

## Congress should rescind aid to Nicaragua 'contras' now!



Militant/Fred Murphy

### Nicaragua sounds alarm on U.S. troop moves in Honduras

BY CINDY JAQUITH

MANAGUA, Nicaragua, Dec. 4 — Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega reported last night that U.S. troops in Honduras had moved within nine miles of the Nicaraguan border. They are supplying heavy weaponry to CIA-organized mercenaries attempting to penetrate Nicaraguan territory, he said.

For the past four days, Sandinista soldiers have been battling some 1,000 to 1,500 mercenaries trying to cross into Nicaragua to carry out terrorism and sabotage. The mercenaries are concentrated in the El Paraíso area of southwestern Honduras.

On November 30 an artillery unit of the 116th Brigade of the Florida National Guard began unannounced "exercises" with Honduran troops. They have moved within nine miles of Nicaragua's border and 24 miles from the area where Sandinista soldiers are battling the mercenaries, Ortega said.

On December 3 the mercenaries began using 81- and 85-millimeter artillery, "obviously brought in by the U.S. troops," Ortega said.

Pointing out that the National Guard is violating the law of the United States — which bars U.S. personnel from operating within 20 miles of Nicaragua's borders — Ortega warned that the situation was "genuinely grave. It could turn into a direct confrontation with U.S. troops."

The Sandinistas warn that right in the midst of the revelations of secret White House funding for the mercenaries attacking Nicaragua, the U.S. government is escalating its aggression. It is attempting in particular to provoke military conflicts between Nicaragua and the neighboring countries of Costa Rica and Honduras.

The revelations are receiving extensive media coverage here.

In a November 27 article, *Barricada* said the secret White House funding demonstrates the clear determination of the U.S. administration to act outside both its

own and international laws in order to try to overthrow the Sandinista People's Revolution.

"The [Reagan] administration is not trying to 'exert pressure' on the Sandinistas," *Barricada* stressed, "but is rather seeking to destroy the Sandinista revolution."

The revelations are helping expose two key lies the Reagan administration has used to justify aid to the contras, said *Barricada*. One is the lie that the Sandinistas are "terrorists." The exposure of top White House officials as the suppliers of the weapons to murder Nicaraguan civilians unmasks "the real terrorist," said *Barricada*. Washington is "using terrorist means to attack a people whose only crime

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### Philippine government, rebels sign 60-day cease-fire pact

BY FRED FELDMAN

The government of Philippine President Corazon Aquino agreed November 27 to a 60-day cease-fire with the New People's Army (NPA). It was the first time the government had agreed to a cease-fire in its 17-year war against the peasant-based guerrilla movement.

Negotiators for the National Democratic Front (NDF), a broad coalition that represented the NPA in the negotiations, had called for a 100-day cease-fire. The government had attempted to limit the cease-fire to only 30 days.

As the cease-fire agreement, which is scheduled to take effect on December 10, was being announced, the Philippine armed forces were continuing attacks on alleged NPA units. Some clashes were reported occurring within 25 miles of Manila.

The cease-fire is scheduled to continue

### Support antiwar protests!

Emergency protests demanding "U.S. hands off Nicaragua!" and that Congress rescind aid to the *contras* are urgently needed. That is the necessary response to the revelation that the White House has secretly transferred millions of dollars from arms sales to Iran to the mercenary bands trying to overthrow the Nicaraguan government. The Pledge of Resistance, a national antiwar group, backed by a wide range of other organizations, has called for a December 13 protest in Florida at the

### EDITORIAL

U.S. Air Force base where the contras are being trained, with support actions in local areas. These demonstrations deserve the support of all those who oppose this dirty war.

Now is also the time for the broad range of individuals and organizations that have been discussing the need for national antiwar demonstrations on April 24 and 25 to issue a public call for the actions and begin building them.

The people of the United States don't have to sit back and be spectators. We don't have to simply watch the fancy footwork of capitalist politicians trying to cut their losses as more and more facts about their secret activities in Nicaragua come to light. We can act. And by acting, we can affect what happens.

Most working people oppose Washington's backing for the contras, and are angry about being lied to by the government. Protests will put a spotlight on the U.S.-organized aggression against Nicaragua as the central issue in the Washington scandal. This can increase the political price the government has to pay for carrying out its expanding war in Central America.

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### U.S.-run war key issue in arms deal

BY ERNEST HARSCH

According to government officials and the mass media, it is known as the "Iran affair" or the "Iran arms scandal."

But more than anything else, the current furor in Washington centers on U.S. policy toward Nicaragua. It lifts up another corner of the cloak of secrecy that the Reagan administration has sought to throw over Washington's dirty war against the Nicaraguan people.

However much the media pundits and congressional sleuths seek to focus on other aspects of the secret arms deal, it is the Nicaragua connection that gives these revelations their explosiveness.

"The present uproar worries us very much," declared Danilo Lacayo, a leader of the Nicaraguan *contras* (mercenaries).

Rep. Les Aspin, a Democrat who heads the House Armed Services Committee and supports U.S. aid to the contras, agreed, stating that the new revelations were bound to "damage the prospects for continued aid."

"It is unfortunate because the issues should be separable," Aspin complained. "The vote should be on whether it is right or not right to aid the contras, not on the basis of whether [Reagan adviser] Ollie North was diverting money from Iran" to fund the contras.

But the two things cannot be separated. For more than five years, the U.S.-backed contra war has been at the center of Washington's foreign policy. Hundreds of millions of dollars in overt and covert U.S. aid have been funneled to the mercenaries, and thousands of lives have been lost on both sides in the fighting.

This is a war that has had bipartisan support. The \$100 million in open aid to the contras, approved by Congress this year, was passed by a majority that included both Democrats and Republicans.

Although the Reagan administration has made little secret of its hostile stance toward Nicaragua's Sandinista government, the details and extent of direct U.S. involvement in the contra war have been persistently covered over with lies and subterfuge. Both the White House and those assigned to "investigate" the current revelations would like to keep it that way.

### Two incidents connected

In early October, three young Nicaraguan soldiers shot down a U.S. plane ferrying supplies to the contras, capturing the sole survivor on board, Eugene Hasenfus.

Through his trial in Managua and other sources, important details came to light on the extent of CIA involvement in directing and operating an extensive contra air supply network.

Then on October 31, a Lebanese magazine, *Al Shira'a*, broke the story of former National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane's secret visit to Iran in May. This quickly escalated into another embarrassing incident for the White House with the revelation that Washington had secretly sold arms to Iran since at least late 1985.

The Nicaragua and Iran exposés at first appeared to be separate. But the links soon began to emerge.

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# Behind successful subscription effort in Detroit

BY MALIK MIAH

DETROIT — Andrew Pulley works for the General Motors corporation, the largest auto manufacturer in the world. He's also a member of the United Auto Workers (UAW) union and was

down with Pulley over lunch to discuss the subscription campaign, particularly the effort here to sell papers to workers at plant gates, as well as current sales projections.

"The drive was a big victory,"

subscriptions — 106 percent.

"Seventy-eight subscriptions were bought by members of the UAW," Pulley continued, including 23 of his coworkers. "A highlight of the campaign was the number of workers who bought the *Militant* on the job." Most of these subscriptions to the *Militant* and *PM* were sold by supporters of the publications at three auto assembly plants, the General Dynamics tank plant, and a UAW-organized warehouse.

Another feature of the campaign here was the spread of the sales. "Our sales were balanced," Pulley explained, "with 65 to working people in community sales, 58 to students, and 37 to people attending political rallies,

demonstrations, and meetings."

"We also sold 18 out of the Pathfinder Press bookstore," he continued. "Six came in the mail from a campaign leaflet, and one was sold at a plant gate. Most of the *PM* subscriptions were sold door-to-door in the Mexican community."

I asked about the plant-gate sales.

"This was not consistent," Pulley began. "We only sold regularly at the Rouge and Cadillac plants." Rouge is the giant Ford Motors company complex in River Rouge, a suburb of Detroit.

"Our biggest problem was simply not doing it. All of our energy was focused on reaching the subscription goal. It's all we could

concentrate on," Pulley said.

"A goal we have now is to start up more plant-gate sales — not just to workers at auto assembly plants but to workers at other factories."

Pulley pointed to one advance made in plant-gate sales during the campaign: establishing a sale — although irregularly — at the Thorn Apple Valley meat-packing plant.

Sales organizers here haven't yet thought out their renewal effort. But, Pulley stated, the success of the subscription drive makes everyone more confident of building up a solid, long-term *Militant* and *PM* subscription base, as well as continuing to sell more papers in the coming weeks and months.

## SELLING OUR PRESS AT THE PLANT GATE

the central organizer of the successful fall *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* subscription campaign here.

After speaking at a rally and educational weekend sponsored by the socialist publications, I sat

Pulley began, "because we sold many more papers than we thought possible only a few months ago."

Salespeople here surpassed both their *Militant* and *PM* goals, selling 272 *Militant* and 34 *PM*

# Team introduced hundreds to 'Militant' in Hawaii

BY GREG ROSENBERG

For a three-week period in November, the *Militant* and Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial* sent a sales team to the Hawaiian islands.

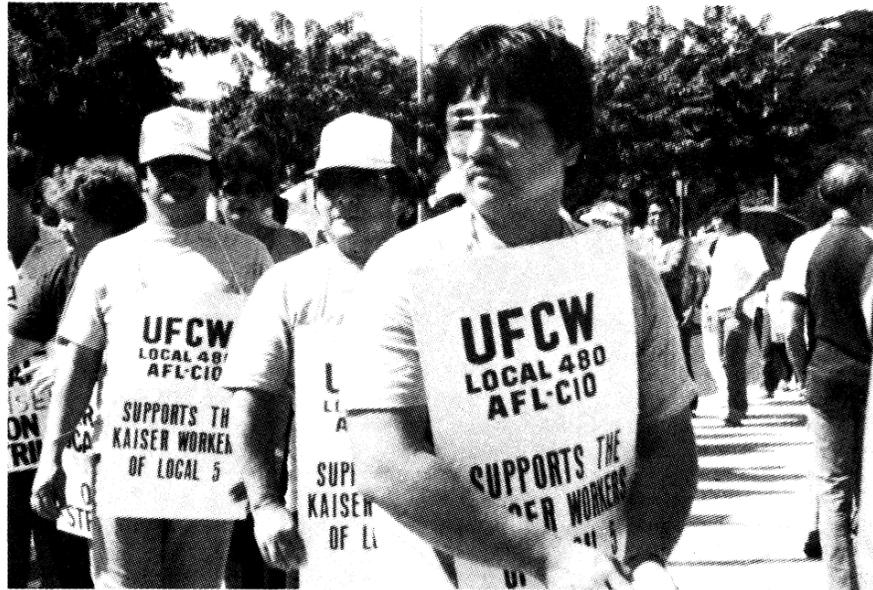
We sold 116 subscriptions to workers and students — 113 to the *Militant* and three to *PM*. We also sold some 500 single copies of the *Militant* and *PM*, \$275 worth of Pathfinder Press literature, and 100 copies of Fred Halstead's pamphlet *The 1985-86 Hormel Meat-Packers Strike in Austin, Minnesota*.

Hawaii was grabbed by U.S. businessmen, backed by the U.S. military, in the 1890s. For many years it has been dominated by the "Big Five" — a group of sugar and pineapple companies. These giant firms own vast tracts of land and employ thousands of workers on the islands. Many of these workers are organized by the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU), which has some 23,000 members on the islands.

The team sold at two ILWU-organized sugar mills and to farm workers coming in from pineapple fields owned by Dole and Del Monte. Four *Militants* and four pamphlets on the Hormel meat-packers' strike were sold to mostly Filipino pineapple field workers.

Team members spoke to two union gatherings. At the Waialua sugar mill, Mike Downs, an ILWU member from Los Angeles, was invited to speak to a meeting held on the front lawn of the mill. He spoke about building solidarity with meat-packers in their fight against the Hormel company in Minnesota and about the U.S. mercenary war against Nicaragua.

Marie Cobbs, a member of the International Association of Machinists in Northern California, spoke to a rally for 850 striking Kaiser health-care workers. The rally and spirited picket of 200 was attended by unionists from the Teamsters, United Food and Commercial Workers,



Picket in Hawaii of striking Kaiser health-care workers and their supporters. *Militant* team members joined picket line and sold subscriptions to participants.

and Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 5, which organizes the Kaiser strikers.

Forty people, including several unionists, demonstrated at the Philippine consulate in Honolulu to demand that the murderers of Philippine union leader Rolando Olalia be brought to justice. Team members joined in, selling three subscriptions, as well as single copies.

YSA

Interest in the Young Socialist Alliance ran high on the three college campuses we visited. Some 200 copies of the *Militant* were sold to students, along with nearly 50 subscriptions. The YSA sponsored two forums, including slideshows, on Nicaragua and South Africa that drew more than

50 people.

At the University of Hawaii in Honolulu, the YSA meeting was chaired by Antonio Rosa, an anti-apartheid activist who fasted for 25 days to protest university investments in companies doing business in South Africa. Several anti-apartheid activists attended the meeting, and a team member was invited to address the Students for Divestment forum the following night.

At the University of Hawaii Hilo campus on Hawaii (the biggest island in the Hawaiian chain), many students thanked us for displaying literature and discussing opposition to the U.S. government's war against Nicaragua. The student government helped secure a literature table, and a sociology class jointly sponsored a YSA

forum titled "Boycott South Africa, not Nicaragua." Several students bought copies of the handbook "Organizing the YSA."

The *Militant* got a good response in Hawaiian, Samoan, and Filipino communities, particularly on the island of Oahu. The team sold subscriptions and singles in Waipahu, Waimanalo, Waialua, and Waianae. In Papakolea, a federal reservation for Hawaiians that is similar to mainland Native American reservations, we sold five subscriptions.

We ran into several GI's, and Nicaragua was a big topic of discussion among them.

Vast areas of Hawaiian land are owned by the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard. Some 45,000 GI's and their families are stationed in Hawaii, which is the nerve center for U.S. military operations in and domination of the Pacific.

Team members, who are also sponsors of the Political Rights Defense Fund (PRDF), signed up anti-apartheid activists, unionists, and others as sponsors of the PRDF. Some 20 copies of the federal court's decision against government harassment and disruption of the Socialist Workers Party and YSA were distributed. We received \$20 in donations to the PRDF.

The team discovered that subscriptions to the *Militant* and *PM* can be sold anywhere, at any time. Subscriptions sold "on the run" included a high school student on the plane to Honolulu, hotel workers where we stayed, restaurant workers where we ate, a carpet layer who we asked for directions, people we met in entertainment spots, and, just as we were returning our rental car before we boarded our plane home, to a Teamster at the rental car company.

\* \* \*

The final sales totals for the Puerto Rico team are: 201 *Perspectiva Mundial* and two *Militant* subscriptions.

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The *Militant* is written in the interests of workers and farmers. Every week it tells the truth about the war Washington and the employers are waging against working people at home and abroad. It provides firsthand coverage of important struggles in other countries, such as Haiti, the Philippines, and Nicaragua. Regular on-the-scene reports come from its Nicaragua Bureau.

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# Boston school busing program under attack

## School committee seeks court order declaring desegregation completed

BY JON HILLSON

BOSTON — More than 12 years after having been found guilty of illegally and unconstitutionally segregating public schools here, the Boston School Committee has asked a federal appeals court to declare the system "desegregated."

The brief, filed November 14, asks the court to find that the committee has fully complied with the sweeping school desegregation orders issued by Federal District Judge Arthur Garrity in 1974.

This action came just days after the U.S. Supreme Court, without comment, refused to hear appeals on behalf of the Norfolk, Virginia, Black community protesting the city of Norfolk's overturn of busing to achieve desegregation.

Racist foes of school busing and desegregation in Norfolk claimed that court orders had been met, the original "wrongdoing" that had segregated the schools had been eliminated, and the local school committee was free to proceed with an educational plan based on "choice" and "neighborhood schools."

This contention was upheld by a U.S. appeals court. With busing to maintain Black access to previously all-white,

segregated schools eliminated, resegregation has begun.

The Boston media has closely followed developments in Norfolk.

The attorney for Boston's Black plaintiffs in the school suit, Thomas Atkins, blasted the school committee claim that it had complied with the federal court's orders here. "The committee," he stated, "has never organized itself to achieve compliance with all [the desegregation] orders."

November 14 was the final day to submit appeals to Garrity of his September 1985 "final orders" on Boston school desegregation.

Garrity has virtually returned all control of the system to the school committee, which he once had stripped of power because of its discriminatory and unconstitutional functioning and refusal to implement his orders. This year, Garrity retired from the federal bench, but retains formal jurisdiction over the school case.

Busing in Boston and school desegregation was at the center of Black community battles for equality from the 1960s to the mid-1970s. Defense of the 1974 Garrity court order mobilized thousands of Blacks,



Militant/Don Gurewitz

A 1974 demonstration in Boston that helped win school desegregation victory

other working people, and youths to defeat racist mobs and the local Democratic Party politicians who organized and inspired them. This mobilization secured school desegregation in the tumultuous period between 1974 and 1976.

For the last several years, leadership to

overturn desegregation has come from the liberal *Boston Globe*.

The attitude of many former advocates of mandatory busing to break through neighborhood and residential segregation and ensure Blacks equal access to all schools is now, according to the *Globe*, shifting to "a focus on the quality of education in the classroom" and away from "mixing races by formula."

"Quality education" has long been a code word for sidestepping "equality in education." Real "quality" has not been diminished by desegregation, but by massive assaults on and funding cuts in public education. These have been carried out and legislated by the same Democrats and Republicans who oppose the use of student-assignment quotas needed to ensure that desegregation really takes place. They are hell-bent against the Black community getting into better, all-white schools that receive more tax dollars and better services than predominantly Black and Latino schools.

The Reagan administration has pushed hard to overturn court-ordered desegregation. It helped spur efforts in Norfolk to push back Black rights.

William Bradford Reynolds, U.S. assistant attorney general in charge of the "civil rights" division of the Justice Department, told the *Globe* November 24 that a favorable appeals court ruling on the Boston School Committee request would mean the committee "can comfortably read into [the] Norfolk [decision] that they can move to alternatives" to busing.

## U.S. gov't harasses travelers to Nicaragua

BY HARRY RING

The U.S. Customs Service is continuing to harass people traveling to Nicaragua.

A new kind of harassment in recent months is to give travelers a form to fill out as they prepare to board their flight to Managua. The form purportedly relates to the trade embargo imposed against Nicaragua by Reagan in 1985.

Unless asked specifically, Customs agents do not tell people that they are not legally required to fill out the form. The impression is given that failure to fill out the form will lead to further hassles that could mean missing your flight.

When the Center for Constitutional Rights complained about the use of this form, Customs replied in a letter that the forms were to be filled out "on a voluntary basis." The purpose, the agency wrote, was to gather "statistical information on those passengers traveling to Nicaragua."

In an interview, Margaret Ratner, an attorney for the center, explained that a number of the questions on the form were patently illegal.

It includes such questions as: "Why are you traveling to Nicaragua?" "Where will you stay while in Nicaragua?" and "Have you made previous trips to Nicaragua? How many?"

Customs does have the legal authority to determine if any goods are being taken to Nicaragua that do not conform to embargo regulations. This includes the authority to check the baggage of those departing for Nicaragua.

Travelers to Nicaragua are not under any legal obligation to fill out the Customs form, however, or to answer any other questions — written or oral — by Customs agents.

In addition to intimidation, the form is obviously designed as a means of collecting political information that is none of the government's business.

In some cases, people have had items taken away from them that they had a legal right to bring to Nicaragua. For instance, one traveler carrying with him a donation of water-testing equipment — a permissible thing — had it confiscated by a man who asserted that it was "obviously electronic equipment."

This harassment directly violates policies that the U.S. Customs Service publicly agreed to abide by recently. These new policy guidelines resulted from two court suits filed by the Center for Constitutional Rights.

One was on behalf of Edward Haase, a Kansas City free-lance journalist. On his return from Nicaragua, he was detained by Customs and turned over to an FBI agent, who took his address book, diary, manuscripts of two articles, and a mailing list of

Nicaragua solidarity groups. Haase saw the agent make copies of the material before returning it.

The second suit brought by the center was on behalf of a dozen individuals and five organizations in the Los Angeles area who had suffered similar victimization on returning from Nicaragua.

This spring, with the suit under way, Customs decided to issue two directives, apparently intending to avoid an injunction. The directives instructed its agents not to grill returning visitors about political questions and to restrict their search of baggage to legal limits traditional at points of entry.

The Customs Service also said it would erase from its computers the names it had entered of people returning and a description of the literature they were carrying.

Among other things, some of those who had their names entered on the computer found that their tax returns were being audited by the Internal Revenue Service. Both the IRS and Customs are branches of the Treasury Department.

As a result of the protests and court ac-

tions, there has been a decline in the number of reported cases of people being harassed on returning from Nicaragua. Now, there is the emerging pattern of harassment on departure, in the guise of enforcing the trade embargo.

While travel to Nicaragua remains totally legal, the obvious aim is to discourage visitors from going there and seeing firsthand what the Nicaraguan revolution really is, and what the terrible toll of Washington's dirty *contra* war is.

A related purpose is to use illegally acquired information to try to intimidate and victimize individuals and organizations standing in solidarity with Nicaragua and in opposition to U.S. aggression against it.

In cooperation with the National Lawyers Guild, the Center for Constitutional Rights maintains a Movement Support Network, whose efforts include countering such illegal government activity.

Those experiencing harassment or victimization on traveling to or from Nicaragua — or seeking legal advice on such travel — can contact the network by phoning (212) 614-6422.

## Nicaragua teacher sees 'two worlds' in U.S.

BY JON HILLSON

BOSTON — "I had thought that the United States was a place where there was everything," Estela Rocha told the *Militant* on the eve of her return to her homeland, Nicaragua.

She had just completed a grueling two-month speaking tour of the East and Midwest, addressing dozens of meetings in 20 U.S. cities. The project was initiated by the New Institute of Central America (NICA), a Spanish-language teaching and solidarity project in Estelí, Nicaragua.

Rocha — a 30-year-old high school teacher and trade unionist, a veteran of the war against the Somoza tyranny, and a participant in the revolution's literacy crusade — teaches Spanish at the NICA school.

Rocha said that her experiences in the United States, meeting with U.S. farmers, trade unionists, Blacks and Latinos, as well as students and antiwar activists, made her views go through a "profound change."

From an image of U.S. society as a "place where anything is possible, where there's everything to buy and much abundance," an image widely held among many Nicaraguans, Rocha saw "abandoned homes and closed steel factories in Pittsburgh."

Amidst the reality of impressive "highways, buildings, and bridges," she stated, "there were food lines, unemployment

lines, workers without jobs."

Rocha spoke with such workers from the steel industry in Pittsburgh. She shared meals with unorganized rail car manufacturers in Vermont and textile workers from Lawrence, Massachusetts.

"I have learned that the workers here are exploited," Rocha said. "I have seen it with my own eyes. I have seen the reality that

there are really *two* worlds in the United States.

"Sincerely," Rocha explained, "before I came here, I had no confidence the American people could stop the war.

"But now, I have met a conscious minority that I have confidence may one day be the majority, and can stop that war," she concluded.

## Meeting to celebrate Mandela writings

SAN FRANCISCO — U.S. Congressman Ronald Dellums, Berkeley Mayor Eugene "Gus" Newport, and several members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors have joined a wide range of labor, religious, and student figures as sponsors of a meeting here in tribute to African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela. The meeting, which will celebrate the publication in the United States of Mandela's speeches and writings, will take place December 13.

The featured speaker will be Neo Mnumzana, chief delegate to the United Nations for the ANC. Curtis McClain, secretary-treasurer of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU), will also speak.

Among the labor sponsors of the meet-

ing are the secretary-treasurer and president of the San Francisco Central Labor Council; international officers of the ILWU, the United Farm Workers, and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; and presidents of more than a dozen local unions.

The meeting was initiated by Pathfinder bookstores in Oakland, San Francisco, and San Jose.

Earlier this year, Pathfinder Press released *Nelson Mandela: The Struggle Is My Life* and the Spanish-language *Habla Nelson Mandela*.

The meeting will be held at the headquarters of ILWU Local 34, 4 Berry St. (at Embarcadero) at 7:00 p.m. For more information, call (415) 282-6255.

# North: 'National hero' or terrorist?

BY FRED FELDMAN

President Reagan has proclaimed Lt. Col. Oliver North "a national hero." "He has a fine record," the president told *Time* magazine in an interview published November 30.

This statement came five days after Reagan fired his "hero" as deputy director for political-military affairs of the National Security Council. The president and other White House officials claimed that North alone was responsible for diverting money from U.S. arms sales to Iran to the *contra* terrorists who are attacking Nicaragua.

Why does Reagan, then, continue to heap praise on this man?

The fact is that North's activities were not out of tune with the president's foreign policies. To the contrary, North was part of implementing them.

And Reagan's claim that he and other administration officials didn't know anything about North's activities are not credible. North — who had an office in the White House basement — regularly briefed Reagan on fund-raising and other activities in support of the *contras*.

As Reagan told *Time*, North was "involved in all our operations."

The Aug. 11, 1985, *Washington Post* reported, for example, that "officials said North was the 'nerve center' for planning the 1983 U.S. invasion of Grenada, one of very few people who knew everything going on."

North has also tried his hand at air piracy — engineering the October 1985 U.S. gov-



U.S. troops in Grenada. North was 'nerve center' for invasion planning.

ernment seizure of an Egyptian plane carrying Palestinians accused of having hijacked the *Achille Lauro* cruise ship.

## Often in disguise

North's tasks, according to the November 26 *Wall Street Journal*, included matters concerning hostages in Lebanon and helping "oversee covert aid to anti-communist rebels in Afghanistan."

"North made a number of trips to Europe and the Middle East, often in disguise," the *Journal* reported.

He played a part in Washington's aid to the British government during the 1982 war with Argentina. In that conflict, the British rulers regained control of Argentina's Malvinas Islands after the Argentine government decided to recover them. The islands had long been a British colony.

But North's primary assignment has been Washington's *contra* war against the Nicaraguan revolution.

In August 1985 it was revealed that North was meeting regularly with *contra* leaders Adolfo Calero and Arturo Cruz. Administration media spokesperson Larry Speakes and then national security adviser Robert McFarlane urged reporters not to make North's name public. McFarlane insisted that all North's actions had full authorization. "He's not a rogue elephant," McFarlane said.

"He traveled often to Honduras," the Nov. 30, 1986, *Washington Post* wrote of North, "and talked regularly — sometimes several times a day — with one of [the *contra*] leaders, Adolfo Calero."

North was linked to the CIA arms airlift from El Salvador to the *contras* that resulted in the capture by Nicaraguan troops of mercenary Eugene Hasenfus in October.

North received phone calls from the house in San Salvador used by participants in the airlift.

## Directed terrorism

He also worked in close coordination with such allegedly retired U.S. military commanders as Air Force Maj. Gen. Richard Secord, Gen. John Singlaub, and Brig. Gen. Harry Aderholt. They have fronted for U.S. government efforts to fund, arm, and provide U.S. personnel for the mercenary forces.

North's involvement went far beyond funding the *contras*. The Aug. 8, 1985, *New York Times* cited a "senior administration official" who described North as providing "advice and direction" for *contra* military operations. "He cited as an example an attack early last month on the *Enrique Campbell Express* ferryboat that

# Contra war key issue in arms deal

## Continued from front page

It became known that Oliver North of the National Security Council — already exposed as a key figure in the *contra* supply network — had been one of those traveling with McFarlane to Tehran.

In anticipation of yet further damaging revelations, the Reagan administration itself announced November 25 that between \$10 million and \$30 million in profits from the arms sales to Iran had been siphoned off for the *contras*, beginning in early 1986. This amount was said to have been routed through secret Swiss bank accounts.

This was done at a time when Congress had explicitly barred any U.S. aid to the *contras*, and was thus illegal.

Attorney General Edwin Meese claimed that the "only persons in the United States government that knew precisely about this — the only person — was Lieutenant Colonel North." He maintained that Reagan knew nothing about it until Meese told him the day before. However, Meese continued, national security adviser John Poindexter and his predecessor, Robert McFarlane, "knew that something of this nature was occurring."

North was dismissed, and Poindexter's resignation was accepted.

On December 1, Reagan himself denied "flat out" that he had any knowledge whatsoever of the diversion of funds to the *contras*.

## Disbelief and new revelations

But the White House's explanation was not very credible. Hardly anyone believed that a lieutenant colonel, operating out of an office in the basement of the White House, could single-handedly set up such a complex and extensive operation without the knowledge and approval of officials higher up in the administration.

An opinion poll conducted by the *New York Times* and CBS News found that a majority of those asked thought Reagan himself knew about the fund diversion.

Further evidence has emerged pointing to top-level involvement in the affair:

- According to Israeli officials, Israel served as an intermediary in the arms sales to Iran, at Washington's request. They also maintain that the proceeds from the arms sales went straight into Swiss bank accounts set up by U.S. officials. This contradicts the Reagan administration's version, which claims that it was Israeli middlemen who diverted the funds.

- CIA Director William Casey has denied knowledge of the fund transfers, but there are numerous signs of direct CIA involvement. Two CIA-run airlines flew the arms to Iran. One of them, Southern Air Transport, was the same airline involved in the air drops to the Nicaraguan *contras*. Casey himself had earlier admitted that the Swiss bank accounts used in the arms sales had been set up by the CIA.

- The fund transfers to the *contras* may have begun before this year. The November 28 *Washington Post* reported, "Knowledgeable sources have said that in 1984, when Congress refused to provide aid to the *contras*, Casey was involved in overtures to third countries, including Israel, to explore whether they could secretly supply assistance to the *contras*."

travels between El Rama and Bluefields in southeastern Nicaragua."

In this operation, *contras* killed four Sandinista soldiers, kidnapped eight people, and robbed everyone on board.

Thousands of Nicaraguans have been murdered, kidnapped, tortured, and raped by *contra* terrorists operating under the "advice and direction" of the National Security Council and other U.S. government agencies.

This "national hero" moved into a commanding role in Washington's *contra* war after Congress barred government appropriations for the *contras* in 1984. "Until then," the Aug. 8, 1985, *Times* reported, "the CIA had managed almost every aspect of their activities."

"But when left to their own devices, the rebels 'couldn't manage themselves very well,' a senior official said." So the Na-

tional Security Council took over the war.

North was linked to the figures who produced the 1984 CIA handbook calling on the *contras* to assassinate key Sandinistas.

Following the scandal that developed when the handbook became public, the Nov. 30, 1986, *Washington Post* reported, "North helped arrange a job on the NSC staff for Vincent Cannistraro, the CIA officer who had run the agency's task force on the *contras*. And he helped find a job for the former army officer who had written the assassination manual."

North's soft spot for the CIA's assassination experts goes way back. According to the *Post*, "he apparently was part of the CIA-run covert war in Indochina." The best known of these CIA operations was the Phoenix program. Its operatives assassinated 20,000 Vietnamese suspected of opposing U.S. domination and occupation of their country.

small circle of advisers formulate policy without regard to popular sentiment, the laws of the country, or even the knowledge of Congress.

## Recipe for a cover-up

Hoping to allay the public furor, Reagan has promised a "full" investigation.

At first, the main responsibility for the investigation was to have rested with Reagan's own attorney general, Edwin Meese. But it was Meese who had proclaimed the questionable legality of the arms sales to Iran. And according to officials in Miami, it was Meese's Justice Department that intervened there earlier this year to obstruct an investigation of an ostensibly private *contra* supply network.

To many people, this was a recipe for a cover-up. And it was so obvious as to be ineffective.

Concerned that an overly blatant cover-up would only escalate the furor, many congresspeople and newspaper publishers called for the naming of a special prosecutor. Reagan, in a December 2 announcement, agreed to do so.

There have also been calls for the convening of a special session of Congress (which is now in recess) to conduct hearings on the arms sales and diversion of funds.

The aim of such congressional proposals is not to get out the full truth or to halt the disbursement of the legally sanctioned aid to the *contras*. A bipartisan majority in both houses voted for that aid and agrees with the White House's general goal of seeking to overturn the Nicaraguan revolution.

## 'We are your friends'

What these congressional critics want is a more effective cover-up. They want the Reagan administration to cut its losses before its credibility is undermined even more. "Before it is over, there are others who will have to go," declared Rep. William Broomfield, the ranking Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Many Democratic Party congresspeople, liberal and conservative alike, have proclaimed the goal of saving the presidency from further disgrace. "We must, all of us, help the president restore his credibility in foreign affairs," declared Sen. Sam Nunn.

On behalf of the Democratic Party, Sen. Daniel Moynihan pleaded with Reagan in a November 29 radio address, "This nation does not want and does not need another destroyed presidency. And so I plead, Mr. President, clean house, out with all the facts, out with all the malefactors. Come to the Hill and talk, elected official to elected official. We are your friends."

In the eyes of Moynihan and his colleagues, the biggest crime involved in the fund transfers was the administration's failure to consult with Congress.

But the crime underlying this whole affair is the ongoing, day-to-day war against the people of Nicaragua.

To the Nicaraguans, it matters very little whether the *contras'* bullets and bombs have been paid for in accordance with U.S. law or illegally through secret Swiss bank accounts. They simply want Washington's terrorist war stopped.

# Protests demand: 'Stop contra aid, training, lies'

BY MARGARET JAYKO

Antiwar activists around the country are responding to the exposé of the White House's illegal transfer of funds to the *contras* with demonstrations, picket lines, and press statements opposing Washington's support for the terrorists waging war against Nicaragua.

On December 2, several organizations met in Washington, D.C., and voted to back protests called for December 13 by the Pledge of Resistance. The Pledge is organizing a demonstration in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, at the main gate to the Eglin Air Force base there. The base is right next to Hurlburt Field, where the CIA is training 70 *contras*.

There will be local actions across the country on that same day in solidarity with the demonstration in Florida. The protests will demand: stop contra training; stop contra aid; stop the lies.

The Florida action begins at noon on Saturday. It will include a silent vigil, a rally, and nonviolent civil disobedience. On Friday and Saturday, door-to-door leafletting will be organized in communities around the base.

Among the groups supporting the December 13 demonstrations are: Committee for a SANE Nuclear Policy, Committee In Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), Mobilization for Survival, Nicaragua Network, Veterans Fast for Life, Washington Peace Center, War Resisters League, Witness for Peace, and Women Strike for Peace, as well as local peace groups in Florida.

The Des Moines, Iowa, chapter of the Pledge of Resistance organized a protest on November 28, just a few days after the news of the illegal funding of the *contras* broke.

The Committee for a SANE Nuclear Policy held a picket line at the White House at noon on December 3 that attracted 75 people. They intend to hold such protests every Wednesday. The action focused on opposition to contra aid. "U.S.A., CIA, out of Nicaragua!" was a popular chant.

The Washington Area Coalition to Stop the U.S. War on Nicaragua is planning a White House picket on Thursday, December 11.

The Nicaragua Network issued a statement on November 26, the day after the White House admitted it had funneled money to the *contras* from the sale of weapons to Iran. The Network encouraged local committees to release similar statements.

"This scandal is the inevitable consequence of the policy of waging an illegal and immoral war against Nicaragua despite

## Nicaraguan 'contras' being trained at air base in Florida

U.S. officials have admitted that the first group of Nicaraguan *contras* to be trained in the United States is stationed at Hurlburt Field on the Florida panhandle. Hurlburt is five miles west of Fort Walton Beach and adjacent to the huge Eglin Air Force Base.

According to Adolfo Calero, head of the largest contra group, 70 *contras* are halfway through a six-week training course being supervised by the CIA. Of the \$100 million in aid to the *contras* voted by Congress, \$70 million can be used for training and supplies.

Eglin Air Force Base, which is two-thirds the size of Rhode Island and 1,000 air miles from Honduras, has a history of secret training operations. The unsuccessful 1980 raid approved by President James Carter, purportedly to rescue U.S. diplomatic personnel from the U.S. embassy in Iran, was rehearsed there.

Pentagon officials say different groups of *contras* may be trained at more than one camp in the United States.

the overwhelming opposition of the people of the United States," said the statement.

"It comes on the heels of the revelations of other illegal and unconstitutional acts: the use of American planes, personnel, and money to drop weapons to the *contras* in Nicaragua and the secret military training of the brutal contra leadership on American soil," the Network stated.

For more information about the demonstrations on December 13, contact the Pledge of Resistance office in Washington, D.C., at (202) 328-4040.

## Nicaragua warns of U.S. troop moves

Continued from front page

has been to choose the road of self-determination and sovereignty."

The mounting evidence also exposes the lie that the contra aggression is a "civil war," supposedly fueled by deep discontent with Sandinista policies, said *Barricada*. It confirms what the Sandinistas have said for years: that the war is a mercenary operation — run from the outside — with no popular base of support inside Nicaragua.

In a November 29 article, *Barricada's* assistant editor, Xavier Reyes Alba, wrote about the impact of the revelations on politics inside the United States. The mounting scandal is bringing to the fore "a timely debate," he said: "Should the war against Nicaragua be continued?"

The exposures "strengthen the opinions of those demanding an end to the war against the Sandinista People's Revolution," Reyes pointed out. Growing U.S. public opinion against the war can have an impact on the congressional vote next February over whether to turn over to the *contras* the remaining \$40 million appropriated to them by the Democrats and Republicans, he wrote.

In the meantime, the Sandinistas emphasize, the illegal war continues. In fact, Washington has escalated its provocations since the revelations about the secret arms deal began, with the goal of creating a military incident that would distract attention from the White House scandal and "put out the domestic fire in the United States," as *Barricada* put it.

When the convoy of more than 100 Florida National Guard troops stationed in Honduras began moving toward the Nicaraguan border, heavily armed and accompanied by two U.S. Air Force helicopters, no prior explanation was given. Rumors spread that the troops were going to attack Nicaragua. Honduran officials refused to answer press inquiries about the convoy.

It was only after half a day of the troop movements that the U.S. embassy in Honduras finally stated that this was a joint U.S.-Honduran "exercise." Previously, an official announcement has been made prior to such exercises.

Combined with the direct U.S. troop provocations, there are large concentrations of CIA-organized mercenaries on both the Honduran and Costa Rican borders, reports the Sandinista People's Army. There has been heavy fighting in the Nicaraguan-Honduran border area between the *contras* and Sandinista troops for several weeks. Major attempts by the mercenaries to penetrate Nicaragua from Costa Rica have begun more recently.

In an unprecedented move at the end of November, the government of Costa Rica allowed U.S.-backed mercenary chiefs to publicly hold a strategy meeting on Costa Rican soil to discuss how to overthrow the Nicaraguan government.

The meeting involved more than 100 CIA-financed terrorists belonging to the mercenary bloc known as the United Nicaraguan Opposition, which includes counterrevolutionary leader Alfonso Robelo.

In a sharp protest letter to the Costa



Troops of Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN), outfitted with funds from Washington. Protests against contra war will take place across country on December 13.

Rican government, Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto called the decision to permit the meeting "an open interference in Nicaragua's internal affairs" and "a new violation" of Costa Rica's proclaimed neutrality.

Commenting on the increasingly direct involvement of the Costa Rican government in the contra war, Gen. Humberto

Ortega, head of the Sandinista army, called the situation in the Central American region "tense and grave." He noted that Washington is also pressuring Central American governments to revive CONDECA, the Central American military alliance initiated in 1964 by Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza, who was overthrown here in 1979.

## Borge denied visa for Puerto Rico

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — The U.S. government — which refuses to grant independence to the island of Puerto Rico — has now denied Puerto Ricans the right to invite Nicaraguan Interior Minister Tomás Borge to their country.

Borge had been invited to the island to attend a congress of the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) in late November. But Washington — which controls immigration to Puerto Rico — turned down his request for a visa.

Nicaraguan Minister of Culture Ernesto Cardenal attended the PIP congress in

Borge's place. Speaking in San Juan, Cardenal commended Puerto Ricans for protesting plans to use their island to train the U.S.-backed mercenaries attacking Nicaragua.

He also denounced the colonial arrogance of the U.S. decision to deny Borge entry into Puerto Rico, calling it an affront to all Latin Americans.

"It is intolerable," Cardenal explained, "that the government of the United States prevents a Latin American citizen from visiting another Latin American nation."

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# Why reviewers sing praises of 'Against All Hope'

## A weapon in smear-Cuba campaign

**Against All Hope.** By Armando Valladares. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1986. Translated from the Spanish. 380 pages, cloth. \$18.95.

BY HARRY RING

(First of three parts)

Few recent political works have enjoyed the acclaim lavished on this book. Critics and columnists, from left liberal to ultraright, agree that Armando Valladares, who served a 22-year prison term in Cuba, has written a searing indictment of political tyranny.

Widely known for a period as the "wheelchair poet," Valladares was released by Cuban authorities in 1982 following an international campaign in his behalf, capped by the intervention of French President François Mitterrand.

Supporters of Valladares contended he had been jailed not for any crime he had committed, but solely for his dissident views. In jail, it was claimed, he was subjected to such harsh mistreatment that he suffered paralysis of both legs.

Since his release, Valladares has written this account of his prison experience,

## BOOK REVIEW

which was originally published in Spain in 1985.

In addition to the many reviews of the book, Valladares was brought to this country from Europe early this fall for major media interviews and other publicity.

He is being established as an international figure. He provides a syndicated column to 25 papers in Latin America and has enjoyed considerable media coverage in Western Europe.

Ten broadcasts based on his book have been beamed into Cuba by Washington's propaganda voice, shamelessly dubbed, "Radio Martí."

### Kirkland praises book

On September 23, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland organized a union luncheon in honor of Valladares.

Kirkland saluted his book as "a chronicle of immense personal courage in the face of systematic degradation and cruelty."

Nat Hentoff, a writer for the *New York Village Voice* and other publications, saluted Valladares as a "compelling witness for legions of prisoners of conscience."

Stephen Rosenfeld, liberal columnist for the *Washington Post*, named Valladares "the Cuban Solzhenitsyn."

A few writers took a bit more cautious approach. For instance, liberal columnist Mary McGrory, also of the *Post*, noted, "Some reviewers and human rights experts express doubts about Valladares' reliability."

But, she hastily added, "it is not important. If a fraction of what he recounts . . . is true, we have abounding evidence that Castro is steeped in blood. . . ."

If only a "fraction" of what he writes is true?

What fraction? Ninety-nine percent? One percent? Zero? McGrory offers no estimate.

Earl Shorris, who reviewed the book for the *Nation*, was also a bit cautious.

He described *Against All Hope* as "a book so poorly written, so carelessly edited and so unfaithfully translated that the reader must struggle through every page, battling lack of interest and disbelief. . . . The reader suffers an uneasiness of distrust."

"And yet," Shorris inexplicably assured, "a man suffered; his human rights were torn out of his life."

The political aim of those who endorse this book, either cautiously or totally blindly, was laid out by *New York Times* critic John Gross.

Gross wrote: "Revelations of the kind

Mr. Valladares makes would, of course, be significant whatever the political coloring of the regime concerned. But they are all the more valuable when it is a regime that has been the source of so many illusions.

"It should not be forgotten," Gross stated, "that while the horrendous scenes described were taking place, a procession of influential visitors from the United States and elsewhere — writers, academics, and others — were busy proclaiming the virtues of the Cuban revolution in the most radiant terms."

### Stench bomb

In sum, for opponents of the Cuban revolution, this book is a stench bomb to be utilized to the maximum. It is particularly intended to whip into line those writers and political figures who have been friendly to Cuba or, at least, resisted joining the chorus against it.

Of all the partisans of the book, none have embraced it more warmly than Ronald Radosh, a onetime "new lefter," who did a fast handspring a few years back to become an anticommunist.

The *New York Times* devoted a page of its June 8, 1986, Sunday book review section to a tribute to the book by Radosh.

For Radosh, Valladares' book reveals "the terrible reality — Mr. Castro has created a new despotism that has institutionalized torture as a mechanism of social control."

He added that Valladares has given us "a picture of the hell that was the Cuba he lived in."

And that is the point — to convince people that revolutionary Cuba is the worst hellhole on earth.

A second purpose is to lean on those who don't agree, to get them to repent and confess their sins.

Elliott Abrams, Reagan's assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, said the book's account of "degradation, cruelty, and sadism to which political prisoners are subjected has caused soul-searching around the world among longtime Castro apologists."

And, writing in the July 28, 1986, *New Republic*, David Reiff declared:

"What remains to be seen is whether those of us who gave the Cuban revolution limitless moral overdraft are willing to accept the shame and discomfiture *Against All Hope* should by all rights provoke."

The fascinating thing about all this moral fervor is that the book which generates it — *Against All Hope* — is a hoax. To confirm that all you have to do is read it through with a reasonable degree of objectivity.

Valladares piles one patent absurdity on top of the other. His book is riddled with contradictions — not only from chapter to chapter, but from page to page and even, occasionally, from paragraph to paragraph.

Totally preposterous things are presented as hard fact. Descriptions of alleged abuse and torture are laid on so thick that all but the most biased reader will begin to mutter, "Now really."

We will take these up in some detail later.

### Oppose the revolution

The reason Valladares and his endorsers think the Cuban prison system is a hellhole is because that's their view of the revolution itself in which 10 million unwilling Cubans are enslaved.

But that's simply not the fact. True, a minority were not won to the revolution, or became disaffected from it.

But the great majority of Cubans willingly supports their revolution because it has brought them immense social progress. And what is so impressive about these gains is that they have been accomplished despite nearly 28 years of unrelenting hostility by U.S. imperialism.

The break-Cuba campaign began in



Armando Valladares (center), the so-called wheelchair poet released from prison by Cuban government, at luncheon by AFL-CIO Department of International Affairs. Anticommunists such as AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland (right) hope Valladares' prison-memoir hoax will be taken for good coin.

1960 with economic sanctions that continue to this day; it includes the infamous 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion; the CIA-organized infiltration of arsonists, saboteurs, and would-be assassins into the country. It now includes a total trade embargo and the ban on travel to Cuba.

And, throughout, there has been an unrelenting propaganda campaign of smears and lies against Cuba. Today, the Valladares book is an important piece in that campaign.

If you check out the numerous favorable reviews of *Against All Hope*, you won't find any discussion, one way or the other, of the gains of the revolution, no less any mention of Washington's anti-Cuba drive.

Obvious anti-Cuba bias aside, there's a reason for this. If you are going to promote the thesis that Cuba is a "tropical gulag," how do you square that with the well-documented and fairly widely known social gains of the revolution? If Cuban society is, in fact, moving forward, why is savage repression of the kind depicted by Valladares necessary?

### Big strides

Coping with a legacy of imperialist-imposed underdevelopment and U.S. enmity, Cuba is, of course, not utopia. But the problem of massive numbers of landless peasants has been resolved. Chronic, large-scale unemployment has been ended.

Illiteracy has been eradicated. Quality education from kindergarten to the university level is free and available to all.

From the outset, religious freedom has been respected.

Racism is being uprooted in Cuba. Gains in establishing women's rights have been substantial.

One of Cuba's most widely lauded advances has been the development of an outstanding system of free, socialized medicine.

In its issue of Dec. 8, 1983, the *New England Journal of Medicine* paid tribute to Cuba's medical plan. It recalled that prior to the revolution, the *Fidelista* guerrillas had pledged a medical system equal to any. Now, the magazine declared, "even Cuba's detractors admit that the new government has made good on that commitment."

It noted Cuba's enviable record in reducing infant mortality, observing that it now approaches the rate for the United States (today, 15 infant deaths for every 1,000 births in Cuba, 12 here). And, the report added, Cuba's rate is lower than for Blacks in this country.

The *Journal* cited the head of the World Health Organization as declaring that the commitment of the Cuban leadership to health care is "truly remarkable."

Moreover, Cuban policy has not been marked by narrow self-interest. Internationalist concerns are a top priority.

Despite the risk involved, Cuba responded without hesitation when Angola called on it for help in repelling a 1975 South African invasion. Cuban troops beat back the racist aggressors.

And in Ethiopia in 1977, Cuban forces helped thwart a Washington-inspired intervention by the regime in Somalia.

Despite its own sometimes pressing needs, Cuba has sent teachers, doctors, engineers and construction workers to underdeveloped countries around the globe. More than 1,500 Cuban doctors are now serving abroad.

Could a nation of slaves carry out such an exemplary program of international solidarity?

Since the overthrow of dictator Fulgencio Batista, Cuba has made meaningful progress in developing a democratic structure. This involves the participation of the unions, farm organizations, the women's federation, and the creation of People's Power, the elected legislative assemblies.

Perhaps the most decisive proof that Cuba is not gripped by repression is the island-wide organization of people's militias. Over a million Cubans — men and women — bear arms and are well-trained to use them.

In her discussion of the Valladares book, columnist Mary McGrory likens Cuba's government to the murderous Pinochet regime in Chile.

Can anyone imagine Pinochet arming a popular militia?

(Next week: *Who is Armando Valladares?*)

## Miami Haitians protest Namphy regime

BY JEFF MILLER AND ZENA McFADDEN

MIAMI — More than 300 people chanting, "Haiti is not for sale!" and "Namphy must go!" protested across the street from the Hyatt Regency Hotel here. They were demonstrating against the U.S.-installed Haitian regime of Gen. Henri Namphy and the exploitation of Haitians under the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). The CBI was created to induce U.S. investors to set up profitable operations in the region.

Namphy and 20 other top officials from Central America and the Caribbean were inside the hotel at a conference assessing the CBI.

Demonstrators at the November 19 action were eager to talk about the situation in Haiti and why it is so important to oppose the regime. One woman explained the lack of democracy today: "We have no representative government; Namphy was never elected. The decision of who would run the country was made in Washington. All of the policies that were carried out by [dictator "Baby Doc"] Duvalier are still in place."

The hated secret police of Duvalier, the Tontons Macoutes, are still operating, she said, and "the army opened fire on demonstrators just this week during the general strike" in Haiti.

# Hormel workers: 'Struggle goes on'

## Austin meat-packers tour country to tell their story

BY NORTON SANDLER

NEW YORK — Cecil Cain is one of a couple dozen meat-packers from Austin, Minnesota, who have been touring the country speaking to unionists about their fight against Geo. A. Hormel & Co. During his recent visit to the New York-New Jersey area, Cain talked to the *Militant* about the current stage of that struggle.

Cain worked at the Austin plant for a year and a half before the strike by United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local P-9 began in August 1985. Since June, he has been putting in "10 to 12" hours a day in the "Communications Department" the Austin workers and their supporters set up. His main assignment has been organizing outreach trips to other unions. During the past couple of months, he has been on the road himself.

Cain said that unionists are surprised to hear the struggle is continuing. Most do not know that the contract Hormel imposed on workers in the Austin plant in September excluded 850 workers from getting their jobs back.

### Upset

"We thought it was over, heard you got a contract," is an initial response, Cain said. "So you tell them how the contract came to be, and wow, they are a little bit upset."

When speaking to unionists, Cain explained, "we take them back and reiterate what has happened so far, and why we think it fits into the full picture of anybody who works for a living."

"We ask them absolutely to help us, to boycott the product, and we ask for their financial help so we don't have to abandon the fight that has to be fought and go find another \$5.00-an-hour job or whatever," he said.

Cain said Hormel is counting on wearing the meat-packers down. "But it's a gamble on their part how much business they will lose, how much it will affect their name, how long it will take to regain shelf space, to regain respectability. They are gambling on the lengthiness of the fight to get everybody to quit," he said.

According to Cain, Hormel believed the workers would "get tired, they'd get cold. . . . That didn't come to pass." They "put us in trusteeship to try to stop us. That didn't work. The courts didn't work." He said the new contract at the plant has not

stopped the struggle either.

He emphasized that Hormel knows that the UFCW officials who put P-9 in trusteeship and negotiated the contract at the Austin plant can't get the workers to call off the fight.

### Impact on Hormel

Cain said the continuing fight is having an impact on Hormel.

"This last letter we got about four weeks ago addressed us as 'Dear employees,'" he said. Management threatened to fire "us from jobs that we don't have if we don't stop the boycott and ask our supporters to stop the boycott. But anyway, the real significance of that letter is this is the first time since we went on strike that the Hormel company addressed us — not the court, not the trustee."

Cain said that the new contract in Austin "has got to be removed or they can indiscriminately get rid of anybody they don't like."

"I am not sure that there is any way of getting rid of that contract other than North American Meat Packers," he said. "I just don't trust the courts to throw it out."

The North American Meat Packers Union (NAMPU) was formed last summer after Local P-9 was placed in trusteeship. Several hundred workers signed NAMPU petitions calling for a recertification election at the Austin plant. The National Labor Relations Board has not set a date for the election. Those eligible to vote will

choose between NAMPU, the UFCW, or no union. The latter is a choice the NLRB requires in a recertification election.

Cain says the Austin struggle is directly related to the fight of meat-packers across North America to resist company demands for givebacks.

### Forefront of fight

"I think Austin is in the forefront of these other strikes, leading the way," he said. "Hormel has got to be at the top in contracts, they are the most profitable meat-packers."

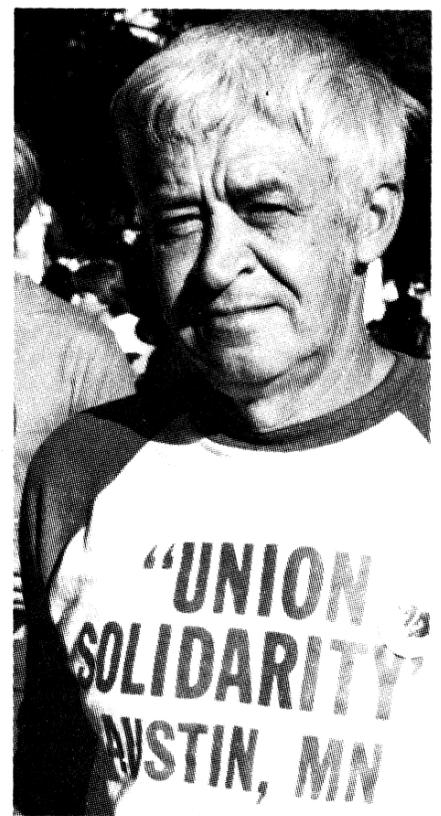
"I have been down to Marshalltown, and they are good folks," he said, referring to the more than 300 National Brotherhood of Packinghouse and Industrial Workers Union members on strike at Swift Independent Packing.

"They fully expect a better contract than what they have been offered, and they deserve it. And hopefully they can learn from us some of the things we had to learn the hard way," he added.

He also placed importance on developments at the Hormel packing plant in Ottumwa, Iowa, where more than 500 workers were fired earlier this year for honoring P-9 picket lines.

Cain explained that 258 have gotten their jobs back. "The rest are fighting for reinstatement."

"Their contract comes up in the spring. They are very active yet. The Ottumwa



Militant/Nelson Blackstock "Skinny" Weis (above), along with Cecil Cain and other meat-packers, has been rallying support for fight. Weis was in Los Angeles recently (see story below).

fight is very much alive," he said. "The fight has got to be to get all those guys their jobs back with back pay. They've got an absolute right to get back pay under their contract."

## L.A. unionists 'adopt' needy P-9 families

BY MIKE MALONEY  
AND SUE SKINNER

LOS ANGELES — Two Hormel meat-packers from Austin, Minnesota, have been in this area since mid-October. Initially, John "Skinny" Weis, a 43-year veteran in the Austin plant and a suspended United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-9 executive board member, came out alone, but, he said, "the response was so fantastic I asked for Rick [Fuller] to come out and help. We've spoken at union meetings nearly every day and sometimes speak to three, four, or more meetings in a day."

This is the first time many workers in

this area have had the opportunity to hear and talk to Hormel fighters. "When people learn that we haven't gotten back to work," Weis said, "they're more than willing to help us out by adopting a family or contributing to the Hardship Fund. Other supporters have helped out by sharing their apartments, providing meals, or donating the use of a car."

At an executive board meeting of Local 53 of the National Association of Broadcast Engineers and Technicians November 13, Weis explained that "presently, for many of us, our only means of support is welfare. The biggest thing that has kept us going is the Adopt-a-Family program."

"We have been arrested, tear-gassed, maced, some have lost their homes and cars, but we're still continuing to fight," he said.

Weis pointed to other meat-packing strikes in North America, including strikes at the Gainers packing plant in Alberta, Canada, and at Swift Independent Packing Co. in Marshalltown, Iowa, as well as recently concluded strikes at FDL packing plants in Dubuque, Iowa, and Rochelle, Illinois.

"What our people are fighting for is some unity, and safe working conditions in the meat industry."

"The proceeds of this money and any cash raised will be sent back to help the children of the families have a good Christmas," he said.

The executive board adopted a family. Families have also been adopted by locals of the Communications Workers of America, United Teachers of Los Angeles, International Association of Machinists (IAM), United Auto Workers, and Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers.

"I know you are having trouble with your company now, too, and are thinking about a strike," Fuller told a midnight union meeting of members of IAM District 720. "I just want you to know that we'll be with you. We'll help you on the picket lines or any way we can because that's what solidarity is all about."

A motion was passed unanimously to take a collection for families in Austin.

This was one of several meetings where Fuller and Weis had a chance to meet McDonnell Douglas workers. On payday, they set up a table at a bowling alley where workers congregate. Many machinists wanted to know how P-9 had gotten everybody organized for the struggle against Hormel.

"Bring them to the union hall, and give

them something to do," Weis said. Fuller explained that solidarity means workers sticking together and supporting each other no matter what union, what state, or what country they are from.

Weis and Fuller set up a table at a contract vote meeting of District 720 a few days later. The 4,000 machinists who attended overwhelmingly voted down the company's offer. Half a dozen machinists helped staff the P-9 table. One steward made arrangements for buttons reading "They say giveback, we say fightback" to be flown in from Austin and distributed at the plant.

Fuller also attended the California state IAM conference. Forty-eight delegates signed a letter to Hormel management demanding that they rehire the 850 workers excluded under the terms of the contract the company imposed in September.

Sue Skinner is a member of IAM District 720 and works at the McDonnell Douglas plant in Torrance, California. Mike Maloney is a member of IAM Lodge 727B and works at Lockheed in Burbank, California.

## Guyette at Boston labor rally

BY PETER GLACE  
AND JON HILLSON

BOSTON — A spirited, broadly sponsored labor rally in defense of Hormel meat-packers was held in Faneuil Hall here November 23.

"This struggle is not over until every single one of us is in the plant and back to work," Jim Guyette, president of trustee Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) told the meeting of 300.

The packinghouse "sat in a Midwest cornfield that history had generally passed by. But no more," Guyette said.

Referring to workers fighting to get their jobs back at Hormel plants in Austin, Minnesota; Ottumwa, Iowa; and Fremont, Nebraska, he said, "The company has turned us into 1,200 of the most militant trade unionists you'll see anywhere."

"All strikes are interconnected," Guyette explained. "The bosses come together to plan how to smash the farmers, how to break the unions, and how to make workers in the United States compete with other workers who only make \$6 to \$8 a day."

Guyette said that because of these connections, the Hormel meat-packers have taken their case to workers around the world. He described the recent trip he and other meat-packers made to Britain. The union leader also expressed solidarity with workers at Hormel plants in South Africa, Mexico, and those "in Hormel in the Philippines, who'll be on strike at the end of this month."

He encouraged union locals to step up the boycott of Hormel products and to pass resolutions demanding that Hormel rehire

the 1,200 excluded workers.

The audience responded enthusiastically to Guyette's description of how an anti-slavery crowd of abolitionists in Faneuil Hall had defended runaway slave Dred Scott from his "owner" 130 years earlier.

"Together that crowd stripped [the slaveowner] of his clothes and chased him out of town. With your support, that's what we can do with the Hormel corporation," he said.

Bill Cook from Ottumwa, Iowa, told the meeting, "We have no food, no money, no benefits, nothing."

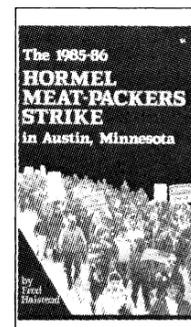
But, Cook emphasized, "someone had to take a stand, something had to be done, and we're doing it, and we're going to continue to do it."

Other speakers included Ron Weisen, president of Local 1397 in Homestead, Pennsylvania; Domenic Bozzotto, president of Hotel and Restaurant Workers Local 26; Charlie Ruitter, a member of the executive board of International Union of Electronic Workers Local 201; Larry Regan, president of United Steelworkers of America Local 1014; Tom Evers, president of the Massachusetts Building Trades Council; and Alda Melo, financial secretary of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Local 377.

More than \$3,200 was raised for the meat-packers' struggle.

Peter Glace is a member of International Union of Electronic Workers Local 201. Jon Hillson is a member of International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union Local 311.

## A pamphlet on meat-packers' struggle



The 1985-86 Hormel Meat-Packers Strike in Austin, Minnesota presents the facts about the Geo. A. Hormel & Co.'s union-busting attack on the workers at its Austin plant, and about how the Hormel workers have fought back and won support

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# New attempt to cover up murder of Maurice

## Bernard Coard pins blame on Grenadian leader's closest supporters

BY STEVE CLARK

Bernard Coard and others responsible for the destruction of the Grenada revolution have begun to tell a new story this year in order to cover up their responsibility for the murder of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and other Grenadian revolutionists on Oct. 19, 1983.

Coard is now seeking to place the blame for these crimes on a number of Bishop's own closest supporters. These individuals, Coard claims without offering a shred of evidence, were acting as provocateurs in the pay of the CIA. (See accompanying open letter from Don Rojas.)

As more facts about what actually happened in October 1983 have come out over the past three years — through the efforts of surviving Grenadian revolutionists, leaders of the Cuban revolution, and others — Coard and his followers have been put on the defensive politically. In hopes of regaining some political sympathy, they have toned down many of the most serious charges they had originally leveled against Bishop himself.

Following the October 1983 massacre, for example, Coard's backers announced over Grenada's radio station that Bishop had "linked up — openly — with counter-revolutionaries." Now, however, Coard is portraying Bishop as a revolutionary who allowed himself to be confused and misled by friends and associates who were either motivated by ambition or were in the service of the CIA.

This latest account was presented by Coard during his statement to the court in Grenada, where he and 17 others have been on trial since April of this year for murdering Bishop.

Coard's charges were reported in a Caribbean News Agency dispatch in August. He cynically called for the establishment of an international commission of inquiry, made up of prominent lawyers and judges, to investigate how Bishop and the others were killed.

Coard's supporters are also circulating a document — entitled "Grenada 1983: Whose Struggle for Power?" — detailing their account. This document was issued by a group calling itself "Grenadians for the truth about October '83." It is being promoted in the United States by the New York-based organization Friends for Jamaica.

Articles reporting Coard's trial statements have been carried in *In These Times*, the *Guardian*, and the *New York Caribbean News*.

Coard's slanders turn the truth on its

head. It was he and his faction in the governing New Jewel Movement, army officer corps, and government in Grenada — not those who supported Bishop — who organized and carried out the counterrevolutionary coup and massacre in October 1983.

In doing so, as Cuban President Fidel Castro has explained, "Coard and his group served the United States, on a silver platter, ideal conditions for the invasion of Grenada." (*Fidel Castro: Nothing Can Stop the Course of History*, by Jeffrey M. Elliot and Mervyn M. Dymally, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1986.)

### How Coard prepared counterrevolution

What, then, are the facts? What led up to the overthrow of the People's Revolutionary Government that had been established by the March 1979 popular revolution that ousted the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Eric Gairy?

The New Jewel Movement was founded in 1973 to organize opposition to the Gairy regime. Its most prominent founding leaders were Maurice Bishop and Unison Whiteman, both murdered in October 1983, and Kendrick Radix and George Louison, who actively opposed Coard's counterrevolution and are today leaders of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement in Grenada.

In 1976 Bernard Coard and a group of his followers joined the NJM. Behind the backs of the party's membership and elected leadership, however, this grouping continued to function as a secret faction with its own discussions, goals, and discipline.

The Coard faction used its leverage inside the NJM leadership to keep the party small and narrow. It blocked recruitment of the most conscious revolutionary workers and farmers in the workplaces and mass organizations. At the time of Coard's coup in October 1983, there were only some 300 full and candidate members of the NJM.

The Coard group "didn't work with the masses," Castro explained in *Nothing Can Stop the Course of History*. "[I]t worked among the party members . . . and with the cadres of the army and the Ministry of the Interior."

Keeping the lid tight on party membership facilitated the Coard faction's maneuvers to secure a majority of the party's Central Committee and Political Bureau, which they had achieved by 1983. Coard and his closest followers also gained the upper hand in the army officer corps, the police and other security bodies, and sec-

tions of the government administration. They gained leading positions in some trade unions, the women's organization, and the NJM's youth affiliate.

Coard consolidated his position through a combination of favoritism and distribution of material privileges. He attracted those in the party and government who, in the face of imperialist pressure and objective difficulties, lost confidence in the capacity of the Grenadian workers and farmers to defend and advance their revolution.

Longstanding NJM leaders were purged and replaced by members of Coard's faction. Coard himself pulled the strings from behind the scenes. In mid-1982 he resigned from the Central Committee, attributing his decision to the "slackness" of the party leadership and its insufficient grounding in Marxist-Leninist principles. (Coard's practice of "Marxism-Leninism" was derived largely from pamphlets by Joseph Stalin, packaged in ultraleft rhetoric.)

Coard's only tolerable alternatives, according to a summary of his position in the NJM Central Committee minutes, were to resign or to "Change Chairmanship of CC" — in other words, to replace Bishop with himself. Coard continued to serve as deputy prime minister, however.

"Coard worked with great subtlety," Castro says in *Nothing Can Stop the Course of History*. "He did not work openly. . . . He had even resigned his position as a member of the [Political] Bureau a year earlier as a gesture of selflessness. . . . [B]ut he continued being the spiritual guide. That was his style."

In this manner, and "in the name of the purity of Marxist-Leninist principles," Castro said, "[Coard] portrayed Bishop as a man insufficiently prepared to lead the country. . . . [H]e created the image of a vacillating, reformist Bishop."

### Had Bishop placed Grenada in crisis?

By the fall of 1983, the Coard faction felt strong enough to make an open move to remove Bishop as leader of the NJM. Aware of the immense political authority that Bishop had earned among the working people of Grenada, Coard's grouping hoped to retain Bishop, at least for a time, in a figurehead position as prime minister.

In an effort to justify this power grab, Coard's faction claimed that the Grenada revolution under Bishop's leadership had reached a point of perilous social, economic, and political crisis.

The People's Revolutionary Government of Grenada certainly did face many

difficulties. Grenada was burdened by a long history of colonial oppression. This had left it with backward agriculture, little industry, poor transportation and communication, and widespread poverty.

Moreover, Washington had responded to the 1979 revolution by orchestrating an international campaign to deny loans and financial aid to Grenada and to sabotage its tourism, which was an important source of income. Washington was steadily escalating its military threats against Grenada and seeking to bolster right-wing political forces on the island.

Despite these problems, the Grenada revolution was making social and economic progress. Its economic growth rate was among the highest in the Caribbean, and unemployment was falling. The living conditions of working people were improving.

The revolutionary government had established free medical care; built new schools and health clinics; instituted free public education; and implemented programs to aid small farmers, expand labor rights, advance women's equality, lower the costs of food and other basic necessities, and improve housing.

In addition, Bishop and other revolutionists in the NJM were seeking to deepen the participation of workers and farmers in all aspects of running their country. They encouraged the expansion of the unions and other mass organizations, as well as workplace- and neighborhood-based people's committees.

The bureaucratic and administrative practices of Coard's increasingly powerful followers in various government bodies and mass organizations, however, had begun to take a mounting toll in the population, particularly during the final year of the revolution. Participation in the mass organizations and the level of popular mobilization had begun to erode.

At a September meeting of the NJM Central Committee, Coard's supporters sought to pin the blame for the revolution's problems on Bishop's alleged misleadership and lack of Marxist theoretical understanding. Toward the end of the meeting, they sprang a proposal — euphemistically dubbed as "joint leadership" — that Bishop step aside as party leader and turn over the position to Coard.

Bishop expressed grave reservations, but the proposal was adopted by a majority. At an internal party meeting on September 25, Bishop agreed to abide by this majority decision.

### The October 1983 coup

Following these September meetings, Bishop left Grenada for a diplomatic visit to Eastern Europe. Upon his return, he was alarmed by the rapid steps that were being taken, without any consultation, to remove him from any effective voice in decision-making in the party and government. He requested to raise the so-called joint leadership proposal for further discussion in the Central Committee.

Coard's followers responded to Bishop's request by launching a coup, overthrowing the revolutionary government. They placed Bishop under house arrest on October 12. They accused him of spreading a rumor that Coard was plotting to assassinate him — a charge that Bishop vigorously denied. (As subsequent events were to prove, nonetheless, Bishop and his supporters can hardly be blamed for suspecting that Coard would not shrink from murder to achieve his goals.)

Coard's followers launched a smear campaign, first inside the NJM and then more broadly, to discredit Bishop as a petty-bourgeois leader of a personality cult ("one-mannism"). Anticipating that the big majority of Grenada's workers and farmers, including its most militant and class-conscious layers, would resist any attempt to purge Bishop, Coard and his followers had also begun organizing to further demobilize the masses.

While Bishop was out of the country, the popular militia had begun to be disarmed. At the same time, Coard raised the salaries

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# ice Bishop

of soldiers in the army, hoping in this way to consolidate a base of support for the planned coup.

As word spread of Bishop's house arrest, the Grenadian people came into the streets over the following week to demand his immediate release. George Louison met with Coard and urged him to meet this demand. Coard showed his contempt for the Grenadian people by telling Louison that the demonstrators "are bound to get tired and hungry" in a few days, and things would return to normal.

On October 19 some 30,000 people, more than a quarter of Grenada's population, poured into the streets. A section of the crowd went to Bishop's home and freed him.

The demonstrators took Bishop to Fort Rupert, the army headquarters in St. George's. There, he and other revolutionary leaders prepared to issue an appeal to the Grenadian people to put the revolution back on its original course and to reverse the Coard-instigated coup.

Through their uprising on October 19, the Grenadian people sought to restore to power a government led by revolutionaries who had won their confidence through more than a decade of struggles. But Coard's faction sent troops and armored cars to fire on the demonstrators, killing many of them.

Bishop and five of his colleagues — Fitzroy Bain, Norris Bain, Jacqueline Creft, Vincent Noel, and Unison White-man — were summarily murdered.

As Castro put it in *Nothing Can Stop the Course of History*, "when the people's uprising occurred, [Coard and his followers] became so frightened and confused that they fired upon the people and shortly thereafter killed Bishop and a group of valuable aides. That is the historical truth."

Having committed these crimes, "The government [of Coard] could not have endured," Castro said. "We wouldn't have offered any support to that government after it murdered Bishop and fired on the people.

"After we had assumed that attitude, it would have been difficult for any other socialist or progressive country to support that group, because Bishop actually had great authority and great international prestige."

On October 20, the revolutionary government of Cuba and the Cuban Communist Party immediately issued a statement saying: "No doctrine, no principle or position held up as revolutionary, and no internal division justifies atrocious proceedings like the physical elimination of Bishop and the outstanding group of honest and worthy leaders killed yesterday." The Cubans warned that these crimes would embolden Washington.

## The U.S. invasion

The new government placed in power by the coup terrorized the population in order to prevent further opposition. It imposed a round-the-clock curfew, announcing that offenders would be shot on sight.

The disorientation, demoralization, and demobilization caused by Coard's actions gave Washington the opportunity that it had been waiting for since the very first days of the revolution.

"Naturally, [the U.S. invading troops] were not going to be met with the people's resistance," Castro told Dymally and Elliot, "for the simple reason that the people were outraged, traumatized by the attitude of this group that had fired upon the people and assassinated Bishop.

"Thus a divorce took place; those involved in the coup gathered the weapons of the militia. They disarmed the militia on various pretexts, precisely for fear of the people after what they had done."

The prospects for broad international protests against the U.S. aggression were also drastically limited by the effects of Coard's days of terror.

The U.S. invading forces imposed a government that is subservient to imperialist interests in Grenada and through-



Meeting of Technical and Allied Workers Union in 1982. Revolutionary government of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop sought to deepen participation of workers and farmers in running their country. Meanwhile, Coard clique plotted to keep the most conscious and revolutionary workers and farmers out of country's leadership.

Militant/Pat Kane

out the region. The new regime has dismantled virtually all the economic and social programs that were benefiting the Grenadian people. Unemployment has skyrocketed. Promised economic development projects have either fallen through or done nothing to benefit the majority of the population.

In the United Nations, Grenada has now even joined the tiny handful of countries whose delegations vote with the United States to block international sanctions against the racist apartheid regime in South Africa.

## Drawing the lessons

In the weeks and months that followed the counterrevolutionary coup and subsequent U.S. invasion, revolutionists in many countries began to draw important political conclusions from what had happened in Grenada. They saw in life the consequences of Coard's method of building a privileged clique loyal to himself through the use of buddyism and material corruption, as well as the consequences of

his reliance on administrative fiat, ultraleft demagoguery, and finally bloody repression.

In contrast, many revolutionists began to understand and appreciate more profoundly the orientation charted by Maurice Bishop toward the organization, mobilization, and political education of the workers and farmers as the bedrock of any revolutionary change.

They were attracted to Bishop's internationalism, to his outspoken identification with revolutionary Cuba and Nicaragua. Their own internationalist consciousness was raised by his call to overcome the divisions — imposed during centuries of colonial domination — between the working people of the English-, Spanish-, French-, and Dutch-speaking Caribbean and Central America.

## Lies, slanders, and hypocrisy

As these lessons have been drawn by growing layers of revolutionary-minded fighters throughout the Americas and the world, the Coard group has found itself on the defensive politically. That is why it has

had to adjust its defense, in hopes of stirring up renewed confusion.

The fullest presentation in print of Coard's latest version of the October 1983 events is the previously cited document being circulated in this country by the Friends for Jamaica.

According to this account, Bishop was a well-intentioned but subjective revolutionary who in 1983 had fallen under the evil influence, on the one side, of the power-hungry George Louison and Kendrick Radix, and, on the other side, of CIA agents such as Don Rojas and others.

"It is now known," the document states, "that the CIA was successful in penetrating both the NJM and the PRG at the highest levels."

"In short," the document concludes, "Bro. Maurice Bishop at the crucial moment was literally surrounded by forces who were drumming into his head, night and day, that he should not accept the sharing of the Party's Leadership. This constant pressure on Bro. Bishop was com-

Continued on next page

# Open letter by Don Rojas on slander campaign

The following open letter dated Nov. 8, 1986, was sent by Don Rojas to a number of publications in the United States, the Caribbean, and other countries.

Rojas is currently the representative in Havana, Cuba, of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement of Grenada; a member of the coordinating committee of the Anti-Imperialist Organizations of the Caribbean and Central America, a group of 32 organizations from 21 countries founded at a conference in Havana in June 1984; and secretary for the Caribbean and Central America for the International Organization of Journalists.

It has been reported in a Caribbean News Agency (CANA) dispatch of Aug. 14, 1986, that Bernard Coard in his statement to the court in the Maurice Bishop murder trial in St. George's, Grenada, made a number of slanderous remarks about my involvement in the Grenada Revolution and in the fateful events of Oct. 19, 1983.

These false and completely unsubstantiated charges that I am an agent of the U.S. CIA have subsequently appeared in a front-page headline and page 3 article in the New York *Carib News* of August 26. This smear was then repeated in a major report on the trial in the U.S. weekly *In These Times*. It has also been presented as fact in a document entitled "Grenada 1983: Whose Struggle for Power," published by a New York-based group called Friends for Jamaica; this document has been advertised in the U.S. weeklies the *Guardian* and *In These Times*.

I was not contacted by any of these publications to comment on and rebut these dangerous and irresponsible lies about my

own character and about the events of October 19 that led to the murder of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and many other Grenadian patriots. I wish to respond to Coard's charges and to clarify the record on his falsifications.

## What happened October 19

Shortly before he was brutally assassinated by Coard and his clique on Oct. 19, 1983, the late Prime Minister instructed me as his press secretary to go to the Telephone Company in St. George's and try to inform the outside world, in particular the Grenadians living abroad, that the patriotic supporters of the Revolution had risked their lives to release him from his house arrest and that he was preparing to speak to the tens of thousands of Grenadians who had gathered in the Market Square.

I proceeded with four other Bishop supporters to the telephone building and discovered the gates padlocked and chained. We found a few telephone company workers, along with a female employee of the Ministry of Interior who had been planted there by Coard's group some days before. We called on them to open the gates and assist us in making the international calls, as the Prime Minister had requested. The workers responded positively and assisted us without hesitation in manning the switchboards.

While in the process of telephoning the outside world, the military attack by Coard's forces took place at Fort Rupert where Bishop and his supporters had gone following his rescue from house arrest. I was able to give an eyewitness report by phone to the Caribbean News Agency of what I could see and hear from the window of the telephone building: cannon fire, followed by bursts of automatic rifle fire,

smoke rising from the courtyard of the fort, people jumping over the walls and running in panic in all directions.

Shortly after the attack, a group of about 100 enraged Bishop supporters gathered at the gates of the telephone building and demanded that they be given a small quantity of weapons stored in a room at the back of the building. They wanted the weapons to defend themselves against the soldiers who had attacked Fort Rupert.

I refused to distribute the weapons, calling on them instead to be calm and avoid bloodshed, since this was what Bishop had desired when I had spoken to him earlier that day. I then left the Telephone Company and made for my house in nearby Grand Anse, not knowing that the Prime Minister and other Grenadian revolutionaries and patriots had been murdered at Fort Rupert. I heard the sad news later that night when it was announced by Gen. Hudson Austin on the radio.

## Shoot-to-kill curfew

In that same broadcast, Austin — nominal head of Coard's new government — announced an indefinite, round-the-clock curfew; violators would be shot on sight, he warned. I spent the days of the curfew in hiding, since Coard and his gang had mounted a military manhunt for me.

My wife was arrested and detained at Fort Frederick at that time, also on orders of his gang. Playing the "soft cop," General Austin personally tried to trick my wife into revealing my whereabouts, but failed.

Four days after the American invasion on October 25, my family and I were found in a house in the Lime area of southern St. George's by U.S. soldiers. Along with

Continued on next page

# New attempt to cover up murder of Bishop

Continued from previous page

bined with his own personal weaknesses, especially his well-known tendency to allow close personal friends to have unusual sway over him, and his tendency . . . to resent criticism.

"It was this confluence of forces and tendencies, the chemistry of the 'joint operation' of [George] Louison and the CIA, that in the final analysis led to Bro. Bishop's slide off the path of principle, and into a road of defiance of the Party's decision. . . ."

This account includes the vile charge that one of these provocateurs was even known by Bishop to be a CIA agent, but was nonetheless able to infiltrate the NJM because he could not resist her sexual advances. "[S]he kept after him, and after a while he just couldn't resist her," one of Coard's supporters claims in this scurrilous document.

In the week after Bishop was placed under house arrest, the document states, "the CIA stepped up its work to ensure that no healing would take place. CIA agents actively began sowing more rumors and confusion in villages and communities throughout the Country. Overnight, they became the firmest supporters of Bishop."

Yet, neither Coard nor his backers have presented even a single piece of evidence to back up their public charge that any one of the individuals they cite was in fact a CIA agent.

With regard to the alleged seductress, for example, the Friends for Jamaica document cites a Coard supporter and former security officer as stating, "we were fairly certain this woman was working for the CIA." He also points out that "she had been living in the USA for several years." That's the totality of the "evidence."

The authors of this document consider it sufficient to label Don Rojas a CIA agent on the basis of the statement by this same former security officer that "we were watching him — we had certain information on him which caused us to put a question mark beside his name. But it was his actions on October 19 which conclusively demonstrated his CIA connections."

In other words, the "proof" that Rojas was a CIA agent was that he — along with 30,000 other Grenadians — participated in the October 19 popular uprising against the Coard coup! Rojas has explained the facts about his activities on that day and over the following week in his response to the Coard slanders.

The current trial of Coard and his col-

laborators is aimed at legitimizing the cops, courts, and other institutions of the current pro-imperialist government in Grenada. By falsely portraying these hated figures as "Marxists," the imperialists and their political servants in Grenada hope that the trial can help discredit the political legacy of Maurice Bishop, the Cuban revolution, and all progressive forces in the Caribbean and Central America.

Revolutionary-minded democrats, freedom fighters, and communists around the world do not recognize the moral or political legitimacy of this U.S.-installed regime. It has no standing to pass judgment on Coard and his cronies for their counter-revolutionary crimes.

Coard and his cohorts are politically and morally responsible for the crimes committed against the Grenadian working people and the Grenada revolution in October 1983. And those counterrevolutionary acts are *undefensible*.

There can be no effective effort to rebuild the revolutionary movement of working people in Grenada that does not include spreading the truth about the events of October 1983 that destroyed the revolution

and opened the way to the U.S. invasion.

Moreover, Coard's practice of slandering political opponents as police agents must be decisively rejected. This poisonous method was introduced into the international workers' movement by the Social Democrats, who used such smears against the Bolshevik leadership of the October 1917 revolution in Russia and against other revolutionists.

Agent-baiting later became a standard practice of Stalin's regime. It was used to justify bloody purges of communists both inside the Soviet Union and elsewhere who spoke out against Stalin's reversal of Lenin's revolutionary internationalist course.

It is in the most pressing interests of revolutionary fighters around the world to put a halt once and for all to the use of slander and violence inside the anti-imperialist and working-class movements.

As the Cuban government and Communist Party explained in its Oct. 20, 1983, statement on the murder of Bishop and other Grenadian patriots, let "the concept prevail that no crime must be committed in the name of the revolution and freedom."



Don Rojas

## Letter by Rojas on slander campaign

Continued from previous page

other families in the area, we were ordered out of the buildings so that house-to-house searches could be carried out. We were ordered to go to the site of the Point Salines airport, then controlled by the invading forces.

I was separated from my family and interrogated at gunpoint. My family was sent to Barbados on a U.S. military transport plane.

Some hours later I, too, was expelled and sent to Barbados, exactly four years after Maurice Bishop had invited me to come serve the Grenadian Revolution as a Caribbean-born, anti-imperialist journalist. I subsequently worked for the Revolution as a member of the New Jewel Movement; as editor of the *Free West Indian*, Grenada's main newspaper; and as the Prime Minister's press secretary.

Before leaving Grenada, I was interviewed by the first group of journalists allowed into the country by the invading U.S. forces. When asked my views on the invasion, I condemned it as an aggression against Grenadian sovereignty and as a vio-

lation of international law, and I also said that if Prime Minister Bishop were alive, he too would have opposed this illegal action of the U.S. government.

This condemnation of the criminal Yankee occupation of Grenada was prominently reported in both the Caribbean and the U.S. press at the time.

No U.S.-installed government such as that in Grenada today has either the moral or political legitimacy to imprison, try, or render judgment on Coard and the others responsible for the murderous events of Oct. 19, 1983. But Coard's decision to use the trial proceedings as a platform to justify his counterrevolutionary crimes is a slap in the face to progressive and democratic world opinion.

### Coard's lies and slanders

Coard has resorted to a mixture of lies, half-truths, cheap slandering, and misinformation in his diatribes to the court, the same court which only weeks ago he was hypocritically describing as unconstitutional and illegitimate.

His tactic is to divert attention from his responsibility for the crimes of October 19, to create a smoke screen that would hide his culpability and minimize his isolation from the progressive and revolutionary forces in the Caribbean and Latin America.

History will never forgive Coard, because history has already passed its verdict of guilt by complicity in the Fort Rupert massacre and in the destruction of the Grenadian Revolution. He was the undisputed leader of the so-called Central Committee majority that ordered Bishop's assassination and of the so-called Revolutionary Military Council that terrorized and traumatized the Grenadian people during the nightmarish shoot-to-kill curfew.

History will remember him only for his enormous vanity, unbidded ambition, and immense hypocrisy. He and his gang gave to imperialism the popular Grenada Revolution on a silver platter. Coard opened the door to the U.S. invasion.

Bishop gave his life for the Grenadian Revolution and for the poor and humble people of the Caribbean. History will never forget him. His spirit will continue to live in the hearts and minds of all patriotic Caribbean people.

Coard, in stark contrast, was prepared to order the killing of his compatriots in the name of the Revolution, but not prepared to die for it; prepared to approve and even applaud those who pulled the triggers on Bishop, Unison Whiteman, and the other martyrs, but not prepared to account honestly to the Grenadian people for these monstrous counterrevolutionary crimes.

Coard's refusal to acknowledge his responsibility for the events of October 19 at Fort Rupert repeats his cowardice in surrendering without a fight to the American forces after he and his gangsters in the "Revolutionary Military Council" had called on the Grenadian people "to fight to

the last man, woman, and child."

Coard's actions have set back the forces of peace, liberty, and social progress in the Caribbean for many years and have tarnished the image of the progressive movement in the eyes of the region's masses. Furthermore, these actions have created the conditions for current U.S. domination and militarization of Grenada.

### Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement

Coard's hysterical attacks on the leadership of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM) during his egotistical grandstanding in the trial no doubt evoked smiles of appreciation in Washington, apart from revealing how traitorous he is to the just cause of the working people.

His aim is to undermine the credibility of the MBPM by attempting to discredit it and slander individuals identified with it. By attacking the movement dedicated to preserving the ideas and programs of Maurice Bishop, Coard is once again demonstrating his contempt for Bishop and his legacy, notwithstanding his hypocritical statements that he and Bishop were close both politically and socially.

The Grenadian masses will never forget that it was Coard who authorized his infantile, phrasemongering minions to publicly slander Brother Bishop as "right wing," "opportunist," "counterrevolutionary," and even "worse than Gairy," and that it was he who finally organized the liquidation of Bishop, his self-perceived rival since the mid-1970s.

### Some final questions

If, as Coard now says, he was shocked and traumatized by Comrade Bishop's death, why did he not proclaim his disapproval to the world in the days between Bishop's assassination and the Yankee invasion?

Why did Coard — the de facto leader of the party and government on October 19 — not order the immediate arrest of Bishop's murderers, institute a period of national mourning, and hand over the remains of Bishop and the other martyrs to their families for a dignified burial?

And why did he not put a stop to the misnamed Revolutionary Military Council's lying statements over Radio Free Grenada about the events of October 19? The answer is simple, because he was the very author of those statements.

Finally, we are confident that the judgment of history will ultimately condemn imperialism as well as Coardism for their crimes in Grenada and will vindicate Maurice Bishop, his ideas, his example, and the popular revolution that he led with consummate skill, dignity, and courage.

Long live the patriotic Grenadian people!

Long live the memory of Maurice Bishop!

Down with the enemies of the masses!  
Let us go forward on our feet, never on our knees!

Do you know someone who reads Spanish?

## Puerto Ricans fight for forest

"They won't train the military in El Yunque," chanted nearly 8,000 people during a march protesting U.S. government attempts to destroy Puerto Rico's most valuable rain forest.

Last September, the U.S. Forest Service decided to allow the exploitation of the woods for commercial purposes. This triggered vigorous protests. The 28,000-acre park is ecologically unique and is the source of the island's biggest rivers.

The controversy escalated when the Pentagon announced it was looking for a tropical forest site to train troops as part of its preparations for war in Central America.

The December issue of *Perspectiva Mundial* has on-the-spot coverage of this latest development in the struggle against U.S. militarization of the island.

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# Fighting for land, Philippine peasants rally to rebels

BY FRED FELDMAN

The 60-day cease-fire agreement signed November 27 by the Philippine government of President Corazon Aquino and negotiators authorized to represent the New People's Army guerrilla movement is a measure of the support the NPA has gained.

The inability of the Ferdinand Marcos tyranny to crush the growing revolt in the countryside, despite repression that cost thousands of lives, was a major cause of his downfall in February.

The September 15 *Washington Post* reported that there are now an "estimated 16,500 NPA regulars, nearly 15,000 'part-time' militiamen, and its hundreds of thousands of civilian supporters." U.S. intelligence agencies concede that the NPA now has major influence in at least 5,000 of the 40,000 rural villages, and operates in 60 out of the country's 73 provinces.

"Many of those insurgents are fighting chiefly for land," the *Post* reported. "Many are tenant farmers, and they are convinced that a revolutionary government will make them owners of the land they till, or restore to them lands they have been forced to vacate to powerful cronies of Marcos or the large agribusinesses of multinational corporations."

"Others join the revolutionary movement," the *Post* added, "because of what they call abuses by a military that tends to regard all rural villagers as rebel army supporters."

The Philippines has a population of 58 million scattered over 7,000 islands. Roughly 70 percent of these are exploited peasants. Most work small plots, paying exorbitant rents or shares of their crop to big landlords.

On the island of Negros, workers on the big sugar plantations face massive unemployment and malnutrition. This has impelled working people to fight to get parcels of land on which they can grow food for their families.

Since 1983 support for the NPA on Negros has grown rapidly as the landlords unleashed the army and private bands of hired gunmen on workers seeking to organize. In September 1985, for example, 28 workers protesting hunger were gunned down in the town of Escalante.

"I hardly go to the farm now," Negros landlord Manuel Lacson told the *Post*. Before the overthrow of Marcos, "our word was law. But now the workers have changed their attitude. They have teach-ins every night, and if we go there we are met by armed people."

The NPA was founded in 1969 by members of the newly organized Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). Its founders had been expelled from the older Communist Party (PKP), which subsequently moved toward support of the Marcos dictatorship after martial law was declared in 1972.

"While following the absolute leadership of the working class and the Communist Party of the Philippines," the Basic Rules issued by the NPA declared, "the New People's Army incorporates mainly the armed peasants fighting for agrarian revolution, which is the main content of the people's democratic revolution."

The growth of support for the NPA was part of a broader challenge to the Marcos dictatorship by the workers and peasants. This included the development of the May 1 Movement (KMU) union federation, the Peasant Movement of the Philippines, church-related human rights and social action organizations, and other organizations. The National Federation of Sugar Workers, which has developed strong support in the Negros cane fields, is a KMU affiliate.

Many of these popular organizations united during Marcos' reign to form the National Democratic Front, which supports many of the political goals of the guerrilla movement.

Many figures accused of supporting the NPA were released from prison after Marcos' regime fell. They included Jose Maria Sison, a founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines. He and the late KMU Chairman Rolando Olalia were among the founders of the Party of the Nation, a legal political party set up after Marcos' downfall that advocates radical social change in the Philippines.

But the struggle in the countryside continued after Aquino was brought to office by the popular upsurge that ended the Marcos regime. And scores of others arrested



New recruits being trained by guerrillas of New People's Army

under Marcos remain in rural jails in the Philippines, and some have been jailed since Aquino came to power.

On Negros, for example, the landlords and their hired guns use charges of supporting the NPA as a pretext for jailing peasant organizers.

The landlords have maintained their pri-

vate armies, and their supporters such as ousted Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile were among the strongest foes of a cease-fire.

The armed forces also continued the war against the guerrillas. Up until the announcement of the cease-fire, an average of 10 people were being killed each day.

## —WORLD NEWS BRIEFS—

### Largest French student protest since 1968

Just a week after the French government unveiled plans to raise university tuitions and tighten up entrance qualifications, hundreds of thousands of students poured into the streets of Paris and 50 other cities to protest the move.

Organizers said that more than a million demonstrators took part in the November 27 action, while police estimates put the number at more than 400,000. In either case, it was the largest student action in the country since 1968, when a massive student and worker revolt nearly toppled the government.

"Out, out, out, the students are in the streets!" chanted the marchers in Paris, demanding the resignation of Education Minister René Monory. The march ended in a mass sit-in outside the National Assembly, where assembly members were scheduled to debate the new education bill.

The following day the government announced that it would make some revisions in the bill.

### UN condemns U.S. air strikes against Libya

The United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution November 20 condemning the U.S. raid against Libya last April as a violation of international law.

Adopted by a 79-28 vote, with 33 abstentions, the resolution also "affirms the right" of Libya "to receive appropriate compensation." And in a reference to the U.S. use of British airfields, the UN called on countries to "refrain from extending any assistance or facilities for perpetrating acts of aggression" against Libya.

### Barclays Bank sells off South African stake

Officials of Barclays Bank, one of the largest British investors in South Africa, announced November 24 that they were selling off their holdings there. Barclays' interests will be bought by several South African companies, including Anglo American Corp., the mining and industrial giant.

This divestment move came in the wake of several other prominent pullouts by U.S. companies such as General

Motors and International Business Machines. But Barclays' move was the first one by a major British concern.

Barclays officials said the reason for the withdrawal was "basically commercial." The profits from the bank's South African operations had fallen from 10 percent of its total profits in 1980 to less than 3 percent in 1985.

Pressure from the anti-apartheid movement was also a key factor. "World opinion counts," said Sir Timothy Bevan, the bank chairman. "It affects commerce. And world opinion has changed quite a lot this year."

### Brazilians demonstrate against price hikes

Thousands of workers and students filled the streets of Brasilia, Brazil's capital, November 27 to protest new gasoline and other price increases.

The protesters were attacked by police with clubs and tear gas, leading to clashes that left considerable damage.

Besides the price hikes, the government has announced plans to shut down 15 state enterprises, which could lead to layoffs of 30,000 workers.

The United Workers Federation (CUT), representing more than 11 million workers, has called for a countrywide general strike in mid-December to protest the government's latest economic measures.

### Canada's native peoples hit NATO base plans

Representatives of the native Attikameke and Montagnais peoples of Canada's northern Quebec and Labrador regions traveled to NATO headquarters in Brussels November 20. They went to express their "categorical opposition" to plans to expand the NATO air base at Goose Bay.

The flights from the base, located at the mouth of Labrador's Churchill River, have already led to some pollution of the rivers and lakes in the subarctic region and have disturbed the local wildlife. This has seriously affected the livelihood of the Attikamekes and Montagnais, many of whom are hunters and trappers.

Currently there are between 30 and 50 flights daily from the base. Under NATO's expansion plans, there will be about 200.

## Philippine cease-fire pact

Continued from front page accomplishment."

Since Salas had been participating in the negotiations, his arrest caused a breakdown in the talks until November 10.

The NDF withdrew from the talks again after the assassination of Rolando Olalia, chairman of the May 1 Movement union federation. The talks resumed November 25.

The accord calls on the armed forces "to disarm and punish abusive members and units in the field, including abusive CHDF [Civilian Home Defense Forces]." The military has given this title to many of the landlords' private armies that terrorize the rural population. The NDF agreed that the NPA would also discipline its own forces.

However, the agreement also states that "government peace-keeping functions against criminal activities shall continue" during the cease-fire. This is how the military has presented the war against the NPA in the past.

Gen. Eduardo Ermita, deputy chief of staff of the armed forces, asserted that "definitely, the military will support" the agreement. Defense Minister Rafael Ilete said he thought "we must give the effort a chance." However, he indicated, there are differences in the officer corps about this.

Chief NDF negotiator Saturnino Ocampo called the truce a first step toward "peace based on justice, freedom, and democracy."

Discussions between the NDF and the government on bringing an end to the war



Government negotiator Ramon Mitra holding copy of pact. To right is Saturnino Ocampo of the National Democratic Front.

are supposed to start within 30 days. Ocampo and government negotiator Ramon Mitra both predicted that these talks would be more difficult than the cease-fire negotiations.

NDF negotiators said such issues as redistribution of land and the occupation of Philippine territory by U.S. bases would be raised.

In an earlier interview with the *Washington Post*, Ocampo stated, "The root of the insurgency lies in the unjust social structures."

# Socialist Regional Educational Conferences

## ALABAMA

### Birmingham

**Government Crisis Rocks the Philippines.** Speaker: Ronaldo Karunungan, founding chair of Samahang Pinaoi (Alliance for Philippine Concerns). Film: *Breaking Ground for Freedom*. Sat., Dec. 6, 6:30 p.m. 1306 1st Ave. N. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (205) 323-3079.

## ARIZONA

### Phoenix

**"The Truth Must Not Only Be the Truth, It Must Be Told."** Speakers: representative of African National Congress of South Africa; Fred Halstead, Socialist Workers Party, leader of movement against Vietnam War; Francisca Cavazos, Arizona Farm Workers Union, recently returned from the Philippines; Pablo Otero, Young Socialist Alliance; Dawn Noggle, Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. Sat., Dec. 13. Reception, 6 p.m.; rally, 7 p.m. 1809 W Indian School Rd. Donation: \$3. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance and Pathfinder Books. For more information call (602) 279-5850.

**The Fighting Potential of the U.S. Working Class.** Class by Fred Halstead. Sun., Dec. 14, noon. 1809 W Indian School Rd. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance and Pathfinder Books. Donation: \$2. For more information call (602) 279-5850.

## CALIFORNIA

### San Francisco

**A Tribute to Nelson Mandela: A Celebration of the U.S. Publication of His Writings.** Featured speaker Neo Mnumzana, chief UN delegate of the African National Congress of South Africa. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 13, 7 p.m. ILWU Local 34, 4 Berry St. (at Embarcadero). Donation: \$2. Ausp: Pathfinder Bookstore. For more information call (415) 282-6255.

### San Jose

**Crisis in the Philippines. Workers and Farmers Press Their Demands.** Speaker: Joel Rocamora, director Philippine Resource Center. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 20, 7:30 p.m. 46½ Race St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (408) 998-4007.

## GEORGIA

### Atlanta

**Women in Struggle.** Speakers: Byllie Avery, founder and executive director of the National Black Women's Health Project; others. Showing of video from the International Women's Conference held in Nairobi, Kenya. 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd floor. Sat., Dec. 6, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$2.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

## MARYLAND

### Baltimore

**Reagan's Secret Aid to 'Contras': New Openings for Antiwar Protests.** Speakers: Debbie Frattan, CASA Baltimore; Joe Delia, Towson State U. antiwar activist; Sarah Harris, Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., Dec. 6, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (301) 235-0013.

## MASSACHUSETTS

### Boston

**South Africa Sanctions Bill: The Hidden Attack on the African National Congress.** Speakers to be announced. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 6, 7:30 p.m. 107 Brighton Ave., Allston. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (617) 787-0275.

## MICHIGAN

### Detroit

**Stop Union-Busting, Save Jobs.** Speakers:

## CALIFORNIA

### Los Angeles

**Forum. The U.S. War Against Nicaragua: How It Can Be Stopped, Its Impact on U.S. Workers.** Sat., Dec. 6, 7:30 p.m.

Two classes: 1. **The Coming Revolution in South Africa and the Role of the African National Congress.** Sat., Dec. 6, 12:30 p.m. 2. **The Cuban Role in Africa.** Sat., Dec. 6, 3 p.m. Classes and forum translated to Spanish. Speaker: Malik Miah, Socialist Workers Party National Committee.

Events held at 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$5 for series or \$2 per event. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

## GEORGIA

### Atlanta

**Forum. Why We Need a Revolution in the United States.** Speaker: Thabo Ntweng, Socialist Workers Party National Committee. Sun., Dec. 14, 10 a.m.

Two classes on **Roots of U.S. War Drive in Central America.** Sat., Dec. 13, 2 p.m. and Sun., noon.

Events held at 132 Cone St. Ausp: Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

## ILLINOIS

### Chicago

**Workers, Farmers, and Students Need to**

Merle Krueger, member Original Local P-9, Austin, Minnesota; Joe Wilson, president United Auto Workers Local 15; Joe Velsler, United Steelworkers of America District 29 organizer; Sat., Dec. 13, 3 p.m. 2441 W Grand Blvd. Ausp: International Association of Machinists Local 82. For more information call (313) 898-9163.

**GM Plant Closings: How to Fight Them.** Speaker: Andrew Pulley, Socialist Workers Party, member United Auto Workers Local 5960. Film showing: *Poletown Lives*. Sat., Dec. 13, 8 p.m. 2135 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (313) 961-0395.

## MISSOURI

### St. Louis

**Labor's Turning Point.** A film about the 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters' strike. Sat., Dec. 6, 7 p.m. 4907 Martin Luther King Dr. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (314) 361-0250.

## MINNESOTA

### St. Paul

**Reagan's Secret Arms Deal.** Speakers: Natasha Terlexis, Socialist Workers Party; others. Sat., Dec. 6, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

## NEW YORK

### Manhattan

**Holiday Benefit Dance for Independent Federation of Flight Attendants (TWA workers).** Sat., Dec. 13, 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. Local 1199, 310 W 43rd St. Donation: \$10. Ausp: IFFA. For more information call (718) 520-0996.

**Fundraiser in Solidarity with Puerto Rican Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War.** Speakers: Julio Rosado, eastern coordinator of the MLN; Felix Rosa, recently released political prisoner. Cultural presentation by Grupo Bajari. Fri., Dec. 12. Food, refreshments, literature, arts and crafts. El Caney, 170 E 116 St. (between Lexington and 3rd aves.) Donation: \$5. Ausp: National Committee to Free Puerto Rican

**Discuss How We Can Stop the U.S. War on Nicaragua and Defend Workers and Farmers at Home.**

Class series begins Sat., Dec. 13, 12 noon, ends Sun., Dec. 14, 2 p.m.

Keynote address: **War and Crisis in the Americas.** Speaker: Mac Warren, Socialist Workers Party National Committee. Sat., Dec. 13, 7 p.m.

All events at McCormick Center Hotel. Translation to Spanish provided. Donation: \$6 for conference. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (312) 326-5853.

## MISSOURI

### Kansas City

**Forum. Why We Need a Revolution in the United States.** Sat., Dec. 13, 8 p.m.

Two classes: **U.S. Farm Crisis and Why Workers and Farmers Have a Stake in Ending It.** Sat., Dec. 13, 1 p.m.; Sun., Dec. 14, 1 p.m.

Events held at 4725 Troost. Donation: \$5 for conference; \$2 for classes. Ausp: Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (816) 753-0404.

## NEW YORK

### Manhattan

Two-class series: **The State of U.S. Trade Unions Today.** Sat., Dec. 13, 11 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. **The Coming Revolution in South Africa.** Sat. 11 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

Forum: **The U.S. Political Situation**

Prisoners of War.

## NORTH CAROLINA

### Greensboro

**How Can Workers Defend Themselves Against Company Attacks?** Speakers to be announced. Video showing of *Labor's Turning Point*. Sun., Dec. 7, 5 p.m. 2219 E Market St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (919) 272-5996.

## OHIO

### Cleveland

**The Fight Against the Perry Nuclear Power Plant.** A panel discussion. Sat., Dec. 6, 7:30 p.m. 2521 Market Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (216) 861-6150.

## OREGON

### Portland

**From Big Mountain to Columbia River: Native American Rights Under Attack.** Speakers: representative from Columbia River Defense Project, Northwest Big Mountain Support Group, and Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. 2732 NE Union. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (503) 287-7416.

## TEXAS

### Houston

**Behind the U.S.-Iran 'Contra' Arms Deal.** Panel discussion. Speakers to be announced. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Almeda Rd. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

## UTAH

### Salt Lake City

**Utah Youth Speak Out in Support of Nicaragua.** A panel discussion. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 6, 7:30 p.m. 767 S State,

Today. Discussion to follow. Speaker: Larry Seigle, national leader of Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m. Party to follow.

Two classes: **The Roots of the Imperialist War in Central America** and **The U.S. Farm Crisis.** Sun., Dec. 14. Both at 1:30 p.m.

Conference events translated to Spanish. Registration Sat., 10 to 11 a.m. Young Socialist Alliance reception Sat., 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. All events at 79 Leonard St. Donation: \$6 for conference; or \$1.50 per class; \$3 for forum. Ausp: YSA and Socialist Workers Party. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

**Forum: Prospects for Socialism in the United States.** Speaker: John Studer, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m.

Two-class series: 1. **The Freedom Struggle in South Africa.** Speaker to be announced. Sat., 3 p.m. and Sun., Dec. 14, 12:30 p.m. 2. **War and Revolution in Central America.** Speaker: Jerry Freiwrth, Socialist Workers Party National Committee. Sat., 3 p.m. and Sun., 12:30 p.m. Forum and classes translated to Spanish.

Events held at Antioch School of Law, 2633 16th St. NW. Donation: \$5 for conference or \$2 per event. Ausp: Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party. For more information call (202) 797-7699.

3rd floor. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum/ Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

**New Immigration Legislation: An Attack on Democratic Rights.** Speakers to be announced. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. 767 S State, 3rd floor. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

## VIRGINIA

### Newport News

**New Stage in the Struggle for Democracy in the Philippines.** Speaker: Bob Morgan, Socialist Workers Party; others to be announced. Sun., Dec. 7, 7:30 p.m. 5412 Jefferson Ave. Donation: \$3. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (804) 380-0133.

## WASHINGTON

### Seattle

**New Immigration Laws: An Attack on Immigrant Workers, the Effect of Initiative 30.** Panel: Jose Bocanegra, representative from Committee in Defense of Immigrant Rights; Socialist Workers Party; others. Sat., Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. 5517 Rainier Ave. S. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (206) 723-5330.

## WEST VIRGINIA

### Charleston

**The Truth Behind U.S. Secret Arms Sales.** Speakers to be announced. Sun., Dec. 7, 7 p.m. 116 McFarland St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 345-3040.

## WISCONSIN

### Milwaukee

**Behind Reagan's Iran Crisis: Socialist Viewpoint.** Speaker: Tony Prince, Socialist Workers Party, member of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 64. Sat., Dec. 6, 7:30 p.m. 4707 W Lisbon Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (414) 445-2076.

**Dallas:** SWP, YSA, 336 W. Jefferson. Zip: 75208. Tel: (214) 943-5195. **Houston:** SWP, YSA, 4806 Almeda. Zip: 77004. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

**UTAH: Price:** SWP, YSA, 23 S. Carbon Ave., Suite 19, P.O. Box 758. Zip: 84501. Tel: (801) 637-6294. **Salt Lake City:** SWP, YSA, 767 S. State, 3rd floor. Zip: 84111. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

**VIRGINIA: Tidewater Area (Newport News):** SWP, YSA, 5412 Jefferson Ave. Zip 23605. Tel: (804) 380-0133.

**WASHINGTON, D.C.:** SWP, YSA, 3106 Mt. Pleasant St. NW. Zip: 20010. Tel: (202) 797-7699, 797-7021.

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

**WEST VIRGINIA: Charleston:** SWP, YSA, 116 McFarland St. Zip: 25301. Tel: (304) 345-3040. **Morgantown:** SWP, YSA, 221 Pleasant St. Zip: 26505. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

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

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**ALABAMA: Birmingham:** SWP, YSA, 1306 1st Ave. N. Zip: 35203. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

**ARIZONA: Phoenix:** SWP, YSA, 1809 W. Indian School Rd. Zip: 85015. Tel: (602) 279-5850.

**CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles:** SWP, YSA, 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Zip: 90006. Tel: (213) 380-9460. **Oakland:** SWP, YSA, 3808 E 14th St. Zip: 94601. Tel: (415) 261-3014. **San Diego:** SWP, YSA, 2803 B St. Zip: 92102. Tel: (619) 234-4630. **San Francisco:** SWP, YSA, 3284 23rd St. Zip: 94110. Tel: (415) 282-6255. **San Jose:** SWP, YSA, 46½ Race St. Zip: 95126. Tel: (408) 998-4007.

**COLORADO: Denver:** SWP, YSA, 25 W. 3rd Ave. Zip: 80223. Tel: (303) 698-2550.

**FLORIDA: Miami:** SWP, YSA, 137 NE 54th St. Mailing address: P.O. Box 370486. Zip: 33137. Tel: (305) 756-1020. **Tallahassee:** YSA, P.O. Box 20715. Zip: 32316. Tel: (904) 222-4434.

**GEORGIA: Atlanta:** SWP, YSA, 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd Floor. Zip: 30303. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

**ILLINOIS: Chicago:** SWP, YSA, 3455 S. Michigan Ave. Zip: 60616. Tel: (312) 326-5853 or 326-5453.

**KENTUCKY: Louisville:** SWP, YSA, 809 E. Broadway. Zip: 40204. Tel: (502) 587-8418.

**LOUISIANA: New Orleans:** SWP, YSA, 3640 Magazine St. Zip: 70115. Tel: (504) 895-1961.

**MARYLAND: Baltimore:** SWP, YSA, 2913 Greenmount Ave. Zip: 21218. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

**MASSACHUSETTS: Boston:** SWP, YSA, 107 Brighton Ave., 2nd floor, Allston. Zip: 02134. Tel: (617) 787-0275.

**MICHIGAN: Detroit:** SWP, YSA, 2135 Woodward Ave. Zip: 48201. Tel: (313) 961-0395.

**MINNESOTA: Twin Cities:** SWP, YSA, 508 N. Snelling Ave., St. Paul. Zip: 55104. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

**MISSOURI: Kansas City:** SWP, YSA, 4725 Troost. Zip: 64110. Tel: (816) 753-0404. **St. Louis:** SWP, YSA, 4907 Martin Luther King Dr. Zip: 63113. Tel: (314) 361-0250.

**NEW JERSEY: Newark:** SWP, YSA, 141 Halsey. Zip: 07102. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

**NEW YORK: Capital District (Albany):** SWP, YSA, 114E Quail St. Zip: 12206. Tel: (518) 434-3247. **New York:** SWP, YSA, 79 Leonard St. Zip: 10013. Tel: (212) 219-3679 or 925-1668. Socialist Books, 226-8445.

**NORTH CAROLINA: Greensboro:** SWP, YSA, 2219 E Market. Zip: 27401. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

**OHIO: Cincinnati:** SWP, YSA, 4945 Pad-dock Rd. Zip: 45237. Tel: (513) 242-7161.

**Cleveland:** SWP, YSA, 2521 Market Ave. Zip: 44113. Tel: (216) 861-6150. **Columbus:** YSA, P.O. Box 02097. Zip: 43202. **Toledo:** SWP, YSA, 1701 W Bancroft St. Zip: 43606. Tel: (419) 536-0383.

**OREGON: Portland:** SWP, YSA, 2732 NE Union. Zip: 97212. Tel: (503) 287-7416.

**PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia:** SWP, YSA, 2744 Germantown Ave. Zip: 19133. Tel: (215) 225-0213. **Pittsburgh:** SWP, YSA, 402 N. Highland Ave. Zip: 15206. Tel: (412) 362-6767.

**TEXAS: Austin:** YSA, c/o Mike Rose, 7409 Berkman Dr. Zip: 78752. Tel: (512) 452-3923.

**No sweat** — Experts at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission have resolved the seemingly thorny problem of evacuating masses of people from the area of



Harry Ring

a stricken nuke plant. How? Don't try to move them all. "You would not move everybody in a 10-mile radius," an expert said. "Maybe some would just need to close

their windows or go to the basement — something like that."

**God's work?** — A U of Pittsburgh researcher says it's a mystery why, but research suggests that women over the age of 50 who have married but never had children may face an increased risk of dying suddenly of heart disease. The "study" was of 98 women.

**Ah, they're only kids** — the Beech-Nut Nutrition (!) Corp. was indicted for shipping 25,000 cases of phony apple juice intended for babies. The stuff included beet sugar, cane sugar, corn syrup and various other ingredients. The company is the second biggest

producer of baby food.

**Grounds for a coup** — We missed it at the time, but a few months back Imelda Marcos charged that Philippine President Aquino was wearing one of the 3,000 pairs of shoes she left behind when she and spouse Ferdy split the Malacañang Palace.

**In living color** — If there's less heat in your work area, or the company clock seems to be running slow, maybe your griever should check it out. With new technological advances, video cameras for spying on workers can now be made tiny enough to squeeze into a thermostat or wall clock.

**For sure** — In preparation for the 1989 bicentennial celebration of the signing of the Constitution, companies are readying quill pens, placemats, ashtrays, T-shirts, tie clasps, etc., with constitutional themes. "This is a great opportunity to show the spirit of America," said an exec at the Wall Street firm of Merrill Lynch.

**Stocking stuffer** — A Montreal museum is offering a parmesan cheese cellar created by a well-known furniture designer. The cellar, \$67.95. With spoon, \$79.95.

**A steal** — An executive of the company that sells it feels \$13.50 is reasonable for St. Laurent lipstick. "You're paying for a

number of things," she explains. "Shades based on couture fashions, state-of-the-art formulations and packaging."

**March of civilization** — Bugging devices can now be voice-activated, leaving government snoopers and other dirty-trick artists more time for other illegal activity.

**Quick as a thief** — In its recent feature on the country's 400 richest people, *Forbes* magazine notes that 10 of the nation's greatest fortunes at least doubled in the past 12 months, observing, "Yes, the rich do get richer, and they do it faster, too."

# How Oakland workers beat union-busting in 1946

BY PAUL MONTAUK

OAKLAND, Calif. — Workers on strike against the Kaiser Foundation Health Plan here since October 27 are fighting company demands that they accept a two-tier wage system and other takebacks. Their struggle has become a rallying point for many unionists in this area.

The living standards and union rights that Kaiser workers have had, and that the employer is now trying to take away, are the products of previous struggles. An important one happened here 40 years ago — the Oakland general strike of Dec. 3-5, 1946.

In that action, about 100,000 workers protested the use of scabs to block union organizing drives and the backing the city council and cops gave to the union-busters.

The strike was called by the Alameda County American Federation of Labor Central Labor Council and the railroad brotherhoods. (This was before the 1955 merger of the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations formed the AFL-CIO.)

This event took place in the aftermath of World War II, in the midst of a massive upswing in strikes and union activity that swept the country.

In Oakland, the Department Store Clerks union had launched an organizing drive at the downtown department stores, and more than 90 percent of the workers had signed up for union representation. When the owners said no, the workers struck two of the big stores on October 31.

The majority of the striking workers were women recently hired as salespersons. They had been kicked out of the shipyards and other war industries and forced

back into traditional "women's" jobs.

At the department stores they were put on the "waiting system." They had to show up for work and wait unpaid in a back room of the store for a supervisor to call them out if needed to sell merchandise during busy hours.

## Scabs brought in

The workers set up mass picket lines. The bosses responded by importing scabs from Los Angeles and keeping the stores open. The local Teamsters voted overwhelmingly to honor picket lines, and many other unions lent similar support.

The department stores announced that merchandise would be delivered to the stores by the newly created "Veterans Trucking Line Inc." under the "personal supervision of the Oakland chief of police."

On the delivery day, hundreds of massed Oakland and Berkeley cops cleared pickets out of the vicinity of the stores and towed away all cars whose owners could not be found quickly. Dozens of cars belonging to unionists were stolen in this way. The scab trucks then made the deliveries, with an escort of police radio cars and motorcycle cops.

Streetcar and bus drivers left their vehicles to join the embattled pickets, and traffic was tied up for hours. AFL and other union officials then held a strategy meeting at the Labor Temple. On December 2 officials of all AFL unions, with one dissenting vote, called for a "general work holiday." The general strike officially began at 5:00 a.m. the next morning.

The San Francisco *Examiner* reported that on that day in Oakland, "you can't board a streetcar, call a cab, buy food, go to a movie, buy gas, get a haircut, buy fresh vegetables, get laundry washed, eat in a restaurant, or Christmas shop."

The East Bay printers walked out, closing down the four big-business dailies. When San Francisco papers attempted to deliver bundles, they were stopped at the Golden Gate Bridge by threats to extend picketing to San Francisco.

Water, gas and electricity were maintained by CIO unions at the request of the AFL. The CIO Industrial Council, which represented 31,000 Alameda County workers, voted to join the strike. The AFL officials asked them to hold off.

## City comes to halt

Aside from basic utilities, the entire city came to a halt. Police were no longer massed on the streets. Streetcar and bus drivers directed traffic. Everyone, including the commander of the army base who wanted to move a ship, had to get the permission of the General Strike Permit Committee to move anything.

More than 6,000 people picketed the two struck stores demanding that the employers recognize the Department Store Clerks.

That night, about 20,000 people gathered inside and around the Civic Auditorium to hear AFL officials denounce the strikebreaking attempts of the employers, cops, and city officials.

During the course of the 54-hour strike, order was maintained by the strike committee. The only violent incident occurred when a man was struck by a cop's motorcycle.

By the third day of the strike, *Militant* correspondent Robert Chester reported, "The magnificent solidarity of labor triumphed. After an all-night session between [Oakland City Manager] Hassler and the strike strategy committee, the agreement not to use police to escort strikebreakers . . . was announced this morning."

"This afternoon," Chester continued, "while hundreds of jeering pickets looked on and pressed against police lines, a group of scared and bedraggled-looking scabs . . . were sneaked through police lines into the nearby City Hall, from which, several hours later, they left in inconspicuous groups of twos and threes."

As the strike ended, negotiations between the Department Store Clerks and the store owners were renewed. In the end, the clerks' union secured a contract, including union recognition, wage increases, and the abolition of the "waiting system."

The unions continued organizing efforts, and the city council and cops renewed harassment. Then the Oakland Labor Council's *East Bay Labor Journal* carried the headline: "Why Continue to Fight City Hall, Why Not Take It Over."

A resolution was adopted by the AFL council, the CIO council, and the rail brotherhoods "to begin the practical steps of building the organization that will win victory at the polls." The Alameda County Joint Committee to Fight Antilabor Legislation (JLC) was formed.

## Unionists run for office

Union officials from five union locals were selected to run for city council in the May 1947 elections. This action was endorsed by a meeting of more than 8,000 workers. The JLC changed its name to the

Oakland Voters League (OVL), and the labor election campaign was launched.

On election eve, a unionists' car caravan estimated at 500 automobiles honked its way through the city, calling all to the polls to "vote for labor." On election day, more than 100,000 ballots were cast. Four out of five OVL candidates were elected, and a fifth was elected later. Joe Smith, head of the local of the National Lawyers Guild, became mayor. With him on the council were officials from the Carpenters union, the Painters, a rail brotherhood, and a communications workers union.

Out of the general strike a new formation had developed — the Negro-Labor Committee. It was made up of Black unionists and community leaders who were fed up with the prevailing racist discrimination.

At their insistence, one of the first items taken up by the new city council was the racist practices of the cops. The council voted to completely close down the notorious West Oakland Lock-up, an old jail in the Black community, which the cops kept filled all the time. Four cops were fired, and many others quit.

Union organizing drives moved forward. One issue of the *East Bay Labor Journal* reported the organization of the newly founded Kaiser Hospital in Oakland by several unions.

For eight years, unionists made up a majority of the Oakland City Council — the mayor among them. But the independence of the OVL as a labor political body was short-lived. The AFL and CIO leaderships gradually buried the OVL in the Democratic Party. It lingered as a liberal "people's" organization for a while and was then dissolved.

## — 10 AND 25 YEARS AGO —

### THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE 25c  
December 10, 1976

As the *Militant* goes to press December 1, a Utah judge said Gary Mark Gilmore should be shot December 6 at sunrise.

Gilmore says he wants to die. As the story has unfolded in the media, it has often been made to look like one man's personal tragedy.

But the state of Utah is trying to take Gilmore's life. That makes it everybody's business.

There are hundreds of human beings on death rows across the country. Up till now, the executioner's hand has been stayed. [In 1972 the Supreme Court had ruled that the death penalty as it was enforced was unconstitutional.]

But Gilmore's execution could open the way to a bloodbath. The death penalty is cruel and barbaric. And, as applied in the United States, it is also racist to the core. Most victims of this bloodbath will be poor and Black.

A massive public outcry is needed *right now* to stop the executions before they begin. Abolish the death penalty!

### THE MILITANT

Published in the Interests of the Working People  
December 11, 1961 Price 10c

December 6 — While troops used guns, clubs, and tear gas to smash the general strike of the Dominican people, U.S. warships, which had hovered three miles off the country's coast, quietly withdrew to 12 miles from shore. The move at the height of the military bloodletting gave the lie to President [John] Kennedy's claim that the ships had been sent to prevent reestablishment of dictatorial rule on the island.

Despite ferocious government attacks, and handicapped by a spineless top leadership, the general strike to topple the hated [President Joaquin] Balaguer regime is now in its ninth day. Any illusions among the Dominican masses that U.S. power would be used to help them establish democracy have been dispelled. Last Friday, government troops opened fire without warning on a procession of more than a thousand women in support of the strike. Nine women were wounded. One correspondent reported that the crowd turned on U.S. newsmen and one person shouted:

"Your ships are out there to defend this government so it can machine-gun women!"

### Battles that built the unions

## Labor's Giant Step: 20 Years of the CIO

by Art Preis

The story of the labor struggles that unionized much of the auto, steel, maritime, and other industries in the United States in the 1930s and 1940s, written by a participant. Preis' history includes sections on the battles that established the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), union struggles during World War II, the labor upsurge after the war, and on the antilabor witch-hunt that completed the housebreaking and bureaucratization of this movement in the post war years. 538 pp., \$11.95.

Available from the bookstores listed on page 12, and from Pathfinder Press, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014. Please include \$.75 for postage and handling.

## Union Carbide's crime in India

The government of India is seeking \$3 billion in damages from the Union Carbide Corporation. In December 1984 a deadly gas escaped from the company's chemical pesticide plant in Bhopal, claiming the lives of more than 2,300 people in that Indian city and injuring some 200,000 more. Measured against Union Carbide's criminal responsibility for that catastrophe, the damage claim, announced November 22, is modest.

With typical capitalist arrogance, Union Carbide responded that the Indian government claim was "without foundation." In a court affidavit the company claimed that India's federal government and the government of the state in which Bhopal is located should take responsibility for the deaths and injuries because they allegedly permitted people to live illegally near the plant.

This is a hoax.

The Bhopal plant was not built in some safely remote area and then surrounded by illegal squatters' shacks. The plant is located on the outskirts of Bhopal, a city of 900,000.

When deadly methyl isocyanate gas erupted, "The whole city became a big gas chamber," is how one social worker there described it.

Some people died on the spot. Others, blinded and choking, tried to escape but still suffered injuries by the tens of thousands. Nearly two months later one doctor said his clinic was still treating 600 victims a day, many of them people initially considered to have recovered.

Many of the injured, doctors say, will suffer premature death. Others will suffer blindness, sterility, and lung, kidney, and liver damage.

Apparently, as its last line of defense, Union Carbide is now claiming that the leak was deliberately caused by a disgruntled employee.

With Union Carbide's record on wages and safety conditions, there were, no doubt, many disgruntled employees at the Bhopal plant. But the company has produced no evidence that one of them is responsible for the disaster.

Meanwhile, there is a mass of evidence pointing to the company's readiness to sacrifice lives for profits.

In the Bhopal plant's department where lethal gases

are produced, unionists there charged at the time that the work crew had been cut in half, resulting in a pileup of necessary maintenance work.

A key piece in the safety system had broken down six days before the gas escaped and had not been repaired.

A scrubber designed to keep the plant free of toxic chemicals was not working for a month. Meters on gas-storage tanks were not functioning properly.

Such disregard for safety is Union Carbide policy in all its plants. Safety conditions at the Bhopal plant were no doubt worse than those in Union Carbide plants in this country. But the difference is a matter of degree.

Last April the U.S. Department of Labor announced a \$1.4-million fine against Union Carbide for 221 health and safety violations at its chemical plant in Institute, West Virginia.

If that's the situation here, you can imagine what the Union Carbide safety record is in an impoverished country such as India, where the company's economic clout is even greater.

For years, workers in colonial and semicolonial countries have borne the brunt of the pesticide toll. Oxfam, the British relief agency, estimates that in 1982 alone, there were 375,000 cases of pesticide poisoning, with 10,000 dead, in imperialist-dominated countries.

Initially, the Indian government sought to have the Bhopal damage suit tried in this country. It did so because the Indian court system moves at even more of a snail's pace than the ones here when it comes to such matters. And it was estimated that monetary awards were likely to be smaller in India.

But last May, a U.S. district court judge in New York ruled the case should be tried in India, not here.

To hold it here, he piously asserted, would be "yet another example of imperialism."

The Bhopal disaster, understandably, generated massive public outrage in India. It is to be hoped this will be translated into strong pressure for maximum financial compensation for the Union Carbide victims.

And it would be fitting and proper if criminal action was initiated against key executives of the company as well.

## Why can't everyone find housing?

BY DOUG JENNESS

A few weeks ago, the city council in Alexandria, Virginia, approved a real estate developers' plan to remove 1,500 residents from Dominion Garden, a 416-unit apartment complex in a largely Latino community. The apartments are to be renovated and the rents jacked up.

Evicted tenants will supposedly receive between \$380 and \$880 in compensation, but they say this is "nickel and dimes." They were paying an average monthly rent of \$460 for a two-bedroom apartment, and now many of them can't find anything for much less than \$1,000.

This scene is typical of what is happening in cities and towns across the country. It is one of the many ways that residents are being displaced from their homes or apartments. Tenants are also being kicked out of their apartments when buildings are torn down to make room for

## LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

new office buildings or luxury housing or are converted into condominiums.

Many homeowners, victims of long layoffs, are losing their homes when they can't make their mortgage payments.

Many displaced persons are able to find alternative housing, although often more expensive and inferior to what they had before. Or they double up with relatives or friends. But a considerable number do not find a place to live at all. They seek shelter in city parks, steam tunnels, railroad and bus stations, abandoned buildings, on the streets — any place they can.

Nobody knows how many people are homeless. In fact, the number is disputed by statistics takers, with the most conservative saying 350,000, and others placing the figure as high as 2 million. But whatever the exact number, it's staggering.

How could this situation arise in a country as wealthy as the United States? Why can't everyone have a place to live?

It's certainly not due to insufficient materials or labor. This country doesn't lack lumber or cement-producing capacity; and a great many experienced construction workers are ready to build new, low-cost housing.

Moreover, at any given time, a substantial number of apartments or houses are vacant. According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 7.5 percent of all housing units were vacant year round in 1983. And this figure is a bit higher than it had been in the 1960s and 1970s.

The reason why hundreds of thousands can't find a place to live and even more are forced to live in dwellings unfit for human habitation can be boiled down to one word: profits. It is less profitable for the weasels of the real estate world to build housing for low-income workers.

The return on their investment isn't as great. By constructing office buildings or luxury apartments, they can collect much more rent for each dollar invested than if they develop housing for low-income tenants.

In older buildings, where the original investment has been or is nearly repaid and where maintenance costs are mounting, landlords will often allow the buildings to deteriorate. This is done without any regard to the health and safety of the tenants. Eventually they tear down the old firetraps and build new buildings or renovate the old apartments. Or they sell the land to a new owner who develops buildings on it. In either case, this "gentrification" leads to substantially greater rents and fatter wallets for the landlords.

Tenants' checks contribute to whatever maintenance is done on the building where they live, as well as help pay for the original cost of the building. But a big hunk of it also goes to the landlord simply because he or she owns the land and can charge for its use.

Although the form is different, most homeowners are also victims of parasitism. In order to buy a home, they have to borrow money from a bank or a loan shark at high interest rates. And if they fall behind in their payments, the bloodsuckers who are getting rich off of them foreclose on their mortgages and take over their homes. That's when thousands of jobless workers and their families learn that homeowners' deeds don't guarantee unlimited occupancy.

Rents are taking a bigger bite out of tenants' income, and the cost of buying a home is mounting.

In 1970, 50 percent of tenants paid more than 20 percent of their income on rent. In 1981, the same proportion of renters were paying 27 percent of their income on rent.

During the same period, a typical homeowner with a mortgage saw his or her total housing expenses grow from \$172 to \$365 — up 112 percent.

Many of the facts described here will come as no surprise to most readers. The big question is what can be done about the housing situation. That will be the subject of next week's column.

## Support antiwar protests

Continued from front page

And emergency protests in cities, towns, and campuses across the country are another step toward building an antiwar movement that can help end U.S. military intervention. The widespread anger over how the White House has lied about its contra support operation will spur more unions, religious organizations, and community groups to get actively involved in opposing this war.

The secret bankrolling of the contras goes hand in hand with the open funding of these mercenary forces.

Several months ago, Congress voted to renew aid to the mercenaries to the tune of \$100 million. So far, the contras have received \$60 million of those funds, with the other \$40 million to be delivered in the form of "heavy weapons" in February.

Congress should immediately reconvene in emergency session and rescind these funds — *every last penny*.

Both the overt and covert funding are a challenge to the antiwar majority in this country. Both are part of what has become a new stage in this war. The Sandinistas are warning that right in the middle of these exposures, Washington is escalating its aggression. (See report from Managua on front page.)

Bipartisan support for the contra aid package has given a boost to other recent moves that have increased direct U.S. involvement in this war, including: the training of contras at Hurlburt Field in Florida; selling new jet fighters to neighboring Honduras, ending previous congressional restrictions on the CIA's ability to run the contra army directly, building up even further the already massive U.S. military presence on Honduran soil, and deployment of U.S. warships and aircraft around Nicaragua.

The covert side of the war, and the cover-up of contra atrocities by government officials and the big-business media, make it more difficult to picture the scope of the aggression that Nicaragua has been subjected to, every day, nonstop, for 60 months:

- The total number of Nicaraguans killed or wounded — including those in the contra ranks — now exceeds 31,000. Nicaragua is a country of only 3 million; this would be the equivalent for the United States of well over 2 million casualties.

- More than 120,000 people have been displaced from their lands by the war.

- Health services to 250,000 people have been impaired due to the damages affecting 55 health units.

- The terrorists have destroyed 48 schools; 500 other education centers can no longer operate because they are located in war zones. This has prevented more than 90,000 children and adults from attending classes.

The decision by Congress to approve the \$100 million means that more children will be killed by contra bombs, more Indians kidnapped and pressed into the service of

the contras, more schools and hospitals burned down, and more teachers and medical workers murdered.

The Nicaraguans have dealt severe political and military blows to the contra bands. These U.S.-government hirelings don't control any Nicaraguan soil and are hated by the Nicaraguan people. They are incapable of overthrowing the Nicaraguan government.

The contras, however, continue to inflict severe human and economic damage on that impoverished country and will do so as long as Washington pays and trains them.

That's why big national antiwar protests in Washington, D.C., and on the West Coast in the spring are so important.

The proposal for actions on April 24 and 25 has already won impressive support:

- The national convention of the Mobilization for Survival voted unanimously to join with a broad range of other anti-intervention groups to help organize a "mass mobilization in Washington, D.C., and the West Coast during the weekend of April 24-25."

- The Midwest regional conference of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), on the recommendation of CISPES national leaders, voted to make mobilizing for the April actions a major priority for the spring.

- A Mid-Atlantic regional conference sponsored by the Nicaragua Network decided building the April actions is its central task.

- Steven Slade, national coordinator of the Pledge of Resistance, sent a letter to state coordinators alerting them to begin preparations for maximum participation in the national actions.

- National Actions for Peace, Jobs and Justice, which coordinated the October 25 and November 1 regional protests this fall, has added its voice in support of the April 24-25 protests.

- Local groups and coalitions across the country have begun publicizing the spring actions.

A coalition of peace, solidarity, religious, and labor organizations — the April Action Committee — has been meeting in Washington, D.C., to discuss these national mobilizations. What's needed now is a public call that clearly sets the date for the actions so that organizing can begin. Once building for the actions gets rolling, the momentum will attract many new forces, laying the basis for broadening participation in the coalition.

This is the big challenge — and the big opportunity — for all activists opposed to U.S. intervention in Nicaragua. We can give a loud and clear response to the stench of lies and provocations coming out of Washington with emergency actions now and national actions in April.

Rescind aid to the contras!  
U.S. hands off Nicaragua!

# Locked-out steelworkers discuss what to do next

BY SANDY NELSEN

"Stop working and go home, they've shut down the plant" was the word spreading through the 104-year-old Judson steel mill in Emeryville, California, one morning in July as the machines ground to a halt.

In the middle of a shift, with no warning, and within

## UNION TALK

two days of the termination of United Steelworkers of America Local 1441's contract, the company met with union officials to tell them the plant was going to shut down.

The shock of the news did not stop union members from taking immediate action. Television stations were called within minutes, and informal meetings near the plant were arranged.

The consensus among us was that the company, which

made \$2.5 million in profits last year, was trying to bust the union.

The union hall was packed that Saturday. As we signed in, there was kidding around about going fishing and taking vacations, but the underlying mood was more serious as people mulled over what to do about house payments, rent, and jobs.

Union Vice-president Daniel Parks said the company was going to shell out severance paychecks of \$500,000 but that they shouldn't be cashed because we would then be ineligible to collect unemployment benefits.

We were reminded that during the last contract negotiations, the owners had also threatened to close the plant.

The business agent said the Steelworkers International was taking the position that the company was locking us out. He promised a fightback.

A month after the lockout began, we were notified that as of Aug. 31, 1986, we would be terminated. All life insurance and dental insurance payments were going to be suspended within 10 days, and all medical benefits would be cut off on November 1.

The USWA International quickly moved away from its

stance at the first meeting. The International representative focused on working out termination details instead of struggling against the company. He became reluctant to call union meetings, although workers were more than ready to do whatever was necessary to fight.

The International froze the local's books at the beginning of October, making it impossible even to pay for a mailing to the union membership.

Meanwhile, union members are keeping an eye on Judson Steel. The company is continuing to operate its fabrication shop, organized by the Ironworkers, at the same location.

Billets are being stockpiled with the obvious intention of operating the rolling mill. The scrap yard, melt shop, and casting areas are being well maintained. There is talk that another company is interested in buying part of Judson Steel. Some union members have been contacted about coming back to work. Does this sound like a company going out of business?

Workers are trying to figure out what to do next. One worker said, "I think we can keep this union together."

## LETTERS

### Up to date

As of today, I have been on strike against the Hormel Co. for one year and three months.

The *Militant* keeps me up to date on our struggle here in Austin, along with those who are fighting their own battles. I enjoy the letters of support written in the letters section.

We are getting some court hearings soon about our trusteeship.

C.M.  
St. Ansgar, Iowa

### Solidarity with Nicaragua

On November 17 I was privileged to be invited to a breakfast honoring Sergio Ramirez, vice-president of Nicaragua.

The event was sponsored by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

SCLC invited a wide range of antiwar, solidarity, and civil rights organizations to send representatives. Approximately 100 people attended. A lot of organizations gave greetings.

Rev. Joseph Lowery, president of SCLC who had just returned from Nicaragua, praised Vice-president Ramirez and defended the right of the Nicaraguan people to live in peace. He reminded the audience that English-speaking Afro-Nicaraguans, people of the same heritage as Afro-Americans, live on the east coast of Nicaragua. He urged an end to U.S.-sponsored aggression.

This was a very significant meeting. Martin Luther King, Jr., shortly before his assassination in 1968, began to link the civil rights movement with the movement against the war in Vietnam.

That link was never fully realized. I believe that this meeting was a continuation of that linkage. The solidarity and clear focus presented at the breakfast shows the tremendous potential for building a broad-based antiwar movement.

Robin Singer  
Atlanta Committee on Latin America  
Atlanta, Georgia

### Solidarity

As a subscriber to the very informative *Militant* I would like to express one of my views.

As a person who has been on the picket line and who has been on strike against a major corporation in the fight for a fair and tolerable wage and benefits contract, I think the working class all over the world must show its solidarity and stick together.

I'm a member of the United Auto Workers, and I'm very proud of my local itself and most of its membership. The local is Local 1200; we are fighters and I feel we shall always be fighters, as we still understand the definition of sol-

idarity.

I also sincerely feel that the rank and file has done and is doing its job in this hell of a fight for fair wages and benefits that are tolerable, given today's standards and costs.

However, it's costing us good members and a chance for membership growth as the International heads seem to not want solidarity among the members of the local. When a strong local takes a stand for the rights of its membership, that local receives a title and that title is "trouble" or even "militant."

I would like to congratulate the *Militant* for its fact-finding involvement. You are out there, and you tell it like it is. As long as there is a struggle, we all should be participating and supporting each other in striving for solidarity.

John Dodson  
Berkley, Michigan

### Please renew

Thank you for the coverage you provide in the *Militant*.

After I read them, I tear the address label off and leave them in a laundromat or in the library at school.

Please renew my subscription and have a dollar donation.

Your friend,  
D.H.  
San Diego, California

### Utah elections

In the elections for Congress in Utah the Socialist Workers Party candidates received the following votes: Mary Zins for U.S. Senate, 1,845; Scott Breen for Congress, 2nd C.D., 200; and David Hurst for Congress, 3rd C.D., 1,109.

Bob Hoyle  
Salt Lake City, Utah

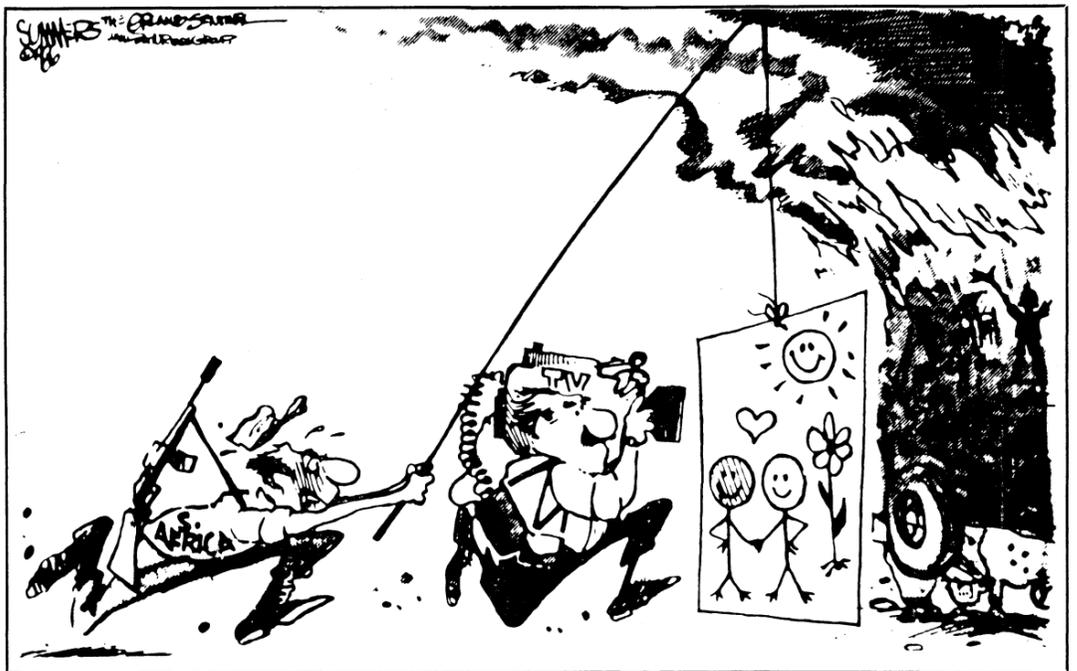
### GM plant closings

Forty people, including unionists and church leaders, picketed General Motors headquarters in Detroit November 21, protesting plans to close plants and throw 30,000 workers out of work.

Many pickets carried signs blasting GM's "inhuman" decision. A contingent from United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 15 carried a banner calling for legislation against plant closings. Local 15 organizes workers at GM's Cadillac Fleetwood plant, which is on GM's hit list.

Also on the picket line were members of other UAW locals and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, which recently went on strike against Detroit Mayor Coleman Young's union-busting.

The picket line was organized by Rep. John Conyers, who picketed GM earlier with Rosa Parks, veteran civil rights activist. At a



November 14 meeting for Estela Rocha, a teacher visiting from Nicaragua, and at other meetings over the weekend, Conyers urged people to get involved in the fight against plant closings.

Kibwe Diarra  
Detroit, Michigan

### More on Latin America

Renew my subscription for six months. I particularly enjoy your thorough coverage of Nicaragua and would like to see more on Latin America.

R.N.  
Seattle, Washington

### Strapped

I am unable to subscribe for a longer period of time, for I am strapped for money (Reagan cut my student loan)! Please keep me on your mailing list, as well as any organization affiliated with you. Good luck.

E.F.  
Boston, Massachusetts

### Scientific world outlook

May I kindly ask you to send me a catalog of Pathfinder books, pamphlets, and cassettes, together with the subscription rates on your newspaper the *Militant*.

Although my student status imposes severe financial constraints, I am ready to use the little money that I come across to order revolutionary books and pamphlets. Immediately after completion of my studies, I will regularly buy books from Pathfinder.

Our region is a focal point of sharp contradictions between the forces of imperialism (and its product and regional instrument — apartheid) on the one hand and the forces of total liberation from the yoke of capital on the other. It is imperative for us to be armed with a scientific world outlook in order to prevail over the forces of

reaction.  
A reader  
Gaborone, Botswana

### Black student

On November 19, 43-year-old Murray Kennedy was stabbed to death by 13-year-old Keyvin Lyles Jones in a small town northeast of Atlanta. Kennedy was the principal at Bethlehem Elementary School. Jones is a student there. Kennedy is white. Jones is Black.

The big-business media here is portraying Kennedy as a helpless victim, a fine educator, and a compassionate, outstanding community leader.

Jones is portrayed as a murderer. He's pictured as a troublemaker, always getting into fights.

The district attorney of Barrow County wants to charge Jones for murder. He also wants to try him as an adult.

What were the events that led to Kennedy's death?

On November 17 Jones was involved in a fight at school. Kennedy broke up the fight and disciplined Jones. In a Channel 2 television interview, Jones' mother, Sherry Lyles, explained what happened: Kennedy "shoved his [her son's] head into a desk. He pushed him on the floor. And he began to paddle him. He paddled him on the front part of his legs and on his behind. He showed me the bruises on the thigh part of his leg."

Furious about the beating, Sherry Lyles returned to school with her son two days later. They met with Kennedy. The discussion became heated. The principal called the police. The youth tried to leave.

"When my son went to the door," Lyles explained, "Mr. Kennedy shoved my son down on the floor. It was pretty hard. He got up. His book bag was in reaching distance. He just reached in his book bag and got something. I

couldn't see what it was. And he just went into [Kennedy]." The "something" Jones got was a fingernail file. The youth's family said he had been paddled by the principal in the past.

Members of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Justice Department were quick to move into the situation. They visited Jones' family in Winder, Georgia. The Justice Department officials warned the family to watch for "racial reactions" in the area.

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference, a civil rights organization, has announced it will conduct its own investigation. SCLC has also set up a legal defense fund for the youth.

Maceo Dixon  
Atlanta, Georgia

### Correction

In the article "Behind conflict between Sikhs and Indian government" in the last issue, the date of the Punjab state government elections in which the Sikh Akali Dal Party became the majority was omitted. The election was in 1985.

**The *Militant* special prisoner fund makes it possible to send reduced-rate subscriptions to prisoners who can't pay for them. Where possible the fund also tries to fill prisoners' requests for other literature. 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.**

## Calif. aircraft workers reject pact

BY DEAN DENNO

LONG BEACH, Calif. — On November 23, members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 148 voted to reject the most recent contract offer from McDonnell Douglas corporation. With about 4,000 of 9,500 union members voting, a strike authorization vote fell slightly short of the required two-thirds majority.

The negotiating committee had recommended rejection of the company offer and asked members to authorize a strike in response to company intransigence on important takeback demands. The major difference between this proposal and one rejected October 17 is that the company dropped the so-called Protected Employee Group (PEG) plan.

PEG was a union-busting plan disguised under the name of job security. It provided for the establishment of a "job bank" of workers who would otherwise have been laid off. Such workers could be assigned to virtually any job in or out of the plant. Their assignment and pay rate could vary daily, and they would have no right to vacations, sick leave, pay progression, or seniority protection. Workers could even be sent to other companies and required to cross picket lines.

The plan was withdrawn after Local 148 and three other UAW locals representing workers at McDonnell Douglas plants in Arkansas and Oklahoma filed unfair labor practice charges against the company.

After PEG was withdrawn, the bargaining committees of all four McDonnell Douglas UAW locals continued to recommend rejection of the current offer because it still includes takebacks on health-care coverage and a cross-utilization plan that would undermine seniority rights and lead to layoffs.



Militant McDonnell Douglas unionists on picket line during 1983-84 strike. Company forced major takebacks on workers in 1984. Now facing more takeback demands in 1987 pact proposal, workers are discussing how to fight back.

The relatively low turnout for the meeting and vote reflect uncertainty among workers about just how bad the contract still is and what course can best defend their interests.

About half of the current work force was at the plant during the 116-day 1983-84 strike, which was defeated. Some of these workers feel the strike showed that McDonnell Douglas cannot be successfully fought with another full-scale strike. This view is also expressed by the Local 148 leadership, which is proposing partial or "rolling" strikes beginning in January. Under this plan, non-striking union members would contribute toward providing substantial strike benefits for the workers

who walk out.

Many of the workers hired since the last strike are also unsure about what to do. These workers have been directly victimized by the two-tier wage structure and other concessions forced on McDonnell Douglas and other aerospace workers in 1983.

Under the two-tier wage system, starting pay for new hires was reduced in many job classifications. The current proposal does not get rid of these cuts. In fact, it would deepen the divisions among workers by granting small wage increases to most workers already on the payroll. The increases would not apply to "red circled" employees earning the top rate in some classifications, nor to the starting rates for

new hires.

Moreover, the proposal would continue a cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) system that denies full COLA coverage to workers hired after the first COLA adjustment.

Local 148 President Bob Berghoff has raised the possibility of taking a new strike vote after further discussion of the issues in the union. A campaign to strengthen the fight against the takebacks requires education around the 1983 concessions, including the two-tier system, and the importance for all workers of restoring the wages that were cut. This approach is needed throughout the aerospace industry. When concessions hit some members of a union while initially sparing others, solidarity is undermined, and all eventually suffer.

While the need for solidarity is understood by many workers, there is little discussion of how to achieve it. Local 148 members are encouraged by the collaboration between the various UAW and IAM locals involved in the current negotiations with McDonnell Douglas. It has been more extensive this year than in past negotiations. In-plant meetings the week before the contract vote were also an important step forward. But much remains to be done.

Dean Denno is a member of UAW Local 148 and works at the Long Beach McDonnell Douglas plant.

## Cops assault USX pickets

BY BILL KALMAN

CLEVELAND, Ohio — A police attack on locked-out steelworkers at USX in Lorain enabled the company to ship steel out of the mill November 26.

When USX attempted to transport steel pipe out of Lorain in mid-September, members of United Steelworkers of America Local 1104 mobilized to block the shipment. More than 50 workers were arrested by the police.

USX then went to Cuyahoga County Judge Frank Gorman. He issued an order allowing the company to ship pipe produced before the lockout began July 31.

When USX and the union resumed talks in Pittsburgh, the company agreed not to ship steel. The company broke off talks November 19.

On November 25 several hundred Lorain steelworkers again mobilized to prevent the shipment of pipe. They physically blocked railroad tracks coming out of the mill.

The next day Judge Gorman ordered the cops to enforce his order.

About 170 cops from five police departments converged on the scene. When more than 150 steelworkers refused to move out of the way to allow a 15-car train to leave the mill with a shipment of pipe, the cops attacked.

Four USWA members were injured, including Local 1104 President Al Peña and District 28 Director Frank Valenta. Fourteen workers were arrested and charged with rioting, which is a misdemeanor. Five, including Valenta and Peña, were also charged with inciting to violence, a felony. The injured were taken directly to jail after their injuries were treated.

After the police attack, USX moved the pipe out.

Unionists in Lorain and elsewhere in this area are outraged by the attacks, and many have called USWA offices in Lorain to offer support.

A Lorain County judge ruled December 1 that USX may not ship steel for 30 days.

Bill Kalman is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 6825.

## TWA attendants demand reinstatement

BY MARCIA GALLO

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Five thousand flight attendants who struck Trans World Airlines (TWA) for 72 days last spring "are determined that they will return to their jobs," according to Vicki Frankovich, president of the Independent Federation of Flight Attendants (IFFA).

In a recent interview with the *Militant* the union leader stated, "We have launched a boycott of conscience against TWA urging the public not to fly on TWA until our dispute is resolved."

Frankovich also explained that the IFFA initiated a lawsuit, which is currently being heard in federal district court in Kansas City, charging TWA with bad-faith bargaining during the 24 months preceding the strike. "Their goal was to undercut the cost of all the other carriers by hiring 19-year-olds and ridding themselves of the older work force," she stated.

Before the strike TWA employed 6,500 flight attendants with an average seniority of 14.5-15 years. Eighty-five percent were female with an average age of 36-37 years.

Some 1,200 attendants crossed the picket lines during the strike and TWA hired 2,500 more scabs to fill the other jobs. By imposing massive work rule changes, including more forced overtime, TWA is currently operating with 4,000 workers doing the jobs formerly held by 6,500.

On May 17 the IFFA called off the strike to stop the company from continuing to fill jobs with scabs. Since then the fight has continued in the courts and through the boycott effort.

The IFFA had agreed to accept concessions equivalent to the 15 percent agreed to by the International Association of Machinists, but TWA President Carl Icahn demanded they take a 44 percent cut in wages and benefits.

The IFFA won a favorable court deci-

sion when a federal judge ruled that scabs and new hires had to continue to pay union dues. It ordered TWA to enforce dues collection because the IFFA had a union-shop agreement.

TWA has appealed this decision, raising technical objections.

TWA recently reopened discussions with the IFFA after an October 25 merger with Ozark and as the bad-faith lawsuit case began.

Icahn proposed a buyout plan, offering workers with 10 or more years on the job their own retirement money adjusted for age, in return for dropping the lawsuit. He wanted the IFFA leadership to "sell" this proposal to the membership. It refused, but

## Calif. machinists vote not to strike

BY GLOVA SCOTT

BURBANK, Calif. — On November 9 workers at Weber Aircraft here came within 30 votes of calling a strike. Four days later, they voted not to strike by 70 percent.

The 706 production and clerical workers are members of District Lodge 727 and Local Lodge 1004 of the International Association of Machinists. Weber makes interiors for commercial jets.

At the November 9 meeting, workers joined in a "unity clap" to show solidarity, chanted "No way, Weber way," and wore buttons that read, "I don't want to strike, but I will." Meat-packers from Austin, Minnesota, spoke at the meeting about their militant struggle against the Hormel Co. Many workers wore buttons and T-shirts to work in solidarity with the meat-packers.

They voted down the company contract proposal by an overwhelming majority. It included a continuation of two-tier wages,

a bonus of 5 percent the first year and 3 percent each additional year instead of a wage increase, and an inferior cost-of-living adjustment formula.

Another strike-sanction vote was scheduled to take place four days later.

The next day, the company cranked up its propaganda machine. It organized meetings to convince workers not to strike, claiming company profits were not as high as reported and that the two-tier wage system was no longer an issue.

The union put out a leaflet outlining minor improvements negotiated after the contract rejection. No meeting was held to counter the company's lies.

When the majority of the members voted November 13 not to strike, the union negotiating committee said this was the same as ratifying the previously rejected contract.

Glova Scott is a member of the International Association of Machinists and works at Weber.