

Nat'l Guard herds scabs at Hormel

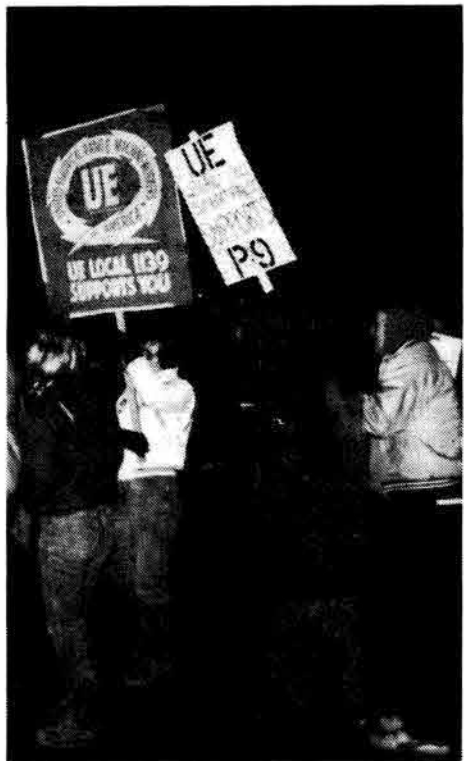
BY MAGGIE McCRAW

AUSTIN, Minn. — On Monday, February 3, Minnesota Gov. Rudy Perpich ordered the National Guard to return to the gates of the struck Hormel plant here.

Perpich reassigned the Guard to herd scabs for Hormel after United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) Local P-9, along with hundreds of supporters, successfully closed the plant on Friday, January 31. Perpich had withdrawn the Guard to the Austin Armory only two days earlier.

With the Guard back in place, the Hormel bosses were able to reopen the plant.

Perpich seized on the big-business press reports that 100 union members allegedly wanted to cross the picket line, with baseball bats and guns to "protect" themselves. Paul Tschida, Perpich's liaison in Austin, cynically claimed that the "Guard



Militant/Tom Jaax

Minnesota strike supporters mobilized January 31 to shut down plant. National Guard was ordered back to plant gate.

was there to protect the strikers as well as the workers."

Strike leaders have condemned the Guard's presence in Austin. Calling the 800 troops in the town "a private security force for Hormel," the local is demanding that they be withdrawn.

As the Guard was being mobilized, the daily newspapers tried to turn public opinion against the strikers by implying that they or their supporters were sabotaging Hormel products. Banner headlines in papers across the state read: "Metal found in Hormel hot dogs." The reports claimed that razor blades had been found in the company's products. The tampering, they said, occurred in stores, not in the production facilities.

Local union leaders have responded by condemning any such acts.

Perpich's decision to remobilize the Guard followed on the heels of his failure to pressure P-9 to return to work on Hormel's terms.

Immediately after withdrawing the Guard to the armory, Perpich held a series of meetings on the strike. First he met with Chairman Richard Knowlton. Then he met with state AFL-CIO leaders and William

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Reagan demands more arms, cuts in social services

The central theme of President Ronald Reagan's State of the Union address was clear. Speaking to a joint meeting of the Senate and House of Representatives on February 4, the president called for a whopping 11.9 percent increase in military expenses and a big cut in spending for social programs.

In motivating the Pentagon's military buildup, Reagan spotlighted the U.S. government's war against Nicaragua's Sandinista government. "Surely, no issue is

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more important for peace in our own hemisphere, for the security of our frontiers, for the protection of our vital interests — than to achieve democracy in Nicaragua and to protect Nicaragua's democratic neighbors," the President proclaimed.

The White House had already announced that it will seek \$100 million in aid for the counterrevolutionaries who are conducting Washington's dirty war against this Central American country.

Washington's program to build an anti-missile shield in space, commonly called Star Wars, is the number one expense in Reagan's proposed \$311.6 billion military budget.

In affirming his commitment to the government's space program, the president stated that the same technology can be used for developing the Star Wars project. He then added, "America met one historic challenge and went to the moon. Now, America must meet another — to make our strategic defense real for all the citizens of Planet Earth."

The notion that extending Washington's weaponry into space is going to make the world secure from nuclear arms is as much of a scam as all other so-called deterrent policies of the Pentagon.

Reagan's view of the current state of the union is summed up by his assertion that "the United States is the economic miracle, the model to which the world once again turns."

U.S. gov't prettifies Nicaraguan 'contras'

BY HARRY RING

The congressional program of financial aid to the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries (*contras*) will expire March 31. This \$27 million aid package, approved last June, was earmarked for food, boots, uniforms, medicine, and other "humanitarian" supplies to help sustain the *contras*.

Reagan is now pressing Congress to appropriate \$100 million more, a big chunk of which would go for open military aid to the anti-Sandinista fighters.

To help win support for the \$100 million, the pro-*contra* propaganda campaign is being escalated. Already it includes some heavy poor-mouthing about the consequences of alleged lack of material aid to the *contras*.

Honduras-based *contras* admitted to reporters January 27 that they have suffered setbacks and that only 40 percent of their forces — an estimated 5,000 — are now inside Nicaragua. The main reason for their military reverses, they said, was a lack of supplies.

"We have thousands of men who don't even have a pair of boots or a poncho," one spokesperson whined.

It is a fact that the *contras* have been dealt some stiff blows by the Sandinista army and militia. With no popular base inside the country, they have been unable to hold a square inch of territory.



In State of the Union message, Reagan urged more money for Pentagon, to be used for nuclear weapons and waging wars like one against Nicaragua. Proposed budget cuts will mean increase in number of homeless and hungry.

The president is basking in the glow of what has become a relatively long upturn in the business cycle. And from the standpoint of the U.S. ruling families, who are raking in profits hand over fist, the state of the economy does indeed appear very good. And the managers, lawyers, and politicians who serve them, as well as many other businessmen and professionals, are enjoying the benefits too.

But there is another United States, made up of the great majority whose labor produces the country's vast wealth, who are not living in an economic miracle.

According to government figures, more than 9 million workers are either seeking jobs or have given up looking. This is an extraordinarily high number of jobless during an economic upturn. Estimates of the number of homeless range up to 3 million and homelessness increased in most major cities in 1985.

In the past five years 150,000 farm families have been driven off the land they



work. And tens of thousands more are expected to leave farming this year. The 1985 farm bill, approved by both Reagan and Congress, will help speed this process along.

A study released by a congressional committee in early January showed what every working-class family already knows: their standard of living has sharply declined in the past decade. Real-dollar income has dropped as wages have been cut or not raised enough to keep up with the growing cost of living.

According to the study, the percentage of total income going to the bottom fifth of 21 families dropped from 5.5 percent in 1974 to 4.7 percent in 1984. During the same period, the top fifth increased its income share from 41 percent to 42.9 percent. Thus, another way to describe Reagan's "economic miracle" is that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

The handful of ruling families who

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the complaint about no boots is hardly credible. Only last August, a U.S. official boasted that the *contras* had received as much as \$25 million in private aid in addition to the \$27 million allocated by Congress. At that time, *contra* leaders said they had enough weapons to arm a force of 30,000.

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Cuban party congress opens

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

HAVANA, Cuba — The Third Congress of the Cuban Communist Party opened February 4 with the main report presented by the party's first secretary, Fidel Castro. The sweeping report, which took nearly six hours to deliver, was characterized above all by a frank and critical assessment of the challenges facing the Cuban people in what Castro called "the war of the economy" that will remain a major battlefield between now and the year 2000.

The report began by reviewing the impressive economic achievements registered since the Second Congress in December 1980. It noted that Cuba's gains stand in sharp contrast to the economic crisis con-

fronting other countries in Latin America.

Moreover, Castro emphasized, substantial progress has been achieved despite drought and devastating tropical storms such as the recent Hurricane Kate and despite the fact that "sugar prices on the so-called world market reached their lowest buying power this century, and there is still an imperialist blockade of our country."

The fact that Cuba has achieved what it has in this period, he said, "attests to our excellent and fair economic relations with the socialist community."

Within this context, Castro went on to detail major deficiencies and shortcomings in relation to productivity, planning, and supplies of consumer goods, as well as ex-

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'Militant' builds solidarity with Hormel strikers

BY ELLIE GARCIA

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Getting out the truth about the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) Local P-9 strike

As part of this campaign, *Militant* supporters went not only to the plants where they usually sell, but to worksites where sales have not been carried out every week.

SELLING OUR PRESS AT THE PLANT GATE

against Hormel is key to winning solidarity with these embattled workers.

For this reason, socialists here made a special effort to sell the *Militant* — which has sent a reporting team of Maggie McCraw and Tom Jaax to Austin to cover the strike — at as many area plant gates as possible last week.

To make this possible, some *Militant* supporters sold at two plant gates last week.

Sales teams carried signs that read: "National Guard out of Austin. Support P-9. Read the *Militant*."

The team that sold at the Ford plant, organized by the United Auto Workers, reported that the

paper received a friendlier than usual response. Seven papers were sold there.

At the Koch Oil Refinery, one paper was sold to a worker who attends training classes with a *Militant* supporter who works in the refinery. This supporter reported that the *Militant* provoked a lively political discussion on the Hormel strike among the workers in the class.

As part of the special sales effort, sales teams returned to Waldorf, a giant paper plant, for the first time in over a year. Seven papers were sold at the plant. Some workers who didn't buy the *Militant* did stop to discuss the P-9 strike.

One worker reported that there

had been a collection taken in the Waldorf plant for the Hormel strikers. He told the team that \$54 was raised. Even people who didn't stop gave a thumbs-up sign to the sales team as they drove by.

The *Militant* got an especially positive response at the Iowa Pork plant organized by UFCW Local 789 here. The team arrived for the last half hour of the shift change. Most of the workers had already left. Salespeople only spoke to nine workers — seven bought the paper and one already had a copy.

One young man told them, "Yeah, I'll take that paper. We support P-9 here because their fight is important. Any little step forward, even the fight itself, will help us here."

An older worker, who had already bought the paper, told the sales team that there were weekly collections in the plant for the Hormel strikers.

In Austin on January 31, supporters of the strike had driven in from all over the state to be there for the 4:30 a.m. picket line in front of the Hormel plant. Thirty-five copies of the paper were sold at the picket line.

Militant reporter Maggie McCraw sold 18 *Militants*. She said people who bought the paper gave no less than \$1 and some as much as \$5 for each copy when they learned that the *Militant* was being made available to strikers for whatever they could afford or for free.

U.S. government prettifies Nicaraguan 'contras'

Continued from front page

The contra problem is not a lack of guns or boots. It's the lack of popular support within Nicaragua and an odious reputation here and internationally. They are rightly known by growing numbers as a gang of cutthroats.

Recently, the CIA was moved to deny that the contras often slit the throats of captives.

The proof? The contras "are normally not equipped with either bayonets or combat knives."

The assertion was scoffed at by former contra leaders, who said such weapons were common among the troops and frequently used to kill prisoners.

A member of the House foreign affairs committee dismissed the CIA report as "incredibly sloppy at best and intentionally deceptive at worst."

Thus burdened, the administration carries on with its efforts to project a democratic image for its hirelings.

Three contra figures met with Secretary of State George Shultz January 29. They reportedly presented him with a set of "principles and objectives" for a provisional government if they succeeded in toppling the Sandinistas. (Interestingly, it's no longer denied that this is the aim of the operation.)

The purpose of the document, asserted Alfonso Robelo, one of the trio at the meeting, is "to tell the world that we are not going to return to a *Somocista* past."

The *Somocistas*, supporters of the late dictator Anastasio Somoza, are the leading force among the contras. Robelo and Arturo Cruz, with reputations as "moderates," were placed on a three-member contra directorate to be non-*Somocista* window dressing.

The backbone of the contras is the FDN, the Nicaraguan Democratic Front. The FDN is totally dominated by the ex-*Somocistas*.

And that's not simply on the level of the

military commanders. The contras' committee on international relations, for example, includes one of Somoza's former foreign ministers, a former vice-minister of foreign affairs, and his former ambassador to Spain.

Such facts are confirmed by Edgar Chamorro, an ex-member of the top directorate of the FDN who quit when he could no longer stomach being a pawn for the CIA.

In a letter to the January 9 *New York Times*, he declared the contras "were, and are, a proxy army controlled by the U.S. government." He branded as a "gross fabrication" the claim that the contras are composed of democratic groups that fought Somoza.

"As I can attest," he wrote, the contra force "is directed and controlled by officers of Somoza's National Guard, who fought at the dictator's side until the very end and then fled to Honduras."

To confirm this, Chamorro cites an April 1985 U.S. Congressional study showing that 46 of the 48 positions in the FDN military leadership are held by former National Guardsmen.

Assailing the claims of a contra concern for human rights, he declared that, during his four-year tenure as a contra director, "it was premeditated policy to terrorize civilian noncombatants. . . . Hundreds of civilian murders, mutilations, tortures, and rapes were committed in pursuit of this policy of which the 'contra' leaders and their CIA superiors were well aware."

A "proxy army," declares Chamorro. That's exactly correct.

When Somoza's ex-Guardsmen fled to Honduras, it was the CIA that organized them into a cohesive counterrevolutionary force, equipping, training, and supervising them.

And when Congress decided last year to route its aid through State Department rather than CIA channels, the Reagan administration contemptuously brushed the

legal restrictions aside. It assigned a member of the National Security Council to be military and political liaison with the contras and organized a campaign of private fundraising.

To head up the fund effort, the White House tapped retired Army Maj. Gen. John Singlaub.

A rabid ultrarightist, Singlaub heads the World Anti-Communist League. The quality of that outfit is suggested by Singlaub's insistence that former Nazi SS officers really have been purged from the organization.

Singlaub takes credit for the \$25 million in private funding for the contras. The cash, he says, comes from here and abroad. From Europe, it's mostly from corporations. Here, apparently for legal reasons, "it's the individuals who make the contribution, rather than any corporation."

The corporate giving is not motivated by humanitarian concerns.

Says Singlaub, "I think the European money is coming from corporations that had their properties in Nicaragua expropriated or nationalized. . . ."

For the fundraising operation, Singlaub has an assortment of supporters.

There is CAUSA. Headed by a retired Air Force general, this outfit is affiliated with the ultraright Moonies.

Another group is CMA, Civilian-Military Assistance. A private military formation based in Alabama, CMA provides equipment, training, and personnel to the contras. Two of its members were shot down inside Nicaragua while flying CIA-provided helicopters in a military raid.

Then there is *Soldier of Fortune*, the national magazine of right-wing mercenary thugs. It supplies advisers, training, and supplies to the contras and to Salvadoran police.

Ultraright radio and TV evangelists pass the plate for the contras as well.

There is good reason for this reactionary gang to feel drawn to the ex-Guardsmen

who lead the contras.

The Nicaraguan National Guard was conceived, created, and imposed on the people of Nicaragua by the government of the United States.

Established in 1925 during the U.S. occupation of Nicaragua, the Guard was trained and directly commanded by U.S. Marines until they left in 1933.

Command of the Guard was then turned over to Anastasio Somoza García, who used it to establish a brutal dictatorship later inherited by his sons, who also inherited command of the Guard.

Throughout, the Guardsmen continued to receive U.S. military training. And, at U.S. insistence, it combined military and police functions.

While Somoza and his family looted the country, the top layer of the Guard was given a free hand to steal, swindle, and bribe. And the power to beat, torture, and murder at will.

One of the powerful factors in the victory of the Sandinista revolution in 1979 was the universal hatred for these butchers. To this day they are cursed by the Nicaraguan people, who suffered so much at their hands. This is one of the reasons why the contras are not popular inside the country and remain totally dependent on their U.S. employers.

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Reagan hails S. Africa-backed terrorist

BY FRED FELDMAN

Jonas Savimbi, who heads the terrorist National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), began a two-week tour of the United States January 28. Savimbi's UNITA bands are armed and financed by the white minority regime in South Africa as part of its war against the independent West African country of Angola. He was greeted with great fanfare as a "freedom fighter" by the Reagan administration and various right-wing organizations.

President Reagan met with Savimbi at the White House January 30, posed for pictures with him, and promised that Washington would be "very helpful" in his South Africa-supported attacks on the Angolan government.

The Reagan administration has proposed "covert" arms aid to Savimbi and has called for a congressional resolution hailing him. More than 120 U.S. senators and representatives from both capitalist parties are pressing resolutions calling for up to \$50 million in open military assistance to Savimbi's killers. The administration says it opposes these proposals.

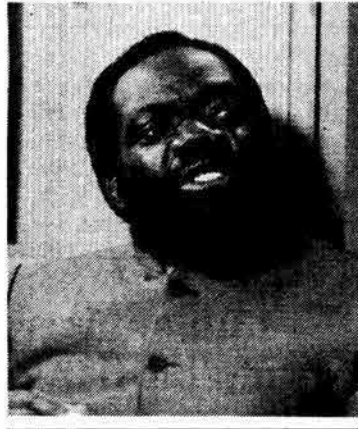
On January 29 Savimbi held meetings with Secretary of State George Shultz and Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker and with Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and Admiral William Crowe, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the armed forces.

Weinberger told Savimbi, according to the January 30 *New York Times*, that "he hoped Congress would give 'appropriate support' leading to a diplomatic solution and the departure of the Cubans from Angola." According to U.S. officials, Savimbi asked for antiaircraft and antitank weapons.

Cuban volunteer troops have been stationed in Angola since the apartheid regime launched an all-out invasion, backed by Washington, aimed at taking Angola's capital city of Luanda in 1975. The Cuban troops form a defense line against repetition of such a move.

The removal of the Cuban troops under present circumstances would make it far easier for Washington and the white minority government in South Africa to dictate to Angola. Much of the big-business media joined in the effort to win more support in this country for Savimbi. The National Press Club staged a meeting for him January 31, billing him as an "Angolan freedom fighter."

Reactionary outfits that played host to



Jonas Savimbi (inset). South African troops and helicopter gunships in raid on Angola.

Savimbi included the Heritage Foundation, American Enterprise Institute, the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies, the Cuban American National Foundation, and Freedom House.

Dozens of right-wing organizations scheduled a rally in his honor January 31.

Despite the royal welcome from the Reagan administration and the ultraright, Savimbi failed to substantially widen support for open U.S. intervention against Angola.

The Congressional Black Caucus denounced the tour, as did a petition signed by 500 university educators with backgrounds in African affairs.

A public relations firm, which got \$600,000 for organizing Savimbi's visit, announced he would be the guest at a dinner held by AFL-CIO officials in Washington, D.C.

"It is just not true," responded Murray Seeger, media spokesperson for the union federation. "He sought a dinner and put it on his schedule, but there is no dinner. He will not meet with [AFL-CIO president] Lane Kirkland."

Nor have administration hopes that Con-

gress would rush through a declaration of support for Savimbi before he left been realized. Senator Richard Lugar, head of the foreign relations committee and an advocate of measures aimed at aiding UNITA, said the issue would not come up until later.

The administration's proposal to "covertly" arm UNITA is reportedly deadlocked in the Senate Intelligence Committee.

The U.S. rulers remain divided over whether to openly take Savimbi's side, although they have in fact backed UNITA and its South African sponsors throughout the war against Angola.

Congressman Theodore Weiss and 17 other House members are sponsoring a bill to bar all aid to UNITA.

In November, 101 members of the House of Representatives warned that "U.S. involvement in this conflict, whether direct or indirect, covert or overt, would damage our relations with governments throughout Africa..."

The effort to pass Savimbi off as a sterling democrat and militant fighter for Black freedom in southern Africa has not removed the stench of his total reliance on massive South African military assistance or his support to the white minority government.

"Savimbi travels to and from Angola primarily through South Africa and South African-controlled Namibia; his headquarters in Jamba are only 18 miles from the Namibian border," wrote Sanford Ungar in

the January 26 *Washington Post*. "Savimbi was an honored guest at the inauguration of [South African] State President P.W. Botha in 1984."

Geoffrey McKeown, media spokesman for TransAfrica (a group opposed to U.S. support to the apartheid regime), noted that UNITA held off a recent "offensive by Angolan government forces... only because of air strikes. UNITA has no planes. The strikes were by South African war planes."

The apartheid regime's goals in waging war against Angola are to replace the Angolan government with one that will bar anti-apartheid fighters from the country and accept the political and economic domination of the region by U.S. and South African imperialism.

This was also the goal of the apartheid regime's military blockade of Lesotho that resulted in a South African-backed coup in that country January 20. And this is the goal of the South African military attacks and threats against Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Zambia, Swaziland, and other countries in southern Africa.

South African anti-apartheid fighters have made the Reagan administration's coverup of Savimbi's role more difficult. In recent weeks, Bishop Desmond Tutu and Winnie Mandela denounced Washington's support to UNITA as support to the apartheid regime.

Hundreds picketed outside when Savimbi addressed the National Press Club. Hundreds also picketed the right-wing rally for Savimbi held January 31.

Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women



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D.C. picket will protest aid to Nicaraguan 'contras'

BY IKE NAHEM

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A coalition of antiwar, solidarity, and religious organizations has called for a regional action here on February 21 to protest the U.S.-organized war against Nicaragua.

The Coalition to Stop U.S. War on Nicaragua was initiated by the Nicaragua Information Committee (NICA), a D.C. organization established two years ago by activists who have participated in volunteer work brigades in Nicaragua. NICA is affiliated to the Nicaragua Network and the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES).

Griff Jones, a leader of NICA, told the *Militant* that the action was called in response to the latest campaign for aid to the *contras* (counterrevolutionaries) by the Reagan administration. "We sent a letter stating the need to respond to 85 peace, solidarity, church, labor, Black, anti-apartheid, student, women's, and other progressive organizations. In the letter we called for a meeting to discuss a united response."

Some 50 people representing more than a dozen organizations attended the first meeting. Several action proposals were raised and committees set up.

The next meeting gave the ad hoc coalition a name and decided to rally at a Capitol Hill subway stop and march to the Capitol during the evening rush hour. Ten thousand educational leaflets will be distributed to counter the government's lies about Nicaragua and to publicize the protest.

So far, according to Jones, 30 organizations have taken some responsibility for the February 21 action, including making financial contributions.

Initial sponsors of the coalition include: Casa El Salvador, Center for New Creation, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Quest for Peace, Committee for Health Rights in Central America, World Peacemakers, Nicaragua Network, CISPES, All-Peoples Congress, Peace and Solidarity Network, and Socialist Workers Party.

Additional endorsers of the action include: American Indian Movement; Dumi Matabane, D.C. representative of the African National Congress; Committee Against the Marcos Dictatorship; D.C. Rape Crisis Center; Guatemala Health Rights Network; Maryland Council on Latin America; and the National Black Independent Political Party.

The National Organization for Women has called two abortion rights actions — in Washington, D.C., for March 9, and in Los Angeles for March 16. The theme of the actions is a "National March for Women's Lives" to keep abortion and birth control safe and legal.

NOW is involving a broad range of women's rights, Black, Latino, student, and labor organizations in building the marches.

The *Militant* is starting this column as a regular feature to encourage readers to build the March actions.

For information on the Washington march, contact National March for Women's Lives, 1401 New York Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20005; telephone (202) 347-2279. For information on the Los Angeles march, 1242 S. La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90035; telephone (213) 652-5576.

More than 120 organizations sponsor actions

The March for Women's Lives is gaining momentum and "more organizations sign onto the march daily," according to Eleanor Smeal, president of the National Organization for Women.

Some 120 organizations had become cosponsors of the actions as of January 31.

An initial list of cosponsors includes the American Association of University Women, Abortion

Rights Mobilization, American Jewish Congress, American Licensed Practical Nurses' Association, Coalition of Labor Union Women, Comisión Femenil de Los Angeles, and Democratic Socialists of America.

Other initial endorsers include: International Council of African Women, National Abortion Rights Action League, National Association of Social Workers, National Council of Negro Women, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, National Lawyers Guild, National Women's Political Caucus, Socialist Workers Party, Women's Equity Action League, and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Some of the recent endorsers include the African Women's Committee for Community Education, American Friends Service Committee, Catholics for a Free Choice, National Alliance of Third World Journalists, and the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc.

'Women of Color' conference

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A "Women of Color" conference to build the abortion rights action is being held Saturday, February 8, in Washington, D.C.

The meeting is sponsored by the International Council of African Women, National Black Women's Health Project, National Organization for Women, and the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights Women of Color Partnership Project.

It will include discussions on the topics of reproductive freedom and international oppression, reproductive rights and civil rights, and on the question, "Is abortion genocide?"

Loretta Ross, director of the Women of Color Program at the National NOW headquarters in Washington, D.C., told the *Militant*, "We believe very strongly that for Black women to really enjoy civil rights, they have to have the right to control their own reproduction."

Ross said the meeting would be an important opportunity to organize for the March 9 and 16 actions and discuss the concerns of Black women, Puerto Ricans, Chicanas, Asians, American Indians, and other victims of racist discrimination in the fight for reproductive freedom.

"I think the March for Women's Lives is going to be a big success," Ross said. "We already have 15 Black groups nationally that have agreed to participate, a pretty good showing this early."

The forum is 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the United Methodist Building, 100 Maryland Ave., NE, Washington, D.C.

For more information call (202) 347-2279.

Toledo: CLUW, NOW leaders to speak

Lee Levin, national executive secretary of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, and Sherri O'Dell, national vice-president (action) of the National Organization for

Women, will share the platform at a February 7 meeting in Toledo on "Abortion: keep it safe and legal. Defend women's lives."

Sponsored by Toledo NOW, the meeting will publicize the March demonstrations. It will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Church, 2210 Collingwood Ave.

Buses from Toledo are being chartered for March 9. For more information call (419) 693-6803.

13th anniversary of abortion rights

Last week's *Militant* reported on a number of abortion rights activities that took place around January 22, the 13th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. Here is news on some others:

In St. Louis, Michelle Clay, a city prosecuting attorney who has been involved in cases against opponents of abortion rights who harass women at clinics, spoke to 400 at a rally on January 22.

She described the antiabortion trespassers as "American contras," comparing them to the U.S.-backed mercenary forces seeking to overthrow the Nicaraguan government.

Clay responded to a local anti-abortion leader's comparison of his movement to that of Martin Luther King, Jr. "As a Black woman I am offended that they would compare their movement to the Black civil rights movement. These are not peaceful marches ending with an old woman being butted by a policeman's nightstick," she said.

A local meeting to plan partici-

pation in the national march was announced at the rally.

In Muncie, Indiana, 50 people attended a candlelight vigil. Among the speakers were Firdaus Jami, an anti-apartheid activist at Ball State University, and Nilda Keller, president of Muncie 9 to 5, an organization of women office workers.

An ad was placed in the *Muncie Star* on January 22 containing a reply form stating, "I want to be part of the National March for Women's Lives to make it clear that the actual majority of Americans support safe and legal birth control and abortion." For local information on the march call (317) 228-3581 or 289-8727.

Time, place of D.C., L.A. marches

Washington, D.C., Sunday, March 9:

Assemble: 10 a.m. on the Mall between 7th and 14th streets, NW.

March: Down Pennsylvania Avenue past the White House to the Lincoln Memorial.

Rally: 12 noon at the Lincoln Memorial

Los Angeles, Sunday, March 16:

Assemble: 10 a.m. at Century City along Century Park West.

March: Along the Avenue of the Stars past Century Plaza Hotel to Rancho Park.

Rally: 12 noon at Cheviot Hills-Rancho Park.

The stakes in the fight to keep abortion legal

Continued from back page
squarely on the basis of a woman's right to choose.

The slogans reflected this:
"Our bodies, our lives! Our right to decide!"

"Not the church, not the state! Women must decide our fate!"

"Women's lives are human lives."

"Keep your laws off my body!"

Women rejected the right of anyone — any government or official body, doctor, priest, husband, or parent — to force them to bear children when they did not choose to do so.

On this most basic question, which would affect every other decision of a woman's life, for the rest of her life, women refused to be ruled.

They rejected the double standard that said a woman must "pay the price" of bearing an unwanted child for the "sin" of having sex.

Women rejected the mystical and degrading notion that a fetus was more important than a real, live human female.

Abortion rights supporters organized tribunals, picket lines, mass demonstrations, petition campaigns, speakouts, debates, and defense campaigns. They filed hundreds of lawsuits against the reactionary state laws.

In a relatively short period of time, the majority of people were won to support legal abortion.

First breakthrough

The first victory in this fight came in 1970 when the New York State Legislature passed a law permitting abortions through the 24th week of pregnancy.

"Women's liberation played a big part in the passage of this bill," Gov. Nelson Rockefeller acknowledged as he signed it into law.

Women then traveled to New York from every state to get abortions. In the first two years of New York's liberalized law, 400,000 abortions were performed. More than 260,000 of these were for women from other states.

The victory — and the new freedom and

dignity women felt at being able to get abortions — spurred the movement. The New York law proved that legal abortion saves lives as the maternal death rate plummeted.

It also spurred opponents of women's rights, led by the Catholic church hierarchy, into action. In May 1972, the state legislature actually repealed the law, but pressure from the women's rights movement forced Governor Rockefeller to veto the repeal.

On Jan. 22, 1973, the progress made by supporters of legal abortion was registered in a historic victory.

The Supreme Court, in the case of *Roe v. Wade*, struck down all antiabortion laws and declared that abortion is a woman's right.

Behind the Jane Roe in *Roe v. Wade* stood millions of women fighting for their freedom.

The woman who filed the lawsuit was a young, unmarried waitress in Dallas, Texas. She became pregnant as a result of a

gang rape. In Texas, as in most states, she could only get an abortion if her life was in danger. And she couldn't afford to go to another state. So she filed a lawsuit trying to get the Texas law overturned.

The case was not settled before she was forced to bear a child that she then gave up for adoption. But the outcome of the case changed the lives of millions of women.

The Supreme Court decision marked the most significant step forward for women's equality since women won the right to vote. It declared that legal abortion is a constitutional right based on the right to privacy in the Fourteenth Amendment.

The ruling struck down all state laws that restricted that right.

In the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, the Court said, no restrictions at all may be placed on the right of women to abortion.

In the second trimester, the state may not interfere with the right of a woman to get an abortion, but is permitted to regulate conditions insuring the medical safety of

the procedure for the woman.

The Supreme Court decision did allow states to regulate abortion in the last three months of pregnancy. But the Supreme Court stipulated that state governments cannot prohibit abortions necessary to the life or health of the woman, no matter how late in the pregnancy.

The Court rejected the arguments of "right-to-life" groups that the fetus is a human being. "The word 'person' as used in the Fourteenth Amendment, does not include the unborn," the Court said.

The ink wasn't dry on *Roe v. Wade* before the attempts to gut and reverse it began. Today, 13 years later, abortion remains legal though its availability has been restricted.

Women, however, are showing that they will not easily relinquish the freedom they have won by being able to control their own bodies. "We will never go back" has become the slogan today as the fight to defend abortion rights heats up.

Rural women hold conference on farm crisis

BY KATHIE FITZGERALD

DES MOINES, Iowa — More than 400 women — a majority of them farm women — participated in the "Harvesting Our Potential: A Rural Women's Conference" here January 10-11.

The conference was sponsored by the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women, Iowa Farm Unity Coalition, Iowa Inter-church Agency for Peace and Justice, North American Farm Alliance, and Prairiefire Rural Action.

The Iowa National Organization for Women; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Council 61; and the Iowa United Auto Workers Community Action Program Council were among the conference endorsers.

In opening the event, Denise O'Brien, an Iowa dairy farmer, explained that "we women have always been the invisible farmer. But no longer can we sit back and

be timid. The purpose of this conference is support. We are here for education. We are here to solve things."

The conference took place at a time when family farmers are facing a deepening crisis. Nearly 45,000 farmers lost their land in 1985 alone. Pointing to the impact of the farm bill recently passed by Congress, which substantially lowers the prices the government pays farmers for their products, conference participants explained that this year will be worse.

In the workshops, women grappled with how to solve the farm crisis. They discussed the possibility of a farm strike — withholding their products from the market — as a solution. Others raised collective bargaining as a possible response. Direct actions against farm foreclosures as well as lobbying of elected officials were also discussed.

Another topic that came up was the vari-

ous attempts that are made by the government and big-business media to divide U.S. farmers from other working people in this country and around the world.

Referring to a recent natural disaster in Brazil which is expected to raise the prices some U.S. farmers receive for their products, one farmer commented, "Some people say this is good. Can you imagine that?"

Another activist pointed out, "They are always trying to divide us — rural and city, white and minority. And they try to divide us farmers. But farmers around the world aren't our enemy."

Conference organizer Karla Schmidt said that the response by women to the gathering was way beyond her expectations. They had planned for 200, not the more than twice that number who showed up. For most, the conference was their first such meeting.

Blacks, Chicanos organize 3rd World solidarity brigade to Nicaragua

BY HÉCTOR CARRIÓN

MATAGALPA, Nicaragua — "It is important for Black people to know about Nicaragua, to realize that the Nicaraguans are their brothers and sisters," said Deborah Brooks, a Black woman from Atlanta, Georgia.

"Blacks are kept away from international issues. More Blacks should come to Nicaragua. They should go back to the United States and tell the truth to their brothers and sisters so in case the United States invades Nicaragua, Blacks do not come here as cannon fodder the way they were sent to Vietnam."

The *Militant* interviewed Brooks while she was picking coffee in the mountains here. She was part of a group of 40 North Americans, most of them Blacks and Chicanos, who spent the first two weeks of January picking coffee at the La Pintada coffee plantation.

Want more Blacks to visit Nicaragua

Daryl Williams, a Black from New York City and one of the organizers of the coffee brigade, explained how it was organized. He said, "I'd been to Nicaragua three times before, and I never saw more than one Black person in any solidarity group visiting here. Many Nicaraguans had come up to me and said that they would like to see more Blacks visiting Nicaragua."

Williams and Gloria Alonzo, a Chicana from San Francisco, helped to get the people together from throughout the United States to form the brigade. "This was coordinated through the Nicaragua Network, the Nicaragua Exchange, and Afro-Americans in Solidarity with Central America," said Alonzo. They named the group "Third World Brigade — Julia de Burgos, Malcolm X, and Vincent Chin — in Solidarity with Nicaragua."

Julia de Burgos was a Puerto Rican poet whose works inspired Puerto Ricans to fight for their island's independence from U.S. domination.

Malcolm X was the outstanding revolutionary leader of the Black struggle for liberation during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Vincent Chin was a Chinese-American who was clubbed to death in 1983 in Detroit by a racist auto plant foreman whipped up by anti-Japanese, anti-import propaganda.

The 40 people on the brigade included Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Salvadorans, a Chinese, a Japanese, a Haitian, and a Nicaraguan. Half of the group was fluent in Spanish, and the rest spoke some. Their ages ranged from 18 to 39.

Most brigade members were activists in anti-apartheid groups or in MEChA (Chicano Student Movement of Aztlán) or La Raza, another Chicano organization.

Workday starts early

Work at the coffee plantation began at 4:30 a.m. Breakfast was served by 5:00, and by 6:00 everyone was climbing the mountains to get to the coffee trees. A lunch of rice, beans, and tortillas was served at noon, and by 3:30 the workday ended. Each person then had to carry down his or her own bag of coffee to the weighing station.

Alcohol was not allowed on the plantation, and a 9 p.m. curfew was imposed to protect everyone from possible attacks by the U.S.-organized counterrevolutionary bands.

During their free time, political discussions took place among the *brigadistas* and the Nicaraguans. The topics ranged from the U.S. aggression against Nicaragua to the living conditions of oppressed nationalities in the United States.

I asked brigade members why they had decided to come to Nicaragua. Sergio García is a Chicano law student at the University of California at Berkeley. He worked with the Nicaragua Information Center. "I do not like the news that has been reported

in the United States about Nicaragua. I'm concerned that not too many Spanish-speaking people and Blacks are participating in U.S. solidarity groups to help our brothers and sisters in Nicaragua," he responded.

Margarita Benitez, a Puerto Rican woman from the University of San Francisco, said, "I do not see how Nicaragua can be a threat to the United States. This country is very poor and needs a lot of help. I'm going back to the United States to speak to people about my experience in Nicaragua." Benitez is a staff member of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Peace Mobile Project in San Francisco.

'I grew up in same situation'

Linda, a Black woman from Long Island, New York, said, "There's a special feeling I get here. I grew up in the same situation as I see here in this coffee plantation — no running water, no lights, and very hard work. This is my first time picking coffee, but I used to pick cotton and watermelons in the state of Virginia." Such agricultural work was a way of life for her family.

"Here I am picking coffee for a cause," she said, smiling broadly. Linda also explained that she planned to write for her school newspaper and speak to students about her experience. "When I was getting ready to come down here, some friends were telling me that it was dangerous to be in Nicaragua. But here I am picking coffee in a war zone with my Nicaraguan brothers and sisters, and I'm very happy."

Carmen, a young Nicaraguan who grew up in Chinandega Province, was on the

'End aid to 'contras,' renew peace talks'

BY ANDREA GONZÁLEZ

"The particular type of aggression being waged against the Nicaraguan people by this American-sponsored group of mercenaries [*contras*] — targeting health clinics, schools, farm cooperatives, and religious institutions, constitutes a clear violation of the laws and customs of warfare... and every known principle of international humanitarian law."

This condemnation of the U.S.-backed war against Nicaragua forms the opening section of a statement issued by a group of lawyers, civil libertarians, and others from the United States and Canada, following a one-week tour of Nicaragua in mid-November.

The delegation included Ramsey Clark, former U.S. attorney general; attorney Leonard Weinglass; Olga Talamante from USOCA (U.S. Out of Central America); Robert Saint-Louis, secretary of the Association of Lawyers of Quebec; and others.

The delegation visited Nicaragua at the invitation of the Anti-imperialist Tribunal of Our America.

Describing the toll the U.S.-backed war has taken, the statement says, "Over 13,000 people have been killed, 80 percent of whom are civilians... Twenty-five health-care centers and 11 child-care centers have been destroyed, along with 1,900 housing units. The physical and economic damage alone runs over \$300 million."

The statement then turns to the Reagan administration's propaganda offensive against the Nicaraguan revolution. In particular, the statement answers the U.S. government's lies and slanders about the state of emergency declared by the Nicaraguan government prior to the delegation's visit.

The Nicaraguan government was forced to declare a state of emergency because of "a sustained and concerted attack on its



Militant/Héctor Carrión

Some members of a brigade of North Americans who picked coffee in mountains of Matagalpa, Nicaragua. Banner reads: "Greetings to the people of Nicaragua — 3rd World Brigade."

brigade. She and her family moved to San Francisco 10 years ago. This brigade was her first visit back to Nicaragua since. Carmen was so happy to be in Nicaragua that tears came to her eyes as she was talking to me.

"There is a new consciousness among the people, an awakening," she said. "I remember when I was little in my hometown in Chinandega Province, and the cotton needed to be harvested. Peasants were brought in by truck to the cotton fields. People from the towns felt that the peasants were inferior and never cared for them. Today this is not the case. Professionals, students, women, city workers, even members of the armed forces — everyone is harvesting coffee and cotton together as brothers and sisters."

Big changes since revolution

Carmen said that, as soon as she finishes school, she will return to Nicaragua to help her people. She pointed out the big changes she noticed in her Nicaraguan hometown, such as paved streets and lights. "When I was little, our bridge was washed away in a flood, and we had only a log to cross the

stream. Today there is a brand new bridge built by the revolution."

Heather, a young Black woman who is a junior at the University of California, explained, "Most of my friends were saying that I was crazy to come to Nicaragua. They thought that, because of the state of emergency, the Nicaraguan people needed a pass to travel around the country, and that it would be difficult for me also. My mother was the only person who inspired me to come."

Her trip to Nicaragua meant "I'm going to be late for school registration, and I must pay back the money I borrowed for the trip. But I'm glad to be here."

The Nicaraguan people were glad to see so many Black and Latino North Americans visiting Nicaragua. Many Nicaraguans wanted to know about the way of life for people of color in the United States. Young people were fascinated by the dreadlocks several brigade members wore.

Daryl Williams and Gloria Alonzo assured me this would not be the last time such a brigade visits Nicaragua because they are determined to organize similar ones in the future.

border and an attempted campaign of massive destabilization and terror. These minimal measures," the statement said, are "designed to ensure the safety and security of its people."

"Some civil liberties have been temporarily suspended... to deal with the enormity of the threat." But, the statement continues, "it is clear from their execution that these measures have not been motivated by any desire to protect the government from a dissatisfied people, but rather to protect the citizens of Nicaragua from the depredations of an illegal war."

Under the state of emergency, the statement explains, "daily life goes on in the major urban areas much as before. There is no curfew, no presence of excessive military personnel, and no evidence of a 'police state.'"

"In fact, we found more freedom in this

invaded and embattled country than exists in a number of other Latin American and Caribbean countries widely touted as models of democracy," the delegation emphasized.

While Washington hypocritically attacks the state of emergency in Nicaragua, the U.S. government continues "its reprehensible role in supporting the wholesale violations of human rights in countries such as El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Chile, Haiti, the Philippines, South Africa, Namibia, Lebanon, and by Israel," it continues.

The statement ends with a call to all North Americans to join together in demanding: "An end to aid to the *contras*; an end to the embargo; and a renewal of peace talks between the United States and Nicaragua, talks which began and were unilaterally stopped by the United States."

Grenadian government detains leader of 1979 revolution

The U.S.-installed government in Grenada detained George Louison for three hours on January 7 after police searched his home claiming they were looking for arms and ammunition. They found nothing.

Louison is a leader of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM). He was minister of agriculture in the workers' and farmers' government led by former Prime Minister Maurice Bishop from March 1979 to October 1983. Bishop and other leaders of the New Jewel Movement were murdered when a clique organized by Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard overthrew the government, opening the way for Washington's invasion.

Louison's detention came after the Grenadian government had arrested 15 youths

for allegedly carrying out illegal military training and exercises.

Defense attorneys for the youths charge they were arrested because they oppose the extradition to the United States of imprisoned unionist Chester Humphrey. Humphrey faces gunrunning charges here.

The MBPM issued a statement denouncing Louison's detention as a "vulgar and childish attempt to link our party with fictitious plots invented by the regime."

Louison's arrest, the statement said, was the "latest act of terrorism by the security forces of the U.S.-installed puppet regime."

The Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement called on the government to immediately end its harassment of the MBPM and the Grenadian people.

Farm activist, unionist visit Central America

BY DAVE MORROW

MILWAUKEE — Fifty area trade unionists and antiwar activists heard Minnesota farm protest leader Bobbi Polzine describe her visit to Nicaragua. Polzine went in September as part of a delegation organized by the North American Farm Alliance at the invitation of Nicaragua's National Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG).

"Nicaragua has a moratorium on farm foreclosures. They're giving the land back to the farmers. In a five-year period they turned over land to 77,000 recipients," she said.

"Nicaraguan farmers get loans at 8-10 percent. I pay 14 percent. The old debts of Nicaraguan farmers were forgiven, and they get aid from the government."

The meeting also heard from Morrie Davidson, a retired former business agent and organizer for United Food and Commercial Workers Local 43. He participated in a delegation of unionists who visited El Salvador in November to investigate the fate of union members arrested by the Salvadoran government.

Davidson described a telephone workers' strike that was settled after military intervention.

In the capital city of San Salvador "soldiers point weapons at people as you walk down the street. The army is in every work place and in public places like libraries and hospitals."

The meeting was sponsored by the Central America Solidarity Coalition, Wisconsin Action Coa-

lition, and others. Tom Lesch, the assistant directing business representative of the Wisconsin Council of Machinists, chaired the meeting.

74th anniversary of African National Congress

BY MIKE FITZSIMMONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — More than 300 supporters of the freedom struggle in South Africa gathered January 23 to celebrate the 74th anniversary of the founding of the African National Congress.

The meeting was held at the International Association of Machinists (IAM) hall here.

Neo Mnumzana, the ANC's chief representative to the United Nations, explained the advances the ANC has made as growing numbers of South Africans openly identify with it. He called on everyone to work for the continued international isolation of apartheid in order to hasten its overthrow.

Also speaking at the celebration was Rep. John Conyers, on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus; Clark Johnson, IAM; and others.

Warm greetings for ANC

BY JEFF ROGERS

ATLANTA — More than 300 people, mostly unionists from General Motors Doraville assembly plant, attended a meeting to celebrate the life of Martin Luther

King, Jr., at United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 10 Herb Butler Hall January 12.

A warm reception was given to African National Congress representative David Ndaba. Commenting on the recent formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, Ndaba said that by "uniting all South African workers," it would play an important role in 1986 when all sectors of the freedom movement in South Africa will step up their struggle "for a free, nonracial democratic society where all colors may live in equality."

There were also unionists, Black rights leaders, and others who spoke.

Union women's forum hits apartheid

BY LESLIE DORK

NEW YORK — Seventy-five unionists attended an educational program on South Africa sponsored by the South Africa and Hispanic committees of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), January 25.

More than half of those attending were garment workers from International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) Local 23-25. One young garment worker received a leaflet for the meeting on the street in front of his shop the day before and came "to learn about South Africa."

You Have Struck a Rock, a film on the struggle of South African women against the extension of pass laws to women, was shown.

Darlene Chisholm, cochair of the CLUW South Africa Committee and member of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees District 37, introduced Mamazane Xulu of the African National Congress (ANC). Xulu explained that "women have always been a part and parcel of the struggle" in South Africa.

She also asked people to call for the release "of our leader Nelson Mandela and the other political prisoners," the lifting of martial law, and troops out of the Black areas and to demand prisoner of war status for imprisoned members of the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe. Finally, she asked for material support for ANC refugees in Tanzania.

The meeting was reconvened after lunch so that Assemblyman Roger Green, who had just returned from the State Capitol in Albany, could report on progress on a bill calling for New York state divestment from South Africa.

Southern Africa Freedom Sunday

BY MARK ZOLA

NORFOLK, Va. — Fifteen hundred people packed the First Baptist Church in Norfolk on January 19 to commemorate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and to show their solidarity with the South African freedom struggle.

This was the largest anti-apartheid action ever held in the Tidewater area.

"Southern Africa Freedom Sunday" was the latest in a series of events organized by the Norfolk

affiliate of the Anti-Apartheid Coalition of Virginia. In her opening remarks, coalition spokesperson Diana Chappell said, "If Dr. King were with us today, he would be speaking out against the war in Central America; against the U.S. government funding the *contras*, who kill innocent children and seek to overthrow the democratically elected government of Nicaragua."

The featured speaker at the event was Mpho Tutu, daughter of Bishop Desmond Tutu and a student activist at Howard University.

"When they shoot down a ten-year-old child, to them that is not violence. When they fire teargas into funeral processions and beat up peaceful demonstrators, to them that is not violence. When they reduce the great mass of the people to a life of hunger, disease, and poverty, to them that is not violence. It would seem that the only time you have violence is when a white person dies," she said, referring to the South African government.

"The only acceptable alternative" to the current state of affairs, Tutu concluded, "is the abolition of apartheid."

Recently, the Norfolk City Council voted 5 to 2 not to overturn the city pension board's refusal to divest tens of millions of dollars from banks and corporations with ties to South Africa.

Norfolk Vice-mayor Rev. Joseph Green, who cast one of the two dissenting votes in the Norfolk council debate, stated, "That decision must be changed" and pointed to the strength of the event's turnout as the real indicator of the sentiments of the people of Norfolk.

Cuban Communist Party opens congress in Havana

Continued from front page

amples of inefficiency and intolerable administrative insensitivity in the service sector.

Addressing and overcoming these problems, Castro said, must be a central priority of the party's work in the coming years.

"We could have made better use of our resources and efforts. Our work has been far from its best. Deficiencies and shortcomings still persist, and we must call them by their names and fight against them with all our might. Only thus will we be worthy of the name communists! Only thus will we be able to advance with ever faster and firmer steps," Castro declared to pro-

longed applause.

The report outlined the development plans projected for the next five-year period and reviewed the work of the party, the Union of Young Communists, and various mass organizations in Cuba. The concluding portion also dealt with the evolution of the world political situation since 1980 and Cuba's positions on major international questions.

Central attention was given to the heroic struggle of the people of Nicaragua, who are suffering from a war that is financed, directed, and carried out by Washington, using a mercenary army based on Nicaragua's borders.

Nicaragua is proving, Castro affirmed, that "the course of history cannot be reversed. The Sandinistas' firm and courageous decision not to retreat has clearly shown that Cuba was not an exception, that no country, regardless of its power, can impose its arbitrary will on a revolution that resists."

As if to make its belligerent voice heard in the halls of the congress here, a U.S. spy plane provocatively circled the island on the morning of February 5, unleashing a sonic boom as it passed near the capital city of Havana.

"The time when the empire could do as it

pleased in our country is in the distant past," Castro said. "Our perseverance, tenacity, and firmness in resisting throughout these 27 years, our proven loyalty to principle, the determination with which we have embarked upon the task of creating a new world and a just homeland, the confidence and security with which we are laying the foundations of our future, and the heroism with which we have defended and are capable of defending our revolutionary achievements have earned our people the right never to be ignored or underestimated," Castro declared in concluding his report.

"Like it or not, the United States will have to come to terms with revolutionary Cuba, learn to live with it and with a changing world."

Speech by ANC leader in 'IP'

The apartheid regime in South Africa "has lost the strategic initiative. That initiative is now in our hands," declared Oliver Tambo, president of the African National Congress (ANC), in a January 8 speech.

The upcoming, February 24, *Intercontinental Press* will feature the full text of Tambo's speech, delivered on the 74th anniversary of the ANC's founding in 1912.

Looking back over the events of the past year, Tambo notes that the freedom struggle has reached massive proportions, becoming a "rebellion of millions of our people." He pays tribute to the many activists who have been killed and hails the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, the largest democratic union federation in the country's history.

Tambo also outlines the key tasks for the coming year. These include the fight to abolish the pass laws, a deepening of the struggle in the countryside, and an escalation of the armed struggle.

The current, February 10, *IP* includes a background article on the revolution in South Yemen, which has recently been set back by the disastrous conflict in its leadership. The article gives valuable information on the revolution's development and the gains working people won under it.

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INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

Africa Asia Europe Oceania the Americas
Vol. 21 No. 3 February 10, 1986

Reagan Seeks More Funds for Nicaraguan 'Contras'

South Yemen
Disastrous Split
Endangers Revolution

Lesotho
Apartheid-backed Coup
Topples Government

Guatemalan Rulers Put On Civilian Face



Cuban President Fidel Castro

Disastrous conflict damages revolution in South Yemen

Imperialists look to intervene

BY ERNEST HARSCH

Heavy fighting has rocked South Yemen since January 13, resulting from a deep split in the leadership of that Middle Eastern country.

This armed conflict has inflicted grievous harm on South Yemen's democratic, anti-imperialist revolution. It undermines many of the social, economic, and political gains working people have won there since they threw off British rule in 1967.

This conflict also provides openings that the imperialists and their regional allies will seek to utilize to push back the anti-imperialist struggle throughout the Middle East.

The split in South Yemen has torn apart the government, officer corps, and governing Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP). From the extent of the fighting, it is clear that both sides were able to draw on significant forces. Both had the support of parts of the army, navy, air force, and militia.

The first demonstrative public sign of this split came on the afternoon of January 13, when a domestic radio broadcast from the capital, Aden, announced that an attempt to "assassinate" President Ali Nasser Mohammed had been defeated. The alleged coup plotters were branded as an "opportunistic rightist grouping" acting in league with "imperialist and reactionary circles." The broadcast named those involved (all members of the YSP Political Bureau) as: Abdel Fattah Ismail, Ali Ahmed Nasser Antar, Ali Salem al-Beedh, and Ali Shaiy Hadi. It claimed they had been executed.

Very quickly, however, large-scale fighting engulfed Aden and the regions around it, pitting foes and supporters of President Ali Nasser against each other. The capital was shaken by aerial bombardments, artillery fire, and tank battles.

An opposition radio station that began broadcasting north of Aden claimed that none of the alleged coup plotters had, in fact, been executed, but were leading the struggle against Ali Nasser. Ismail and Antar, in particular, were widely considered the main leaders of this effort, although Antar was later killed in the fighting.

By January 19 this opposition radio station had been moved to Aden itself, indicating the advances made by Ali Nasser's opponents. The station accused Ali Nasser of having attempted to impose a "dictatorship" and to link South Yemen "with the wheels of neocolonialism and reactionary influence."

By January 25 the fighting in Aden had subsided with the apparent defeat, at least in the capital, of Ali Nasser's supporters. Prime Minister Haider Abu Bakr al-Attas — who had been in the Soviet Union throughout most of the conflict — was proclaimed the new "acting president." Several days earlier he had declared his support for Ismail.

But the takeover in Aden did not yet end the fighting in the country as a whole. A new radio station, supporting Ali Nasser, began broadcasting from his home area in the Abyan Mountains east of the capital. It urged continued resistance.

The death and destruction in Aden alone have been massive. As many as 10,000 people are believed to have been killed — in a country of only 2 million people. Physical damage is estimated to run into the hundreds of millions of dollars (South Yemen's gross domestic product is only around \$900 million). Scarcely a building in Aden has remained untouched. During the fighting, water and electricity was cut off to most of the city.

Revolution under pressure

The strains and fissures within the South Yemeni leadership have been evident for a number of years. From time to time they have broken out in armed clashes, although never on the scale of the current conflict. These divisions at the top have been

exacerbated by the big pressures bearing down on South Yemen's revolutionary struggle.

In part, the difficulties facing the revolution arise from the very poverty and backwardness of the country, a legacy of 128 years of British colonial rule. Although the revolution has brought many gains to the working people, South Yemen remains one of the poorest countries in the world. Its per capita income is just \$470 a year, life expectancy averages around 46 years, and more than 60 percent of the population is still illiterate.

These objective difficulties have been greatly compounded by outside pressure, especially the threats, aggression, and blackmail of the major imperialist powers. Their efforts to subvert the revolution have been aided by the surrounding regimes in Saudi Arabia, North Yemen, and Oman, all of which maintain close military ties with Washington and London.

From the first days of the revolution, South Yemen has been the victim of foreign aggression. Brief wars were fought in 1972 and 1979 with the reactionary regime in North Yemen, which received major U.S. arms shipments and large-scale financing from Saudi Arabia.

Throughout most of the 1970s, South Yemen suffered from a virtual economic embargo imposed by the imperialist powers and most of the Arab regimes. Assistance from the Soviet Union, Cuba, and other workers' states only partially compensated for this.

As recently as 1983 and 1984, armed clashes broke out along the Saudi border. Exiled opponents of the revolution continue to receive assistance in neighboring countries. In the early 1980s, Washington obtained base facilities in Oman for its Rapid Deployment Force; one base, at Thamarit, is just 100 miles from South Yemen's border.

Divisions in leadership

Most of the current leadership in South Yemen came out of the armed struggle against British colonial rule. Ali Nasser, Ismail, Antar, and others were all key leaders of the National Liberation Front (NLF), the main anticolonial organization.

The NLF leadership termed the process in South Yemen a "national democratic revolution." It also increasingly adopted the terminology of Marxism. This was further codified in 1978 when the NLF united with two smaller groups to form the Yemeni Socialist Party. According to Ismail, the YSP's first general secretary, it was "a vanguard party of the working class" that was "guided by the theory of scientific socialism."

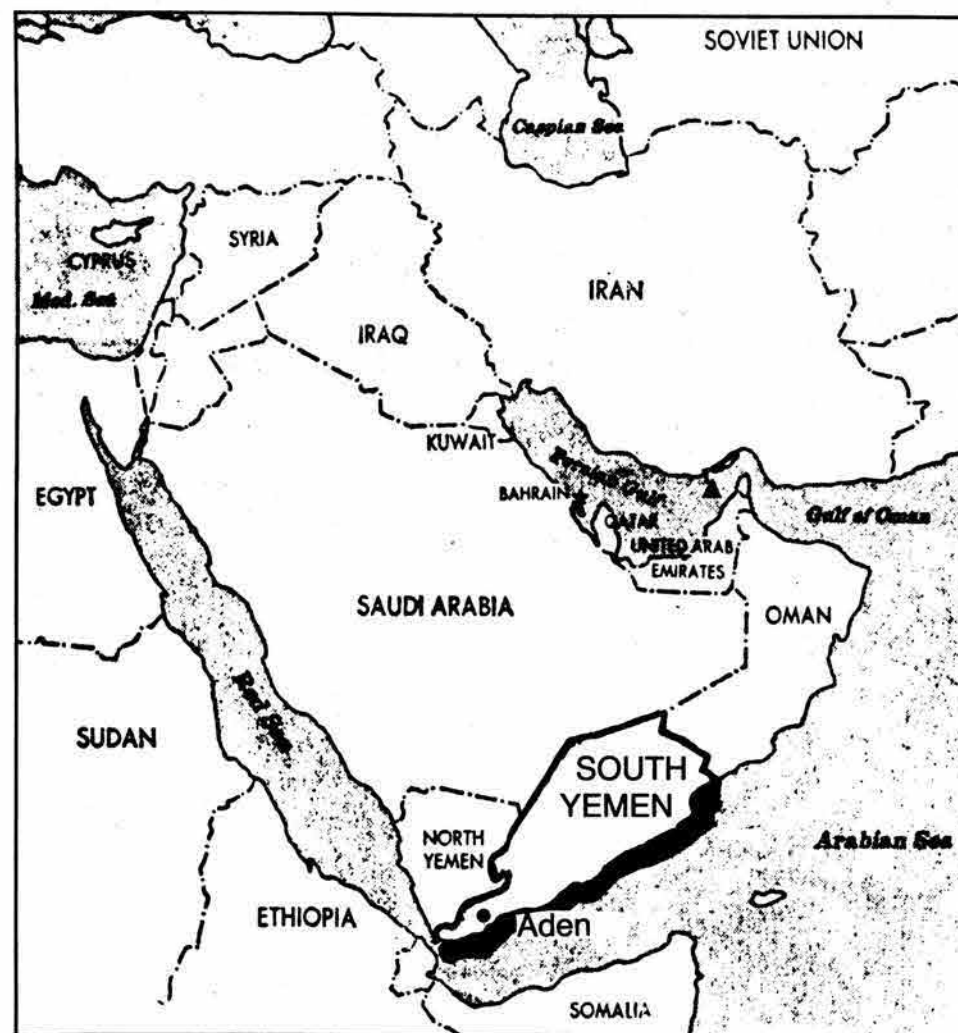
Membership in the YSP has been kept restricted and today there are only 26,000 members in the entire country. Just 13 percent are workers and 12 percent peasants.

Over the years, the government and party leadership have received assistance from a variety of workers' states, including the Soviet Union, China, North Korea, Cuba, and the Eastern European countries. Cuba has several hundred military instructors and technical personnel in South Yemen.

The YSP leaders, however, have looked primarily to Moscow and the Eastern European parties for political direction. Instructors from East Germany, for example, make up the greatest number of teachers in the YSP's party schools.

Throughout the 1970s, the government's economic policies emphasized continual expansion of the state sector, at times overstepping its ability to manage the nationalized enterprises. Planning officials later acknowledged that many errors were made.

Differences within the government and party leadership over economic, social, and political policies were frequent, but were rarely discussed publicly. They were usually settled through coercive means,



with the losing side in a dispute routinely branded as "reactionary." Factional intrigue was common.

Before the current split, the most serious rift came in June 1978, when Aden was shaken by several days of street battles. Salem Robea Ali, the president at the time, was accused of having attempted a coup; he was deposed and executed. Ismail was named the new president, supported at the time by Ali Nasser, who had been prime minister since 1971.

Fred Halliday, who has written extensively on South Yemen, noted some changes during a visit in 1979. He reported that "top party officials in Aden have received increased material privileges in the form of access to restricted consumer goods shops, and the army has become much more prominent in Yemeni life, with rank promotions for top commanders."

Ismail himself was then ousted in 1980. He went into exile in Moscow, while several of his key supporters were arrested. Ali Nasser became the new president and YSP general secretary, while retaining his previous position as prime minister.

Ali Nasser's government instituted some policy shifts. Restrictions were eased on small private businesses and on retail merchants, while individual peasants and peasant cooperatives were given increased assistance. Visitors to South Yemen noted stepped-up economic activity and a greater availability of consumer goods.

While reaffirming its close ties with Moscow, the government also embarked on a campaign to broaden its international relations and open up new sources of economic assistance. In 1981 a tripartite mutual defense agreement was signed with the governments of Ethiopia and Libya.

Diplomatic ties were also established for the first time with Oman, and political and economic contacts were increased with Saudi Arabia and North Yemen. This was accompanied by the government's decision to drop its direct backing to the anti-imperialist guerrilla forces in both North Yemen and Oman (which had already been largely defeated by then).

Some within the YSP opposed these shifts or came into conflict with Ali Nasser's supporters for other reasons. They coalesced into several factions. Some supported Ismail; others looked to Antar, who had been ousted as defense minister in 1982. By 1984 these factions had formed a bloc, and in May of that year several of its leaders were brought into an expanded Political Bureau.

Then in February 1985 Ismail himself returned from Moscow and secured a key organizational post within the YSP Central Committee. Ali Nasser relinquished his position as prime minister to al-Attas, while remaining as president and YSP general secretary.

In mid-1985, as preparations were under way for a party congress scheduled for October, the strains within the YSP mounted. Ali Nasser's supporters obtained 70 per-

cent of the delegate nominations, prompting a sharp reaction from his opponents. Rival factions in the army and militia set up street barricades. Armed clashes were temporarily averted, however.

The YSP congress took place as scheduled. Ismail and his supporters were strong enough to reinforce their position within the party leadership bodies.

Political differences

What finally triggered the showdown is not yet publicly known. But there are some indications of the general political disputes that underlie the split.

According to a report by Helen Lackner in the January 20 London *Guardian*, differences over agrarian policy were one factor:

"Abdul Fattah [Ismail]'s supporters see cooperatives as an intermediary step on the road to total collectivisation of the land. In anticipation of this, every cooperative was provided with a large administration of full-time officials in the 1970s. By contrast, since 1980, under Ali Nasser, reforms have been introduced which increase the power of the peasants and fishermen, giving them far greater control over their produce, over marketing, distribution, investment and organisation."

"In the case of agriculture, individual peasants have also been given titles to their land, thus ensuring that they are not subject to collectivisation against the peasants' will. This has been done at the expense of the top-heavy administration of the cooperatives, whose officials may be among the supporters of the rebellion."

Ismail himself hinted at the differences during his campaign to whip up opposition to Ali Nasser in 1985, preceding the YSP congress. Ismail accused Ali Nasser of having "abandoned the revolutionary movements of the Arabian Peninsula, especially in North Yemen and Oman, of encouraging private capitalism by facilitating the return to the country of South Yemeni émigrés, and of favoring economic relations with the West on the pretext of efficiency."

Ali Nasser's supporters denied that the government's policies involved either support for capitalist forces or collaboration with imperialism.

Some news commentaries, including in the Soviet press, have drawn attention to a further possible factor in the split: differing tribal allegiances.

Ali Nasser, a Dathina from the Abyan Mountains, tended to promote his fellow Dathinas in an effort to counter the supporters of Antar and Ismail. Antar's grouping, on the other hand, had a strong base in his native Dhali region, north of Aden; it was there that the opposition radio station was first set up.

The revolution has made progress toward developing a nation-state, advancing national consciousness, lessening the isolation of the countryside, and overcoming many of the tribal particularisms that previ-

Continued on Page 12

Meatpackers' roving pickets gain support

BY TOM JAAX

AUSTIN, Minn. — "These people are doing the kind of thing that built the labor movement and that will rebuild it." Ray Rogers, consultant for United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local P-9, was welcoming back teams of roving pickets at a strike support and strategy meeting of some 400 people here January 31. The teams had just returned from picketing Hormel-affiliated plants throughout the country.

The roving pickets are an important part of the strike. Not only are they building solidarity among workers throughout the Hormel chain, but the inspiration they provide helps counter the pressures on many P-9 members to go back to work.

The returning pickets reported on their experiences to standing ovations from the crowd.

Some strikers had gone to Ottumwa, Iowa, where Hormel workers were fired for honoring the picket line set up by the unionists from Austin. After the firings were announced, a march of 2,000 strike supporters was organized.

One picket from Ottumwa told the meeting, "They put 2,000 people on the street — John Deere workers, Teamsters, city workers. I thought Austin was a union town, but we're not nearly as strong as Ottumwa."

Local P-9 began to send out roving pickets to other Hormel plants after the company tried to open their struck plant in Austin on January 20.

The strikers set up picket lines outside plants asking their union brothers and sisters not to cross. Many workers honored the lines. The UFCW International has publicly condemned the pickets.

On January 27, teams of Austin strikers were sent to plants in Ottumwa, Iowa; Fremont, Nebraska; Dallas and Houston, Texas; Atlanta, Georgia; Seattle, Washington; and Beloit, Wisconsin.

In Dallas, all 52 workers refused to cross P-9's picket line — shutting the plant. Faced with being fired, these workers were forced to return to work.

In Atlanta, P-9 decided not to set up a picket line at the plant. Only half of the work force are members of the union. If nonunion workers were fired, their jobs could not be won back through union



Militant/Tom Jaax

Roving pickets reporting back to Local P-9 support and strategy meeting. Some had just returned from Ottumwa, Iowa, with news that United Food and Commercial Workers local there had honored P-9's picket lines at Hormel's second largest meatpacking plant. Plant is shut down.

negotiations.

The strikers leafleted the factory and organized a meeting with the workers. P-9 members discussed their strike and the importance of having a union. Afterward, 35 workers decided to join the union.

The Ottumwa plant has been shut since January 27. In response, Hormel announced that more than 400 workers were fired. Hormel Vice-president Charles Nyberg claimed, "The company has a very strong no-strike clause. . . . If they [Local 431] stand in the shoes of a striker, they are also strikers."

Local 431 has rejected Hormel's claim and is filing a grievance on behalf of all the fired workers. Dan Varner, chief union steward for the Ottumwa local, explained, "It is not our picket line. It is their [P-9's] picket line. Our position is that the company is in breach of the contract as a result of the firings."

"This picket line," he continued, "is legal because the Austin workers are following their struck work, work that would have been done by the Austin plant. . . .

Contract language gives validity to the fact people have the right not to cross the picket line."

P-9's President Jim Guyette estimates that the closing of the Ottumwa plant is costing Hormel \$500,000 a day.

Union truck drivers have also refused to cross P-9 pickets in Ottumwa. And city workers have refused to repair the frozen sewer pipes in the plant.

The Austin strikers are working with the Ottumwa local to set up committees to help the families of the fired workers. A big acquisition of the Austin strike has been these support committees. Now P-9 members are sharing this experience with Local 431.

After the roving pickets successfully closed the Ottumwa plant, Minnesota Gov. Rudy Perpich proposed a 48-hour cooling-off period. Included in this proposal was the demand that P-9 call back its roving pickets. But the strikers rejected the governor's trade-off.

In Fremont, Nebraska, about 125 of the 800 workers refused to cross P-9's initial picket line on January 20. Many of them have since returned to work, but continue to support the Austin strike. On January 29, 250 Fremont workers attended a meeting where workers from Austin and Ottumwa explained the issues in the strike.

The plant in Dubuque, Iowa, is continu-

ing to work. On February 2, the UFCW local there organized a meeting to hear representatives from the UFCW International, as well as local P-9. The representatives of the International were booed by the membership. Jim Guyette and Carl Pontius, a member of P-9's executive board, were given standing ovations.

From Dubuque, Guyette and Pontius drove to Beloit, Wisconsin, for a meeting with the members of the UFCW local there.

In the discussion, union members explained that they had crossed P-9's picket lines because of the high unemployment in the area. It would be easy, they said, for Hormel to replace 150 workers. They told the P-9 leaders that if the local could close Hormel's big plants, they will go out.

Hormel management in Dubuque has brought legal charges against P-9, claiming that the roving pickets constitute a secondary boycott.

One of the pickets reporting back to the January 31 meeting in Austin summed up the solidarity the roving pickets found. "I met a lot of people who say, 'Hell, big deal. We lose our house, our car. I've lost lots of things. That's just material that can be replaced. But once you've lost your future, you'll never get that back.'"

Do you know someone who reads Spanish? 'PM' on the revolt in Haiti

Haiti is one of the world's poorest nations. Three out of four Haitians earn less than \$150 a year. Eighty percent of the population is illiterate. Hunger and disease are daily afflictions for millions of people in this Black nation in the Caribbean.

Meanwhile, U.S. corporations like Rawling Sporting Goods and GTE Sylvania make superprofits from the labor of Haitian workers, paying them \$3 a day.

Today Haiti is being shaken by popular protests against the rule of President-for-Life Jean-Claude Duvalier. The new issue of *Perspectiva Mundial* covers the recent upsurge and features an article by Selva Nebbia examining the conditions that led to the current revolt. It points to Washington's role in propping up the reign of terror that helps guarantee U.S. corporate profits in Haiti.

Also in the new issue is extensive coverage of the strike by meatpacking workers in Minnesota against the Hormel food giant. *PM* takes up the call by Hormel strikers for labor solidarity in their battle against the bosses and the Minnesota National Guard.

Perspectiva Mundial is the Spanish-language socialist magazine that every two weeks brings you the truth about the struggles of working people and the oppressed in the U.S. and around the world.

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2,000 demonstrate against Hormel firings in Iowa

BY BOB MILLER
AND SHEILA OSTROW

OTTUMWA, Iowa — Despite cold and windy weather, 2,000 people marched down Iowa Avenue here January 9 to show their support for union meatpackers.

The march was organized 24 hours after the George A. Hormel Co. announced it would fire 458 members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 431. Hormel announced the firings after the workers at its plant here honored a picket line set up by UFCW Local P-9, which is on strike against Hormel in Austin, Minnesota. The plants in Ottumwa and Austin are the two largest in the Hormel chain.

The action was sponsored by Citizens For Ottumwa's Future to show support both for the fired workers and the Minnesota strike.

Among the protesters were the wives and children of fired workers, as well as area unionists. Marchers carried signs that read, "Citizens of Ottumwa support working people" and "Human needs not corporate greed."

The members of Local 431 lined the sides of Iowa Avenue cheering.

Hormel has fired the majority of the Ottumwa work force. This violates the union contract, which prohibits Hormel from disciplining workers for honoring an authorized picket line. The union is filing

grievances on behalf of all the fired workers. Less than a quarter of the work force, including office employees, have reported for work.

Since the members of Local 431 were fired and are not on strike, they cannot participate in picket lines or marches outside the plant.

The wives of the fired workers, however, are picketing. The women have also joined Local P-9's roving pickets at Hormel's Fremont, Nebraska, plant. And they have organized child care and a kitchen at the union hall.

Auto workers, Steelworkers, Teamsters, and members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees have volunteered to join the wives of the fired workers and some 50 members of P-9, who are picketing the plant around the clock. These pickets receive a warm response from working people in the area, who honk their horns or give a thumbs-up sign.

On January 30, 400 unionists from 23 locals came to 431's hall to express their solidarity. They contributed money and vowed to boycott Hormel's products.

Many grocery stores in town have already removed Hormel items from their shelves in a show of support for the fired workers.

Citizens For Ottumwa's Future are planning a Freedom March here February 8 to show support for all Hormel workers.

'Withdraw the National Guard!'

Socialist candidate for Minn. governor backs strikers

ST. PAUL, Minn. — The Socialist Workers Party announced February 5 that Geoff Mirelowitz would be the party's candidate for governor of Minnesota in the 1986 elections. Mirelowitz' first action as a candidate was to demand the removal of the Minnesota National Guard from Austin. In a letter to Gov. Rudy Perpich he wrote:

"I add my voice to those others who have demanded that you withdraw the National Guard from Austin, Minnesota, immediately and completely. The Hormel Company has no right to a private strike-breaking and union-busting force at the expense of the tax dollars of working people. The presence of the Guard in Austin only reinforces Hormel's refusal to bargain in good faith with UFCW Local P-9.

"As P-9's leaders have explained to you, the Guard is not needed and was never needed. It is time to put an end to this episode of government strikebreaking."

A copy of this protest was sent to Local P-9 along with a message reading, "Your determined struggle continues to be an inspiration to all of us resisting the attacks of big business, the banks, and the government on working people."

Mirelowitz is a former steelworker who is currently a production worker at Capital Gears in St. Paul. He is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 459.

In his opening campaign statement he listed three immediate issues confronting workers and farmers in Minnesota: the union-busting attack on the Hormel strikers; the plunder of farmers by the bankers, grain monopolies, and the employers' government; and the need for actions opposing the U.S. government-backed war against Nicaragua.

"We will use our campaign and our campaign newspaper, the *Militant*," said Mirelowitz, "to spread the truth about these and other struggles of working people; the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa; the plight of the unemployed iron ore miners on Minnesota's Iron Range; the Indian peoples' fight to retain their land on the White Earth reservation; the struggles of Blacks and Chicanos for affirmative action and other rights; and women's right to choose abortion."

Pledging the Socialist Workers Party's

support for working farmers, Mirelowitz said, "We will actively campaign for the demands raised by more than 3,500 farmers on the steps of the Capitol Building last month: 1. An immediate moratorium on farm foreclosures, 2. a decent price for farm products, and 3. a debt-restructuring program."

Mirelowitz' statement said this campaign would build and participate in the National March for Women's Lives actions for abortion rights taking place in Washington, D.C., on March 9 and in Los Angeles on March 16.

Mirelowitz also called for support to the March 23 St. Paul demonstration against U.S.-organized war in Central America.

Mirelowitz said, "The workers and farmers of Nicaragua, who have won a government that expresses their interests, have been forced to fight a costly war against U.S.-organized reactionaries. The people of El Salvador are fighting a repres-

sive regime that is waging a brutal air war against farmers who demand their right to land.

"While the government here slashes price supports for farm commodities and other programs that benefit working people, it always seems to find the money to help big business try to dominate other countries and break strikes.

"The same National Guard which is being used to back Hormel in Austin is also being used in U.S. military maneuvers in Honduras that prepare further escalation of the war.

"Now the U.S. government wants to escalate the dirty war in Central America by massively increasing arms shipments to the *contra* gangs of killers who are fighting Nicaragua. This criminal action calls for protests that say, loud and clear: No aid to the *contras*. National Guard out of Austin and out of Central America! U.S. out of Central America now!"



Militant/Janet Post
Geoff Mirelowitz, Socialist Workers Party gubernatorial candidate.

Guard herds scabs for Hormel Co.

Continued from front page

Wynn, the UFCW International president. Prior to this meeting, Wynn had issued a public attack on P-9. (See accompanying article.) All these meetings, the press reported, discussed ways to pressure P-9 back to work.

Finally, Perpich met with P-9's executive board. At the meeting, he proposed that the local accept the federal mediator's proposal, which had already been voted down twice by the membership.

At a February 1 membership meeting, the strikers voted not to reconsider the mediator's proposal, but to continue the fight for a decent contract. P-9 members also voted to continue their national boycott of Hormel products and to maintain the roving pickets at plants in the Hormel and FDL chain. FDL is a subsidiary of Hormel.

The strikers voted to continue the fight on Saturday night, and by Monday morning, February 3, at 4:30 a.m., the troops had been remobilized.

Hormel says that the scabs will be permanently replacing strikers. The company claims that the scabs are a "highly motivated" work force with "exceptionally high morale."

Production at the plant has remained limited. Hormel claims that in a couple of weeks, the scabs will be sufficiently trained to start the cut and kill department.

Veteran union members doubt that the company can start up that department because the jobs are dangerous and skilled.

They point out that there are already injuries in the less dangerous departments.

The big-business media continues its campaign against the union. Peaceful protests are described as "mob violence."

P-9 President Jim Guyette is continuously accused of playing "God with people's lives." The press has repeated UFCW President Wynn's portrayal of Ray Rogers, P-9's consultant, as the "Ayatollah of Austin."

P-9's roving pickets are commonly referred to in the press as "Guyette's roving bandits."

Since dozens of working farmers organized a tractorcade here in support of

Continued on Page 17

Union top betrays embattled local

BY ANDREA GONZÁLEZ

In the last two weeks, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) International President William Wynn has twice publicly attacked UFCW Local P-9, which is engaged in a bitter struggle with Hormel management, the government, and the National Guard.

The first attack was a letter from Wynn to P-9 President Jim Guyette that Wynn sent to the press. In the letter, Wynn characterized P-9's strike as "suicide." He called the local's willingness to fight for a decent contract against Hormel's takeback demands "inflexible bargaining positions." This made it easier for Gov. Rudy Perpich to call out the National Guard against the strikers.

The latest attack — a telegram to all UFCW locals in the Hormel chain — was issued to the press on January 30.

In the telegram, Wynn charged that "Ray Rogers" [P-9 consultant] and Jim Guyette's program of 'total victory or total defeat' is playing itself out to total defeat in Austin. . . .

Avoiding even a criticism of Hormel, which fired hundreds of UFCW members in Iowa, Texas, and Nebraska January 28, Wynn wrote, "Guyette and Rogers have chosen to sacrifice the jobs of not only our courageous Austin members, but our members at other plants who have been fired, replaced, or face disciplinary action by Hormel."

"Rogers," Wynn continued, "has anointed himself the Ayatollah of Austin" and "is making hostages of our members at other Hormel plants." Wynn thus provided the bosses and the big-business media with

ammunition to use against the striking meatpackers.

In an attempt to cover up his own betrayal of the Hormel strikers, Wynn charged that "Rogers and Guyette are attempting to make the International union the scapegoat for their suicidal strategy."

"I strongly urge you," Wynn wrote, "to inform every member of the consequences of risking their jobs in order to help Rogers save face. With the Reagan NLRB [National Labor Relations Board] and Reagan judges, we are concerned that our members would not receive fair treatment if Rogers' and Guyette's desperation tactics reach that point."

In his statement answering Wynn's telegram, Rogers explained that P-9 is fighting "to stop Hormel from destroying P-9 members' grievance procedure and seniority system. We are looking for some commitment on the part of the company to on-the-job safety and a fair economic package."

Rogers explained that the UFCW members who refused to cross P-9's picket lines across the country had decided that "with their contracts expiring shortly . . . it was in their best interest to make a show of strength. . . .

"No one," Rogers continued, "has made a scapegoat of the International union. Its officers have made themselves what they are — key allies of Hormel. They have shown their true allegiance by regularly attempting to undermine the most fundamental expressions of worker-to-worker solidarity."

Rogers challenged Wynn "to test the

Continued on Page 15

Texas workers show solidarity

BY PETE SEIDMAN

HOUSTON — Some 25 members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local P-9 came to Texas January 27-28. The strikers are traveling all over the country to win solidarity for their struggle and to build support for a consumer boycott of Hormel products. As part of their trip to Texas, the strikers picketed Hormel plants in Dallas and Houston.

UFCW members at the Dallas facility refused to cross P-9's picket lines, shutting down the plant.

Officials of the UFCW local at Hormel's Houston plant, however, refused to ask union members to honor the picket line. A few union members from the plant came by to express their solidarity with the strike.

While in Houston, P-9 members attempted to attend the Hormel stockholders' meeting. As a result of a company stock ownership plan, the strikers are legally entitled to participate in such meetings. But Houston cops and private security guards barred most of the unionists from entering the meeting.

P-9 President Jim Guyette, however, was able to attend. During the meeting, he

exposed the company's union-busting tactics. Guyette pointed out that Hormel hired the notorious union-busting consultant Thomas Krukowski with the aim of forcing the local out on strike.

Guyette told the *Militant* that P-9 plans to return to Texas to continue to win solidarity and build support for the boycott.

Local P-9 asks for protests to governor

Local P-9 is asking supporters around the country to send messages to Minnesota Gov. Rudy Perpich, protesting his use of the National Guard as a strikebreaker and demanding that the Guard be removed from Austin.

Such messages should be sent to: Gov. Rudy Perpich, 130 State Capitol Building, St. Paul, Minn. 55155.

Copies of these messages, along with financial aid, food, and messages of solidarity can be sent to Local P-9 at: United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-9, 316 N.E. 4th Ave., Austin, Minn. 55912.

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Auto workers hit hard by rulers' worldwide anti

Socialist UAW members discuss how '85 Chrysler pact weakened union

BY NORTON SANDLER

CHICAGO — Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance members who work in plants and factories organized by the United Auto Workers (UAW) met here December 28-29.

They discussed the U.S. rulers' offensive against workers and farmers around the world, the ways it is reflected in the auto industry, and the responses to it by auto workers and the top UAW officialdom. They looked back on the contract signed by Chrysler and the UAW officials in October 1985 and how it eroded living standards and weakened the union.

They reviewed activities that socialists have been carrying out in the UAW, and they discussed and voted on their tasks in the coming months.

Participants in the meeting included workers in auto assembly plants, auto parts plants, aerospace and arms plants, and a variety of other shops organized by the UAW.

Why the attacks?

Andrew Pulley, a member of UAW Local 5960 at General Motors' Buick-Oldsmobile-Cadillac plant in Pontiac, Michigan, gave the main report to the meeting on behalf of the SWP's Trade Union Bureau. The meeting voted to approve the report.

Pulley explained that the attacks on auto workers and their union today are rooted in the crisis that is developing throughout the capitalist system.

For more than a quarter of a century following World War II, the relative expansion and prosperity of the capitalist system meant that most unionized workers were able to win wage gains despite the union officialdom's strategy of collaboration with the employing class, which led to a severe weakening of the unions.

The recession of 1974-75 was a turning point, Pulley said. A growing tendency toward capitalist overproduction spurred greatly intensified competition between the U.S. capitalists and their rivals.

In addition, the rulers also confront revolutionary threats to their imperialist domination of Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

The ruling class' response has been to take the offensive against working people all over the world, including in the United States. Over the last decade, the living standards and expectations of U.S. workers and farmers have been pushed down.

War drive

Especially since 1979, Washington has stepped up wars, warlike moves, war preparations, and war propaganda.

"Washington is calling the shots for a mercenary war against the workers' and farmers' government in Nicaragua," Pulley

said.

"Washington's eventual aim is to smash the Sandinista revolution and impose a repressive capitalist regime like the Somoza dynasty that the Nicaraguan people overthrew in 1979," said Pulley.

"Washington is also the main ally of the apartheid regime in South Africa," Pulley continued.

"The more Washington aids the *contras* [counterrevolutionaries], the more Washington backs up apartheid, the clearer the government's hypocrisy becomes," he said. "It is becoming easier for workers and farmers in the United States to identify with the struggles of the oppressed worldwide."

Concessions drive in auto

Attacks on auto workers and the UAW are part of this offensive against working people.

The auto barons produce cars with 200,000 fewer workers than they employed in 1979.

Several nonunion car and truck plants have been opened.

Since 1979, Pulley explained, the auto corporations have wrested substantial concessions in wages, benefits, work rules, and union rights. And they are demanding more.

"In face of the employers' offensive," Pulley said, "the union officialdom acts like labor lieutenants of the ruling class."

The UAW top officials, like the rest of the labor officialdom, believe that workers' wages and rights depend on their productivity for the employers.

In 1979, Ford and General Motors demanded concessions from auto workers. Douglas Fraser, president of the UAW at that time, hailed the Ford and GM contracts that resulted.

But the 1979 contracts were a setback for the union, Pulley said. Ford and GM workers got a 3 percent annual wage increase even though inflation was 11 percent.

New hires were required to work 90 days before getting full pay and a year before getting full medical coverage.

The contract also diverted more than \$175 million due to workers in cost-of-living adjustments to the pension fund.

'Save Chrysler'

As the GM and Ford settlements were being signed, the "save Chrysler" scam was putting the squeeze on Chrysler workers. The October 1979 contract gave Chrysler \$403 million in wage, benefit, and work-rule concessions. UAW President Fraser got a seat on the Chrysler board of directors.

Then came the government's \$1.5 billion "bailout" of the Chrysler bosses. As a



Militant/Steven Fuchs
Andrew Pulley, member of United Auto Workers Local 5960 at Buick-Oldsmobile-Cadillac plant in Pontiac, Michigan, gave main report to meeting of socialist auto workers.

condition of the bailout, Congress demanded more concessions from Chrysler workers. Under pressure from the government, the company, and UAW officials, Chrysler workers accepted \$243 million more in concessions in January 1980.

Workers lost more ground in each subsequent round of negotiations.

When workers wanted to resist concessions during the past six years, Pulley said, the union bureaucracy told them that it was futile to fight for a decent contract.

"They want us to think we get nowhere through struggle. They approach every set of negotiations like the auto companies and the workers are friendly adversaries. That approach guarantees that workers will get knocked out every time they step into the ring," he said.

1985 Chrysler contract

The same approach dominated the recent negotiations with Chrysler, which resulted in the October 1985 contract that ended a 12-day strike. An article on the settlement in *Solidarity*, the union's magazine, was headlined, "Chrysler workers win what they struck for, new contract provides economic parity, job security."

UAW Vice-president Marc Stepp was quoted as boasting, "Our mandate was to achieve parity" with General Motors and Ford workers. "But our negotiators brought back not only full parity, but a whole lot more."

UAW President Owen Bieber, billed as "the workers' representative on the Chrysler board of directors," was quoted as saying that the contract "is a commitment to Chrysler workers to give them a chance to build this corporation into a continuing and vital corporation."

Pulley said the Chrysler contract meant "a worse, not better, life, a worse, not better, future" for auto workers.

"Under the new contract, the standard of living of auto workers will continue to go down just as it has the last six years. Hourly wage raises totaling 5 percent over the next three years will fall far short of recovering past and present losses from inflation. And if the inflation rates goes up, the gap will widen," he said.

Pulley hit the contract's provision of a "lump-sum payment," rather than a wage raise, in the second year of the contract — a practice initiated in the 1984 Ford and GM contracts.

"Real gains for workers can only come about through increases in the hourly pay rate. They affect not only current negotiations but also where you begin negotiations the next time around."

"Increases in hourly rates also affect other benefits, such as pensions and medical coverage," he added.

"The bureaucracy," he said, "traded away needed increases in the hourly pay rate for such things as the lump-sum payment in the second year, a one-shot \$2,120 to supposedly compensate for previous

losses, a profit-sharing plan, and the right of workers to sell the Chrysler stock they were forced to accept in place of wage increases in previous contracts."

Deepening divisions

"The contract was a blow to all workers who will be hired in the future," Pulley pointed out. "For the first time at Chrysler, workers will not receive full pay when they start work. It will take 18 months to reach full rate. Chrysler will make more millions from this."

"In addition, the new workers have no stock to sell and they won't get compensation payments. The divisions established between new and old workers will weaken the union even more," he said.

The union officialdom said the contract brought Chrysler workers "parity" with workers at GM and Ford. But, Pulley said, "Ford and GM workers got bad contracts. Parity with bad contracts doesn't mean you got a good contract."

A total of 87 percent of workers who participated in the balloting voted to ratify the contract.

"Considering the obstacles posed to a struggle by the top union officialdom, the fact that there were no union officials leading a fight against the contract, and that money was offered up front, most workers voted to ratify."

Socialists' stand

"Although we knew that the contract would be ratified by a big majority of those voting," Pulley said, "SWP and YSA members decided to patiently explain why we were opposed to it, and how it weakened the union. The competition between the auto companies, the 12-day strike that completely shut Chrysler down, and Chrysler's fat profits meant that more could have been won even with this rotten UAW leadership."

"By taking this approach, we helped advance the thinking of some of our coworkers and drew them closer to our perspective for changing the union," Pulley explained.

"Our perspective," he said, "begins with the ranks. We discuss our ideas with the many workers who are trying to think through these problems, and we collaborate with those in the ranks who want to participate in the struggles today that advance the interests of workers and farmers."

Socialist auto workers participated in the two-month strike at General Dynamics tank plants last fall. Pulley described the struggle the ranks of the union carried out.

General Dynamics fight

A major demand of the General Dynamics strikers in Detroit was wage parity with Chrysler workers. The tank plants were owned by Chrysler until 1982 when they were sold to General Dynamics.

The workers gave up massive wage and other concessions in 1979 to Chrysler and then in 1982 to General Dynamics. In 1985, they fought to make up the losses.

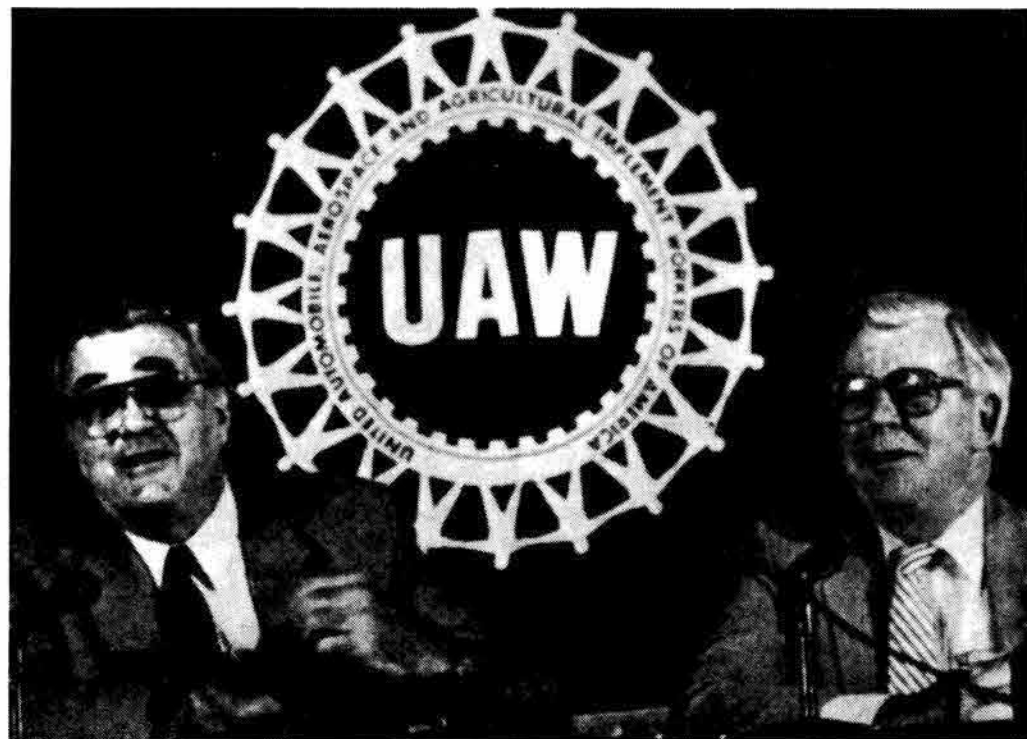
Pulley said the contract that the General Dynamics workers narrowly approved, under intense pressure from the top UAW bureaucracy, "did not regain past wage takebacks, but it was better than what the company tried to sell in June — and that was because of the fight the union membership waged."

Sheldon McCrahey, a member of UAW Local 1200 at the Warren, Michigan, General Dynamics plant, said UAW top officials tried to force the workers to accept the first contract.

McCrahey explained how the local set up an outreach committee that held solidarity rallies and organized union members to speak before other unions and community groups. A contingent from Local 1200 participated in the Michigan Labor for a Free South Africa rally.

When the company made contract proposals, they were discussed by the ranks at large union meetings.

Opening new plant facilities with changed work rules and fewer job classifications is a central part of the bosses' profit drive.



Solidarity/Syd Harris
United Auto Workers President Owen Bieber (left) and Vice-president Donald Ephlin report on contract with General Motors for future workers at Saturn plant to be built in Tennessee. Contract marked an even further retreat from national concession contract signed with GM on wages, work rules, seniority, and union rights.

labor drive

The former General Motors plant in Fremont, California, was recently reopened as a joint venture by GM and Toyota. They set up a corporation called New United Motors Manufacturing (NUMMI) to run the plant. Under the cover of new ownership, the company demanded sweeping changes in work rules. Only a portion of the former plant's employees were rehired.

GM is planning to build a "Saturn" plant in Spring Hill, Tennessee. When completed, this plant will operate under a completely different set of wages, benefits, work rules, seniority, and health and safety provisions than those in the national GM contract. The union tops have already negotiated a Saturn contract though the plant is only beginning to be built and no one has been hired to work there.

"The auto bosses have made big strides in increasing the inhuman pace on the assembly line," said Jim Burfeind, who works at NUMMI.

Holding onto their jobs is a prime concern among auto workers. A number of speakers commented on a plan called "GM-10," which is modeled after the "Saturn" plan.

Under "GM-10" new plants are being built at already existing GM locations. GM is demanding major changes in work rules at those plants.

Steve Iverson, who works at the GM plant in Arlington, Texas, said that the UAW International office is having each local organize its own discussion with the company about the proposed changes in work rules.

"This," he said, "will undermine the national contract."

A similar problem confronts workers at the Fairfax plant near Kansas City, which is also targeted under "GM-10." "We are supposed to vote on a new contract for the new plant soon," said Dick Geyer, a member of Local 31, "even though the plant is not supposed to open until 1987." The Fairfax plant currently has 100 job classifications, but at the new plant GM is proposing "two classifications — team leader and team member."

There is resistance to the offensive in many plants. St. Louis auto worker Joe Allor described the important fight that workers participated in at the Fenton Chrysler plant. After being closed for a while, the plant had been opened with a new set of work rules. After some experience with these, the workers began demanding a return to the old job classifications and other work practices that had existed before. They waged a strike that resulted in some gains being won.

Competition among workers

In his report, Pulley described how the ruling families in the United States use all the means of miseducation and misinformation at their disposal to convince workers and farmers here that workers and farmers from other countries are to blame for our problems.

"Japanese workers are especially targeted as supposed causes of the problems faced by U.S. auto workers," he said. The bosses want more competition and conflict among workers.

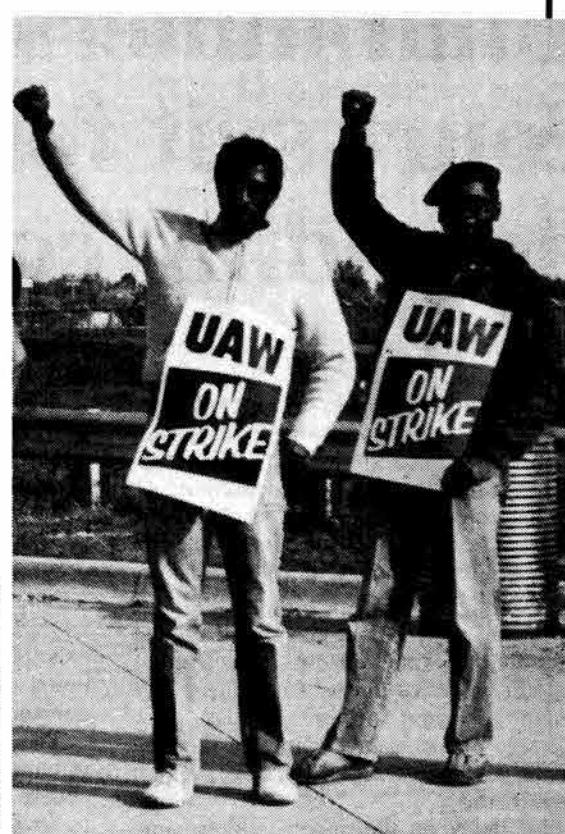
Toledo auto workers described an episode that showed the logic of this employer propaganda, which UAW officials push as part of their anti-imports campaign.

After layoffs at American Motors Corp. plants in Kenosha and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, some auto workers moved to Toledo, Ohio, where they had been offered jobs at the AMC Jeep plant. The company claimed that a corporate seniority provision in the contract with the UAW at Kenosha gave some workers from there more seniority than other workers at AMC Jeep in Toledo. When a round of layoffs occurred, 40 Jeep workers were laid off out of the order of their seniority at the plant.

A demonstration outside the plant denounced the Wisconsin workers, and some scuffles occurred inside. T-shirts appeared with the slogan, "Kenosha sucks — Toledo Jeep, Toledo jobs."



Left, striking General Dynamics workers put up strong fight against concessions in two-month strike that ended in December. Right, Chrysler workers on picket line during 12-day strike last year. Socialists view union ranks as decisive in coming struggles to transform unions into revolutionary organizations that fight for economic, social, and political interests of entire working class.



Militant photos by Kate Kaku

Not all Jeep workers got caught up in blaming the Kenosha workers for the situation. But the atmosphere was tense.

"One month the union was discussing solidarity with the South African revolution. The next month there was a breakdown of solidarity in the union and a near brawl among the workers over the seniority issue," said Joe Callahan, a member of Local 12 at Jeep. It was months before Local 12 officials issued a statement calling for solidarity among all the workers.

"Nobody believes in job security at American Motors," said Alan Epstein. "What everybody was thinking about is how we can keep our jobs."

Crisis affects entire working class

Some workers react to the crisis by saying the union "should pull back from being involved in social questions and concentrate only on contract problems," said Diane Shur from Kansas City. Other workers, she said, "are beginning to see that this crisis can't be figured out in the narrow context of the plant, the company, and the union."

"Workers at NUMMI make \$13 an hour," Burfeind said, "while workers in the rest of Silicon Valley mostly make much less and are being hit with massive layoffs. UAW officials are putting forward plans like Guaranteed Income Stream (GIS) or job banks. In the midst of a broad social crisis, the jobs problem won't be solved by these plans," he said.

Pulley addressed the way the fights workers are involved in today contribute to long-term solutions to the problems confronting the entire working class.

"These current strikes are important," he said. "You can't expect these strikes to instantly transform 50 years of class collaboration in the labor movement." But, he continued, "it is necessary to relearn how to fight."

"When workers begin to fight, they are more open to discussing Nicaragua and South Africa. They are more interested in politics," he emphasized.

He contrasted this to the narrow trade union perspective the union bureaucracy puts forward. "The bureaucracy views the unions as organizations to preserve the living standard of a small number of privileged workers. They try to negotiate company-by-company or industry-by-industry solutions to the problems of these workers. This strategy has resulted in isolating unionized workers from the millions of workers who are not unionized."

"Our perspective is for the working class to think socially and act politically. That is what will make it possible to transform the unions into revolutionary organizations that fight for the national, social, and economic interests of the whole working class. It is along those lines that labor's next giant step, the formation of a labor party, will come about," said Pulley.

Bureaucrats act as though capitalism has always existed and always will exist. Socialists, Pulley said, "involve ourselves

in today's fights, but we place them in the framework of our long-term revolutionary perspective. We never forget that we have a program for changing the union, the country, and the world," he said.

"Our eyes are on the ranks of the union. It is only when the ranks begin to think in social terms that the next giant step can be taken."

Socialist publications

A number of speakers stressed the important role socialist publications play in helping workers generalize from their own experience so they can begin to think in class terms. Pulley reported that a number of Chrysler and General Dynamics workers bought subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* during the strikes last fall.

"Many of our coworkers will want to read the latest issue of *New Internationalist* on the dynamics of the South African revolution," Pulley said.

Meeting participants decided to step up activity in opposition to the U.S. government's mercenary war against Nicaragua. Atlanta auto worker Maceo Dixon reported on this.

Action coalitions

Dixon said unionists should participate in local coalitions that carry out activity in opposition to Washington's war in Central America. The affiliates in various cities of the April Actions Coalition for Peace, Jobs and Justice are a particularly important example.

Dixon stressed the vital role of national demonstrations such as the one organized by the April Actions Coalition last April 20 as focal points for antiwar activity.

"Action coalitions are important," he said, "especially since there is no section of the labor officialdom that is going to initiate demonstrations in opposition to Washington's war. Once an action is called, however, many union locals and union members can get involved," Dixon pointed out.

Floyd Fowler from Denver described how a group of workers at the Martin-Marietta plant responded to an appeal for aid from the Sandinista Workers Federation, the largest Nicaraguan union federation. They discussed the appeal with their coworkers and eventually collected several hundred dollars worth of tools for Nicaragua. The tools were delivered by participants in a tour of Nicaragua organized by St. Louis union members.

Several auto workers at the meeting commented on successful tours of the East Coast by union leaders from Nicaragua and El Salvador.

SWP Trade Union Bureau member Tom Fiske stressed the importance of talking to workers about the important democratic gains Nicaraguan workers and farmers have made since the revolution. "Workers don't like the idea of Washington trying to again impose a dictatorship like that of Somoza's," he said.

Milwaukee UAW member Jeanne Porter reported on anti-apartheid activity in the union. Many UAW locals are actively protesting the racist policies of the South African government.

She said the formation of the 500,000-member Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), which calls for the withdrawal of investments from South Africa, will help build the anti-apartheid movement in the United States.

She added that the UAW has taken a stand in opposition to apartheid and printed several articles in its publications that contain useful facts on how the apartheid system works. However, the union officialdom is not for disinvestment from South Africa.

There is a discussion in the union around this question, Porter said. "We should look for opportunities to get COSATU speakers to come before the union," she added.

Build abortion rights action

Jeff Powers from Local 93 at GM's Leeds plant near Kansas City reported on other work in the union. He emphasized the importance of involving the UAW and UAW members in the March 9 and March 16 East and West Coast actions in defense of women's right to abortion. These have been called by the National Organization for Women.

Powers pointed out that the UAW has been on record in support of abortion rights for a number of years.

Jeanne Porter encouraged meeting participants to be "up front about discussing abortion with our coworkers." She explained that her local at the Delco-Remy Battery plant in Milwaukee has regularly sent financial contributions to abortion rights organizations and that her local's women's committee has issued statements condemning bombings at abortion clinics.

Solidarity with farmers

Several UAW locals in the Midwest joined protests against farm foreclosures. Powers, who has organized support for these actions among Kansas City unionists, said, "We should continue to encourage more union members to support farmers' struggles, and we should encourage locals to invite farmers to speak to union meetings. Unionists get inspired by the struggles of farmers, our fellow producers on the land."

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Utah miners hit by court suit for defending contract

BY DAVE HURST

HUNTINGTON, Utah — Following a one-week strike by coal miners, the Emery Mining Corp. here is seeking a permanent no-strike injunction against the local United Mine Workers of America and its officers and members. The company aims to prevent any more strikes during the life of the current contract, despite company violations of its terms.

Emery is also seeking damages from the union for three times the cost of each ton of coal not produced during the January 2-9 walkout, or about \$385,000 per day.

Emery operates three mines in the area for the Utah Power & Light Co., which owns them.

The attack on the miners' union came after a federal judge forced miners to return to work January 9. We had resumed work the day after Federal District Court Judge David Winder had granted a temporary restraining order against United Mine Workers District 22 and the three striking UMW local.

The walkout had been provoked by the company on January 2. Miners reporting to work on the afternoon shift at the Deer Creek mine were confronted by a notice saying floating vacation days, or "floaters," had been taken from those of us who had missed 12 working days or more in a month in 1985. This included miners off work due to industrial injury, sickness, or layoff. None of these categories had ever been used before to determine attendance credits for receiving floaters.

The wildcat strike expanded to the entire work force when miners at the Des-Bee-Dove and Wilberg-Cottonwood mines walked out on January 6 and 7. It was the Wilberg mine where a fire on Dec. 19, 1984, killed 19 miners and 8 company personnel. The fire was a result of company violation of safety rules.

Emery spokesman Bob Henrie unleashed a barrage of lies to the media to try to undercut support for the strike. His claim that miners already get 6½ to 8

weeks paid leave per year was a big laugh for anyone familiar with the contract.

In reality we get two weeks regular vacation, five sick or personal leave days, and four floaters, for a total of four weeks paid leave.

The attack on our floaters is regarded as the first step toward bigger attacks on our vacation and on other aspects of the contract. This is seen as necessary by the mine owners and operators in order to make an example of the UMW, the only industrial union nationally to withstand the bosses' demands for concessions.

The new vacation policy is going through the grievance and arbitration procedure. Even though we were forced back to work without compelling the company to remove the new policy, we did make some gains through our strike action. New bonds of unity were forged among the three locals as we saw how to defend ourselves together in action. And we felt that if it were not for government intervention threatening us and our union with contempt-of-court charges, we could have held out longer against Emery.

UMWA District 22 is considering filing a lawsuit against Emery under the National Labor Relations Act, charging the company with gross violations of our contract.

In addition, many miners are thinking ahead to January 1988, which is our next opportunity to strengthen the contract.

One key issue likely to come up in membership proposals will be regaining the right to strike by doing away with automatic, mandatory arbitration of all disputes. The main reason the union membership walked off the job in the first place was because of a lack of confidence in the grievance and arbitration procedure.

One miner said on returning to work, "They expect us to die in a Wilberg fire, so the least they can do is treat us with some dignity and human respect."

Dave Hurst is a member of United Mine Workers of America Local 1769 and works at the Deer Creek mine.



United Mine Workers Journal
Wilberg-Cottonwood was one of three Utah coal mines closed by strike early in January. Emery Mining Corp. provoked strike by violating union contract.

New agriculture sec'y: no good news for farmers

BY CHESTER NELSON

When John Block, U.S. secretary of agriculture, announced his resignation on January 7, a reporter asked President Reagan if he would "be looking for a working farmer" to replace the secretary.

The president replied that he wanted someone like Block "who has all the experience that is necessary in that field. And yes, it would be fine if we come up with a working farmer."

Leaving aside for a moment the erroneous implication that Block is a "working farmer," one thing is certain: his replacement, Richard Lyng, is not.

Lyng, who was nominated by Reagan on January 29, has been either a businessman, trade association executive, or government functionary for most of the last 40 years. His experience and interests are not only remote from those of the big majority of farmers who work their land with the help of their families, but contradictory to them.

After graduating from college in 1940, Lyng began working for his father's seed and processing company in Modesto, California. He became president of the business in 1949, a position he held until 1966.

He was director of the California Department of Agriculture for two years between 1967 and 1969, when Reagan was governor of the state. During this period California farm workers were in the midst of a big drive to organize their own union. In this effort they received no help from Lyng's office, which was a bastion of support for the capitalist growers.

Following this, Lyng went to Washington where he became an assistant to Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz in President Richard Nixon's administration.

From 1973 to 1979 he was president of the American Meat Institute, a national association of meat processors that is a powerful lobbying group in Washington. During his stint in this position, a massive nationwide consumers' boycott of supermarkets occurred in protest against skyrocketing meat prices. The big meat processors that Lyng represented, however, made a killing as a result of their price gouging.

Lyng's California crony, Governor Reagan, stated at the time that "meat shortages" are just part of "God's will." "And I'm not in favor of boycotting Him."

Lyng was the No. 2 man in the Department of Agriculture for three years during Reagan's first term in the White House.

He has also served as director of the Commodity Credit Corporation; director of the National Livestock and Meat Board; and member of the advisory board of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

He succeeds Block, who, although a farm owner, is a far cry from being a working farmer. His hog, corn, and soybean farm in Illinois is among the country's top 1 percent in annual income and employs, in addition to family members, seven workers. Moreover, he is heavy into real estate speculation and was a bank director before joining Reagan's cabinet.

Lyng, like Block, is a loyal servant of the big processors, bankers, landlords, and other exploiters of working farmers. In taking over direction of the new farm programs authorized in the Food Security Act of 1985, he will be implementing some of the most severe governmental attacks on working farm families in many years. Lyng's appointment brings them nothing to cheer about.

S. Yemen: disastrous conflict

Continued from Page 7

ously marked Yemeni rural society. But this process is still far from complete.

Washington's 'interests'

From the beginning, the U.S. imperialists have been attentively watching the course of the conflict in South Yemen. The White House announced it was monitoring the situation "very closely." A State Department official told a reporter that while Washington had "no friends" on either side of the conflict, "we have interests in South Yemen."

Those "interests" involve seeing that the Yemeni revolution is driven back as far as possible. The U.S. and other imperialist powers are now preparing to take advantage of the rift that has opened up, with the aim of deepening it and spreading yet further demoralization among the Yemeni masses.

One aspect of this preparation is the anti-communist propaganda campaign being advanced by the big-business news media. It presents the warfare in South Yemen as an inevitable outcome of the revolution. And to justify U.S. intervention —

whether in South Yemen or elsewhere in the region — this campaign also sounds the standard U.S. propaganda theme of "Soviet interference," claiming Soviet backing for Ismail's "hardline Marxist" faction against the "moderate" Ali Nasser.

While there has long been considerable Soviet political influence over the Yemeni leadership, and even involvement in its internal life, there is no evidence of a direct Soviet role in seeking to oust Ali Nasser. The first response of the Soviet press to the January 13 claim that Ismail and his colleagues had been executed for attempting a coup was to condemn them as "counterrevolutionary." During most of the fighting Moscow did not publicly favor either side, and only endorsed al-Attas as acting president when it appeared that Ali Nasser's forces had lost.

The real danger of military intervention in South Yemen comes from imperialism. In fact, in the month leading up to the outbreak of fighting, threatening U.S. military actions stepped up noticeably. The U.S. aircraft carrier *Saratoga* and other warships conducted maneuvers near South Yemen, and U.S. warplanes buzzed Yemeni civilian aircraft. Israeli officials openly discussed possible military action against South Yemen for giving refuge to hundreds of Palestinian fighters.

Now, on the pretext of rescuing foreign citizens, U.S., British, and French warships have concentrated in South Yemen's vicinity. A unit of the Special Air Service, a British intervention force, has been placed on alert in nearby Djibouti.

The current conflict in South Yemen has already weakened the revolution in face of such imperialist pressures and threats. The gains of the Yemeni masses are in jeopardy. **From Intercontinental Press**

Caravan aids Calif. cannery strike

BY RICK TRUJILLO

WATSONVILLE, Calif. — Some 250 unionists and others gathered here Saturday, January 25, for a rally in solidarity with members of Teamsters Local 912. The local's 1,800 frozen-food workers have been on strike against Watsonville Cannery since Sept. 9, 1985.

Strike supporters traveled in a caravan of 50 cars and trucks from San Jose, California, to Watsonville. They brought more than 12,000 pounds of food for the strikers.

The rally — conducted in both Spanish and English — was chaired by Sergio López, secretary-treasurer of the local. The bulk of the strikers are Mexicans and Chicanos; 80 percent are women.

López thanked the AFL-CIO, the United Farm Workers (UFW), and the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) for their solidarity. He pointed out that the strikers' struggle has been hard — 48 families have been evicted from their homes.

Bill Walsh, picket coordinator for the northern California Teamsters, reported

that the local's food drive had collected 500,000 pounds of food so far from community groups, churches, and other union locals.

To shouts of "Viva la huelga" (Long live the strike) and "Sí se puede" (Yes, it can be done), Dolores Huerta, vice-president of the UFW, told the rally that "your strike has won the people's hearts." She encouraged the local to continue to reach out everywhere for support. "You are fighting for more than a contract," Huerta said. "You are fighting for justice and for your union."

Tom Lofend, representing the northern California ILWU, brought a check for \$1,200 and pledged an additional \$400 a month until the strike is over.

Walter Johnson, president of the San Francisco Central Labor Council, brought greetings from the California AFL-CIO. "We will be here every fourth Saturday of the month with food and financial aid for as long as the strike continues. We will show the employers," Johnson said, "who want to wear you down, that they are not going to wear down the labor movement."

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Steel union, bosses open contract talks

BY HOLLY HARKNESS

CHICAGO — On January 16, a meeting of 550 United Steelworkers of America (USWA) local union presidents met here. They make up the union's Basic Steel Conference. The meeting was called to discuss the union's strategy for the upcoming steel negotiations.

Last May 2, five of the biggest steel companies in the United States announced they were dissolving their collective bargaining committee that had previously negotiated basic steel agreements with the USWA. Inland Steel, LTV, Bethlehem, U.S. Steel, and Armco all said they would bargain separately. Together with National Steel, these companies made up the Big Six steel companies and employ 145,000 USWA members.

The Basic Steel Conference agreed to separate bargaining with each one of the Big Six. It also agreed that workers at each company would vote on their own contract — for the first time since 1956. The exact method of voting is not yet determined.

A union bargaining committee will negotiate the settlements at each company. Then the union's executive board, made up of USWA International officers and district directors, will review each contract before it goes to the membership.

The current contract does not expire until July 31, 1986, but the conference voted to begin negotiations with all six companies as soon as possible. Discussions have already begun with LTV, Bethlehem, and National Steel and are expected soon with the others.

Among the goals laid out by the union in these talks were no major concessions, no two-tier wage structures, an end to outside contracting of labor previously done by union members, lengthening the notice period for any planned plant shutdowns, and full financial disclosure by firms that seek employee givebacks.

The conference accepted the steel companies' assertion that they face financial difficulties, but said union members have sacrificed more than their fair share over the past few years. A recent study conducted for the union concluded that 72 percent of cost reductions in the steel industry in the last four years were the result of reduced labor costs. This included savings from both layoffs of workers and wage and benefit cuts.

As the union begins negotiations, the steel owners are escalating their threats of bankruptcy, layoffs, and plant closings.

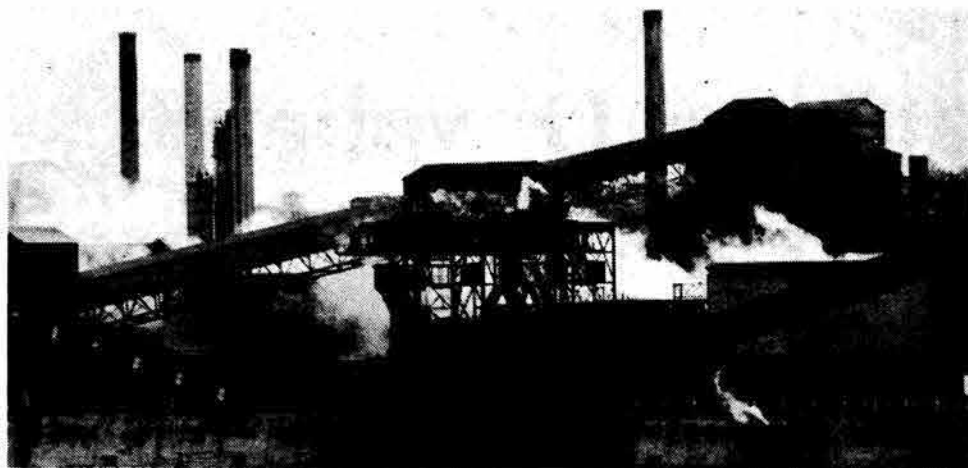
For example, the January 13 issue of *Crain's Chicago Business* published a front-page article speculating that LTV's South Works Plant (formerly Republic Steel mill) would close down. The rumor of a plant shutdown prompted South Chicago currency exchanges to refuse to

cash LTV workers' checks that week. The currency exchange owners told reporters they'd read the *Crain's* article and feared the plant was on the verge of a shutdown.

Six years ago, when Wisconsin Steel closed its South Chicago plant, the workers' last paychecks bounced. The currency exchanges said they were taking precautions to prevent getting stuck with bad checks.

LTV issued a statement saying the checks were good and the company had no immediate plans to shut the Chicago plant.

But a climate is being created to try to intimidate workers into accepting concessions in wages and work rules by raising the specter of layoffs.



U.S. Steel mill in Clairton, Pennsylvania.

Militant/Howard Petrick

Issues in Steelworkers District 31 elections

BY HOLLY HARKNESS
AND DENNIS RICHTER

CHICAGO — The Nov. 26, 1985, election for director of District 31, United Steelworkers of America (USWA), was an important barometer of where things are at in the union. Despite membership losses and setbacks due to the steel bosses' attacks, District 31 remains the strongest and most important district in the USWA. Many union activists nationally look to District 31 for action that can help the Steelworkers move forward in defending their interests.

Jack Parton, who has been district director since 1981, was reelected over two opponents.

One was John Bierman, a union staff representative for 17 years who holds conservative views on where the union should be going.

The other was Alice Peurala, president of Local 65, who was an active supporter of the Steelworkers Fight Back reform movement in the 1970s. The main spokesperson of that movement was Ed Sadlowski, who was District 31 director at the time.

In the 1980s the leadership of that reform movement has divided and retreated. But the fight waged by Steelworkers Fight Back remains an important part of the experience of District 31 members. They were the backbone of the reform movement from the beginning. And gains won by that movement still exist.

The November elections in District 31 reflected a stage in these developments. This can be shown by a brief review of the evolution of the Steelworkers Fight Back movement.

Steelworkers Fight Back

Steelworkers Fight Back was formed in

the course of Sadlowski's campaign for District 31 director in 1973 and his bid for International president in 1977. But its roots were in the ongoing efforts of workers in District 31 to more effectively fight the bosses, a fight that goes back as far as the 1959 national steel strike.

Sadlowski's campaigns gave a voice to a layer of younger, more militant workers who were tired of the "tuxedo unionism" practiced by the bureaucrats. They wanted the union opened up to the ranks, and they recognized the importance of fighting for the most oppressed workers — Blacks, Latinos, and women. They urged the union movement to take up political and social issues such as Black rights and U.S. foreign policy. They demanded that the membership have the right to ratify the basic steel contract and the right to strike, which had been taken away from them by the union officialdom.

Steelworkers Fight Back was a genuine reform movement that spread throughout the union and beyond. It inspired both organized and unorganized workers across the United States and Canada.

Sadlowski was defeated by Lloyd McBride in the race for International president. But one of Sadlowski's supporters, James Balanoff, succeeded him as District 31 director. Under Sadlowski and Balanoff, the USWA in District 31 was revitalized. The union became involved in strike solidarity activities and political issues, such as affirmative action and the fight against a nuclear power plant in the area.

The union played an active role in organizing support for the Equal Rights Amendment for women. Women's committees were formed in many locals and districtwide women's conferences were held.

Retreat of leaders

But the Steelworkers Fight Back leadership did not live up to the expectations of the ranks who supported them. The 1977 defeat in the race for International president was misinterpreted by a layer of union leaders as a sign that Sadlowski had been too radical. Over the next few years, the Fight Back leadership became more demoralized and disillusioned. It lost confidence in the ability of union members to transform the USWA into a fighting organization.

At the same time, the economic crisis hit the steel industry hard. The ruling families who own the steel companies began restructuring the industry to make it more profitable. Older mills were shut down, and new technology was introduced in other mills. Tens of thousands were thrown out of work. In the face of this attack, the Fight Back leaders had no proposals for defending the union.

Instead of using union power to fight for workers' interests, their focus was narrowed to changing the leadership, that is, getting themselves elected to union positions. At the same time, their organizational strength diminished within District 31. In 1981 Lloyd McBride was reelected USWA president without opposition. In District 31 Balanoff was defeated by Jack Parton, a McBride supporter.

When the USWA national leadership signed a contract with the basic steel employers in 1983, giving up \$3 billion in wages and benefits, there was no organized

opposition within the district.

District elections

In the November 1985 district elections, all three candidates — Bierman, Parton, and Peurala — said they supported the right of the membership to ratify the basic steel contract, opposed outside contracting of jobs from USWA-organized shops, and demanded an end to concession bargaining.

But the elections did not provide union members with a forum to discuss preparing the union for the upcoming national steel negotiations. None of the campaigns offered an effective program to fight the wage cuts and other concessions the steel bosses are pushing for.

The candidates did not draw the lessons from the hard-fought Wheeling-Pittsburgh strike, which District 31 members had followed so closely.

Last year's strike by 8,000 Steelworkers against Wheeling-Pitt in Ohio and western Pennsylvania was the first strike in basic steel since 1959. The 98-day walkout was a response by the workers to Wheeling-Pitt's proposed wage cuts and other concessions.

Steelworkers in District 31 boarded buses in Chicago and Gary, Indiana, to travel to the USWA picket lines. Almost \$45,000 was raised within the district at plant-gate collections and through locals' contributions.

Candidates

Bierman appealed to racist sentiments among workers who are white and did nothing to build solidarity with Wheeling-Pitt workers or to involve the membership in the district's Civil Rights and Women's Conference.

Peurala's campaign, which was supported by former Fight Back leader Jim Balanoff, had little in common with the goals of the Fight Back program.

Some Steelworkers initially approached Peurala's candidacy with some interest to see if it had the same progressive thrust of the previous campaigns of Balanoff and Sadlowski. This proved not to be the case.

Peurala, in fact, did not participate in or back important developments in the district — like anti-apartheid activities, solidarity with the Wheeling-Pitt strikers, and support for last year's April 20 antiwar action — that involved the members.

Peurala refused to throw her active support behind these crucial union activities because it might have made Parton — who was head of the district when the activities were organized — look good to the membership and thereby help him win the election.

Another example of how Peurala stood aside from important developments in the district for narrow factional reasons was her unwillingness to actively build and participate in the district's Civil Rights and Women's Conference held just before the election. The fact that the district holds conferences like this is one of the victories of the Fight Back movement that Peurala was a part of.

The conference discussed important questions facing all union members — regardless of which candidate they were going to vote for. But attendance from locals supporting Peurala was noticeably sparse at the meeting.

Continued on next page

Invaluable for anti-apartheid activists!

Latest

'New International'

The dynamics of revolution in South Africa is featured in the current issue of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory. Fighters against apartheid, in the United States and other countries, will find valuable material here in equipping themselves politically to carry on the struggle. Articles and speeches by: Jack Barnes, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party; Oliver Tambo, president of the African National Congress of South Africa; Cuba's President Fidel Castro; and Ernest Harsch, managing editor of *Intercontinental Press*. Reprints South Africa's "Freedom Charter."

Send \$5 plus 75 cents handling and postage to New International, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014.



Miami cops attack peaceful protest against Duvalier

BY ERNEST MAILHOT

MIAMI — "Divalye alle!" Throughout the streets of Little Haiti, this chant, meaning "Duvalier is gone!" could be heard amid a continuous honking of car horns.

It was about 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 30, as I drove up North Miami Avenue. People were pouring out of their houses singing and chanting slogans, waving their fists in the air, or waving pieces of blue and red cloth. These colors represent the old Haitian flag before dictator "Papa Doc" Duvalier changed it to black and red.

There were about 1,000 people in front of the Haitian refugee center on 54th Street when I arrived. While overwhelmingly Haitian, the crowd also included several North American Blacks, Latinos, and whites. Demonstrators had forced the closing of the street and were celebrating what they thought was the overthrow of the hated regime of Jean-Claude Duvalier in their homeland.

Many in the gathering had rushed from their homes as soon as they heard of the reported overthrow, including a couple I saw wearing bathrobes. As I slowly made my way through the dancing and singing mass of people, a Haitian woman suddenly threw her arms around my neck while yelling "Divalye alle! Vive Haiti!" It turned out to be Ann, a former coworker of mine from a Miami garment shop.

The crowd grew to more than 2,000. Around 9 p.m. I was on the edge of the crowd when a car came screeching by me and turned the corner. The passenger door was open and was hitting parked cars as it went by.

Hundreds of people were chasing the car and caught up with it about a block away. The driver was a known supporter of the Duvalier dictatorship who had just driven his car into the demonstration. He killed one woman and seriously injured several others. It is widely believed that the driver is a Tonton Macoute, a member of Duvalier's hated secret police, and that he

had purposely tried to kill the demonstrators.

The police rescued this thug after he had fled into an apartment. In the melee, one cop lowered his gun and shot himself in the arm. As I turned to go back to 54th Street, I saw a large bonfire in the middle of the street. It was the new bright red Ford that the Macoute had driven into the crowd.

It took a long time for the ambulances to finally arrive to remove the injured. The crowd was still large and militant, despite the attack. At the same time the gathering was overwhelmingly peaceful.

Suddenly several cop cars sped up to the outskirts of the protest and police with their dogs jumped out and began attacking people. One cop ran at a group of us standing on the sidewalk. The cop was screaming and swearing. Several people were bitten and many accused the police of making racist slurs during the attack.

For anyone who participated in the Thursday evening activities, the big-business press coverage was nothing less than scandalous. The onus for the violence was placed on the demonstrators instead of the police and right-wing Duvalier supporters. Much was made of three cops who were injured, even though one shot himself, another was bitten by one of his own dogs, and one was hit by a stone.

Police Chief Clarence Dixon defended the cop attack.

The Haitian community remained mobilized even after it became clear Duvalier was still in power. Friday afternoon saw more than 1,000 people still in control of 54th Street and hundreds more were there all day Saturday.

A Friday evening meeting at the Haitian activities center heard leaders of Konbit Libete, a Haitian solidarity group here. Hundreds of people from the demonstration wandered in and out of the event, participating in part of the program.

The main speaker pointed to the central role of the U.S. government in propping up the Duvaliers for the past 29 years.

Boston demonstration denounces U.S. aid to Haiti dictatorship

BY JON HILLSON

BOSTON — Zero-degree-windchill weather couldn't freeze the spirits of nearly 350 demonstrators, overwhelmingly Haitians. They cheered and chanted their way from the Federal Building to the Haitian consulate in three hours of protest on February 1 against the regime of dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier.

Called by the Haiti Solidarity Committee (COSAH), the rally was a militant demonstration in support of the ongoing protests in Haiti. An estimated 50,000 Haitians live in the greater Boston area.

"Fire everywhere, the people demand freedom!" the marchers chanted in Creole.

"Down with Duvalier!" they shouted in French.

"Hey, hey, USA, stop supporting Duvalier!" was the English slogan that caught sympathetic attention from passers-by.

"It is our duty, and that of no one else, to decide the destiny of our country," COSAH speaker Freida Laurent told the cheering demonstrators.

"We denounce the Reagan-Duvalier alliance," she said. "The real issue is not 'communism,' or Cuba or Nicaragua, but economic apartheid, political repression, and a terrorist government."

"We want," Laurent went on, repeatedly interrupted by chanting and applause, "jobs, economic equality, human rights, and freedom!"

COSAH speaker Jean Jeunise hailed the courage of the Haitian people. "They have called us," he said, referring to policy makers in Washington and to the Duvalier regime, "a people of zombies." But now

'the people of zombies' are making history."

"Our people," Jeunise said, "have the right to fight, to fight back, to fight by any means necessary for our freedom."

The U.S. government, he pointed out, "supported Somoza for nearly 50 years, but he is gone. They supported the shah of Iran for 25 years, but he is gone. They supported [Ethiopian monarch] Haile Selassie but he is gone. And they have supported the Duvaliers for 30 years but they will go down too."

"A bas, Duvalier!" — down with Duvalier — the demonstrators shouted again and again.

Others at the rally offered their solidarity with the Haitian freedom struggle.

State AFL-CIO Vice-president Domenic Bozzotto, who is also president of Boston's Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees union — whose 6,000 members include hundreds of Haitians — told the crowd that "freedom for Haiti will not come from Washington, but the heart and soul of the Haitian people. A bas Duvalier!"

El Comité El Salvador spokesperson Mauricio Castro hailed the Haiti liberation battle as a blow for the Salvadoran struggle. "It gives us strength to continue the fight for our own freedom," he said.

Near the conclusion of the first part of the afternoon events, Boston Mayor Raymond Flynn appeared and told the gathering, "I stand with you."

Other speakers included a representative of the Rainbow Coalition and Rev. Graylan Ellis-Haglar, a well-known Black religious figure and political activist.



Haitians lie in Miami street after cops attacked with dogs. Supporter of Duvalier ran car into demonstration celebrating dictator's rumored overthrow, killing one woman and injuring several other people.

Dictator faces revolt



Slums in Haiti. U.S. imperialist domination is responsible for island's desperate poverty.

Continued from back page

peace force to restore order to Haiti and to protect the rights of American citizens whose lives are presently endangered by the violence in that country."

According to Durenberger, the invasion force would have "the equally important responsibility of supervising the transition to democracy in a country which has been historically undemocratic."

McCormack responded, "If American lives were in danger and the situation were to become explosive... clearly the American government would look to the safety of its citizens."

Such an action by the OAS, which has long been under Washington's thumb, would be nothing but a cover for U.S. occupation of Haiti. In 1965, the OAS placed its rubber stamp on the U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic, which shares the Caribbean island of Hispaniola with Haiti.

As was the case in the Dominican Republic, a U.S. occupation would have nothing to do with establishing real democracy in Haiti and everything to do with preserving the economic and political domination of U.S. big business.

U.S. troops occupied Haiti in 1915 after the overthrow of a dictatorship. When the troops left in 1934, power was turned over to a government that followed Washington's dictates.

Issues in Steelworkers' election

Continued from previous page

Peurla counterposed her interest in running the district for the members to the idea of the members themselves participating in the union and using it to fight for their interests.

There was little involvement by the membership in Peurla's campaign. It was virtually the opposite of what other campaigns by Steelworkers Fight Back leaders had been — part of a reform movement within District 31 that called for and developed participation by the ranks in the fight against the steel bosses.

The fact that more than 5,000 Steelworkers cast their votes for Peurla, however, is an indication that the progressive legacy of that movement has not been totally erased.

Election results

Only 35 percent of the district membership eligible to vote cast ballots despite the big role they have played in the politics of the union over the years. Out of the 28,681 votes cast, Parton was reelected with 14,140. Bierman got 8,907 votes and

Peurla 5,256.

While the campaign itself provided few opportunities for political discussion among union members, Socialist Workers Party activists in District 31 voted for Parton. This was because Parton, as district director, has adapted in some measure to the pressures from progressive-minded Steelworkers in the district. This makes it a bit easier for the members to participate in the district and make their pressure felt. Support that Parton helped organize for Wheeling-Pitt strikers, anti-apartheid and antiwar activities, and the Civil Rights and Women's Conference were a result of the conquests of the Steelworkers Fight Back reform movement.

Though the organized Steelworkers Fight Back movement no longer exists within the USWA, the progressive-minded members who gave it life continue to press for change.

Holly Harkness is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 758, and Dennis Richter is a member of Local 7370. Both locals are in District 31.

'Part of My Soul': memoirs of Winnie Mandela

Part of My Soul Went With Him. Winnie Mandela. 164 pages, \$5.95. W.W. Norton & Co. New York, 1985.

BY JANE HARRIS

"Winnie is powerful; she is faithful and honest. But above all, she is brave; she has the kind of guts I don't have, many of us don't have."

"She would stand before police captains with machine guns and tell them to go and get stuffed . . . and when they threatened to lock her up, she just said, 'Do it, man!'"

— A salute to Winnie Mandela from Dr. Nthatho Motlana, a South African anti-apartheid fighter.

Educational and inspiring, *Part of My Soul* is a rich political and personal memoir. Reading it, you readily un-

BOOK REVIEW

derstand why the wife of Nelson Mandela is a major figure in her own right in the South African freedom struggle.

Winnie Mandela has been banned under South African law for most of her adult life. Legally, that meant she must live where ordered, could never be quoted in the media, could never meet with more than one person at a time other than her children, and had to clear her comings and goings with the cops.

Like her imprisoned husband, she is long associated with the banned African National Congress. The ANC is leading the battle to smash the apartheid system.

Winnie Mandela has been arrested countless times and has experienced the cruelty suffered by South African political prisoners. Outside, constant surveillance, harassment, and victimization have followed her for the past 22 years. But her revolutionary will has not faltered and in this book she explains why.

Book banned in South Africa

Understandably, *Part of My Soul* was quickly banned in South Africa.

Through interviews with Anne Benjamin, Mandela offers a candidly personal account of her experiences as an anti-apartheid leader.

"I am of no importance to them as an individual," she somewhat modestly says. "What I stand for is what they want to banish. I couldn't think of a greater honor."

Mandela is a medical social worker. Banished to the town of Brandfort, she tried doggedly to help alleviate

the suffering of its impoverished Black community.

She sums up the situation in Brandfort this way: "The infant mortality rate is incredibly high. Almost every week we bury babies. Last weekend we had six funerals, this week there will be three, all children under two."

Exile in Brandfort, "my little Siberia," only deepened her revolutionary resolve.

During one prison term she spent 17 months in solitary confinement. She tells of the "ludicrous suggestion" by her jailers that her torment would be ended if she agreed to broadcast an appeal to ANC fighters to lay down their arms.

"That's how narrow-minded these people can be," she indignantly declares. "After you've given the best years of your life to this cause — that they can dream that your principles can still be for sale!"

Struggle of Black women

For Mandela, that commitment to principle is deepened by the double oppression of Black women.

Recalling that in the first years of her marriage, she was principally known as "Nelson's wife," she says:

"Looking at our struggle in this country, the black woman has had to struggle a great deal. But not only from a political angle. One has had to fight the male domination in a much more complex sense."

"We have the cultural clash where a black woman must emerge as a politician against the traditional background of a woman's place being in the home. . . . So, for a woman to emerge as an individual, as a politician, is not very easy."

But a politician she is. One particularly interesting example of her political thinking is her discussion of the differences between the ANC and the Black Consciousness movement, which had won a significant following in the 1970s.

She argues against the Black Consciousness view that "wants to go it alone, excluding the white man."

To this she counterposes the nonracial approach of the ANC. Pointing to the rifts that have developed among whites as a result of the anti-apartheid struggle, she insists there are white allies that can and must be won.

"The white student at Wits or Cape Town University who is beaten up by the same system that is beating up my people . . . must I ignore him? He is fighting the same cause as me. That is a fellow comrade."

"And you can't ignore those students who today are so brave as to hold anti-Republic demonstrations with a vacant chair labelled 'Nelson Mandela.' They are fellow human beings who are fighting side by side in our struggle."

"The South Africa of tomorrow that I'm fighting for will include that white child who has been so brave defying his Broederbond [a secret racist Afrikaner society] parents and shouting the slogans of my movement on the campus. I can't ignore him. He is part of us."

Importance of labor movement

Arguing for the Freedom Charter, the ANC program for a national, democratic revolution, she points to the United Democratic Front, a broad anti-apartheid coalition, as an image of "our South Africa of tomorrow, a movement that encompasses everybody, even people of different ideologies — the worker, the doctor, the lawyer, the man in the street, the road digger — that is our country."

At the same time she knows where the basic power is: "Nothing is more important than what is happening in the labor movement. We are the wealth of this country . . . we could bring this country down through our labor — these black hands. We have made it what it is and we can bring it down the same way."

Scoring the foreign corporations as "political criminals in this country," she fully recognizes the value of the fight for divestment.

Defending the right of the ANC to battle the system by any means necessary, she explains, "All that this people's organization is doing is responding to the violence of the system."

She cites her own evolution on the issue:

"Before I went into solitary confinement, I must tell you the truth, I made pronouncements on platforms and said things I hadn't tested myself on. I was a social worker, I was a mother; I knew that even though I was in a violent situation, if I was given a gun and told to go into a battlefield and shoot, I knew I wouldn't be able to do it. . . ."

"What happened during my detention was quite extraordinary. Now if the man I'm dealing with appeared carrying a gun — in defense of my principles, I know I would fire. That is what they have taught me. I could never have achieved that alone."

Part of My Soul is must reading. It will deepen the political understanding of everyone in the anti-apartheid movement. And it's hard to think of a better starting place for someone who wants to learn what the fight against apartheid is all about.

When Nelson Mandela went to prison over 20 years ago, Winnie Mandela said, "Part of my soul went with him."

But none of her fighting spirit went, nor her capacity to argue eloquently for the cause of liberation.

Cuba, Colombia: different responses to disasters

BY NANCY BURTON
AND MARK FRANKLIN

HAVANA, Cuba — Within a few days of each other, two giant natural disasters hit Colombia and Cuba.

In Colombia, a volcanic eruption killed 25,000 and left tens of thousands displaced.

In Cuba, Hurricane "Kate" ravaged 500 kilometers of Cuba's northern coast. But because the Cuban government put a premium on saving lives, only two people were killed.

Why the marked difference when both countries had forewarnings of the disasters? How were the people prepared for the disasters, and what was done to help them afterwards?

Colombia: warnings unheeded

The Nevado del Ruiz volcano erupted twice on November 13. Melting snow at its peak caused mud slides that buried the town of Armero, which had a population of 25,000. The dead totaled 23,000 in Armero and 2,000 in the nearby town of Chinchina. Both towns are in the heart of the coffee-growing region.

Scientists in Colombia had reported as early as 1984 that there was a "67 percent probability" that the volcano would erupt. U.S. government officials agreed. But neither the U.S. nor the Colombian government prepared for this possibility.

For two months leading up to the eruption, the volcano had been smoking and, for three days prior to the eruption, spewing ashes.

People were outraged at the government's failure to evacuate the area even after the first eruption. A survivor, Alirio Oliveros, said, "The government didn't pay any attention to this town. I was listening to the radio, and they said there was no danger."

In addition to the human toll, there were millions of dollars in property damage. Thousands of jobs and a whole economic infrastructure was destroyed.

This economic catastrophe adds to the already monstrous foreign debt of \$12 billion owed to imperialist banks by Colombia.

To add insult to injury, the U.S. government doled out aid with an eyedropper: 12 helicopters, 4,500 blankets and cots, 500 tents, and medical supplies.

Compare this to the wealth annually extracted from the Colombian people or the tens of millions given U.S.-backed mercenary killers in Nicaragua and Angola or to Israel and South Africa.

Cuba prepares

As soon as meteorological evidence confirmed that "Kate" would hit Cuba November 18, the government and people moved into action. Emergency meetings of the Cuban Communist Party were held. Party members organized sessions of leaders of the mass organizations, especially the Zone Defense Committees.

Within 24 hours, 300,000 people and thousands of head of livestock were evacuated and moved further inland in the seven provinces eventually hit by the hurricane.

The Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (neighborhood defense committees), the Federation of Cuban Women, the Cuban Workers Federation, and the Union of Young Communists mobilized their memberships and the rest of the population to carry out the evacuation and to hold damage to a minimum.

This was accomplished in the face of winds up to 118 miles an hour and waves over seven feet high encroaching inland.

Cuban President Fidel Castro, after touring the affected areas the day after, estimated the damage at 1 billion pesos. (One Cuban peso equals U.S.\$1.15.)

There were 60,000 partially damaged homes, and 5,000 were completely destroyed. Thousands of agricultural sites and factories were heavily damaged or totally wiped out. The sugar cane fields were

flattened and the citrus groves stripped of fruit.

Cubans mobilize

The December 8 issue of the Cuban newspaper *Granma* reported on Castro's provincewide tours and his speech to the residents of hard-hit Villa Clara.

"What do we do now?" asked Fidel. "We'll have to mobilize and cut a lot of cane by hand. We can't use the machines." In Matanzas, for example, since 81 percent of the cane harvest is normally done mechanically, only 4,500 canecutting workers were thought needed. Now all that has changed.

Damage from the hurricane included loss of electric, gas, water, and telephone services to tens of thousands in Havana and other areas.

Within 24 hours, telephone service was reestablished to 3,930 units. Seventy cables and 50 phone poles were fixed. Within a week, more than 85 percent of the damage to the electric and water services had been repaired.

Within hours after the hurricane passed, the mass organizations again mobilized their members for cleanup and reconstruction. Factory workers volunteered to work overtime without pay and to produce more to help make up for the losses. Hundreds of youths organized by the Union of Young Communists helped in volunteer brigades to pick fallen fruit and cut cane.

The organization of Young Pioneers — José Martí (for children aged seven to 14) undertook the task of cleaning up the parks and planting new trees to replace the more than 300,000 estimated to have been uprooted.

Armando Acosta, alternate member of the political bureau of the Cuban Communist Party, and national coordinator of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, summed up the spirit of the Cuban people. "The damage was great, but the willingness to make repairs is greater."

The combination of the Cuban people's mobilization and the material aid provided by the Soviet Union has helped cut the losses; yet the economic goals for 1986 will have to be revised. Rebuilding the country after the worst natural disaster in the past century is no easy task. Nor would it be for any country.

Soviet help

The Soviet Union promised to send Cuba 30,000 tons of rice, 20,000 tons of flour, 10,000 tons of zinc roof sheeting, 5,000 tons of aluminum sheets, 2 million asbestos-cement tiles, and 1,000 tons of long-fiber asbestos for local production of asbestos sheets — all free.

Cuba's top priority was to save lives — which it did with much success. The cost in pesos was never considered.

Nat'l union president betrays embattled local

Continued from Page 9

support his policies have won" by visiting Austin, Ottumwa, Fremont, and Dubuque. [T]hen we will see the regard in which Hormel and FDL workers hold him." (FDL is a subsidiary of Hormel.)

P-9 President Guyette responded to Wynn's attack at a press conference in Austin. He told reporters that it "reflects the problems of the labor movement today. The top-down strategy means more concessions. They have no answers, no help. . . ."

"Some leaders," Guyette said, "have become out of touch, but new leaders are coming forward and will come forward."

Guyette made clear that P-9's "fight is with the company and First Bank [one of Hormel's largest shareholders]. We will continue to fight despite those who want to run interference for the company. But our enemy is the company and First Bank."

ARIZONA

Phoenix

Mexico vs. U.S. Banks: Eyewitness Report on the Social and Economic Crisis in Mexico. Speakers: member of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT) of Mexico; Kathy Owen, Socialist Workers Party; others. Bilingual forum in English and Spanish with translation. Sat., Feb. 15, 7 p.m. 3750 W McDowell. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (602) 272-4026.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Eyewitness Report and Slide Show from the Philippines. Speakers: Steve Graw, representative of Vietnam Aid; representative of Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 8, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

Film: Guazapa, El Salvador. Bilingual program in English and Spanish with translation. Sat., Feb. 15, 2546 W Pico. Donation: \$3. Ausp: Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Forum. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

San Francisco

The Revolution in South Africa: Stakes in the Fight Against Apartheid. Speakers: Steven Meal, Socialist Workers Party; others to be announced. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 15, 7 p.m. 3284 23rd St. (near Mission). Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (415) 282-6255.

Socialist Bookstore Sale During Black History Month. 20 percent off all books on the Black rights struggle and the fight against apartheid. Hours: Mon. through Fri. 1-7 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. 3284 23rd St. (near Mission). For more information call (415) 282-6255.

San Jose

Workers Fight Back Against Union-Busting. The Hormel and Watsonville Cannery Strikes. Speakers: Ron Lind, organizer, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 428; representative of Teamsters Local 912. Translation to Spanish. Sat. Feb. 8, 7:30 p.m. 46 1/2 Race St., Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (408) 998-4007.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Eastern's Attack on Airline Workers: Defending Our Unions. Speakers: Stu Singer, member International Association of Machinists Local 702 at Eastern in Miami. Sun., Feb. 16, 7 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (301) 235-0013.

U.S. Aggression Against Nicaragua, an Eyewitness Account. Speakers: Gertrude Hughes, antiwar activist recently returned from Nicaragua; John Lemon, Socialist Workers Party; representative from Casa Baltimore. Sat., Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (301) 235-0013.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Crisis in Haiti. Speakers: Jean Claude Martineau, noted Haitian poet; representative, Haiti Solidarity Committee (COSAH); Bob DeBarge, Young Socialist Alliance. Translation to Spanish and French. Sat., Feb. 8, 7:30 p.m. 510 Commonwealth Ave. 4th Floor. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Boston Militant Forum. For more information call (617) 262-4621.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

Crisis in the Philippines. Film showing of *Sing Your Own Song* with presentation by Harris

Freeman, member of Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 15, 8 p.m. 2135 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (313) 961-0395.

Grand Opening of Militant Bookstore, with Cuba and Nicaragua: An Eyewitness Report. Speakers: Nancy Burton and Mark Franklin, Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party. Grand opening begins 5 p.m.; forum at 8 p.m. Donation: \$2. Twenty percent off all Pathfinder Press books. 2135 Woodward Ave. Ausp: Militant Bookstore and Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (313) 961-0395.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

Boycott South Africa, Not Nicaragua! An educational conference, Sun., Feb. 9.

1. "The Coming Revolution in South Africa," 12:00 noon.

2. "Revolutionary Nicaragua Today," 2 p.m.

3. Panel discussion. Speakers: Heidi Adelman, member Minnesota Anti-Apartheid Coalition; Kristen Dooley, member Central America Coalition and Nicaragua Solidarity Committee; Chris Nissan, Citizens for Positive Police Action and coordinator of the Market Place Forum; a representative of the Young Socialist Alliance. 5 p.m. Dinner served at 4 p.m. Donations: classes, \$1 each; dinner, \$2; panel, \$2. All events, \$5. 508 N Snelling. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (612) 645-1674.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Nicaragua Under Fire, Why Reagan Hates the Sandinista Revolution, Why We Should Support It. Eyewitness Report. Speakers: Robert Dees, recently toured Nicaragua, member, Socialist Workers Party; others. Translation to Spanish. Fri. Feb. 14, 7:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. 141 Halsey. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Washington's War Against Nicaragua. How the Sandinista revolution is fighting to defend gains for working people, farmers, indigenous peoples, and women. Speaker: Cindy Jaquith, chief correspondent of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial's* Managua bureau. Translation to Spanish. Fri., Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m. 79 Leonard St. Donation: \$2. Preforum dinner \$3. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

Bitter Cane. A film documentary on life under the Duvalier dictatorship in Haiti. Introduction by film's director, Ben Dupuy, who is also editor of *Haiti Progres* and spokesperson for the Committee Against Repression in Haiti. Fri., Feb. 14, 7:30 p.m. Preforum dinner at 6:30 p.m. 79 Leonard St. Donation: film \$3; dinner \$3. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

Celebrate Black History Month. A series of forums on the struggle for Black liberation nationally and internationally.

1. **Malcolm X and the Strategy for Black Liberation Today.** Sun., Feb. 9, 5 p.m.

2. **Blacks in Nicaragua: Ending Centuries of Discrimination.** Sun., Feb. 16, 5 p.m.

3. **Black Women and the Fight to Defend Abortion Rights.** Sun., Feb. 23, 5 p.m. 2219 E. Market St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum, 15 percent off all titles in Militant Bookstore during Black history month. For

more information call (919) 272-5996.

OHIO

Cincinnati

Libya: Target of U.S. Terrorism. Speakers: Kathleen Denny, Socialist Workers Party and member of International Association of Machinists. Sun., Feb. 9, 7:30 p.m. 4945 Paddock Rd. Donation: \$2.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (513) 242-7161.

Malcolm X: The Meaning of His Ideas Today. Speaker: Mohammed Oliver, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 15, 7:30 p.m. 4945 Paddock Rd. Donation: \$2.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (513) 242-7161.

Ethiopia: How Grain Monopolies Starve the World. Speakers: Girma Mitku and Seyoum Kiffle, Ethiopian students attending Ohio State University. Sat., Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m. 4945 Paddock Rd. Donation: \$2.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (513) 242-7161.

Cleveland

Women's Rights and the Fight Against Racism. Speakers: Ione Biggs, co-coordinator of Northeast Ohio Anti-apartheid Coalition; Kathy Leen Geathers, chair, Civil Rights Committee of Women Speak Out for Peace and Justice; Helen Woods; and Celeste Welch, National Black Independent Political Party. Mon., Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m. Lakewood Public Library, 15425 Detroit Ave. Ausp: Cleveland National Organization for Women and NBIPP. For more information call (216) 226-6514.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

Stop the U.S. War Drive Against Libya and Nicaragua. Speaker: Clare Fraenzl, member of United Mine Workers of America Local 1197 and Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 8, 7:30 p.m. 402 N Highland Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

Unionists Look at Plant Closings: What is the Solution? Speaker: Doug Hord, member

United Auto Workers and Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 15, 7:30 p.m. 402 N Highland Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

TEXAS

Houston

Rebellion in Haiti. Speaker: Steve Warshell, Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sun., Feb. 9, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

How Workers and Peasants in Nicaragua Use Union Power to Advance the Revolution. Speaker: Scott Breen, member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, visited Nicaragua in January. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 8, 7:30 p.m. 767 S State St., 3rd floor. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

Malcolm X — The Man and His Ideas. A presentation with recordings of Malcolm's speeches. Sat., Feb. 15, 7:30 p.m. 767 S State, 3rd floor. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Women and the Nicaraguan Revolution. Speaker: Aida Oliver, attaché of Nicaraguan embassy. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 8, 7 p.m. 3106 Mt. Pleasant St. NW. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum and Nica. For more information call (202) 797-7699.

WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston

British Miners Still Fighting Back. Speaker: Kathy Mickells, member of United Mine Workers of America recently returned from a tour of Britain. Sun., Feb. 9, 7 p.m. 611-A Tennessee Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 345-3040.



BARRICADA

INTERNATIONAL WEEKLY OF THE SANDINISTA NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT

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Zimbabwe's Prime Minister visits



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

Hypertension? — True, there was no evidence of threat to the Super Bowl gathering, but the FBI advised there were 16 Libyan hit



Harry Ring

squads in the country, so 500 rent-a-cops, city police, and FBI sleuths were at the bowl. As back-up, there was a detachment of marines who ushered. "We don't want to hype this," an FBI gum-

shoe assured.

Of course — What with five-year-old office furniture, Michael Hickey, Howard County, Maryland, school superintendent, refurbished. An executive desk, conference table, sofa, chairs, etc., \$21,000. Responding to the ensuing flak, he offered to chip in \$4,500 and get a reduction from the supplier. He further assured that "the education of children is my highest priority."

Suggestion box — Many stores are placing background music with subliminal messages aimed at discouraging shoplifting. Some are upbeat, like, "You are honest, don't steal." Others feature police

sirens or slammer doors closing. It may not help, but they might pipe those into the office where the merchandise is priced.

They do it all for you — According to *Harpers*, since 1968, 85 percent of the hostages killed in airplane hijackings died during rescue operations.

Great for reheating burgers — An AGA stove from England. Hand enameled in decorator colors, it weighs over a half ton and requires a good floor. With two to four ovens, it grills, bakes, boils, broils, stews, steams, simmers, and fries with a minimum of attention. It's on all the time, so it needs a kitchen with lots of win-

dows and/or air-conditioning. About \$6,000 plus installation.

Nothing's too good — The luxury liner, *Queen Elizabeth II*, has passed two of its last nine U.S. health inspections.

Let the good times roll — Way back when, an anxious landlord might offer to paint and throw in a month's free rent. In New York, these times are back, sort of. One-bedroom condos have dropped 20 percent and can be snapped up for about \$334,000. One desperate chap, stuck with a two-bedroom penthouse, will throw in a free Cadillac and has slashed the asking price to \$695,000.

They care — The Pentagon may accept pricey materiel that doesn't work too good, but it was tough about Xmas fruit cake. Suppliers were given 18 pages of specifications to ensure the final product "shall not crumble nor show any compression streaks, gummy centers, soggy areas, be excessively dry or overprocessed." But if it did come out like that they could use it for turkey stuffing.

\$\$\$\$\$\$ — "When you live in a highly pressurized society, psychiatric problems are a way of life." — John Hindelong, a Wall Street analyst, explaining why private psychiatric hospitals are a sound investment.

A visit to Jewish Community House in Havana, Cuba

BY NANCY BURTON AND MARK FRANKLIN

While in Cuba recently, we visited the Jewish Community House in Havana. What we found there revealed the falsity of the charge, occasionally put out by the capitalist media in the United States, that the Cuban government carries out anti-Semitic policies.

Most Cubans who consider themselves Jewish came to Cuba in the 1920s and '30s, fleeing fascist and other reactionary anti-Semitic regimes in Europe. Many hoped

AS I SEE IT

ultimately to be admitted to the United States. But thousands remained.

Just prior to the 1959 revolution in Cuba, there were about 15,000 Jews who lived there. Most were relatively prosperous. A number were active supporters of the July 26 Movement, founded by Fidel Castro, which led the struggle against the Batista dictatorship. These included Enrique Oldusky, an engineer in Havana, and Martin Klein, a pilot who brought supplies to the rebel army in the mountains.

Today, some people of Jewish origin are in leading government and party positions, but none are religious. Fabio Grobart, an immigrant from Poland, who was a founder of the first Cuban Communist Party in 1925, is

now a member of the central committee of the Communist Party of Cuba.

"Most practicing Jews left Cuba after the revolution," said Adela Dworin, director of the Jewish Community House, "not because of anti-Semitism, but because their businesses were nationalized. There is not, nor has there been, any repression or discrimination against Jews."

Dworin herself was an active revolutionary at the University of Havana during the fight to overthrow Batista. Her father was a businessman who remained in Cuba until his death.

"Today," Dworin added, "the 900 to 1,200 Cuban Jews include many elderly people who receive government pensions, young people, and those professionals who decided to stay to work for the government."

There are five synagogues in Cuba, which sponsor religious and cultural activities. The Canadian Jewish Congress supplies the food for the religious services and holidays.

There are no rabbis, but one often comes to Cuba from abroad for the most important religious holidays.

"Government assistance is not needed," points out Dworin, "but if we needed it, I am sure the government would help us."

The synagogue and community center are funded by members and by the previous sale of part of the building complex to the government.

People who charge that the Cuban government is anti-Semitic have obviously never been to Cuba, she said.



Jewish Community House in Havana

The issues in Minnesota meatpackers' strike

BY TOM LEONARD

The big-business press likes to portray the six-month-old strike by United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local P-9 against Hormel as a battle for \$.69 an hour.

These reports refer to Hormel's pay offer of \$10 an hour and the union's demand to return to the \$10.69 an hour workers received before Hormel unilaterally slashed wages in October 1984.

By portraying the strikers as greedy and high-paid, the big-business press wants to undercut support for them among other working people, especially those workers who make far less and are not members of unions.

The issues in this strike, however, go beyond wages. And they are of importance to all working people — organized and unorganized.

"It wasn't \$10 we were turning down," Larry Gullickson, a member of Local P-9, explained at a St. Paul Militant Labor Forum last September. "It was where they gutted and raped our contract. They took everything they could possibly take that has been built over the last 50 years in the labor movement."

What is Hormel demanding?

According to a special edition of the local's newspaper, the *Unionist*, published after the strike began Aug. 17, 1985, Hormel wants to destroy the seniority system, demanding that management have the right to arbitrarily assign all jobs and overtime.

The company also wants to institute a two-tier wage system and the right to hire part-time and temporary workers, who would have no benefits or seniority rights. The *Unionist* explained that this proposal would divide the work force, "paying new workers less than current workers for the same work."

The company is also demanding the right to suspend and discharge workers for

"strikes, slowdowns, refusals to work sympathy strikes, picketing, boycotting [or] handbilling..." This provision, the *Unionist* stated, "aside from violating a member's constitutional rights, would allow the company to fire a person for participating in political activities that have nothing to do with Hormel."

Hormel also wants to cut medical benefits and eliminate maternity leave.

In addition, Hormel wants to end the right of injured workers to reclaim their regular jobs if they do not return to these jobs within 60 days.

Characterizing this demand as "punitive treatment of injured workers," the *Unionist*

explained that "on the job injuries are at an epidemic level. . . . The company admits," the paper continued, "that a third of Austin workers sustained some injury in 1984."

The outrageous concessions demanded by Hormel codify the deteriorating working conditions P-9 members were already forced to work under before the strike began.

For example, workers had to maintain a production rate 20 percent higher than at any of Hormel's other plants.

High production rates led to degrading and inhumane working conditions in the plant and skyrocketing injuries. Local P-9 reported before the strike that "there are

202 injuries for every 100 workers each year. Moreover, the injury rate is rising; serious and major lost-time injuries at Hormel's Austin plant have increased by 119 percent since 1981."

The union listed some injuries suffered by meatpackers: mangled and amputated hands and fingers, injured backs and limbs, circulatory problems, tendinitis, and carpal tunnel syndrome. Many new hires were fired when their hands became too sore to work.

Local P-9 business agent Peter Winkels said, going into the strike, "There is much more involved in our struggle than just a dollars-and-cents issue. It's called dignity and respect. . . ."

Nat'l Guard mobilized against Hormel workers

Continued from Page 9

P-9, a number of articles and editorials have appeared in the press attacking the growing alliance between farmers and workers. These articles claim that the union has hurt farmers by closing down Hormel, an important market for Minnesota's hog producers.

Agri-News, published by the Rochester *Post-Bulletin*, encouraged destitute farmers to scab on the strike, saying that in the free enterprise system "one man's dispute is another man's opportunity."

The courts have also intervened against the strikers. P-9's executive board, as well as Ray Rogers, have been slapped with a number of contempt of court charges for alleged violations of an injunction limiting union activity at the plant.

On Tuesday, February 4, Guyette and Rogers were found guilty of civil contempt of court charges. The rest of P-9's executive board was acquitted.

The two men were fined \$250 each and

sentenced to 15 days in jail. The jail sentence was suspended for six months on the condition that they abide by the guidelines of the injunction.

Under this pressure, some P-9 members who had supported the strike disagree with the local's decision to continue the walk-out. At the same time, some members who had crossed the picket line have come back out because the conditions are so bad in the plant. One such worker pledged to a union support and strategy meeting, "I'll never go back in there again without a union."

The union has mapped out plans to pull as many of its members as possible back out of the plant. They are organizing a personal phone call campaign and an "amnesty" meeting at a local church.

Despite these attacks by the company, state government, and press, the strike is very much alive. P-9 continues to win support from other unions and community, church, and campus organizations.

The local has received a \$20,000 dona-

tion from Joint Council 32 of the Teamsters. The joint council includes 17 Teamsters locals in the state. In making the contribution, Howard Frontier, president of the council, wrote, "While being in disagreement with both the leadership of P-9 and the management of the Hormel company, Joint Council 32 has great sympathy with the members of Local P-9."

Dave Foster, a grievance chairman of USWA Local 7263, presented the meatpackers with \$13,500, the first installment of plant-gate collections organized by the National Rank-and-File Against Concessions.

UFCW Local 538 at the Oscar Mayer plant in Madison, Wisconsin, is bringing a food caravan to Austin February 8.

P-9's President Jim Guyette has sent a letter calling on the labor movement to come to a national rally to "Stop union-busting in Austin, Minnesota," Saturday, February 15, at 2:00 p.m. at Austin High School.

Shuttling the military into space

Since the space shuttle Challenger caught fire and exploded on January 28, taking seven lives, President Reagan has been spearheading the drive to win public support for continuing the shuttle program. In his first statement after the accident, he proclaimed on national television, "We'll continue our quest in space. There will be more shuttle flights and more shuttle crews. . . ."

Polls have even been organized to show that school children are still convinced the program should continue.

Government officials are pressing to speed up the investigation of the explosion so that shuttle flights can be resumed as soon as possible. Thirteen more were scheduled for this year, before they were suspended immediately after the accident. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)'s goal had been to get the four shuttles doing 24 flights a year in preparation for constructing an \$8 billion space station.

A few officials are now raising the idea of putting the remaining spacecraft on a round-the-clock schedule to do the 24 flights yearly. Others are pushing for the construction of another orbiter to replace Challenger.

Bits and pieces of evidence are now surfacing about a series of accidents, safety violations, and mismanagement in the servicing and maintenance of the space shuttles in the past several months. These occurred at the same time that NASA was jacking up the number of shuttle flights. And they come on top of a whole series of mishaps that have plagued the shuttle program since it began.

The reason the White House and many in Congress and the Pentagon are driving to get the shuttle flights going again doesn't have anything to do with science or space exploration. Rather it has to do with the fact that the shuttle program is an important part of Washington's military buildup.

Two weeks before the Challenger's mishap, the *Wall Street Journal* ran an article headlined, "Growing Militarization of the Space Program Worries U.S. Scientists." It pointed out that the Pentagon is the largest single user of the space shuttle.

Fully 34 percent of shuttle payloads scheduled through 1994 are military. Many of the missions are slated to deliver and test hardware for the Strategic Defense Initiative, commonly called Star Wars. The shuttle is now the

only launch vehicle capable of placing large military payloads into orbit.

Moreover, the Defense Department has authority to claim priority for its cargo on the basis of national security.

Assistant Secretary of Defense Donald Latham stated that regardless of the Challenger's accident the Pentagon would not give up its predominant role in using the shuttle. "The Department of Defense is the biggest customer and always has been," he said, "and that's not going to change."

The military insists on strict secrecy about its missions. According to the *Journal* article, "Twice in the last two years, NASA employees have had to observe complete silence during military shuttle flights."

This furtiveness has been carried over to the investigation of the accident. NASA has maintained very tight control of information about the accident. In addition to this it illegally impounded news agencies' and television networks' film of the explosion.

The decision to carry civilians on space flights, including school teachers and journalists, was an attempt to put a human face on what is essentially a military program. This was calculated to win broader support for the space shuttle.

There is no question that the shuttle as well as other space programs have demonstrated big advances in science and technology — advances that could be of substantial benefit to human society.

But in the hands of a tiny number of billionaire families that dominate this country, these scientific achievements are used to boost profits and improve their capacity to wage wars against working people and oppressed nations throughout the world.

Moreover, this spectacular display of modern science and technology sharply contrasts with the massive hunger and malnutrition in much of the world and the abysmal conditions of housing, medical care, and education in the United States.

The massive funds now spent on the military-oriented space programs — funds which President Reagan proposes increasing — should instead be spent to improve conditions for human beings on earth.

Reagan demands more arms

Continued from front page

dominate the banks, industry, and the land in the United States are on a drive to boost their profits at the expense of working people. They are attempting to get workers to accept lower wages, worse working conditions, and fewer government benefits. And Reagan, as their chief executive officer at the moment, and Congress are doing their utmost to implement these attacks.

That's why no praise was heard from Reagan for the striking meatpackers at Hormel in Minnesota or from the five Democrats who were given time to answer him. These Hormel workers, who have been on strike since August and have refused to knuckle under even in the face of a massive National Guard mobilization, are on the front line in the fight against the employers' grinding offensive.

When Reagan spoke about "the quiet courage and common sense" of the American people, he was not referring to these working-class fighters whom that tribute aptly fits.

Reagan focused a lot of attention on the large deficits in the federal budget and argued that "we face those deficits because the federal government overspends." The budget his administration presented to Congress on the following day called for reduced spending on a wide range of social programs, including housing, farm relief, transportation, education, pollution control, medical research, and health care.

Many radio and television commentators cooed over his proposal for affordable insurance for those who would not otherwise be able to pay for a catastrophic illness in the family. The hitch in this is that all Reagan proposed was for the Secretary of Health and Human Resources to come up with a recommendation a year from now on how the private sector can help address this problem.

Meanwhile, the president's budget calls for slashing \$70 billion in the next five years from the already inadequate Medicare and Medicaid programs.

Reagan also called for freeing the poor from "the spider's web of dependency" on government-financed welfare assistance. But in the absence of any proposals for full unemployment compensation as long as a person is unemployed and free child care, this recommendation would only further reduce the meager and inadequate relief working people get.

Reagan's proposed measures steer away from the government assuming responsibility for providing socially needed programs. He told Congress that "private values must be at the heart of public policies." The gigantic fi-

nancial resources of the government should not be used for improving the lives of those who pay most of the taxes — workers and farmers. Relief, Reagan thinks, should be left up to individuals, churches, and private agencies.

Despite the many cuts urged by the White House, it does not propose axing Social Security benefits at this time. When Reagan floated a trial balloon along this line several years ago, it was quickly shot down by widespread opposition in the working class.

Two days before Reagan's speech, the editors of the *New York Times* complained that "the mere mention of curbing Social Security makes Congressmen blanch and Presidents duck." It urged the president to limit cost-of-living increases and subject benefits to greater taxation.

The Democratic officials who responded to Reagan's address also presented the budget deficit as the source of evil. Their remedy was to raise taxes, a measure no less onerous to working people than cuts in social spending.

As he usually does on such occasions Reagan appealed to the moral virtues of family, God, and country. Within this framework he reaffirmed his opposition to the right of women to have abortions. He referred to this constitutional guarantee as "a wound in our national conscience."

Reagan also repeated his demand that religious prayers be reestablished in the classrooms of the country's public schools.

The Democratic rebuttals failed to address either of these questions. In fact, they attempted, with general success, to outdo the president in championing the glories of church and hearth.

Reagan told the assembly of lawmakers that his administration was hoping to negotiate an agreement with the Soviet Union on reducing nuclear arms. But he made it clear that Soviet leaders must recognize that any arms accord must be in the context of Washington's continued support to those fighting "to win freedom in Afghanistan, in Angola, in Cambodia, and in Nicaragua." These "freedom fighters," as Reagan referred to the mercenaries and other reactionary scum who are trying to topple the governments in those countries, are getting big doses of U.S. aid.

Reagan, however, did not have a word to say about the true freedom fighters in South Africa who are conducting a massive struggle to get rid of the hated apartheid system there.

Reagan's address once again shows that "economic miracles" and "freedom fighters" mean something quite different to the tiny handful of ruling families than they do to the working families.

Carlos Baliño: unionist, Marxist in Cuba, U.S.

Reprinted below are excerpts from an article that appeared in the July-August 1983 issue of the *Young Socialist*, the newspaper that reflects the views of the Young Socialist Alliance.

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Carlos Baliño was a fighter against oppression from his youth until the day he died.

Born in Guanajay, Cuba, on February 13, 1848, Baliño was involved as a youth in the Cuban independence struggle against Spain. With the outbreak of Cuba's first anticolonial revolt in 1869, Baliño was among a large number of Cuban workers forced to immigrate to the U.S. due to the repression following the de-

OUR REVOLUTIONARY HERITAGE

feat of the revolt in their homeland. Many found work in the southern tobacco shops, particularly in Florida.

Baliño helped lead immigrant workers to establish unions in the South. In Key West, home of a large Cuban community, he was a representative of the Tobacco Selectors Guild.

Baliño and his coworkers were profoundly influenced by the labor upsurge that shook the United States at the end of the nineteenth century.

It was during these years, under the impact of the U.S. class struggle, that this militant worker read the writings of Marx and Engels. Before long, Baliño was won over to revolutionary socialism and began spreading these ideas to other workers.

Historian Philip Foner points out, "It was inevitable that the paths of [José] Martí and Baliño should cross." Martí, an anti-imperialist fighter, was the main leader of the Cuban independence struggle and also lived in the United States. Martí established the Cuban Revolutionary Party (PRC), which was based primarily among Blacks and working people. The party's aim was to "achieve absolute independence for the island of Cuba, and to aid and encourage that of Puerto Rico," as its program stated.

Baliño became a cofounder of the PRC in 1892. From then on, Baliño and Martí shared the platform everywhere, including a joint speaking tour of Florida.

Baliño spent the rest of his time in the U.S. organizing revolutionary workers' clubs to build the PRC. The tobacco workers in these clubs gave 10 percent of their wages in weekly contributions to the party, becoming the PRC's financial base. The PRC helped lead the workers in their strikes and other battles against the bosses.

The Cuban revolution that broke out in 1895 — in which José Martí and Black leader Antonio Maceo were killed in combat — led to Cuba's formal independence in 1902. But Washington intervened in the war, making Cuba a semicolony of U.S. imperialism.

Carlos Baliño returned to his homeland in 1902. In Cuba, Baliño threw himself into editing workers' newspapers, writing socialist pamphlets, and organizing strikes. In 1905 he founded the Socialist Workers Party (POS) of Cuba, the first Marxist political party in that country.

The victorious Russian revolution in 1917 was an inspiring example for the oppressed throughout Latin America and the world. "Hail Soviet Russia, hope of humanity," exclaimed Carlos Baliño, who noted that "the Workers and Farmers Republic recognized the independence of all territories that had been forcefully annexed to the czarist empire."

In 1922, Baliño broke with the reformist Socialist International, which had supported the imperialist world war, and formed the Communist Group in Havana. He collaborated with *Juventud*, Cuba's new communist youth newspaper, led by Julio Antonio Mella. These efforts finally culminated in 1925 when Baliño and Mella founded the Communist Party of Cuba, which then joined the new Communist International.

An internationalist proletarian, Baliño also launched, together with Mella, the Anti-Imperialist League of the Americas, which was an effort to create a continentwide united front of all forces fighting imperialism.

Finally, in 1926, the Machado dictatorship of Cuba ordered Baliño arrested during an antilabor crackdown. The 77-year-old fighter, however, eluded the cops and died peacefully in his home hours before the cops could arrest him.

Fidel Castro pointed out in a 1975 speech, "The task of liberating the nation from imperialist domination was inextricably linked to that of wiping out exploitation of man by man in our society. . . . Having understood this was, in our judgment, the greatest historical merit of Baliño."

For the Cuban people, Castro explained, "Carlos Baliño symbolizes the direct link between the Revolutionary Party of José Martí, and the first Communist Party of Cuba."

Rural women examine role as 'invisible farmers'

The following is a guest column by Kathie Fitzgerald. She is a member of United Auto Workers Local 93 and an active participant in Missouri farm protest activities.

Several weeks ago I had the opportunity to attend the Iowa Rural Women's Conference held in Des Moines. Close to 450 farm women, mainly from Iowa, showed up



WOMEN IN REVOLT

Pat Grogan

to try to come to grips with the crisis that is so violently changing their lives.

In 1985 tens of thousands of farms were lost. According to the Census Bureau, 400,000 fewer people in the United States live on farms today than did in 1983.

Suicide, alcoholism, divorce, spouse and child abuse,

drug use by teenagers, truancy from school — all have increased as the farm crisis has deepened.

Women at the conference and thousands of their sisters in rural areas faced not being able to get Christmas presents for their children this year. Every day many face not having enough money for clothes, food, or utilities.

On January 10, the day the conference began, Harvard University released a study showing that, for the first time in U.S. history, rural poverty and hunger exceed that of urban areas. The study is full of numbers, percentages, and charts.

The reality is a family of five I know here in Missouri. They lost almost all their land a year ago. The bank came and seized their machinery. They are living in a trailer without a telephone and sometimes without heat. The husband has tried to find work helping other farmers, but that's been hard to do. The family is living on the money the wife makes working part-time (20 hours a week) as a secretary. When they applied for food stamps, they were told they were ineligible because of the "value" of their few remaining acres.

While the breakdown of a way of life on the farm affects everyone involved, an inordinate share is borne by the woman. This burden is being placed on shoulders that already carry far more than most people are aware of. It has probably become fairly well known that men who farm put in long, long hours of backbreaking labor. But

women are "invisible farmers." The facts are that, in addition to the cleaning, cooking, laundering, chauffeuring, etc., that is the lot of most working-class women, farm women have many other responsibilities.

While her tasks may vary depending on what her farm produces, in general the farm woman is most often responsible for: all bookkeeping (which is a job in itself), caring for certain livestock, gardening and canning, buying parts for machinery, and in the busy seasons, working alongside the man in the fields.

A recent article in the *Kansas City Star* reported that 69 percent of farming families rely on off-farm income to get by. Most of that income is earned by women. When she works off the farm, the farm woman makes only 44 cents for every dollar earned by rural men. And her jobs at home don't just magically disappear. The books still have to be kept, the livestock fed, the house cleaned.

Given these conditions, it's no wonder that 450 women showed up for a conference originally planned for 200.

During the movement for women's rights in the 1970s, participants had a slogan: "sisterhood is powerful." That sentiment is growing among farm women today. Commenting on the conference afterward, a farm leader from Missouri said to me, "There was a lot of emotion at the conference, but it was upbeat. There were a lot of new women there — but we all knew each other."

Ky. garment workers discuss right to abortion

BY JEANETTE TRACY

I work at a men's shirt factory in Louisville, Kentucky, that is organized by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. The shop employs about 500 people; 95 percent of us are women. Low wages, in-

UNION TALK

adequate benefits, and harsh working conditions make life difficult for workers in the shop, especially single working mothers.

The local chapter of the National Organization for Women, which I'm a member of, has been actively building the March 9 national demonstration in support of women's right to abortion. Socialist workers in my shop are helping to build the action in our plant. We know that the right to obtain an abortion, the right to decide if and when to have children, is a fundamental right for all women.

Abortion is not a topic that has been frequently discussed openly. You got the impression that people felt this was solely a personal question. I think some workers also felt that if you raised it, people would become immediately polarized around the issue. The ruling class ideological campaign against a woman's right to abortion — which has been hammered away at in the big-business-owned media and from the pulpits — had had an impact on women in our shop, undermining their confidence to speak out on this issue.

As a result, we weren't sure how coworkers would re-

spond when we brought the issue up and began building support for the demonstration. But we were pleasantly surprised.

One coworker told me she supported abortion rights but thought that "we are a real minority here in the shop." Just then another coworker came by, saw the leaflet on the demonstration, and said, "That's a good idea. Abortion should be legal." Ironically, when I went to the break room to make a phone call, there was the Yellow Pages open to the listings for abortion clinics.

Another coworker told us she has always supported a woman's right to abortion, and she is planning on going to the march in Washington.

Not all workers feel this way, of course. One woman told me that, if a woman gets pregnant, no matter how it happened or how young she is, she should have the baby.

The important thing we have learned is that abortion is an issue that can be discussed on the job with a wide range of coworkers, and there is a lot of support for abortion rights.

Women who back legal abortion are relieved to be able to discuss their views openly and to know that they are not the only ones who think that way. It gives all of us more confidence.

The fact that a national demonstration has been called is very important. Knowing that thousands of people across the country are speaking out, organizing, and fighting back against the reactionary notion that abortion is murder encourages everyone who supports a woman's right to abortion to speak up.

And we've gained more confidence in explaining why unions should get behind the fight for abortion rights.

Without the right to control whether or not to bear a child, women can't control our own lives. Without the

right to safe, legal abortion, women can never be equal to men.

The unions have a stake in the cause of women's equality, in fighting every form of discrimination that divides and weakens working people.

Far from being a "personal" issue that the unions shouldn't stick their noses into, the right to abortion is the most central political issue in the fight for women's rights today.

An interesting discussion also took place in my chapter of the Coalition of Labor Union Women.

CLUW has always had a strong proabortion rights position. But not everyone in my chapter knew that.

We were discussing whether to endorse the national march for abortion rights and a local building action called by NOW for January 18. One woman opposed abortion rights. Another supported abortion but thought CLUW probably didn't have a position because abortion is so "controversial."

But other women jumped into the discussion, explaining CLUW's support for abortion rights and why it was important for CLUW to participate in these actions and other abortion rights activities. The motion to endorse the march passed with only one abstention.

This discussion convinced me of two things. First, that CLUW can play an important role in educating the labor movement on the need for unions to champion a woman's right to abortion.

And second, there are opportunities today to involve the unions in the fight for abortion rights and in the March actions. The actions themselves, in turn, will have a big impact and will open doors for continued educational work in the labor movement on this basic question of women's equality.

LETTERS

UNITA

Three bills have recently been introduced in Congress to provide assistance to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA).

We are vehemently opposed to U.S. aid to UNITA because passage of any of the three bills will greatly aid the South African government, the principal sponsor of UNITA, to attain regional hegemony and to further entrench the system of apartheid.

The South Africans have long sought to overthrow the Angolan government so as to establish a

satellite buffer state. South Africa has been sponsoring UNITA since 1975 and on numerous occasions has used its own troops and air power to support the military exploits of the rebel group.

With a UNITA victory, Angola would no longer be a supporter of efforts to end South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia and eliminate the system of apartheid.

Proponents of the three bills, including the Reagan administration, have tried to justify U.S. assistance to UNITA as a means of combating Soviet-Cuban expansionism in the region. (Currently 25,000 Cuban troops are in Angola by invitation of the Angolan government to help counteract South African aggression in the region.)

However, they have cleverly excluded from their arguments the extent to which South Africa would gain from the removal of the current government in Angola.

It is critical that we express our opposition to HR 3472, HR 3609, and HR 3598 to our congressional representatives and the White House through letters, phone calls, and demonstrations.

Jim Stone
Support Committee of TransAfrica
San Diego, California

Farmers helping farmers

An item in the latest issue of the *North American Farmer* caught my eye, and I thought readers of the *Militant* would be interested.

While 15 Wisconsin farm families held a widely publicized Christmas vigil inside the state capitol building, another group traveled to Mississippi bringing food, clothing, and 600 Christmas gifts to Black farm families who are in even worse financial condition than the Wisconsin farmers.

Doug Harsh, president of the Wisconsin Farm Unity Alliance, is quoted as saying, "It's a matter of farmers helping farmers. We're all in the same boat."

Kathie Fitzgerald
Kansas City, Missouri

Teamsters series

I particularly enjoy rereading the series of books on the Teamsters by Farrell Dobbs at contract time. It is full of important and valuable lessons for today's union activists.

While rereading *Teamster Power*, I came across the name of the Independent Union of All Workers (IUAW) in Austin, Minnesota. This union established itself in a bitterly fought struggle

against Hormel.

The United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-9 strikers are following in the traditions of these original strikers. The IUAW reached out to organize other packinghouse workers in southern Minnesota and to establish relations with packinghouse workers in northern Iowa.

The IUAW collaborated with militant Teamsters Local 574 and others in figuring out how to best battle the bosses in Minnesota.

The Teamsters series should be read and reread often.
Ed Berger
Los Angeles, California

Losing arguments

I'm a loyal reader of the *Militant*. I'm 21 years old and consider myself political. I like to talk about Nicaragua, Libya, and South Africa to my fellow convicts here at Folsom State prison.

When we talk they seem to always win the argument, and that makes me highly upset.

I know that I am telling the truth about the U.S. government and its imperialist allies. When I read the *Militant* it always seems to say what I'm thinking and what I can't seem to put into words. So all I can do is show them the paper, but

that's not good enough because they can't give arguments to a newspaper. It's my job to protect my or our point of view.

So I've stopped talking about political subjects for now. I think it's time for me to hit the books. But that's a problem because I'm indigent, and I have no one out there on the street to help me.

So my revolutionary education is limited to the *Militant* and *Intercontinental Press*. Do you know if there is any place that I can write for revolutionary materials?

A prisoner
Represa, California

The *Militant* special prisoner fund makes it possible to send reduced-rate subscriptions to prisoners who can't pay for them. To help this important cause, send your contribution to: Militant Prisoner Subscription Fund, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014.

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.

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Haiti: dictatorship faces revolt



In response to growing protests such as this one in capital, Duvalier dictatorship announced martial law on January 31.

BY FRED FELDMAN

Opposition forces in Haiti have called for an eight-day general strike beginning February 12 as the dictatorship of Jean-Claude Duvalier seeks to hang on through bloody repression.

On January 31, President Duvalier — who was elected "President for Life" in a rigged referendum last year — proclaimed a state of siege.

A six-hour curfew was imposed in Cap-Haïtien (the second largest city) in an effort to stem protests there.

And Radio Soleil (operated by the Catholic church), Radio Lumière (a Baptist station), and Radio Cacique were shut down.

The state of siege declaration came after thousands of demonstrators protested in Gonaïves and other cities. A report in the January 31 *Miami Herald* described the crowd in Gonaïves "parading through the streets with coffins bearing the names of Duvalier and his wife, Michelle, and singing a traditional Haitian death march."

"Radio Lumière said every street in the town 90 miles north of Port-au-Prince was blocked with crowds burning tires and saying they would not retreat."

In response to the state of siege, the working people of Port-au-Prince poured into the streets. These were the first protests in the country's capital city since the current unrest began in November with the shooting of student protesters in Gonaïves.

At least 50 people were reported killed as Duvalier unleashed the murderous Volontaires for National Security — commonly known as the *Tontons Macoutes* (bogeymen). The Tontons Macoutes is a gang of thousands of thugs formed in 1958 by François Duvalier — the father of Jean-Claude, who ruled Haiti until his death in 1971. The Duvalier dynasty uses the Tontons both to terrorize the population and to counter the danger of a military coup.

Some of the victims were reportedly buried in a mass grave in a marsh near Titanyin described by human rights activist Gérard Gourgue as a "special cemetery for the indigent and people murdered by the police."

"They bring the bodies in pickup trucks," he said. "They throw them in pits, pour calcium on the bodies, and then cover them with a thin layer of soil."

Reporters who visited the marsh found it littered with human skulls.

But the brutal repression has not put a stop to protests, which continued February 1 in Cap-Haïtien, Gonaïves, and Les Cayes.

A march of 1,200 in the city of St. Marc February 2 carried a coffin bearing the slogan "Jean-Claude, your place is here."

As the upsurge gained steam, Washington took its distance from Duvalier. State Department spokesman Bernard Kalb announced January 31 that the U.S. government could not certify that Haiti was making progress in the field of human rights, a congressional requirement for approval of the administration's proposal to give \$56 million to the Duvalier regime. In the past, such aid has been given despite the Duvalier record of butchery.

Some government officials in Washington are beginning to lay the basis for possible U.S. military intervention.

Senator David Durenberger, head of the Senate Intelligence Committee, initiated the proposal in a letter to Richard McCormack, U.S. ambassador to the Organization of American States (OAS).

Durenberger urged "an immediate meeting of the permanent council of the OAS to consider the dispatch of an inter-American

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Stakes in abortion rights fight

BY PAT GROGAN

On March 9 and March 16, tens of thousands of supporters of women's equality will take to the streets in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles to defend the right of a woman to choose abortion.

A look at women's lives in the years before abortion was legalized shows why women are so determined to fight to defend this right.

In March 1969, 12 young women in New York City stepped before an audience of 300 people and spoke about their own abortions. By doing so, they were admitting they had violated the law.

It was one of the first times that women had publicly broken the silence on an issue that had been shrouded in guilt, fear, and shame.

This event heralded the beginning of a powerful movement in which women stepped forward to claim abortion as their fundamental right.

Women had poured into the work force in the decades following World War II. They had greater opportunities, education, and expectations than ever before. But at every turn they faced archaic laws that barred them from participating as equals in all aspects of society.

A powerful women's liberation movement developed in the late 1960s that challenged the second-class status of women.

One of the main targets of the newly emerged movement was the hated laws that made abortion a crime.

For the first time in history, technological advances made it possible for women to control childbearing. Contraception was widely available. And medical advances made abortion a safe, simple, 100 percent effective procedure to terminate an unwanted pregnancy.

Yet laws dating from the mid-19th century made abortion illegal, denying women the freedom these medical advances made possible.

When abortion was illegal

Women faced with an unwanted pregnancy had only two alternatives: illegal abortion or forced pregnancy and childbearing.

In 1966, 42 states had laws that made abortion a crime except when a doctor or hospital board decreed it was necessary to save the life of a woman. A few states permitted abortion in the case of serious, permanent bodily injuries.

No state law permitted abortion on de-

mand even in the case of rape.

Only 8,000 women each year qualified for legal abortions in this country. The well-off were the only ones who could afford to travel some place where they could get legal abortions.

Studies done by Planned Parenthood in 1957 and 1964 put the number of illegal abortions at 1,200,000 every year. The very lowest estimate anyone suggested was 200,000.

A 1967 Report of the President's Commission on Crime named illegal abortions as the third largest racket in the United States.

One of the major activities of the women's liberation movement was to bring the full scope and horror of illegal abortion into the light of day.

Women spoke of their rage and sense of helplessness at facing an unwanted pregnancy and being forced to bear a child. They spoke of unwanted marriages and an end to plans for study or work and other hopes.

Women who had children told of the pain of having to bear another child they couldn't afford to raise, emotionally or financially. They spoke of the demoralization they felt at losing control over their lives and the loss of a sense of self worth that accompanied it. They declared their right to terminate a pregnancy without having to justify it to anybody.

For young women in those days, no fear was greater than to find themselves pregnant and unwed.

Some were forced into "shotgun weddings." Others were sent away to homes for unwed mothers and forced to suffer the trauma of bearing and then giving up a child.

For many, it meant the end of any hope for education or being forced onto welfare. Some died trying to abort themselves.

'Home remedies'

To obtain an illegal abortion, it was often necessary to "find somebody who might know somebody" who would do the operation in some secret place.

Those who couldn't afford an illegal abortion told of paying a quack \$50 or \$75 to pierce them with knitting needles or inject them with harsh detergents. This would "start" the abortion so they could then go to a hospital emergency room where physicians would have to complete the abortions to save their lives. Many didn't make it.

And women spoke of inflicting these "home remedies" on themselves. The wire coat hanger, in fact, became the symbol of the movement for abortion rights.

No one really knows how many women died each year as a result of botched illegal abortions. Some say 1,000. Some say 5,000. Everyone agrees it was the leading cause of maternal death.

Working-class women — a disproportionate number of whom were Black, Latina, and other victims of racist discrimination — suffered the most.

The women's liberation movement also brought to light the widespread, racist practice of forced sterilization, which permanently ends a woman's ability to have children. Sterilization was often exacted by doctors as the price for illegal abortion for women who were welfare recipients.

A fight for women's freedom

The women's liberation movement fought the battle for abortion rights

Continued on Page 4

Phila: protest racism Feb. 15

BY ALISON DAVIS
AND HALKET ALLEN

PHILADELPHIA — The February 15 National March Against Racism will put a spotlight on the racist nature of the Philadelphia city government and its police force. "They eyes of the country are on Philadelphia. What we do here can deal a setback to racism everywhere. Enough is enough!" says the leaflet for the march.

In May the city bombed the home of members of the Black organization MOVE, killing 11 people. An entire neighborhood was destroyed when 61 homes burned in the ensuing fire.

The only adult survivor of the bombing of MOVE, Ramona Africa, was immediately arrested and is currently on trial facing frame-up charges of aggravated assault, reckless endangerment of another person, resisting arrest, riot, and conspiracy.

The February 15 demonstration will demand that city officials enforce the fair-housing laws and arrest and prosecute those carrying out racist and anti-Semitic violence.

The storefront office for the March Against Racism is continuing to attract

high school and college students, working people, and other residents of Philadelphia who call or come in for information on the action. Each Saturday more than 40 people have come in to the office for leafletting teams. This has now been expanded to daily teams organized at three regular times to leaflet and post up. It is difficult to go anywhere in the city without seeing information about the march. Transportation is being organized from more than 30 cities.

There has been leafletting at plant gates, garment shops, auto plants, rail stations, and refineries to publicize the demonstration.

Among the newest endorsers of the march are United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1357; the Black Caucus of the American Federation of Teachers; American Postal Workers Union, Philadelphia local; and Gary Kapanowski, president of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 1723.

For more information, contact the National Mobilization Against Racism office at 4206 Baltimore Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104. Telephone (215) 387-7522.