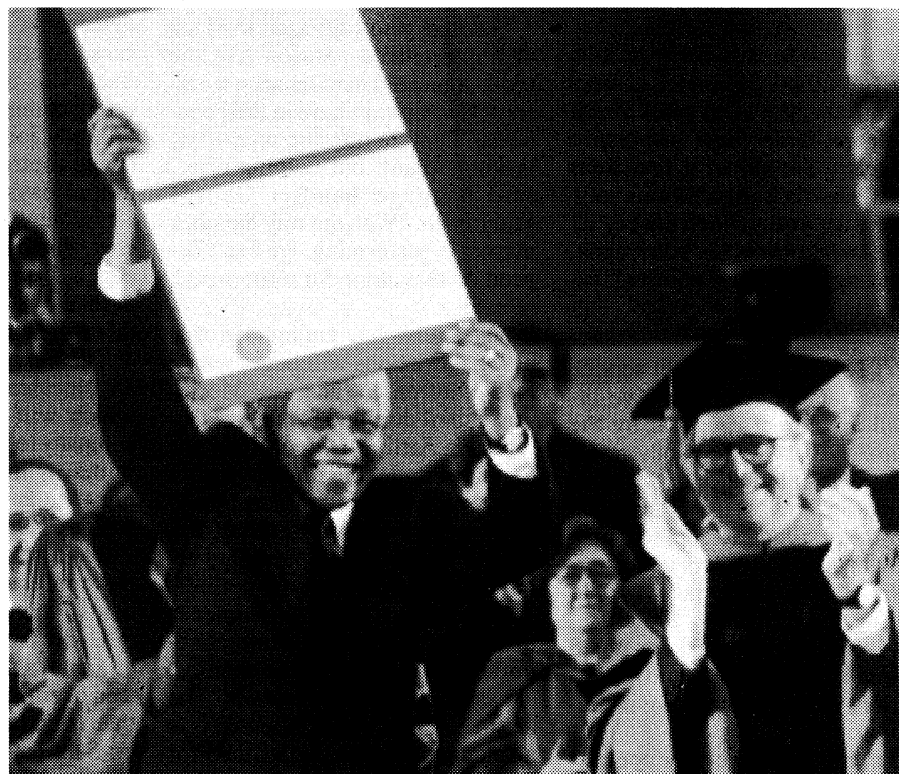
Aborigines in the Mutawintji area were dispossessed of their land in the 1860s as the sheep- and cattle-grazing pastoral industry expanded westward. As in other parts of Australia, many of their descendants maintained some ties to the land through employment on outback pastoral properties into the 1960s, when mechanization pushed most off the land.

1983 blockade

The 1983 blockade was part of the new wave of land rights struggles around the country that had risen again beginning in the 1960s. Wiimpatja were especially angry that sacred sites at Mutawintji had become prime tourist attractions with no regard for their significance to a living people.

"The blockade lasted about a week. There were hundreds of people, Aboriginal people, from all over New South Wales: Dubbo, Wilcannia, Broken Hill, Menindee and in between," O'Donnell said. "People all came together to help the Mutawintji people to do the blockade and fight for those things for Aboriginal people. There were also solicitors [lawyers] and doctors and others from the white community who came out here and gave us their support and stood by us in the blockade."

Mandela speaks in Boston



Militant/Margrethe Siem

Nelson Mandela, leader of the struggle to overthrow apartheid in South Africa and now the president of that country, received an honorary doctorate from Harvard University in Boston September 18. "The greatest single challenge facing our globalized world is to combat and eradicate its disparities. While in all parts of the world progress is being made in entrenching democratic forms of governance, we constantly need to remind ourselves that the freedoms which democracy brings will remain empty shells if they are not accompanied by real and tangible improvement in the material lives of the millions of ordinary citizens of those countries," Mandela told the 25,000 students and others attending the ceremony to great applause. "Where men and women and children go burdened with hunger, suffering from preventable diseases, languishing in ignorance and illiteracy, or finding themselves bereft of decent shelter, talk of democracy and freedom that does not recognize these material aspects can erode confidence exactly in those values we seek to promote," he continued.

By the mid to late 1980s Mutawintji Land Council members were conducting tours at the park.

William Bates, the chairman of the Mutawintji Local Aboriginal Land Council, noted especially how the last 18 months of direct lease negotiations had gone. "We fought for our rights.... We've had our problems with National Parks, we've had our blues [arguments], we've had our disagreements, but I'm proud to stand here and say it's all worked out well. We're not going to

be selfish, we're going to share this land."

In his speech before handing title over to Bates, Premier Carr said, "In giving back this national park, we return to the traditional owners not only their lands but their dignity, their pride, their history. We give them back some of what they have lost in the last 210 years."

Messages of support were received, including from Jacqui Katona on behalf of Mirrar elder Yvonne Margarula. The Mirrar are reaching out in the fight against a second uranium mine under construction on their land in Kakadu National Park in the Northern Territory and have won national and international support. "Congratulations to all your mob for achieving a significant land rights victory. The struggle for country continues," Katona wrote. The term "country" is used to refer to land specific to a particular Aboriginal people. Three Aboriginal representatives of the Board of Management of Uluru-Kata Tjuta made the 1,100-mile trip and gave greetings.

Ron Poulsen, a textile worker and the Communist League candidate for Senate in the October 3 federal election, attended. He told the *Militant*, "This victory is thanks to the courage and determination of Aboriginal people themselves. Without those things it would never have happened. They refused to be 'extinct.' The story of this fight deserves to be told widely. It will inspire Aboriginal and other working people that gains are won only when we resist and fight."

Edward Bugmy, originally from Wilcannia, who works as a tree lopper in Broken Hill, said his mother had been involved in the fight before she died. He told the *Militant*, "I reckon it's good.... Most of the people that started the fight off, there's not too many of them left alive. It's up to the young ones to carry on."

7,400 Toronto-area teachers on strike, locked out over gov't education cuts

BY KATY LEROUGETEL

TORONTO — In the Greater Toronto Area, 7,400 teachers were either locked out or on strike as of mid-September. Across Ontario, an estimated 180,000 students have been affected by the confrontation between teachers and school boards seeking to implement provincial government-imposed guidelines.

On September 14, 1,760 public secondary school teachers in the York region near Toronto staged a one-day strike, the first in a series of rotating work stoppages planned to protest government cutbacks.

One thousand high school teachers locked out by the Catholic school board in Toronto staged a protest rally in front of the board meeting September 10.

Their colleagues on strike in the Dufferin-Peel region expanded picketing at the Catholic Education Centre offices near Toronto to stretch between 4:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. on September 21 and 22, in an effort to reach out to other working people and parents going by.

Funds continue to be cut from the education budget and hundreds of teachers are being laid off. In this context, the government stipulation that class sizes be reduced to an average ratio of one high school teacher per 22 students amounts to demanding an extra 75 minutes of classroom time a day from teachers.

"Enough is enough. We just can't take it anymore," high school teacher Lloyd-Graham told the *Toronto Star* as he picketed during the York region one-day strike.

Teachers explain the increased class time will force them to eliminate extracurricular activities such as sports and student clubs, as well as reduce individual time with students and preparation time for teaching.

Irene, who teaches at a Catholic high school in Toronto, told the *Militant* at the September 10th rally that the government "expects us to teach from 8:30 to 4:30 and then to coach basketball, music. And when are we supposed to go to the bathroom? In my school there are three minutes between periods, and if I'm teaching three in a row, I

barely have time to get from one class to another."

As he left the rally, Andrew O'Hanley said, "A lot of teachers are looking at the hospitals and [saying] this is us two years from now." Cutbacks have created notoriously inadequate conditions in Canadian health-care facilities.

Some parents have organized highly publicized actions against the teachers. According to the daily *Toronto Star*, 150 parents and students rallied outside school board offices north of Toronto on September 19. Julie Santori told the *Star*, "I don't want my children being governed by a union. This is a democratic country."

The provincial government is insisting school boards strictly implement the government guidelines in the region-by-region, board-by-board negotiations, which continue. The government also denies any plans to legislate teachers back to work soon.

Katy LeRougetel is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 5338.

Doug Cooper is a member of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union in Sydney.