

## U.S. backs South Africa; Black protests continue

BY FRED FELDMAN

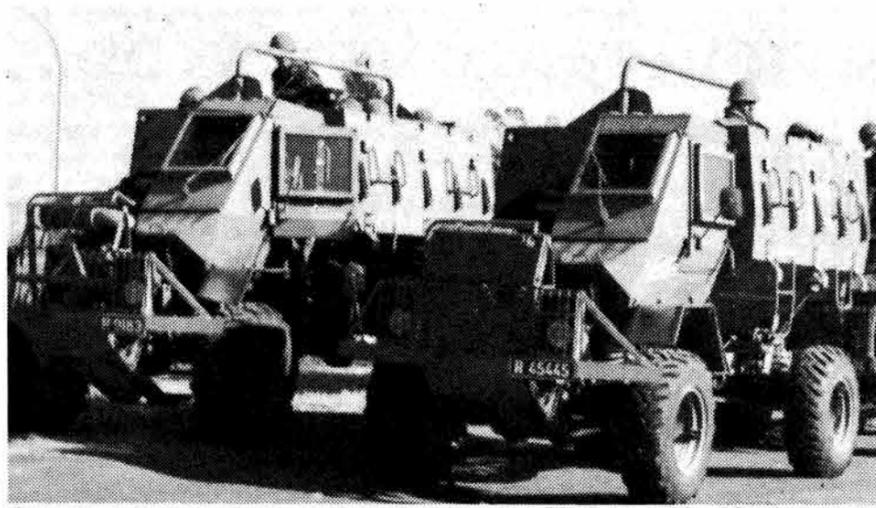
The U.S. government continues to support the racist regime in South Africa as it steps up murders, jailings, and other forms of repression against heroic Black youths, trade unionists, and others who are fighting to put an end to apartheid.

In the United Nations Security Council July 26, representatives of the U.S. and British governments vetoed a move to require member nations to impose economic sanctions against the South African regime. They abstained on a milder proposal, put forward by the French government, urging member nations to voluntarily impose sanctions.

The government cynically claims to oppose economic sanctions on the grounds that this will allegedly cost Black workers their jobs. But the Black South African workers and their unions are in the forefront of the forces demanding sanctions against apartheid.

Washington has not lifted a finger to defend the Black workers for decades, while the South African government has murdered hundreds of Black working people and deprived the rest of all human rights. But the U.S. government wants working people here and around the world to believe that it draws the line at the danger that some Black workers might lose their slave-wage jobs if sanctions are imposed!

Washington is simply trying to protect the billions in profits made by U.S. corporations and banks in South Africa, and to preserve the apartheid regime's role as an imperialist bastion in Africa.



Government armored personnel carriers occupy a Black township. Massive repression has not ended South African Blacks' resistance to apartheid.

As of July 31, South African cops admitted having arrested more than 1,200 and killed at least 20 people since the state of emergency was imposed on 36 urban districts July 20.

But Black rights groups like the Detainees' Parents Support Committee insist that the figures are higher.

Nor has the escalating repression ended the current wave of protests, although news about protest actions has been reduced to a trickle under the state of emergency.

A strike of Black bakery workers continued in Durban. University students there

protested outside the U.S. consulate and later burned an effigy of Prime Minister Botha and a U.S. flag.

Boycotts of white-owned businesses in Port Elizabeth and other cities in eastern Cape Province were still in effect.

In Soweto, hundreds marched in a funeral procession for Black youths killed during earlier protests.

Some 80 percent of Black students boycotted classes in Cape Province. About 1,000 participated in an anti-apartheid march.

South African cops alleged that protests

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## Stakes in Wheeling-Pittsburgh strike

The owners of Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Corp., spearheading a concerted anti-union drive by the giant steel corporations, are attempting to strike a savage blow against the United Steelworkers of America. Working hand in glove with anti-labor bankruptcy courts, they have torn up their contract with the USWA — due to run until July 1986 — and are attempting to impose massive pay cuts and other takebacks.

The company's actions have forced 8,600 workers at nine Wheeling-Pittsburgh

The strike began July 21 when the company unilaterally imposed a \$5.85 cut in wages and benefits, as well as other takebacks, on the workers. A wage cut of between \$3 and \$4 brought the hourly wage down to between \$7 and \$8 an hour — and reduced average take-home pay to between \$5 and \$6 an hour.

The company also cut vacations by two weeks, eliminated a holiday, gutted seniority provisions, slashed incentive pay, and eliminated the grievance procedure.

The bosses stated that they reserved the right to further reduce wages and benefits, and make work-rule changes, as they saw fit.

The owners of Wheeling-Pittsburgh acted after a federal bankruptcy court rubber stamped their claim that the company was threatened with bankruptcy unless the contract was thrown out. The judge gave the green light to the changes proposed by Wheeling-Pittsburgh.

When the company presented the court-approved package to the union, it was rejected. The company then imposed the contract unilaterally and the strike — which union officials regard as a company lockout — began.

Wheeling-Pittsburgh workers have already yielded three rounds of concessions to the company. As one union committeeman from the Allenport, Pennsylvania plant said: "Each year we hear this from management: 'We need this. We're broke, but if you give us this we'll create jobs.' None of that was true. In 1979, 1,700 of us worked at Allenport. Last weekend, there were only 370 of us."

USWA officials are voicing strong support for the Wheeling-Pittsburgh workers. USWA international president Lynn Williams walked pre-dawn picket lines as the strike began.

In a message to a rally of hundreds of Wheeling-Pittsburgh workers in Charleroi, Pennsylvania, July 21, he promised that "anything this strike needs to win, the union will provide."

In a front-page article supporting the strike, the national *AFL-CIO News* reported that, "Some 300 USWA local offi-

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## Latin America meeting on debt opens in Havana, Cuba

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

HAVANA, Cuba, July 30 — "This is the broadest and most pluralistic gathering ever held in our hemisphere," stated Cuban President Fidel Castro here tonight as he opened the Meeting on the Foreign Debt of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Some 1,200 prominent figures from 30 Latin American and Caribbean countries have gathered here to participate in the broad forum. No prior documents were drawn up as the basis of common agreement, Castro explained in his opening remarks. There will be no attempt to reach common conclusions, he said. The conference will be a dialogue. All sessions will be plenary discussions in which any participant can take the floor and all speakers will be limited to 12 minutes each.

The topic of discussion is one central question: how to respond to the growing economic and social catastrophe throughout the region today.

"The foreign debt problem has unanimously been recognized as the most impor-

## Fighting spirit at NOW conference

BY PAT GROGAN

NEW ORLEANS — A fighting spirit prevailed among the 2,300 participants — many of them young women — in the national conference of the National Organization for Women (NOW) held here July 19-21.

This was reflected, most importantly, in their decision to launch a national action campaign in defense of women's right to safe, legal abortion. Delegates voted to organize mass abortion rights demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and the West Coast in 1986. The conference also outlined a series of educational and protest activities in the months leading up to the demonstrations.

The conference opened just four days after the Justice Department announced that it was seeking to overturn the Jan. 22, 1973, Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade* that legalized abortion. As one young woman told the *Militant*, "The attacks on abortion have been coming down. The clinics have been bombed. But now Reagan is going straight for the jugular. It makes you realize that you could really lose legal abortion someday, if we don't fight for it. If you didn't think we really had to organize before this happened, you sure do now."

It was this determination by women to stand up and fight for abortion rights that marked the NOW conference from beginning to end.

Incumbent NOW President Judy Goldsmith opened the conference by announcing a "Campaign to Save Women's Lives: One Million Strong."

"We will not go back. We will fight, organize, and mobilize women and the pro-choice majority against this all-out assault on our rights to make our own reproductive decisions," said Goldsmith.

This was met with chants of "We will never go back! We will never go back!"

This campaign includes a massive petition drive to collect 1 million signatures in

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## EDITORIAL

mills in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia to go out on strike. The strike is the first by the USWA against a major steel corporation — Wheeling-Pittsburgh is the seventh largest steel producer — since 1959.

The stakes are high for the USWA and the union movement as a whole. "Every steelmaker is going to want what Wheeling-Pittsburgh gets," John Kirkwood, a former LTV Steel Co. executive, told the *Wall Street Journal*.

Five giant steel corporations, with contracts also due to expire in July 1986, are already pressing the USWA to negotiate more concessions.

If the Wheeling-Pittsburgh workers are driven back, it will accelerate the takeback, union-busting drive of all the bosses. It will strengthen the ability of the rulers to strike new blows against farmers, Blacks, women, and other oppressed and exploited people.

Actively organizing solidarity with the Wheeling USWA strikers at Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel is a top priority.

tant problem for the economy of Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole, and the economies of each one of our countries," Castro noted in the letter of invitation sent to heads of state. "The sum of more than \$360 billion owed to private banks, multilateral credit agencies, and various developed countries' governments by the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean weighs heavily on the hemisphere and has become unbearable, given the current international economic situation," he said.

Among those who have assembled here there is a broad range of opinions about the appropriate action to take. But there are few disagreements about the reality and seriousness of the situation. While some have expressed the view that it is technically feasible for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to eventually pay the tribute being exacted by the imperialist banks and their governments, others, like the Cuban leadership, are insisting that even the interest on the mount-

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BY JOANNE MURPHY

DETROIT — Finding plant gates where we can reach hundreds of workers is no problem in Detroit. The giant auto plants owned by General Motors, Chrysler, and Ford that are organized by the United Auto Workers (UAW) employ tens of thousands of workers.

We can't sell the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* at all of them. So we have picked five plants, where we have sent regular teams over the last two years — two Chrysler and two GM plants and the giant Ford Rouge complex.

These sales have not been spectacular, and often only one or two workers will stop to buy a paper.

One reason is that many political groups sell at these gates. Some mornings at the Rouge plant, for example, there is a long line of people selling different political papers.

This means workers have to distinguish the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* from the other papers. We haven't found any gimmicks. Being there, being polite, and being persistent are the most important. Over time we found that the most persistent and regular teams start to pick up a few more sales, especially as workers find out that *Militant* sales-teams members are workers, too. They become more interested in what we have to say.

Once we got *Militant* supporters working in some of these plants and they saw how political material distributed at the plant gates gets around inside, it made us more determined to get the *Militant* and other socialist literature into workers' hands.

During the spring *Militant* sub drive we had good results selling subscriptions to coworkers at the General Dynamics tank plant, at the new Chrysler plant in Sterling Heights, and at a couple of GM plants in Detroit. We want to complement these discussions inside the plant with plant-gate sales that reach a broader range of people.

Although the auto union predominates, steel, chemical, and

garment are all organized here, as well as the rail and trucking industries. We have recently talked to many striking Teamster pickets at auto and truck plants around the area.

We have made some initial attempts to get sales teams out to one of the big steel mills and are trying to have at least occasional sales at shops organized by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, and the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. These are much smaller plants, but they help us to find out more about what's happening to all kinds of working people in the Detroit area.



Detroit Ford River Rouge plant

## Urban League conference targets apartheid regime

BY DAVID PAPARELLO

WASHINGTON, D.C. — "We are here as a national movement. Our national movement calls for an end to apartheid and an end to constructive engagement." (Constructive engagement is the U.S. government's policy of close economic and political ties to the South African regime. The Reagan administration claims this policy has led to reforms in the apartheid system.)

John Jacob, president of the National Urban League, made this remark on July 23 as 1,500 people picketed the South African embassy. The Urban League had adjourned its 75th annual conference held here July 21-24 so the 1,500 conference

participants could join the daily weekday protests outside that country's embassy.

In his keynote address opening the conference, Jacob stated, "Time is running out for South Africa. Opposition to its racist system is shared by all Americans. . . . The policy of constructive engagement has failed. It should be replaced by a policy of active assistance to the forces resisting apartheid."

The conference's evening session, which followed the picket line, was devoted to the U.S. government's policy toward the South African regime and the struggle of the Black majority to win their freedom. The speakers were Randall

Robinson, executive director of TransAfrica, the organization that initiated the daily protests at the apartheid embassy, and Dr. Allan Boesak, a Black South African minister and president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

Much of the conference dealt with the Reagan administration's stepped-up attacks on Black rights, particularly affirmative-action programs.

A plenary session took up a debate over the need for quotas and affirmative action. This was also discussed at a forum panel titled "Blacks and the labor movement." In response to a question about affirmative action and seniority, panelist William Pol-

lard, director of the AFL-CIO Department of Civil Rights, responded that "nobody is demanding quotas."

Jacob answered this assertion in his keynote speech after reaffirming the Urban League's support for affirmative action. "Race-conscious remedies," he explained, "are needed to correct the evils of a race-conscious past . . . and no one can suppose we can correct that history without aggressive affirmative-action programs, both public and private."

Jacob also spoke to the condition of Blacks in the United States today. He explained that a Black child is twice as likely as a white child to be born premature, to die in the first year, to live in substandard housing, to have jobless parents, and to be unemployed. Blacks are three to four times as likely as whites, he continued, to be poor, to suffer child abuse, to be supervised by a welfare agency, to be in jail, and to become murder victims.

## Leader of Kanak struggle plans tour of U.S.

BY GEORGE KAPLAN

Susanna Ounei, a leader of the struggle of the Kanak people of the South Pacific island nation of New Caledonia, will soon begin a two-month speaking tour of the United States. Beginning at the end of August, she will visit 20 cities over the next two months, getting out the truth about the social upheaval that is occurring in New Caledonia.

The Kanak people are fighting to end French rule and colonial domination, which began when the French government seized New Caledonia in 1853. In an effort to put an end to massive demonstrations and other struggles by the Kanak people and their supporters, the French government has sent thousands of troops to occupy New Caledonia. The Kanaks also face hostility from thousands of heavily armed anti-independence French settlers.

The French occupiers have killed leaders of the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS), which has led the struggle and established a provisional government for New Caledonia last December.

Ounei is touring as an official representative of the FLNKS, of which she is a founder and central leader. She is also a

founder of the Kanak and Exploited Women's Group in Struggle. She is the author of the pamphlet: *For Kanak Independence: The Fight Against French Rule in New Caledonia*.

Ounei recently attended the United Nations' Forum '85, an international women's conference in Nairobi, Kenya, where she was able to bring information about the Kanak liberation struggle to thousands of women there. She was a featured speaker at rallies in defense of the Nicaraguan revolution and in support of the struggle in the Philippines. Ounei also appeared on a series of panels concerning women in the South Pacific.

An important aspect of the tour will be raising funds to help establish a Kanak radio station and newspaper in New Caledonia. All media on the island is now controlled by the French government and white settlers. This appeal has already gained the support of international groups like the New Zealand Federation of Labor which endorsed the project and called on its affiliate unions to donate funds.

Five prominent individuals, who are among the initial sponsors of the tour, signed a letter calling for broad support and

participation. The signers were Tony Russo of the U.S.-Vietnam Friendship Society; Elombe Brath of the Patrice Lumumba Coalition; Wabun Inini (Vernon Bellecourt) of the American Indian Movement; Adeyeme Bendele, a supporter of the Grenadian revolution who has been an active opponent of the U.S. occupation of Grenada; and Jackie Floyd, a leader of the Young Socialist Alliance.

Ounei's tour will take her to New York; Newark; Atlanta; Miami; Philadelphia; Washington, D.C.; Houston; San Jose; San Francisco; Oakland; Los Angeles; Chicago; Minneapolis-St. Paul; Detroit; St. Louis; New Orleans; Birmingham, Alabama; Salt Lake City; Greensboro, North Carolina; and Price, Utah.

In a letter announcing the tour, the sponsors stated: "We hope to have Ms. Ounei meet with a wide range of prominent individuals and speak before trade union, civil rights, farm, American Indian, women's rights, and other organizations."

For further information about the tour by Susanna Ounei, contact tour coordinator Jerry Freiwirth, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014. Telephone (212) 242-5530.

### For Kanak Independence

The fight against French Rule in New Caledonia

By Susanna Ounei  
leader of the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS)

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# GM gets cutbacks for 'factory of future'

BY HARRIS FREEMAN

DETROIT — General Motors' newly organized Saturn Corporation has reached a "Memorandum of Agreement" with the United Auto Workers' (UAW) top officialdom that opens the door to a more ruthless exploitation of production workers at GM's "auto plant of the future" and eventually at all its plants.

The goal of Saturn is to raise profits by slashing union wages, benefits, work rules, and job classifications to squeeze more labor from fewer workers. GM management acknowledges that its Saturn plant — when fully implemented — could reduce its total work force by 175,000 employees by 1990.

This new far-reaching pact will be imposed on yet-to-be-hired Saturn workers without the ranks of the UAW having discussed, seen, or voted on the agreement.

GM Saturn hopes to begin producing cars by 1987, reaching full production by 1989, at a new plant site in Spring Hill, Tennessee. The plant will employ 6,000 workers and management personnel and produce up to 2,000 cars a day on two assembly lines.

The Saturn plant is being called the factory of the future because it will use new technology, computerization, and automation. But in fact, a large part of the technology to be used at Saturn is already in operation at other GM, Ford, and Chrysler auto plants, and in other industries as well.

## No national agreement

The Saturn Corp. is a wholly owned subsidiary of General Motors, but UAW members who will work at Saturn will not be covered by longstanding UAW national agreements.

Instead the new agreement would allow Saturn to ignore benefit and wage packages, seniority provisions, work rules, and health and safety stipulations that the union has been able to win from GM in previous national agreements.

GM's use of Saturn to undermine the entire GM-UAW national agreement was pointed to by Mike Bennett, president of UAW Local 326, representing 2,000 workers at a GM body plant in Flint, Michigan. Bennett told the *Detroit Free Press*, a big business daily, "At a stroke of a pen, simply, GM could assign one plant from its present position into the Saturn Corp. and thereby circumvent that entire national agreement."

This is not idle speculation. Plans are under way to have Saturn Corp. ultimately produce a substantial volume of GM's small cars. At the outset, Saturn will produce only 400,000 small cars per year. This year, however, GM sold two million small cars in the U.S. and a GM source was quoted in the *Free Press* as saying, "We're looking at Saturn, one, two, three, four, and so on."

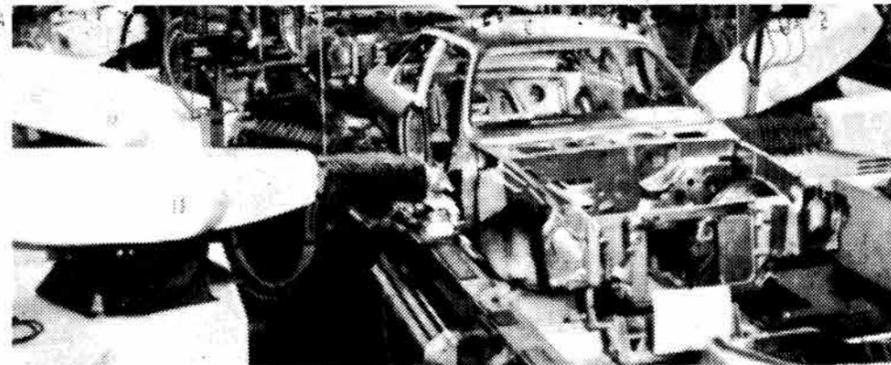
The Saturn agreement on wages and other compensations is entitled "Reward

System." Workers will no longer be paid weekly for the number of hours worked. Instead Saturn workers' "base compensation will be established on an annual salary basis, and they will be paid semi-monthly."

For the first year of car production base compensation will be at the rate of \$13.45 per hour for operating technicians (production workers) and \$15.49 for skilled trades (this includes COLA — cost-of-living-allowances). This is respectively six percent and eight percent below what workers will be receiving on an hourly basis at other GM plants in 1987 when Saturn will open.

After the first year of production, workers will receive a cut in pay. Base compensation will be reduced to 80 percent of the wages of workers at GM, Ford, Chrysler, Mazda, and New United Motors Manufacturing Inc. (NUMMI). Saturn workers will only reach comparable pay if they meet company production standards. A two-tier wage scale will be put in effect. Workers may start as much as 20 percent below the base pay and take up to two years to reach top wage rates.

The memorandum of agreement contains no mention of overtime pay rates, or



GM robots (above) eliminate many assembly jobs and simplify others. At projected Saturn plant UAW leaders have agreed to combine and speed up remaining production jobs at a lower pay scale.

whether Saturn workers will be compensated in any way at all for work beyond forty hours. The section "Working Hours" states only, "To fulfill the objectives of the Saturn philosophy and mission, it will be necessary to have flexible hours of work."

Profit sharing and incentive pay are combined with a new "job design" to create a glorified piece-rate system that promotes speed-up, job combinations, and intensified competition between groups of workers.

The agreement lays out the changed organization of workers on the shop floor to conform with management plans to replace portions of the assembly line with fixed stations where workers would install and assemble larger modular components. Six

to fifteen workers would comprise a "work unit." These units are then grouped according to function and location with a common boss called a "Work Unit Advisor."

Each Work Unit will have the responsibility to produce quality products on schedule and jobs will be designed to make work units more competitive. If workers in a work unit meet the production rate and quality standards set by the bosses and, in addition, Saturn is making a profit, the "reward system" "will provide compensation equivalent to that earned by comparable employees in GM."

If performance goals, quality standards or profits are not met, Saturn workers will suffer. In other words, if the company says any given work unit is not doing well,

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# Ballot rights under attack in N.Y.

BY ANA LÓPEZ

NEW YORK — In a totally undemocratic move, the New York City Board of Elections ruled July 30 that State Assemblyman Herman (Denny) Farrell, who is Black, could not appear on the ballot for the Democratic Party mayoral primary in September. Although the Board of Elections admits that Farrell had collected more than the required number of signatures to obtain ballot status, they claim that one cover sheet for some petitions was incorrectly filled out, invalidating over 2,000 signatures.

Farrell announced he would appeal the decision on the grounds that the board's guidelines were unconstitutional and violated federal voting-rights laws by disenfranchising his supporters. Farrell added that he would continue his campaign.

This decision came as a result of a challenge to Farrell's petitions by City Council President Carol Bellamy, who is also seeking the Democratic Party's nomination in the mayor's race. Democratic Mayor Edward Koch said he opposed Bellamy's challenge of Farrell's right to be on the ballot.

In addition to the undemocratic exclusion of Farrell, the ballot rights of Israel Ruiz and Joseph Erazo — both seeking the Democratic Party's nomination for city council president — have been challenged by Andrew Stein, another candidate for the Democratic Party's nomination in the elections for city council president.

No decision on these challenges has yet been announced.

The decision to rule Farrell from the ballot and the other challenges are being used by the ruling class here to legitimize all restrictions on ballot rights.

The Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor, Andrea González, condemned the decision to exclude Farrell from the ballot, as well as the other challenges. "Any restrictions to having a fair and open ballot is an attack on the democratic rights of working people. Assemblyman Farrell is right in calling this ruling an attempt to disenfranchise his supporters."

González pointed out that during the 1984 presidential campaign, the Democratic administration of New York State successfully blocked the Socialist Workers Party's candidates from the ballot. "This was the first time since 1948 that the party's candidates in a presidential election did not appear on the ballot here," she said.

"At a time when the city's working people are seeking ways to resist and beat

back the deepening attacks on their rights and living standards by the city's wealthy rulers," she continued, "the broadest possible discussion of political alternatives is called for. Any attempt to cut across this discussion must be denounced."

"Our campaign calls on all supporters of democratic rights to join us in demanding an open ballot."

Even as the Board of Elections was reaching its undemocratic decision, supporters of the Socialist Workers Party campaign were finishing a successful 15-day drive to collect signatures to put the party's candidates on the November ballot for the municipal elections. As we go to press, campaign supporters have collected over 10,000 signatures on petitions for the party's slate, which in addition to González includes Rashaad Ali for New York City Council president and Pat Hayes for Brooklyn borough president.

# UTU rail chairmen vote down takeback contract with carriers

BY LOUISE GOODMAN

OAKLAND, Calif. — United Transportation Union (UTU) chairmen from across the country have voted not to ratify a new contract between the National rail carriers and the union that contained major concessions for all rail workers. Many chairmen had conducted straw polls about the contract with rank-and-file members before casting their votes. Voting was completed on July 29.

The rejection came after a year of negotiations during which rail workers have been working under the old contract.

UTU President Fred Hardin had sent out a letter to union members urging adoption of the contract on July 20. The same day another letter was sent out by UTU Vice-president H.G. Kenyon urging that the contract be rejected. Kenyon wrote, "If the agreement is ratified we will be giving up many of the agreements and conditions that our predecessors have fought hard over the past 70 to 80 years to accomplish."

Kenyon said he had heard a lot of alarming comments about what it would mean to reject the contract. He said, "I've heard it said if we have to strike, Congress will pass legislation forcing us to arbitration, and to that I say we have a better chance of beating the railroads and preserving most of our hard earned agreement. In any event, it would be better to stand up and fight for what we have."

In urging a yes vote, Hardin said a rejection would mean more negotiations, and if the carriers did not agree, "We will schedule a strike date and either just before or after the strike is in progress, President Reagan will, under existing law, appoint an emergency presidential board."

Notices of the contract rejection have been posted on UTU bulletin boards across the country.

Louise Goodman works for the Southern Pacific in Northern California and is a member of UTU Local 100.

*What they're saying about*

## Nicaragua:

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# Fighting spirit at NOW gathering

## Launches abortion rights fight, hits U.S. war in Central America

Continued from front page

support of a woman's right to safe, legal abortion. These will then be presented in Washington, D.C. on Jan. 22, 1986. NOW also called for abortion rights rallies at the Supreme Court and federal courthouses in cities across the country on October 6, the day before the Supreme Court opens its fall session. The campaign will include public forums, speaking tours, and vigils and other actions to protect abortion clinics from right-wing violence.

### Abortion rights resolution

The "Reproductive Rights Strategies" resolution, that was passed by the big majority of the 1,650 conference delegates, included the call for NOW to "organize a massive march and rally in Washington, D.C., and on the West Coast in 1986 of our supporters to show — dramatically — the overwhelming majority support for legal abortion and birth control."

This proposal was debated and discussed at workshops and in the plenary sessions. Some participants asked, "Won't this draw energies and resources away from local organizing?" Others raised questions like, "Should we put all our efforts into one big media event?" and "Can we really succeed in mobilizing thousands of supporters of abortion rights?"

But the big majority felt that a massive show of support for abortion rights in the streets — that could reach out and mobilize women and their allies — was not only possible, but a powerful way to respond to the attacks.

The resolution also calls on NOW to launch a campus campaign as part of organizing young women, "the millions of women of childbearing age who have no memory of back alley abortion, but have a major stake in the battle for women's lives."

Another section of the resolution calls on NOW to aid state NOW organizations that are fighting to defeat antiabortion referenda.

At the final plenary session of the conference, a motion was made to substitute the words "anti-choice" for the words "anti-abortion" in the resolution. A delegate from New Jersey spoke against this, pointing out that it was not an abstract question of a woman's right to choose. It was, after all, a question of a woman's right to choose *abortion*. The amendment was voted down, an indication that the women at the conference were in no mood to be defensive or apologetic about their right to abortion.

### U.S.-backed war in Central America

Delegates voted to put NOW on record in opposition to the escalating U.S. military intervention in Central America. This antiwar resolution originated in the New York City NOW chapter. Only a handful of delegates voted against it.

The resolution hits the CIA-backed *contra* (counterrevolutionary) attacks against Nicaragua, which are trying "to forcibly overturn the 1979 revolution, which with the active participation of Nicaraguan women has achieved important feminist goals. . . ."

It also hit the "increasing U.S.-funded and directed conventional and chemical warfare and government repression" in El Salvador. (Full text of resolution is reprinted elsewhere on this page.)

Many NOW members have visited Nicaragua and are aware of the advances women are making through their revolution, despite the impact of decades of imperialist domination and the U.S.-organized war. Some NOW chapters and many individual NOW members participated in the April 20 antiwar actions that

were organized by the April Actions Coalition for Peace, Jobs and Justice.

For the first time at a national NOW gathering, an official workshop was organized on Central America. It was called, "U.S. Policy in Central America: A Feminist Perspective." The NOW leadership had invited Miriam Hooker, Second Secretary of the Nicaraguan Embassy in Washington, D.C., to speak at the workshop. She was unable to attend, however.

NOW had also invited Gladis Tovar, a representative of the Women's Association of El Salvador (AMES) who currently lives in Nicaragua, to address the workshop. The U.S. embassy in Nicaragua, however, refused to grant her a visa and would give no explanation for this blatant attempt to prevent women's rights fighters in this country from developing closer links with their Salvadoran sisters. Julieta López, an AMES representative, spoke in Tovar's place.

Antiwar activist and supporter of the Nicaraguan revolution, Dr. Maureen Fiedler, addressed both the plenary and the workshop. Fiedler is one of 24 nuns who have been threatened with dismissal from their religious orders by the Vatican for their support for women's right to choose abortion free from church and state restrictions.

Fiedler, who was warmly received by conference participants because of her defiance of the reactionary Vatican authorities, took the opportunity to explain her support to Nicaragua, which she has visited several times. "I've learned a lot from the poor people of Nicaragua," declared Fiedler.

A NOW delegate from Iowa urged others at the workshop to go to Nicaragua. "So many of us have been there and know the truth," she said.

The workshop discussed a wide range of educational, solidarity, and antiwar activities NOW members could participate in.

U.S. intervention in Central America was viewed by most participants at the conference as a question of deep concern to feminists in the United States. Many of the keynote speakers addressed themselves to the need to oppose the U.S.-backed war in Central America.

In the course of the forum held to hear the views of the two candidates who were running for NOW president — Eleanor Smeal and Judy Goldsmith — one delegate asked both candidates what they thought NOW's position on U.S. military intervention in Central America should be.

Both affirmed their individual opposition to U.S. intervention and to the U.S. nuclear arsenal and indicated that they thought NOW as an organization should do likewise.

### Civil Rights Restoration Act

The conference also voted to carry out an emergency campaign to pass the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1985. This act is aimed at putting the teeth back in Title IX of the Civil Rights Act — the only law providing protection from sex discrimination in education. Title IX was gutted by the Supreme Court decision in *Grove City College v. Bell* last year.

A theme of the conference was the need to work in coalitions with others, especially Black rights groups, which NOW has been working with on the Civil Rights Restoration Act, as well as in activity to defend affirmative action programs, and protests against the racist regime in South Africa.

Dr. Blandina Cárdenas Ramírez, one of three members of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission removed from office by the Reagan administration in 1983 and later reinstated, told the conference: "When attacks happen, it is not an attack on the woman's agenda, it is not an attack on the Black agenda, it is not an attack on the Chicano agenda, it is not an attack on the gay agenda — it is an attack on us all."

Eleanor Holmes Norton, the first woman to chair the federal government's Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, struck home when she told participants, "The women's liberation movement must speak and fight for all women." She said

that while some women have been advancing into the professions, "most women, most Black and Hispanic women, are being pushed down. You have to stop this. You can't have two classes: an elite that is progressing, and the majority of women that is stymied."

### Black, Chicana, Puerto Rican women

No gains were registered at this conference, however, on the long-standing challenge to NOW of involving large numbers of women of the oppressed nationalities in its ranks and leadership. As at previous NOW conferences, the number of Blacks, Latinas, and other victims of racist discrimination was extremely small.

A resolution from the New York City chapter of NOW to organize a "strong, committed and activist Minority Women's Issues Conference" was voted down and no central NOW leader came forward to back the proposal.

At the Minority Women's Special Caucus, a discussion took place on how NOW can and should reach out to women of the oppressed nationalities.

An Asian-American NOW member pointed out that NOW had to take *concrete* steps to support the demands and concerns of the most oppressed.

She said that NOW should make a special effort to involve Black, Chicana, Puerto Rican, Asian, and Native American women in the abortion rights campaign. This includes making demands for the repeal of the Hyde Amendment, which cut off Medicaid funding for abortion, and for an end to the racist practice of forced sterilization.

It was also suggested that NOW chapters could participate in the October 11 anti-apartheid actions which have been called by students and others. Despite the involvement of NOW at many levels of support of anti-apartheid actions, however, no resolution on South Africa was presented to the plenary.

### Population control

The minority women's caucus also discussed a section of the "Reproductive Rights Strategies" resolution that calls for "linking the antiabortion movement . . . to death and starvation in the Third World, especially in Africa." In other words, NOW should blame the impoverishment of these countries on overpopulation. A few conference participants wore buttons endorsing this view that read, "Export Food, Technology, and Birth Control."

Many conference participants, however, sharply rejected this racist and reactionary view. They argued that NOW's fight for abortion rights could only be based on the right of women to control their own bodies. "We put the population control arguments behind us," one woman said. "We should leave them there. They are used in a racist way."

In the minority women's caucus, a woman from South Dakota pointed out that a large number of Native American women have been sterilized against their will by the government. Others pointed to the forced sterilization of as many as 35 percent of Puerto Rican women of childbearing age by the mid-1970s. Black women have been special targets of forced sterilization.

Many women at the conference understood that if NOW were to become associated with racist population control schemes, it would not only prevent the involvement of women of the oppressed nationalities, it would deal a mortal blow to the fight for reproductive freedom.

The Economic Justice workshop passed a resolution to support relocation efforts for the copper strikers in Arizona who struck Phelps Dodge in 1983-84. It noted the leadership role women played in that strike of predominantly Chicano and Native American workers.

The workshop also passed a resolution calling on NOW to reestablish a labor committee to help involve unions in supporting women's rights campaigns.

There was a lot of debate and discussion at the conference on the question of pornography. While there was general agree-

## NOW's antiwar resolution

The following resolution, titled, "End U.S. Intervention in Central America," was passed overwhelmingly by delegates to the July 19-21 national conference of the National Organization for Women (NOW).

WHEREAS, the feminist movement and the National Organization for Women are opposed to war; and

WHEREAS, the Reagan administration's increasing military intervention and threatened escalation in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and throughout Central America are developing into a regional war similar to Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, NOW opposed the war in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, the increasing U.S.-funded and directed conventional and chemical warfare and government repression have claimed 55,000 lives in El Salvador, with civilian women and children being the primary victims of massive bombings, rape, massacre, and assassinations; and

WHEREAS, the Reagan administration is threatening an illegal invasion of Nicaragua, where attacks by CIA-backed "contras" have already caused over 8,000 casualties in their effort to forcibly overturn the 1979 revolution, which with the active participation of Nicaraguan women has achieved important feminist goals, including equal rights under the law, low-cost child care facilities, child support legislation, public health care, literacy, and human rights; and

WHEREAS, our tax dollars are financing this war — already costing over \$80 million to the "contras," and a million dollars every day to the Salvadoran government — through Reagan's drastic cuts in food stamps, child care, job training, housing subsidies, and other vital domestic programs which have forced millions of American women and children into poverty;

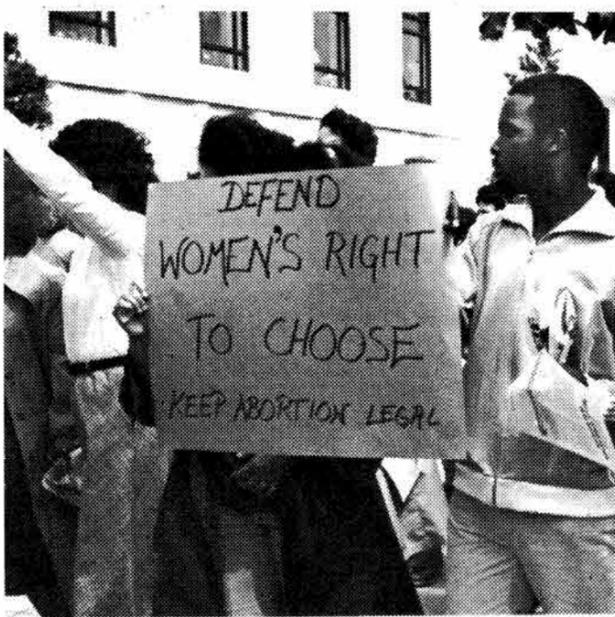
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED That the National Organization for Women go on record as opposing United States intervention in Central America.



Nicaraguan women soldiers at demonstration in solidarity with El Salvador. NOW supports gains that Nicaraguan revolution has brought to women.



Militant/Katy Larkins



Militant/Margaret Jayko

Conference mapped out action campaign to defend abortion rights, culminating in mass protests in Washington, West Coast in spring, 1986.

ment that pornography is sexist and reactionary, there was not much clarity on what its impact is on society or what to do about it.

The focus of the discussion was censorship ordinances that have been proposed in several states as a way to stop pornography.

These laws would define pornography as a violation of women's civil rights, that is, as an action on the basis of which someone feeling herself to be injured could sue the author or distributor.

Literature from the Feminist Anti Censorship Taskforce (FACT) was distributed at the conference. It explained that although the ordinances were drafted by women's rights activists, they "represent a dangerous and misguided strategy for the women's movement and feminists who oppose it are beginning to make their voices heard."

FACT points out that the ordinances would give the courts authority to forbid the future dissemination of literature that the state, not feminists, define as pornographic.

Writer Andrea Dworkin, one of the chief architects of these ordinances, led a well-orchestrated intervention into the conference to try to get NOW to unequivocally back these laws. Her view is that pornography is central to the oppression of women, and the cause of violence against us.

While many NOW members would not agree with her, they were confused or unable to counter the false notion that pornog-

raphy is central to women's oppression and a cause of our second-class status. Dworkin's emotional campaign at the conference was designed to prevent rational dialogue in order to sweep delegates into support for her undemocratic and dangerous ordinances. But the delegates refused to go along.

The conference discussion reflected the fact that in the year since the July 1984 NOW conference, where this was also discussed, many women's rights fighters have begun to recognize the threat that these laws pose to civil liberties and therefore to women's rights.

NOW members pointed out that some foes of women's rights define such feminist books as *Our Bodies, Ourselves* as pornography. Many right-wingers support the ordinances because they can use them to try to ban literature on abortion and contraception, to try to shut down gay and lesbian bookstores, and to silence other socially progressive forces.

Another NOW member said that as a movement fighting for social change, NOW should jealously guard democratic rights.

Delegates passed a "compromise" resolution that called on NOW chapters to participate in actions and education against pornography. It left as an open question whether or not NOW chapters should back the ordinances. This reflected the fact that NOW couldn't come to a unified position

at this time and felt that more discussion was needed.

The conference passed a resolution supporting the rights of lesbians and gays to act as foster parents. Throughout the conference, NOW members pointed out that anti-gay prejudices are often used by right-wingers to try to undermine support for issues like the Equal Rights Amendment and democratic rights, and that any bending to these reactionary ideas weakens the fight for women's rights.

#### Elections for NOW president

New national officers were elected at this conference.

Eleanor Smeal was elected president of NOW, defeating Judy Goldsmith by a vote of 839 to 703. Smeal had previously been NOW president from 1977 to 1982.

The election contest was presented as decisive for determining NOW's future political course. But this was not true. In fact, at various points throughout the conference and campaign that preceded it, candidates affirmed that there was very little difference between them. At the 1982 NOW convention, in fact, Smeal had backed Goldsmith, her former vice-president, for the new presidency.

Over the past several years, they had jointly led the organization more and more deeply into capitalist electoral politics and away from action campaigns in defense of women's rights. During the 1984 presidential elections, NOW was immobilized as a

feminist organization and became a virtual campaign committee for Democratic candidates Walter Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro.

At the same time, government attacks on women's rights were escalating. Many NOW members reacted against this silence in the face of attack. Pressure built up for NOW to take independent action in defense of women's rights. This is what was reflected at this conference and was the most important thing that happened here.

During the NOW elections, Smeal campaigned for the national abortion rights demonstrations, while Goldsmith opposed them, emphasizing instead the other aspects of the abortion action program that was mapped out. Yet some NOW members who supported the call for a national abortion rights demonstration voted for Goldsmith because of the relatively greater ability of the membership to exercise their democratic rights within NOW when Goldsmith was president than when Smeal was.

#### Big opportunities

The campaign to defend safe, legal abortion laid out at this conference presents a big opportunity for NOW members and all supporters of women's rights to reach out to and mobilize women and our allies in the unions, Black organizations, among family farmers, and other forces fighting for social justice around the fundamental question of women's oppression.

And the decision by the NOW conference to oppose U.S. intervention in Central America provides an opening to involve NOW and other women's rights fighters in antiwar and anti-apartheid actions that will take place this fall and next spring.

## St. Louis: 300 celebrate Nicaraguan revolution anniversary

BY MARTY ARKIN

ST. LOUIS — Some 300 people participated in a celebration of the sixth anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution. The event was held here July 20.

Celebrations of this kind have been organized by the St. Louis Latin American Solidarity Committee for the last five years as a way for activists to express their solidarity with the Sandinista revolution and their opposition to the U.S. government's aggression in the region. This year's event was the most successful so far.

The program included a Nicaraguan-style dinner, a showing of the movie *No pasarán!*, speakers, and a reggae dance.

The featured speakers on the program included Raul Salinas of the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee; Rev. Ted Braun, a local supporter of the Cuban revolution; and Manuel, a refugee from El Salvador.

Salinas is in St. Louis to organize actions to demand a retrial for Leonard Peltier. Peltier, a leader of the American Indian Movement, was framed up on murder charges by the FBI in 1975. His case has recently gained international attention. Salinas, like other Native American activists, has visited Nicaragua. He is active in exposing the U.S. government's lies about the "abuse" of the Miskito Indians by the Sandinistas. Salinas told the audience that the Peltier Defense Committee stood in support of the people of Central America.

Other speakers included Linda Robertson from the St. Louis United Auto Workers Women's Caucus, which is currently helping to organize a labor tour of Nicaragua; Peggy Moore of Pledge of Resistance; and Marea Himelgrin from the April Mobilization Coalition, which built the April 20 antiwar action in Washington, D.C. They encouraged those present to participate in the fall actions that have been called against U.S. intervention in Central America and against U.S. support for apartheid in South Africa.

A Militant Bookstore table did a brisk business during the celebration, selling over \$150 worth of socialist literature.

## Feminists show interest in 'Militant' booth

BY LYNDA JOYCE

NEW ORLEANS — Participants in the recent National Organization for Women (NOW) conference here were eager to read literature about women's oppression and the struggle for liberation. Many of these women came by the *Militant* booth in the exhibit hall to buy pamphlets, books, and copies of the *Militant*. And they wanted to discuss and debate politics — everything from the Nicaraguan revolution and the current upheaval in South Africa to the debates on women's rights taking place at the conference.

Participants purchased \$630 worth of literature and 120 copies of the *Militant*, along with 20 subscriptions from the

socialist literature table.

The best-selling items were two new pamphlets by Pathfinder Press: *Abortion Is a Woman's Right!* and *Is Biology Woman's Destiny?* Fifty-two copies of each were sold as part of a special offer to conference participants of both pamphlets for \$1.

Women also purchased several copies of *Woman's Evolution*, a major work on the origins of women's oppression by Evelyn Reed. Reed was a longtime Socialist Workers Party leader and feminist activist who died in 1979.

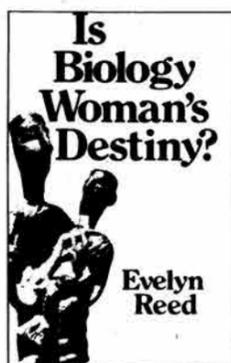
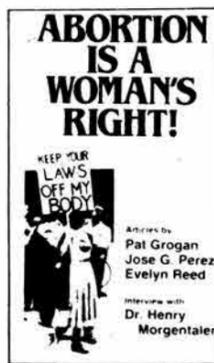
Interest in the Nicaraguan revolution and the advances being made by women there was reflected in the popularity of *Women and the Nicaraguan Revolution*, a speech

by Sandinista leader Tomás Borge in pamphlet form, and *Sandinista's Daughters*, a book of interviews with Nicaraguan women.

Also popular were *Women and Apartheid* and books by Black author and feminist Alice Walker.

A slideshow on the Nicaraguan revolution was sponsored by the *Militant*. It was so popular that it was shown three times in one evening. Among those who watched it were women from the United Food and Commercial Workers Local 400 who are spearheading a boycott of Marval Poultry products because of the inhuman working conditions that company forces on its employees.

## 2 new women's liberation pamphlets



Abortion Is a Woman's Right! 95 cents

Is Biology Woman's Destiny? 75 cents

Also available:

Women and the Nicaraguan Revolution 75 cents

Women and the Cuban Revolution \$4.95

Woman's Evolution \$9.95

Sexism and Science \$5.95

Order from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Please include 75 cents for postage and handling.

# N.Y. concert celebrates Cuban revolution

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

NEW YORK — One hundred fifty people turned out for a benefit concert here July 27 in celebration of the 32nd anniversary of the Cuban revolution and the publication of the new book *Fidel Castro Speeches 1984-85: War and Crisis in the Americas* by Pathfinder Press.

The concert, held at Socialist Books, New York's newest political bookstore, also celebrated the first anniversary of the opening of the store.

Featured performer of the evening was Roy Brown, Puerto Rican composer and singer who is a pioneer of the Latin American "New Song" (Nueva Canción) movement. Brown is a long-time supporter of Puerto Rican independence and the Cuban revolution.

In opening his performance, Brown thanked Socialist Books for inviting him to play, explaining that artists like himself do not have many opportunities to perform. He told the audience that Socialist Books was a good place to come to learn the truth about revolutionary struggles.

The audience, which included many of Brown's fans from the *barrios* of New York and New Jersey, cheered Brown's songs about revolutionary struggles from Managua to Beirut to San Juan.

Introducing the evening was Andrea González, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party. González told the audience that the Cuban revolution gave a vision of a new future to the workers and farmers of the Americas, including in the United States.

González, who had just returned from the International Women's Conference in

Nairobi, Kenya, hailed Cuba's role in leading the discussion on the debt crisis in Latin America and the fight against the U.S.-backed war in Central America.

Members of the audience included several United Nations diplomatic members, a number of regular customers of the bookstore, and at least 30 or 35 people for whom the concert was their first visit to the store.

Several copies of *Fidel Castro Speeches 1984-85* were sold during the concert. All proceeds from the event will go to help maintain and expand Socialist Books, which in just one year has become one of New York's largest outlets for political books, pamphlets, and periodicals. The store is located at 79 Leonard St., in Manhattan, (five blocks south of Canal, between Broadway and Church), and is open from noon to 7 p.m. six days a week.



Militant/Holbrook Mahn

Singer Roy Brown in concert celebrating Cuban revolution at Socialist Books.

## Houston rally marks Nicaragua victory

BY NANCY COLE

HOUSTON — More than 100 people celebrated the sixth anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution here July 20 at an event sponsored by the Texas Mobilization for Jobs, Peace, and Justice and by Casa El Salvador.

The event raised more than \$400 for a water-purification project that U.S. Witness for Peace is helping fund in the Nicaraguan city of Jalapa.

Many celebrants were Salvadoran, reflecting their admiration and respect for Nicaragua's struggle. As a representative

of Casa El Salvador explained, "They don't sell out — they don't surrender!"

Representatives from 10 area groups brought greetings of solidarity to the celebration. These included the Nuclear Safety League, the National Black Independent Political Party, Witness for Peace, and the Free South Africa Movement.

"Nicaragua is not a terrorist nation. These are lies and they should be called what they are," declared Celia Teresa, a women's rights activist here who was raised on the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua. Teresa is a former officeholder in the Na-

tional Organization for Women and the Women's Political Caucus and is currently on the boards of both the Ms. Foundation for Women and the Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans.

"What Reagan tells us is intended to divide us — it is to divide Nicaraguans," she said. "My family is divided. Vietnam was divided. That is the way to terrorize a nation."

"I am a feminist and I am very proud of my sisters in Nicaragua," Teresa concluded, urging a more united effort in this country to oppose intervention in Central America.

Bebe Lising from the Safe Harbor Alliance for a Nuclear Free Gulf Coast thanked all those who had participated in protests against the proposed basing of the nuclear-armed battleship *Wisconsin* in Galveston. The Safe Harbor Alliance views the Navy's decision not to base the battleship in Galveston as a victory, although there is still consideration of housing two frigates and three minesweepers there. The alliance has consistently pointed to what they believe is behind the push for a base on the Gulf Coast: that it is within firing range of Central America.

Lee Loe delivered her remarks in Spanish for the Houston Freeze. She commended the Nicaraguans for "the development of a unique society that they are building with their hands and their hearts." She expressed hope that their seventh year would leave them with peace.

The Texas Mobilization for Jobs, Peace, and Justice is now discussing proposals for fall actions. At its last meeting, the mobilization voted to endorse and actively support a plan for a regional demonstration against apartheid followed by workshops on October 11-12 initiated here by the Free South Africa Movement.

## Contras massacre unarmed Nicaraguans

BY JOSÉ G. PÉREZ

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — U.S.-backed terrorists, called *contras*, carried out a savage massacre against unarmed Nicaraguan civilians. On July 27, CIA-trained mercenaries ambushed two trucks carrying mothers and other relatives who were going to visit draftees at the Mulukukú Army Base in eastern Matagalpa Province.

At least nine people were murdered — six mothers and a sister of the draftees, a young man, and one person whose remains were burned beyond recognition. Fourteen

were wounded. Four more mothers are missing and feared dead.

Survivors say that the terrorists deliberately set out to kill unarmed women.

The trucks carrying the relatives were preceded on the same road by a large army convoy, including tanks and members of the Ramón Raudales Irregular Warfare Battalion.

The *contras* hid as the soldiers passed, opening up only when the civilians came into their gun sights.

"They attacked us with everything," recalled Nubia Vargas. "They had us surrounded on both sides and the truck couldn't advance or retreat. It was impossible, we couldn't leave."

"The women desperately shouted, 'cowards, don't kill us, we are mothers,'" explained Rufina Detanco Ramos. "But they kept shooting, and shouting at us that we should surrender."

Most of the women escaped by hiding in the underbrush, but the mercenaries captured a few. "Before killing the women they said, 'give us your bags,' and they grabbed some of the women who had

handed over their bags, raped them, and then cut off their legs," said Vargas.

Most of the murdered women came from the city of León. A funeral mass was held there July 29.

Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega attended the service, as did other government leaders. The mass was followed by a protest meeting in León's Militia Plaza.

"The heart of León, the heart of Nicaragua has been wounded to its very depth, but we are also outraged," Ortega said.

Denouncing President Reagan and "the honorable U.S. representatives who voted for the \$27 million" to finance the *contra* bands, Ortega said, "your children, your grandchildren will condemn you for the crimes you are committing against the people of Nicaragua."

He warned that no matter what military action the U.S. rulers take against Nicaragua, "they should have no illusions: we will never betray the memory of the heroes and martyrs who knew how to struggle, who knew how to live and die with our slogan of 'Free Homeland or Death!'"

## Sandinista soldiers defend riverboat from contra attack

BY JOSÉ G. PÉREZ

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Nicaraguan soldiers prevented CIA-trained terrorists from seizing a civilian passenger boat bound for the port of Bluefields on July 23. One Sandinista soldier was killed defending the boat and 17 people were wounded, but the terrorists vessel and its passengers.

Passenger boats run daily down the Escondido River from the town of El Rama, in Nicaragua's interior, to Bluefields on the Atlantic Coast. The trip by river is the main way working people travel between the two parts of the country. Thus it has long been a target for the counterrevolutionaries backed by Washington.

Earlier this month, another river boat bound for Bluefields was ambushed and destroyed by the *contras*. The mercenaries killed four Sandinista soldiers, kidnapped at least eight people, and robbed all those on board.

This time, Sandinista soldiers on the boat were able to rapidly return the fire while the crew kept the vessel going, escaping the mercenary gang. Civilians on board aided the soldiers by reloading their rifle magazines so they could continue shooting non-stop.

The nine-year-old daughter of Rosa Rodríguez de Viviea was one of those wounded in the ambush. "This criminal act is unforgivable," said Rodríguez. "They are murderers."

Seventy-year-old Amalia García, a lifelong resident of Bluefields, was wounded by shrapnel. "I only know we escaped from hell thanks to the *compas*," she said afterward. *Compas* is a term of affection for the Sandinista soldiers.

## 'IP' on trade union meeting in Havana

The Cuban government, as well as many organizations in Cuba, are on an international campaign to win support for canceling the mammoth foreign debt in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In the past couple of months several conferences have been held in Havana to discuss the foreign debt. Among them was the Latin American and Caribbean Trade Union Conference on the Foreign Debt held in mid-July. It was hosted by the Cuban Workers Confederation (CTC). More than 300 delegates met and adopted the Havana Act calling for a cancellation, moratorium, or postponement of the foreign debt.

The meeting also called for a Day of Action Against the Foreign Debt on October 23.

The August 19 issue of *Intercontinental Press* carries an article about the conference and the full text of the Havana Act adopted there. It quotes extensively from the welcoming address by Roberto Veiga, general secretary of the CTC.

Veiga stated, "The conference was the broadest and most representative trade union meeting in the history of this hemisphere."

This issue of *IP* also carries an article on the background to recent protests in Panama against the effects of the foreign debt crisis in that country.

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**UPHEAVAL ON AFRICAN CONTINENT**



Militant photos by José G. Pérez

'Victory of July' sugar mill built with Cuban aid will increase production 50 percent. Fidel Castro (right) announced Cuba's cancellation of Nicaragua's debt for mill.



## Sugar mill: 'belongs to Nicaraguan people'

BY MADALINE LANE

TIPITAPA-MALACATOYA, Nicaragua — Participants in the May Day tour of Nicaragua sponsored by Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Tours Inc. had the opportunity to visit the *Victoria de Julio* (Victory of July) sugar processing complex.

The mill began its operation just a few weeks before we arrived. The construction of this mill represents a tremendous advance for the workers and farmers of Nicaragua.

The mill is the largest industrial enterprise in the country, and one of the five largest sugar mills in Latin America. It will mean a 50 percent increase in current Nicaraguan sugar production when it is operating at full capacity several years from now.

The giant sugar complex was constructed in collaboration with revolutionary Cuba, which donated \$73.8 million in supplies for the project. Several hundred Cuban workers and technicians helped build the complex and get it running.

Cuba donated its financial and construction efforts in an important show of international solidarity with the Nicaraguan people. The successful completion of the mill is all the more impressive given that it was carried out in the face of a serious escalation of the U.S.-backed mercenary war against Nicaragua.

In his speech at the Jan. 11, 1985, inauguration of the mill, Cuban President Fidel Castro noted that on top of the economic importance of the complex, another fact stood out: "When the construction of this industry began, it was for the people. Because this industry will not belong to any transnational or any foreign company, no one is going to take a single cent from this industry, which is the result of the workers' effort. No one will take its capital and send it to the corporate headquarters. Not one cent. The entire mill is Nicaraguan and belongs to the Nicaraguan people. All that is produced, saved, and all profits are for the Nicaraguan people."

The complex is projected to eventually

yield 7,690 tons of sugar and 655,000 gallons of molasses. The pride of the Nicaraguan workers that we met in this project was evident.

Oscar Ramírez, secretary of defense for the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST), guided our group through the refinery. Most of us were industrial workers from the United States and Canada. He explained the gains that workers have made since the 1979 revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza and put the workers and farmers in power.

The complex employs 3,500 people, 40 percent of whom work in the sugar cane fields around the mill. All of the workers — both in the fields and in the factory — are members of the CST, which is divided into 27 different sections in the complex.

In addition to participating in the union, all the workers are members of the militia, and many are also members of the Nicaraguan Women's Association and the Sandinista Youth.

Meals are served three times a day at the complex. Higher-paid workers pay 20 percent of the cost of the food while the lower-paid workers get the meals for free.

There is a commissary at the complex

where workers can purchase food and clothing items at 30-40 percent lower prices than at regular stores.

Medical care is provided free or at very low cost in Nicaragua, and there is a doctor for the workers at the complex.

The educational needs of the workers are also being met at a union-sponsored school that workers attend after hours. Several workers have been sent to Cuba to take technical courses to prepare them for skilled jobs at the mill, including workers from the countryside who had no previous education. While these workers are out of the country studying, they are guaranteed a salary and their families have access to the commissary and the mill doctor.

New housing is also being constructed for some of the workers so that they will not have to travel so far to get to work. The complex is located at Tipitapa and Malacatoya, two townships which are about 25 miles northeast of Nicaragua's capital city of Managua.

Women who work at the complex enjoy the gains that all Nicaraguan women have made since the victory of the revolution. Women are employed in all jobs, from field workers to advanced technicians. They are guaranteed all of the benefits that

mill workers have. Pregnant women are granted 40 days' maternity leave before giving birth and 55 days after and they are paid a full salary while they are out of work. When they return they are guaranteed their original job.

The goal of the complex is 100 percent mechanization of the cane-cutting process as well as the refining. All of the fields will be under central irrigation during the dry season. The mill will be completely self-sufficient in energy and will eventually produce excess electricity during nonharvest time.

After our tour of the complex, we relaxed over lunch with the workers. I asked one young woman I was sitting next to if she participated in the militias. She laughed and said she was a coward; at the first sound of gun fire she would hide under her bed. A young man sitting next to her said "but in Nicaragua even the cowards won't surrender." She nodded her head emphatically in agreement.

Our visit to the Victoria de Julio mill helped make our group more determined than ever to build a massive movement in this country to stop Washington's aggression against the workers and peasants of Nicaragua.

## 100 rally for Nicaragua in Detroit

BY TIM CRAINE

DETROIT — More than 100 people gathered at the Church of the Messiah here July 19 to celebrate the accomplishments of six years of the Nicaraguan revolution. Sponsored by the Detroit Central America Solidarity Committee (CASC), the event consisted of a dinner followed by speakers.

Fred Miller spoke, representing the Coalition for Peace, Jobs, and Justice. He invited participants to join in building actions this fall in opposition to U.S. intervention in Central America, and demanding an end to U.S. support to apartheid; an end to the

arms buildup; and spending for jobs and social services, not war.

Victor Rubio, representative of the FDR-FMLN, linked the struggle of the people of El Salvador against the Duarte dictatorship with the struggle of Nicaragua against U.S. aggression. Answering Reagan's charge that Nicaragua sponsors terrorism, Rubio blasted the U.S. supported bombings of FMLN held territory. He pointed to Washington, D.C., not Managua, as the real capital of international terrorism.

Kathy Gonzales, a staff member of the Michigan Interfaith Committee on Central American Human Rights (MICA), was a North American resident in Nicaragua during 1979. She described the final days of the insurrection and the respect she gained from that experience for the Sandinista fighters, "los muchachos," as they were

called.

David Kaimowitz of the National Network in Solidarity with the Nicaraguan People described concrete gains made by the revolution and the organization of the people on a block-by-block basis in the Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS).

Reverend Ron Spann, rector of the Church of the Messiah, spoke about his trip to Nicaragua as a member of the Michigan Witness for Peace Delegation. As an Afro-American Spann said he felt a strong bond of friendship with the Nicaraguan people and identification with their struggle.

Amy Goode of CASC, who chaired the program, announced that over \$300 in donations plus medical supplies had been collected that evening. She invited everyone to return for the 7th anniversary of the revolution and many more to come.

## Solidarity meeting in Chicago

BY JOHN VOTAVA

CHICAGO — The sixth anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution was celebrated very successfully July 19 at the downtown campus of De Paul University. About 125 people attended.

The chair, Carol Pazera, began the meeting by introducing about a dozen people from various social and public community groups who were special guests. At the end of the meeting another three representatives were also introduced.

The featured speaker was María Meneses, a representative from the Nicaragua government and a member of AMNLAE, the Nicaraguan women's organization. Meneses spoke through an interpreter. She began her presentation by citing a few dates from Nicaraguan history, all occasions when the United States sent its troops into the small Central American country. The first time was in 1852, long before the 1917 Russian revolution occurred, she pointed out, when obviously the United States was not able to use the pretext that it was justified in carrying out these attacks in order to defend itself or its neighbors against communist-inspired aggression.

Most importantly, she explained, all these invasions make absolutely clear that the Nicaraguan government is not being paranoid when it goes before world public opinion seeking aid and arguing that the U.S. government is planning an invasion. U.S. President Ronald Reagan tries to downplay the significance of his war-like acts, denying the United States has plans to invade. But, Meneses made clear, everything in the history of U.S.-Nicaraguan relations shows there is every reason to take all the threats seriously.

She ended her presentation with a call to all U.S. citizens, and particularly to all the women in the United States, not to wait until troops are in Nicaragua before organizing a protest. The best way mothers can avoid having to protest their children coming home in plastic body bags is to act now to stay the hand of the U.S. government.

Other speakers included Guillermo de paz, representing the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front and the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FMLN-FDR) of El Salvador; representatives from the Guatemalan Opposition and Casa Nicaragua; and the cultural attaché from the Mexican consulate, Argentina Terán.

## Youth planning tour to Nicaragua

BY ED JOSEPHSON

DETROIT — More than 40 high school students, teachers, and others will visit Nicaragua in August as part of the Fresh View Tour organized by the New Institute of Central America (NICA).

The tour is an opportunity for young people in the United States to meet their Nicaraguan counterparts.

The participants will travel to Managua, Bluefields, and Estelí. They will meet with members of the Sandinista Youth, members of the Artists and Cultural Workers' Association, and representatives of the government.

The trip to Bluefields will include a visit to a new hospital named after Malcolm X, the Black revolutionary internationalist who was assassinated in 1965.

Young people on the tour will participate in voluntary work projects, mural painting, and other cultural exchanges. There will be baseball games with Nicaraguans and with Cuban volunteer workers.

The tour involves young people from six U.S. cities including Boston; San Francisco; New York City; Detroit; Fort Wayne, Indiana; and Ithaca, New York. They will reflect a wide range of ages, experiences, and nationalities.

The tour participants from Detroit are four high school students, two auto workers, and a professor of Afro-American studies at Wayne State University. The San Francisco contingent includes organizers of *Entre Jovenes* (Between Youths), a material aid project that arranges for U.S. high school students to send paper, pens, and other school supplies to a "sister school" in Nicaragua.

Tour members are already planning an ambitious program of speaking engagements and media events for the fall, particularly targeting potentially draft-age youths and youths of oppressed nationalities.

NICA hopes this tour will open a continuing series of contacts between Nicaraguan and North American youth.



# International Socialist Review

Supplement to the Militant August 1985

## 'The Communist League of America 1932-34' Depression years and labor's initial fightback

BY FRED STANTON  
AND MICHAEL TABER

The following is the introduction to the new Monad Press book, *The Communist League of America 1932-34*, by James P. Cannon. Cannon was a central leader of the Communist League of America — a precursor of the Socialist Workers Party — and a long-time leader of the SWP until his death in 1974. The introduction is by Fred Stanton and Michael Taber, editors of the book. To order a copy, send \$9.95 to Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Include 75 cents for postage and handling. Copyright © 1985, Anchor Foundation, Inc., reprinted by permission of the publisher.

As this volume opens in January 1932, the U.S. labor movement had reached the low ebb of its devastation by the Great Depression, which had begun more than two years earlier. By December 1934, when the book closes, labor had begun to score some initial victories against the employers — victories that were to lead to the explosive rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in the latter half of the decade.

This shift in the U.S. class struggle was reflected in the changing political fortunes of the Communist League of America (CLA) — precursor of today's Socialist Workers Party. The CLA had been formed in 1929 by revolutionists expelled by the Stalinist leadership of the Communist Party (CP). The year 1933 marked the beginning of the end of what CLA leader James P. Cannon called the "dog days" of the young organization. During the final year and a half covered by this volume, the CLA made a turn toward centering its activity in the mass working-class organizations — the trade unions, union organizing committees, and organizations of the unemployed. It threw its energies into building a new communist party and a new revolutionary international.

Cannon's writings and speeches during these years show how the revolutionary workers' movement grappled with the problems and responded to the challenges and opportunities of this period. This collection helps complete the story of the CLA begun in *The Left Opposition in the U.S., 1928-31*, which recounted the Communist League's formation and first three years. The present book ends with the CLA's fusion with another organization to found the new Workers Party of the United States.

Together, these two volumes are useful source material for and companions to Cannon's *The History of American Trotskyism*, which was originally given as a series of talks in 1942. These books record an important chapter in the struggle in the United States to maintain the revolutionary course charted by the Communist International in its first five years (1919-23), led by the Bolshevik team around Lenin.

Following Lenin's death at the beginning of 1924 the Comintern, under the growing influence of a privileged bureaucratic caste in the Soviet Union headed by Joseph Stalin, was abandoning its revolutionary orientation, carrying the majority leadership of the U.S. Communist Party in its wake. These policies were being fought by Soviet Communist leader Leon Trotsky and the political current led by him within the Soviet CP and the Comintern. The Bolshevik-Leninists sought to defend the Leninist program and strategy that had been the Comintern's guide through 1923.

They attacked the Stalin leadership's flight from revolutionary internationalism. This regression to "national communism" was symbolized by Stalin's attempt to foist on the Comintern the subordination of the world revolutionary movement to the task of "building socialism in one country" — a term Stalin coined in 1924 to claim that socialism could be achieved within the borders of the Soviet Union alone.

Stalin caricatured the views of those who opposed this anti-Marxist innovation. He charged that they advocated simultaneous revolutionary uprisings in all countries, and that they doubted the Soviet Union's capacity to develop

its economy and raise the living standards of the workers and peasants. These charges were false. What Trotsky and other Communist leaders opposed was Stalin's policy of shaping Comintern policy to serve the shifting diplomatic needs of the Soviet government bureaucracy, rather than the interests of the world revolution.

Within the Soviet Union, Trotsky and other Communist leaders sought to preserve the worker-peasant alliance that was the social bedrock of the revolutionary regime against the policies of Stalin and Nikolai Bukharin — policies that benefited a relatively small layer of state and party functionaries, exploiting peasants, and speculating traders at the expense of the urban working class, rural wage earners, and the vast peasant majority.

Within the Comintern the Bolshevik-Leninists warned against the dangers of a "second wave of Menshevism," best exemplified by the class-collaborationist line imposed by Stalin and Bukharin on the Chinese CP during the 1925-27 revolution in that country. That policy, which contributed decisively to the revolution's defeat, sacrificed the interests of workers and peasants to the objective of maintaining a bloc with bourgeois-nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek. The disastrous result of this course was the massacre of thousands of Chinese workers and peasants by Chiang's armies in Shanghai, Wuhan, and outlying rural districts in mid-1927.

Finally, Trotsky and other Soviet CP leaders attacked the Stalinists' bureaucratic suppression of alternative points of view. They demanded a return to the democratic internal functioning and revolutionary centralism that characterized the party and Comintern under Lenin's leadership.

Adherents to the Bolshevik-Leninist opposition inside Russia were met by slander, abuse, expulsion from the party, and exile to Siberia. In 1929 Trotsky was banished from the Soviet Union and deported to Turkey. From there he helped organize the International Left Opposition (ILO) as an international movement fighting for the regeneration of the Comintern with a Marxist program and leadership.

### The Great Depression

The Great Depression in the United States bottomed out in 1932-33, with 16 million people — one-third of the work force — unemployed. The Gross National Product had plummeted to 54 percent of its 1929 level. The employers were driving workers who still had jobs to produce more for less. Real wages had fallen by 20 percent since 1929.

The American Federation of Labor (AFL) lost almost half a million members between 1929 and 1933, continuing the decline it had suffered throughout the 1920s. In the needle trades, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers collected dues from only 7,000 members in 1932. With coal production at its lowest point since 1904, few members of the United Mine Workers were working sufficient hours to earn a living. Construction, transportation, and communications workers' unions were hard hit.

In the unorganized production industries, conditions were even worse. In auto, 207,000 production workers lost their jobs from 1929 to 1932 — almost half of the total work force.

The U.S. working class needed strong organizations and united action to fight for emergency relief, public works programs, and a shorter workweek with no cut in pay to spread around the available jobs. The need to organize the unorganized, who comprised the vast majority of the working class, was more acute than ever before.

Yet during the first few years of the depression there was no organized resistance on a mass scale to the employers' attacks. Instead of fighting and organizing, the unions that did exist were in retreat. There were few strikes, and most of those that did occur were defeated.

The perspective of the officialdom of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) had reached a dead end. Based on the relatively better-off workers in the skilled crafts, the union bureaucrats in their big majority op-

Continued on next page



James P. Cannon in 1935. Cannon was founding leader of Communist League of America, precursor of Socialist Workers Party.

Continued from previous page

posed the organization of production workers in steel, auto, rubber, and other industries. They were dead set against the industrial form of organization, whereby all production workers in the same factory and industry — whether on the assembly line or in the tool room — belonged to the same union. Industrial unionism threatened the lucrative positions of the officialdom of the AFL's craft unions.

Identifying labor's interests with those of preserving capitalism and boosting the bosses' profits, the AFL bureaucracy could present no way for either organized or unorganized workers to resist the mounting attacks on their rights and living standards. While some labor misleaders talked about cutting the workweek, they looked to Democratic and Republican party "friends of labor" to accomplish this. Meanwhile, the best they could do was to make agreements for so-called work sharing — workers would work fewer hours, so a few more people had jobs, but the weekly pay check went down proportionately, or even more.

The AFL bureaucracy's passivity toward the bosses contrasted sharply with its steadfastness in policing the union ranks. In this, its overriding goal was to keep a grip on its dues base — the trough from which the officials fed to maintain their own privileged lifestyles. They were determined to beat back any attempt by the workers to utilize the unions as an instrument of militant struggle to defend their interests and organize the unorganized majority of their class. That would require a massive social movement going beyond the narrow framework of the trade unions as they existed; such a struggle would rock the boat, and the bureaucrats feared that they would be among those swept overboard.

Many AFL craft unions refused to admit Blacks as members. In addition to helping preserve the Jim Crow system of segregation, this racist policy of the bureaucracy was another factor weakening the unions themselves. It was a blow to the solidarity among the ranks that is the touchstone of unionism. Moreover, since the vast majority of Black workers were concentrated in the mass-production industries, the officialdom's refusal to organize the unorganized reinforced the oppression and superexploitation of these workers by the ruling class.

Lacking effective unions to fight for their interests, workers did what they could as individuals or in small groups to weather the crisis. Since many workers were from farm families, some tried going back to the land to raise a little food. Some workers organized small cooperatives and other self-help schemes. Others organized demonstrations to demand relief. Many were forced into destitution, begging, and onto food lines.

Various organizations of the unemployed began to be set up, largely at the initiative of left-wing organizations. The CP-led National Council of Unemployed organized squads of workers to fight evictions; in 1931 and 1932 it sponsored hunger marches that were often attacked by the cops. The Socialist Party and the Conference for Progressive Labor Action (CPLA) also built organizations to fight for the rights of the jobless. But the unemployed workers, dispersed in their homes and often demoralized, were not easy to organize on a large scale. The organized social power of the unions was needed to bring the unemployed together as a fighting force, and this did not begin to happen until prospects for some victories became a little brighter toward the mid-1930s.

### Stalin's 'third period'

The procapitalist policies of the AFL bureaucracy received enthusiastic support from the class-collaborationist "Old Guard" leadership of the American Socialist Party, which at the time had a membership of about 10,000. While not a major force in the top AFL officialdom, SP members were prominent in the leadership of the needle-trades unions, especially in New York City.

There was also a small left wing within the union movement. A layer of militant workers looked for leadership to the Communist Party, which had a slightly larger membership than the SP. These workers, however, were increasingly handicapped by the disorienting effects of the CP's political degeneration.

In 1929, the Stalinist leadership of the Comintern proclaimed that post-World War I capitalism had entered its "third period," the period of its final crisis and collapse. This cataclysmic prognosis was designed as a justification for an ultraleft turn initiated by Stalin in the wake of domestic and international reverses at the end of the 1920s, resulting from the Soviet Communist Party leadership's course since the middle of that decade. Accompanying this sharp turn to the left was the ouster from the leadership in 1929 of the right wing of the Soviet Communist Party led by Bukharin, who since 1926 had been the most prominent leader of the Comintern. The purge of the right-wing opposition was carried out in Communist parties throughout the world. In the U.S. CP the current associated with Jay Lovestone, a supporter of Bukharin who had been the party's general secretary, was expelled.

As part of the ultraleft "third period" schema, the social-democratic parties of the Second International were termed "social fascist" and presented as the workers'



1934 Teamsters' strike in Minneapolis. Striking workers battle with cops and deputized businessmen.

chief enemy. The Stalinists no longer called on the leaders of social-democratic parties or the unions to enter into alliances for joint action to advance the interests of exploited working people. The perspective of the working-class united front, formulated by the Comintern under Lenin's leadership, was abandoned. Only a "united front from below" was permissible — that is, a call on the ranks of social democratic organizations to break with their leaders and join in united actions with the Communists. This sectarian approach could influence only the tiny handful of workers already convinced politically of the need to break with the leadership of their organizations.

In pursuing this line, the Comintern advanced a new "dual union" policy of splitting militant workers away from the established unions to form their own, "red" unions. The CP applied this policy in the United States by pulling its members and others influenced by them out of the AFL to establish new organizations. Through this action, the CP isolated many vanguard workers from the rest of the organized working class, thereby leaving the AFL officialdom a freer hand in its class-collaborationist practices.

The CP's ultraleft course was also reflected in the farmers' protest movement when the party refused to support the Farm Holiday Association founded in 1932. Characterizing this group as "social fascist," the CP set up its own separate farm organization.

### Pressures on the CLA

The pressures from the political situation during the early 1930s bore down heavily on the 150-200 members of the Communist League of America. The CLA was largely isolated from active participation in working-class struggles, and it was plagued by a severe lack of funds.

During these years the CLA's weekly newspaper, the *Militant*, and its public activities were oriented primarily to the working-class vanguard that continued to belong to and look toward the Communist Party. Cannon explained this orientation in *The History of American Trotskyism*.

The CLA directed its "main efforts, appeals and activities, not to the mass of 40 million American workers, but to the vanguard of the class organized in and around the Communist Party," Cannon said. Its approach was that, "We must first get what is obtainable from this vanguard group, consisting of some tens of thousands of Communist Party members and sympathizers, and crystallize out of them a sufficient cadre either to reform the party, or, if after a serious effort that fails in the end — and only when the failure is conclusively demonstrated — to build a new one with the forces recruited in the endeavor. Only in this way is it possible for us to reconstitute the party in the real sense of the word."

"By remaining partisans of the Communist Party and the Communist International," Cannon said, "by opposing the bureaucratic leaders at the top, but appraising correctly the rank and file as they were at that time, and seeking contact with them, we continued to gain new recruits from the ranks of the Communist workers. The overwhelming majority of our members in the first five years of our existence came from the CP. Thus we built the foundations of a regenerated Communist movement."

The Communist Opposition, however, did not have an easy time getting the ear of the thousands of revolutionary-minded workers in the CP. It faced the obstacle of the CP bureaucrats' physical attacks and verbal slanders. Moreover, some CP members who were initially influenced by the CLA misinterpreted the Stalinists' ultraleft "third period" policies as embodying the essence of the program of the Bolshevik-Leninist opposition.

"The Stalinist 'left turn' piled up new difficulties for us," Cannon recounted in *The History of American Trotskyism*. "This turn was in part designed by Stalin to cut the ground from under the feet of the Left Opposition. . . . They used to say to us: 'You see, you were wrong, Stalin is correcting everything. He is taking a radical position all along the line in Russia, America and ev-

erywhere else.' . . .

"There were, I would say, perhaps hundreds of Communist Party members, who had been leaning towards us, who gained the same impression and returned to Stalinism in the period of the ultra-left swing."

"Those were the real dog days of the Left Opposition," Cannon said.

Despite all these obstacles, the CLA did not succumb. Although perpetually scrambling for funds, the CLA continued the regular publication of the *Militant*, never missing an issue of it. The CLA was able to publish and distribute the most important political and programmatic articles by Trotsky and the International Left Opposition. It educated and trained a disciplined and self-sacrificing cadre that would be capable of responding to political opportunities when they arose.

Nonetheless, the combination of the pressures bearing down on the working class as a whole at the beginning of the 1930s and the particular obstacles confronting the CLA inevitably took their toll on the organization. In his *History* Cannon paints a vivid picture of this period:

"We had no friends, no sympathizers, no periphery around our movement. We had no chance whatever to participate in the mass movement. Whenever we tried to get into a workers organization we would be expelled as counterrevolutionary Trotskyists. We tried to send delegations to the unemployed meetings. Our credentials would be rejected on the ground that we were enemies of the working class. We were utterly isolated, forced in upon ourselves. Our recruitment dropped to almost nothing. The Communist Party and its vast periphery seemed to be hermetically sealed against us.

"Then, as is always the case with new political movements, we began to recruit from sources none too healthy. . . . Many people came to us who had revolted against the Communist Party not for its bad sides but for its good sides; that is, the discipline of the party, the subordination of the individual to the decisions of the party in current work. A lot of dilettantish petty-bourgeois-minded people who couldn't stand any kind of discipline, who had either left the CP or been expelled from it, wanted, or rather thought they wanted to become Trotskyists. Some of them joined the New York branch and brought with them that same prejudice against discipline in our organization. . . .

"All the people of this type have one common characteristic: they like to discuss things without limit or end. The New York branch of the Trotskyist movement in those days was just one continuous stew of discussion. . . . Walled off from the vanguard represented by the Communist movement and without contact with the living mass movement of the workers, we were thrown in upon ourselves and subjected to this invasion. There was no way out of it. We had to go through the long drawn-out period of stewing and discussing."

The predominantly petty-bourgeois composition of the league's New York City organization formed a breeding ground for cliques that spent their considerable energy complaining, factionalizing, and sniping at the leadership. "The greatest movement, with its magnificent program of the liberation of all humanity, with the most grandiose historic perspectives," Cannon recalled, "was inundated in those days by a sea of petty troubles, jealousies, clique formations and internal fights. Worst of all, these faction fights weren't fully comprehensible to the membership because the great political issues which were implicit in them had not yet broken through."

One factor exacerbating these conflicts was the CLA leaders' training in the CP during the middle and late 1920s. The Comintern leadership, rapidly fleeing from Leninist policies during that period, could no longer serve as an example and source of assistance to its still young national sections in the hard task of forging a mature, objective, and politically homogeneous leadership. Lacking such counterbalancing influences, the U.S. CP had become a jungle of permanent factions. Cannon described this situation in *The First Ten Years of American Communism*:

"The factional struggle became bankrupt for lack of real political justification for the existence of the factions. For that reason nothing could be solved by the victory of one faction, giving it the opportunity to execute its policy, since the policies of the others were basically the same. There were differences of implicit tendency, to be sure, but further experience was required to show where they might lead. The factions lived on exaggerations and distortions of each others' positions and the anticipation of future differences."

Pressures similar to those confronting the CLA at the outset of the 1930s, and their organizational and political effects, also took a toll on the International Left Opposition as a whole. The ILO's European sections, too, had difficulty in forging leaderships that worked collectively to build their organizations around a revolutionary Marxist program. They went through numerous faction fights and splits, sloughing off politically disloyal groupings and individuals, cliques, traffickers in "inside dope" and personal intrigue.

Many leaders of the International Left Opposition who were miseducated in the factional jungles of the de-

Continued on ISR/6

# School desegregation in Boston — 10 years later

BY JON HILLSON

*Busing in Boston.* A decade ago, that short sentence conveyed the stark image of racist mobs stoning yellow school buses carrying Black students; of Democratic Party office-holders exhorting rallies of white racists to "resist"; and of lines of police surrounding schools as Afro-American children rushed in and out of buildings amidst racial slurs and catcalls.

This was the spectacle that captured headlines worldwide as Federal District Judge W. Arthur Garrity's desegregation plan went into effect in the fall of 1974. It came after years of determined effort by Boston's Black community to win equality in education.<sup>1</sup>

The struggle that grew out of those tumultuous first days of desegregation have left a deep imprint in Boston: in the school system, on the social life outside the classrooms, and on the consciousness of working people — Black, Latino, Asian, and white.

Today, as desegregated education moves into its second decade, the historic court order is being peppered with new attacks aimed at whittling away this gain won in struggle by the Black community and its allies.

These attacks on Boston's desegregation plan are not isolated. The U.S. government and employing class are actively attempting to push back gains won by the Black, Puerto Rican, Chicano, women's rights, and labor movements. The Reagan administration is dead opposed to busing to achieve school desegregation, as well as to the use of preferential quotas in hiring and promotions — that is, affirmative action programs.

The White House recently moved to strike down court-ordered affirmative action programs in some 50 cities, states, and counties. The Justice Department is also challenging voluntary affirmative action programs, many of which were negotiated through union contracts.

In this context, racist opponents of Boston's school desegregation program are again in motion.

But Boston of 1985 is not the same as Boston of 1974, when the battle for the school-desegregation plan erupted. And there are lessons from that fight for today's supporters of desegregation.

The gains made from a decade of desegregation show that the effort of this city's Black community and its allies to beat back the racist attacks on busing and Black rights was well worth it.

The fight to win and defend desegregation in Boston was no easy task.

The Black community here — which encompasses more than 20 percent of this city's population — was inspired to campaign for equality by civil rights struggles of the 1950s and 60s based in the South. The Democratic Party-dominated city government resisted every attempt at social change.

The city's capitalist politicians sowed the racist seeds of fear and hatred of desegregation through a network of patronage and Democratic Party clubs. The privilege-encrusted top layers of the local union officialdom also echoed the employers' racism.

## 'Divide and rule' tactics

The city rulers successfully used "divide and rule" tactics to pit some white workers against the Black community. This thwarted united efforts to win better public education in Boston, the first step of which was necessar-

1. While legal school segregation in Boston ended in 1854, a system of *de facto* school segregation continued to exist. It wasn't until the rise of the mass civil rights movement in the 1950s and 60s against Jim Crow legal segregation in the South that a battle began in Boston against this *de facto* segregation, which was part of the social fabric of the city.

In 1963 Boston's first big solidarity demonstration with the southern civil rights movement occurred. Several speakers connected the battle against Jim Crow with the fight to end segregation in Boston.

The mass fight for civil rights in the South and for equality in education in Boston finally led in August 1965 to the passage of the Racial Imbalance Act in the Massachusetts state legislature. Massachusetts became the first state to outlaw *de facto* segregation in education. A drawback to the act was "imbalanced" schools were defined as schools that were majority Black — meaning only Blacks would be bused to all-white schools — not the other way around. However, the law was never implemented.

In the early 1970s, Black parents once again pushed for an end to the dual school system. They decided in 1972 to file a federal court suit. The suit documented how the segregation of Boston schools was deliberately organized by the School Committee. Two years later, on June 21, Judge W. Arthur Garrity ordered Boston's schools desegregated.

Jon Hillson was a reporter for the Militant newspaper in Boston during the height of the desegregation struggle. He is the author of the book, *The Battle of Boston*, which is available from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014 for \$6.95. Please include 75 cents for postage and handling.



1974 Boston busing scene

ily the elimination of racist inequality in the school system.

Decades of housing and residential discrimination had segregated Boston's Black community. Upon this foundation, two school systems had been constructed — one for whites and another for Blacks.

Busing was used to maintain this dual school system — transporting whites to faraway, superior schools, and busing Blacks away from schools in nearby all-white areas.

Special exams and assignment procedures were used to secure this racist setup.

While Black workers paid taxes for the schools, their children suffered second-class education: fewer qualified teachers, inferior resources and materials, dilapidated buildings, and limited access to the city's prestige examination-entry college preparatory and vocational schools and programs.

This showed up in higher Black drop-out — that is, push-out — rates, lower test scores, and an ever widening gap between Black and white academic achievement.

A racist system of patronage hiring had turned the teaching force into a white job trust. The system basically put a "for whites only" sign on administrative and supervisory employment.

The Democratic Party machine preached that desegregation would take away the relatively better educational opportunities that whites had. Under the code words of "neighborhood schools" and "freedom of choice" a racist movement was forged. The key word was opposition to "forced busing."

Judge Garrity's ruling ordered the uprooting of the racist, dual school system.

To overcome the effect of residential segregation, it mandated busing to achieve a racial balance in most city schools.

The court's decision challenged racist hiring practices and implemented affirmative-action employment quotas to increase the real numbers and percentage of Black and Latino teachers, aides, and principals to reflect the population.<sup>2</sup>

Included in this was a provision for dual seniority, so that when layoffs occurred, the ratio of Black and Latino teachers would not decline.

The judge paired various schools with local colleges and universities to increase educational opportunity; created special magnet schools within the desegregated

2. This was necessarily a far-reaching plan. In 1971, 35 percent of the students were Black, while 94 percent of the teachers were white. There had never been a Black principal in any of the city's predominantly white schools. Twenty to 30 percent of the staffs of all-Black schools were generally substitute teachers.

system; ordered the creation of parent councils to increase access to the schools and the workings of the desegregation plan; challenged discriminatory tests for the Boston Latin schools — the elite, public, college-track institutions; and upgraded bilingual education for Boston's growing Latino and Asian communities.

The historically all-white Boston School Committee fought these reforms tooth and nail.

They were joined by other local capitalist politicians, who operated in City Hall to organize a racist movement in the streets to disrupt and sabotage the plan. And they used the ancient buddy-network of lifetime, school-department bureaucrats and administrators to cripple desegregation.

Alongside their court fights these forces spearheaded a boycott of the school system itself, which pulled white students out of public education and put them into parochial schools and private "segregation academies."

Foes of Black rights use the racist term "white flight" to describe this deliberate move to maintain segregation.

## Black community fights back

Against all these odds, the Black community and its supporters fought back.

It mobilized against racist terror and violence, in major demonstrations in December 1974 and again in May 1975.

These two national marches drew thousands into the streets of Boston to demand protection of Black youth and to defend desegregation.

Between them came the daily demonstrations of Black youth who, as longtime Black community leader Elma Lewis stated at the time, "would go into the jaws of death" for a better education.

They braved insults and slurs, bricks and bottles, and racist gang attacks inside and outside the schools, symbolizing the defiance of the Black community in the face of anti-Black attacks. They defied a national campaign against desegregation, which had a White House seal of approval.

This green light had been given by then-Republican President Gerald Ford, who announced in 1974, on the day after a near lynching of a Black worker from Haiti by an antibusing mob in South Boston, that he "respectfully" disagreed with the Garrity order.

Following Ford, Democratic President James Carter ran on a platform in 1976 opposing the central pillars of the Garrity plan: busing to achieve desegregation and affirmative action quotas in hiring.

But the national expressions of solidarity spurred by the courage of Boston's Black students — the periodic mobilizations and the picket lines, protests, and teach-ins that accompanied them — were an effective *action* response to bipartisan opposition to Black rights.

This countermobilization against racist violence began to find a positive echo in the labor movement as well. Then-AFL-CIO President George Meany issued statements supporting desegregation, because the enemies of Black rights posed a direct challenge to labor itself and the rights of the Black, Latino, and white workers organized into trade unions.

Dozens of reporters gathered on Bunker Hill in Charlestown in the fall of 1975 for the beginning of the second year of the school desegregation plan.

The efforts of the Boston NAACP and other forces to defend the democratic right of Blacks to receive an equal education had focused international attention on Boston.

The racists in and out of government had so far failed to overturn the 1974 court order. The yellow school buses continued to roll; desegregation was beginning to take hold.

But the opponents of desegregation hadn't given up. They were determined to stop those buses.

The explosive potential of further confrontation gave the rulers, in Boston and nationally, food for thought. They had not expected a determined fightback by the Black community and its allies.

Under the pressure of this developing movement in support of busing and school desegregation, the city's ruling families — who had encouraged the racist mobs by their anti-busing stance in an effort to terrorize the Black community, and who had clogged the courts with appeals of the Garrity order — drew back. They were forced to contain the situation.

Police protection of Black students increased, and the racist mobs were reined in. Appeals for "moderation" were made. Over time, district organization of school committee and city council elections was implemented, enabling Blacks to be elected to Boston's governing bodies, which had been, with only minor exceptions, all white.

The court order would stand.

The Black community and its allies in the city and country had defeated the racist movement and overturned

Continued on ISR/8

# Scargill speech evaluates British miners' strike

## Introduction

BY MALIK MIAH

The following are excerpts from the "Annual Conference Presidential Address" given by Arthur Scargill to the July 1-4 convention of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) held in Sheffield, Britain. In this address, Scargill, president of the NUM, outlines the union leadership's evaluation of the nearly 12-month strike the NUM conducted against mine closures and unemployment.

The miners went out on strike in March 1984. At the high point more than 150,000 of the 180,000 miners were on the picket line.

The British ruling class was determined to defeat the NUM. The stakes were high: a victory by the miners would push back the employers' drive against the wages, working conditions, democratic rights, and other gains won by Britain's working people over the decades. Millions of dollars were spent to break the strike.

The miners were finally forced to return to work without an agreement on March 3, 1985.

During the strike, some 10,000 miners were arrested by the cops, along with 50 women supporters. Five thousand miners were injured by police attacks on the picket lines, and four died. More than 900 miners have been fired because of their strike activities. And nearly 80 miners have been jailed for taking actions to save their jobs.

One of the central campaigns decided by the conference was to step up efforts to win general amnesty for the miners who have been imprisoned and fired, and to demand an end to all further victimizations.

Working people in the United States can express their solidarity and support for the miners by sending messages calling for amnesty to: the Home Secretary, Home Office, 50 Queen Ann's Gate, London, SW1, England. Messages calling for the reinstatement of fired miners can be sent to: The Chairman, National Coal Board, Head Office, Hobart House, Grosvenor Place, London, SW1, England; and to: The Minister, Department of Energy, Thames House South, Millbank, London, SW1, England.

Copies of messages should be sent to: NOMPAS (National Organization for Miners in Prison and Supporters), 5 Caledonian Rd., Kings Cross, London, N1, England; and to: National Union of Mineworkers, St. James House, Vicar Lane, Sheffield, England.

\* \* \*

A discussion is under way in the NUM and the British labor movement on the lessons of the strike as the British ruling class attempts to use its victory against the miners to advance its antilabor policies. The right wing of the NUM, the leadership of the Trades Union Congress (TUC — Britain's equivalent to the AFL-CIO), and the Labor Party officialdom are attempting to use the defeat of the strike to undermine the authority of the NUM leadership team around Scargill among the rank and file and other working people who rallied to the miners' defense. This is primarily done by criticizing the tactics employed by the NUM. This includes the union's use of mass picketing, reaching out to other unionists, Blacks, and farmers, as well as their organizing of women against mine closures.

The miners and their allies have learned the value of such class-struggle methods through their strike experience and are ready to use them again in future battles. This fact has also been registered in ruling class circles.

The right-wing labor officials — in many cases echoing the views of the National Coal Board — argued that the NUM's demand against the closure of what the government called "uneconomic" mines was unrealistic. In fact, a few weeks before the strike was called off, the top TUC officialdom worked out an agreement with the National Coal Board that was worse than the original Coal Board proposal that led to the strike. The NUM rejected it out of hand.

This campaign against the Scargill leadership is in fact aimed at the militancy of the striking miners and their supporters. The "realistic" TUC and Labor Party leaders are attempting to cover up their failure to mobilize the type of solidarity the miners needed to push back the government's union-busting attack and win the strike. The top TUC officials, for example, despite pressure from the NUM, refused to implement a TUC conference resolution promising "total support" for the strike.

While the Scargill leadership maintains its majority in the union, the failure of the strike, continuing victimizations by the Coal Board, and the right-wing offensive within the labor movement have given encouragement to anti-NUM forces in the union itself. Thus two days after the NUM conference, the leadership of the Nottinghamshire-area miners organized a breakaway from the NUM with the aim of creating a rival union.

The NUM leadership expects 7,000 of the 22,000



Arthur Scargill, president of National Union of Mineworkers in Britain.

Notts miners, as the Nottinghamshire-area miners are known, to stay with the NUM, and another 5,000 to give up union membership altogether. This will leave 10,000 miners in the split-away outfit.

The Notts miners have historically constituted a right-wing base within the NUM. They formed the Nottinghamshire "Working Miners Committee" and worked against the strike. Working in the highly productive coalfields of Nottinghamshire, the Notts miners were paid more and faced no immediate threats of layoffs. Their scabbing action against the majority of miners who went on strike severely damaged strike unity and contributed to its failure.

While the government of Conservative (Tory) Party Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher did not openly praise this breakaway from the NUM during the miners' strike, she and her Tory ministers often hailed the scabs as national heroes who upheld the "right to work." A spokesman for the National Coal Board said after the split: "The board will view sympathetically an approach from the Nottinghamshire union representatives."

The TUC and Labor Party leaderships have both stated the Notts union will not be allowed to affiliate to either body.

This breakaway, however, is a further blow to the unity of the miners and their ability to resist the government's continuing attacks.

Because of the role British miners have historically played in resisting the employers' attacks, the ruling class waged a gigantic effort to inflict defeat, and continues to push ahead with its attacks. But as Scargill explains in his address, the union and its leadership were not broken. Broad support was won in Britain and abroad. And even in its weakened position, the NUM continues to fight back.

That example of fighting back in a determined way was not only an inspiration for other trade unionists and oppressed people of Britain. It also encouraged workers and working farmers in the United States and other countries who face sharp attacks by their capitalist exploiters and governments.

That's why the lessons drawn by the NUM leadership of their strike should be of special interest to U.S. working people, particularly those active in the trade unions.

Footnotes to Scargill's speech are by the *ISR*.

## Conference Presidential Address

BY ARTHUR SCARGILL

[The] Conference meets this year following the longest, most bitter, and possibly most savage national strike ever seen anywhere in the world. We meet not in the aftermath, but still in the midst of, a historic and heroic struggle waged by this union and mining communities against the most reactionary coal industry management seen since the 1920s and '30s — a struggle in which we have had to face the combined weight of the most reactionary and destructive government Britain has known in over a century.

We have come through a strike which has changed the course of British history: a conflict of tremendous signifi-

cance which has resounded around the world — a conflict which has transformed the lives of those who stood and fought against the National Coal Board's disastrous pit [mine] closure program — a conflict which has inspired workers in this and other countries to defend the right to work.

The National Union of Mineworkers [NUM] has challenged the very heart of the capitalist system. We have refused to accept that any industry inside capitalist society — whether public or private sectors — has the right to destroy the livelihood of men and women at the stroke of an accountant's pen. Our challenge has been met with a savagery unprecedented in any time of trade union history.

The pit closure program announced by the [National Coal] Board on March 6, 1984, was a deliberate action, designed to provoke our union into either taking strike action or backing down in the face of Coal Board policy. Backing down as some delegates in this room may recall, the union did a number of years ago.

Since November 1983, the union had been . . . winning support both in mining areas and in the wider community. The NUM was taking the arguments for saving pits and jobs to our members and their families in a way which had never been seen before.

Faced with this unity of action, the Coal Board began a new tactic, using closure announcements to cut across and violate all our industry's established procedures. As they contemptuously announced 25 pit closures — five of them immediately — with a loss of over 25,000 jobs, we knew in our hearts that our union had no choice. We could either accept the Board's proposals in the certain knowledge that they were only the start of a massive closure program — or we could take strike action, and fight with dignity and pride for the position we knew to be right.

## Took strike action

To the eternal credit of this union, we took strike action. Let me say, unequivocally, that in defending our policies, our jobs, communities and industries, we had no alternative — and history will vindicate our position.

Now, four months after our return to work, it is essential to look back over the first crucial phase of our fight for the future, examining what was accomplished, and determine where our union and its members go from here.

It is vital that the union analyze the events of 1984-85 in order that we learn from what took place and to utilize the experience in the next stage of our fight.

The Coal Board's pit closure program for 1984-85 was not carried out. It was not carried out because the miners took strike action! And I feel it right that we should remind ourselves, that had it not been for the action of this union, our conference this week would have been taking place with 25 pits that are still open, already having been closed. . . .

The cost of the miners' strike to Thatcherism has been truly astronomical. In their mad crusade against the NUM and trade unionism, this government robbed Britain's taxpayers of 8 billion pounds [about \$11.2 billion] as they sought desperately to defeat the miners and destroy the National Union of Mineworkers.

History will record this was a colossal act of vandalism by a monetarist Tory government, which in order to survive requires a high pool of unemployment — a weak, collaborationist, or nonexistent trade union movement — and laws which remove the democratic rights won by our people in over two centuries of struggle.

The attack on our union was the culmination of five years in which the Thatcher government had successively introduced anti-trade union legislation while raising unemployment to four and a half million — and through the use of the media had implanted in the hands of trade unionists the idea that they could not win any struggle against this new authoritarian government.

Ian MacGregor was appointed chairman [of the National Coal Board] in order that free-market criteria could be applied to the mining industry, following exactly the line pursued by the Tory government in other nationalized industries. His brief was to carry through a policy of pit closures as the first step toward a restructured mining industry, ripe for privatization — a strategy which the Tories also believed would see Britain's most powerful union rendered impotent.

## 'Political prisoners'

During the strike, over 900 miners were sacked [fired], and since the end of the strike, still more have been dismissed. To date, over 600 have not been reinstated. This is an attack upon this movement and union that smacks of the 1920s and '30s. The management and government determined to try to dismiss from this industry the most active elements and the most militant sections of the trade union movement.

Over 50 of our members have been jailed while carry-

ing out union policy, taking action to save pits and jobs. I say without equivocation, they are political prisoners, and this movement must regard them as such, and should support them and sustain them during the period while incarcerated by this government. Their only crime was fighting for the right to work, and an amnesty for them, as well as reinstatement for all who have been sacked, must be among this union's first priorities.

Ian MacGregor's contempt for this industry and those who work within it has also just been demonstrated by the Board's total abandonment of the agreement reached last autumn with NACODS,<sup>1</sup> which incorporated a new modified Colliery [coal mine and its connected buildings] Review Procedure. You will recall that this procedure was described by Ian MacGregor, by [Tory Minister] Peter Walker, by Margaret Thatcher, as being "sacrosanct." It has now been proved the sham we said it was at the time. And I hope that those with the vitriolic pens will remember the words they wrote last November, when they urged that this union accept the so-called NACODS deal. Some went so far as to say that the union was snatching defeat from the jaws of victory. What we said then is now being proved correct. The deal was a sham, and the only thing that the miners — in whatever union of this industry — should have done and should continue to do, is to fight the Coal Board's policy and keep pits open.

There is no denying that the miners' strike could have been brought to a swift and successful conclusion within a very short space of time but for a number of important factors which had a major effect on the attitude of both the Coal Board and the government.

[The] conference will recall following our Special Delegate Conference on April 19, 1984, which reaffirmed the democratic decision to endorse strike action in accordance with Rule 41,<sup>2</sup> the union's call on all areas to support the dispute was not followed by Nottinghamshire, South Derbyshire, or Leicestershire. We are now analyzing what should have taken place in various sections. We're analyzing those things to point out that if those steps had been taken, the strike would have been drawn to a swift conclusion, and let this conference examine those facts in a sober and detailed fashion.

In refusing to respond to a call from the vast majority of their colleagues already on strike, and — more important — by refusing to respect picket lines, those who continued to work producing coal provided a lifeline to the Tory government as it waged class war against the NUM.

There have been many comments from critics, cynics, and even some colleagues, suggesting that had we held an individual ballot vote, the outcome of our dispute would have been different. That argument has [several] basic flaws:

Firstly, it fails to recognize that miners in 1984 were taking exactly the same kind of action that they had taken in 1981. Recall the action of 1981 was unofficial strike action, and had been supported by Notts, South Derbyshire, and Leicestershire without a ballot vote. If that had been done on this occasion, the outcome in the early weeks of the dispute would have transformed the situation.

Secondly, it fails to recognize, by the time of our conference on April 19, nearly 80 percent of our members were *already* on strike. And never in the history of this union have you held a ballot vote of members who have already decided with their feet to take action against the Coal Board decision to try to destroy their jobs and their communities.

And thirdly, the argument also fails to recognize, or conveniently forgets, that on a previous occasion areas, including those three areas — Notts, South Derbyshire and Leicester — refused to accept the democratic decision of our membership as determined in an individual ballot vote, and proceeded to negotiate with the National Coal Board an incentive scheme that has led this union into divisions and split. . . .

There have also been suggestions (again, from critics, cynics, even some of our colleagues) that traditional, picket-line militancy is dead. Nothing could be further from the truth, and accurate, historical analysis will prove that point beyond doubt.

Colleagues, it was not a failure of mass picketing, but a failure to mass picket that represented a weakness in many sections of our union, and other trade unions and we must learn the lessons of what took place in 1984-85.

We are involved in a class war, and any attempt to deny that flies in the face of reality. Don't believe me,

1. NACODS is the mine supervisors' union. Many NACODS members honored NUM pickets during the strike. The majority of NACODS members had voted to go on strike in October 1984, but the union's leadership struck a deal with the National Coal Board on October 24. The government then tried to use this settlement to impose an agreement on the NUM. The NUM refused since the NACODS agreement did not include the government's withdrawal of the NCB's program to close mines — the main issue in the strike.

2. Rule 41 permitted the NUM National Executive Committee to sanction strike action area by area. This meant a national ballot of all members of the union was not required to call a strike in one area. The 1984 strike began in one area and spread from one area to another.



Militant/G.M. Cookson  
**June 1984 miners' support march in Britain. While majority of Britain's working people were sympathetic to miners' strike, this support was not actively organized by top labor officialdom.**

listen to what Margaret Thatcher and Peter Walker keep saying about this union and our members. Just look at the attack of the establishment on the National Union of Mineworkers, and they, more eloquently than I, demonstrate the nature of the class war to which I refer. Confronted by our enemy's mobilization, we are entitled, indeed, obliged, to call upon *our* class for massive support. In any future industrial action by any union — including ours — this must be done.

Fourthly, it is a fact that the NUM did not receive the level of support we needed and were entitled to expect from our colleagues in the wider movements.

In spite of pleas from this union, the leaders of the power workers refused to give us the same basic support they gave in 1974 — a measure of support again, I should add for the record, was *not* present in 1972 (contrary to any statements made by media experts). In 1974, by operating basic principled guidelines determined by the Trades Union Congress in September 1984, power workers stopped the flow of coal into British power stations.

By acquiescing in the conversion of coal-fired power stations to oil, power station workers made it impossible for us to really mount an effective campaign. If the power station workers had simply operated [by] the guidelines, the oil burn would not have increased from 5 to 40 percent. And they could have prevented, simply by following guidelines that they had in 1974.

Fifthly, the abject refusal by [steelworkers' leaders] to mobilize and coordinate the same degree of support for the NUM that we gave to steelworkers in 1980.

The British Steel Corp. has admitted that without the cooperation of the steel unions they could not have kept going, and the Coal Board would thus have been put under intense pressure to negotiate with the NUM. But any address of this kind would be hollow, and would fail to take into account all the factors to which I have previously referred, if we also did not say at this stage that in spite of all that's taken place, if steelworkers or any other workers face attack, this union will adopt a principled position of supporting workers in struggle. . . .

The government's massive transport operation . . . to convey coal, coke, and iron ore to power stations and steel works only proved effective because the power and steel unions failed to respect picket line and stop deliveries.

I think that we should pay tribute, at the same time as pointing to a weakness, to the magnificent support we obtained from the Nation Union of Railwaymen, from ASLEF [Amalgamated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen], and from the National Union of Seamen, and sections of the Transport and General Workers Union. Their support was not only an inspiration, it was an example to other unions of what trade union solidarity is all about.

#### Default by TUC and LP

There is also the failure of the TUC to translate into positive action decisions taken at [its] 1984 congress. And it was this, according to well-informed sources, that led the Coal Board to a change of attitude, and they saw it as a green light to intensify their attacks against the NUM.

Had . . . guidelines supporting the NUM adopted by [the] congress been even partially implemented, the pressure upon the Coal Board and the government would have been intense, and a negotiated settlement inevitable.

There can be no excuse for the TUC General Council's refusal to provide desperately needed financial assistance to this union following sequestration [of union funds by the courts] and receivership. The appointment of a receiver for a trade union is unprecedented, and is associated with the new Tory legislation — and yet, eight months after receivership was imposed on the NUM, the £400,000 [\$560,000] fund established in a blaze of glory by the TUC at the 1982 Wembley Conference remains intact — while we fight to survive. They should recognize that this union has been hijacked, and they should give financial support to this union.

During the strike, the Labor Party leadership allowed itself to be preoccupied with allegations of "violence," scripted daily by the media — when they should have been attacking the Tory government for *its* violence against our industry, and defending our members in the same way as Thatcher defended her riot squad in blue. That should have been the preoccupation of the [Labor] Party . . . throughout our industrial dispute.

Of course, the High Court decision last autumn to fine the NUM and then place an order of sequestration upon us failed to stop the union functioning. Further legal moves then resulted in the High Court sacking the three NUM trustees and appointing a receiver, whose purpose was to bring the union's operations and administration to a standstill by hijacking our funds.

As a result of his appointment, our funds have now been depleted by £1 million [\$1.4 million]. Those funds would still be intact had the union's trustees not been sacked, and the trusteeship placed in the hands of the receiver who is supposed to be looking after the assets of the NUM. I think it imperative to make the point that the receivership of this union marks a very dangerous precedent for other trade unions. It means that the unions in Britain today can in fact be seized literally overnight, and the whole movement has to understand that they've got an obligation to fight back against the appointment of a receiver in this, or indeed any other, trade union.

Finally, while analyzing the dispute, let me say I believe the proposal for a return to work without an agreement was a fundamental mistake — and events have shown that this was not the best course of action to adopt.

However, let no one in this conference or outside talk to me about defeat or setbacks. Those who since the end of the strike have pontificated in a negative and destructive fashion fail utterly to understand the nature of what actually took place.

This union must not turn inwards in an orgy of self-criticism. We should stand confident and proud of what we have achieved, proclaiming the positive aspects of the dispute, and the most important victory of all — the struggle itself. Let's not forget that without that struggle the pits would have been closed, and I submit that we had no alternative but to stand and fight. And indeed in the future we will have no alternative again.

Within our union and our communities, the strike brought forth revolutionary changes. I never tire of paying my tribute to young miners, whose courage and determination throughout the 12-month battle remain an inspiration to us all. Our union must continue to fully involve them at all levels, to provide education and to tap their tremendous energy and skills to the fullest for the use of this union in the fight to save our pits and jobs.

#### Women's support groups

I also take this opportunity, yet again, to pay my tribute to the magnificent force which has emerged to take its rightful place alongside the NUM — the women's support groups. No words of mine can pay adequate tribute to their historic contribution to our common struggle. I believe I speak on behalf of [NUM Vice-president] Michael McGahey and [NUM Secretary] Peter Heathfield as well when I say that nothing gives me greater pride than my association with the Women Against Pit Closures campaign, and those brilliant women who organized and supported that campaign. There is absolutely no doubt that their collective strength is crucial to the fight that still lies ahead of us.

For the NUM, the tasks ahead present the greatest challenge any trade union ever faced. We must build from this conference a united fight — united on policies and on principles. We must intensify the fight to save pits, jobs, and communities, knowing that in the present climate only industrial action can stave the pit closure program and the decimation of our mining communities. If we don't involve ourselves with other unions in this industry, if we don't take decisions this week that will unite our union, then we are showing the green light to the Coal Board to come forward with a program that will slaughter our industry, and no area will be exempt from that program of attack.

We must demand, indeed we have a right to demand, from the rest of the movement — and in particular from the leadership of the Labor Party and the TUC — a firm

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## The Depression and the labor movement's initial fightback

Continued from ISR/2

generating Comintern were now challenged to develop the political skills to deal with these problems. The best help in this regard was to be found in the political experience and capacity that Trotsky had learned as part of the leadership team of the Soviet republic and Comintern forged by Lenin.

The CLA had some advantages over the majority of European organizations in dealing with these problems. In general, it was a more politically homogeneous leadership, and more working-class in composition. Many, including Cannon — a veteran of the Industrial Workers of the World and a leader of the CP-led International Labor Defense founded in 1925 — had backgrounds as leaders in working-class struggles going back a decade or more. In addition, most had previously been leading members in the Communist Party, where they had been won to a revolutionary working-class perspective. Of special note was the CLA's Minneapolis branch, which included virtually the entire former leadership of the CP in that city, leaders with considerable experience inside the labor movement.

### Avoiding a split

Under the impact of the formidable pressures the CLA confronted, however, this collaboration began to fracture. In particular, frictions that had developed in 1929 between Cannon and Max Shachtman — the CLA's two most prominent founding leaders — broke out into a bitter faction fight in early 1932.

The factional struggle divided the nine-person National Committee elected in 1931 as follows:

The Cannon group included Vincent R. Dunne and Carl Skoglund, formerly central leaders of the Minnesota CP, who were seasoned revolutionists with long experience in the trade unions; Hugo Oehler, an organizer with experience in miners' struggles in the West and in the CP's textile-organizing drive in the South; and Arne Swabeck (referred to as Ben Webster in *The History of American Trotskyism*), a founding central leader of the CP with many years' experience in trade union work in Chicago.

The Shachtman group included Shachtman himself, who had spent most of his time in the CP as an editor for the youth paper or for the International Labor Defense's monthly journal; Martin Abern, a founding leader of the CP youth with experience as a district organizer and an assistant to Cannon in the ILD; Maurice Spector, a founding leader and former national chairman of the Canadian CP, who had edited its paper and was working as a college professor after his expulsion; and Albert Glotzer, who had been a leader of the CP youth.

By early 1933 the faction fight had reached such a degree of intensity that the CLA faced the danger of a split lacking a sufficient political basis. Such an outcome would have dealt a body blow to revolutionary Marxism in the United States for many years to come.

There were some differences between Cannon and Shachtman, especially over Shachtman's work as international representative of the league in Europe. Shachtman had intervened on the side of various cliques and groupings in several European sections, giving the misimpression that his views on these internal disputes reflected those of the CLA leadership. This had led to political conflicts between Shachtman, on the one hand, and Trotsky and other European ILO leaders, on the other.

Cannon and Shachtman also had a different approach on how to go about building a professional staff and effective leadership committees.

None of these differences, however, were either deep enough or sufficiently clear at this point to explain the factional heat generated around them in the National Committee.

Although the National Committee was unanimous on every big political question, it was nonetheless often paralyzed. The committee of the NC members resident in New York — the day-to-day leading body — often found itself deadlocked, unable to act on practical matters. In addition, the league's finances, on shaky ground to begin with because of high unemployment and inexperience in organizing financial matters, were further disrupted by factionalism, as Schachtman's followers expressed their disagreement with some projects by withholding contributions to the national office.

The Cannon group, which had a slim majority on the National Committee as a whole, grew increasingly impatient with this situation. Following a unanimous vote on the international resolution at the June 1932 NC plenum, which appeared to signal a resolution of the conflict, the Cannon group moved to coopt two more of its supporters onto the NC to assure a working majority on the resident NC in New York. This proposal was then submitted to the membership for approval in a referendum, since the CLA constitution provided that NC members could be elected only by a convention. Heated discussions erupted in the branches. Not only Shachtman's supporters but other CLA members asked: Why do we need cooptations

when the National Committee is unanimous on all questions? The majority of the membership voted against the cooptations.

In early 1933 Swabeck was scheduled to go to Europe as the CLA representative for discussions with Trotsky and the European sections. Prior to Swabeck's departure, he and Cannon proposed a new reorganization of the resident NC. They formed a Political Committee composed of Cannon, Oehler, and Shachtman. As a result, Abern was now the only NC member resident in New York not on the new body, which had a two-to-one majority for Cannon's faction.

The Shachtman faction protested these moves by the NC majority. Shachtman demanded a quick national conference, where — on the basis of the referendum vote — he expected to gain a majority.

This was the situation when Swabeck and Trotsky began to discuss the fight in the CLA during their meetings in Turkey in February 1933. Trotsky was soon able to convince Swabeck, and through him Cannon, that organizational concessions by the majority were necessary to deescalate the internal tensions, avoid a split, and enable the CLA to advance. Trotsky also convinced Shachtman, who had been sent by the CLA to Europe around this same time, of the need for steps to lessen organizational frictions, including an end to his supporters' financial and leadership boycott. (The transcripts of some of Trotsky's discussions with Swabeck on this and other subjects have been published in *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1932-33)*, *Writings of Leon Trotsky Supplement (1929-33)*, and *Leon Trotsky on Black Nationalism and Self-Determination*, all published by Pathfinder Press.)

It was through Trotsky's assistance that the CLA leaders were able to extricate themselves from the factional war. Four of Trotsky's letters are included as appendices to this book, containing his views of the CLA's crisis and his suggestions for overcoming it. In one of these letters, "The Situation in the American League," Trotsky analyzed the causes of the conflict:

"The lack of progress in the movement which has been the case aroused all sorts of personal antagonisms, group antagonisms, or local antagonisms. The same lack of progress in the movement does not permit these antagonisms to take on a political character. This has given and still gives the struggle an exceedingly poisoned character in the absence of a principled content clear to everybody. Members of the organization do not learn anything from such a struggle. They are forced to group themselves according to personal attachments, sympathies and antipathies. The struggle of the groups becomes in its turn an obstacle to the further progress of the movement."

"It is quite possible," he went on, "that in this struggle there are contained valid principled differences in embryonic form. Nevertheless it is unfortunate that the two groups anticipate too much and sharpen the organizational struggle between the groups and the members altogether out of proportion with the development of political work and of the questions raised by the latter."

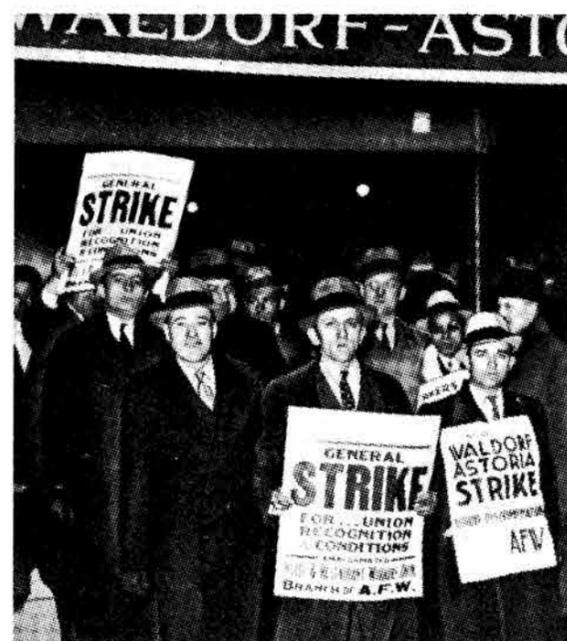
Trotsky added that "it is impossible not to see the harmful influence of the methods and the procedure of the epigone Comintern, which has accustomed an entire generation to seek a way out of all sorts of difficulties through apparatus combinations at the expense of the whole organization."

It was these factors that were leading the CLA to a split. "A split under these conditions," Trotsky wrote, "would have a purely a priori character, a preventive one, so to speak, one that is incomprehensible to all except those who initiate the split. If it is difficult for us, the leading members of the International Left Opposition, to grasp the motives of the ferocious struggle, the American workers, including the members of the League itself, would be all the less capable of understanding the causes of a split. This kind of split at the top would infinitely shatter the authority of both groups and compromise the cause of the Left Opposition in America for a long time."

Trotsky was confident that an expansion of the CLA's work within the organizations of the working class and the recruitment of workers would facilitate the league to find a solution to the crisis. For this to occur, however, it was necessary to buy some time for a change in the political situation. Trotsky suggested a series of proposals designed to restore normal leadership functioning within the organization and prevent a split.

The result of Trotsky's political guidance was an agreement in May 1933 by the leadership of both factions to end the fight. This achievement made possible the CLA's further political advance and organizational strengthening over the next period.

As Trotsky predicted, the next round of differences that emerged in the CLA leadership did not reproduce those from the past, but revealed new alignments on the basis of new tasks and challenges facing the movement. One of the documents toward the end of this book, "The Record of the CLA Leadership," notes how the differing



1934 New York hotel workers' strike

political perspectives that emerged in the National Committee in late 1934 cut across the previous factional divisions. In particular, the collaboration of Cannon and Shachtman was restored, lasting until 1939.

"To be sure," Cannon later acknowledged, "the definitive split did eventually take place — in 1940. But that was seven years later, over principled differences and political disputes of such depth and scope as to be clear to everybody. Meantime the party did some good work despite internal friction. Following the truce and the developments of mass work new alignments took place and the eventual split, which came in 1940, after the political differences were fully matured and explainable to all, had a salutary effect on the further development of the party, as we all know!" The record of the 1939-40 political struggle against Shachtman's anti-Marxist opposition can be found in Cannon's *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party* and Trotsky's *In Defense of Marxism*.

The resolution of the factional struggle in the CLA took place against the background of big changes in the political situation both in the United States and internationally. These developments posed a series of major new tasks and challenges.

### Defeat of German working class

On Jan. 30, 1933, Adolf Hitler was appointed chancellor of Germany, and in March he seized dictatorial power. The victory of German fascism and the crushing defeat of capitalist Europe's largest and most powerfully organized working-class movement was a historic blow to the proletariat internationally. It set the stage for the onset of the second inter-imperialist world war.

The Nazi victory in Germany had not been inevitable. It was hastened by a betrayal by the two mass German workers' parties: the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party. Together these two parties had the support of the overwhelming majority of the German working class.

For several years prior to 1933, the Nazis had been rapidly expanding their mass base among small business people and professionals, as millions became desperate at the prospects of being ruined by the capitalist crisis. It also attracted certain layers of declassed and permanently jobless youth. Moreover, dominant sections of the German bourgeoisie had become convinced that a Nazi accession to power was now the only way to destroy the organized working-class movement and prevent a challenge to capitalist rule.

Escalating attacks by armed Nazi gangs on the unions, CP, and Social Democrats posed the need for a united front of the two main workers' parties to defend the interests and organizations of the working class through militant action. Such a united front had the potential power to defeat the fascist forces. Through decisive action and by presenting a program to offer a way out of the capitalist crisis, the working-class forces could have rallied large sections of the disoriented middle classes to the side of the proletariat. It could have forged a fighting alliance with the exploited farmers, a substantial proportion of Germany's population at the time.

The International Left Opposition urgently campaigned for a CP-Social Democratic united front against the Nazis and in defense of the interests of working people. The ILO pointed out that if the CP launched such a campaign, pressure from the workers who still looked to the reformist Social Democratic Party could force it to participate. The Stalinists, however, adopted the opposite course. Under the influence of the ultra-left "third

period" line, the CP centered its fire not on the Nazis but on the Social Democrats, terming them "social fascists." Until a few months prior to Hitler's victory, the CP was still spurning all calls for joint action with the Social Democrats to fight Nazism. The CP's sectarian policy suited the Social Democratic officials. These misleaders put their faith in liberal, "democratic," capitalist forces, and were not eager for a working-class united front against Hitler.

This default by the CP and the Social Democrats opened the door to a Nazi victory that encountered virtually no opposition, stunning class-struggle-minded workers around the world — including many who had previously looked to the Stalinists and Social Democrats. A certain number began to listen for the first time to Trotsky and the International Left Opposition, who had been sounding the alarm and presenting a Marxist perspective for the fight against fascism in Germany since the outset of the 1930s.

In the wake of this historic defeat, the leadership of the German CP and the Comintern refused to assess the errors of its disastrous policy and return to a revolutionary course. The ranks of the Stalinist-led organization had been so whipped into line by the preceding purges and slander campaigns that this betrayal by their leaders did not result in any significant shake-up or reassessment of views regarding the policies of the bureaucratic caste in Moscow.

This default convinced the International Left Opposition that the Comintern could no longer be looked to as the force from which a new revolutionary Marxist leadership would emerge. Those seeking to restore a consistent internationalist course of advancing the fight against world imperialism could no longer focus their energies on winning a majority committed to reforming these organizations. New Parties and a new International Left Opposition issued a call for the construction of a Fourth International.

The CLA leaders enthusiastically endorsed this shift in strategic orientation. No longer would their axis in building the CLA be that of convincing CP militants to wage a battle to return the party to revolutionary Marxism. The task of building a revolutionary party in the United States now necessitated looking in other directions — toward increasing the CLA's participation in the organized working-class movement, which in the fifth year of the depression was finally starting to organize and fight back on a significant level. The CLA now set out to win workers from the CP, SP, and other forces to this party-building orientation in the midst of the labor upsurge that was beginning.

#### Workers start to fight back

In 1933 workers in the United States were beginning to recover from the initial shock of the Great Depression. This coincided with a partial economic upturn. As many workers returned to the job and the unions began to reverse their decline in size, a feeling of rising confidence and willingness to struggle emerged in the ranks of labor.

Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt had been inaugurated as president in March 1933 and went on to proclaim a "New Deal," raising the expectations of many workers. The aim of Roosevelt and the Democratic Party, however, was to make the workers and exploited farmers pay for the measures that could help stimulate an upturn in the capitalist economy. Spending from government New Deal programs flowed overwhelmingly to the big industrialists, bankers, and landlords.

Roosevelt had no intention of "giving" the workers and working farm families anything. They had to fight for each and every improvement in their conditions. Gains won by the working class over the next half decade such as industrial unions, social security, unemployment insurance, and cash relief were conquered through hard-fought and often bloody struggles involving millions of workers. These gigantic battles reinforced the fight of working farmers, who also won important gains, including government-funded credit programs and rural electrification. These fresh winds also gave an impetus to the struggle by Blacks against Jim Crow segregation and lynchings in the South, as well as miserable slum conditions and racist discrimination in the North.

The first strike wave of the decade began in early 1933. As a result of this upsurge, the Roosevelt administration and Congress were pressured to include provisions expanding workers' rights to organize as part of the first major New Deal reform bill — the National Industrial Recovery Act (NRA). The NRA was by no means a prolabor policy, however. It set up production codes that exempted industries from antitrust laws, established low minimum wages, and upheld the employers' "right" to victimize union militants on the basis of "merit." Nonetheless, unions made use of the NRA to sign up new members. The United Mine Workers grew by 30,000 in two months; the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union by 150,000; and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers by 50,000.

Washington quickly showed where it stood when workers fought for union rights. The government used injunctions, troops, police, special deputies, labor spies, and criminal syndicalism laws against the workers. In the

second half of 1933, fifteen strikers were killed, two hundred injured, and hundreds arrested. The 1933 strike wave ended in a series of defeats, although it signaled a new wave of militancy and willingness to struggle.

Despite the gains registered by some unions, the AFL leaders as a whole did little to organize the unorganized under the NRA. But the workers had shown in 1933 that they were ready to move. And it was the cadre of socialist and communist organizations who provided leadership for the first successful organizing strikes of that period in 1934, working through AFL unions.

Through militant and nationally publicized strikes in February, May, and July-August 1934, Teamsters General Drivers Local 574 in Minneapolis won union recognition and forced significant concessions from the employers. Among the central leaders of these strikes were members and sympathizers of the CLA, including National Committee members V.R. Dunne and Carl Skoglund, and Farrell Dobbs, who was won to the CLA during these struggles. Organized democratically to mobilize the power of the ranks, Local 574 built alliances with unemployed workers and with farmers, organized a women's auxiliary, published a daily strike newspaper, held daily mass strike meetings, fielded flying picket squads, and effectively defended itself against armed attacks by cops and special deputies. The victories scored by Local 574 opened the way to organizing truck drivers, including over-the-road drivers, and warehouse workers on an industrial basis throughout the Midwest.

At the Toledo Electric Auto-Lite plant, members of an AFL federal local (chartered by the national federation, not by one of its craft-based affiliates) went on strike in mid-April and were hit with an antipicketing injunction. They looked for help to the local unemployed league, which was led by the American Workers Party, and more than 10,000 people were mobilized to defy the injunction. The strikers and their supporters held their ground in a six-day battle with police and the National Guard that nearly led to a general strike. The union won a contract, which helped open the way for the organization of the auto industry.

A third battle came in July 1934 in San Francisco. There a strike by longshore and maritime workers was being led by radicals, some in or around the CP, others influenced by syndicalist notions. The chief leader, Harry Bridges, was close to the CP but did not follow its policy of sectarian abstention from the AFL unions. After police killed two workers, the union movement shut down the city with a general strike lasting four days and involving 125,000 workers. After the city's AFL leaders called off the general strike, vigilante gangs and cops smashed the headquarters of the left-wing groups and jailed more than 300 people. The eleven-week longshore strike finally ended with an agreement to arbitrate. Through continuing job actions over the next year the workers won the union hiring hall, thereby reducing the bosses' ability to discriminate against union militants in hiring and increasing the workers' power on the job. This struggle opened the way for the organization of industrial labor on the West Coast.

These three class battles in 1934 set the stage for the massive organizing drives in steel, rubber, auto, and other mass-production industries that were the key element in the rise of the CIO, which was founded the following year.

#### Breaking out of the isolation

These changes in the objective situation enabled the CLA to begin breaking out of its isolation. As Cannon described it, the CLA now had the opportunity to make a "turn to mass work" in the trade unions and other organizations of the working class. Opportunities began to open up for work within unemployed organizations, including those led by the CP that had previously excluded CLA members.

In early 1933 the CLA faced its first significant opening for trade union work, among Illinois coal miners who had recently formed the Progressive Miners of America. Many of Cannon's articles and letters in this volume were written to help guide CLA members involved in this work. They contain useful lessons about the CLA's efforts to work out and apply a communist approach to strategy and tactics in the trade unions.

This collection also includes writings by Cannon on the CLA's participation in the leadership of two 1934 trade union battles: the New York hotel workers' strike, and the Minneapolis Teamsters strikes, the latter of which brought the CLA to national attention. Through its leadership of the Minneapolis Teamsters movement, the CLA was also gaining rich experience in relating to the reformist-led Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party. During this period the CLA was not calling for the creation of a labor party based on the trade unions, but its experiences in Minnesota were useful to the league when it changed its policy in 1938, placing the labor party demand in a central place in its program.

As a result of taking advantage of the new political openings in 1933-34, recruitment began to pick up, and by the end of this period the CLA had grown to 400 members. The circulation of the *Militant* was climbing.

In *The History of American Trotskyism* Cannon de-

scribes why the CLA was able to respond effectively to the new openings: "After five years of struggle our ranks had become consolidated on a firm programmatic foundation. They had been educated in the great principled questions, had acquired facility in explaining them, and in applying them to the events of the day. . . . It was precisely that period of isolation, hardship, discussion, study and assimilation of theoretical ideas that prepared our young movement for this new time of bloom when the movement was opening up in all directions."

The CLA also began to look more closely at other left-wing organizations that were being affected by these political developments and that seemed to contain currents moving in a class-struggle direction. "In all workers organizations there was ferment and change," Cannon pointed out. "One who had a political eye could see that things were really happening now, and that this was not the time to be sitting in the library mulling over principles. This was the time for action on these principles; this was the time to be right on top of things, to take advantage of every opportunity presented by the new developments in the other organizations and movements. . . . We invited all groupings, whoever they might be, who were interested in forming a new revolutionary party and a new International, to discuss with us the basis of the program."

Most important of these forces was the American Workers Party, led by A.J. Muste. The AWP had developed from the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, founded in 1929. Its politics had become more radical through participation in struggles of miners, textile workers, and the unemployed; and it was attracting revolutionary workers.

In January 1934 the CLA took the initiative and proposed discussions with the AWP. These discussions began soon after, and in December led to the fusion of the two groups. This marked the first significant fusion on the U.S. left since 1921.

The new party was named the Workers Party of the United States. It continued to pay particular attention to the development of new revolutionary currents, especially to the militants who were joining the Socialist Party. The SP had been in decline throughout the 1920s, but the radicalizing conditions of the early 1930s were attracting militant workers and students to it. This helped lead to the development of a significant left wing that clashed with the policies of the right-wing leadership. The WP sought to influence this current, at first from outside, and later by entering the SP in 1936. That will be the subject of a future volume in this series.

#### Material not previously published

James P. Cannon did all he could to further the CLA's turn to mass work. Even during the "dog days," Cannon had always sought to respond to any openings in the trade unions and other mass organizations. He recognized that the best conditions for overcoming the league's problems would be created when it began to recruit workers and transform its internal political life. He spoke to conferences of miners and the unemployed, wrote about them in the *Militant*, and collaborated with CLA trade unionists in strike battles they were involved in. He argued within the National Committee for more leadership attention to and involvement in this work.

Cannon eagerly embraced the new opportunities in 1933-34 to turn the league outward toward the broader labor movement. As he remarked in an unpublished interview before his death in 1974, "My aspiration was always outward. I started in the Wobblies as a soapboxer, an agitator."

The CLA's turn to mass work affected him personally to a degree that was noticeable even to his factional opponents. Albert Glotzer remarked in a letter to Shachtman in February 1933 that Cannon appeared warm and happy for the first time in four years after his trip to the Illinois coal fields.

None of the material by Cannon included in this collection is currently in print. In addition to previously published articles from the *Militant* and elsewhere, this volume contains a number of unpublished items from Cannon's private papers. Among these are many of Cannon's letters and circulars, as well as reports and motions contained in the CLA National Committee minutes.

This volume does not contain all of Cannon's writings and speeches that are available from this period. Left out are articles and letters of a routine character, or those of less general interest, as well as those which are repetitive of other items that are included. Since almost all of Cannon's speeches from this period have been preserved in the form of outline notes rather than transcripts, only three speeches are included.

In addition, Cannon's articles from the *Organizer*, the daily strike newspaper of Minneapolis Teamsters Local 574 in 1934 are contained in *Notebook of an Agitator* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1973), and are therefore not included here.

Since many of the events and individuals mentioned in this volume will be obscure to present-day readers, extensive editorial notes have been provided, along with a glossary of names and organizations at the end of the book.

# Desegregation of the Boston schools — 10 years later

Continued from ISR/3

the dual school system. This was an important victory for all working people.

## Results since the victory

Within the Boston public school system, a decade of desegregation has notched impressive advances.

"Apartheid in the Boston school system," said Thomas Atkins, one of the central leaders of the Boston desegregation struggle in the 1970s, "was ended in 1974."

Atkins was president of the Boston NAACP and one of the legal counsels for Black parents who initiated the civil rights suit that spurred the Garry order. Atkins went on to become general counsel for the NAACP nationally.

"Racial prejudice," he told the *Militant*, "has lessened. Parents have more access to the schools, as part of the court order," he noted. "The system is a far more open place."

"The [racist] old boy network [in the school department] does not operate to some extent," the Black attorney explained. "Although it is not totally dead."

"There has been academic improvement," Atkins continued. "There are far more Black teachers, teacher-aides, administrators, and staff people."

Indeed, prior to desegregation, barely 5 percent of the teachers were Black. Now fully a quarter of them are, despite big layoffs several years ago. A decade ago there wasn't a single Black administrator in a majority-white school; now that's changed totally, on a city-wide basis.

A recent report on student achievement in standardized testing in reading and math reflected a "narrowed gap in the upper grades" between Black and white students, most of whom have been through the desegregation process since the early grades.

Black students exceeded the national norm in math scores through the sixth grade, a figure inconceivable prior to desegregation.

As one Black graduate of the desegregated system, an auto worker at Framingham's sprawling General Motors plant put it, "I finally got to use a microscope."

According to the Boston School Department, Black students achieving basic competency in reading in the second grade jumped from 67 percent to 92 percent between 1981-84; from 77 percent to 80 percent in grade five in the same period; and from 75 percent to 79 percent in the same years in the eighth grade.

A similar increase in mathematics competency was also recorded, as well as in writing.

In the same 1981-84 period, Latino students recorded increases in reading, math, and writing. So did whites — for instance, white student achievement of basic reading competency rose from 80 percent to 97 percent in the second grade between 1981-84. And white student achievement in mathematics rose from 76 percent to 97 percent in the fifth grade in the same years.

The overall general improvement of basic skills by Blacks, Latinos, and whites in the desegregated system reaffirms the fact that while particularly benefiting historic victims of racism — Blacks and Latinos — desegregation has never adversely affected the achievement of white students. On the contrary, the achievement of white students improved, despite the lies of the racist opponents of busing.

In fact, fewer students in Boston are being bused today to achieve desegregation — both in numbers and percentage — than were bused to maintain segregation under the former dual school system, according to computer printouts from the Boston public school system.

Unfortunately, the city's school department has failed to keep comparative figures for Black college enrollment prior to or during the years of desegregation, but many observers of the plan note increased Black student entry into higher education.

Court-appointed desegregation "expert" Robert Dentler states desegregation has ended "the cruel and unconstitutional isolation of the Black students."

As well, he stated, the order "brought bilingual education to Boston, although it had long been required under state law, but ignored. [Garry] forced the city to introduce special education, which as a state law was being denied to thousands of children."

Finally, according to Martin Walsh, director of community relations for the U.S. Justice Department, the implementation of desegregation ended the politics of "never" — the racist code word that announced the aim of Democrats here to keep Black and white students apart.

## Changes at Southie

This gain is one of *consciousness*, of the breaking down of racist prejudice and its replacement, over time and through practical experience, by *solidarity* between Black, Latino, and white working class youths who attend the public schools.

This slow transformation is highlighted in South Bos-

ton High School, which was the hub of racist violence and bitter opposition to school busing in the early 1970s, the lingering effects of which obstructed education into the latter part of that decade.

On Dec. 11, 1974, at South Boston High School, after a corridor skirmish during which a Black student defended himself against a white attacker, up to 1,000 white South Bostonians — speedily organized by local racist organizations — encircled the embattled building on G Street.

Decoy buses were smashed as police escorted Black students from the school to other buses, while the mob chanted, "Bus 'em back to Africa!" and "Niggers eat shit!"

An ensuing police assault on the mob dispersed the hooligans. The school was then closed, to be reopened later under federal receivership by Judge Garry. Tension and violence marked the following months and years in the building.

But no more.

Today, according to Daniel Terris and Michael Tierney, who codirect the extracurricular Mosaic program at the high school, the institution belongs "very much in spirit to the South Boston, Roxbury, and Dorchester neighborhoods it serves."

Their article in the *Boston Globe Magazine* makes the point unmistakably: *desegregation works*.

The school's 800 students are 30 percent white, 42 percent Black, 15 percent Latino and 12 percent Asian.

The school newspaper is published in English, Spanish, and Khmer, the national language of Kampuchea.

Terris and Tierney reported that visitors to the school will "see students of all races shouting to one another and hanging on one another's sleeves in the hallway during period changes. . . . In recent years, the senior class officers have provided a particularly good example of integrated student leadership. In 1982-83, Cynthia Cropper of Roxbury ran against Anne Stanton of South Boston for class president. Cropper won, but she immediately stressed the importance of working together: 'She's got South Boston; I've got Roxbury; together, we're unbeatable.' The next day, Cropper sported an 'Anne Stanton for Class President' T-shirt. The following year, a predominantly Black senior class elected Richard Pelton of South Boston as class president."

Pointing to tutorial programs, increased extracurricular activities, multiracial classes, and the atmosphere of working together, Terris and Tierney cite "enormous progress" since the explosions of the past.

One white Southie student indicated the ground covered — and the organized racist social pressure that still exists — when he told why he couldn't bring a friend from Roxbury to visit him in his project apartment. White thugs might attack the Black. "And then I'd have to beat them up," he said.

## Changing consciousness

This change in social consciousness is not limited to Southie High, or South Boston, or the school system.

It reflects broader social changes in the city's working class.

Thousands more Blacks, Latinos, and Asians, have entered the workforce since 1974.

They have higher expectations about their rights because of the victory embodied in the desegregation struggle and its benefits for their children.

# Scargill evaluates British miners' strike

Continued from ISR/5

commitment in our action, in our fight for the coal industry and for our jobs.

The case to protect our communities and mining families is irrefutable — but never forget that it is inextricable from the *economic* case for coal, and it is on our economic case against pit closures that we urge the Labor Party and TUC to campaign in Parliament and throughout the nation.

Looking ahead, one immediate task that faces us — and the movement — is building the campaign to release our members, jailed as political prisoners fighting against pit closures. We must win reinstatement at work for our members sacked during and since the end of the strike. This task is as crucial to the union as the fight to save the industry itself.

This conference is a vital one. It follows a historic strike which has united communities as never before. It is true to say that in 1984-85, for the first time in 50 years, many of our people discovered the real meaning of the word "community."

I call in this presidential address in 1985 on all sections of our union to take strength from the lessons of 1984-

A reflection of this change is indicated by the stance of current mayor Raymond Flynn, who as a South Boston state legislator in the early 1970s was a prominent leader of racist forces opposed to desegregation.

Flynn now postures as a mayor of "all the people." He is on record in favor of divesting Boston city pensions from corporations doing business in South Africa. His opponent in the 1983 mayoral campaign, former Democratic state legislator Melvin King, who was beaten up by cops during a protest effort to desegregate Carson Beach in 1975, was able to campaign virtually without incident in that community. King is Black.

## New threats to desegregation

Despite the impressive achievements of a decade of school desegregation, there are new attempts under way to roll back those gains. They come as the U.S. government and employing class step up their war drive abroad, particularly in Central America, and attacks on the social, economic, and democratic rights of working people at home.

After proclaiming his desire more than three years ago to leave the desegregation case and return control of the school system to the Boston School Committee, Judge Garry now appears ready to do so.

A poll of the Black community in 1982 indicated 73 percent of those asked believed his withdrawal would be viewed as a setback for civil rights.

But many others see Garry's departure as a boon. Like, for example, the most vocal champions of a full-scale "overhaul" of a decade of desegregation — the liberal editors of the *Boston Globe*.

The *Globe* has waged a lengthy and extensive campaign of regular editorials blasting away at Black attorney Thomas Atkins, who remains committed to desegregation, and at Garry. The *Globe* rails against the "unworkable" plan and its "1950s solution" — busing, quotas, and the very concept that desegregation first and foremost is aimed at *winning Black equality in education*. Instead, the *Globe's* liberal bigots announce that "quality education" is the goal — the anti-Black code word used by the previous generation of racist foes of desegregation.

The *Globe* has also chimed in with salvos against the current bilingual education program, which is a necessity for thousands of the system's students, more than a quarter of whom are Latino and Asian.

And despite the changes in Boston, racist gang attacks, police brutality, racist harassment, housing discrimination, and the other features of racist oppression and victimization that are institutionalized in capitalist society continue to be faced by Blacks, Latinos, and Asians.

These are the realities and challenges that confront Boston's Black community and other working people as the second decade of desegregation begins.

But the fact is, the Black community and its potentially powerful allies in the labor movement and the Latino and Asian communities stand on a better footing today to defend school desegregation than when the buses began to roll in the fall of 1974.

Because of the real improvements in the quality of education, desegregation is more widely accepted by working people — Black, Latino, Asian, and white. This fact makes it more possible to organize a determined, united response by trade unionists, Black rights' activists, and others to the new attempts by racist forces to bring back the type of segregation that existed in the Boston schools prior to 1974.

85, and from the fact that we are all part of a national union.

Our union's contribution to history and to humanity is in itself a triumph — let our great strike be the beginning of the fight not only to save jobs and pits, but to strengthen our union, and help create the conditions for electing a Labor government pledged to fulfill the aims and principles upon which the NUM was founded.

Colleagues, when we go from this hall at the end of this week, leave with confidence and pride. Lift your eyes and go into the coalfields and campaign. Recognize the achievement of the 1984-85 dispute. You have written history. Let there be no doubt about what your achievements are — that the only way to sustain our industry, the only way to save our jobs and our pits, is to fight yet again with the same determination, the same courage, and the same pride that brought us together in a way never seen before. Let each and every one of us, from every single area of the British coalfields, dedicate ourselves to the task of carrying out the policy decisions of this conference. As president, I pledge myself to that task. I ask [the] conference to equally pledge itself to the task as well. Together we cannot fail.

# U.S. backs S. Africa as Blacks protest

Continued from front page

were occurring in many townships.

On July 31 the South African rulers announced sweeping restrictions on funerals for victims of the racist regime's terror, including a ban on outdoor services. Funerals had provided one of the forums in which the Black majority protested the apartheid system.

The failure of the apartheid regime to decisively crush the protests, together with broadening international protests against complicity with apartheid, forced the U.S. government to state publicly its judgement that the state of emergency was not working.

On July 27 White House media spokesman Larry Speakes called for an "expedited" end to the state of emergency. "I think the continuing violence and bloodshed there... has not abated, and it's clear that this is not bringing about the type of results that we want."

Speakes said that the U.S. government would continue to give top priority to "maintaining close contacts with the South African government."

Speakes issued the statement after the French and British governments condemned the state of emergency. The French government recalled its ambassador to South Africa and barred new investments in South Africa.

Washington was also mildly critical of South African Prime Minister Pieter Botha's refusal to meet with Bishop Desmond Tutu, a leader of the anti-apartheid movement. Botha said he would meet only with "people who denounce violence and civil disobedience." Tutu has supported civil disobedience as a means of protesting apartheid.

In response to the administration's more critical tone, the South African government asked its ambassador to Washington to return home for consultations.

Despite the diplomatic tension, the U.S. rulers remain steadfast in their support to Pretoria. This is justified with the claim that the Black upsurge is incapable of bringing down the apartheid government or

improving the situation of Blacks.

"Sharpeville blew over, and Soweto blew over, and even though this is worse, there's nowhere it can really go," the July 29 *New York Times* quoted a State Department official as saying.

The South African regime massacred 67 demonstrators in a protest in the township of Sharpeville in 1960. The previous state of emergency was declared then. The African National Congress was banned, and most of its prominent leaders were arrested. Nelson Mandela was captured and jailed in 1962.

In 1976 and 1977, the regime murdered at least 575 people in suppressing a wave of protests that centered in Soweto.

Another U.S. official reiterated the government's stand that anti-apartheid protests in South Africa are the obstacle to "reform": "The riots will stop even the glacial pace of internal reform," he claimed.

While government officials present the South African rulers as invulnerable to internal protest and revolt, there is growing concern. The same *Times* article cited a recent State Department study that worried that the struggle against the apartheid regime had entered "a new stage." The report took note of the broad identification South Africa's Black youth are expressing for the

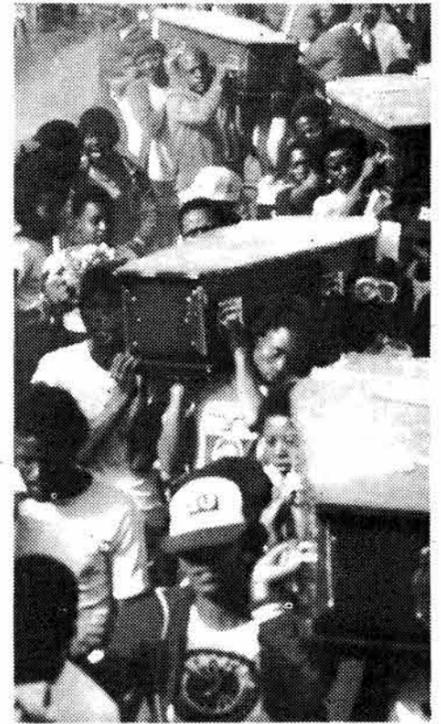
outlawed African National Congress.

"A wide range of administration officials," the *Times* said, "expressed the view that unless progress was made toward power sharing with the Black majority this would eventually lead to an explosion."

These officials expressed "even greater concern," according to the *Times*, about an "overreaction" against apartheid in the United States. They fear the spread of protests that could potentially cripple Washington's capacity to come to the aid of the racist regime in the face of a deepening Black revolt.

The July 31 decision by the House and Senate conferees to present a common bill that would impose mild sanctions on South Africa reflects the concern that the White House policy of "constructive engagement" — political and economic support for South Africa's rulers — is not working and that something different must be done to pressure the Pretoria regime to modify its form of rule. It also reflects the impact of the growing anti-apartheid protests in this country.

The brutal repression in South Africa and the U.S. government's determination to help the South African regime make the upcoming October 11 anti-apartheid protests all the more important.



Mass funerals for victims of racist violence are a form of protest in South Africa.

## Laotian women celebrate anniversary

BY SELVA NEBBIA

NEW YORK — "The Lao women are more and more aware of their political and social position and role within the national fabric," said Amphone Vongsay, wife of the Laotian ambassador to the United Nations, at a reception held July 20 by the Lao mission to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Lao Women's Union.

"They realized that they have to continue to wage a long and difficult struggle to attain complete liberation in all fields to make the principle of 'equality of men and women' a tangible reality, thus making

themselves a new type of women, that is socialist women," she added.

The reception was attended by women from Vietnam, the Soviet Union, and Cuba, as well as by North American and other supporters of the people of Laos.

The Lao Women's Organization was formed in July of 1955. Organized into small groups, it did work among women throughout the country. Today it has a membership of more than 426,000 women.

This year Laos celebrated the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The old regime was brought down after decades of struggle by masses of people of all ethnic groups and social strata against French colonialism and later U.S. imperialism.

"This historic event opened up for the entire Lao people a new era, that of peace, independence, unity, and socialism," said Vongsay.

Women played a very important role in the liberation struggle and in rebuilding a country that was devastated by U.S. imperialism's war against Indochina.

Laos is one of the poorest countries in the world. This year the first census ever conducted was taken. Laos has a population of more than 3.5 million people. Of those, 1.8 million are women. About 8 per-

cent of the population is engaged in agriculture. And women make up 60 percent of the total work force in the agricultural sector.

Illiteracy has been virtually eliminated in a country that had a literacy rate of only 35 percent in 1975. About half the teachers in Laos are women, said Vongsay. Women play a major role in health care, too. Fifty percent of health care workers are female.

Today, explained Vongsay, the Lao women's Union organizes and mobilizes the women of Laos for two main tasks, "national defense and building socialism, and emancipation of women step by step."

National defense rates a high priority because of continued imperialist-backed attacks on Laos, including the government of Thailand's occupation of several Laotian towns, raids launched by counterrevolutionaries from camps in Thailand, and pressure from the Chinese government.

She concluded by saying that the women of Laos know that the gains they have made cannot be "separated from the precious and timely support given by their sisters of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, People's Republic of Kampuchea, the USSR, and other socialist countries as well as all peace- and justice-loving countries in the world."

## Oakland divests from S. Africa

BY ADJUA CODJOE

OAKLAND, Calif. — On July 30, the Oakland City Council's ordinance prohibiting all investments of city funds in banks or companies doing business in or with South Africa or Namibia went into effect.

The ordinance had been proposed by the Bay Area Free South Africa Movement (BAFSAM), an Oakland-based coalition of groups and individuals actively opposing South Africa's apartheid system. The ordinance had been proposed in May in challenge to the city council's own proposal.

The city council unanimously approved the ordinance at its July 9 meeting in front of an audience of more than 200 trade unionists, church and community groups, U.C. Berkeley students, and anti-apartheid activists who chanted divestment slogans and anti-apartheid chants.

The unanimous vote was not automatic. At the July 9 meeting, Mayor Lionel Wilson had recessed the meeting for an hour hoping to diffuse the crowd, which had been consistently mobilized by BAFSAM at all city council meetings where apartheid

was on the agenda. After the recess, the mayor, wearing a red ribbon, reconvened the meeting and voted for the proposal. Wilson had opposed the ordinance because of its potential impact on city finances. The city finance director had said the city could lose \$300,000 to \$1 million a year if the ordinance were implemented.

Oakland has an estimated \$150 million invested in institutions doing business in South Africa. Addressing these concerns, a compromise amendment was adopted that provided a waiver clause and flexibility around the city's possible inability to find acceptable banking institutions in the face of exceptional investment losses.

This vote was hailed as a victory by Lorenzo Carlisle, co-coordinator of BAFSAM, who is a longtime union activist and member of the International Association of Machinists. Carlisle said that BAFSAM, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, and International Longshore and Warehousemen's Union Local 10 plan to cosponsor a conference to discuss strengthening labor's fight against apartheid. It will be held August 17 in San Francisco.

## 300 protest apartheid in Seattle

BY DAN FEIN

SEATTLE — In response to the South African government's repressive "state of emergency," 100 people picketed and rallied at the Federal Building here the afternoon of July 23.

The action, sponsored by the Seattle Coalition Against Apartheid, was called on one day's notice.

A few downtown office workers joined the picket line after work when they saw signs and banners against South African apartheid and the U.S. government's support to it. The loudest chant was "Hey South Africa, don't you know? The state of emergency has to go."

A number of speakers at the rally spoke about the desperation of the Pretoria gov-

ernment. Rev. Samuel McKinney, Washington state cochairperson of the Rainbow Coalition, said, "The people of South Africa have made up their minds that apartheid is over. Look at Vietnam, — the United States had all the fire-power, but the Vietnamese had the will. The sun is setting on apartheid."

Solidarity from the anti-apartheid struggle inside South Africa itself was brought by Randy Carter of the American Friends Service Committee. He had just returned from a trip to the Black-ruled neighboring states of South Africa where he spoke with South African freedom fighters, who asked him to take back a message of solidarity to anti-apartheid activists in the United States.

## 80 U.S. deaths in Central America

In the last four years, 80 U.S. citizens have died in Central America as a result of the U.S.-backed war in the region. The majority of these casualties were military personnel.

Approximately 40 North Americans died in Honduras. Twenty-one members of the U.S. armed forces died when their military transport crashed in that country and 19 others died in other accidents related to the constant U.S. military maneuvers on the Nicaraguan-Honduran border. One U.S. soldier died of an unknown disease. One U.S. civilian was recently shot to death by the Honduran army in the border area near Guatemala and El Salvador.

One U.S. army official died in a plane crash in Guatemala in January of this year. Three technicians from the Agency for International Development (AID) and from the U.S. Peace Corps in Guatemala died.

In March of this year two U.S. pilots died when their military jet crashed into a mountain in Panama.

Three CIA agents died in Nicaragua when their helicopter was downed after attacking a Sandinista People's Army installation.

In El Salvador no less than 17 members of the U.S. armed forces have died in that country's civil war. Seven U.S. civilians, including a unionist and two journalists have been murdered by the death squads in

that country. No one has ever been tried for any of these murders.

Finally, a December 1984 Knight-Ridder report revealed that 17 members of the 101st Airborne Division of the U.S. Army had died in secret military missions somewhere in Central America. These 17 casualties have never been made public by the Pentagon.

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# Area unions rally to support Bath strike

BY JOHN STUDER

BATH, Me. — Some 1,000 shipyard strikers, and their supporters from dozens of unions who came from as far away as New York City, marched and rallied here July 28 in solidarity with locals 6 and 7 of the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America (IUMSWA). These two locals have been forced to strike by Bath Iron Works (BIW), a part of the National Congoleum conglomerate.

Local 6, which organizes the 4,500 production workers, was forced out on strike July 1 by company demands for massive takebacks, including a three-year wage freeze, a two-tier contract starting new hires at \$3 an hour below workers now in the yard, job combinations, slashes in medical benefits, and other cutbacks. Local 7, which organizes over 300 shipyard clerical workers, has been on strike since the end of April.

The rally was held two days after the Maine press carried stories reporting a news conference held by Ray Ladd, president of Local 6. Ladd revealed that the union had obtained copies of BIW contracts to build three new ships for the navy in the coming years. BIW has justified its demands for concessions from the union by claiming that the concessions were built into the contracts in order to underbid competitors. Local 6 has consistently demanded that BIW open its books so everyone can see whether the company's claims are true. As Ladd stated at the press conference, "What we are saying is 'show us'."

"Is it a company that is so intent on making vast profits that it is prepared to sacrifice the morale of its work force to fatten its own pocketbook?" Ladd asked.

In reviewing the contracts the company is trying to hide, Local 6 showed that BIW will make a minimum profit of \$79 million on these three ships alone.

Contrasting these profit figures with company demands for cutbacks for the workers, Ladd explained, "What we do resent is outright greed disguised as the need to maintain a competitive position."

"We want a contract that is fair and reasonable," he said, and "we will continue to seek further information that will allow us to find out the real story."

Faced with the revelations, it is not surprising that BIW told the *Times Record* that



Bath shipyard workers leaving union meeting in Augusta, Maine, on June 30 after voting 3,500 to 25 to reject concessions contract.

it had "no immediate response" to the union news conference.

The July 28 march and rally was co-sponsored by the IUMSWA unions and the Maine AFL-CIO State Federation, which sent letters to all its affiliates urging them to participate.

Their letter explained: "An attack on one of us is an attack on all of us. Just recently management busted the unions at Marine Colloids in Rockland. The trades locals at S.D. Warren in Westbrook just recently concluded a very difficult strike. The Maine Legislature a few weeks ago enacted a Worker's Compensation law that is an attack on workers. The National Labor Relations Board is stacked against us. Management is forcing locals to eat up their treasuries on arbitration cases. More and more companies are demanding rollbacks in contract negotiations."

"The time has come for us to put our backs to the wall, and stand up against both management and government. The place to do this is at the rally in Bath, Sunday, July 28. We are going to be pushed around more and more unless we fight back in unity."

Participants marched at noon from the union headquarters across the street from the shipyard to a park in front of the Bath public library. The rally lasted until 4

p.m., featuring a number of local bands and speakers. The speakers included both strike leaders and supporters from other unions.

Ladd got the biggest response of the afternoon when he told the crowd that company officials called him up Wednesday night and told him that if the union took the information on their anticipated \$79 million profit public, they would "declare war."

"They're a little slow," Ladd explained, "they've already declared war and we are going to stick together and we're not going to take any concessions."

Other speakers included Paul Devlin, national vice-president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT); the president of Local 5 of the shipyard workers

from Quincy, Massachusetts, who have just been informed that General Dynamics plans to shut their yard, throwing them all out of work; Charles O'Leary, president of the Maine AFL-CIO; Paul Brilliant, president of clerical workers Local 7; and Milt Dudley, strike coordinator for Local 6.

Colorful banners and signs were carried both by strikers and unionists who had come to show their support. Rally emcee John Portela announced that among those present were representatives from four locals of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; the Metal Trades Council from a Maine ship overhaul facility; six International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers locals, including from New York and Boston; the Steelworkers; Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers; all seven Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union locals in Maine; International Union of Electronic Workers Local 201 from Lynn, Massachusetts; two Boilermakers locals; a big delegation from the Maine State Employees Association; the Maine chapter of Coalition of Labor Union Women; the AFT; the National Maritime Union; United Auto Workers; International Typographical Union; Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks; United Paperworkers; and Teamsters.

Rally participants felt that this was just the beginning of what will have to be ongoing solidarity activity to aid the shipyard workers in this battle.

The Maine AFL-CIO is organizing an ongoing food drive throughout the state to help striking workers. Local 6 is asking supporters to help contribute by sending financial contributions to: Local 6 Strike Fund, 722 Washington Street, Bath, Me. 04530.

## No life of luxury for strikers

BY JOHN STUDER

BATH, Me. — The 4,500 members of Local 6 of the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America, AFL-CIO, are locked in a fierce showdown with their Bath Iron Works employers. The company is demanding cutthroat takeback concessions from the workers.

The company, which has existed for 101 years on the shores of the Kennebec River here, has made careful preparations to keep the workers out as long as necessary in order to win deep concessions. As part of their antiunion drive, BIW hopes to take advantage of the isolated Maine geographic location of this town in order to isolate the strikers.

One weapon the company is using is its influence with the local media to paint a false picture of why the union is on strike and what the battle is about. Strikers know the real story — that the union is fighting first and foremost against the two-tier wage plan because it threatens the unity and solidarity of workers in the shipyard and the area. They know this would find deep support from workers all across the country, many of whom face similar corporate demands.

Milt Dudley, strike coordinator for Local 6, explains clearly the deep social significance of this fight. "What they are basically asking us to do is to sell out our own sons and daughters."

To disguise the real issues in the strike, the company is using its might to get the press to portray the shipyard workers as a greedy, overpaid "elite," selfishly demanding higher wages to enjoy a lavish lifestyle, oblivious to other workers in Maine and around the country who are facing tough times.

### A slanted interview

An article that appeared in the July 7 *Maine Sunday Telegram* is a perfect example of this Congoleum campaign. Entitled "BIW lifestyles on the line: strikers fighting to retain title of state's elite," the article grossly distorts the views and living conditions of Tom Deraspe, a shop steward and strike activist in the shipbuilders' local. After reading the article, I had a chance to discuss it, and the response it has provoked, with Deraspe as he walked the picket line.

The article opens, "The apartment is sleek, cool, comfortable, with thick car-

pets and chairs made for lounging and waterbeds in both bedrooms.

"A weight-lifting rig occupies one side of the living room. It belongs to Tom Deraspe's wife, Laurie. A rabbit hunkered in his unhappy cage takes up the other side."

(Milt Dudley explained to me that the reason the rabbit was "hunkered" down was that Abby Zimet, the reporter, brought her pet German Shepherd with her unannounced, and it was sitting in the middle of the living room.)

The article continues, "Tom Deraspe is sprawled on the generous couch. . . ."

It goes on, "Deraspe is typical in many ways of that work force: a force among the most well-paid, highly skilled, tightly organized, and elite group of workers in Maine."

"Their wages and skills — and the kind of cream-of-the-crop pride they've historically taken in both — place BIW workers well ahead of most other manufacturing workers in Maine."

It goes on, "He and his family live comfortably, if not sumptuously."

"There is, he says, 'always money for partying.'"

In case a reader of the article doesn't get the message as to what BIW workers should do, reporter Zimet adds an accompanying box entitled "Other yards trying wage cuts."

Of course, it is virtually impossible to write an article about the strike without some truth coming through.

And it quotes Deraspe on management's demand for cutbacks that are responsible for the strike.

"There's a corporate hobby going on across the country, and it's called union-busting," he says. "It's a big game, with big stakes. They want to take what little power I have as a union employee away from me. They want that union out."

### Letters answer slanders

This slanted "interview" has provoked a big response. A week after it appeared, the *Sunday Tribune* ran a half-page of four letters answering it. The first letter was from Laurie Deraspe. It punctures a number of the gross factual distortions regarding herself and her husband in the article.

Lewis Gordon of Springvale writes, "there is a national campaign . . . to drive

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Do you know someone who reads Spanish?

## Autonomy discussed in 'PM'

The people of Nicaragua are beginning a nationwide discussion on establishing local government autonomy for the Atlantic Coast region of the country, where most Nicaraguan Indians and Blacks live.

The region comprises half the territory of the country but only about one-twelfth of the total population of 3 million.

The Atlantic Coast Indians and Blacks have their own languages, traditions and cultures.

Under the Somoza dictatorship, the Atlantic Coast was stripped by U.S. and Canadian companies of many of its resources, and it was kept isolated from and far less developed than the rest of the country.

In 1979 a popular insurrection of workers and peasants, based on the Pacific side of Nicaragua, overthrew the Somoza dictatorship and landlord-capitalist rule. This opened the door to overcoming the isolation and economic backwardness of the Atlantic Coast and uprooting the specific forms of oppression suffered by its peoples, and unifying the nation.

This issue of *Perspectiva Mundial* has in-depth coverage of this important development in Nicaragua.

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# Nairobi conference condemns apartheid...

Continued from back page

in another workshop as Rigoberta Menchú from Guatemala traced the history of the struggle in her country. She began with the 1954 U.S.-organized coup against the democratically elected government of President Jacobo Arbenz. "We knew," she said, "with this defeat that our freedom would cost more." Today, she continued, "there don't exist political prisoners in Guatemala, or women in prison but only political deaths." Tens of thousands have been killed and some one million people displaced by the genocidal regime.

The situation of women in Nicaragua was a sharp contrast to that of the other women of Central America. Magda Enríquez from the Nicaraguan Women's Association (AMNLAE) explained that in 1979 the new revolutionary government "without money, without structure, with no army, no judges" but with the "political will" encouraged women.

The people of Nicaragua as a whole have made great advances despite limited resources, Enríquez said, because "the people are not the objects of development but the subjects of development — the subjects of change." All the gains the Nicaraguan people have made — literacy, health care, land reform, urban reform — have benefited women the most and have "made us very popular around the world." But, she continued, it has made the U.S. government consider us "very dangerous." It has led the U.S. ruling families to fund and direct a mercenary war against Nicaragua.

Enríquez called on the women of the United States to join the women of Nicaragua in the fight against this war. She told the crowd that "we are convinced we will win. In the history of the world armies have defeated armies but there is no case where an army has defeated an entire people."

## 'The debt is unpayable'

Cuban women led an important discussion on the imperialist-imposed foreign debt crisis in the Third World, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Cuban delegation set up a literature table with pamphlets of speeches and interviews by Cuban President Fidel Castro explaining his proposal that the debt be cancelled. These pamphlets, in English, Spanish, and French, were distributed free.

In meetings on the debt crisis, women from Peru, Mexico, and Argentina described the impact of the debt on their countries. Jacqueline Santanas from Chile



Women protesting U.S. aggression in Nicaragua. Susanna Ounei of Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS) addressing rally.



Militant photos by Andrea González

told one meeting that in addition to the repression of the U.S.-backed Pinochet dictatorship, "we also suffer from an extremely grave economic crisis. The dictatorship owes \$22 billion in debt," she said. "That is not a debt of the Chilean people. That is not a debt used to economically develop our country. The Chilean people cannot and will not pay the debt. The Chilean people demand that they [the bankers in the United States] assume the debt."

Rigoberta Menchú explained that in Guatemala the money borrowed was used to finance "the terror, the war... the counterinsurgency... the arms used against us."

A Salvadoran woman told the crowd that the money taken from Latin America by the U.S. banks is used to pay for the U.S.-backed war in her country and against Nicaragua.

Summing up the view of the women from the region, a Colombian woman explained, "the debt is immoral — economically and politically — and it is unpayable. To guarantee democracy we must end negotiations with the International Monetary Fund and oppose U.S. intervention in Central America."

A debate at the Peace Tent on the Iraq-Iran war also drew a large crowd. Women from Iran set up massive photo displays on the campus demonstrating the effects of the chemical warfare used against their homeland. The Iraqi regime, encouraged by imperialism, launched war against Iran five years ago in an attempt to overturn the 1979 Iranian revolution.

Throughout the conference protest actions were organized. These actions included demonstrations against U.S. support to the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines, against apartheid in South Africa, and against the Israeli government's 1982 invasion and occupation of Lebanon, and a rally against U.S. aggression against Nicaragua (see story below).

Although these actions involving thousands of women were orderly, large numbers of Kenyan security forces were mobilized in an unsuccessful attempt to intimidate the women. The Forum '85 organizers and the Kenyan government then cracked down and outlawed further demonstrations either on campus or in the streets of Nairobi.

Criticism of the U.S. government's foreign policy was sharp throughout the conference. However, there was little "anti-Americanism" toward the U.S. women. Speakers from the liberation struggles around the world explained that it was the U.S. government not the U.S. people who are the enemy of their struggles. They appealed to U.S. women to fight with them against Washington's reactionary policies.

## Disruption by pro-Israeli forces

Throughout the conference supporters of Israeli imperialism organized a campaign to stop the conference participants from hearing the truth about the Israeli government's brutal oppression of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples.

In a workshop I attended on the conditions of Palestinian women in the Israeli-occupied territories of the West Bank some

10 opponents of the right to self-determination for the Palestinian people marched as a group into the room and attempted to disrupt first the presentations and then the discussion. Failing to force an early end to the workshop they marched out shouting.

A big part of the discussion here and at the official UN conference concerned Zionism and the Israeli government's racist oppression of the Palestinian people. While the official UN conference document, approved July 27, did not denounce Zionism as a form of racism, as many delegates proposed and as had been done at the 1975 UN official government conference in Mexico City, most women here viewed Zionism, along with racism, apartheid, and exploitation, as an obstacle to the advancement of women.

For example, when these racist opponents of Palestinian self-determination attempted to shout down a Palestinian woman in one anti-apartheid workshop, a representative of the African National Congress told them, "we see linkage and interconnection between the struggle of Latin America and the Middle East with our struggle... When we see suffering in Africa, we cannot ignore more suffering in the Middle East."

In yet another workshop when these same reactionary elements attempted to shout down a Palestinian woman, a South West Africa People's Organization representative told them, "we embrace other sisters and brothers engaged in similar struggles — the ANC, the Palestine Liberation Organization, the people of El Salvador, Nicaragua — they are fighting with us in the trenches against the same evil."

## Antiwomen forces

Opponents of women's right to abortion also had an organized participation in Forum '85. These forces from the United States, Britain, Scotland, and Australia organized themselves into the so-called Pro-family International Coalition. They hoped to make opposition to abortion rights the center of the conference. Having failed in this, they organized a press conference to complain that the women at the forum assumed abortion was a human right. These elements opposed contraception and characterized discussions about women having affirmative action, child care, and so on as discriminating against housewives and mothers.

Peggy Antrobus of Jamaica took up these right-wingers in a workshop called "Economic Development in the Third World." These "reactionary forces," she said, are using the legitimate criticism that Third World women have about many family-planning methods "to argue for a total cut in support for these services."

Other delegates circulated a petition condemning the cuts in the U.S. government's funding for family planning. At a press conference held to deliver these petitions to the U.S. delegation at the official UN conference, these women explained that these cutbacks deny "women the human right to decide the number and spacing of their children."

The conference was organized into over 1,000 workshops on these and scores of other topics. In addition there was a film festival of over 180 films and videos by and about women, as well as art and photo exhibits from various countries. A craft

Continued on Page 20

## ...solidarizes with Nicaragua

BY ANDREA GONZÁLEZ

NAIROBI, Kenya — Thousands of women participating in Forum '85 gathered on the grass at Nairobi University for a noontime rally to protest U.S. aggression against Nicaragua July 18.

Two hours before the rally was scheduled to begin, Dame Nita Barrow, the convenor of Forum '85, banned all demonstrations. Organizers of the solidarity rally were denied a sound system.

Supporters of the Nicaraguan revolution rigged a microphone to a portable stereo system and the rally began. Although women had to strain to hear the speakers, the spirited rally went on as scheduled.

The rally was opened by Hortensia Allende, the widow of the former Chilean president Salvador Allende who was murdered in the U.S.-backed coup in that country in 1973. Allende thanked the women for their efforts to stop the U.S.-backed war against Nicaragua. She warned that a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua would lead to a long protracted war throughout the region.

Following Allende, greetings were given from women representing various organizations in the United States. They pledged to redouble their efforts to build a movement that could stop U.S. intervention in Central America. Former U.S. Congresswoman Bella Abzug told the women gathered that "the people of the U.S., as distinguished from the government of the U.S., are clearly on record against U.S. intervention in Nicaragua."

Messages of solidarity were brought

from the women of the Soviet Union, France, and Spain.

Two women from West Germany told the crowd that there was massive opposition to their government's support for U.S. aggression against Nicaragua. Hundreds and hundreds of Nicaraguan solidarity committees in West Germany were winning towns to adopt sister cities in Nicaragua; raising funds to build child care centers there, and organizing solidarity workers to go to Nicaragua to help with the coffee and cotton harvests.

In a moving speech a Chilean woman put into words the sentiment of the hundreds of women from Latin America at Forum '85. She said, "We in the interior of Chile from different organizations of women, of students, of workers, are organizing solidarity actions with Nicaragua because we consider Nicaragua a vision for Latin America. We in South America have the ability to build the same free society... In our demonstrations," she said, "we chant 'Si Somoza ya se fue, que se vaya Pinochet' [Somoza now is gone, so get Pinochet out (the U.S.-backed Chilean dictator)]."

Reminding the women that the next day, July 19, was the sixth anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution, a woman from El Salvador told the crowd that "my people with arms in hand salute with respect, admiration and great affection the Sandinista revolution. We must all demand, all of us, that the Yankees get out of Central America."

The representative from Vietnam was

greeted with a standing ovation. She told the rally that despite the bombs and toxic chemicals the U.S. government had used against the Vietnamese people, the U.S. imperialists had been defeated in Vietnam. "So we are convinced that the heroism of the people and the women of Nicaragua in face of the U.S. intervention, will win. The U.S. imperialists were defeated in Vietnam and will be defeated in Nicaragua."

Susanna Ounei, representing the Kanaky people struggling against French colonialism in New Caledonia, told the audience that the struggle of the Kanaky and Nicaraguan people are the same. "As people who fight we understand each other. And we demonstrate our solidarity with you."

Women from Brazil, India, Puerto Rico and the Philippines — those fighting the U.S.-backed Marcos dictatorship — as well as Palestinian women brought greetings.

A representative of the African National Congress (ANC) also spoke at the rally. She told the women that "... we have to be here to pay solidarity to our sisters... because we are fighting the same enemy — American imperialism which is intervening in Nicaragua and supplying arms to South Africa that are used to kill the children, the women, the people of Southern Africa."

Maireya Baimea of the Intercontinental Women's Front Against U.S. Intervention — an organization of Latin American women — ended the rally by calling on women to send a message to Washington that they will actively oppose U.S. intervention in Nicaragua.

**A steal** — Boeing and GE have offered to make refunds to the Pentagon for any spare parts deemed overpriced. For instance, Boeings says it's already repriced those two sets of \$748 pliers at \$80 each.

**Educating Ernie** — "I dreamed I was a cruel moneygrubber who yelled mean things at people to make them work harder and harder so I would have more money. I don't want to grow up to be like that." — That's what the hero of *Ernie Discovers Excellence*, a "capitalist fable," tells his capitalist father. Dad whisks him down for a day at the office and Ernie comes home cured, the fable

says.

**P.S.** — Author Lewis Lazare wrote his "capitalist fable" because he felt big biz gets a bum rap in children's books. Experts in the field seemed surprised. Said Michele Stepto, an instructor in children's literature at Yale, "Most books for children between the ages of seven and 12 ultimately support capitalist values."

**Then Pepsipants** — They look like ordinary sweatshirts, sweaters, and jeans, except they feature the Coca Cola logo. Murjani, who's peddling the item, anticipates a \$100 million take,

wholesale. And next year, Coca Cola Clothes for kiddies.

**Sip on this one** — Dress up the rumpus room with the Courbu Pyramid, a brass and glass case that's a 1/400th scale version of Egypt's Cheops Pyramid. Just to look at? Nope. According to the company, you place bottles of wine inside and in a few weeks they age the equivalent of two years. \$900.

**Puff on that one** — Following reports that the government is spending \$5 million a year on trying to find a "safe" cigarette, a reporter asked at R.J. Reynolds if they were also looking for such a

cigarette. Responded a quick-witted spokesperson: "We don't know of anything that makes a cigarette unsafe, so how could we be working toward a safer cigarette?"

**Shop early** — If you're the type that's already thinking about how to keep warm next winter, check out Maxmillian's salon in New York. They've got a neat skin-on-skin, floor length Russian sable coat that reverses to black leather. \$65,000.

**Fashion tip** — A New York boutique is featuring dresses, etc.,

in classic velvet. \$1,100 up. Or, if you're an individualist and prefer to whip up your own, it's available at \$200 a yard.

**How was your day?** — Former TV "Wonder Woman," Lynda Carter, now on the night club circuit and settled down with a prosperous D.C. lawyer spouse, describes her new, "regular person's day": "I do vocal exercises. Go to lunch with my husband as often as I can. I go to that gourmet place... and choose something fresh to make for dinner. I usually do the cooking. I make business phone calls. I read. It's restful."

## —CALENDAR—

### ARIZONA

#### Phoenix

**Defending Abortion Rights in Canada and the United States.** Speaker: Kathy Olsen, Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sun., Aug. 4, 7 p.m. 3750 W McDowell. Ausp: Socialist Workers Campaign for Mayor. For more information call (602) 272-4026.

### MINNESOTA

#### St. Paul

**The Fight For Women's Rights is Worldwide.** Featuring a report-back from the International Women's Conference in Nairobi, Kenya. A panel discussion with Sheri Wilson, member of Women of All Red Nations and Women Against Military Madness; Ella Mahmoud, Twin Cities journalist; and Lisa Ahlberg, Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance, just returned from National Organization for Women conference. Translation to Spanish. Sun., Aug. 4, 4 p.m. 508 Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

### PENNSYLVANIA

#### Pittsburgh

**Steelworkers Under Attack: the Battle at Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel.** Speaker: Mary

Nell Bockman, member United Steelworkers Local 15018 and Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Aug. 3, 7:30 p.m. 402 N Highland. Donation \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

### TEXAS

#### Dallas

**Cuban Revolution Anniversary Celebration.** Learn about the people of Cuba and the gains they have made since overthrowing capitalism. Dinner, slideshow, and entertainment. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Aug. 3, 6 p.m. 1119 N Bishop, Oakcliff. Donation: \$5. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (214) 943-5195 or 948-1355.

### UTAH

#### Salt Lake City

**Celebration of the Cuban and Nicaraguan Revolutions.** Introducing Bob Hoyle, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Salt Lake City. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Aug. 3. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; rally, 7:30 p.m. 767 S State, 3rd floor. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Socialist Workers Campaign. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

## Washington, D.C.

### Meeting to celebrate publication of new Pathfinder book

### Nicaragua: The Sandinista People's Revolution

Speakers:

**Miriam Hooker**, Nicaraguan embassy  
**Debbie Reuben**, Nicaragua Network  
**Fred Solowey**, Washington Area Labor Committee on Central America and the Caribbean  
**Rob Moody**, Washington Area Nicaragua Information Committee (NICA)  
**Thabo Ntweng**, Pathfinder Press



Sponsored by Pathfinder Press, Nicaragua Network, and NICA Tuesday, August 6. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. International Association of Machinists Building, 1st floor auditorium. 1300 Connecticut Ave., Washington, D.C. Donation: \$2. For more information call (202) 797-7699 or 265-3800

## Nairobi conference condemns apartheid

**Continued from previous page**  
center and market was set up for Forum '85 where Kenyan women demonstrated and sold local handicrafts. One section of the campus grounds was set aside for music and singing. The campus was lined with tables with information on the situation of women in various countries. Many of these displays spilled over to blankets on the grass.

The U.S. had the largest number of women attending the conference. While the majority were professionals and business women, there were also many students and working women. Many of these working women were able to come to Nairobi because an organization sponsored them. Others raised the money on their own through individual fund-raising efforts.

Among the U.S. participants were Betty Freidan, representing the National Organization for Women, and Bella Abzug.

While Freidan held daily discussions on feminism, Abzug, a former Democratic Party congresswoman from New York City and representing Women USA, organized a workshop entitled "If Women Ruled the World." There she explained that electing women to political office would end war and poverty.

Many of the workshops organized by U.S. women, including Black women, tended to focus on the problems of professional women. One group of participants, however, organized a workshop entitled "Third World Women in the United States Speak Out: a Working-class Perspective." This gave participants from around the world a true picture of the problems faced by Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and other oppressed minorities in the United States.

Forum '85 ended July 19 with an outdoor program of cultural performances and speeches.

## Debt conference opens in Cuba

**Continued from front page**

ing debt is both "unpayable and uncollectable."

Fidel Castro's proposals that there must be a united response by the governments of the debtor nations — a strike of the debt slaves — has broad appeal among the exploited working people throughout the region. That is why so many people have gathered here to discuss what is to be done.

Among those who will be present in Havana for the five-day conference are numerous former presidents and heads of government, including Michael Manley of Jamaica and Juan Bosch of the Dominican Republic; two Nobel prize winners — Gabriel García Márquez and Adolfo Pérez Esquivel; more than 100 heads of parties and other political organizations; numerous trade union leaders; and hundreds of prominent individuals representing women, students, peasant groups, the academic milieu, the press, and religious groups.

This diversity was clearly reflected in

the speakers list during the opening session. Among those who took the floor for their 12 minutes each were a former president of Bolivia; a personal representative of the current president of Bolivia; the general secretary of the Bolivian Workers Confederation, as well as trade union leaders from Colombia and Peru; the general secretary of the Chilean Communist Party; a representative of the Latin American and Caribbean women who participated in the Nairobi Conference on Women organized by the United Nations; a professor of economics from Mexico; and a Puerto Rican women pastor who is the coordinator of the National Ecumenical Conference of Puerto Rico.

Also prominent on the platform was the leadership of the delegation of the Nicaraguan government, including Vice-president Sergio Ramírez and Commanders of the Revolution Jaime Wheelock and Henry Ruiz of the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

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**WASHINGTON, D.C.:** SWP, YSA, 3106 Mt. Pleasant St. NW. Zip: 20010. Tel: (202) 797-7699.

**WASHINGTON:** Seattle: SWP, YSA, 5517 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118. Tel: (206) 723-5330.

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**WISCONSIN:** Milwaukee: SWP, YSA, 4707 W. Lisbon Ave. Zip: 53208. Tel: (414) 445-2076.

# Blaming the victim: media coverup on El Salvador

BY FRED FELDMAN

The national liberation movement in El Salvador has become a prime target of the campaign by the U.S. government and capitalist media to whip up public opinion about terrorism. The idea is to use the terrorist label to justify stepping up U.S. military intervention in El Salvador and to soften up U.S. working people into accepting the possibility of a massive U.S. invasion of Nicaragua.

While Salvadoran fighters are portrayed as inhuman for recently killing four U.S. marines and two U.S. businessmen, the U.S.-backed Duarte government is pictured as ever more democratic and popular.

Why this "democratic" government requires an ever-growing corps of U.S. military "advisers" and ever-

## AS I SEE IT

larger infusions of U.S. military hardware — including the largest air force in Central America — to stay in power is rarely asked, or is answered by vague references to Nicaraguan "subversion."

The Democratic Party liberals in Congress have enthusiastically participated in this propaganda campaign. Other liberals have chimed in, too, without necessarily dropping their criticisms of U.S. intervention.

An example is Aryeh Neier, who chairs Americas Watch, a group that monitors human rights in North and South America. In a column in the July 26 *New York Times*, Neier asserts that "a recent deterioration in the practices of the guerrillas makes it essential that we speak out more forcefully now to denounce their abuses against noncombatants."

Neier mistakes his own responsiveness to the latest wave of U.S. propaganda against the Salvadoran liberation struggle for a change in the nature of the struggle itself.

Neier and Americas Watch have made this kind of error before. In June 1984, Americas Watch issued a

highly publicized report echoing some of Washington's propaganda claims about human rights violations in Nicaragua. Embarrassed by the way the U.S. rulers used this report to fuel their war against Nicaragua, Americas Watch recently issued a much less publicized report exposing some of Reagan's lies and distortions on the human-rights issue.

Neier concedes in the *Times* article that the U.S.-backed Salvadoran government forces "continue to be responsible for most of the civilian suffering," but he chooses not to burden his readers with the details. The government's killing of tens of thousands of Salvadorans is passed over. Instead Neier dilates on the kidnapping by revolutionary forces of some reactionary mayors, the killing of the four marines, and other actions against alleged noncombatants, which are decried every day in the capitalist media.

At a time when the U.S. rulers and the Duarte government are raining death on Salvadoran workers and farmers, Neier's call for everyone to "speak out more forcefully" against the workers and peasants who are fighting back is obscene. The *Times* publication of his article is part of the media coverup of the truth about the U.S.-backed war against the people of El Salvador.

The truth is available, in fact, in reports from Americas Watch, among other sources. Those reports show that the most savage air war ever carried out in the Americas is being waged by U.S. imperialism and the Salvadoran government against the Salvadoran workers and peasants.

*Free Fire*, an Americas Watch report issued in August 1984, states that "thousands of noncombatants are being killed in indiscriminate attacks by bombardments in the air, shelling, and ground sweeps. Thousands more are being wounded. As best we can determine, these attacks on civilian noncombatants in conflict zones are part of a deliberate policy . . . to force civilians to flee . . . depriving the guerrillas of a civilian population. . . . The cost of pursuing this policy, in terms of human suffering, is beyond measurement."

In March 1985, an Americas Watch report revealed

that one-fifth of the Salvadoran population were refugees — a greater percentage than in Vietnam at the height of the U.S. air war.

One Salvadoran refugee told the *Christian Science Monitor*, "At first the Air Force dropped bombs that knocked down trees and houses, killed people, and made three-meter craters. Then they began to drop bombs that exploded before hitting the ground [antipersonnel bombs] and others that made craters eight meters deep to kill us as we hid in our shelters. Now they use the worst bombs of all — the flaming liquid [napalm and liquid phosphorus]."

On July 18 an article on the air war appeared in the *New York Times*. It portrayed the bombing as humane, and sought to discredit refugee testimony on the grounds that many are supporters of the liberation struggle.

Nonetheless reporter James LaMoyné conceded that "this year the air force is dropping an average of 60 500-pound bombs and 75 750-pound bombs each month, according to the [U.S.] embassy. [This is] an increase in the largest bombs being used. The number of 2.75-inch rockets fired has risen to about 975 a month. Many more machine-gun bullets are being fired from the newly provided [helicopter] gunships."

The *Times* says that the Salvadoran government now bars "indiscriminate" bombing. The bombs are aimed straight at the hundreds of thousands of Salvadoran peasants, agricultural workers, and village people who identify with the liberation struggle and oppose the U.S.-backed war.

Neier thinks opponents of this genocide, which is stamped Made in USA, should balance this by "forcefully" criticizing the actions of the victims of genocide. He is giving ground to the "terrorism" scam that the U.S. rulers are using to escalate their Vietnam-type war in El Salvador.

Opponents of U.S. intervention should not take the sucker bait. We must stand with the people of El Salvador who are fighting to end this genocide. Our fire should be "discriminate": against the U.S. government and its dirty war in El Salvador.

# Boston school desegregation under new attack

Continued from back page

"very dismaying." She said big challenges remain to defend Black equal rights in education.

Thomas Atkins, an attorney for Black parents in the school case, was NAACP president in the early 1970s and a central leader in the school desegregation battle that focused world-wide attention on the Black community's resistance to racist mobs that attacked school buses. He termed Garry's draft final order as "going in the right direction."

Atkins and cocounsel Robert Pressman were preparing to submit their comments July 26 to Garry on his departure mandate. These stress, Atkins told the *Militant*, "the need to tighten up in certain areas," including provisions on vocational education, student and parent participation — which the school committee wants modified out of existence — and equal access to the city's prestige examination high school, Boston Latin.

Sooner or later, Atkins said, "the federal court's ability to remain comes to an inevitable end." Atkins urged stepped up Black community involvement in the schools, "in monitoring, in finding out what is happening" as essential to defending the conquests of equal rights.

## Mass. socialist hits racist threat

BOSTON — The Socialist Workers Party candidate for city-council at-large, Kip Hedges, stated today that "renewed organization and activity by the Black community and all those who defend the gains of desegregation is necessary to ensure that Judge Garry's departure does not become a green light for dismantling the fruits of a decade of advances for Black equality in the school system."

Hedges termed Garry's permanent injunction against racist discrimination, his mandate for affirmative action hiring of Black teachers and staff, and continued orders for desegregation quotas in pupil assignment "bases on which defenders of Black rights can resist moves against desegregation by the Boston School Committee and others who've made clear their fundamental opposition to the plan, from the *Boston Globe* to Boston University's John Silber."

The socialist candidate, a machinist and

Such activity, Atkins said, "must be accelerated as we enter a new phase."

Atkins and other attorneys for the Black plaintiffs urged Garry not to give total control of the system to the Boston School Committee, proposing instead that major aspects of such power be turned over to the state board of education for five years.

Citing the "substantial failure" of the school committee to administer the desegregation order during Garry's tenure over the system, the prodesegregation attorneys stated Garry's departure from the case will not "increase" the school committee's "implementation zeal."

Lawyers representing a Latino community organization in the case, *El Comité de Padres*, also urged Garry not to withdraw until there is a "stability at the highest level" in the school system.

But Boston Mayor Raymond Flynn urged Garry to withdraw from the case immediately and turn control of the system over to the school committee.

The need for stepped up vigilance by defenders of equal rights has been underscored in past weeks.

In a stunning display of unbridled bigotry, school-committee member Joseph Casper publicly insulted Peter Negróni, a Latino educator from New York City cur-

rently in the running for school superintendent. "You're not a traditional Hispanic," Casper told him. "You're very smooth. You dress well." He belittled Negróni's "New York accent" and baldly stated the educator was "about as much Hispanic as I am."

Black, Latino, and several white school-committee members have joined in an effort to censure Casper, a move which committee head John Nucci opposed. Casper also blasted Garry for "driving" white students out of the school system.

Not to be outdone by Casper, Boston University President John Silber — a member of the Reagan-appointed Henry Kissinger commission on Central America — has been pressing the school committee to

allow Boston University to take over and administer the Boston public school system, one of "the worst in the nation," he claims.

The reason for his offer? To stop the system's production of "criminals" and "welfare recipients," a crudely racist swipe at the Black, Latino, and Asian student-body majority.

Silber's arrogant offer has won the ear of several Boston City Council members and is now part of a broad discussion on the future of the school system. It intensifies longstanding efforts by both "old guard" bigots and liberal opponents of busing, like the *Boston Globe*, who are now united in their charge that desegregation has failed and should be "overhauled."

## No life of luxury for strikers

Continued from Page 18

down the living standards of all workers, to liquidate the family farmers and to attack the poor, the aged, the sick, and the children.

"Can BIW workers afford to live in comfort? Hopefully. This should be the right of every American. Do they live in luxury? Compared to the bosses and stockholders, they work for peanuts. The *Telegram* chooses to compare their wages with underpaid workers of other industries. Why not a comparison with the profits the company is making?"

"They deserve the full support of every worker, every citizen and every honest taxpayer."

Claire Fasulo, wife of a striker from Lisbon Falls, writes "the story on lifestyles of BIW workers was extremely misleading, implying that most BIW employees are partying fools living in luxury. That just isn't so."

By way of contrast, she explains that her husband has "gone to work sick several times because of the three meager sick days the union gets per year; we just couldn't get along without the days' earnings."

Walking the picket line, Tom Deraspe told the *Militant* that he's taken a lot of ribbing since the article appeared. But most workers were also angered by this pro-company and divisive ploy.

Tom Deraspe explained that Local 6 members feel that their fight — which, he

is careful to note, they didn't choose but had forced on them by corporate greed — is in the interest of people all over Maine and all over the country. This is especially true of the fight against divisive company demands such as the one for a two-tier contract.

Deraspe also explained that BIW workers, like all workers, do want to take pride in their work. "But," he said, "the company refuses to treat us like human beings. Instead, they try to run us like mindless extensions of our machines. And then they try and convince us we should sacrifice for them."

I asked him if there was one central thing he wanted to say to readers across the country. "Yes," he explained, "there is a deepening national trend toward union-busting. We're trying to stand up to it, and we appreciate anything that can be done to get the truth out about this drive and our efforts to meet it."

This Congoleum effort to use the press to misrepresent, attack, and weaken the union failed. But it is just the first of what strikers expect will be many, many efforts to slander the union, cut it off from support, and attempt to force it to accept a takeback contract.

Tom Deraspe and other strikers may be having trouble getting a fair shake from the *Sunday Tribune*, but they see getting the truth out, and winning solidarity for their union, as crucial to their fight.

## High stakes in steel strike

Continued from front page

cers and representatives unanimously approved the work stoppage with the full support of the USWA Basic Steel Conference."

Paul Rusen, director of USWA District 23 and chief negotiator for the union, told the media that basic steel locals would be asked to make contributions to the strike. He predicted "a long and difficult war."

Rusen told a rally of several thousand in Steubenville, Ohio, that "the decree handed down to us is the company's dream. . . . But for us it is a declaration of war, a war on our dignity and everything your fathers and grandfathers fought for."

Frank Valenta, director of USWA District 28, told the Lorain, Ohio, *Journal*, "I foresee this could be the real rallying point for the steelworkers and labor unions in general. Enough is enough."

"It really poses a threat to us that a company can abort a contract instead of sitting down at the table and working out a labor agreement."

Members of other unions, such as the Air Line Pilots Association, participated in picket lines and expressed solidarity in other ways.

The Wheeling-Pittsburgh attack is a carefully planned escalation of the steel bosses' drive to gut the living standards, working conditions, and union rights of USWA members.

The antilabor drive is fueled by the weakened position of the union which has lost nearly half its members due to layoffs and the spread of nonunion minimills and other nonunion steel operations over the last 5 years.

The USWA officialdom's steady retreat before the bosses' attack has been a major factor in eroding the union's strength.

In March 1983, the USWA leadership reached a concessions contract with the seven biggest steel corporations. The contract cost steelworkers an average of \$4,000 a year. The 1983 agreement was followed by supplementary concession deals with Bethlehem and other firms.

The Phelps Dodge corporation then moved to bust the Steelworkers and 12 other unions in its Arizona copper mines in July 1983. They succeeded in doing so despite a hard-fought strike by the copper miners.

The steel bosses ended coordinated bargaining on May 2. Contract negotiations will now be held on a company-by-company, or even on a plant-by-plant, basis.

The top USWA officials — like the rest of the AFL-CIO officialdom — sought to convince union members that they have a common interest with the bosses in maintaining and increasing the profitability of the companies. This disarmed the union's capacity to resist the bosses' push to make workers pay for the crisis of their system.

The steel bosses, while giving lip service to the myth of workers and owners having common interests, have acted on the knowledge that every dime of profit the corporations get comes out of workers' hides. While USWA officials preached and practiced class collaboration, the steel bosses steadily intensified their war against the workers and their union.

Wheeling-Pittsburgh executives are responding to the workers' decision to fight back with threats to shut down the mills. A long strike means "quick and certain death" for Wheeling-Pittsburgh, claimed company negotiator Joseph Scalise.

The USWA and the whole labor movement should respond to this blackmail with the demand that the government move immediately to take Wheeling-Pittsburgh out of the hands of the company's private owners and nationalize it, placing it under government ownership. If the Wheeling-Pittsburgh bosses can't produce steel and provide union-scale conditions for workers, the union movement should demand that the government do so.

There are plenty of social uses for the steel that the Wheeling-Pittsburgh plants, which include some of the most modern in the country, can produce.

The company's books should be opened to the public — not just the doctored ones the bosses set aside for workers and tax collectors to look at, but the books where the bosses' dirty dealings are recorded.

The issues involved in this strike are life-and-death ones for the union movement, and for all workers and farmers.

Solidarity should be expressed loud and clear by union bodies, farmers', organizations, Black rights forces, women's rights groups, and other organizations of the oppressed and exploited.

## New moves against Nicaragua

The U.S. government continues to step up pressure on the Nicaraguan revolution.

On July 26 Secretary of State George Shultz rejected a call by the governments of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, and Panama for a resumption of talks between the U.S. and Nicaraguan governments. The talks, which had been held in Manzanillo, Mexico, were broken off unilaterally last January by the U.S. government.

Nicaragua has repeatedly offered to resume the talks unconditionally.

Shultz demanded that Nicaragua negotiate with the *contras* (the counterrevolutionaries attacking that country) who are bankrolled, armed, organized and controlled by Washington.

Bernardo Supúlveda, foreign minister of Mexico, noted the contrast between Washington's irreconcilable stance toward Nicaragua and the U.S. policy of "constructive engagement" (a euphemism for support) for the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Shultz's rejection of talks violated an April 23 promise by Reagan to the Senate that he would "resume bilateral talks with the government of Nicaragua." The promise was a sop for senators who wanted some cover for their

vote for millions in U.S. aid to the *contra* murderers.

As Shultz was rejecting the talks, House-Senate conferences approved a bipartisan plan to give the *contras* \$27 million in overt aid. The legislators added the proviso that none of the aid could be administered by the CIA or Pentagon.

As the *New York Times* noted, "The decision of the Congress to provide any aid at all to the rebels represented a significant victory for the administration."

The *Times* added that "the Administration would look for legal loopholes to justify CIA participation." The Republican and Democratic legislators who voted to back the *contra* war can be counted on to look the other way.

U.S. opponents of Washington's war drive against the Nicaraguan revolution, the continuing U.S. military buildup in Honduras and Costa Rica, and the escalating U.S. involvement in the brutal war against the people of El Salvador, can play an important role in opposing Washington's aggression in Central America. Building a series of broad-based protests against U.S. intervention in Central America set for the fall, can provide an immediate focus for antiwar and solidarity activists.

## Congress OKs nerve-gas bomb

It is a matter of concern for all humanity that Congress has approved scrapping a 16-year moratorium on production of nerve-gas weapons.

The determination to bull ahead with the nerve gas was indicated when a congressional committee ironing out differences between a House and Senate version of the bill dropped a House proviso that production not begin until NATO allies approved deployment of the weapons in Europe.

The conferees included a statement that the new weapons are to replace existing stockpiles. This, however, is strictly "nonbinding."

The present stockpile is awesome, including an estimated 2.6 million bombs, shells, and rockets containing various nerve-gas compounds or mustard gas.

The new weapons will supposedly be safe, featuring two "relatively" harmless compounds that become lethal when mixed in flight.

The scope of the barbaric capacity of these weapons is

mind boggling. One planned weapon system, the "Bigeye" bomb, will feature an oily compound called VX. A tiny droplet will kill in minutes.

Each "Bigeye" bomb will carry 185 pounds of these droplets.

When a lethal chemical escaped at the Union Carbide plant in India, more than 2,000 people died and another 200,000 were injured.

The city of Bhopal became a human river of blinded, suffocating people trying to escape. Animal carcasses were found over a 25-mile area.

Bhopal was a minor incident compared to what "Bigeye" can do.

"Bigeye," like Washington's massive nuclear arsenal, is a dagger aimed at the throat of all the oppressed and exploited who are fighting for an end to U.S. imperialist domination of their countries, their resources, and their lives.

## Why imperialism seeks domination, not freedom

Washington's support to the escalation of racist repression in South Africa highlights the international role of U.S. imperialism. Everywhere its profit interests are identified with the most reactionary, racist, and anti-democratic forces.

This is true here in the United States, too. The U.S. ruling class is striving to push back the affirmative action gains won by Blacks and others who suffer discrimination. It is trying to undermine and, if possible, reverse the right of women to choose to have abortions. It is using a spy scare to further restrict the democratic rights of workers and farmers.

The imperialist ruling classes of the advanced capitalist countries follow a similar reactionary course.

In 1916, V. I. Lenin explained why imperialism

## OUR REVOLUTIONARY HERITAGE

"strives for domination, not freedom" in an article entitled "Imperialism and the Crisis in Socialism." Lenin was the central leader of the Bolshevik Party in Russia and of the working-class internationalists who advocated a revolutionary struggle against the first world imperialist war — World War I.

Following are excerpts from this article, which can be found in Lenin's *Struggle for a Revolutionary International*. This book is available for \$10.95 from Pathfinder Press or any of the bookstores listed on page 20. Copyright ©1984 by the Anchor Foundation; reprinted by permission of the publisher.

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Imperialism is a specific historical stage of capitalism. Its specific character is three-fold: imperialism is (1) monopoly capitalism; (2) parasitic, or decaying capitalism; (3) moribund capitalism. The supplanting of free competition by monopoly is the fundamental economic feature, the *quintessence* of imperialism. Monopoly manifests itself in five principal forms: (1) cartels, syndicates and trusts — the concentration of production has reached a degree which gives rise to these monopolistic associations of capitalists (2) the monopolistic position of the big banks — three, four or five giant banks manipulate the whole economic life of America, France, Germany; (3) seizure of the sources of *raw material* by the trusts and the financial oligarchy (finance capital is monopoly industrial capital merged with bank capital); (4) the (economic) partition of the world by the international cartels has *begun*. There are already over *one hundred* such international cartels, which command the *entire* world market and divide it "amicably" among themselves — until war *redivides* it. The export of capital, as distinct from the export of commodities under non-monopoly capitalism, is a highly characteristic phenomenon and is closely linked with the economic and territorial-political partition of the world; (5) the territorial partition of the world (colonies) is *completed*.

Imperialism, as the highest stage of capitalism in America and Europe, and later in Asia, took final shape in the period 1898-1914. The Spanish-American War (1898), the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) and the economic crisis in Europe in 1900 are the chief historical landmarks in the new era of world history.

The fact that imperialism is parasitic or decaying capitalism is manifested first of all in the tendency to decay, which is characteristic of *every* monopoly under the system of private ownership of the means of production. The difference between the democratic-republican and the reactionary-monarchist imperialist bourgeoisie is obliterated precisely because they are both rotting alive (which by no means precludes an extraordinarily rapid development of capitalism in individual branches of industry, in individual countries, and in individual periods).

Secondly, the decay of capitalism is manifested in the creation of a huge stratum of *rentiers*, capitalists who live by "clipping coupons". In each of the four leading imperialist countries — England, U.S.A., France and Germany — capital in securities amounts to 100,000 or 150,000 million francs, from which each country derives an annual income of no less than five to eight thousand million.

Thirdly, export of capital is parasitism raised to a high pitch.

Fourthly, "finance capital strives for domination, not freedom". Political reaction *all along* the line is a characteristic feature of imperialism. Corruption, bribery on a huge scale and all kinds of fraud.

Fifthly, the exploitation of oppressed nations — which is inseparably connected with annexations — and especially the exploitation of colonies by a handful of "Great" Powers, increasingly transforms the "civilized" world into a parasite on the body of hundreds of millions in the uncivilized nations.

# 'Zoot suit' riots: racist violence in World War II

The following is a guest column by Raúl González.

A central aspect of the U.S. ruling class war drive is the whipping up of racist hatred against the foreign "enemy." This is most clearly seen today in the blatantly racist campaign around "Arab terrorism" and Reagan's warnings about "waves" of "feet people" immigrating to the United States from Central America.

We hear this from the big-business media, from State Department hacks, and from Sunday morning TV



¡BASTA YA!

Andrea González

preachers. This is an essential part of the ruling-class drive to convince working people in this country to support Washington's aggression abroad. Using this racist campaign as a battering ram, they hope to beat back their opponents within the Black and Chicano communities and to cow the working class as a whole into silence.

As much as it is today, racism was an important element of the ruling-class war drives in the past. The experience of the "zoot suit riots" of World War II is a useful reminder of this.

In December 1941, the U.S. government formally entered World War II. In February 1942, 110,000 Japanese Americans were herded into concentration camps. Throughout 1942, anti-Black violence increased greatly. The worst incident occurred in June 1943 in Detroit, where racist mobs murdered 27 Blacks.

By the fall of 1942, the anti-Mexican racism of the California press had become so blatant that the Mexican government protested. The Office of War Information urged the Los Angeles press to change its tone. While the terms "zoot suiter" and "Pachuco gang member" replaced the term Mexican, the racist campaign continued.

Pachuco was a term then used by many young Chicanos to identify themselves. A zoot suit included high waisted, pleated pants, baggy at the knees and tight at the ankles, as well as a wide-lapelled jacket with fingertip length sleeves and a body that often came to the knees. One charge against the "zoot suiters," many of whom were Black and Chicano, was that at a time of rationing, the garment used too much cloth and was unpatric.

The campaign against "zoot suiters" was not limited to Los Angeles. In April 1943, gangs of white sailors from Alameda Naval Base attacked Chicanos and Blacks in East Oakland, beating and stripping the youths.

The capitalist press also labored to create the impression that servicemen were a special target of muggings and assaults by "zoot suiters."

The massive racist assaults on the Chicano community in Los Angeles, which have come to be known as the "zoot suit riots," began in June 1943.

On June 4, 200 sailors from the naval armory at Chavez Ravine, led by a petty officer, piled into 20 taxis and drove to East Los Angeles. There they set upon and beat up five Chicanos wearing zoot suits. No charges were filed against any of the sailors, and the cops did not interfere with the taxi brigade.

On June 5 and 6, groups of racist servicemen — sometimes as large as 100 — marched on downtown and East Los Angeles. Linking arms four abreast, sailors, marines, and GIs — sometimes led by officers and sometimes by persons in civilian clothes — walked down

Broadway in downtown Los Angeles telling Chicanos to get off the streets. They entered movie theaters, turned on the lights, insulted the audiences, and beat and stripped anyone wearing a zoot suit or anyone who got in their way. In East Los Angeles they set upon individuals or groups of youths and entered bars to beat and strip the patrons.

On June 7, the capitalist press announced that the Pachucos were planning to assault servicemen. Press reports even named specific street corners in the middle of the *barrio* where the youths were allegedly waiting to attack servicemen.

The night of June 7, thousands of racists descended on the *barrio*. They beat and attacked Chicanos, Blacks, and Filipinos. The mob pulled a Black worker off of a streetcar and gouged his eye out with a knife. As they had done throughout the course of the events, civilian cops and military cops followed the mobs. Wherever they saw groups of Chicanos gathering to defend themselves, they moved in and made mass arrests, breaking up the groups.

In the following days, Los Angeles was declared off limits to military personnel. Racist violence continued, however, and the Los Angeles City Council ruled that wearing a zoot suit was a misdemeanor.

The "zoot suit riots" were a result of the racist offensive launched by the ruling class as a part of its war drive and were inseparably linked to it. It formed part of a broader attack on the rights of the working class that occurred during World War II.

These attacks, as well as the internment of Japanese Americans and attacks on Blacks, were the results on the home front of an inter-imperialist war that was designed to redivide the world between the capitalist powers of Europe and Asia. Then, as now, such a war could only be waged by beating back the working class and the oppressed.

## GM gets cutbacks for 'the factory of the future'

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wages would be reduced below the base compensation rate set in the agreement.

In this way, wages will vary from one work unit to another with some earning more than the base rate and others less. Work units must also demand that their members push for speedup and help find ways to eliminate jobs as part of their effort to become competitive with other work units.

### Seniority rights gutted

The term seniority is not even used in the Saturn agreement. No longer will job assignments, shift preference, or even layoffs be determined by seniority. Instead Saturn workers will compete with each other and if the boss thinks two workers are equal in all respects, then the time and date a worker is hired will serve as a tie breaker.

Job classifications for production workers are eliminated and there will only be three to five classifications in the skilled trades. At most GM assembly plants there are presently some 100 job classifications.

The agreement says that the bulk of new hires at Saturn will be GM workers including some on layoff. These workers will not be hired at Saturn according to their seniority with GM. Instead a joint company-union committee will be used to "select"

those GM employees and former GM employees for work at Saturn. The agreement says that Saturn will hire only those workers who meet established recruitment and selection criteria.

This includes pre-hire interviews and orientations that will be used to weed out GM workers whose attitude is not compatible with what the agreement calls the Saturn "mission and philosophy." Workers who are hired at Saturn give up their recall rights and seniority rights acquired at other GM plants.

To entice GM workers to give up their rights Saturn is offering a phony job security provision. The agreement says, "Saturn will not lay off Saturn members except in situations arising from unforeseen or catastrophic events or severe economic conditions." Such conditions or events are not specified. In addition, the agreement specifies that up to 20 percent of the work force is not covered by this phony job security provision and will suffer from regular layoffs. These Saturn workers are referred to as "associative members" who are contractually second-class employees.

### Union structures dismantled

The memorandum scraps the grievance procedure, shop floor committees, and steward system in operation at most union

shops in the United States. They are replaced with a system that puts union representatives on a pyramid of management committees. The union will take a seat alongside the bosses in policing the work force instead of defending the workers from the abuses and assaults of the bosses.

Instead of stewards, each work unit elects a "UAW Work Unit Counselor" who is a working unit member. These work units and presumably the UAW counselor are responsible for disciplining workers whose "... conduct or attitude is adversely affecting the Work Unit. ... The parties (Saturn and UAW) agree to work toward a variety of approaches to be followed in the attempt to encourage the member to become a full participant in the unit."

A group of work units, referred to as a Business Unit will elect a UAW Business Unit Advisor who will "administer the Agreement on behalf of the union." A UAW Advisor will also be elected at-large by union members to sit on a Manufacturing Advisory Committee. A union representative will also serve on the Strategic Advisory Committee which is in effect the corporate board.

### Blow to union

The Saturn-UAW agreement negotiated and enthusiastically supported by the top

levels of the UAW officialdom — beginning with President Owen Bieber and Vice-president Donald Ephlin — is not the road forward for the unions. It is a blow that will affect future contract negotiations and the ability of the UAW to stand up to more company concession demands.

Already the top executives of the auto giants have said this agreement represents a guide for future contract negotiations. The bosses expect and will demand similar concessions in wages, benefits, and working conditions.

Chrysler president Lee Iacocca, for example, said Chrysler will push for a Saturn-type contract with the UAW for all of Chrysler.

Ford and GM executives said Saturn will affect bargaining when the current contract expires in 1987.

And American Motors Corp. vice-president of personnel and industrial relations, Richard Calmes, said AMC will be looking for a Saturn-like contract at its new production facility in Ontario, Canada. Calmes also said the future of auto production at its Wisconsin plants is dependent on a Saturn-type agreement.

Harris Freeman is a member of UAW Local 1700, Chrysler's Sterling Heights assembly plant.

## LETTERS

### George Jackson

I'm a prisoner held in one of the special (lock-up) units and I'm a daily reader of the *Militant* through other prisoners who are deep into the struggle.

You cover a lot of issues, especially Che Guevara, Malcolm X, Patrice Lumumba, Fidel Castro, etc. But I haven't seen any coverage on Comrade George Jackson. He is highly respected by most prisoners, especially myself. I would like to see you do a story on this great Black prison revolutionary. Keep on struggling and staying strong.

A prisoner  
Great Meadows, New York

### 'Inside/Out'

I am a member of an organization that is known as Inside/Out. The national headquarters for the organization is based in Fresno, but we have been able to organize a sub-chapter here in Soledad State Prison.

The Inside/Out organization is committed to nonviolent social change and decentralization of legal knowledge for the working class.

The Fresno County district attorney and conspirators recruited from and by the Fresno County sheriff's office and the FBI have been involved in mindboggling cointelpro operations [against us] by means of acts of perjury, fabrication of evidence, destruction of evidence, and malicious and insidious maneuvers.

The Soledad sub-chapter of Inside/Out has faced and defeated the prison officials in subjecting prisoners to forced transfers that subjected prisoners to inhuman conditions that are meant to deprive prisoners of their civil rights.

Soledad Prison officials began taking major retaliatory actions against prisoners that they labeled as "jailhouse lawyers" and began

transferring individuals that they identified as "jailhouse lawyers." They threatened prisoners by training automatic weapons at them whenever these "jailhouse lawyers" happened to pass by them. This will not stifle our will to resist.

We here in the Soledad sub-chapter of Inside/Out open the lines of communication to all interested individuals. Correspondence and support from prisoners and nonprisoners is welcome at: INSIDE/OUT, 366 N Van Ness, Fresno, California 93701.

Samuel L. Pena  
Soledad, California

### Honest coverage

I am an inmate at the Greenhaven Correctional Facility in Stormville, New York. I read your newspaper, the *Militant* and was overwhelmed with the honesty of your articles, especially concerning the struggles of the Nicaraguan

people against the counterrevolutionaries.

I'd love to become a subscriber to your paper. Please add my name and number to your list.

A prisoner  
Stormville, New York

### Trotsky on terrorism

The hijacking of the TWA plane to Beirut raised the subject of terrorism again.

I could not — after reading the account of the circumstances in the *Militant* — help but recall the words of Leon Trotsky, one of the central leaders of the 1917 Russian revolution, on the subject.

"Our class enemies are in the habit of complaining about our terrorism. What they mean by this is rather unclear. They would like to label all the activities of the proletariat directed against the class enemy's interest as terrorism. The threat of a strike ... all this and much more they call terrorism. If terrorism is understood in this way

as any action inspiring fear in, or doing harm to, the enemy, then of course the entire class struggle is nothing but terrorism. And the only question remaining is whether the bourgeois politicians have the right to pour out their floods of moral indignation about proletarian terrorism when their entire state apparatus with its laws, police, and army is nothing but an apparatus for capitalist terror!"

This quote is from Leon Trotsky's work *Against Individual Terrorism*. *Militant* readers will find it a useful thing to read on the question.

Jack Bresée  
Newport News, Virginia

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.

## Women hit apartheid, U.S. war

BY ANDREA GONZÁLEZ

NAIROBI, Kenya — Thirteen thousand women participated in Forum '85, the United Nations-organized conference open to all women. It took place at the University of Nairobi July 10-19.

Parallel to Forum '85 was the official UN conference on women. The later conference was only open to government-appointed delegations and went on from July 15-26. (See the August 2 *Militant* for a report on the official conference.) The U.S. delegation to the official UN conference was handpicked by President Reagan and was headed by his daughter Maureen Reagan.

Forum '85 and the official conference were the third set of parallel conferences on women organized by the UN since it declared 1975-85 the Decade for Women. Both Forum '85 and the official UN conference were organized to mark the end of this decade and to evaluate women's progress in the last 10 years on the themes of peace, equality, and development.

Among the participants of Forum '85 were a large number of African women, as well as hundreds of women from Latin America and the Caribbean. This included women living under brutal dictatorships in Chile, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Haiti.

Participants also included women from many Asian countries and from the island nations of the South Pacific as well as women from various European countries. Thousands of women from the United States came to Nairobi, including over 1,000 Black women.

### Peace the central issue

Although Forum '85 was organized on the themes of equality, development, and peace, participants agreed that without winning peace, women could not win anything else. This made an unofficially organized Peace Tent set up on Nairobi University campus a center of political discussion and debate during the 10-day conference. It served as a place where workshops continued and new topics were discussed.

The eyes of Forum '85 participants turned to two of the most important battles for peace in the world today: the struggle against the apartheid regime in South Africa and the fight against the U.S. aggression in Central America and the Caribbean.

Hundreds of women crowded into rooms to hear representatives of the fight against South African apartheid and Pretoria's domination of Namibia. There were leaders of the African National Congress, an outlawed anti-apartheid organization; the United Democratic Front, a broad coalition

of Africans, whites, Indians, and Coloreds (people of mixed races) fighting apartheid inside South Africa; and the South West Africa People's Organization fighting for the independence of the South Africa-ruled Namibia. So many women wanted to discuss the fight against apartheid that one workshop had to be moved to a large outdoor tent and even it could not accommodate the crowd.

### The fight against apartheid

At these workshops women gave graphic descriptions of life under apartheid. In one, Sister Bernard, a Catholic nun and a leader of the Transvaal Women's Federation, explained, "South Africa cannot renounce violence because apartheid cannot survive without violence. They use violence that goes beyond physical force... such a fundamentally violent system," she said, "cannot be reformed into a peaceful system."

African National Congress (ANC) representative Rose Sear explained that the apartheid system is responsible for violence throughout southern Africa. "The brutality spills on to the frontline states [Black-ruled countries near South Africa] as well," she said. "South Africa commits atrocities against the people of the sovereign states of Angola, Mozambique, and Botswana. The people of all southern Africa are paying with their blood so that the people of South Africa can be free."

At yet another workshop an ANC representative explained that U.S. government support for South Africa is not limited to economic or military aid but includes political cover. It was the U.S. government, she said, that linked South African withdrawal



In Peace Tent at Forum '85, Rigoberta Menchú of Guatemala discusses foreign debt, U.S. intervention.

from Namibia to the withdrawal of the Cuban internationalist forces in Angola. "The ANC," she said, "rejects this linkage because we know that before any Cuban troops withdrawing got back to Havana, the South African regime would launch a massive invasion of Angola."

### U.S.-backed war in Central America

Workshops on Central America and the Caribbean were similarly packed with

women who wanted to learn the truth about the revolutions in that region.

Women were visibly moved by Alicia de García, a representative of the Mothers Committee of El Salvador, when she gave an account of the death squad activities in her country. These atrocities, she explained, continue today under Salvadoran President Duarte's "democracy."

Hundreds of women sat in total silence

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## Teamster car haulers on strike

BY ED JOSEPHSON

DETROIT — On July 26, more than 20,000 Teamsters who transport new cars from the factories to dealerships in all 50 states went out on strike for the first time in 30 years. The National Automobile Transporters Association, the organization of car haulers' bosses, is attempting to impose a concession contract that would sharply cut pay rates for all drivers and introduce a two-tier pay scale.

Picket lines were set up after union members overwhelmingly rejected the tentative pact that top Teamsters officials recommended for ratification. The *Militant* spoke to strikers from Teamster Local 229, the largest car-haulers local in the country,

who are on strike against Ryder Truck Yard here. They explained that the hauling companies want to cut the pay for all return trips from the current rate of 65 cents per mile to 35 cents per mile.

One striker told the *Militant*, "They think there are lots of unemployed people who will work for a nickel or a dime. They're trying to cut wages back to where they were in the '60s and '70s."

Another union member explained that the companies are attempting to impose a two-tier wage scale under which new drivers would receive 80 percent of the basic rate, reaching full pay only after three years.

In 1982 the car hauling companies used the slump in the auto industry to force through a concessions contract. Under that contract pay rates for return loads on some routes were cut 50 percent. Today, despite the upturn in car sales, the companies are offering only a three-and-a-half-cent raise in the basic rate while demanding that the 1982 concessions be extended to all loads carried on return runs.

The hauling companies have already introduced two-driver teams on runs to California forcing drivers to split the pay. "If they extend these sleeper teams," one striker said, "we will have to live in the trucks all the time to make a living."

Drivers have been working without a contract since June when over 80 percent of the union members voted against the companies' contract offer. A second offer, reportedly worse than the first, was never even put to a vote.

In the first days of the strike, Ryder Truck Yard moved cars from the Cadillac plant to the truck yard but has not yet tried to move the cars to the dealerships. Some strikers here are expecting the bosses to use driver-trainees, who are not yet in the union, to start running loads. One striker explained that "Ryder has been getting ready for this strike for a long time. They eventually want to have a non-union operation. This strike isn't just important for us, it will have an effect throughout the whole industry."

Nationally, delivery of new cars to dealerships has been stopped. If the strike runs more than a few weeks the auto companies may be forced to cut back production as storage facilities fill up.

One member of Local 299 predicted that the strike will heat up in mid-August and September when the auto companies complete their retooling to begin production on new models. "Chrysler wanted to get a jump on the '86 model year with an early changeover. They'll be mad as hell if they can't move the cars."

## Boston: judge to leave desegregation case

BY JON HILLSON

BOSTON — Federal District Court Judge W. Arthur Garrity is scheduled to present final orders for his departure from the historic Boston school-desegregation case on August 7, a month and two days after announcing his intention to do so.

Black community attorneys, the Boston School Committee, and other parties to the case have submitted proposals for inclusion in Garrity's tentative plan for the future of the school system. Garrity has assumed control of the schools, since finding in June 1974 that the school committee and state board of education violated the rights of Black students. He then ordered system-wide busing to achieve desegregation. (See article in this issue's *International Socialist Review* for a balance sheet of the first decade of desegregation in Boston.)

Garrity's draft order includes a permanent injunction against race discrimination in the Boston public school system and proportional hiring of Black faculty and administrative staff "at least commensurate" with the percentage of Black residents in Boston.

The order returns control of the school system to the Boston School Committee and enables it to "adopt or reject proposed modifications" to the standing desegregation order, provided such changes do not "violate the permanent orders."

This formula allows for Black community attorneys to move to have Garrity re-enter the case if they feel modifications contemplated by the school committee challenge the equal-rights gains of the desegregation plan.

The Boston School Committee has publicly opposed Garrity's proposed Black hiring plan and complains of a lack of "flexibility" in the scope of its ability to modify the permanent plan. It also challenges a portion of the order that attempts to maintain quotas for racial balance in the schools — for the desegregated make-up of each school.

"Many of us will not be sleeping too well at night for some time to come until the school committee establishes the fact that they can be relied on," Boston NAACP President Jack E. Robinson stated.

The five-member school committee, which Garrity found guilty of racist discrimination in 1974, had never included a Black member. Now, the restructured 13-member body includes district and at large members, among them three Blacks and a Latino representative, and most of its white members profess lip service to accommodation to desegregation. But in its majority, the committee has done little to give confidence to the Black and Latino communities.

"The school committee," Ellen Jackson, a leader of the struggle to desegregate the schools in the 1960s and 70s, told the *Militant*, "still isn't able to handle business without someone looking over its shoulder."

Currently dean of affirmative action at Northeastern University, Jackson termed Garrity's tenure as "one of the best things that ever happened in Boston." His departure leaves her with "mixed emotions."

School committee member Jean McGuire, who is Black, told the *Militant* that Garrity's withdrawal from the case is

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